

THE 

APRIL 2015

LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR



MAKING
DISCIPLES



THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

APRIL 2015
VOL. 53 NO. 4

EDITOR

Pastor Robert L. Lee
rlee@aflc.org

MANAGING EDITOR

Ruth Gunderson
ruthg@aflc.org

CIRCULATION

Charlotte Fruehauf
charlotte@aflc.org

EDITORIAL BOARD

Oryen Benrud
Pastor Jerry Moan
Pastor James L. Johnson

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

(USPS 588-620 ISSN 0746-3413)
is published monthly by
the Association of Free
Lutheran Congregations.
AFLC headquarters and
publications office is at
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.,
Plymouth, MN 55441.
Phone (763) 545-5631;
fax 763-545-0079.

SUBSCRIPTION CHANGES AND INFORMATION

3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.,
Plymouth, MN 55441.
763-545-5631
luthamb@aflc.org

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

\$19 a year, Group, U.S.
\$20 a year, Individual, U.S.
\$22 a year, International
Periodicals postage paid
at Minneapolis, MN, and
additional mailing office.

POSTMASTER

Send address changes to
The Lutheran Ambassador,
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.,
Plymouth, MN 55441.

ENCOURAGING WORD

LANDSLIDES IN THE DARK

BY LIZ TONNESON

My dad would often take one of his girls with him as he traveled to other cities in Ecuador for meetings or to visit churches. In the summer of 1994, it was 4-year-old Becca's turn, and she and my dad took the bus to Cuenca. The trip home to Loja is where their adventure began.

When they were about an hour away from home, the bus was stopped by three landslides covering the road. They had two options: climb over the landslides in the dark and meet a bus waiting on the other side, or take the bus back to the closest city and stay in a hotel. My dad didn't think the landslide looked too bad, so he shouldered his backpack, grabbed Becca by the hand, and joined the nearly 100 people gingerly making their way through the mud. He wrote about the experience in a letter to my grandma: "We are on a windy mountainside. On the right side of the road is the mountain, on the left is the cliff, and the landslides have filled in where the road was with piles, up to 20 feet high, of slippery mud and jagged rocks, and even some medium-sized trees. Water is trickling here and there through the mud, the same water that caused the landslides in the first place, ready to cause them to keep sliding over the edge."

Nobody had a flashlight, and it was dark in the mountains. A nice young man came and helped carry Becca, whose leg had been hurt in a fall on the rocks. By passing her back and forth as they worked their way through the tough spots, they finally made it to the waiting bus. Soon they

were home to hot showers and supper.

I am struck by how similar their adventure is to our Christian walk. Things can be going along just fine when all of a sudden there's a landslide (or three!) blocking the way. We have the choice to turn back to the familiar, or risk the danger and adventure of climbing through the landslide. God is with us either way, and often sends people to help and support us right when the going is hardest. Some people bring light, others offer strong arms, and still others offer comfort by just hiking through the mud with us.

In the last couple of months, my husband, Ryan, and I have been figuring out where to go after his seminary internship is done. It's a pretty big life decision, and sometimes it feels like slogging across a landslide in the dark. But God is faithful and has found good places for our feet to tread and encouraging people to come alongside us. You might have decisions to make also—where to go for college, the best treatment plan, or what new job to take. Thankfully, God promises that as you go forward into those landslides, "Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying, 'This is the way; walk in it'" (Isaiah 30:21).

Tonneson, a former missionary kid in Ecuador, lives in Cloquet, Minn., where her husband, Ryan, is the seminary intern at St. Paul's Lutheran.

"Christians are reborn with silver tongues in their mouths. It is just natural for Christians to talk. Christians can fail to feel the urge to speak of Jesus Christ no more than children can suppress the joy of the heart or restrain themselves from sharing a secret."

—Robert Kolb

"When will we realize that evangelism is not done by something, but by someone? It is an expression of God's love, and God is a person. His nature, being personal, is only expressed through personality, first revealed fully in Christ, and now expressed through his Spirit in the lives of those yielded to him. Committees may help to organize and direct it, and to that end they certainly are needed, but the work itself is done by people reaching other people for Christ."

—Robert E. Coleman

"The greatest need we have in our evangelism is the power of the Holy Spirit in its programs and strategy. Perhaps we do need some new programs, but most certainly we need a new spirit—the Holy Spirit. Some of us are majoring on mechanics and minoring on dynamics in our evangelism. The chief dynamic of evangelism is the Holy Spirit."

—Delos Miles

"There is always a temptation to spoil the Gospel of Jesus by stressing much more of what people are to do than of what God has done for us through Jesus."

—Ulrich Parzany

THE HOLY SPIRIT & EVANGELISM

BY KEVIN HOOPS





When asked what it means to disciple one another and what role the Holy Spirit has in it, many Christians may look at you with an odd expression. Sure, we all know that we are supposed to build each other up and encourage fellow believers. But then the “can’ts” and the “don’ts”

get in the way. Many of us say, “I can’t be a disciple, I don’t know how,” or, “There are others who are much better at this than me.” In reality, God gives all of us the ability to encourage (disciple) one another. John 14:26 says, “But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you.” Wow, what an encouragement: I’m not in this alone.

So how do we begin? We first must be in the Word of God: reading, studying, and praying. The Holy Spirit can then mold and shape us. He can prune where we need pruning, and He can build us up when we need to grow. We cannot by our own understanding believe in Jesus Christ, and we cannot by our own strength and ability share God’s love to others without the power of the Holy Spirit.

As we become more familiar with the Word, the Holy Spirit will remind us of Scripture that will provide encouragement to others. God is not asking us to come up with a whole new plan; He wants us to share and encourage fellow believers with what we have already been taught. He wants us to share, with love, all that He has planned for all believers. God wants us to support those who are growing in their faith, those who are hurting, struggling or going through a difficult time. He doesn’t expect us to know everything, but He does want us to rely on the Holy Spirit to give us words when we don’t know what to ask, or what to say.

When we come along a fellow believer who is having a difficult time and say, “You know, I don’t know what you are going through right now, but I would like to help,” we are being disciples. We are showing the individual love, patience, kindness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control, all of which are the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22). With the Holy Spirit’s guidance, we can focus on the Word of God and how it relates to a particular situation. By building each other up and encouraging each other,

“a cord of three strands is not quickly broken” (Ecclesiastes 4:12).

We also need to disciple those who are new to their faith. Encourage them with Scripture and prayer. Be patient as they take baby steps, into this new world of faith. Allow the Holy Spirit to guide us so that they don’t feel overwhelmed with too much information. Support and reassure them as they learn to embrace the power of the Holy Spirit. “The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God” (Romans 8:16). What wonderful reassurance that because of God’s great goodness we are adopted into the family of God.

We should also keep in step with the Holy Spirit, not running ahead or lagging behind, but being so intuned with the Spirit that we walk side-by-side with Him as the Lord would have us mentor or disciple those around us. If we are to be effective in being the hands and feet of Christ, we must know that we cannot in our own strength or ability teach the very words of God. It is the Word of God, combined with the power of the Holy Spirit, which empowers seekers to come to the knowledge of the truth. Let us go forth and make disciples, then, teaching with the power of the Holy Spirit. For He promises to be with us to the very end of the age (Matthew 28:19-20).

Hoops, a member of Abiding Word Lutheran, Deshler, Neb., is a member of the Commission on Evangelism.

"THE SPIRIT
HIMSELF BEARS
WITNESS WITH
OUR SPIRIT
THAT WE ARE
CHILDREN
OF GOD."
(ROMANS 8:16).



Imagine if you were willing to disciple two other people over the next few years. And let's say that these two people are the only people you disciple in your entire life. However, in a year's time, you encourage both of them to find two others to do exactly what you have been doing with them. They each find two people and begin discipling them. After a year, they encourage their disciples to do the same, and the process continues to multiply year after year. In just five years, this disciple-making process would create 32 disciple-makers. In ten years the process would net 1,024 disciple-makers. In 20 years 1,048,496 disciple-makers will have been birthed. And that is if each disciple-maker only disciplined two people his or her entire life.

I believe Christians would have a major impact on society's values if just one Christian from each church practiced disciple-making. This is why Jesus' example of disciple-making is so crucial for those of us who claim His name. Disciple-making can literally transform the world.

In the Gospel of

Luke, many people started following Jesus. He even asked some of them to follow Him. But His example of disciple-making begins with an entire night spent in prayer. We read in Luke 6:13 that the very next day, Jesus called His followers together and chose 12 of them to be His apostles. Jesus did

not just want crowds of people following Him around; He wanted disciple-makers who would help expand His Kingdom after His mission was complete.

It is important to see the emphasis of the Son of God places on prayer. I am sure He sought His Father's wisdom as to which followers He should especially pour into in order to create disciple-makers. Jesus modeled the importance of seeking God's direction through prayer in disciple-making.

But who are the right people? Obviously, if you are going to invest time, energy, and wisdom into people, they must be humble enough to have a teachable spirit and they must be interested in the things of Christ. Unfortunately, not everyone attending the worship service each week is ready or willing to be discipled. I've heard it said that we preach to the masses and disciple the disciples. So ask God to call and prepare people to be disciples.

After a night of prayer and choosing His disciples,

Jesus spent specific and purposeful time with them. He taught them the Scriptures and allowed them to observe His example. By spending time with Him, they observed how He ministered to people. He demonstrated how to live, talk, and even think in a godly way. He allowed them to see His heart for people.

As time passed, Jesus sent the apostles out two by two. And in Luke 9:10 we read that they reported back to Jesus about all they had done. A few months later, Jesus sent 70 disciples out two by two. The number of disciple-makers in training was obviously growing. They, too, returned to Jesus and with joy reported, "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name" (Luke 10:17). Jesus encouraged them, "I was watching Satan fall from heaven like lightning" (vs. 18).

So far we have seen Jesus praying about who to disciple, choosing His disciples, spending time with them, teaching them, demonstrating his heart for others and how to reach them, delegating opportunities, and supervising through report-back sessions.

Jesus also demonstrated to His disciples how to deal with challenges that were beyond them. For example, in Matthew 17:14-21, the disciples could not drive out a demon from a young boy. Jesus drove it out, and then challenged the disciples' lack of faith, explaining, "... for truly I say to you, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you. But this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting" (vs 20-21).

Finally, Jesus commissioned His disciples to "go, therefore, and make disciples ..." (Matthew 28:19). Here were very imperfect, uneducated, and somewhat common men going out and not just making disciples, but making disciple-makers. In fact, in Acts 8, when the persecution against the church in Jerusalem became so great, everyone, except the apostles, scattered. And we are told that those who scattered were preaching the Word. The Christian Church grew greatly as a result.

Jesus, the Son of God, preached to large crowds and taught and discipled many. But He made disciple-makers out of a focused few. And every believer today is a product of that disciple-making process. First Peter 2:21 says, "For you have been called for this purpose, since Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example for you to follow in His steps." A disciple-making process like that of Jesus will transform our world. It already has. The question is, who will join in the process?

Johnson, who serves Christ the King Free Lutheran, Pipestone, Minn., is a member of the Commission on Evangelism.

JESUS MODELED THE IMPORTANCE OF SEEKING GOD'S DIRECTION ...

JESUS THE DISCIPLE MAKER

BY PASTOR TIM JOHNSON



TO LEARN & THEN TO APPLY

BY LICENSED PASTOR LEE HOOPS





always learning, never applying.

I had to smile when the above prescribed writing assignment was received. Fifty-year-old memories of my high-school geometry teacher chastising me for not applying myself in her class immediately came to mind. And then there are those memories of hearing Dad and Mom

ask with dismay, “Lee! Did that go in one ear and out the other?” proof I hadn’t followed through on a principle they believed I had learned. With my 69th birthday just around the corner, I had to wonder if “always learning, never applying” is a trait I will ever outgrow.

I do recall memorizing and learning at a very young age the Great Commission, “Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20). And I’ve heard more than one sermon challenging me to get with it and do my part, so that the Great Commission progress would happen where God had planted me. In recent years I’ve also preached messages on those very words spoken by Jesus.

As a Christian believer, a licensed pastor, and a member of the AFLC Commission on Evangelism, I’m convinced that the sacrament of baptism is being faithfully administered throughout the AFLC. On a weekly basis, I get to see the blessed effect of biblical teaching as both young and old learn more of Christ crucified and risen, and are taught to obey everything Jesus commanded. And who in the AFLC has not sensed the Lord Jesus’ presence as He leads us in the work He has placed before us—work He has entrusted to us? Whether it means going halfway around the world or just down the sidewalk, many people are joyfully obedient to the “go” part of the Great Commission. And they go, baptizing and teaching, trusting Jesus is with them.

There is much evidence that wonderful progress is being made regarding four of the five main points within the Great Commission. That’s 80 percent. Performing at eighty percent would certainly have pleased my high school geometry teacher, but does the Church of Jesus Christ on earth dare to be satisfied by meeting 80 percent of the clear directives of Jesus Christ our Lord? Disciple making is one wide-spread congregational deficiency that may have motivated A.W. Tozer to assert, “Christians habitually weep and pray over beautiful truth, only to draw back from that same truth when it comes to the difficult job of putting it into practice. The average church simply does not dare to check its practices against biblical

precepts.” What might happen within the AFLC, maybe even worldwide, if every Christian believer began actively making disciples, disciples who would then make more disciples, as Jesus demonstrated and directed? What might that look like, you ask?

I like one example recorded in I Corinthians 3. Followers of Paul and Apollos were dealing with an evangelism implosion due to competitive attitudes. Paul set those believers straight, giving us a great fundamental aspect of evangelism I call follow-through. “What after all, is Apollos? And what is Paul? Only servants, through whom you came to believe—as the Lord has assigned to each his task. I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. The man who plants and the man who waters have one purpose, and each will be rewarded according to his own labor. For we are God’s fellow workers; you are God’s field, God’s building” (I Corinthians 3:5-9). By God’s grace, through the Holy Spirit working faith in Jesus Christ, Paul and Apollos were divinely discipled so they might disciple others. And they did. Christian, did you catch that? Today, “we are God’s fellow workers ...”

So what does this example mean to 21st century Christians eager to be used of the Lord to grow His Church, for His glory, honor, and praise? Bill Hull, in his book, *The Disciple Making Pastor*, writes, “Christ commissioned His church to make disciples to insure that two things happen: that the church will produce a healthy product (a reproducing disciple) and that world evangelization will become a reality. But only disciples reproduce and multiply; there is no other way. Therefore, disciple making must be at the heart of the local church. The pastor must install disciple making as first priority.”

Follow-through is the answer. Brothers and sisters who are in Christ, may the Lord find us faithfully following Him, following-through, doing every facet of the Great Commission, always learning, and eagerly applying.

Hoops, who recently retired, serves on the AFLC Commission on Evangelism.

“BUT ONLY
DISCIPLES
REPRODUCE
AND MULTIPLY;
THERE IS NO
OTHER WAY.”



he story of Martha and Mary is at the heart of being a disciple of Christ. We read in Luke 10:38-42 that Jesus visited the home of the sisters while He was traveling throughout Israel. While Mary “sat at the Lord’s feet listening to what he said,” Martha “was distracted by all of the preparations that had to be made.” Sitting at the feet of Jesus, Mary portrays a person who wants to simply be in the presence of the Savior. Meanwhile, Martha sought to serve Him through her labors. Disciples need both approaches to discipleship.

Discipleship should be a balanced combination of two things: service and sitting at the feet of Jesus in prayer. Both are vital if our lives are to demonstrate positive acts

of worship. But Mary chose the best, said Jesus (vs. 42), showing the importance of listening to His voice and having a personal relationship of worship with Him.

It is a great temptation to serve at the expense of being spiritually fed, and that is essentially what Jesus said to Martha after she complained about Mary: “You are worried and upset about many things, but few things are needed—or indeed only one” (vs. 41-42).

Some activities can

wait. There is a time to serve and a time to listen. We must learn to make time in our schedule when we listen to God in His Word and talk to Him in prayer, one on one. It is important that we seek God and His plans for us. And as we listen to God, we will foster a true desire to be molded and shaped by Him.

Mary understood the importance of listening to God. She put herself at the feet of Jesus to listen to what He had to say to her. We also must understand the importance of listening. By putting ourselves at His feet, the distractions of life fade. Jesus did not criticize Martha for her works of service, but for the way in which she was doing it—distracted, worried, and upset—and for a critical spirit

toward her sister. Following Christ and becoming His disciple means seeking to live a properly balanced life of prayer and service, with prayer as the priority.

The first step in implementing prayer in discipleship is recognizing the need to surrender to Christ’s will. When Jesus taught His disciples about prayer, He said, “This, then, is how you should pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one” (Matthew 6:9-13). Have you ever asked God to forgive you when you haven’t forgiven someone else? Have you ever tried to deal with a very difficult or tempting situation without asking God for guidance? Have you ever struggled with how you, as a disciple of Christ, are supposed to pray?

The second step of prayer and discipleship takes us from merely understanding the need for discipleship to spending time with Him and allowing our hearts to become in tune with His. In a sense, as we pray, “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven,” we begin to desire God’s will. To pray this prayer, we must absolutely surrender to God. The mere understanding of God’s power and His authority in our lives does no good without surrendering to Him so that He can mold us.

The Lord’s Prayer reflects a disciple’s ultimate trust in God’s care. Whether it be circumstances that reveal His control and power, the provision of basic needs like nutrition, or spiritual protection, the disciple knows that God’s presence in his life is an absolute necessity. That recognition is at the heart of the Lord’s Prayer. Thus, the prayer unites the disciple to God, recognizing that the affairs of life are a matter in which we either walk alone or walk hand-in-hand with God. The disciple’s prayer acknowledges that his hands need to be in God’s hands.

Prayer requires a disciplined commitment. Trust God’s work and His will for our lives, and lean less on our need to control all things in our lives. God’s wisdom and power reach far beyond our ability to understand, even when dealing with our own lives.

Will you commit to pray this prayer from the heart? Will you give up the control that you hold so dear and allow God to direct your life? If you will make this commitment, you are surrendering to Christ’s will for your life and will begin to see things through the eyes of Jesus.

Lynnes, a member of West Prairie Free Lutheran, Leonard, N.D., serves on the AFLC Commission on Evangelism.

THE LORD'S PRAYER REFLECTS A DISCIPLE'S ULTIMATE TRUST IN GOD'S CARE.

THE ROLE OF PRAYER IN DISCIPLESHIP

BY MICHAEL LYNNES



THE LAW THE GOSPEL & EVANGELISM

BY PASTOR CAL WILLARD





ou are going to be held accountable.” Christians hear this warning frequently in the Church today. Bill Faye’s excellent program, *Share Jesus Without Fear*, begins with the warning that we are going to be held accountable for the “sin of silence”; that is, for not being

good evangelists. *Webster’s Dictionary* tells us that accountability means “to be held responsible for, to give an explanation, to furnish a reckoning, make satisfactory amends (punishment), to give satisfactory reasons.”

During Lent, we reflected on our absolute need for a Savior, and we looked toward Easter, which testifies that Jesus Christ is God’s answer to our need: “... Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures. ... But now Christ is risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept” (I Corinthians 15:3-4, 20).

As Lutherans, we understand the difference between law and gospel and their proper uses. Are Christians going to be held accountable for failures to be good evangelists, good givers, or by any other measure of goodness? When I have asked those warning of accountability how this stands up to the gospel, I have received two answers. First, yes: “For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in his body ...” (II Corinthians 5:10). Second, they answer that saved souls will be held accountable so as to receive their appropriate reward in heaven.

How does Scripture interpret Scripture? With regard to believers, the Bible says: “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1). (See also Jeremiah 31:34 and Galatians 5:14.) Through faith in God and His Redeemer, the repentant believers’ sins are removed from them as far as east is from west, as if dropped into the deepest part of the sea. Jesus says those who believe in Him shall not come into judgment (John 5:24).

How does the gospel of Christ reconcile with II Corinthians 5:10? I see two possible ways. First, a believer comes before the judgment seat of Christ the moment he or she by faith receives Him as Savior. There and then Christ judges the repentant sinner not guilty. This is the forensic meaning behind Romans 5:1. On judgment day, when the Book of Life is opened (Revelation 20:12), Christians will already be with Christ (I Thessalonians 4:16-17; Luke 23:43). The second way is explained in *Lenski’s Commentary* (p. 1014-1016). Christ has already judged the repentant sinner and has declared him not guilty according to Romans 5:1. On judgment day a public announcement will be made reaffirming the personal verdict already passed.

The law, summarized in the Ten Commandments, has three purposes. First, it convicts us of our sins so as to prepare our hearts to receive our Savior Jesus Christ. Second, it provides divine guidance for good government. And third, it teaches and reminds Christians how God wants us to live.

The Bible teaches that those convicted by the law, who then repent and ask Jesus to be their Savior, are no longer under the law. “There is therefore, now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit” (Romans 8:1). The third purpose convicts us also, but not out of fear of condemnation (II Timothy 1:7; I John 4:18), but rather because Christian spiritual life desires to keep the law and please God. The warning of being held accountable is the first function of the law and is for those walking in unbelief. Condemnation does not apply to repentant Christians walking in faith.

But what about our crowns? Will we be held accountable with regards to our reward in heaven? Again, what does the Bible say? With regard to the patriarchs: “These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them ...” (Hebrews 11:13). Jesus taught throughout the gospels that the uniform reward of faith is eternal life. In Matthew 20:1-16, a kingdom parable, Jesus teaches that those hired in the eleventh hour were paid the same as those hired in the early morning. “So the last will be first, and the first last” (vs. 16). The apostle Paul wrote that his only righteousness was “that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith” (Philippians 3:9).

The gospel excludes any thought of Christians being held accountable, either for judgment or earned rewards. Mueller’s *Christian Dogmatics* states: “Holy Scripture, moreover, affirms that good works flow from faith alone ... without coercion ... and without any thought of meriting even the least grace by them.”

To warn Christians that they will be held accountable, either for judgment or earned rewards, only brings fear into their lives and causes doubts about the gospel. But God wants us to have peace through faith in Jesus Christ. Martin Luther taught that justification by faith alone is the foundation upon which the true Church stands. “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is a gift from God” (Ephesians 2:8.)

Here, then, is our challenge as we look at evangelism. Jesus taught, “Repent and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:15). So we must use the law correctly to bring lost souls to repentance. The gospel is for the helpless repentant sinners who need to hear that Christ died for all of their sins, and rose again that they may know they have eternal life through faith in Christ our Lord.

Willard serves Calvary Lutheran, Everett, Wash.

“FOR WE MUST ALL
APPEAR BEFORE THE
JUDGMENT SEAT
OF CHRIST; THAT
EACH ONE MAY
RECEIVE THE THINGS
DONE IN HIS BODY ...”
(I CORINTHIANS 15:10).

THE 2015 GRADUATING CLASS OF THE FREE LUTHERAN SEMINARY



DANIEL ANTAL

Park River, N.D.

Before the foundation of the world, God knew me. He knew I would be rebellious and that I would sin against Him, but He still decided to love me. Though God decided to love me, my sin was still a problem, so He made a plan to save me.

Even before I was born, God carried out this plan. He sent His very own Son into the world to fulfill the law on my behalf, suffer for my sins, and to rise again, that I might have the promise of eternal life.

On March 28, 1983, I was born to Pastor Mark and Ruth Antal. I was baptized into Christ on April 17, 1983.

What God knew about me before the foundation of the world is true. I am sinful, and I am in daily need of His forgiveness. So I am blessed to have been born into a loving family with parents who brought me to Christ in baptism and continually taught me of His grace. I am also blessed to have grown up in churches where God's Word was taught and the forgiveness of sins was proclaimed. My hometown is Park River, N.D., and my home congregation is Victory Free Lutheran Church.

After high school I attended AFLBS and Northwestern College, majoring in Biblical Studies.

I am thankful for the education I received at AFLTS and while serving my internship under Pastor Terry Olson at Trinity Free Lutheran Church in Grand Forks, N.D. I have learned that I am constantly in need of God's mercy and His enabling for the work of ministry.

Most recently God has blessed me with a wonderful wife. Alicia (Brynildson) and I were married on March 14, 2015. We are excited to serve Christ together.



ROB EDWARDS

Aurora, Ill.

The good Creator brought me into this world on Feb. 3, 1981, the first child of Bob and Teri Edwards. I grew up in Aurora, Ill., a large western suburb of Chicago. I attended St. Olaf Free Lutheran Church in Montgomery, Ill., and later enjoyed my time in the thriving youth ministry of the congregation. Our pastor invested his time building relationships with the youths, and he always made sure to take us to the Free Lutheran Youth Convention in Colorado.

It was at the FLY Convention in 1997 that God got a hold of me and turned my life around. Up until that point, I had lived my life for myself and rarely even thought about Christ and all He had done for me. Though seemingly I was a good kid, in reality, I was a self-centered, prideful, and ungrateful sinner. That night in 1997, God confronted me with my sin. His Word brought to light all the ways I personally fell short of the glory of God. Yet it also revealed to me how Jesus freely and lavishly displayed His love for me on the cross.

After high school, I attended AFLBS and later graduated from Northwestern College in St. Paul, Minn. I met my beautiful wife, Sarah (Keller), in Bible school and we were married in 2003. God has since blessed us with four awesome children—Owen (8), Caleb (6), Naomi (4), and Hannah (1). During my four years of seminary, God taught me about the power of His Word and gave me many chances to experience it; it has never ceased to amaze me! My internship was served at Bethel Free Lutheran in Grafton, N.D., under Pastor Tim Carlson.



DANIEL HURNER

Glyndon, Minn.

I was born on Aug. 9, 1988, in Fargo, N.D., to Craig and Carla Hurner. I grew up on our family farm outside of Glyndon, Minn., and attended North Buffalo Lutheran Church, where I was baptized and confirmed. We joined Maranatha Free Lutheran Church in Glyndon, Minn., in 2005.

Later that summer, I attended my first FLY Convention and realized that if I were to die that night, I wasn't certain where I would spend eternity. I rededicated my life to Christ that night and left feeling excited to see what God had in store for my life. After graduating from high school, I attended AFLBS, where I met many new friends, sang in choir and gospel teams, and spent my summers teaching vacation Bible school on a summer team. I attended Crown College in St. Bonifacius, Minn. It was at this time that I felt a strong call to work alongside youth and their families, and I graduated with a major in Youth Ministry. Throughout my studies, I saw the importance of further biblical training in ministry and felt God leading me to attend AFLTS.

During the summer of 2011 I was married to Hannah Voth. I began my seminary studies that fall. Our daughter, Eloise Eden, was born in December 2013 and is a wonderful source of joy in our lives. I am currently serving my internship at Our Savior's Free Lutheran, Stanley, N.D., and First English, Lostwood, N.D.

One of the many things God has shown me during seminary is the importance of continually equipping others for the work of ministry. Jesus' ministry was constantly geared toward equipping His disciples to carry on His work. We are to follow His example: making disciple-makers.



JARROD HYLDEN

Park River, N.D.

My name is Jarrod Hylden and I'm happily married to Elise (Parsley) Hylden. I was born in 1986 to Mark and Esther Hylden who faithfully brought me to Jesus in baptism and raised me in the Christian faith in rural Park River, N.D.

My home congregation, Bethel Free Lutheran in Grafton, N.D., also nurtured my beliefs. Pastor Tim Carlson's law and gospel preaching, along with his sound biblical teaching, helped to keep me in the faith and whet my appetite for God's Word.

Following high school I attended AFLBS. There, God used the course on Romans and Galatians to teach me the essence of the gospel. I went on to study classics and religion at Concordia College in Moorhead, Minn., while Elise earned an art degree a couple blocks away at Minnesota State University. We were married in August 2009 and graduated in 2011. While Elise pursued writing and illustrating for children's picture books, I began studying God's Word full-time at AFLBS.

Before seminary I had a poor grasp of the big picture of Scripture, especially in the Old Testament. Now I've learned how to trace God's one promise of salvation, first given to Adam and Eve, then to the patriarchs, proclaimed by the prophets, and finally realized in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. My internship is at Maranatha Free Lutheran Church in Glyndon and Ulen, Minn., under the supervision of Pastor Lloyd Quanbeck, who has been a remarkable mentor for me. As I consider beginning the pastoral ministry, I am humbled to think that God would use me as a mouthpiece for His Word.



DAVID LUSK

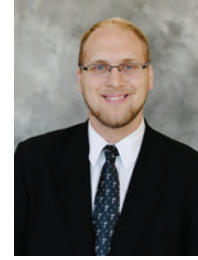
Camarillo, Calif.

After retiring from a successful career in law enforcement due to an on-duty injury and finishing my master's degree in public administration, I received and accepted the Lord's call to seminary. As I reflect on the last four years, I am humbled by the grace, mercy and love that the Lord has bestowed on our family. I entered seminary with blind faith. We were unsure how we would financially provide for our needs, what the transition would be like for our children, and exactly what road this journey would take us on. Fortunately, God not only walked hand-in-hand with us, but gently carried us, lovingly lifted us, graciously held us, and pushed us beyond our comfort zone.

I have had wonderful support from my parents, Walter and Beverly Lusk, who raised me in a solid Lutheran home since my birth on May 12, 1968. My wife, Carmen (Cook), and I, along with our two children, Jacob (16) and Olivia (13), attended Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Camarillo, Calif. Currently I am serving my internship at Abiding Savior Free Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, S.D., under Pastor Kirk Flaa.

Our time in Sioux Falls has been an absolute blessing to my family and me. From the moment we arrived, we have felt welcomed and both our children quickly connected to the youth group and have been active in that ministry. My time under the teaching and leadership of Pastor Flaa has been blessing for me in my pastoral studies and training for pastoral ministry.

During these years, God had taught us to rely fully on Him. As much as we think our plan is the right plan, it is not. It is God's.



NATHAN OLSON

Shakopee, Minn.

I was born to Pastor Kevin and Pam Olson on October 17, 1989. Shortly thereafter, I was born again through the waters of baptism, as God adopted me to be a part of His family. My testimony is similar to that of King David, who wrote in Psalm 22, "You made me trust You at my mother's breasts. On you was I cast from my birth, and from my mother's womb you have been my God." By God's grace, He has held me close to Him ever since.

I grew up in Shakopee, Minn., and learned the Word of God through Sunday morning worship at Faith Lutheran Church and in daily family devotions. God used those times in His Word to prepare me for future ministry.

After high school, I graduated from AFLBS and then transferred to the University of Northwestern in St. Paul, Minn., to receive my bachelor's degree in theological studies. It was during my time at AFLBS that the Lord spoke to my heart through His Word (Ezekiel 3:4-11) and called me to seminary.

Shortly after receiving God's call to come to the Free Lutheran Seminary, I met my wife Emily (Hoops). She has been a great ministry helpmate and I praise the Lord for her daily. We have one son, Josiah (1 year old), and are enjoying the blessings of parenthood. The Lord has taught us many things during the seminary process, but above all, He has reminded us of His faithfulness.

As Emily and I look to the future, we have accepted a call to serve at Gloria Dei Free Lutheran Church in St. Louis, Mo., and I have been accepted to continue studies toward a Ph.D. in Doctrinal Theology from Concordia Seminary.



RYAN TONNESON

Sioux Falls, S.D.

I am blessed to have a godly heritage of faith. In fact, some of my earliest childhood memories are of my parents, Jim and Pam Tonneson, teaching my Sunday school classes. At an Easter service when I was 5 or 6 years old, the pastor was using big words like “forgiveness” and “salvation” that I just could not comprehend. At home after the service that day, I asked my father what the pastor was talking about. He explained it in a way that my childlike mind could understand. That day, I received Christ as my Lord and Savior and I also received the forgiveness of my sins.

When I was a freshman in high school, my family began to attend Abiding Savior in Sioux Falls, S.D. After graduation, I attended AFLBS. Even at AFLBS, I felt an inward call to pastoral ministry, but I ran from it. After graduating from AFLBS in 2005, I spent a few years in the Twin Cities working odd jobs and attending community college. But the call remained. And I continued to run from it. One day, I compromised with the Lord, telling Him I would not go into pastoral ministry, but I would become a parish builder with AFLC Home Missions. After serving a year and a half in Brandon, Fla., and two years in Mesa, Ariz., the Lord finally got a hold of me. I completed my undergrad online at Northwestern College, graduating with a bachelor’s degree in Biblical Studies. In the fall of 2011, I began studies at AFLTS.

In between my second and third year at seminary, I married the love of my life: Elizabeth (Lackey) in June 2013. And we are expecting our first child in July.

I am serving my internship at St. Paul’s Lutheran in Cloquet, Minn. It has been a wonderful experience. I have had the privilege of learning from two seasoned veterans in the ministry. They have taught me the importance of building relationships within the congregation and community. We are excited to see where the Lord leads after seminary.



GEORGE WINSTON

Hagerstown, Md.

I was born on February 18, 1973, in Silver Spring, Md., the first child to Alan and Mary Winston. We moved farther north to Frederick, Md., where I grew up with my sister Dawn. I also have two step-brothers, Michael and Stephen. It was a blessing to grow up in a home that was filled with love and family. I met my wife, Leslie Curran, while I was a senior in high school. After dating three years, we were married on Dec. 17, 1994. We were blessed with our beautiful daughters Kimberly (19) and Kirsten (18). We lived in Maryland and West Virginia, and I worked for seventeen years as a union HVAC technician in Washington, D.C., Maryland, and Virginia. We also opened a glass art business and I taught classes for glassblowing.

My main focus was worldly pursuits and being the best at whatever I was doing, no matter the cost. We had departed from our faith as we began our life of raising children for several years. God, through His grace and mercy, placed circumstances and Christian people in our lives to call us back. We began to refocus our lives and, by the Holy Spirit’s leading, I felt the calling to full-time ministry. With much prayer I surrendered to God’s call, to which He open doors and made the impossible possible. I was accepted at AFLTS, began training and seeking God’s leading for future ministry. What a blessing to have been trained under such godly men who hold the Word in high regard. We are currently finishing our internship at St. John’s Lutheran Church, Newark, Ohio, under Pastor Tom Olson.

The last four years have been a time of blessing and growing. We are thankful and excited to see where the Lord will lead us.



BRENT RAAN

Tioga, N.D.

My name is Brent Raan and my parents are Rick and Rochelle Raan. I was born on March 13, 1985. I am from Tioga, N.D., and attended Zion Lutheran after accepting Christ in the summer of 2004.

I graduated from the Association Free Lutheran Bible School in 2006, the Ministry Training Institute in 2007, and then Northwestern College in 2010. My wife, Emily (Walker), and I were married in June 2011. Our daughter, Amaleah Grace, was born in Sioux Falls, S.D., in July 2014.

We have been so blessed during this year of internship. I served Living Word Free Lutheran in Sioux Falls under Pastor Wade Mobley for six months and am now serving in Jinja, Uganda, under Pastor Nathan Jore, who serves with AFLC World Missions. The Lord has stretched me in many ways over this past year. He has used difficult situations in my life to strengthen my faith in Him. One of those areas lies within God’s leading of my family. We have accepted a call to serve with AFLC World Missions in India. This decision has caused us to reflect on Christ being the head of our household and the One who goes before us. Though at times there are fears that arise, the Lord has given us a peace and excitement for this next chapter of our lives.

Due to space, one graduate will be featured in the May issue.



Alaska Gift Registry

Our Alaska missionaries have limited access to stores, and their remote location often brings up needs for unique items. Many of you have been gracious in calling the Home Missions office to inquire about sending care packages to our Alaska missionaries. Thank you for your inquiries.

AFLC Home Missions has set up an online Alaska Hospitality Registry, much like using an online baby or wedding shower registry. This allows us to keep an up-to-date list of needs, avoid unnecessary duplication. To donate, visit:



[myregistry.com/
visitors/?registryid=337412](http://myregistry.com/visitors/?registryid=337412)

BY ROBERTA OVERGAARD

Georg Sverdrup asked, so many years ago, “How can we get those who sleep awakened, how can we get those who are dying saved, how can we get those who are bound set free, how can we get someone along with us on the way to eternal life?”

In Matthew 15:16, Jesus tells us—no, He commands us—to “preach the gospel to all creation.” Do you understand the importance of this? Our brothers and sisters’ eternal lives are dependent upon hearing the gospel.

To a long-time Christian, practicing evangelism has hopefully become second nature. But to new Christians, evangelism may sound like a scary word, especially when they are told they must do this work. But evangelism can take on many forms, and every believer can participate—you just need to find what works for you.

I found a niche for myself at a wonderful mission in a remote village in Alaska. Never would I have dreamt that this is where I would be asked to go to serve Christ. But now that I have, I’m eager to go back to serve AFLC Home Missions in Naknek, Alaska, again this summer. The interesting part of this work is that once I am there, I don’t even need to set foot outside the door to be involved in evangelism. I’m able to

connect with people from around the world who come to Naknek to fish for salmon and work in the canneries.

The fishing industry workers come from all over the world. Imagine, Bibles and other materials being handed out in Naknek have the potential of reaching not only the people of Alaska and the other 49 states, but also such places as Cuba, Columbia, Chile, Brazil, Iran, Iraq, India, Somalia, Kenya, Sudan, Libya, Bulgaria, Thailand, Vietnam, and the Philippines. Talk about a mission field at our doorstep.

As we begin to prepare for this summer, please keep this mission in your prayers. Pray for Pastor Jeff Swanson, Pastor Bob Lee and Pastor Jeremy Crowell and their families as they work throughout the year in Naknek. Pray that a team will be formed, and that its members will serve in Naknek this summer at our coffee shop ministry called The Net.

Pray that God will use all of us in a mighty way to, as Sverdrup put it, “get someone along with us on the way to eternal life.”

Overgaard is a member of Good Shepherd Lutheran, Camarillo, Calif.

WMF

WOMEN'S
MISSIONARY
FEDERATION



THE LOVE FEAST

BY JOYANN DAHL

For 25 years, members of the youth group at Our Saviour's Free Lutheran Church in Thief River Falls, Minn. (called FLY for Free Lutheran Youth), have been participating in a Love Feast meal and program for members of the congregation who are 55 years old and older. The event began out of a desire to show appreciation for those in the congregation who consistently support the youth program in many ways, especially in prayer. The meal is a way for both young and older members to get to know each other better by sharing a meal, and it allows the youths to gain experience in serving others.

Preparation begins weeks before the actual event. While two moms typically plan the meal and shop for the food, all of the parents help with serving and clean up. This year, the Love Feast was held Feb. 8. Members of the youth group served more than 80 people a dinner that included chicken and gravy, candied carrots, homemade buns, salads, and baked potatoes. Tables were decorated ahead of time, and youths were instructed on the correct way to serve a table and initiate table conversation. Equally important, the young adults are taught to clean up the table and the kitchen following the meal.

The actual day of the event, youth members chose their own table and sat in pairs or, at times, by themselves at a table as the adults were seated. Following the meal, members of the youth group presented a program. By their own choice, each youth chose either a song to sing with the group or a poem or Scripture to read. I Corinthians 13 (the love chapter) was read, a tradition we keep every year, and prayer was held at the beginning and closing of the program. Many smiles, laughter,

and fellowship were shared by the church family, who often request more musical numbers.

Serving others and encouraging one another in our faith is just one way the body of Christ glorifies God. Members of the congregation look forward to this event each year, and the youths, likewise, look forward to serving and interacting with the adults. Afterward, youth group members often share stories among themselves about their experiences at their tables. They also enjoy looking at pictures in a slide show at the end of the year as a reflection back on good memories.

The greatest benefit of the Love Feast, besides the opportunity for adults to sit down and share a meal with the young people of our church, is that the adults share their faith with the youths and encourage them through prayer. As in I Corinthians 13, both young and old share the hope for each day and for the future. "For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face. Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known. And now these three remain: faith, hope and love. But the greatest of these is love" (vs. 12-13).

Dahl, the recording secretary for the WMF, is a member of Our Saviour's Lutheran, Thief River Falls, Minn.



BY MICAH BERGER

NO COMPROMISES

AFLC World Missions seeks to make disciples of all nations through teaching and evangelism. Current mission fields include Brazil, India, Uganda and Mexico.



Berger, from Wadena, Minn., serves full-time with AFLC World Missions in Uganda.



In Uganda there are trees that are said to have spirits living them. You'll see them sometimes if you go out among the villages. They're not hard to spot because they are older and taller than

all the trees around them. No one dares to cut them down, of course.

A friend once told me a story about one of these demon trees. He said that a certain village began having a lot of problems in their area: sicknesses, maybe even deaths. Of course, the villagers attributed all these troubles to the spirits of the local tree.

So what do think they did? Did they pray about it or try to exorcise the tree? Did they cut it down and sell the timbers? Did they chalk it all up to coincidence and go home? None of the above, actually. Instead they somehow discerned that they ought to arrange a marriage between the spirits of tree and the Virgin Mary. And apparently that's just what they did. They brought in an icon of Mary and performed a wedding ceremony between the statue and the demon tree.

And so I'm told, though I've never seen it myself, that somewhere in Uganda there's now a demon tree with a statue of Mary sitting in it: A compromise between darkness and light.

What's the moral of the story? Don't put the Virgin Mary in demon trees? Maybe another story will shed more light.

I was on my way home from a class one day when a Muslim man I know ran into me and began talking about how Christians and Muslims ought

to be friends with each other. "We all pray to one God," he argued.

Now I'm all for being friends with my Muslim neighbors, and it was tempting to just agree and not make waves. I was raised, after all, to be polite and cordial like most other Americans. But as a missionary I knew that I was sent to Uganda to speak to lost souls. If I were to agree that our faiths were essentially the same, then why would my friend want to hear the gospel?

I responded, "Well, for us (Christians), we pray to Jesus."

"No," he said. "We don't pray to Jesus. But we all pray to one God."

"Okay, you don't pray to Jesus. But we do pray to Him."

"No ..." he continued. And so it went.

I didn't make a convert that day, and I probably didn't strengthen our relationship much, either, but maybe the next time will be different. Ironically (or perhaps providentially) this conversation happened as I was on my way home from teaching a story from Acts 4 on the topic of witnessing. In verses 11-12 Peter says: "This Jesus is the stone that was rejected by you, the builders, which has become the cornerstone. And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved."

Please pray for me and for the church in Uganda that we wouldn't compromise with spirits or with men, but would continue to clearly confess the truth of Jesus Christ. I pray the same for each of you.

WATERS IN THE WILDERNESS

APRIL 20



"They said to each other, 'Did not our hearts burn within us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?'" (Luke 24:32)

The Holy Spirit is still with us, waiting to illumine our minds and hearts. If, with receptive minds, we are yielded to Him, He is taking us step by step along the path meant for each one who is the disciple of Jesus. As much as we are able to bear and understand, He reveals the Word to us. He stoops to our weaknesses and immaturities. He stimulates our thoughts and desires.

Poet Paul Laurence Dunbar once wrote, "There is a heaven for ever, day by day, the upward longing of my soul doth tell me so." The promise that Christ is always present is a constant comfort to all believers. Let us not be so blinded with care and preoccupation that we fail to see Him or enjoy His presence as we ought.

When our hearts are filled with indignation against sin in ourselves and about us, we are in measure purified by the spirit of burning. When we are occupied with the things of God and the love of Christ, our hearts are fanned into fuller flame and burn within us because the voice of Jesus is a reality. This causes us to become more involved in His Kingdom's work; our lives will glow with faith, assurance and joy. This can become the possession of every believer. It is God's intention that every child of His should be led by the Holy Spirit into ever greater and deeper experiences with God.

Rev. Reuben Wee, now deceased, was from Granite Falls, Minn.

Waters in the Wilderness is a daily devotional published by the AFLC Board of Parish Education in 1971 with Dr. Iver Olson, editor. All 365 meditations were contributed by AFLC members from many walks of life. "Here, they offer each a glass of cool and refreshing water each day to thirsting souls," wrote Olson in the preface. Reprinted by permission. The volume is out of print.

NEWS

Business manager sought for AFLC

Members of the Coordinating Committee are seeking applications for the position of Director of Business Management. This is a full-time, salaried position with benefits. This individual will manage the accounting, payroll, and human resource functions for the AFLC and oversee the personnel and budget functions for information technology and the reception area. Qualifications include a personal faith in Jesus Christ, membership in an AFLC congregation, a four-year degree, at least five years of experience managing an organization of comparable size and scope to that of the AFLC General Fund and its accounting department, mastery of accepted accounting principles and practices, experience in structuring an accounting system, and outstanding communication and strategic planning skills. Review of applications will begin immediately and continue until the position is filled.

Interested individuals may request a copy of the complete position description by contacting the AFLC Offices at 3110 E. Medicine Lake Boulevard, Plymouth, MN 55441, by phone at 763-545-5631, or by e-mailing Karen Floan at kmfloan@afcl.org. Informal inquiries and questions may be addressed to the Coordinating Committee Chairman, Dr. Daniel Mundfrom, by e-mail at daniel.mundfrom@eku.edu, or by calling 970-302-7997. To apply, a letter of application that addresses how you meet the qualifications of this position and a current résumé that documents your education and experience should be submitted electronically to: kmfloan@afcl.org.

Alumni and Friends Day

Mark your calendars for the annual Alumni and Friends Day on Aug. 1, hosted by the Association Free Lutheran Bible School. The day will feature a Golf Scramble, Disc Golf tournament, and a barbecue and silent auction at the AFLBS campus, which will include games and inflatables for kids.

A class titled, "Back to Bible School Classes," will be held in the morning, taught by Pastor Bob Lee and Pastor Phil Haugen.

Were you in the AFLBS class of 2005, 1995, 1985, or 1975? If you are interested in organizing a class reunion, please contact the AFLBS office at 763-544-9501 or aflbs@afcl.org.



India missions trip

Pastor Eugene Enderlein, pictured above, led a group from Hope Lutheran, Minneapolis, Minn., on a short-term mission trip to India. The group spent nearly two weeks visiting churches and ministries associated with AFLC-India.

Hiepler celebrates 70 years in ministry, 95th birthday

Dr. Orville Hiepler celebrated 70 years of pastoral ministry by preaching at Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Camarillo, Calif., on Feb. 8, two days before his 95th birthday. With 130 people in attendance, two news reporters, and a photographer chronicling the event, he spoke on God's heart to reach the lost. His sermon was titled, "No Five Minute Rule." A reception at the church, which he helped found, followed.



Hiepler, who was born Feb. 10, 1920, near Springbrook, N.D. He finished his undergraduate coursework at Concordia College, Moorhead, Minn., and graduated from Luther Seminary in 1945. He served congregations in Pasco, Wash., Sacramento, Calif., Hawthorne, Calif., and Camarillo, Calif.

He and wife, Florence, live in Camarillo. He has a daughter living in Golden Valley, Minn., and another in south Orange County, Calif., and a son in Camarillo.

Pacific Northwest District opens annual conference registration

We invite you to come to this year's annual conference June 16-19 at Warm Beach Christian Camp & Conference Center, Stanwood, Wash. The Pacific Northwest offers the grandeur of the Cascade and Olympic Mountain Ranges, highlighted by Mount Rainier and Mount Baker, and graced by the beauty of Puget Sound and the San Juan Islands. The conference site is 20 minutes from the nearest hotel or restaurants, so we encourage you to lodge and eat on site.

Because of the variety of housing and meal package options, the registration form is lengthy. It will not be printed in *The Lutheran Ambassador*, but it is available as a printable document at both www.aflc.org and www.aflchurch.org. Registration can be submitted online, as well. We would suggest printing the registration form, working through it, then either calling in your registration to (360) 502-3452, or submitting the online form. If submitted online, you will receive an e-mail confirmation with the balance due. If you are unable to print the registration form, we would be happy to mail one to you.

Register early (by April 25) for best lodging selection and a 20 percent savings.

We pray and trust that the upcoming conference will be a special event for all who can take part. A limited number of scholarships are available to those who qualify, please inquire during registration. Let us know how we can serve you.

The conference will offer something for the whole family. We are planning a full morning and afternoon schedule for all children and youths. Because Warm Beach is a Christian campground facility, it offers a wide variety of activities for the young while adults are in session. See you in June in Washington.

~The Pacific Northwest District, hosts



Downloadable form

www.aflc.org
www.aflchurch.org

Call to register

360.502.3452

Discounts available

Register before April 25
for a 20 percent discount

PEOPLE & PLACES

David Lusk, a graduating seminarian, has accepted a call to serve Faith Lutheran, Durant, Okla. Following graduation, he will be ordained May 24 at Good Shepherd Lutheran, Camarillo, Calif., with AFLC President Pastor Lyndon Korhonen officiating. He will begin serving Faith Lutheran in June.

Jarrold Hylden has accepted a call to Skrefsrud Lutheran Church, Beresford, S.D. Hylden will graduate from the Free Lutheran Seminary in May. He will be ordained during the Annual Conference, June 19.

Pastor Greg Schram has accepted a call to serve Lutheran Church of Hope, Loveland, Colo., an AFLC Home Missions congregation. He served Our Saviour's Lutheran, Thief River Falls, Minn., and Reiner Lutheran Free Church, Goodridge, Minn., for more than nine years. His last service there will be June 28, and he will begin serving in Colorado in July.

Pastor Kirk Thorson has accepted a call to serve Living Word Free Lutheran, Sioux Falls, S.D., beginning in June. He served for more than seven years at Living Faith Free Lutheran and Middle Grove Lutheran, Larimore, N.D.

Brent and Emily Raan have accepted a call from AFLC World Missions to serve in India. Currently serving the second half of their seminary internship in Jinja, Uganda, they will return to the United States in May for seminary graduation.

Nathan Olson has enrolled in the doctoral program at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., and will study doctrinal theology. He will begin his studies following his graduation from AFLTS in May. He has also accepted a call to serve Gloria Dei Lutheran, St. Louis.

Internship assignments have been given for senior seminarians.

Jon Langness will serve at Helmar Lutheran, Newark, Ill., under Pastor James Molstre. **Brandon Marschner** will serve Our Savior's Lutheran, Stanley, N.D., and First English Lutheran, Lostwood, N.D., under Pastor Rodney Johnson. And **Aaron Olson** will serve at Ruthfred Lutheran, Bethel Park, Pa., under Pastor Steve Carlson.

Dan Antal has accepted a call to serve Trinity Free Lutheran, Grand Forks, N.D. He will graduate from the Free Lutheran Seminary in May.



Anderson installed at Trinity and Mt. Carmel Parish

Pastor Karl Anderson (right) was installed Feb. 8 at the Mt. Carmel and Trinity Parish, which is located in McIntosh, Minn., by Pastor Lyndon Korhonen (left), president of the AFLC.

FEBRUARY MEMORIALS

AFLBS

Robert Hemingson
Arlene Edlund
Lynn Woodbury
Luther Berdal
Melvin and Lorraine
Finstrom

AFLTS

Helen Smette,
Norine Pedersen
Donald Priebe (2)
Emma Lingle
Margaret Mundfrom
Matt Lahti

Home Missions

Donald Priebe
Lynn Woodbury

WMF

Don McCreary

World Missions

Donald Priebe
Harold Palmer
Margaret Mundfrom

AFLC BENEVOLENCES January 1-February 28, 2015

FUND	REC'D IN FEBRUARY	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	PRIOR YEAR-TO-DATE
General Fund	\$26,422	\$59,199	\$61,265
Evangelism	8,669	20,673	22,061
Youth Ministries	8,514	14,926	17,863
Parish Education	8,687	24,240	19,802
Seminary	26,212	51,805	44,666
Bible School	33,199	61,678	54,308
Home Missions	26,726	83,626	58,951
World Missions	29,591	61,614	71,985
Personal Support	41,539	75,794	78,786
TOTALS	\$209,558	\$453,556	\$429,687

Contact the individual departments for further information about specific financial needs.

THE EVANGEL IN EVANGELISM

The story is told of a Bible camp many years ago in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. The evening speaker preached a closing message from Luke 17, concluding with the words, “So, young people, remember Lot’s wife!” The late Pastor Al Hautamaki, who was the dean of the camp, walked to the podium and turned to the campers with a second closing word: “Young people, remember Jesus Christ!”

One of the final words of instruction that the Apostle Paul wrote to his beloved son in faith, Timothy, were these: “Do the work of an evangelist” (II Timothy 4:5). We find the term *evangelist* in two other New Testament references (Acts 21:8, Ephesians 4:11), plus a couple of striking instances in one Old Testament verse where Zion and Jerusalem are called “bearer of good news” (Isaiah 40:9), which may also be translated *evangelist*.

The AFLC has been no stranger to the ministry of evangelists, as many gifted men ministered throughout our congregations in past years, speaking for special meetings or conferences. Two pastors were officially commissioned by our church body for full-time evangelistic service. (The last to serve in this position was Pastor Ken Pentti, who died in 1985.) Some represented organizations like the Hauge Federation or the Lutheran Evangelistic Movement; others were parish pastors permitted by their congregations to accept invitations to serve in this way, usually for a limited number of weeks each year. The ministry of evangelists has been a source of great blessing to our fellowship over the years, and there are many among us who could tell of life-changing encounters with Christ as a result. This writer is not aware of any full-time Lutheran evangelists today, but it is not unusual for congregations to still schedule a series of special meetings with a guest speaker.



Pastor Robert Lee

As we consider the subject of evangelism, which is the theme of this issue, it is vital to emphasize that *evangel* is at the heart of the word and must be at the heart of the ministry. Most readers of *The Lutheran Ambassador* have heard many times that the word *evangel* means “good news” or “gospel.” Yes, it is important that our evangelism message contains a balance of both law and gospel—a good Lutheran expression—for it is the law that kills, that shows us our sin. Older preachers once warned of becoming “gospel-hardened,” which can result when the law has not first accomplished its work in our hearts. Yet do not imagine for a moment that a saving knowledge of Christ is produced by the preaching of the law. C.F.W. Walther wrote in one of his classic lectures, that “the Word of God is not rightly divided when the person teaching it does not allow the gospel to have a general predominance in his teaching.”

During one of the seasons of spiritual awakening in the land of Wales, there was a young pastor who did know the Lord. He did have a longing, however, for a more fruitful ministry, and one evening attended a meeting where a local evangelist was preaching. The speaker spoke with a loud voice, and his message was a call to his hearers to repent of their sins. “I can do this, too,” the young pastor purposed, and soon his messages were delivered with increased volume and with a law-dominating emphasis. People came under conviction and went to him asking what they must do to be saved. But he did not know how to answer them, for he had preached himself lost, too.

It was during another visit to a service

conducted by the same evangelist that the sin-burdened pastor heard the gospel, the good news, and he trusted in Christ alone for his salvation. Now there was a new note of joy and assurance in his preaching, and many people came to know the peace of God in Jesus Christ. Some told him afterward that they had almost been driven to despair under the preaching of the law, even considering ending their lives.

What is this evangel that is mentioned so frequently (more than 100 times) in the New Testament? What is the good news of evangelism? It is the glorious, life-changing

The ministry of evangelists has been a source of great blessing to our fellowship over the years, and there are many among us who could tell of life-changing encounters with Christ as a result.

message that the Creator God loved us so much He sent His only Son to be our Savior. It is the holy history of Jesus Christ—His birth, His suffering, death, and burial, His resurrection and ascension—to be received by faith.

Yes, we need to be warned of the danger of hearts captured by the world, and to remember Lot’s wife. But above all else, our greatest need is to remember Jesus Christ, and to hear the good news of salvation in Him again and again. Rest in Him! Rejoice in Him! Point others to Him!

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

Periodicals

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

association retreat center

THE COMMAND TO GO

BY PASTOR DAVID JOHNSON

Years ago, just after my second year of Bible school, several of us decided to attend a Keith Green concert at a large arena in Seattle. We got there early, but found a line already wrapped around the block. We barely got in.

As the concert progressed, we were all struck with the non-show character of the performance. This was like being in church, but no church I had ever attended. The songs were pointed and convicting. Suddenly, Keith stopped and began challenging us to consider the lost souls dying around us. He asked, "Who is going to reach them?" Then he said, "It's so easy to write a check; so easy. But God can't cash out-of-state checks in heaven. He needs you." I never forgot those words.

Each year I'm blessed hearing the reports of lives changed at the Association Retreat Center. Hundreds of lives are transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit working through God's Word. Some come to Christ through various church retreats and youth group activities. Others are uniquely touched through local service events or community activities. I gladly do what I can to support the ARC financially or through service. But that can't be where my evangelism ends. God doesn't just want our checks, He wants us.

Luke chapter 9 ends as Jesus is challenging His followers to count the cost of their commitment. One person boldly proclaims, "I will follow You wherever You go." To which Jesus answers, "... the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His

head ... No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (57-62). Oh how easy it is to speak words of dedication, but how different to back those words up with action.

On the heels of this convicting lesson Jesus sends out 70 followers on their first short-term mission trip (Luke 10). He begins by saying, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore beseech the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into His harvest" (2). And amongst Jesus' instructions He states, "... say to them, 'The kingdom of God has come near to you'... The one who listens to you listens to Me, and the one who rejects you rejects Me; and he who rejects Me rejects the One who sent Me" (9, 16).

The disciples were God's Kingdom bearers to society. On

return, the 70 shared testimony after testimony of the miraculous goodness of God working on their behalf. "The seventy returned with joy, saying, 'Lord, even the demons are subject to us in Your name'" (17).

We love to hear testimonies of God working through a ministry or individual. I love those ARC reports. But we can't live out our call to evangelism through the ministries of others.

There are lost people in our world who won't be reached by cutting a check; they need you. God wants to give you a testimony of your own as He works to transform lives through you. You are God's Kingdom bearer to your community.

Johnson serves Disciple Lutheran Fellowship, Reading, Pa., and Living Faith Lutheran, Boyertown, Pa.