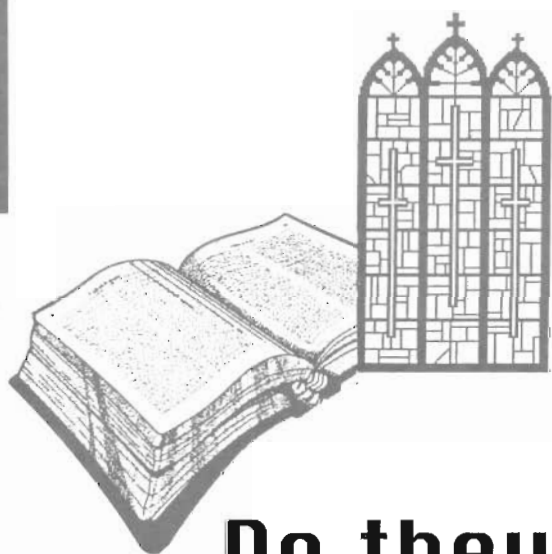




# The Lutheran **AMBASSADOR**

April 9, 1996



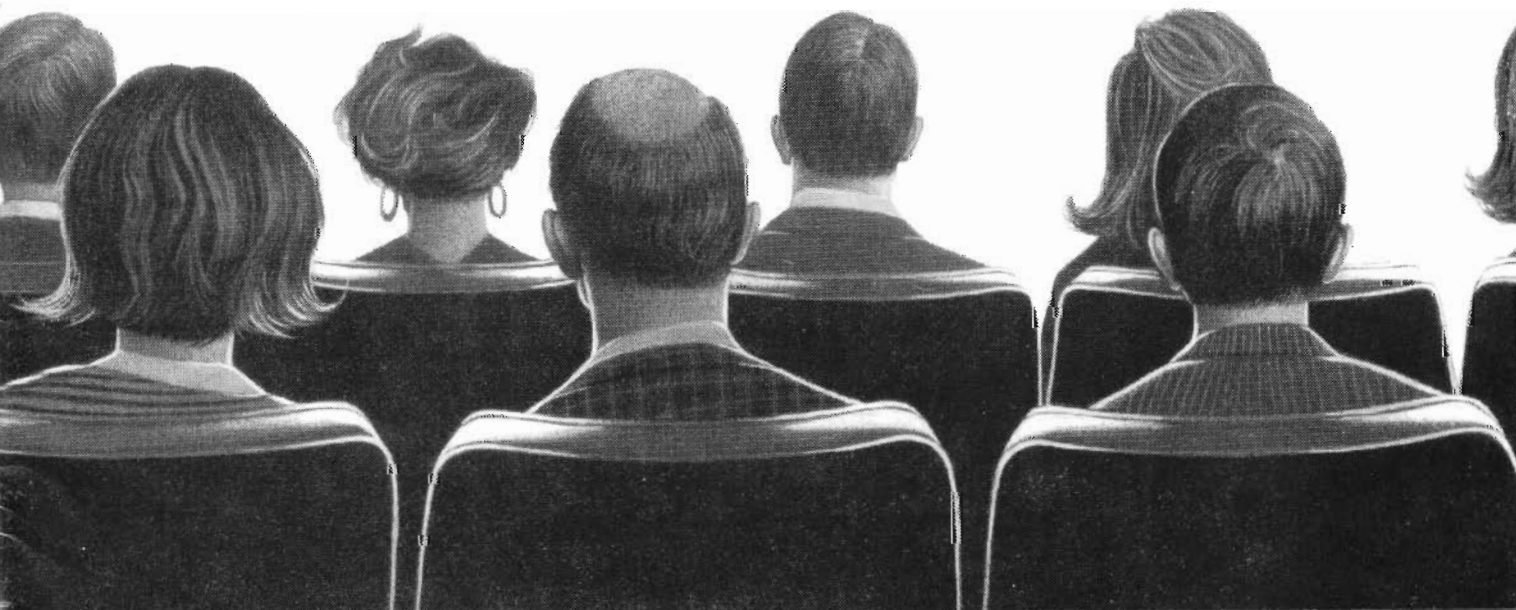
**Faith and  
godliness**



**Fun and  
games**



**Do they go together?**



# THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

February 27, 1996  
Volume 34, Number 5



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## AN ENCOURAGING WORD

### Jesus, the bread of life

*Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life, he who comes to Me shall not hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst."*

— John 6:35

Just the day before Jesus spoke these precious words He had miraculously fed five thousand people. Those who had been the recipients of this feeding sought Him out the next day and then heard His claim to be the "Bread of Life." In presenting this truth to the multitudes Jesus was concerned with two things.

Jesus knew their desperate need. Jesus knew their hearts were set on earthly things. They sincerely believed, as many do today, that the things of this earth can satisfy the deepest needs of life. Jesus sensed the urgency to tell them they were wrong!

Jesus knew He was the only one who could satisfy the innermost longings of their heart. Only He could give lasting satisfaction to the "hunger and thirst" that kept gnawing at their souls.

How we need to listen to this vital claim of the Savior today! The persistent message of the world to us is that it has all the answers to our needs. The world tells us that if we will but "feed" on that which it has to offer we will never hunger or thirst. Unfortunately many buy into this deception only to experience perpetual emptiness in their hearts and lives. They indulge in the things of the world only to come up empty!

Such was the case with Asaph in Psalm 73. He tells us that he became envious of the unbelievers because of their

seemingly "trouble free" and "prosperous" life (vv. 3-7). Asaph was tempted to go the way of the world but then he came into the house of God where he testifies "I perceived their end" (v. 17). God had evidently spoken to Asaph about the deception of the offers of the world and reminded him that only He could satisfy the longings of our hearts. Then Asaph could say in all faith: "Whom have I in heaven but Thee, and besides Thee, I desire nothing on earth. My flesh and my heart may fail; but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever" (vv. 25,26).

Jesus sees many like the multitudes as He looks into hearts and lives today; perhaps you, dear reader, are one of them. Maybe like Asaph you have begun to buy into the deception of the world as it claims to have what you need. Renounce that lie and hear Jesus' words! He bids you to come to Him. Leave behind that which does not satisfy and believe in Him. Throw away confidence in earthly things. He promises that if we do this we will never, ever hunger or thirst again! The deepest longings of our hearts will be met by Him.

May we confess with the writer of Psalm 63:1, "O God, Thou art my God; I shall seek Thee earnestly; My soul thirsts for Thee ... in a dry and weary land where there is no water."

— Rev. Les Johnson  
Faith Lutheran  
Lake Alma, Saskatchewan

# Sowing to harvest God's blessing

To be honest, at times it seems it would be much easier to just plop the kids in front of the television or video game so that we could then enjoy a time of peace and quiet to sip on a cup of coffee and indulge in a favorite book or magazine. We, as parents, know how busy a household can be and the temptation to take the easy way out.

Nancy and I decided we wanted to establish a home that honored God and His Word. When we were married this desire became our commitment. We knew some times would be more encouraging than others, but we claimed Psalm 37:5, "Commit your ways to the Lord, trust also in Him, and He will do it." God told the Israelites in Deuteronomy 31:9-13 to instruct their people about His ways that "their children who have not known, will hear and learn to fear the Lord your God." We can have families that will "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior."

God's Word teaches us to live holy lives — lives that are set apart for Him. As Christians, we all should want to be "lights set on a hill" so that others can see our testimony and be drawn to Jesus and not pushed away from Him. The Bible gives us a good guide to live lives that will glorify God and be a pleasing testimony (Philippians 4:8 and Colossians 3:1-4). We need wisdom and discipline to instill these principles in our families.

As parents we decide what types of entertainment we allow into our home. We have chosen not to make television and other electronic entertainment the central focus of our lives. Programming on television, videos and attending movie theaters, for the most part, are not conducive to Christian growth and close family involvement. Paul reminds us in I Corinthians 6:12 that Christians are free from laws that restrict behavior, but some activities are not beneficial.

Many Christian people have accepted the entertainment options available today without considering the consequences of the influence today's media has over our families. As Christian parents we need to encourage activities that build, promote, and

affirm the values we want to instill in our children.

Families have a tremendous opportunity to support and encourage each other to be more like Christ. Time spent reading together from the family library builds family unity. Developing hobbies encourages interaction while doing research, planning and sharing common goals. A special movie night allows a family to see a program that they choose and supports their values. Family walks, bicycle rides, playing ball, gardening and picnics give opportunities to see biblical values being lived. Social involvement with other like-minded Christian families strengthens the example of parents. Deuteronomy 6:4-9 talks of teaching our children to love God by continually training them. Every activity we participate in will influence our children; whether it be positive or negative.

Galatians 6:7 says, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, this he will also reap." It is clear in the Scriptures that what we put into our children now, we will see in their lives later. Purposing to live holy lives is not always the easiest, neither is it always the most socially acceptable lifestyle; yet it is the most rewarding for both now and eternity. Many joke about not being able to take our earthly things with us when we die. But, let us remember what we can take with us — our children. Let us consider wisely what we sow that we might reap God's blessing.



— Anders Macy  
Fertile, Minnesota

*The author and his wife Nancy (Woods) are 1981 and '82 graduates of AFLBS. They have four sons, ages two to eight. They attend Resurrection Free Lutheran in Beltrami, Minnesota.*

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**Christian stewardship is nothing less than a way of life. It is the understanding that everything we have, including our own lives, is a gift from God. It is a way of looking at the world — at everything that touches our lives — through the eyes of faith.**

— from Parish  
in the Emmaus Newsletter, 3/96  
Bloomington, Minnesota

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# The biblical basis

Christians are beginning to wake up to the fact that we have allowed ourselves and our children to be beguiled by the world. The entertainment industry has been a major factor in a gradual decline in our spiritual and moral standards. We have been so de-sensitized that we voluntarily watch performances, look at pictures, and read or listen to language that we would not have tolerated just a few years ago. Worse, we expose our children to these ungodly influences. It is high time to do something about it!

I have found no Scripture that condemns all entertainment per se; but there are plenty of scriptural principles which can guide the believer in the selection of entertainment for himself and his family.

There is a fine line of distinction between "entertainment" and "recreation." For example, sitting in the stands and watching a baseball game would constitute entertainment, while joining a team and participating in playing the game comes under the heading of recreation. This article will deal primarily with the former.

It might be difficult today for Christians to agree on a firm list of rules to govern the whole spectrum of entertainment. When I was a youngster there were a few: "Christians don't go to movies," for one. Then along came Walt Disney and attitudes began to change; and today most Christian families "go to the movies" quite regularly. Oh sure, some still eschew

attendance at motion-picture theaters; they prefer to watch at home via television or video tape, as if these devices were some sort of electronic sin-filter.

The vast majority of those movies that my generation would not go to see were mighty tame compared to today's smorgasbord of Hollywood filth. The typical motion picture contained no nudity, no profanity, no blasphemy, no characterization of preachers as judgmental kooks — evil was punished, and good prevailed. Still pastors and Christian parents taught that it was wrong to expose oneself to the "worldly influence" of these films and to "support the ungodly Hollywood crowd" with our admission money.



## What can you do?

1. Recognize the seriousness of the problem.
2. Yield this facet of your life completely to the Lord's direction.
3. Develop a set of biblical standards by which to determine what entertainment you and your family will enjoy in the future.
4. Analyze critically the entertainment you are now involved in, and make changes in light of these standards.

NBC sitcom "Friends," is produced by declared homosexual David Crane and has featured the wedding of the program's lesbian couple. Deborah Joy Levine, a lesbian sitcom producer, told the press recently, "I think that as a producer, the more you take the responsibility to show these (gay) walks of life, the more people will become used to them."

— from *Family Issues Alert*  
*Focus on the Family*

# for entertainment

Christ-likeness is the ultimate goal for the Christian. With this in mind, ask yourself some questions. Would Jesus have a problem with attendance at an entertainment function that you currently enjoy? What are your priorities? Can you “walk away” from a sporting event in favor of a church activity or some quality time with your family — or have you become addicted?

Please understand that I am not advocating a monastic existence devoid of any entertainment whatsoever; but I think we need to ask ourselves at what point the objectionable elements in secular entertainment become intolerable elements — both for personal consumption and for our children. That is a question worthy of some contemplation and prayer.

Ephesians 6:4 is addressed to fathers, by the way. Fathers need to take the lead if the entertainment habits of their families need changing. Whether you do it gradually, with a “replacement therapy” approach or whether by “radical surgery” is up to you. If your children are old enough to participate in a discussion of the problem, you could start by addressing the subject in a series of family devotions. Their input may be an eye-opener.

The time to do something is now!

This article has not been exhaustive; and I concede the point that we are in a rather controversial and somewhat subjective area; but as you ponder your attitudes and practices with regard to entertainment, I submit a list of nine questions with Scripture references which may help you with developing a set of biblical standards by which to determine what entertainment you and your family will enjoy in the future.

## **1. Is it wicked?**

Psalms 101:3 — “I will set no wicked thing before my eyes. I hate the work of them that turn aside; it shall not cleave to me.”

## **2. Is it worldly?**

Romans 12:2 — “And be not conformed

to this world; but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

I John 2:15-16 — “Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.”

## **3. Is it expedient (a good idea, wise)?**

I Corinthians 6:12a — “All things are lawful unto me, but all things are not expedient.”

## **4. Does it edify (is it constructive, instructive)?**

I Corinthians 10:23b — “All things are lawful for me but all things edify not.”

## **5. Is it wholesome?**

Philippians 4:8 — “Finally brethren, whatsoever things are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things.”

## **6. Is it addictive?**

I Corinthians 6:12b — “All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the power of any.”

## **7. Could it become more important to me than the Lord?**

II Timothy 3:4b — “Lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God.”

## **8. Will it damage my testimony — diminish my Christian influence?**

I Timothy 4:12b — “Be thou an example of the believers, in word, in conversation (life-style), in charity, in spirit, in faith, in purity.”

## **9. Am I supporting an evil industry (the “God speed” principle)?**

II John 11 — “For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.”

As you meditate on these seed thoughts you will no doubt think of other questions and applicable verses. May God guide you in your decisions.



— Elmer Rumminger  
Greenville, South Carolina  
condensed with permission from  
Today's Christian Preacher

# The games we play — the lessons we learn

*I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in the truth.* III John 4

*But seek first His kingdom, His righteousness, and all these things will be added to you as well.* Matthew 6:33

*Love the Lord thy God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength.* Deuteronomy 6:5

The first job of a Christian coach at a Christian high school is to attempt to lead each player to a saving knowledge of Christ and to live out that Christian example to help the athlete become a strong disciple and see the purpose of his life as serving the Lord.

It is a great opportunity and privilege to play high school athletics, but an awesome responsibility to be an ambassador for Christ on the basketball court while wearing a uniform with only the word "Christian" and a number appearing on the jersey. We pray as a team every day that we would live a life worthy of the Lord and may please Him in every way — the words of our mouth, the intensity, sportsmanship, reactions to referees and opponents, the encouragement we give to one another and even the meditations (thoughts) of our hearts, that it may be acceptable in the sight of the Lord.

Even in the basketball game, the Lord wants the preeminence. What young athletes typically observe on television is trash-talking, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, crude

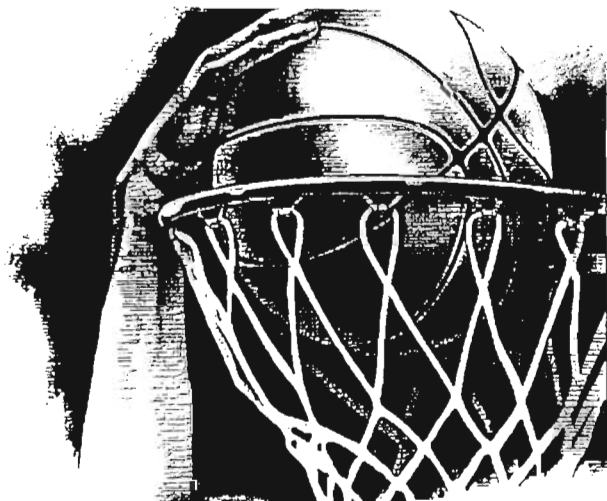
language, dissension, and intimidation. We call upon our athletes to exhibit the fruit of the Spirit. We understand that for the Christian, humility and fear of the Lord leads to riches, honor and life (Proverbs 22:4). To strengthen those whose hearts are fully committed to Him, the Lord's eyes move to and fro across the whole earth seeking to show Himself strong on our behalf (II Chronicles 16:9). When we seek the Lord continually He is able to exhibit the fruit of the Spirit through our lives on and off the court.

Vince Lombardi once said, "The quality of a man's life is in direct proportion to his commitment to excellence, regardless of his chosen field of endeavor." Psalm 37:4-5 promises, "Delight yourself in the Lord; trust in Him and He will give you the desires of your heart. Commit your way unto the Lord; trust in Him and He will do this." For our youth, we desire to so encourage, motivate, inspire dreams, guide, and establish plans for the accomplishment of goals while by our own lives clearly showing them that it is the Lord who gives the increase.

Whether a coach or a parent, our lives must demonstrate a passion for the Lord **first**, but also a passion for what we do — a burning desire to be excellent for the cause of Christ. Hebrews 11:6 says in part, "God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." I Samuel 2:30 promises, "Those who honor Me, I will honor." Do we really believe that "The Lord delights in the way of the man whose steps He has made firm" (Psalm 37:23)?

Can there be any greater lasting treasure to teach our young people than what is found in Joshua 1:8? "Don't let this Book of the Law depart from your mouth; meditate on it day and night, so that you may be careful to do everything written in it. Then you will be prosperous and successful." Commit your life to the Lord, to His Word and to excellence. Fly only where eagles fly.

I found this poem about twenty years ago and it expresses my heartfelt desire for every athlete I've coached.





# My son

by Skip Stogsdill

You're only two, my son  
Yet already you're a competitor.  
You love to throw balls of all shapes  
and sizes

run pell-mell toward a goal  
take on your older sister  
scramble to be first in line ...

I admire your zest  
but I am afraid for you.

What will sports offer you in another  
decade?

Some stars seem avaricious,  
egotistic.

Some games seem computerized,  
dehumanized.

Some fanatics seem bent on burning  
out a boy,  
before he even reaches puberty.

Son, what if you're not first or strong  
enough

to become a starter  
or even make the team?

Can you still enjoy sport for the sheer  
fun of it?

Maybe you're injured.  
Will there still be a place for you?  
Will those whom you trusted still care?  
Suppose you make All-Conference or  
All-State.

Can you handle the clippings?  
the recruiters?

Son, how can I help you develop your  
skills prudently?

To know the satisfaction of a touch-  
down scored,  
winning basket,  
tape broken first,  
bases-loaded hit?

And yet learn vital values,  
Like choosing worthy friends,  
refusing drugs and liquor,  
guarding against mind pollution,  
controlling your sexuality,  
putting others first?

I don't know all the answers, son.  
I can't prescribe your athletic future.  
But for now we can play together,

dream together,  
pray together,  
*discuss life together ...*

Until that time when you must  
Make that awesome decision whether  
or not



To be God's man in every sense of the  
word

like Jesus.

Be like Him, son.

The struggle is great — but so are the  
rewards.

And the world needs you.

Needs your sturdiness,  
tenderness,  
exuberance,  
honesty,  
love.

Go with God my son.

And may your athletic experiences  
help you be

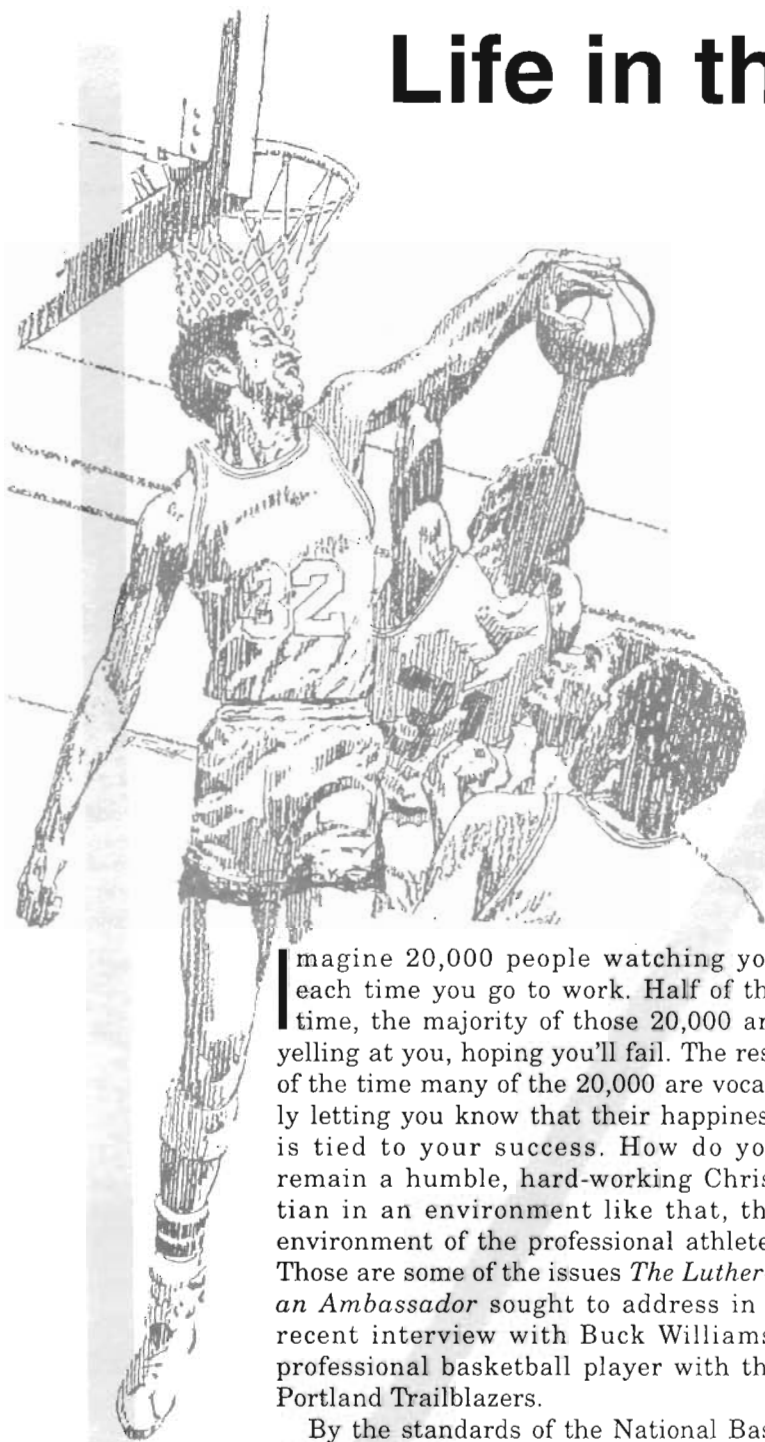
All He wants you to be.



— *Developing Champions for Christ,*  
Don Davidson

*The author has coached high school boys basketball for the past 29 years; 10 at Yorkville, Illinois and the last 19 years at Aurora Christian High School in Aurora, Illinois. His teams have won nearly 70% of the over 750 games he has coached. His 1990 and 1995 teams finished 4th and 2nd respectively in Class A (nearly 500 high schools) boys basketball in Illinois. He and his wife, Steph, have three children and are active at Helmar Lutheran Church in rural Newark, Illinois.*

# Life in the limelight



## Meet Buck Williams of the Portland Trailblazers

Imagine 20,000 people watching you each time you go to work. Half of the time, the majority of those 20,000 are yelling at you, hoping you'll fail. The rest of the time many of the 20,000 are vocally letting you know that their happiness is tied to your success. How do you remain a humble, hard-working Christian in an environment like that, the environment of the professional athlete? Those are some of the issues *The Lutheran Ambassador* sought to address in a recent interview with Buck Williams, professional basketball player with the Portland Trailblazers.

By the standards of the National Basketball Association Buck Williams is a veteran, an elder statesman at the age of 36. He is in his 15th year of playing basketball at the world's highest level. Yet he is described as coming to the games and practice times with "the same workman-like approach he always has." In his previous 14 seasons he has missed only 26 of the 1,148 games his team has played. That consistency and dedication stems from Buck's relationship with Jesus Christ and his desire to live in a manner

that would go along with his testimony.

Walking the walk that fits the talk is not easy when your profession is to play a game that can often get emotional and intense and be very competitive and then do it all in front of thousands of people. "It is very difficult because everyone is watching how I handle myself on the court," says Buck. "I have to restrain myself. I watched A.C. Green (another N.B.A. player known for his Christian testimony) when J.R. Ried knocked his teeth out (during a recent game). He just picked them up off the floor and went about his business. ... It can be a difficult row to hoe."

Young people in particular often look to professional athletes as heroes and examples. Some athletes attempt to avoid being viewed as a role model and the responsibilities that come with that. Buck, on the other hand, says, "I think every player has an obligation to the community and to society in general. We did not have to be in the limelight, we chose it. We have a responsibility to give something back and to be a good example."

Many challenges to a person's Christian faith comes on those in professional sports as on all people. Buck spoke of the need to have a firm commitment to what you believe and strong roots. "You can't allow people and situations to change what you believe." He has maintained his belief in Christ despite the many hurdles he has faced on every turn. "I've been strongly rooted in the Christian faith and able to face many obstacles. ... You have to be really committed and take a stand for what you believe in."

When asked how people could pray for professional athletes, Buck talked about how the public gets very focused on how much money the athletes make and fails to look at their other needs, particularly spiritual. The material wealth is not enough. The stars on the court, like the fans in the stands, are in great need of the peace that comes from knowing Christ. That more athletes would find that, "that's what I would like people to pray for," says Buck.



— by Rev. Craig Johnson



# What's Next?

## FLY LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE

July 15 - 19 at AFLBS

### THEME:

"Whatever It Takes"

1 Corinthians 9:22,23

### WORKSHOPS/BIBLE STUDY

#### How to Share Your Faith

*Rev. Kevin Olson*

#### How to Lead Someone to Christ

*Rev. Jerry Moan*

#### How to Put on a Big

#### Event Outreach

*Mr. Bob Halvorson*

#### The Assurance of Salvation

#### The Return of Christ as Motivation

#### for Sharing One's Faith

*Rev. Dennis Gray,*

Morning Bible Study leader

#### Development of the Inner Life

*Rev. Jim Ritter*

Evening Service speaker

Registration: Call 612-545-5631

Before May 1 - \$175

After May 1 - \$200

Send registration to:

3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.

Minneapolis, MN 55441

## Summer Camps

Galilee Bible Camp, Lake  
Bronson, MN June 4-8

North Central MN District,  
Bethany Bible Camp, Jr. Camp  
June 26-30, Sr. Camp June 30-  
July 3

Eastern North Dakota District,  
Bethany Bible Camp July 21-26

Faith Haven Bible Camp, Bat-  
tle Lake, MN Aug. 11-15

Camp Chera, Williston, ND  
July 21-25

Pickrel Lake Bible Camp, SD  
July 22-26

Lake Geneva Bible Camp,

# Youth Notes

## Is our group too small?

"I don't want to go, there isn't anyone else my age at our youth group."

"Our group is too small, if we were as big as that other group we would have more fun."

Have you heard those words before? I have, and I have probably said them as well. But maybe there is more to a youth group than just size.

At the national youth leaders' meeting in Atlanta, Georgia, one speaker talked about the problems he was having with his group. It was a size problem, they were too big. They had lost the closeness they once had felt as a group. Their group discussions were too large, everyone was afraid to say anything. If someone was missing no one even seemed to notice. What could they do to get that small group intimacy that they once had?

Bob Halvorson said, "The small youth groups are always trying to get bigger, and the big youth groups are trying to get

smaller." I remember when our youth group had about five active members, we could go anywhere and do anything at a moment's notice. Since we knew the problems that each person was dealing with we supported and prayed for each other.

Maybe there are some advantages to being small that you hadn't thought about lately:

—You can meet anywhere! Homes are a great place for intimacy.

—You can really get to know each group member — below the surface stuff, the real you.

—Transportation usually isn't a problem. A couple of drivers and you're gone.

—You can get to know your youth leaders and talk to them about personal issues in your life.

Write us and tell us why your group is great! 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55441

—by Pastor Kevin Olson  
AFLC Youth Ministries director

## Annual conference youth plans

Mom, what can I do while you are in meetings ALL day?

This year the annual conference will include speakers in the morning and activities each afternoon for those in Junior and Senior High! Conference isn't just for adults anymore!

Geneva, WI July 28 - Aug 1

Family Camp, Oklahoma City,  
OK July 29-Aug. 2

Family Camp at Orcas Island,  
San Juan Islands, WA Aug. 5-10

Minneapolis District Youth  
Camp, ARC, Osceola, WI June 23-  
29

## Prayer requests

❶ For the Leadership Conference and the Summer Bible camps. That the Lord would be building a mighty army of youth for such a time as this.

❷ For the youth ministry of the AFLC as a whole and for Kevin Olson as director.

❸ For the pastors in the small congregations as they encourage their youth groups.

❹ For the youth groups who feel small. That they could grow in the love of Jesus for one another and gain a vision for what God could do in their group.

## WORLD MISSIONS



Pictured are the gospel workers attending a pastors' meeting in Guntur. Seated back row (L. to R.): Pastor Sadhu Mattaiah (Matthew), Pastor Yesupadam Bandela, Dr. Anand Kumar, Pastor Luke Tumati and Pastor Krupanandam Bezzam. The BFLC workers meet monthly for a time of Bible study and training classes. This is also a time of evangelistic thrust into the village or community where the meeting is being held. At many of these locations Dr. Anand Kumar will conduct a free health clinic and provide free medicines. Bible workers share the gospel with all who come to the clinic while others witness throughout the community and invite people to attend the evening public service.



A new church was dedicated recently in the village of Anandapet. Pictured is the fellowship dinner, India style, following the service. The menu includes various curries, rice, water and a sweet treat.

That they  
might  
  
know Him

**Aguascalientes, Mexico** — In mid-March missionaries Todd and Barb Schierkolk and family arrived for their first assignment in Aguascalientes. Three men from Faith Lutheran in El Campo, Texas, assisted in the move. They returned to their congregation sharing the thrill of seeing difficulties and opposition overcome. Pray for the Schierkolk's as they begin their ministry. They were given a visa for only two months and will have to return to the border to re-apply.

**Campo Mourao, Brazil** — Mr. John Elkins, an electrician and member of Our Saviour's Lutheran in Dickinson, North Dakota, arrived at the end of February and donated three weeks of labor to rewire the campus at Campo Mourao. New cables were placed underground and the buildings were rewired at a cost of \$3,200 for supplies. The need for a \$1,900 larger transformer is urgent. The original budgeted amount set aside for the electrical project was \$1,000. If you would like to help, contact AFLC World Missions, 3110 Ear Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55441.



This new church was dedicated and opened on Christmas Day, 1995, in the village of Vigilipet. Mr. Benerji Raju, President of BFLC and Mr. D. Satyanandam, BFLC Secretary are at the top of the steps.

## Students share of God's call to missions

**M**issions week at AFLBS last February was a blessing beyond description to many people. Students, faculty, and the general public were nightly challenged with God's Word. The theme verse for the week was II Kings 7:9 where God provided divine deliverance of Samaria from the siege of the Arameans, but the lepers outside the city gates had not told those within the city walls. They were convicted that they were not doing right, since they were not spreading the news of the gift of deliverance to those in need.

The Holy Spirit moved several students to consider full-time ministry for the first time, and several others, including myself, were convicted of incomplete surrender in their lives. After several years of pursuing other interests, I find myself growing at Bible School, and wrestling with God's call to full-time ministry.

The Holy Spirit convicted me of several things that week. The messages shared challenged me to evaluate the depth of my love for the lost. If I truly loved them as Christ commands us I would readily share this joyous message. On the final night of the week, Pastor Todd Schierkolk put our role as disciples in the perspective of the original twelve. In His High Priestly prayer (John 17), Jesus prays for His disciples. He asks the Lord to provide for them, watch over them, then finally petitions the Father, "As Thou didst send Me into the world, I also have sent them into the world." The meaning of this verse was clear to me for the first time. While Christ was certainly a great evangelist, crossing the barrier from divinity to humanity to proclaim the truth, He was first and foremost sent to die on the

(continued on next page)

## HOME MISSIONS



Monroe, Washington — February 4, 1996 was a special day for Edna Best, age 88. After another recent baptism in the congregation, Edna started wondering about her own baptism. She discovered that she had never been baptized. So in obedience to God's Word she was baptized at Monroe Free Lutheran. Her family and friends were thankful to share this special day with her. Pictured are Edna (center) with her pastor, Rev. Earl Korhonen, and her three daughters.

**Melbourne, Florida** — Abiding Word Lutheran enjoyed a unique mission evening on March 10, 1996. AFLC missionaries to Brazil, Paul and Becky Abel and Jonathan and Tamba Abel together with their parents, Rev. John and Ruby Abel presented a mission service. Retired missionary, John Abel serves the congregation in the winter months with the congregation's pastor, Rev. David Barnhart. The young mission congregation has added several new members in recent months. When in the central Florida area, please visit the congregation and be a tremendous encouragement. The phone number is 407-253-9387.

**Cambridge, Minnesota** — Redeemer Free Lutheran is praying for a new meeting place to either rent or purchase. They have been recently encouraged in seeing new youth regularly attend the youth activities. The young congregation is served by Rev. Jim Haga.

**Tucson, Arizona** — Two new families joined Body of Christ Lutheran on Sunday, March 10. The congregation is searching for suitable property on Tucson's east side. Recently a digital hymnal

has been used to supplement the pianist. A recent project was sending out 14,000 flyers inviting the community to their Good Friday service. Rev. Frank Cherney serves the congregation along with Living Faith Lutheran on the southwest side of Tucson.

An Arizona Bible Seminar was held Sunday, February 18, with Living Faith Lutheran and Triumph Lutheran in Nogales. Nogales is about an hour away and the congregations are enjoying opportunities to fellowship together.

**Bismarck, North Dakota** — Calvary Free Lutheran is being served on an interim basis by Dr. Rudy Skogerboe, Grand Forks, North Dakota.

**Wichita Falls, Texas** — Christ Lutheran is calling a pastor. Pray for them as they seek God's will. They were previously served by Rev. Paul Nash, now the AFLC Home Mission Director.

**New York** — On March 16-17, Rev. Paul Nash and AFLC President Robert Lee visited the AFLC's two New York congregations: the new work in Glen Falls served by Rev. Daniel Uzupan and Unity Lutheran in Massapequa, currently without a pastor.

## MISSIONS

cruel cross for the sins of all humanity. This was His true objective, and He fulfilled it without reservation.

Christ paid the ultimate price for the lost. Now He asks the Father to enable us to do the same. As I thought about the dramatic impact of this realization, I recognized that I have operated in my comfort zone as a Christian. It is only when we get out of our comfort zones and reach out to the lost that they will be saved. They must hear the Word of God to be saved. Are we willing to pay the ultimate price to reach the lost? Are we willing to pay any price to reach the lost?

— Wade Mobley  
AFLBS

Lake Preston, South Dakota

This last missions conference was the fourth one that I have been a part of and, by far, had the greatest impact on me personally.

I was encouraged with the offerings received over the four days. The planning committee set a goal of three thousand dollars, doubling the goals of previous years. The final night I was thrilled as I helped count the offering and saw the total rise from \$1200 to over \$3000. What a joy to see God's people giving to help reach the lost for Him.

It was a blessing to see the excitement God has given the Schierkolks to minister to the people of Mexico. Their desire to share the good news of Jesus is obvious and infectious.

As I listened to Dr. Monseth

share of the openness to the gospel in Eastern Europe and the Bible School students share their experiences of growing up on the mission field, I was impressed with the fact that the fields are ripe for harvest.

Maybe the main reason this conference impacted me so greatly was that I listened to God a little closer this time. You see, the past few years my wife and I have been considering God's leading us toward a foreign mission field. Lord willing, my family and I will spend five or six months in Brazil as a part of our internship. May we ask you for your prayers as we consider where the mission field is that God has for us.

— Marshall Nessa  
Seminarian  
Garden City, Iowa

### Please update us about you!

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Year(s) graduated or attended \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse \_\_\_\_\_  
Year(s) graduated or attended \_\_\_\_\_

#### ADDRESS

Street \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Church \_\_\_\_\_  
Pastor \_\_\_\_\_

(Optional)

Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Your birthday \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse's birthday \_\_\_\_\_  
Children — names and birthdays \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

We need your input! Send us ideas for the alumni or Bible School.

Please mail this alumni update form to:

AFLBS Alumni  
3120 East Medicine Lake Blvd.  
Minneapolis, MN 55441

## ALUMNI NEWS

Alumni Tournaments

April 19-20, 1996

West Fargo High School gyms  
West Fargo, North Dakota

### Schedule

Friday — 6-9 p.m.

Men's basketball

Saturday — 9 a.m.-6 p.m.

Men's and Women's basketball

All games will be at West Fargo High School, 801 9th St. East.

Registration for the games and the weekend will be accepted upon arrival at the gym.

Saturday evening 6 p.m.

Supper — Singing — Sharing  
at St. Paul's Lutheran, at  
1603 N. 5th St., Fargo

Welcome to the first of a regular new feature of *The Lutheran Ambassador*. We hope you will enjoy the "Alumni News" and find it informational and helpful.

— Greg Schmitke  
President

AFLBS Alumni Association

Hotels located near the West Acres Mall (I-29 just north of the I-94 interchange):

Holiday Inn, Super 8, Fairfield Inn, Days Inn, Best Western, Comfort Inn.

Meals are on your own except for the Saturday evening meal at the church.

All AFLBS alumni  
are welcome!

Join us for this  
weekend of fun and  
fellowship.

Bring your family.

# Teaching Scripture to children

The teaching of Scripture and morals like honesty, obedience and diligence were a high priority for the Pilgrims and early settlers in America. Perhaps we need to examine closely our priorities for our children today.

*That your sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; That our daughters may be as pillars, sculptured in palace style ... Happy are the people whose God is the Lord*

(Psalm 144:12,15).

I am inspired by that image of youth as sturdy, fruitful plants and towers of strength who are being nurtured and molded under God's guidance. Considered with Proverbs 1:2-7, it implies that even youth may live godly lives that reveal wisdom, knowledge of right and wrong, and common sense.

Psalm 144 was a guide my husband and I chose in raising our children. We realized that God's Word must be lived as well as taught (II Timothy 3:17). I know the values my parents tried to teach me had no impact because they were separated from God and His Word.

Before our children were born, my husband and I prayed for wisdom to lead them to a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. When they were infants, they accepted our words like sponges absorbing water, and we sang spiritual songs and hymns to them and whispered prayers in their ears (Proverbs 4:3-4).

Because God's Word is central to our lives, we never put our Bibles away. Little eyes observed that this Book was special among all others.

One of the first truths we want-

ed our children to know is from Genesis 1:1 — that God is the Creator who gives us the wonders of nature and controls its forces. We frequently gave God the glory for the beauty we saw and called on Him when weather threatened. One morning I carried our son to a picture window to show him the snow banks that wrapped around our house. I did not say a word. He put his tiny hand on the window and said, "Jesus, what did you do now?" Several years later he watched me desperately trying to finish planting my garden as thunder clouds rolled in. Sensing my urgency, he stood at the edge of the garden with folded hands and shouted, "You plant, Mom, I'll pray!"

Our children's first books were illustrated Bibles and Bible storybooks. Before they were patient to listen to an entire story, we looked at pictures and talked about them. For example, while looking at a picture of Mark 10:14 where the children came to Jesus, we explained that Jesus wants to be best friends to big and little people. My husband acted out that story once. That story became a favorite request for months afterward. The story of Jonah is fun to act out, too.

Planning time to read Scripture as a family before bedtime has always been important. As the children grew, this became a time to discuss the application of verses such as Romans 12:17-18. God gave us His Word to help us teach children. Even a very young child can say, "Don't do evil for evil, but make peace." Those verses have ended and prevented a number of sibling squabbles in our home. The story of the prodigal son helped us teach our children the wisdom of admitting a

wrong (sin), asking for forgiveness, and about the comfort that comes from getting a hug from the one who was offended (God). When parents actually use the words as well as the actions of Scripture, they connect God's Word with real life for children.

Teaching Scripture to children is an ongoing process. We try to immerse them in it as they grow and mature so that it becomes their source of joy and salvation, an encouragement in trouble, and instruction for righteousness. I take comfort in knowing that even when our children make mistakes, the seed of the Word is there for them. The greatest motivation we as parents have for teaching our children Scripture is this from Luke 2:52:

*Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.*

— Shelley Overgaard  
Dalton Free Lutheran Parish  
Dalton, Minnesota

## In Memoriam

**Alice Johnson**, 77, Eugene, Oregon, passed away on March 3, 1996. She was a longtime member of Bethany Lutheran in Astoria, Oregon and in recent years attended Spencer Creek Lutheran in Eugene. She is survived by two sons: Lee Johnson of Seattle, Washington and Rev. Craig Johnson of Eugene.

## Looking for a ride to conference?

The Partner's in Mission bus will be going to Warm Beach, Washington, IF there is enough interest. The cost is \$200. Call Al Brazier at (218) 782-2456.



## PEOPLE AND PLACES

**Bloomington, Minnesota** — Emmaus Lutheran will be the facility for a new kindergarten of King's Christian Academy beginning next fall. King's Academy is a 40-year-old interdenominational school serving the south Minneapolis area.

**Northome, Minnesota** — Seventeen youth from Hope and Bethesda Lutheran participated in the District Youth Retreat in February at Bemidji, Minnesota. The guest speaker was Rev. Tim Carlson, Wheatland, Iowa.

**Rev. James Molstre**, now serving Ruthfred Lutheran in Bethel Park, Pennsylvania, is living at 2332 Weston Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15241. The phone number is (H) 412-851-9080 and (O) 412-835-7140.

**Rev. John Strand**, Remer, Minnesota, has been hospitalized in Phoenix, Arizona. Pastor Strand served as president of the AFLC from 1962-78.

**Rev. Jonathan Unverzagt**, Stanhope, Iowa, has resigned as pastor of St. Paul's Lutheran in Jewell where he has served since 1992 and has accepted the call to serve Grace Lutheran in DeKalb, Illinois. He began his new ministry on April 1, 1996.

**Ferndale, Washington** — Triumph Lutheran began their Lenten Wednesday evenings with a soup and sandwich supper sponsored by various organizations in the congregation. This was the first year the congregation hosted this and the average attendance at the service following doubled from previous years.

**Rev. Walt Beaman**, formerly of Argyle, Minnesota, is now living at P.O. Box 82, Fisher, MN 56723. His phone number is 218-891-2434.

**Rev. David Abel**, North Royalton, Ohio, was recently installed as the new pastor of Abiding Savior Lutheran. The address for the Abels is: 9412 Bassett Lane, North Royalton, OH 44133. The phone number is (H) 216-582-1631 and (O) 216-237-6454.

**Arlington, Washington** — Rev. Richard Long of Atonement Free Lutheran traveled to Riga, Latvia on a teaching mission March 22-24.

**For sale** — 40 Concordia hymnals at \$5 each — good to excellent condition. Will give away additional hymnals of poorer quality. Contact Pastor Larry Severson at 218-463-1704.

### MEMORIAL GIFTS

February 1996

Name	Given by	Department
Melvin Barnaal	Edith Barnaal	AFLTS
Irene Rieschl	M/M Roy Finstad	Home Missions
Howard Karban	Mavis Tenneboe	World Missions
Ludvig Bjugstad	Orrin/Lorraine Nyhus	AFLBS
Helga Becherl	M/M Alfred Haugen	AFLBS
Leonard Swanson	May Swanson	Schools
Ingvald Wik	Albin/Alvina Dalager	Missions
Shirley Ptacek	Kenneth/Mary Nash	Home Missions
Earl Nelson	Mavis Tenneboe	Home Missions
	Rev. Robert/Gloria Lee	
	Friends	
	Gerald/Karen Swanson	
	Beatrice Anderson	
	Aini Myking	Schools
Ella Hordrum	Lillian Johnson	Home Missions
Carmen Lombardo	Aini Myking	Schools
Delores Grothe	Loiell/Mary Lynn Dyrud	AFLBS
	Kenneth/Harriet Rolf	
	Rev. Jerry/Rebecca Moan	Schools
	Rev. Lyndon/Linda Korhonen	
	Rev. Raynard Huglen	
Selma Harrington	Elma Thompson	AFLBS Norway Tour

#### Legacies

Nels Jodock Trust  
G. A. Kveen

### Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

#### AFLC Benevolences - January 1 - February 29, 1996

FUND	TOTAL Subsidy	REC'D IN FEBRUARY	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	% TOTAL
General Fund . . . . .	\$241,472.00	\$15,135.66	\$36,685.68	15
Seminary . . . . .	122,626.00	4,953.69	12,682.06	10
Bible School . . . . .	184,696.00	5,392.94	19,333.26	10
Home Missions. . . . .	253,270.00	13,629.15	32,245.13	13
World Missions. . . . .	341,257.00	24,558.03	80,509.11	24
Capital Investment . . .	24,639.00	402.33	1,406.47	6
Parish Education . . .	49,289.00	3,625.09	10,086.58	20
Church Extension . . .	15,018.00	320.41	945.52	6
<b>TOTALS . . . . .</b>	<b>\$1,232,267.00</b>	<b>\$68,217.30</b>	<b>\$193,894.81</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>TOTALS 1995 . . . . .</b>	<b>1,484,851.00</b>	<b>137,509.36</b>	<b>224,259.03</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Goal 17%</b>				

## Thankful for an Inheritance

**A**nother "earthly tent" has been folded up in our family, but I believe, by the grace of God, that "a building from God, an eternal house in heaven" has been received (II Corinthians 5:1, NIV). My mother's life on this earth recently came to a close. It is an appropriate time to give thought to what I have inherited.

Although the dollars are few, the inheritance I have been given is very rich. It will last much longer than any material possessions that are passed on. It is an inheritance of love and faithfulness, compassion and commitment, sacrifice and service, confidence and concern. "Surely I have a delightful inheritance" (Psalm 16:6, NIV).

I have been given an abundance of love. My mom loved her husband and kids sacrificially. She lived out Philippians 2:4: "Look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others." Her family's needs mattered more to her than her own.

That is the example of Christ and the cross. He was concerned with what was best for us, what we need, not what was most convenient for Him.

My heritage is one of love for the Lord and His Church. During her 77 years my mother changed church membership once — when she moved with her family from Luverne, Minnesota, to Astoria, Oregon. Even then she remained in the Lutheran Free Church, simply a different congregation. She did attend another AFLC congregation when she came to Eugene but she kept her membership in Astoria.

Unlike some people she did not change what congregation she belonged to as often as she changed sheets on the bed. It did not mean she always liked what went on in her congregation or church body. The Word of God, however, was still believed and preached so she remained.

She was fortunate that her parents attended a good church when she was born and that she did not move very much in her lifetime. Her consistency of church membership was also related, however, to the belief that displeasure over details should not lead to a hasty departure from the congregation.

When she disagreed with something she said so. At her funeral it was noted that "she said what she meant and she meant what she said ... you knew where you stood with her."

I remember one time in particular when Mom spoke up about how she didn't like a certain decoration in the church. Another lady in the group said, "I bought that decoration." Mom said, "I'm sorry but I still don't like it." Their opinions on the decoration were quite different but their friendship remained strong.

Opinions were held and expressed. Tolerance for different views on areas other than the fundamentals and respect for other people was maintained. What was seen as fundamental was determined by the Bible, not human reason or tradition. Relationships mattered more than always getting your way.

I have inherited a Bible that was well read and studied. It was respected as the Word of God. A copy of Carl Wisloff's *I Know In Whom I Believe* has also been passed down. I must humbly admit her copy of the book is more used than mine.

This is my legacy and also that of our church body. A strong part of our heritage is of lay people reading and studying the Scriptures for themselves. Theology and doctrine is not something for only the clergy to concern themselves with.

We are each passing something down to the next generation. I am so thankful for what has been passed down to me. May we leave a similar legacy for those who follow after us.

## Masking the Pain

**I**t appears from the Gospels that Jesus likes to go to parties and celebrations. His first recorded miracle is at a wedding banquet. He gets in trouble with the religious leaders of the day because He eats and drinks with tax collectors and "sinners." He describes His presence as being more of a time for feasting than fasting (Luke 5:34).

Our Savior celebrated because of the love and joy of the Lord. His relationship with His Father, His love for people, His plan of salvation, His defeat of the evil one; those are the things that caused Him to say, "Let's have a banquet."

The festivities Jesus engaged in were not an attempt to escape from a sinful, painful world and mask its reality. Sadly, that is what our entertainment and recreation often becomes.

When the show or the game is over, the pain is still there. It cannot be covered up with laughter or done away with by music. It can, though, be faced with courage because of the strength and love of Christ.

Let us be a people who truly celebrate; not in an attempt to escape reality but because we have seen the reality of what Jesus has done.

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## SOMETHING TO SHARE

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### Ministering to the aged

**T**he lyrics of a pop song a few years ago said, "Will you still need me? Will you still feed me, when I'm 64?" (Lennon/McCartney). Our "well-seasoned" citizens offer tremendous blessings to our congregations, but too often the young are sought after and the elderly ignored.

Senior citizens can offer the congregation years of wisdom and experience. "A gray head is a crown of glory; it is found in the way of righteousness" (Proverbs 16:31, NASB). They offer valuable experience in dealing with church issues. We are to respect the elders with their godly wisdom gained from years of reading God's Word and learning from life's lessons.

The Bible offers a lesson in the wisdom of the elderly when Rehoboam rejected the advice of the older counselors who said to serve Israel with kindness. Rather, King Rehoboam turned to the counsel of the young who wrongly advised him to treat the people harshly. Taking the wrong advice cost Rehoboam the United Kingdom (I Kings 12).

In our congregations, it is good to weigh the advice of the elderly.

They can often see the pitfalls to avoid and the paths to blessings. Though they are not always perfect in their counsel, yet we are to honor and listen to them.

Senior citizens offer congregations time. Most senior citizens are retirees and desire to spend time with friends, family and church. What a blessing it is when they teach a Sunday school class, fix a leaky faucet, take leadership roles on the council, or preach a sermon on a Sunday morning. Many have come to realize that the aged are the best prayer warriors. While their energy level may not be as high as the younger people, they are available.

The younger generation, on the other hand, can bring blessing to the aged. One of the most effective ways to minister to the aged is to offer a listening ear. Our older members have much to say and want to share their hearts with others. If they are true children of God, their testimonies will be a blessing. By listening to an aged non-believer, you demonstrate that you care for him or her. It can be the beginning of sharing Christ with that person.

Young people can offer a heart

of sensitivity. The aged often experience loss; a spouse, friend, home, strength, vision, hearing, etc. Visiting the elderly in their homes, encouraging them in Christ, and involving them in church ministries are some of the best ways to meet their needs. Their hearts continue to need the ministry of God's Word. Bring it to them.

The elderly are priceless gifts our congregations cannot afford to overlook.

*Even to your old age and gray hairs*

*I am he, I am he who will sustain you.*

*I have made you and I will carry you;*

*I will sustain you and I will rescue you.*

Isaiah 46:4 (NIV)



— Rev. Todd  
Klemme  
Zion Lutheran  
Wadena,  
Minnesota