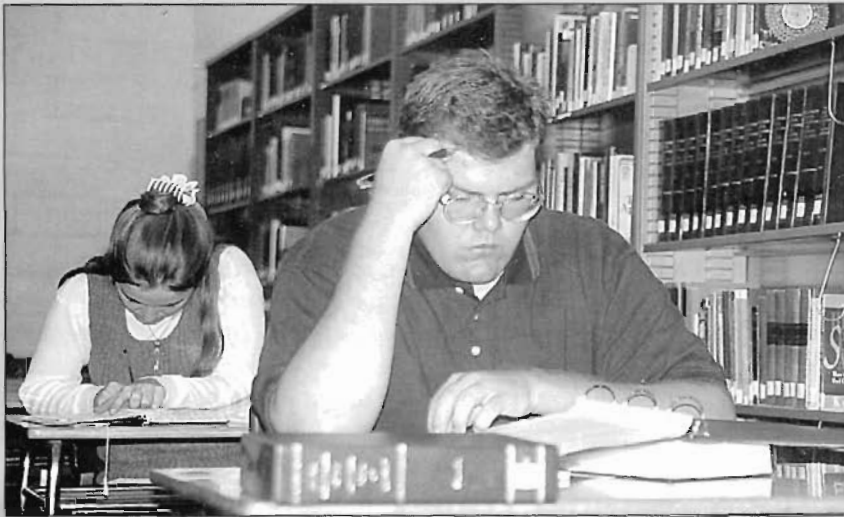
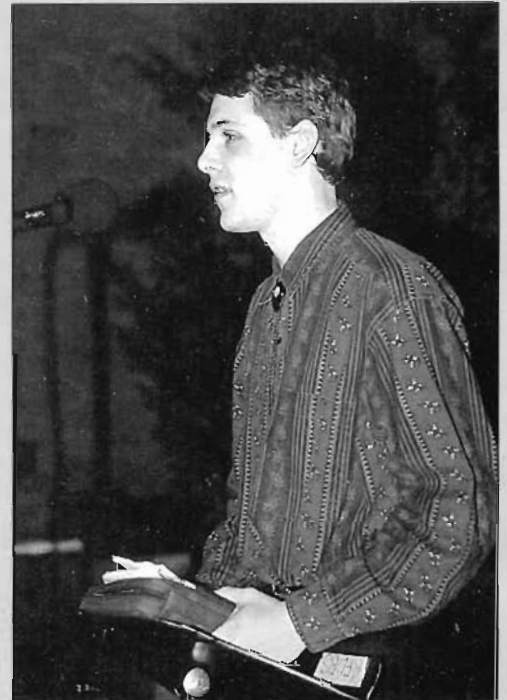


The Lutheran AMBASSADOR

February 2, 1999



**The Association Free Lutheran
Seminary and Bible School**



THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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Editor: Rev. Craig Johnson
Assistant to the Editor: Solveig Hjermstad
Editorial Board: Rev. John Mundfrom, Oryen Benrud, Rev. Jerry Moan.

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For editorial inquiries and information:

The Lutheran Ambassador, Box 446, Bruce, SD 57220-0446; 605-627-5188; fax 605-627-9254;
e-mail craigj@teleport.com
wshjerm@brookings.net

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AN ENCOURAGING WORD

The gift of victory!

"Thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

— I Corinthians 15:57 (NASB)

W

When I think of victory my thoughts go back a few years to a sports team that was excellent. They didn't have a lot of

stars, but they were a good, solid basketball team. They had been taught that each player was as important as the best on the team. And they believed it!

The result was a coordinated unit that never lost a game that season. One player was not particularly talented, but he played his hardest in every practice and game. He was the team's best cheerleader! This team's victory was well earned, because they played **hard** and they played as a **team**.

This is a picture of the way we ordinarily live. Victory seems to be a well deserved reward for those who work hard. Victory comes in many packages in today's society. It might be a big sales account landed, a child well raised, business success, a pin on the wrestling mat, or a child getting the gift he wants from his parents, even though he has just thrown a temper tantrum. In the eyes of the world, victories must be earned. Those who try hard deserve victory. It is our own doing.

What a stark contrast we see in this verse!

The apostle Paul says that God's victory is a total gift, given by Him through our Lord Jesus Christ. This verse actually summarizes everything Paul has talked about in the whole fifteenth chapter. This is the victory over death. Resurrection from the dead is a

reality, and Jesus has won complete victory over every part of Satan's schemes!

This victory is a gift that keeps on giving. It is a gift of grace that continues until we are called home. This beautiful gift of victory in Jesus is given to all who repent of their sins. What an encouragement this is to me! I hope it is to you, too.

*I heard an old, old story, how a
Savior came from glory,
How He gave His life on Calvary to
save a wretch like me:
I heard about His groaning, of His
precious blood's atoning,
Then I repented of my sins and
won the victory.*

*O victory in Jesus, my Savior,
forever!
He sought me and bought me with
His redeeming blood;
He loved me ere I knew Him,
and all my love is due Him —
He plunged me to victory beneath
the cleansing flood.*

— Eugene M. Bartlett,
Ambassador Hymnal, No. 542

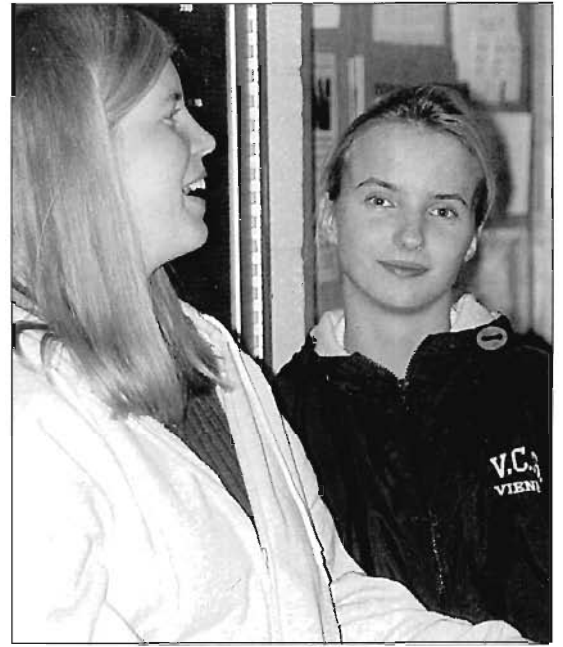


— **Pastor James Rasmussen**
AFLC Director of Evangelism

Campus views



Louise Burton, FLS secretary and librarian.



Jason Norlein, AFLBS junior and AFLC computer technician.



Senior seminarian Gary Haug is the director of AFLBS Proclaim.



The call for pastors



Seminarians Dana Coyle, Raitis Evanmois, and Wayne Olson at the 1998 AFLC Schools' Christmas concert December 6.

"It was He who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ might be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming." — Ephesians 4:11-14



— Pastor Dennis Gray
Bethel Lutheran
Grafton,
North Dakota

The Word of God teaches us that the Lord calls pastors. Some know of the call of God quite young in their lives. Others are called later. Their field of service is the local congregation. In the

local congregation the pastor will preach, teach, and counsel to prepare people for works of service to God. The objective is to have mature men and women in the congregation. Men and woman who have a ministry for Jesus Christ. Men and woman and children and teens who are putting their spiritual gifts to work in their congregation.

This preparation work is done through preaching, teaching and discipling.

It takes a special man for these things. He is to be chosen by God, saved by Christ and led by the Holy Spirit. Timothy calls him an overseer or an elder. He is part of a team within the local congregation. In this the person should not be a recent convert. Paul sets a high criteria for church leaders in I Timothy 3:1-7.

The Lord requires much of the pastor. He needs to be prepared for this opportunity. He needs to know and understand the Bible and its doctrines. He must not be a novice. His primary function must be in the use of the Scripture. He is to rightly administer the sacraments.

Why go to the seminary? It is to prepare as much as possible for the ministry he is call to do. Nowadays our pastors are faced with situations that require maturity and God-given biblical wisdom. While the seminary will not give answers to every situation faced by pastors, it will get men into the Word of God. The seminary teaches principles which can be used in making godly decisions. It is the Word of God and the leading of the Holy Spirit which should govern every pastor and congregation.

In our AFLC seminary, he will study the Word of God. He will grow and mature in the Lord. He will be getting ready for that first congregation. Dedicated teachers will be there to instruct and to nurture. The graduates will take the office of the pastor seriously.

They are not to be pastors for the sake of earning a living. If they would feel comfortable doing something else, they should do something else. If they cannot feel comfortable doing something else, then this is a pretty good indication of a call. However, the call is not complete until the man has been called by a congregation. Seminary training without a place to go is simply seminary training. There must be a tie-in with a local congregation.

“At the seminary, we take the heritage of the Word of God very seriously. Indeed, it is the core of our curriculum, the very basis for all of our course offerings, the means by which students are prepared to serve the Lord and His Church as able and effective pastors, missionaries, teachers, and evangelists. There would be no seminary without God’s Word as our heritage.”

— Dr. Francis Monseth, dean of Free Lutheran Seminary from his 1998 report to the annual conference



On May 22, 1999, the FLS will graduate its 35th class. More than 150 men have graduated from the AFLC’s seminary.

Then follows ordination. Ordination is being set apart by the church for the office of the pastorate. A congregation does not hire nor fire a pastor. The pastor is first called by the Lord and then a congregation. He is called to minister to the congregation. Therefore, every congregation should be concerned about the seminary. They should be praying that the Lord will keep the seminary on the right track. Pray for the teachers and for the students.

Also, the congregation should be praying the Lord of the harvest to call men for the office of the pastorate. We need to be willing to give of our sons for this purpose. And, when they come into the congregation we should support them, pray for them, honor and respect them. Why? They have been chosen by God and called by His Holy Spirit to prepare people for ministry.

Our Free Lutheran Theological Seminary is a biblical seminary. Often times it stands in the back ground of the AFLC. Yet, our AFLC seminary is so vital and so very important. May the Lord lead us in our prayer support for FLTS. May He move our hearts to give of our means to the seminary. FLTS is the source for our pastors and our need is tremendous. Let us not forget the seminary and its instructors. Pray that the Lord would lead more and more of our young men into the ministry of the Word and the sacraments.



Fernando and Monse and their young son are pictured with Missionaries Dan and Debbie Giles at their commissioning service at Spring of Living Water Lutheran in Ahauscalientes, Mexico. Fernando is working in Campo Mourao, Brazil, under the supervision of Missionary Connely Dyrud and Monse works at the Miriam Infant Home during their internship which continues through June of 1999. They hope to become missionaries from Mexico.

Growing children to be servants

**But as for me
and my household,
we will serve the
Lord.** — Joshua 24:15

— *Lee and Kathleen Schierkolk*
Amery Free Lutheran
Amery, Wisconsin

during the worship service. Everything was not always rosy as the children were growing older. A few times discipline was applied in church and more times at home. In the majority of cases, we as parents were also able to provide loving consolation after the discipline.

Many times we as parents were wrong in disciplining and made mistakes. What we had to do was confess our sin to our children and ask their forgiveness. This confessing and forgiving worked both ways and was



In thinking of creating an environment where children grow up to be servants of the Lord, the verse in Joshua 24 comes to mind. We must admit though, we didn't start our marriage off with that verse, but we were committed from the start to attend worship services in the Lutheran church that was closest to our home. From the beginning we included our children in the worship service. We did not wish to put them in the nursery. As they grew older we moved closer to the front of the church so that we as a family would not be distracted

part of the glue that held us together as a family over the years.

During our time in Boise, Idaho, our pastor encouraged members of the congregation to have family devotions. We did have our family devotions, with the children taking turns reading the Scripture, the devotions for the day and then praying together. This worked well while the children were below high school age, but became increasingly difficult during their high school years. Because we were not able to get together as a family many times, we did encourage each child to continue their own private devotions.

It is important to include the children in taking an active part in the activities of the congregation. When Sunday morning came, everybody went to Sunday school, the children to their own class and the parents to the adult Bible study, except when they were teaching a class. We then went to the worship service as a family.

As I shared with our children that we were writing about creating an environment in the home that would encourage kids to grow up and serve the Lord, one of our sons said that our example of service within the church in Bible studies, men's, women's, and couples' groups, was good and important to him. Our boys attended the men's breakfast Bible study with Dad and when too young to go to school they went with Mom to women's Bible study groups. We as a family also attended many of the youth group activities.

Psalms 122:1 says, "I rejoiced with those who said to me, let us go to the house of the Lord." This was always in the back of our minds as we attended Sunday school, the worship service, or other activities of the church family. Even when our attitudes were negative at the start, the Holy Spirit worked a change in our heart such that we were glad to have been there.

While each child had their own decision to make on their advanced schooling and life's work, we believe they were influenced and encouraged by the pastors and congregational members. There were members of the Amery, Wisconsin, congregation in prayer for our sons as they attended AFLBS. Had we not become members of the AFLC I don't believe we would have seen our sons go into the ministry. Our Amery congregation and the Bible school faculty had a great influence on the direction in life that our children walked.

In summary, I would like to encourage parents to create an environment in which we know ourselves that God's Word has the answer to the problems we encounter in life. We as parents need to be involved with our children at home and at church. We can't expect them to grow and mature in the love of the Lord without giving them nourishment from the Word. And last, take to heart the words of Proverbs 3:5-6, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight."



As the seminary goes

—Pastor
Thomas L. Baker
Christ Lutheran
Tulia, Texas



The Apostle Paul wrote to the Galatian Christians, "Do not be deceived, God is not mocked: for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap." In this epistle he warns of the danger of turning to a different gospel and of following false teachers.

In verse 1:7, he said, "There are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ." This was a problem for the first century church, and it still is a problem for the church at the dawn of the twenty-first century. Satan has never changed his tactic of sending false prophets in the attire of righteous men because it has always been so successful.

The late Harold Lindsell, a former seminary professor and vice president at Fuller

Theological Seminary

in Pasadena, California, did two excellent studies which demonstrated conclusively what happened to seminaries and denominations which abandoned the biblical standard of an inerrant Scripture. Anyone desiring an overview of the relation of seminaries and their denominations as a whole would do well to consult these two books.

In *The Battle for the Bible*, (Zondervan, 1976) Lindsell discusses several denominations and the theological deviations which followed when the doctrine of inerrancy was renounced. He claimed that the United Methodist Church does not have a single theological seminary that could be considered close to being evangelical. He added that one of the signs of the times in Methodism is how far to the left some of its seminaries have gone.

In 1975, the Chandler School of Theology (part of Emory University) had the atheist Thomas Altizer on its faculty. Altizer was a leading advocate of the "Death of God" school of theology. A Chandler student for the doctorate, the Rev. K. Richard Robinson, complained that one of his professors began every new class by saying that anyone holding to a fundamental belief in God could

(continued on next page)

so goes the church

SO GOES THE CHURCH

not get higher than a C-minus. Another professor made some reference to the snake in Genesis and said, "The whole thing was just somebody's idea of a sexual hang-up." When Robinson complained, some of his professors accused him of being mentally ill because he believed in God.

Those accusations were made in 1976. In "World" magazine's July 25, 1998 issue, the United Methodist Church was featured. Pastor Ed Ezaki, a 41-year-old Japanese-American minister out of Berkeley and Princeton, who is a staunch defender of the biblical faith, preached on II Corinthians 6 about why belief and purity matter. After the sermon was finished and the business meeting conducted, the congregation voted 200 to nothing in favor of leaving the UMC. They took this action because of the "marriage" of two lesbians by Pastor Jimmy Creech of the 1,900 member First UMC in Omaha, Nebraska. Last March 13, a church jury in Nebraska failed by one vote to determine that he was guilty of disobeying the church's "Book of Discipline."

The purpose of using this example is not to single out the United Methodist Church.

"It should not surprise us that when a seminary is taken over by, or even tolerates, unbelievers or those living an ungodly lifestyle, ... after that the man in the pew will be indistinguishable from the man in the street."

Again I shall claim Dr. Lindsell's quotation as my own. "Evangelicals who have given up on biblical infallibility must be brought to see what follows after a denial in inerrancy. No doubt many of them really believe they will never surrender their belief in any other major doctrines of the Christ-

ian faith. Probably many of them would protest that they would never do what the people I have used for illustrations have done. But the abandonment of inerrancy opens the door wide to such deviations, and the multitudes of others who felt the same way at one time have made these further concessions. And it has always been attended by a decline in Christian zeal and evangelistic outlook as well as in one's ethical life."

In his second book, *The Bible in the Balance*, (Zondervan, 1979), Dr. Lindsell updated the struggle for the soul of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod's Concordia Seminary in St. Louis. "Men like Dr. (John) Tietjen (the liberal leader of Concordia, St. Louis) could swear on a stack of Bibles that they believed the Bible to be the infallible Word of God, but this did not keep them from teaching what the Bible does not allow. Missouri's problem, basically was the same as the one all of the other churches faced earlier and surrendered to. It is the same problem evangelicals face in our generation. They affirm their commitment to doctrinal platforms and then by equivocation, mental reservation, or misunderstanding deny in practice what they profess in principle."

Dr. Lindsell goes on to write: in 1961, Martin E. Marty, the associate editor of the "Christian Century," proposed a methodology of subversion to take over Concordia Seminary. He publicly urged "the prophets" to work "from within" their denominations "for constructive subversion, encirclement, and infiltration, until anti-ecumenical forces bow to evangelical weight of reunion."

Thank God that the evangelicals won the struggle for Concordia Seminary and rescued the LCMS from self-proclaimed authors of subversion like Martin E. Marty.

I for one would not want to be smug about our Free Lutheran Seminary, praying like the Pharisee in Luke 18: "Thank you God that we are not like other men — extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this tax collector." But I am profoundly thankful for our FLS and its faculty, students and staff. This is why we must uphold them daily in prayer. The enemy of our souls takes no rest.

It should not surprise us that when a seminary is taken over by, or even tolerates, unbelievers or those living an ungodly lifestyle, that soon our churches will be led by the same type of men. After that the man in the pew will be indistinguishable from the man in the street.

Thank God for our seminary. May it remain always faithful to the Word of God.



Some things just don't change

— *Pastor James L. Johnson*
AFLBS Dean
Minneapolis, Minnesota

The more things stay the same, the more they change.

It's a twist on a worn saying, but I see it happening here. Since 1966, when AFLBS first opened, a few things have changed.

But our focus is the same. We lift up the name of Jesus for salvation. We uphold Scripture as 100% inerrant. The power of the Word still fascinates us. I watch Hebrews 4:12 in action. "The living and active and sharper than any two-edged sword" Word of God is changing and convicting students who come.

To state it simply, my greatest joy in my third year as AFLBS dean is also double-edged. One, I love to see students saved; two, I love to watch students lead others to salvation. As we aim at those basics, we will continue to see change — God-stirred change — and real transformations.

What else is the same around here?

To those who have been around East Medicine Lake Boulevard a few times, some may seem humorous: The same carpet in the dorms, same rotary dial pay phone at the cafeteria, same curfew (10 p.m. Monday through Thursday). Mr. Rodvold's same Mark IIIB music speakers are on the same wall in what is now Mr. Nelson's music department office.

Other long-time standbys.

It's still the same print of Jesus knocking on the door on the wall of the men's lounge, Wednesday's dignified 11 o'clock Chapel Hour, and Sunday night devotions in the same place — men's lounge. You should hear them sing. You should hear the chaplain preach. They still sit on the same oak lounge furniture while listening and worshipping. In my eyes, AFLBS curriculum is the same — mostly Bible, same electives, mostly three credits.

On the other hand.

If you haven't been back recent-

ly, you will notice a few differences. Some classes are in the cafeteria. We're full! Phones are in each dorm room. School offices are in the church building now. The dean's office, formerly on the first floor of the women's dorm, is in the former office of the AFLC President. The softball field is switched, too. Deep left is now home.

Other changes — the important ones to me — deal with the students themselves. Yes, it's the same quality of Christian kids, but fewer from farms, more from the metropolitan areas. A larger percentage are doing ministry — urban, youth, missions trips, worship teams. Monday morning chapel is moved from 8 to 11 now. The services are led by a student-led worship team, two student testimonies follow. Often a student preaches the sermon. Classes are larger. The students get better jobs — up to \$10 an hour. Most are involved in a weekly ministry calling.

Still, the biggest change-maker isn't students or telephones.

Jesus makes the biggest difference here. As He has for years



Pastor James L. Johnson, center, at a picnic lunch served on the "patio" outside the chapel building.

now, the Lord causes the transformations here, and we're not afraid of those. The classroom space shortage, the numbers, the Plymouth city decisions, the Vision 2004 possibilities — they make the headlines. But they don't make the difference.

Jesus makes the best changes here.

Pray that stays the same.



The 1998-99 AFLBS choir at the annual Christmas concert.

Speak your heart

— Paul Haugen
AFLBS junior
Culbertson, Montana

Helps for giving an effective testimony

Most of us have done it. We've stood in front of a camp or a youth group or a congregation and started out by saying, "Hi, my name is ... and I'd like to give my testimony today (gulp)." What are some things that are helpful to keep in mind when you stand up and fear creeps upon you?

First and foremost, pray! Give what you are planning to say completely over to God's hands and acknowledge that what you are going to say isn't for your glory, but for His and to give a witness to all the people there about what God has done for you.

Second, use Scripture. Whether it's a favorite verse or something that has convicted you in your life, using God's perfect and holy Word helps to keep the talk focused where it belongs: on God.

Third, keep on the topic. I can't believe how many testimonies I've heard where the person talking keeps on going off on tangents in an attempt to be humorous, but completely strays from the topic! Humor has its place, but it is more important to tell of what God has done for you or how He has brought you to salvation and then sit down. Otherwise, you have every chance of losing

your audience and your testimony becomes meaningless.

While it may be helpful to show people where God brought you from, focusing too long on the past may end up just being a talk on what you used to do. Keep the majority of your sharing on the Lord and how He has been working in your life.

Be honest with people. Human beings respond to openness. They appreciate it when they know a speaker is sincere. Share what the Holy Spirit has laid on your heart. Above all, show them the joy that you now have in Christ and glorify Him in any way possible.

Finally, pray some more! There is no way to overemphasize this vital means of communication with God. Pray for guidance. Pray for peace. Pray that He will use you to touch people. And He will!

"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, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:19-20). It's a promise. Go and share!

God can use you

Testimonies here at AFLBS have impacted my life in quite a few ways. Not only have I been able to relate to many of them, but I have been blessed to hear how God has worked in the lives of the students.

Some of the changes God has accomplished in individuals have been noticeable, because of the magnitude of the transformation. However, God really blesses me when I hear people's testimonies where God has been working quietly in their lives — so quietly that maybe no one has noticed except the person God has been working in.

I like to think of the analogy of metamorphosis. At first, we are just like an ugly caterpillar, crawling around in dirty sin. God then takes us and puts us inside a cocoon, and there He transforms us. People on the outside do not see any changes happening in our heart until God lets us fly out of the cocoon as a beautiful butterfly.

I used to think no one would want to hear my testimony until I heard a conversation a couple of weeks ago. "Jane" was sharing her testimony with a small group of peo-

ple. God had done amazing and miraculous things with her life. She had gone through a lot of trials, but God was faithful like always and took care of her.

"Jill" commented how wonderful Jane's testimony had been. She went on to say how she never had a "good" testimony like Jane did, so she never felt that she had anything to share that people wanted to hear.

Jane immediately disagreed with Jill and told her that it is not our testimony and our words, but the words of Jesus. Jesus uses everyone. She went on to say that if Jesus was able to use a donkey, don't you think He could use a person? Jane assured Jill that her heart was always touched when she heard a testimony like Jill's.

Jane hit the head of the nail square with the hammer. God can use anyone He wants to, no matter how inadequate we may feel. God's Word is powerful and needs to be shared, and we should not be the ones to decide when or when not to share His Word. "So the faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17, NAS).

— Michele Deubner
AFLBS Women's Resident Head
Minneapolis, Minnesota

The simple things

"Family Bible Camp!" As a teenager in eastern Montana, those words filled me with inexpressible excitement! Even though I was always certain to share my bunk with a couple of mice, I still could not wait for the times of fellowship with old and new friends. One of the greatest blessings of camp, though, were the summer teams from the Bible school. I looked upon those students as some of the oldest and wisest people in the world. I could not wait to go to Bible school myself and become as "old and wise" as they were.

Before I knew it, I found myself at AFLBS where the Lord blessed me with the opportunity to serve on two summer teams. That first summer, I arrived at training week thinking, "I am too young for this task and I just do not know enough. Lord, how can You use me to be a witness for You?"

The Lord patiently showed me that my depth of knowledge was not why He had called me to serve Him. He simply desired to use me as a vessel to bring glory to His Name. Depending on myself would only cause me to live in a state of fear and selfish pride; in Jesus would I find peace and strength for the summer ahead.

Second Corinthians 12:9 reads, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfected in weakness." Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, so that the power of Christ may dwell in me." I am thankful for the lesson of that first summer. Often I find myself overwhelmed by the jobs the Lord has entrusted to me. How quick I can be to throw a "self-pity party," instead of resting on Christ's promise that His grace is sufficient.

During both summers the Lord also blessed me with godly examples in the congregations and families with whom our team stayed. I remember teaching at a vacation Bible school consisting of twenty children. The numbers were small,

but Christ quickly reminded me that He had not called me to feed the multitudes, but to bring His love to hearts that were hungering for Him. I will always remember that week and the wonder of Christ's love that shined in the eyes of one child who, for the first time, had heard the name of Jesus and of Jesus' love for him.

That church did not have a big facility to offer us, but they had canvassed the streets and the Lord brought children who needed to hear of Christ's love for them. Oh, how faithful God was to show me His love in so many different ways: whether it was the men of the congregation fixing our van or the ladies filling us with more cookies than any human should have! Colossians 3:17 says, "Whatever you do in word or deed,

do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father." As I reminisce about those two summers, I do not remember the glamorous things I saw, but I do recall the testimonies of those who showered our team with Christ's love, by doing even the smallest tasks for Him.

After two summers on a summer team I realized I was not that "old or wise," but simply a child of God who was in need of His grace and strength. Also, I was thankful God had blessed me with the examples of adults who did even the smallest things for Him. May each of us, old or young, be willing to serve each other in the simple things, so that Christ may be glorified.



One of several ministry teams at AFLBS sang during last fall's Campus Days.



Campus expansion given green light

“All things work together for good to those who love Him and are called according to His purpose.”

— Romans 8:28

During the past 12 months (beginning with the neighborhood meetings), we have been on our knees praying, planning and seeking God’s will and direction for Vision 2004 — a vision for building expansion on the campus of the AFLC schools. Finally on December 16, 1999, by God’s grace, after a four-hour debate and discussion, the Plymouth, Minnesota City Council approved all five motions before them that evening. This allows the Vision 2004 campus expansion to move forward.

We appreciate and thank all of you who have been praying for Vision 2004 and this decision, and are excited that God has allowed us to continue to be located for the future ministry of our schools on our existing land and property where we have been for 35 years.

Looking back on that December meeting, we are humbled at how God revealed His authority and His answer to prayer. This was the last council meeting before the end of the year and the last meeting for two council members who strongly supported us. After briefly being able to present and defend our right to expand, we had to sit back and watch the issues debated intensely for four hours.

The debate began with two council members strongly recommending expansion, stating many positive things about the AFLC, the seminary and Bible School, our students, and the project team assembled in this process. One of them, a lawyer said, “We do not want to lose these people as neighbors. They are a valuable part of our community!”

At 11:20 p.m., the decision was made to vote. As they voted, we prayed again, as we had prayed for months, that God’s will be done and that He reveal to us by this decision what His plan was for Vision 2004. Maybe He would open the door for us to move forward with the vision for this location, or He might close the door tightly and give us peace knowing that He had a better plan for our schools at a different location.

Two council members apparently changed their minds and voted in our favor during the debate so we had to wait for the final “aye.” That was to come from the mayor of Plymouth herself. After a long

pause (seemed like hours!), she said “aye” and the decision was made. The council then proceeded to approve the remaining motions before them. Because all were passed, we are now able to proceed with the Vision 2004 campus development plans.

Before everyone in the council chamber left for a break, the mayor thanked all involved for how they handled themselves during the long process. Praise God! Maurice Gavin from the Welsh Company, who has been working with us on this project and was part of our presentation, came up to us after the vote. The first thing he said was, “Truly the hand of God was at work in this room tonight!”

Yes, it was exciting and amazing to see God’s plan and timing at work that evening. This started as God’s project and it will continue that way. Now that the city’s decision is made, the work truly begins. Please continue to pray as each development arises and as details of design are put in place, that they are exactly what God wants.

Prayerfully we would like to begin breaking ground for the construction of the first seminary married housing unit in April or May. The school’s board of trustees has decided to not begin construction until 75% of what will be needed is received in cash or pledges. We desire to build this expansion debt free. We praise God for all of the financial support from churches and individuals that has come in already.

We trust that since God has now given us an answer confirming Vision 2004 on our property, that He will provide the funds that are needed. As our schools continue to grow with students coming to study the Word of God and preparing for their future, this project will become even more of a necessity. As you the congregations and individuals continue to pray and ask the Lord what you can do financially in the coming months and years, may God provide and expand your vision for our schools.

Thank you for all your prayers and support now and in the future.

— **David Borg,**
Chairman, AFLC Schools’ Board of Trustees
and Pastor Tonnes Pollestad,
Director of Vision 2004



This is a detailed site plan of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill campus. The plan shows the layout of various buildings, parking lots, and surrounding streets. Key features include:

- Streets:** 31st Ave. N. (top), 32nd Ave. N. (left), Union Terrace (left), Medicine Lake Blvd. E. (bottom left), and Medicine Lake (bottom right).
- Buildings:** Gym / Music Center, Student Center, Library, Administration, Maintenance, Dining Hall, and various dormitories (Dormitory 1, Dormitory 2, Dormitory 3, Dormitory 4, Dormitory 5, Dormitory 6, Dormitory 7, Dormitory 8, Dormitory 9, Dormitory 10, Dormitory 11, Dormitory 12, Dormitory 13, Dormitory 14, Dormitory 15, Dormitory 16, Dormitory 17, Dormitory 18, Dormitory 19, Dormitory 20, Dormitory 21, Dormitory 22, Dormitory 23, Dormitory 24, Dormitory 25, Dormitory 26, Dormitory 27, Dormitory 28, Dormitory 29, Dormitory 30, Dormitory 31, Dormitory 32, Dormitory 33, Dormitory 34, Dormitory 35, Dormitory 36, Dormitory 37, Dormitory 38, Dormitory 39, Dormitory 40, Dormitory 41, Dormitory 42, Dormitory 43, Dormitory 44, Dormitory 45, Dormitory 46, Dormitory 47, Dormitory 48, Dormitory 49, Dormitory 50, Dormitory 51, Dormitory 52, Dormitory 53, Dormitory 54, Dormitory 55, Dormitory 56, Dormitory 57, Dormitory 58, Dormitory 59, Dormitory 60, Dormitory 61, Dormitory 62, Dormitory 63, Dormitory 64, Dormitory 65, Dormitory 66, Dormitory 67, Dormitory 68, Dormitory 69, Dormitory 70, Dormitory 71, Dormitory 72, Dormitory 73, Dormitory 74, Dormitory 75, Dormitory 76, Dormitory 77, Dormitory 78, Dormitory 79, Dormitory 80, Dormitory 81, Dormitory 82, Dormitory 83, Dormitory 84, Dormitory 85, Dormitory 86, Dormitory 87, Dormitory 88, Dormitory 89, Dormitory 90, Dormitory 91, Dormitory 92, Dormitory 93, Dormitory 94, Dormitory 95, Dormitory 96, Dormitory 97, Dormitory 98, Dormitory 99, Dormitory 100).
- Parking Lots:** Future Parking, Future Parking 2, Future Parking 3, Future Parking 4, Future Parking 5, Future Parking 6, Future Parking 7, Future Parking 8, Future Parking 9, Future Parking 10, Future Parking 11, Future Parking 12, Future Parking 13, Future Parking 14, Future Parking 15, Future Parking 16, Future Parking 17, Future Parking 18, Future Parking 19, Future Parking 20, Future Parking 21, Future Parking 22, Future Parking 23, Future Parking 24, Future Parking 25, Future Parking 26, Future Parking 27, Future Parking 28, Future Parking 29, Future Parking 30, Future Parking 31, Future Parking 32, Future Parking 33, Future Parking 34, Future Parking 35, Future Parking 36, Future Parking 37, Future Parking 38, Future Parking 39, Future Parking 40, Future Parking 41, Future Parking 42, Future Parking 43, Future Parking 44, Future Parking 45, Future Parking 46, Future Parking 47, Future Parking 48, Future Parking 49, Future Parking 50, Future Parking 51, Future Parking 52, Future Parking 53, Future Parking 54, Future Parking 55, Future Parking 56, Future Parking 57, Future Parking 58, Future Parking 59, Future Parking 60, Future Parking 61, Future Parking 62, Future Parking 63, Future Parking 64, Future Parking 65, Future Parking 66, Future Parking 67, Future Parking 68, Future Parking 69, Future Parking 70, Future Parking 71, Future Parking 72, Future Parking 73, Future Parking 74, Future Parking 75, Future Parking 76, Future Parking 77, Future Parking 78, Future Parking 79, Future Parking 80, Future Parking 81, Future Parking 82, Future Parking 83, Future Parking 84, Future Parking 85, Future Parking 86, Future Parking 87, Future Parking 88, Future Parking 89, Future Parking 90, Future Parking 91, Future Parking 92, Future Parking 93, Future Parking 94, Future Parking 95, Future Parking 96, Future Parking 97, Future Parking 98, Future Parking 99, Future Parking 100.
- Other Features:** Ballfield, Future Ballfield, Future Student Center, Future Student Center 2, Future Student Center 3, Future Student Center 4, Future Student Center 5, Future Student Center 6, Future Student Center 7, Future Student Center 8, Future Student Center 9, Future Student Center 10, Future Student Center 11, Future Student Center 12, Future Student Center 13, Future Student Center 14, Future Student Center 15, Future Student Center 16, Future Student Center 17, Future Student Center 18, Future Student Center 19, Future Student Center 20, Future Student Center 21, Future Student Center 22, Future Student Center 23, Future Student Center 24, Future Student Center 25, Future Student Center 26, Future Student Center 27, Future Student Center 28, Future Student Center 29, Future Student Center 30, Future Student Center 31, Future Student Center 32, Future Student Center 33, Future Student Center 34, Future Student Center 35, Future Student Center 36, Future Student Center 37, Future Student Center 38, Future Student Center 39, Future Student Center 40, Future Student Center 41, Future Student Center 42, Future Student Center 43, Future Student Center 44, Future Student Center 45, Future Student Center 46, Future Student Center 47, Future Student Center 48, Future Student Center 49, Future Student Center 50, Future Student Center 51, Future Student Center 52, Future Student Center 53, Future Student Center 54, Future Student Center 55, Future Student Center 56, Future Student Center 57, Future Student Center 58, Future Student Center 59, Future Student Center 60, Future Student Center 61, Future Student Center 62, Future Student Center 63, Future Student Center 64, Future Student Center 65, Future Student Center 66, Future Student Center 67, Future Student Center 68, Future Student Center 69, Future Student Center 70, Future Student Center 71, Future Student Center 72, Future Student Center 73, Future Student Center 74, Future Student Center 75, Future Student Center 76, Future Student Center 77, Future Student Center 78, Future Student Center 79, Future Student Center 80, Future Student Center 81, Future Student Center 82, Future Student Center 83, Future Student Center 84, Future Student Center 85, Future Student Center 86, Future Student Center 87, Future Student Center 88, Future Student Center 89, Future Student Center 90, Future Student Center 91, Future Student Center 92, Future Student Center 93, Future Student Center 94, Future Student Center 95, Future Student Center 96, Future Student Center 97, Future Student Center 98, Future Student Center 99, Future Student Center 100.

Association Free Lutheran Bible School

PROJECT DATA:		PROPOSED	MAXIMUM
SITE SIZE:	23.0 ACRES	23.0 ACRES	33.0 ACRES
ESTIMATED POPULATION:	200	200	375
PARKING:	4	4	16
MAINTAINED STUDENT HOUSING:	278	278	326
TOTAL IMPERVIOUS SURFACE: WITHIN 190' SETBACK			

Student Center Composition:

Classroom	Administration Offices	Library	Student Center	Studio
100	100	100	100	100

Gymnasium, Center Composition:

Gymnasium	Athletic Facilities	Lockers	Musical Department
100	100	100	100

GENESIS ARCHITECTURE

Welsh Companies



AFLBS receives grant money

— Aid Association for Lutherans recently gave a \$20,000 grant to purchase a minivan for the Vision 2004 campaign. Pictured are Pastor Tonnes Pollestad, AAL General Agent Tim Schmidt, and District Representative Barb Hendricks, who has worked with the AFLC schools for the past 15 years. The van is a 1997 Dodge Grand Caravan.

In 1998, AAL provided \$10,300 for two initiatives — \$5,000 to prepare a student recruitment video and \$5,300 for faculty and staff development and retention. In 1997 AAL gave a \$10,300 grant to aid summer outreach teams, and in

1996, AAL provided \$5,400 to help fund the AFLBS Catalog.

The student recruitment video, due to be released this month, used much of the same footage as the Vision 2004 Video released last June. The ten-minute video was produced by the Christian agency, Mahoney Media Group. Call AFLBS at 612-544-9501 to obtain a copy.

AAL also announced this January its new AAL Member Gift-Matching Program. Any friend of the AFLC Schools can have up to \$100 matched to either the Bible school or seminary. Contact them for the forms or ask your local representative.

AFLBS Student Body Officers — Spring semester officers at AFLBS are: President Kevin Groven, Northwood, North Dakota; Vice President Matt Bruce, Fosston, Minnesota; Secretary Katie Nelson, LaCrosse, Wisconsin; Treasurer Carla Mattson, Greenbush, Minnesota; and Chaplain Danny Chavez, Aurora, Illinois.



Tim Borg, senior at AFLBS, from Cokato, Minnesota, was the student body president during fall semester.

Campus calendar

March 10-12 — National basketball tournament, Oklahoma City
April 2-18 — Spring choir tours
April 23-24 — Campus Days
May 22 — Graduation

AFLC office personnel changes — The new year brought personnel changes at the AFLC headquarters and schools. Tara Cherney was the receptionist at AFLBS and is now working as the AFLC receptionist. This includes secretarial work for the youth ministries department. Former AFLC receptionist, Karen Anderson is the full-time secretary for the world missions office.

The Bible school office includes Ellen Erdman as registrar and also working with international students. Michele Deubner is the temporary receptionist while continuing to serve as the women's resident head, and Amy Jo Hill is the part-time student accounts secretary.





Peggy (Brotten) Johnson, '77, Sacred Heart, Minnesota, at the 1998 schools' Christmas concert.

Seminary and Bible School receive Lutheran Brotherhood funds

— The fourth quarter payment to the seminary was \$1,950 while \$2,640 went to the Bible school from Lutheran Brotherhood's Member Matching Gift program. Members' gifts of \$25 to \$100 per year are matched by Lutheran Brotherhood. The seminary has received \$125,510 since the IMPACT Plus gift program started in 1991. The Bible school IMPACT gift program has been in place since 1979 and AFLBS has received \$144,871 over those years.

AFLBS summer reunion set for August 12-15, 1999

All alumni and their families are invited to come and fill their former dormitories. Dorms will open on Thursday night, August 12. At \$10 per night per room, including several meals (approximately \$30 for a family in one room for the weekend), it's a lodging and registration price that's hard to beat! The schedule includes a Saturday night service, a golf tournament, and plenty of time for individual classes to gather alone. Specially honored class groupings are: '68-'70 (30 years); '78-'80 (20 years); '83-'85 (15 years); '88-'90 (10 years); and '93-'94 (5 years). Dorm capacity for the weekend is just over 140. If you missed last fall's homecoming (it didn't occur), don't miss this first ever summer reunion!

1999 Free Lutheran Youth Convention

**June 28 - July 3
Estes Park, Colorado**

\$300 per student (ages 12-18) if registered by March 1, 1999!

Add \$25 per person after March 1.

Special notes:

- Split sessions for junior and senior high.
- AFLC pastors preaching at the evening services.
- Expecting more than the 1400 people who attended in '97.
- Theme is "More To This Life." Call us if you need a brochure.
- New CD is available (\$15) with convention songs. Order them and your T-shirts from Youth Ministries at 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55441; (612) 545-5631 or check us out on the web at <http://www.aflc.org/youth>
- Be changed for life!

Correction:

The January 5, 1999 *Lutheran Ambassador*; ARC calendar on page 24 omitted the Couple's Retreat on March 19-21. The ARC has a new e-mail address: thearc@cornernet.com

Church organs for sale — A friend of Christ the King Lutheran of East Grand Forks, North Dakota is offering two Baldwin church organs for sale at a reduced price. The retail price of the organs is \$17,000. They are being offered for \$7,500. One is a Baldwin model A260, a three manual lighted rocker tab console. The other is a Baldwin model B280, a two manual lighted rocker tab console. Both come with a three-year parts and labor warranty. Shipping and installation is extra. For more information call Pastor Dan Klug, 218-773-2357 or e-mail, maklug@badlands.nodak.edu.

Helping those who mourn

Sometimes we feel rather helpless when we want to help. A friend, a co-worker, a neighbor or a fellow member of our congregation has a loved one die. We know they are hurting and we want to do something. We want to show we care. We would like to try to lessen the pain. But what can we do?

We desire to care for those who grieve because our Lord does. God seeks to “bind up the brokenhearted, ... to comfort all who mourn” (Isaiah 61:1, 2, NIV). It is important, but it isn't always easy.

I have more experience grieving and watching people I care about grieve than I wish I had. I see it as a privilege and an opportunity whenever I get the chance to share the good news of Jesus at a funeral. But I look forward to the day when there will no more funerals to conduct, no more grieving people to comfort. That day will come when Jesus returns for He has said then, “There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain” (Revelation 21:4, NIV). Until that day, mourning people are all around us. What do we do?

After being part of a bereavement support group following some deaths in his family, Ron Green of Eugene, Oregon became a volunteer with the group. He continues to work with the group that aims at providing, not necessarily therapy, but support. He describes the group as, for many, “an island of reality in the midst of the week.” It provides a place where people can feel free to come and share in confidence their struggles.

Your ears can often be more effective in helping grieving people than your words. Words that are well intentioned can actually be a little irritating in some cases. What the person who is mourning often needs more than advice is somebody who will listen.

Let the person share about how they are hurting. Let them talk about the person they have lost. At times we may be afraid to bring up the name of the deceased, thinking this will bring up the hurt. This can lead, however, to the one who is mourning starting to wonder if their loved one is already forgotten. The one that is no longer around is still very much on their mind. Let them talk about it. Let them cry.

“Don't be afraid of not having the right words,” advises Ron. “Chances are if you think you have the right words, you don't.” It is okay to say, “I don't know what to say.”

Scripture is great to share, but let us not think, “If I just find the right Bible verse, I can make all of my friend's pain go away.” It is often not that simple.

God, through His Word, brings comfort and encouragement, but He doesn't make all the pain go away, right away. As we patiently go through the pain He gives strength and teaches powerful lessons. “We also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope” (Romans 5:3, 4, NIV).

Ron says, “A person can go through grief, or around it. When you

go around it, it's still there.” By acting as if a person should just get on with life as if nothing happened, we can in a way be giving a person the message they should go around the grief. By letting a person share, by being a good listener, we can be letting them know we will stand beside them as they go through the grief.

People grieve in different ways. We can't necessarily tell them how to do it. Some express their feelings quite clearly. Others are more reserved. Some like to be busy. Others want to be still. Some want many people around them. Others value their time alone. Listen to the one who is mourning. Be sensitive to their needs. Encourage them to be the person God made them to be.

The one who grieves gets a lot of attention those first few days. Then life goes back to normal — for everyone else. But for the one who has lost someone who was a major part of their life, things will never be the same again. A month after the death may be more difficult than a day after. Now the shock is wearing off and the reality is setting in. Don't forget them. Call them up. Get together for coffee. Try to remember the one-year anniversary of their loved one's death. They will remember it, and probably appreciate if someone else cares enough to remember it as well.

“When does the hurting stop?” is a question we often have. In some ways it doesn't stop. But God's care for us doesn't stop either. We should be sensitive to not “rushing a person along,” thinking they have “had long enough; it's time to get over it!” Weeks, months and years can go by, and grief, though it has lessened, can still arise at unexpected times.

Until Jesus returns for us, this life remains one where pain is a reality. The comfort and strength the Lord offers is also a reality. The wisdom He will give those who want to help the grieving is a reality. And the hope we have that is greater than the grave is a glorious reality as well. That hope is in the One who said, “I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die” (John 11:25, 26, NIV).



A time for thanksgiving

T“Thank you, Lord!” is our prayer in the AFLC offices as the final financial report for 1998 was received from our accounting department. Our total budget goal for 1998 was exceeded, reaching 101%. This is the first time we have been able to celebrate such an achievement for many years, and it fills our hearts with gratitude to God, realizing that all gifts come from His hand. Our thanksgiving becomes even greater when one recognizes that these goals do not include the designated support for missionaries, or Vision 2004, which makes the total even more amazing.

Taking a closer look, we see that four areas of ministry exceeded their goals: general fund (109%), seminary (102%), parish education (136%), and church extension (187%). Home missions ended the year with 98%, world missions with 97%, capital investments with 91%, and the Bible school with 88%.

AFLC budgets are realistically based on the giving of our people in response to the needs that are presented to them, rather than on overly optimistic projections of all that each ministry would like to accomplish if the funds were available. A special word of appreciation is owed to the budget analysis committee, whose members have labored long to see our goals and income in harmony with one another.

It is important to remember, however, that each ministry goal is the minimum required to maintain the work at the current levels. This is why all gifts received that exceed the budget are so important, since they are a commitment to see our ministries expand. A time for thanksgiving is a time to continue giving, as many open doors of opportunity are before us.

“Thank you, faithful friends!” is also the heart cry of those who serve you through the AFLC. I was reminded by one of our pastors of an elderly man in his congregation who recently died. Each letter received from our ministries was considered by him to be a personal note, and although his resources were very limited, it was still very important to him to be a part through his gifts and prayers of what the Lord is doing through the AFLC. There are many like him, and we are so grateful to God for you all.

The new year of 1999 will present new challenges for the AFLC. The expansion of our Bible School facilities especially seems to call for increased support far beyond what has ever been accomplished in the past. Yet we can be confident that when God expands the ministry He will provide the means to pay the bills, according to His will. Giving with eternity in mind provides eternal dividends and produces eternal results. So we give thanks not only for what the Lord has supplied in 1998, but for what He will supply in the months to come.

— **Pastor Robert L. Lee**

New resources available from Parish Education

Lenski's New Testament Commentaries

A newly published 12-volume hard-cover set is available. Pastors, students, and anyone wishing to better understand the New Testament will find a wealth of valuable help in these clearly written commentaries. Lenski provides a literal translation of the original Greek text along with a section-by-section exposition. Written from a conservative Lutheran perspective, this classic series is an excellent resource for Bible study, limited sets are available at \$125. They retail at \$495.

What Luther Says

More than 5000 of Martin Luther's quotations are taken from his writing. All quotations are alphabetically and topically arranged for quick reference. (\$35)

The New Manners and Customs of Bible Times

Detailed accounts of ancient customs regarding marriage, education, farming, dress, economics, food, housing, worship; with colorful artwork, detailed maps and diagrams, topical and Scriptural indexes. (\$24.95)

Nelson's Complete Book of Bible Maps and Charts

Easy-to-understand charts, maps, tables and surveys. Visual overview of events, places and people in the Bible. Fully reproducible. (\$14.95)

The History of Christianity

Two thousand years of Christianity presented period by period, from the world of Greece and Rome to events in China and Eastern Europe in the 1990s. More than 400 colorful photographs, maps, charts and diagrams. (\$34.95)

AFLC Parish Education Office
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, MN 55441

An answer to prayer

The eastern sun was just beginning to cast its long shadows over the little fishing village of Naknek, Alaska. Pastor Tom Olson, AFLC missionary on loan to the Lutheran Mission Societies, was finishing his morning devotions and realized for the first time he had felt freedom from the Spirit to ask the Lord for a much needed airplane.

Only a few days earlier last November at the Evangelism Blitz in Gilbert, Arizona, Harvey Lofts-

gaard, a snowbird from the Park River, North Dakota parish, had asked AFLC Home Missions Director Paul Nash if he would buy his plane. Without hesitation, he answered, "Yes!" Evangelism Director Jim Rasmussen overheard the conversation and with a smile asked Pastor Nash, "How are you going to get the money for this since there is no fund set up to pay for such missionary equipment?"

Harvey signed the title papers and gave them to Pastor Nash. Now with poor eyesight, Harvey was content that his little Cessna 150 would be used in mission work and somehow the Lord would provide the purchase price. Pastor Nash took the papers back to Minneapolis and con-

tinued to pray that the Lord would provide the funds.

Several days later in the heartland of the U.S.A., Pastor Nash prepared to return home to Minneapolis after conducting a workshop in an AFLC congregation. A godly layman and his wife from that congregation sensed a prompting from the Lord and that Sunday afternoon, handed him a check to buy an airplane.

Trembling with the check in hand, Pastor Nash left for home to seek the Lord's guidance. Two days later he felt an urging from the Holy Spirit to call Pastor Tom Olson in Alaska. The phone rang in the Olson home at 7:30 a.m. and the first question asked was, "How's it going?" Tom responded by sharing how during his devotions, the Lord had just given him freedom to specifically ask Him for a plane. Pastor Nash could hardly wait for



Janesville, Wisconsin — Trinity Free Lutheran held a celebration to commemorate the 25th ordination anniversary of their pastor, Rev. Curtis Emerson. The congregation, family and friends of the Emersons attended a special service where AFLC Home Missions Director Paul Nash brought the message and served communion. Following the dinner, the Trinity Quilters gave them a quilt and the congregation gave them a mantle clock. The congregation also planted a tree on the church grounds in honor of the event. The "Janesville Gazette" interviewed Pastor Emerson and asked what motivated him to be in the ministry. His response was: "What I always go back to is that I know in my heart that I've been called to the ministry. It's that sacred call from God that keeps me going."

Mission Aviation Training Academy open in Washington

On January 1, 1999, a new Christian ministry in Arlington, Washington opened its doors. Located at the Arlington Airport, MATA (Mission Aviation Training Academy) is the vision of AFLC Home Mission Committee member, Pastor Michael Crowell, and former pastor of Elim Lutheran in Lake Stevens, Washington. MATA offers short-term classes for mission workers in radio, flying, computers, evangelism, counseling, and emergency medical training.

"This is not a structured two or four-year institution," Pastor Crowell said. "Rather, it's for the pastor/missionary who would like to complement their training with these skills."

In the course of doctoral studies at Faith Seminary of Tacoma, Pastor Crowell realized the need for short-term training opportunities for Christian workers. MATA will seek to meet that need through tailoring schedules of the students, rather than requiring

them to plan around a set academic schedule.

MATA also is seeking to assist existing Christian teaching ministries by providing a means of offering specialized training in the above areas, even when they are not currently set up to do so. Christian high schools, Bible colleges, or seminaries, for example, may contract with MATA to provide aviation instruction to students seeking to become involved in mission aviation. Special seminars and on-site instruction are available.

The academy is fully operational, utilizing leased facilities and aircraft at the Arlington Municipal Airport. MATA is incorporated as a non-profit organization in Washington, and is registered as a charitable organization under state law. For more information and a catalog write to: MATA, P.O. Box 566, Lake Stevens, WA 98258; or call 425-334-2540; e-mail at N5uja@juno.com

him to finish so he could tell Tom that the Lord had provided their plane!

Now several weeks later, money is coming in to upgrade the Cessna 150 to ready it for use in Alaska. Pastor Olson said, "I see this as an impetus for a future pastor pilot/missionary aviation association. Some have used a possible title of 'Free Lutheran Association of Pilot Supporters' or FLAPS, which would serve as a vehicle through which equipment is available for mission workers." Pastor Olson sees this little two-seater plane being used for the work in South Naknek, an isolated community which is accessible only by plane. Eventually he hopes to use a six-seater plane for use at Naknek. This would be large enough to carry families and be better suited for the longer trip to Anchorage.

This February Pastor Henry Mohagen and his wife Linda, will return for another month of ministry in Naknek. They were there

last summer. Pastor Mohagen was the pastor of Hope Lutheran in Rugby, North Dakota, and is now praying about future ministry in Alaska.

While in Naknek, Pastor Mohagen will be given flight instruction by Pastor Mike Crowell (see adjoining article on MATA). In February, Pastor Crowell is scheduled to give ground school training for instrument rating to Pastor Olson and a pilot from the congregation.

Back at the AFLC Home Missions office, Pastor Nash (also a pilot) is seeing God work in amazing ways! He said, "This is a powerful chapter in my life. Forty years ago as a small boy on our North Dakota farm, God spoke to me. Ever since I've had a passionate vision for mission aviation. Now, without anyone saying anything, this has fallen into our lap. I am overwhelmed to watch what the Lord is doing and will do through mission aviation."

— *Solveig Hjermstad*

Lisbon, Portugal — On Sunday, January 3, 1999, the official opening of the Lisbon congregation of the Igreja Luterana de Portugal was held. Rev. Artur Villares wrote, "It's a very important moment for us here in Portugal. This would not be possible without your support and trust." This is the first Lutheran congregation in that nation. AFLC World Missions is giving the group assistance for some of the start-up costs.

Aguascalientes, Mexico — Missionary Dan Giles is translating the AFLC Sunday school material into Spanish. He also works with Missionary Todd Schierkolk as they serve Spring of Living Water congregation and several area Bible study groups. Over 60 people gathered at the Schierkolk home during Christmas for a time of fellowship. Most were from the congregation and the study groups, but several non-Christian friends came as well.

Heidi Quam, McIntosh, Minnesota is planning to return to Brazil to help Missionaries Paul and Becky Abel in 1999 for six months. Heidi was a short-term assistant with the Abels last year. She replaces Becca Welsch of Amery, Wisconsin who worked with the Abel family until returning home this Christmas Eve.

Missionaries David and Sarah Nelson, Campo Mourão, Brazil became the official parents of their little Rachel. Her adoption papers came through on December 15, 1998, which happens to be David's birthday. Rachel will be five in May. The Nelson family expects to begin their furlough year in June.

Pastor Daniel Uzupan, Glens Falls, New York, has announced his retirement effective this spring. He is the pastor of Faith Lutheran Church, a home mission congregation located several hours north of Albany.

Loveland, Colorado — Lutheran Church of Hope has purchased five acres of land and is now in the annexation process with the city of Loveland. The congregation's building committees are planning and hoping to break ground before the end of 1999.

St. Joseph, Minnesota — Redeeming Love Lutheran dedicated their new temporary facility on February 1, 1999. They hope to one day build a sanctuary on the hill behind this current building. The congregation is located on Highway 75 in St. Joseph, just outside of St. Cloud. The congregation is served by Pastor Gary Skramstad, who is encouraged with the completion of his radiation treatments and is regaining his strength.

Ponca City, Oklahoma — On January 6, Good Shepherd Lutheran hosted four youth from Christ the King Lutheran in Pipestone, Minnesota, and 13 people from Calvary Lutheran in Arlington, South Dakota, on their way to Weslaco, Texas. Several from Ponca City joined the group for the 800 miles to Weslaco where they helped build a "crisis shelter" and conducted meetings at Faith Lutheran. Pastor Mark Olson led morning Bible studies and Pastor Tim Hurley preached during the evening services.

Omaha, Nebraska — Community of Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church recently donated a pulpit, pastor's bench, and pews to the new Faith Lutheran in Durant, Oklahoma. Both congregations recently became a part of the AFLC congregational roster.

Pastor Gary Jorgenson, Ottawa, Illinois has resigned as pastor of Faith Lutheran where he has served since 1989, in order to accept the call to Faith Lutheran in Durant, Oklahoma. When he begins his new ministry this spring, he will be the first pastor of this new AFLC congregation, which is not yet a year old. About 50 people are worshipping in a rented facility in Durant, a community about 90 miles from Dallas, Texas.

Living in joy

"On your mark, get set, go ..."

To hear those words at a race makes any heart beat a little faster. There is excitement in the air as all the runners prepare to leap into action. Most likely each runner has

Thank you and welcome

The start of the new year has seen the close of a time of service of some columnists and the beginning of others. We wish to thank Pastor Del Palmer who has shared "An Encouraging Word" during the past six months; Pastor Craig Wentzel who wrote our "Building the Base" column over the past year; and Pastor Lyndon Korhonen who shared "Something to Share" during the past year as well. Thank you for teaching us from God's Word.

We look forward to what God has to teach us from His Word during the coming year through our new column writers. Pastor Jim Rasmussen, who recently began serving as the AFLC Director of Evangelism, will be writing "An Encouraging Word" for the first six months of the year. On alternating issues during the year, Jon Dryburgh of Grand Forks, North Dakota will share in the "Building the Base" column and Jeanne Brandt of Sioux Falls, South Dakota will write in the "Something to Share" column. Thank you for your willingness to serve.

We enjoy hearing from you!

Your input and opinions matter to us. Letters to the editor of *The Lutheran Ambassador* are encouraged. We will gladly publish them if you so desire. If they are intended for publication, please indicate as such. Letters may be edited for space and clarity. They may be addressed to The Lutheran Ambassador, Box 446, Bruce, SD 57220. E-mail addresses are craigj@teleport.com or wshjerm@brookings.net.

prepared extensively and is anxious to do their best.

How does your Christian walk with the Lord compare to the above runner? Does your heart flutter with excitement as you walk with Christ? Are you willing to be there and serve your brother? Are you prepared with the knowledge you need to tell others? Are you anxious to do your best for the Lord?

Our WMF March lesson is titled, "Responding to the Message of Joy." This study from I Peter 1:13-25, gives us wonderful insights on how to respond to life with Jesus and how that life can produce joy in us. God gave us His Word to live by. Life with Jesus is not a guessing game. He provides direction through His Word. He uses words like "gird, keep and fix." That calls us to be ready for action.

Being a Christian is anything but boring! God also gave us His Son. We need to understand this Truth to its fullest. Joy follows as we comprehend what He did on the cross for us. He took our sin on Himself so that we can be forgiven of our sins and be called children of the heavenly Father. Once a child of His, we inherit heaven for all eternity! We have this to look forward to. While we wait for the glory of heav-

en, He equips us with everything we need for this earthly journey. Doesn't that excite you?

Our earthly journey can be very stressful at times. Often our old nature would like us to go back to our old way (the world's way) of doing things. But God wants us to be obedient to His Word and live a holy life. Victory is ours when we obey the instruction He gives. As we learn more about Jesus, we will love Him more. Then our motivation for doing things will also reflect Jesus in us. We will discover joy and security from our living relationship with Christ.

Each day He is there to guide and strengthen us in our journey. With the Bible to guide and the Holy Spirit living in us, we can live a positive life. We can even love our neighbor as we ought. Read and study God's Word and find love at the heart of Jesus' teaching. The ability and strength to be obedient and to "fervently love one another," will come through Him. May you have the courage to seek joy, the wisdom to know joy, and the spirit to share joy!

— Jeanne Jorgenson
Faith Lutheran
Ottawa, Illinois



That's a lot of boxes! Our Savior's Free Lutheran WMF in Argyle, Minnesota, shipped 26 boxes of clothing and miscellaneous items to the AFLC missions in Brazil. The missionaries appreciate the "care packages."

Camrose, Alberta — Solid Rock Lutheran celebrated a special Sunday on December 6. Canadian AFLC President Gene Sundby preached at the service which included 26 baptisms. The congregation is in the process of acquiring land for a future church building. They are currently renting the auditorium at the community's senior center. Jason Siemens has joined the Solid Rock staff as the parish worker.

Arlington, Washington — Atonement Free Lutheran will host the Pacific Northwest District Bible Conference, March 12 to 14. On the afternoon of March 14, a recent addition to the congregation's building will be dedicated.

Mesa, Arizona — The annual AFLC fellowship dinner will be held Tuesday, February 16, 1999 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Superstation Springs Center at 6555 East Southern Ave. in Mesa (adjacent to Luby's cafeteria).

Pastor Fred Faughn, Savannah, Georgia, has accepted the call to St. Mark's Lutheran Church in Whitestown, Indiana. He began his new ministry on January 24.

Minot, North Dakota — Bethel Lutheran will host a area-wide Bible conference during March 5-7. Dr. Francis Monseth is the featured speaker on the theme, "Leadership in the Church: Noble Desire or Necessary Duty?"

Pastor Paul Jecklin, Savannah, Georgia, has accepted the call to serve Zion Lutheran in Silverhill, Alabama. On February 1, he becomes their first full-time pastor since the late 1970s. In 1906 a group of Swedish Lutherans from Chicago organized Zion Lutheran. It was a member of the Augustana Synod, the LCA and the ELCA before joining the AFLC in 1996. Church treasurer, Ernest Burnett said, "We're excited with our new beginning. Silverhill is located in one of the fastest growing counties in the Southeast." They are located about 30 miles east of Mobile. Snowbirds are welcome to join them in worship. For more information call Ernest Burnett at 334-947-7826.

Pastor Roger Tappert, Indianapolis, Indiana, is now serving St. Mark's Lutheran full time. He formerly also taught at Indiana University-Purdue University in Indianapolis. One Advent Sunday last December he wrote and portrayed an "Interview with John the Baptist." Pastor Tappert is a frequent contributor of poetry to *The Lutheran Ambassador*.

Pastor Peter Bergstedt, Chisago City, Minnesota, is serving Bethany Lutheran of Clayton, Wisconsin.



Rev. Harry Andrew Bodsberg, 81, passed away at his home in Amery, Wisconsin on December 31, 1998. He was born on August 15, 1917 in St. Paul, Minnesota to Martin and Ingrid Bodsberg. After graduation from Harding High School in St. Paul, he attended the University of Minnesota and Northwestern College. During World War II he served in the U.S. Army in the invasion of Europe.

He married June S. Sandberg on October 15, 1941. He spent 30 years with Sperry-New Holland in marketing and sales while active in lay ministry. After retirement in 1980, he entered the Free Lutheran Seminary. He was ordained in 1988 and served Bethany Lutheran of Clayton, Wisconsin until his retirement in 1997. Pastor Bodsberg had also served as president of the Hauge Lutheran Innermission Federation. Funeral services were held on January 4, 1999 at Bethany Lutheran.

He is survived by his wife, June; two daughters, Victoria Galush and Jacqueline Gaffey, both of St. Paul, Minnesota; and two grandsons.

Blessed be his memory.

Pastor Manfred Kurschner, Edmonton, Alberta, has accepted the call from Bethel Lutheran in Frontier, Saskatchewan. He and his wife, Renate, moved to Frontier in January to begin their new ministry. Pastor Kurschner is on the AFLC Fellowship Clergy Roster in Canada.

Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

AFLC Benevolences (12 months) — January 1 - December 31, 1998

FUND	TOTAL Subsidy	REC'D IN APRIL	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	% TOTAL
General Fund	\$224,870.00	\$26,806.72	245,146.76	1.09
Seminary	112,558.00	24,565.95	114,803.28	1.02
Bible School	180,678.00	28,234.74	159,861.85	88
Home Missions	260,263.00	55,410.82	253,953.85	98
World Missions	420,686.00	74,768.09	408,921.01	97
Capital Investment	16,276.00	1,443.13	14,751.36	91
Parish Education	50,335.00	16,074.62	68,646.18	1.36
Church Extension	18,092.00	3,503.14	24,496.14	1.87
TOTALS	\$1,278,758.00	230,807.21	1,280,580.43	1.01
TOTALS 1997	1,223,905.00	219,811.95	1,160,702.44	95
Goal 100%				

**1999 Association of Free Lutheran Congregations
37th Annual Conference – June 16 to 20, 1999**

Fergus Falls Middle School
601 Randolph Avenue • Fergus Falls, Minnesota

*Hosted by Calvary Free Lutheran Church
1602 County Road 111
Fergus Falls, MN 56537
Phone: 218-736-4282*

No Other Foundation Than Christ I Corinthians 3:11

Name _____

Spouse's name _____

Check One

Childrens names and ages _____

____ Lay person

____ Lay visitor

Address _____

____ Pastor

City _____ State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____

____ Visiting pastor

Home Congregation _____

Benefits for pre-registering by June 1, 1999:

- Reduced fee for early registration
- Collectible Name Tag/Book Marker
- Faster registration lines
- A tremendous help for the host church

Full refund for cancellations through June 8, 1999.

Send registration to:

**AFLC annual conference
1602 County Rd. 111
Fergus Falls, MN 56537**

	<i>Before June 1</i>	<i>After June 1</i>	
Conference Registration for couples	<i>Early Registration \$30.00</i>	Registration \$40.00	\$ _____
Conference Registration for singles	<i>Early Registration \$20.00</i>	Registration \$25.00	\$ _____
WMF Registration	<i>Early Registration \$ 3.00</i>	Registration \$ 5.00	\$ _____
Vacation Bible School Registration number of children K-6 _____		Free will offering	

Conference Events

	Number of persons	Per person	
WMF Luncheon	Wednesday noon _____	x \$ 6.00	_____ \$ _____
WMF Breakfast	Thursday, 7 a.m. _____	x \$ 5.00	_____ \$ _____
Schools Corporation	Thursday, 5:30 p.m. _____	x \$ 8.00	_____ \$ _____
ARC Corporation	Friday noon _____	x \$ 6.00	_____ \$ _____
Missions Corporation	Friday, 7 a.m. _____	x \$ 5.00	_____ \$ _____
Pastor's Banquet	Friday, 5:30 p.m. _____	x \$13.50	_____ \$ _____

Conference Meals

	Number of persons	Per person	
Noon Lunch Thursday, June 17	_____ x	\$ 5.50	_____ \$ _____
Noon Lunch Friday, June 18	_____ x	\$ 5.50	_____ \$ _____
Noon Lunch Saturday, June 19	_____ x	\$ 5.50	_____ \$ _____

Total Conference Cost \$ _____

I/we have special needs (wheelchair, etc.) Yes___ No___

I/we will arrive by airplane to the Conference Yes___ No___

Make check payable to Calvary Free Lutheran Church. Check must accompany registration.

Nursery services will be available. Please inquire at the registration desk when you arrive.

Questions can be sent by email to Greg Olson at golson@otpc.com

A special school

The percentage of pastors on the AFLC clergy roster who are graduates of the Free Lutheran Seminary is going down. In 1981, of the 100 ordained pastors, 61 were FLS graduates. The percentage stayed the same for the next ten years. In 1991, 114 of the 188 ordained pastors were graduates of FLS, for a percentage of 60.6. The 1998 clergy roster indicates a 55.5% with 207 ordained pastors listed and 115 of them being FLS graduates. In the past seven years, 50 ordained men have been added to the clergy roster, but over the same period 31 men became no longer an active part of the roster. Of the 50 that have been added, 19 are graduates of FLS — 38%.

So is this more than just a bunch of numbers? Does it really matter? Yes, it does. I believe very little is more significant to the future of our church body than the strength of our seminary.

We appreciate those who have come into our church body after receiving training in other seminaries. They make important contributions and help meet crucial needs. In recent years, the number of congregations in need of pastors has been greater than the number of men graduating from our seminary. Thankfully, God has lead various men with similar convictions to ours to join us and help us address those needs. But should we be relying primarily on men trained in other seminaries to serve our congregations? Is it important that the majority of our pastors be ones who were trained at our seminary? Does an education from Free Lutheran Seminary make a difference? Yes, most definitely.

One of the first things the founders of our church body did was establish a seminary. They saw a need that still exists today. We want pastors serving our congregations who hold certain convictions and have been taught certain things that are not being taught in other seminaries.

In the AFLC we have a unique and special view of the congregation. It is “the right form of the Kingdom of God on earth.” It “directs its own affairs, subject to the authority of the Word and the Spirit of God, and acknowledges no other ecclesiastical authority or government above itself” (Fundamental Principles, no. 1 and 5).

Our seminary holds before its students a high view of the congregation. Students pray regularly, by name, for the congregations of the AFLC. They are expected to have been an active part of a congregation before coming to seminary, and to be an active part of a congregation while in seminary. They are being pre-

pared to serve congregations.

Students at FLS are not taught that the most gifted and capable will serve in denomination-wide positions, while the rest will serve as pastors of local congregations. In the AFLC we believe that special callings of service to the church body do exist, but the highest calling is to be a pastor of a local congregation. We want pastors who are trained in that kind of thinking.

Seminarians are not sent out as the ones with all the answers who are to go forth and straighten out the laity. Our congregations are full of men and women who have walked with the Lord for many years and been diligent students of God’s Word. I was taught at FLS to listen and learn from these lay people.

I was also taught to serve the people of the congregation. The pastor is to be the leader, but he is to lead by serving. He is to lead by following the example of Jesus who “made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant” (Philippians 2:7, NIV).

Some schools train business managers. Some train marketing executives. Others train orators. FLS trains servants.

Our seminary has been accused of being “a glorified Bible school.” It is an accusation accepted with pleasure. Seminarians need some practical training and instruction in the “how tos” of being a pastor, but at FLS it is recognized that the most “practical” training is instruction in the Word of God. “All

Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work” (II Timothy 3:16, 17, NIV).

The approach toward the Word of God is both Lutheran and evangelical at FLS. Those two things are not contradictory. They can coexist.

We want pastors who hold to a Lutheran understanding of the Bible and, at the same time, see people apart from Christ as being lost and call people to a personal relationship with Jesus and a saving knowledge of Him. That kind of teaching is given at FLS.

Our congregations need more men who have been called by God and have received the unique kind of training given at FLS. That means we need to pray. Pray, with thanksgiving, for the school’s dean, faculty and board of trustees. Pray for the current students and for future students. Pray as if the future of our congregations depends upon it — because it does.

— **Pastor Craig Johnson**

“...very little is more significant to the future of our church body than the strength of our seminary.”

BUILDING THE BASE

An outsider looking in

Greetings in Christ Jesus our Lord! My name is Jon Dryburgh, and I have been asked to write the "Building the Base" column this year for *The Ambassador*. When I was asked to write, it was suggested that I focus on some issues that are relevant for young people within our churches.

As the title of this article suggests, I am an outsider. I did not grow up in the AFLC. I was baptized into the Methodist Church, confirmed in the American Lutheran Church, and spent a great deal of time at a Bible camp that was supported by the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America. In all of those places, God-fearing men and women encouraged my faith.

In the fall of 1987, my family decided to look for a different church. I was a sophomore in high school and idealistic enough to think that if we stayed in our church, we could help change the decisions being made by pastors in a faraway city. Thankfully, the wisdom of my parents prevailed and we joined Victory Free Lutheran Church in Park River, North Dakota. As a result of my past, at times I do feel like an outsider. That isn't bad. I just don't have the same background knowledge about the AFLC and how it works as people

who grew up in it. I wish I had that background, but I don't.

Now here is my question for you, and this is the question I hope God will allow me to discuss in future issues of *The Ambassador*. Are we really free?

The word "freedom" has many different meanings. To veterans, freedom is a word that often produces watery eyes during our national anthem. On the other hand, freedom to a young person might mean the ability to make decisions without checking with a parent first. Within the church there are many meanings as well.

Before we can have a discussion about our freedom, we must have a proper understanding of our bondage.

One of the greatest pictures of bondage is the Israelites in the book of Exodus. They were forced to give up their children to be thrown into the Nile (Exodus 1:22). They had to do hard manual labor with bricks and mortar, and labor in the field (Exodus 1:13-14). Exodus 2:23 says, "... And the sons of Israel sighed because of the bondage, and they cried out; and their cry for help because of their bondage rose up to God." The reality of their experience physically is a reminder to us of the reality of our experience spiritually.

Ephesians 2:1 says, "And you were dead in your trespasses and sins," and Ephesians 2:3 tells us

that we were, "by nature children of wrath." When our children are born, they are dead in sin. We ourselves continually fall short of God's righteousness (Romans 3:23). The result of that falling short is eternal death. Romans 8:23 tells us that, "... even we ourselves (we who are saved) groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly for our adoption as sons."

My fear for us as young people is that we are not sighing because of our sinful nature and the consequences of that sinfulness. If we do not hear about and understand our bondage, then how can we understand the freedom we claim is ours? That is the question I will be asking this year, are we really free? As an "outsider" I hope my questions will not cause defensiveness, but instead encourage all of us, young and old, to think and pray about our own relationship with the One who truly does set us free.



— Jon Dryburgh
Trinity Lutheran
Grand Forks, North Dakota