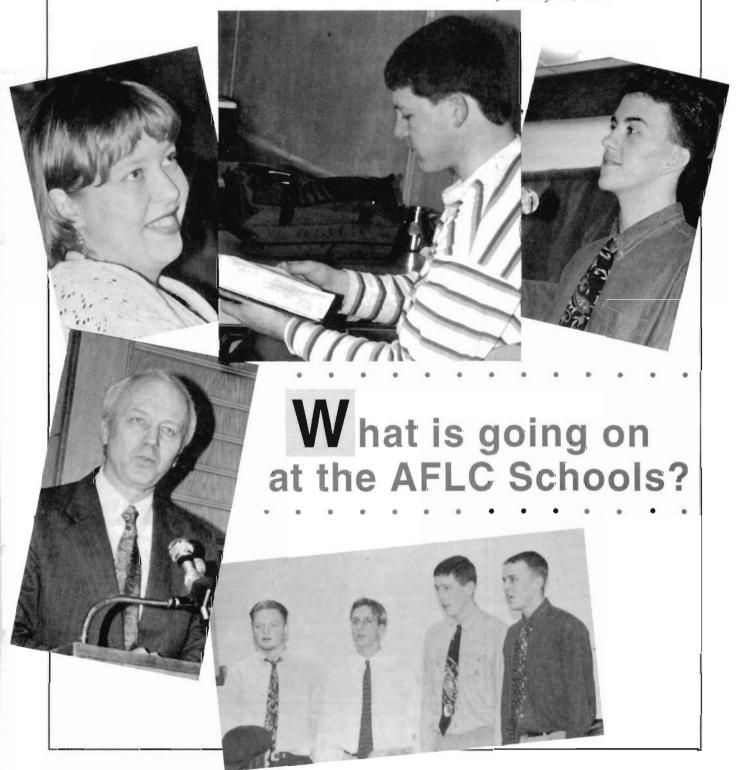
### The Lutheran AMBASSADOR

January 30, 1996



### THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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### AN ENCOURAGING WORD

### Jesus - the light of the world

Again therefore Jesus spoke to them saying, "I am the light of the world; he who follows Me shall not walk in the darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12

his claim of Jesus to be the "light of the world" was spoken following the great feast mentioned in John 7:2. A part of that feast involved the lighting of the grand candelabra which shone over the whole city in commemoration of the pillar of fire that led Israel during their wilderness wanderings. Prior to hearing these words of Jesus the Jews had been reminded of the faithfulness of God to lead His people through the darkness of night as they journeyed toward the promised land.

Jesus was implying that it was not only ancient Israel that needed "light" but the people of His day as well — and the need still exists for all people of our day too! It is needed because we live in a world filled with the darkness of sin. The word for darkness used here is related to another Greek word which means strength or might. The idea is one of restraint for when one is overcome by night he is forced to stop.

Have you experienced the restraining effects of the darkness of sin? Perhaps it is sin around you in the world that has powerfully affected you, your family, or your church. It may be the sin within that has seemingly paralyzed you in your Christian walk. Darkness is real, it is ever present, and its influence on our lives is undeniable.

Jesus comes to us each day, however, in the midst of the darkness and reminds us that He is the light of the world. Just as Moses pointed the Israelites toward the awesome pillar of fire that guided them through the darkness of night, Jesus today calls us to Himself that He, the true light, might guide us in this dark world. The scriptural idea of light is that of an active power which overcomes the opposing power of darkness.

For the present His guidance is not out of the darkness, but through it. At times it may be through the "valley of the shadow of death;" at times through the blackness of utter discouragement and despair; or at times through a way that comes near to the ugliness of the wretched sin of this world. But it will always be the way of His victorious light and life and ultimately to the place where darkness is no more and where we will dwell eternally in His light!

How can we walk in His light today? He says we must "follow Him." To all who receive Him by faith He gives Himself as their personal light. Daily, Jesus bids us to follow Him and to walk in the light of His countenance, His saving grace and His power over the darkness of this world and to experience the blessedness of the light of Life!

Come to the Light, 'tis shining for thee
Sweetly the Light has dawned upon me;
Once I was blind, but now I can see —
The Light of the world is Jesus.
— Philip P. Bliss

— Rev. Les Johnson Faith Lutheran Lake Alma, Saskatchewan

### The lovliest sight to see

n old gospel hymn bears the title, "The Loveliest Sight to See is Youth Kneeling in Prayer to God." Since the beginning of the present school year, there has been a marked increase of these "lovely sights" here on our seminary and Bible school campus. A revival of prayer has characterized the lives of many students, staff, and faculty.

What a lovely sight it has been to come into the campus chapel early in the morning and see in the dim light the silhouettes of students praying, some kneeling at the altar rail, others huddled together in pews and some by themselves. Words cannot describe the joy of seeing these precious youth in prayer, realizing their dependency upon the Lord for strength and wisdom for the day. How welcome they are in God's eyes to come before His throne of grace with their needs!

When the seminary opened in September, students requested that the morning devotional period begin earlier in order to allow more time for prayer. Nearly all the students and faculty have been gathering every morning to call upon the Lord together, to agree together regarding requests to bring to Him, and to praise and thank Him for His grace and mercy.

The prayer requests are many and varied. It is when one recognizes a deep dependence upon the Lord and a confidence that He hears and answers prayer that one desires to bring everything before Him.

In the seminary every day three congregations and their pastors are brought before the Lord in prayer. Often the Sunday school teachers in those churches are prayed for as well as church council members and other leaders. The pastor and his family are also remembered before the Lord, that God may bless them and provide the necessary strength and wisdom to serve the spiritual needs of their congregations.

The various joint ministries of the AFLC are also brought before the Lord: world and home missions; parish educa-



Kelani O'Neil Lena, Wisconsin

tion; youth ministry; the many boards and committees; the directors of the departments and our church president. There is prayer for revival in all of our congregations, beginning with ourselves. These are but a few of the prayer concerns as the campus family unites before the Lord.

Yes, by the gracious working of the Holy Spirit, there are lovely sights at the seminary and Bible school these days as people kneel in prayer before our great God. No wonder there has been such a precious spirit of openness to God's Word. No wonder there has been a special sensitivity and tenderness to the things of the Lord. No wonder the fellowship has been so sweet. No wonder there has been such an earnest concern for revival. No wonder there has been a renewed burden for the lost. It really is no wonder since God answers prayer.

> - Dr. Francis Monseth AFLTS Dean Minneapolis, Minnesota



Rev. Jerry Holmaas

**A**MBASSADOR — What classes are you teaching this year?

Rev. Jerry Holmans — Genesis, Isaiah, Historical Books and Ezekiel-Daniel in the Bible school. General Epistles and Hebrews, Poetical Books, Major and Minor Prophets in the seminary.

Rev. Jerry Moan — Gospel of John, Luke, Acts, Hebrews, Public Speaking, I and II Corinthians and Revelation in the Bible school. Greek, Synoptic Gospels, Hermeneutics, Gospel of John, Acts and I and II Corinthians in the seminary.

A — What has been the biggest challenge you have faced as a new teacher?

J.H. — Without a doubt, it has been keeping up with the preparation to teach four different classes each week. The twelve hours a week in the classroom are easy enough to handle; finding enough hours to even begin to adequately prepare for them is another matter! I've found

That's one of the greatest things about Bible school: the study of the Word and the fellowship around it ... so that we can know God's purpose for our lives and can shine like the stars in the universe.

— Eric Rasmussen Student Body President Winter Quarter, at a recent student body meeting.



### Meet the new

being a new teacher to be both a joyous and consuming challenge — and I am most grateful to God for His sustaining grace and the students for their patience..

J.M. — Teaching Greek has definitely been an adventure. The transition from being a student of the language to teaching it is no small leap! What spurs me on is a passion to make Greek practical for pastors. It is no secret that the mortality rate for those studying original Bible languages is horrendous. Yet I am convinced that this is one of the most valuable and practical tools seminary training can offer.

A — What has been the greatest blessing you have enjoyed?

J.H. — The greatest blessing I've enjoyed has come through the power of the Word as I have experienced God working through it, both in my own life and in the lives of students in both of our schools. I personally consider it a high privilege to be "forced" to spend long days preparing to teach God's Word. God has blessed me deeply, even though I've barely been able to scratch the surface of any material I have taught. Students in both schools have been a significant blessing to me as they have shared insights they have discovered in the books we've been studying together.

J.M. — Seeing the Lord at work in our schools and lives being changed — this has been my greatest joy. Not only that, but I see how God has been at work in my life as well.

A — Has there been anything about your first few months as a teacher that has surprised you?

J.H. — The intensity of life as a beginning teacher has surprised me. I expected to be overwhelmed going through each class for the first time; I didn't expect to be so thoroughly overwhelmed, however. I trust I have learned lessons about God's ability to sustain me when I am helpless, for He has been faithful to do just that!

The other most pleasant surprise has been the quality of the work of the Bible school students. I have been impressed with the insights so many of the students have shown as they have earnestly sought to learn God's Word. Of course, there are some who are not as serious as

### teachers

others (they remind me too much of myself when I was an AFLBS student with some of their parents!).

J.M. — Being busy and feeling somewhat overwhelmed was no surprise. The pleasant "surprise" is being able to say, in spite of this, that I totally love what I am doing! Thanks to each one who remembers us before the Throne. Your support uplifts us when, like Moses, our arms grow weary. Praise the Lord for His sustaining grace!

A — What are some things you would like people to pray about regarding the students?

J.H. — Pray for practical needs like finances and good health. Pray for discipline in study habits and getting adequate rest. Pray for a hedge of protection around our campus. Pray that each student would truly know the Lord and grow in his/her faith. Pray that they might be focused on Christ above all else — that they would be equipped and sent forth as soul-winners, ambassadors for Christ.

J.M. — Pray for those students who struggle with keeping a good balance between work and study, play and rest, and how best to use the hours available each day. Pray for the seniors in both schools as they must make major decisions about the future. Pray, too, that God will call out students for our seminary, for the fields continue to be "white unto harvest." Pray for the Bible school students who are wrestling with God's call.

A — What are some things you would like people to pray about regarding yourself?

J.H. — Pray for ongoing strength for me, especially that I would be disciplined to not only study in preparation for classes, but that I would also not neglect my own soul. I always fear becoming a "professional Christian," that is, one who only spends time in God's Word because it is my job and not because I am passionately in love with Jesus. Pray also for my family as they have experienced major changes in my changing from pastoring to teaching. Pray that when I am home I will be not just there, but truly available to them.

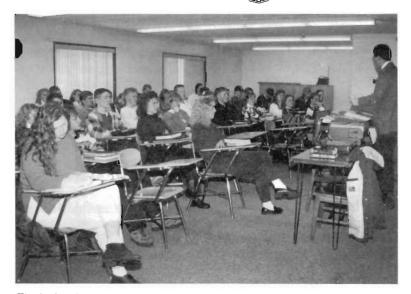
As a final comment, I wish to thank



Rev. Jerry Moan

the people of the AFLC for your ongoing prayers for our schools and for me as a teacher. Don't stop praying. We've already seen great answers to your prayers on campus and we look forward to what God will continue to do!

J.M. — Pray for my family (who would wish to see me at home more than they do); for strength, wisdom and sensitivity to the individual needs of students; that God's truth would be presented in such a way that it might have the greatest impact, and that I might be an encourager to my fellow-workers here on campus. The Lord is great — what a joy to serve Him! "Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord may spread rapidly and be glorified" (II Thessalonians 3:1, NASB).



The junior classroom.

## Who are the junior seminary students?



The Seminary Chorus, (L. to R.): Gary Haug, junior; Tim Johnson, senior; David Johnson, junior; and Bruce Peterson, senior. (Row 2): Tom Schierkolk, senior; Ivars Krafts, junior; Craig Benson, middler; and Jason Holt, junior.

hinking that God is calling you to seminary but that you are too old to go back to school? Or perhaps you feel it would be too hard to uproot your family? For three out of four junior seminarians, being well established in a career and home was no deterrent to answering God's call to begin studies at AFLTS. Who are these junior seminarians? What are some advantages in starting seminary after being seasoned in life's experiences? The Lutheran Ambassador sought to find answers to these and other questions regarding this unusual class.

Meet the AFLTS Class of 1999: Gary and Lucinda Haug: Gary was a full-time music teacher in grades 5—12 and a North Dakota farmer. Jason and Jennifer Holt: Jason is the "young one" and just out of the University of Minnesota, Morris. David and Cindi Johnson: David taught junior and senior high and community college English prior to becoming an audiologist for about twenty years at Hennepin County Medical Center in Minneapolis. Ivars and Bonma Krafts: Ivars was a lawyer living in a northern Minneapolis suburb.

Their children range from ages 12 to 28 with the exception of the Helts, who have no children. They have been active in their local congregations as Sunday school teachers, church council members and other congregational ministries.

So why does a man uproot his family (the Gary Haug family moved from their home of 21 years) and start seminary? Answers like these came: "The Lord called me out of my work ... He opened the door to the seminary extra wide this past summer and reaffirmed His desire for me to be at seminary." Jason Holt said he came to FLS "after much time in prayer and consideration, I felt the Lord's call to seminary. I found the Free Lutheran Seminary to fit my convictions. The Lord has brought me to a place where I can be equipped to serve Him."

All of the men have had nothing but strong support from their family and friends in making this move. One admitted at first some were curious and uncertain because they were unfamiliar with the AFLC, but "at this point, all my close friends and immediate family feel this is the best place for me."

Does coming to seminary now at this time in life have special advantages? David Johnson answered, "This is my third career change. All my training and efforts have been in a caring ministry of one kind or another, so the change in seminary preparation is not so great as one might think. Work history provides ministry insights that would not be present if I had pursued seminary right out of college." Ivars Krafts added, "I am convinced this is what I want to do. Also, my prior life experience gives me a better appreciation and enables me to get more benefit from the courses. This allows for a better understanding of the needs of a pastor."

Yes, there are adjustments and challenges. The men talk of balancing work and study time, of the family and financial adjustments and yet, Gary Haug com-



View of the possible building site from the front of the men's dorm looking northeast. The southeast corner of the women's dorm is pictured on the left.

### Task force to study campus building project

Last fall, David Borg, member of the Board of Trustees, met with AFLBS alumni during homecoming weekend to share plans for a proposed building complex for the Bible school. For years the vision for a gymnasium, student center, classrooms

and possible library has been discussed. Preliminary plans place the complex just east of the men's and women's residence halls. Now financial and planning committees are getting organized and funds designated for the future building project are being received.

More volunteers are needed for each of the task force committees. To volunteer, share your concerns or just get more information, contact David Borg, 6486 Rhoades Ave. SW, Cokato, MN 55321 or call 612-285-5275.

### Alumni – join us and share the vision.

mented, "God has been absolutely affirming the way things have worked out." David Johnson said, "The Lord is meeting our emerging needs. We continue to be amazed at His goodness in His dealing with us."

These men have answered God's call. They wait on His leading for their future. Ivars Krafts said, "When I look back at how God has led me in the past, that enables me not to worry about the future and trust that He will continue to provide for me."

> - David Johnson and Solveig Hjermstad

Schools get new address

No the campus has not moved! But the post office has given them a new address. It's now 3120 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55441. Please note this change in your mailings to the Bible school and seminary offices and students. The AFLC headquarters address remains the same — 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, MN 55441.

### There's a fire in our school

t is 7:25 a.m. "I'm right on schedule," I think to myself as I drive up to the seminary building. The temperature is cold outside but soon the Lord will build a fire in my heart that will warm me for the rest of the day. The excitement slowly builds as I contemplate what is going to happen in the next few minutes.

As I walk into the main classroom I greet some of my "brothers" attending seminary. The clock says 7:30. Someone begins the kindling process with the question: "Does anyone have a prayer request or an answer to prayer they would like to mention?" And so the spark has just given birth to a small flame that begins to warm our spirits.

"We need to pray for ... Let's uphold ... in prayer, ... I would appreciate your prayers today because ... God answered our prayers by providing ... praise the Lord!"

As the words, "Let's go to the Lord in prayer," are spoken, each reverently kneels by his desk. The fire continues to build in our hearts. "O heavenly Father, we kneel in awe of who You are and we wait for You to kindle our hearts this morning as we begin a new day of classes ... Come Holy Spirit, continue Your wonderful work in our lives."

And so, one by one, all of our requests are brought before the throne of God and many prayers of adoration and thanksgiving to God are spoken. We sense the warmth of God's Spirit burning within our souls. Our hearts have been renewed and refreshed. We have confessed our need of God, of the Holy Spirit, and of Jesus Christ. We are now ready to open our Bibles, soak up the gems of truth God has prepared for us as we learn to "rightly divide the word of Truth."

As students at the Free Lutheran Seminary, we are thankful for the spiritual emphasis that is evident in all areas of our training. The people who founded our seminary earnestly prayed for a school where God's Word and His Holy Spirit would rule supreme. We can gladly and honestly say that their prayers are still being answered today.

The emphasis at our seminary is not simply upon changed minds, but rather upon changed hearts! The students and faculty truly desire to follow in the footsteps of the Apostles when they declared in Acts 6:4 that they were going to devote themselves to prayer, and to the ministry of the Word.

God is richly blessing us and our families as we earnestly pray and study His Word at our seminary. We are seeking God's spiritual blessings as well as His physical blessings. We are praying for "changed lives" as God's Spirit touches hearts in a powerful and lasting way.

We thank God for the desires that He places in our hearts, including the desire to bring all of our requests before His heavenly throne. Every day we look for evidences of God's work. They can be clearly seen. He provides during times of family and financial crisis. We marvel at His wonderful work of bringing repentance over sin and guiding us into spiritual maturity.

We thank God for professors who not only talk about the issues of the Christian Church, but also desire to pray about these matters. They are godly, and yet humble role models for us students.

Would you please continue to pray for our seminary — for our professors, for the students and for our families? If Satan can get into this vital work of the AFLC, it will not be long before he will control all of our Free Lutheran congregations.

Pray that God would build up spiritual leaders in our congregations and that those who sense the Lord's call into full-time Christian ministry would be encouraged to step out in faith. Although our enrollment has increased this year, there is a need for many more students to meet the growing opportunities for ministry. Many of our students have given up well-paying professional positions, but ask any one if God has not been faithful in providing for them and their families. The resounding response is that "God is faithful!"

Join us in praying, "Thank You Lord, for the spirit of prayer within our seminary. Thank You for the fire in our school."



### They just keep coming ... AFLBS Parents' Day, 1995

### And their children's

children ... Percy and Judy Strand, Abercrombie, North Dakota (seated middle) began sending their children to AFLBS in 1968. All eight of their children attended Bible school: Ron, Dennis, Elaine, Duane, Jean, Joyce, Paul and Charles. Now their three oldest grandchildren are AFLBS students. Also pictured are (left): Melissa and Jason Strand, children of Barb '70 (DuBois) and Ron Strand, '70 of Abercrombie and Scott Mundfrom, son of Elaine, '74 (Strand -- not pictured) and Dan Mundfrom, '73 of Greeley, Colorado.

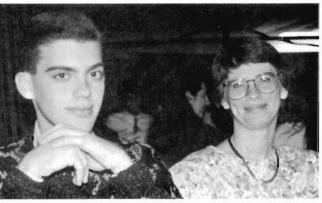




Kent and Mabel Quanbeck, McVille, North Dakota, attended the December 9, 1995 Parents' Day Banquet with their youngest AFLBS student, Janell. Twenty-two years ago they attended their first Parents' Day with their oldest daughter Karen. Throughout the years their other children, Marlys, Diane, Kenneth and Glen were Bible school students.



A snowstorm and bitterly cold temperatures didn't damper the attendance at Parents' Day. Pictured (L. to R.) are: April Lehman, Everett, Washington; Rose and Gene, '74 Finstrom and their daughter, Gretchen Linder of Buxton, North Dakota.



For several years, AFLBS has seen a rising enrollment of second generation Bible school students. Pictured are Adam and Jayne Jordan, Faith, South Dakota. Adam is the son of Dan, '76 and Jayne, '76 (Sletten) Jordan.

### Part-time teachers at the Schools

Rev. Dave Keippela, Stacy, MN -Captivity Epistles, AFLBS Pastoral Counseling, FLS

Rev. John Skeie, New Hope, MN —

Thessalonians/Pastoral Epistles, AFLBS

Mr. Harley Stover, Minneapolis -Creation/Science, AFLBS

Rev. Robert Lee, AFLC President — Doctrine I, AFLBS

General Church History, FLS

Rev. Tonnes Pollestad, Andover, MN —

Reformation Church History, AFLBS

Rev. Jim Haga, Cambridge, MN --

Denominational Differences, AFLBS

Rev. Amos Dyrud, Minneapolis -

Worship, FLS

Mr. Peter Burton, Minneapolis — Greek II, FLS

In the last issue of The Lutheran Ambassador I reported on what Mike Hogan and I discovered concerning growth in AFLC churches. This article reports on what we found regarding our schools. What we were attempting to do was gauge the influence of our schools on our church body. To do this, graduation rates were used as the primary measure of effectiveness. Of course there is more to a school than how many people it graduates every year, but

### Report from Hungary

ary and I have been in Hungary since September 1, and are being blessed and refreshed in the fellowship here. We are working under the direction of Pastor Bulscu Szell, who is the pastor of the Lutheran congregation in Kispest, and president of Fellowship of Lutherans for the Gospel (EKE). Our contact with Bulscu began when he attended the International Lutheran Bible School Director's Conference we hosted at AFLBS in 1994. EKE is an informal group of pastors and people who are Bible-believing, evangelistic Lutherans in Hungary. They sponsor summer Bible camps for all ages, and evangelistic meetings and Bible conferences throughout the year. This is the group that also has a vision for a Bible school here.

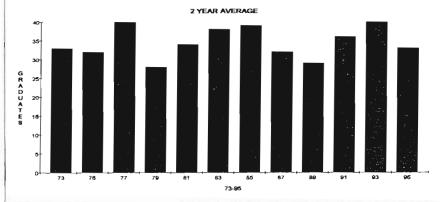
Mary and I have been to about twenty congregations for Bible conferences, evangelistic meetings and Sunday worship services, sharing the gospel and raising the vision among the people for a Hungarian Lutheran Bible School. We have also had the privilege to share the gospel at high schools, colleges, and the Lutheran seminary here in Budapest. What a privilege it has been for us to witness people of all ages coming to receive Jesus as their personal Savior, and to

### **Graduation trends in AFLC**

we were not aware of another way to objectively evaluate our schools.

What we discovered was that the decline in our church body beginning in the mid-1980s was for the most part paralleled by a decline in our school's graduation rates for the same period. We will begin with the Bible school.

AFLBS was one of the brighter spots in this study. The last five years have seen the greatest number of graduates for any fiveyear period in its history. This has included an increasing number of international students, but since this study was designed to measure the condition of the national church, international students were not included in the average. The information for the "2 year Average" was obtained by adding the previous year and dividing it by two. We felt a larger number would give us a more stable average and it would allow us to compare Bible school graduation rates with the information available for odd numbered years in the annual reports.



hear testimonies of many more who have experienced salvation in Jesus as a result of the faithful gospel ministry of the pastors in EKE. As we have gone from church to church, there are two questions I am invariably asked. The first is if I believe in the inerrancy of all of Scripture. Next I am asked to share a personal testimony of how I came to receive Jesus into my heart and life as personal Savior. Since these were also the key issues upon which AFLBS was founded, we recognize that here is a fellowship with a kindred spirit to ours!

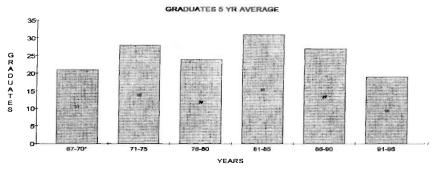
As our time in Hungary will soon be over, God has laid a burden and concern on our hearts to see the vision for a Lutheran Bible School in Hungary become a reality. Others also share this vision. We are grateful to the Hauge Foreign Mission for their

support in prayer and gifts during our time here, and for their desire to help in the ongoing ministry of EKE and the Hungarian Lutheran Bible School. (The Hauge Foreign Mission is the group that sponsors the Labor Day Weekend camp at the ARC). They have set up a special fund for the establishment of such a Bible school, to help pay for property or personnel. Our prayer is that God will touch the hearts of many people in our churches so that this school can become a reality in the very near future. In these few months in Hungary, we have seen how the cults have poured money, buildings and personnel into this country. We must help our brothers and sisters in Christ reach the youth for Christ while the doors are still open!

 Rev. Don and Mary Greven AFLBS dean on sabbatical

### **Schools**

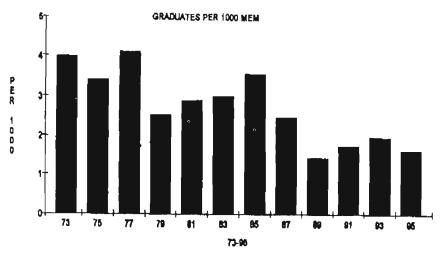
There are three peaks in this graph: one around 1977, one in the expected mid-80s, and another around 1993. It is a little more difficult to draw conclusions from this information, but the following chart, "Graduates Per 1000 Mem," compares the above twoyear average with the number of confirmed members in the AFLC for that year. We wanted to find out how much the Bible school was being used by the members of the AFLC. This graph also shows the school going through cycles, but the general trend is downward. Based on this information it has to be said that AFLBS is decreasing in its influence on our church body.



need for the number of pastors in increasing.

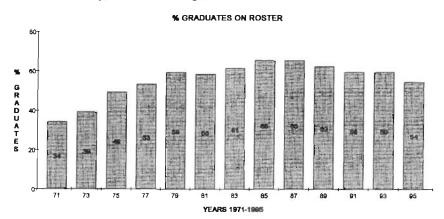
Another factor that indicates the influence the seminary has on our denomination is the number of seminary graduates serving on our clergy roster. The graph "% Graduates On Roster" shows the percentage of AFLTS graduates expect, it lags a year or two behind the decline in graduation rates.

I felt it would also be helpful to know how many graduates the seminary should be putting out to meet our current needs. In order to do so, I needed to make some assumptions. The first was that the average ministry life of a pastor is 30 years. Since there are currently about 190 positions that could be filled by seminary graduates, a yearly rate of just over six graduates would be needed to fill that need. However, since 1967, a period of 28 years, only 58% of graduates are still in service. Considering this, the average graduation rate needs to be just under 11 per year. This of course is neglecting to consider pastors from other sources. The AFLC has never been served strictly by its own seminary graduates. Since only 54% of the clergy roster are currently graduates, only six graduates per year are needed to maintain this percentage, but (continued on page 14)



I did not include a graph by individual years for the seminary. The numbers varied too greatly each year to allow visualization of a trend. Instead, five-year averages were used from 1967 until now. Since only four years were available for the first period of the study, an average of the four years was added to make up a hypothetical fifth year. The graph indicates the same trend as in the AFLC church membership. Perhaps, the most disturbing thing about this trend is that the decline in seminary graduates is taking place at the same time the

on our clergy roster. It shows the same pattern of decline as the rest of the study, but as one might



# acing the fight on our knees

Christian lives that is often underused. For instance, how many times are we found hurling up the "desperation prayers" without acknowledging God's presence in our comfortable times? Or how often do we pray without faith or ambition for the subject being prayed for? These are convicting questions which bring out a more important one: is prayer an important part of our spiritual life? May this question constantly be before us as we continue to realize the impact prayer can truly have.

Looking at our world should give us a sense of urgency for the importance of prayer. As we watch our adversary devour our children using drugs, sex, teenage pregnancy and abortion — we should pray. Our society is becoming so desensitized to violence and death that it no longer respects human life — we should pray. Divorce and juvenile crime rates soar — we should pray. As we see the Lord working and doing miraculous things in the hearts and lives of many — we should pray and give Him thanks.

As Christians, we have a responsibility to reach out in these areas, however, we are no match for God's magnificent power and grace. When we pray we are calling on the same power as Paul and Silas (Acts 16), Daniel (Daniel 6), and Elijah (I Kings 10:16ff).

Life at the Bible school has uncovered the importance and effects of prayer. Since the faculty and student body are incredibly focused on Christ, Satan is lurking around every corner. He is always waiting for a chance to destroy the work of God, especially here. This in itself has made us aware of the continuous battles being fought. It also exposes the lack of strength we have when we try to battle Satan on our own, without Christ. Truthfully, we have had our ups and downs, but through it all we've been victorious with the Lord at our side. We have claimed these victories through Christ and His works with prayer and faith in Him.

Although there are many responsibilities associated with it, prayer should be a living part of our walk with Jesus. It is one of the tools we can use for strength and guidance in setting the world on fire for our Savior and His Kingdom. Let's face every aspect of life with Christ on our side and continue to get on our knees and fight like men and women of God.





— Wes Patterson AFLBS Student Body President Fall Quarter, 1995

### **AFLBS** awarded grants

Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL) has given \$10,000 in grants to the Association Free Lutheran Bible School last fall. The school will use \$6,500 to provide financial aid to 23 students and a \$3,500 grant will be used for student recruitment.

AAL awarded the grant through its Affirmations of Lutheran Higher Education program. This program assists Lutheran colleges, universities and Bible institutes in launching new ideas or approaches to meet the institution's own specific needs and goals.

### IMPACT money received

AFLBS recently received \$1,375 from Lutheran Brotherhood's IMPACT/IMPACT PLUS programs, Inviting Member Participation in Aiding Lutheran Colleges and Theological Seminaries. The fourth quarter payment of 1995 covers 16 gifts of Lutheran Brotherhood members. The IMPACT programs match member gifts of \$25 to \$100 per year to Lutheran institutions of higher education.

Holly Roed, McIntosh, Minnesota, sharing at the Parents' Day Banquet on the ministry of the school's puppet team.



### A tribute to my teacher

— Rev. Gary Skramstad Redeeming Love Lutheran St. Cloud, Minnesota

The year was 1961. Roger Strom, Tim Bjornson, and myself left the parish served by Rev. F. B. Monseth in our home town of Valley City, North Dakota to attend the Lutheran Bible Institute in Minneapolis. It was the first year for classes to be held in the new Golden Valley campus.

It was my particular blessing the ensuing school year to have Pastor Kermitt Grundahl, 1905-1995, not only as my teacher but also as my counselor. He made the Old Testament books come alive in our classes. The more familiar Old Testament books were taught with interesting highlights, but it is the classes in the Minor Prophets that I especially remember. We were shown God's almighty hand in the lives of the prophets, people of God, and even in the nations of the world that did not acknowledge Him. The classes were not easy as Pastor Grundahl expected us to become students of the Word.

As much as Pastor Grundahl imparted knowledge of the Scriptures to us, I believe the impression of a godly man who honored the Word left us with a legacy of one who lived out his beliefs. He was a consistent man of prayer and one to show his students what the Word would have to say. He believed that the power of the Word and the leading of the Holy Spirit for our lives was the key to becoming what the Lord would expect of us all.

It was during these months at LBI that certain struggles arose. Pastor Grundahl was one to make it clear concerning his stand on the Word of God. Some of our friends left for other Bible schools because they felt that his position was going to be even less appreciated in the days ahead.

The other struggle was much more on a personal level. It was

for all of us students to come to grips with the issues of grace and legalism. In several of my private sessions with Pastor Grundahl as counselor, it was good to have the gentle and freeing message of grace to mature me in my spiritual journey. He would so clearly point out that if the Bible is our guide and the Holy Spirit lives within us, whatever we do in life should be from a love response to God for what He has done for us through Christ. Whatever we would do in or out of school could not be an attempt to make God love us. Rather, we should do what we do because of His grace in our lives.

It wasn't always easy to understand such freedoms. As a young person, it would have been easier just to live by a list of rules and regulations. Certainly, such lists have a place but the concern was that the school wouldn't always be our home. Pastor Grundahl's emphasis was that the Holy Spirit should be allowed to direct our every area of life. It was dangerous for some. Some fell into sin and some into disgrace. And then we all could see that repentant sinners have forgiveness, cleansing, and grace applied. These were indeed the greatest lessons that I recall from those days.

But the story doesn't really stop there. It so happened that another student at LBI in 1961 was Carol Presteng, daughter of Herb and Dorothy Presteng of Grafton, North Dakota, who were early leaders of the AFLC. As time progressed we who were in the beginnings of the AFLC, came to realize that many of our young people who desired such a school were now often going far away to find the above principles being practiced. It was at an annual conference in Thief River Falls. Minnesota, when the discussion was held as to whether we should

begin our own Bible school. The morning discussion seemed to paint a bleak acceptance as the young AFLC had so many projects and needs. But Dorothy Presteng and I called a prayer meeting at Our Saviour's for people to come and seek God's answer for this question. People did come. We prayed. A vote was taken later which approved the formation of AFLBS. Its doors opened in the fall of 1966 with 13 students.

There were several in our early history that attended LBI or were blessed by its ministry. I believe it was so important to these people that this tradition would continue. Young and old needed to be assured of salvation in Christ alone; they needed to express their faith in service within the community and congregations; they needed to hold to and be students of the true Word of God; and they needed the Holy Spirit to keep each one living as though Jesus may return today.

Pastor Grundahl and others before him were certainly faithful unto death and have now gone on to receive the Crown of Life. Blessed is his memory!

### AFLC Schools' Mission Conference

February 11-14, 1996

"A Day of Good News" II Kings 7:9

Evening speaker –
Missionary Todd Schierkolk
Monday a.m. –
Dr. Francis Monseth
Tuesday a.m. –
Rev. Paul Nash
Wednesday a.m. –
Missionary Jonathan Abel
Rev. Eugene Enderlein

### AFLC Schools Christmas Concert

December 10, 1995
"Go Rejoicing"



The Choral Club, directed by Mrs. Marian Christopherson.



Seminarian Gary Haug and Mr. Jerry Nelson.



Instrumental Ensembles played the prelude at the concert.

### TRENDS (from page 11)

this number does not allow for any growth.

Caution should be used before making judgments regarding AFLTS graduation rates. The number of total graduates is very small. For the last five years the rate was under four per year. A turnaround could be quick and dramatic. If the other indicators did not support the findings, I would not venture a prediction. but since the other indicators do support the data on AFLTS graduation rates, the probable future of AFLTS is that its influence on the AFLC will continue to decline.

Again the most important question is why? I believe the answers are out there. Many churches and Christian organiza-

tions have been greatly used by God over the last 20 years. Here is just one example: Youth With A Mission is an organization that began about the same time as our Bible school and with about the same number of people, and with a similar goal. Today it has over 8,000 full-time staff members. and has trained over a million students. Maybe we can learn something from them and others like them? We don't have to accept everything, but we have to face the fact that we don't have all the answers.

Some people might say we are too small to accomplish great things. I disagree. Last spring I heard Leighton Ford address a group of pastors. He used this example from the world of business and applied it to churches. He said to succeed in the '90s you don't need to be big. You just need to be innovative and move fast. A small group like ours can more easily make the changes necessary to succeed in the next century.

I believe that despite some of the negative things we found, the AFLC is still a church of tremendous promise. I love this church. I think we have great principles and potential, but principles and potential are not enough. Our principles must live. If we are willing to take an honest look at ourselves, hear God's voice, swallow hard and make the changes necessary, we can look forward to tremendous blessings, maybe even a genuine revival.



Mr. Jerry Nelson and the AFLBS Choir. A standing room only crowd filled the chapel for the 4 p.m. concert.

### Do you have insurance with AAL or Lutheran Brotherhood?

If you are looking for ways to best donate to the choir's ministry in Norway, consider the possibility of getting matching funds for your own private donation. Check with your AAL or Lutheran Brotherhood agent about receiving a matching gift application form to fill out and send in for matching funds.

Congregations or organizations can also consider giving matching funds from Lutheran Brotherhood and/or AAL to double their giving.

Thank you for all the support given already to many in the choir!



Senior seminarian Tim Johnson and his two-month-old son, Jordan at the concert. Tim and Mr. Bruce Peterson are the two members of the AFLTS class of 1996.

### **Choir to travel to Norway**

As a member of the AFLBS Choir, I can surely say that each one of us is anticipating our trip to Norway in late May. Even though most of us are struggling with the financial end of the plans, we have been richly blessed and encouraged to see how our Lord has been providing as we've brought this burden to Him in prayer.

I came to school this year unsure and admittedly a little worried, about how I could pay for school and choir tour. Mr. Nelson, our director, emphasizes the importance of prayer in this area. He is always encouraging us and gives up practice time to form small groups to bring our concerns before the Lord. This prayer was truly answered for me when I found out that my church had taken an offering for me and received enough to pay for half of my trip.

Even more than our concern for our finances, is our burden for the hearts of the people we will be sharing with in Norway. We have learned that 90% of the people in Norway are members of the Norwegian State Church. About one-fifth of the population would testify to being committed Christians and only 3% attend church regularly. It is our heart's desire that these people would come to know our precious Savior, Jesus Christ and that they would experience the same joy and peace that we have through letting Him control our lives. I see this trip as an incredible opportunity to spread the love of Christ.

We would greatly appreciate your prayers.

— Amy Jo Hill Radcliffe, Iowa

### YOUTH

### It's time to evaluate

astors, youth directors and advisors, it's time to evaluate! Where have we been and where are we going? Michael M. Simone in Youth Ministries magazine asks this important question, "Is your youth ministry moving teens into responsible adulthood?" It's a thought provoking question. Our congregations should not simply be entertaining our youth.

All youth directors and volunteer advisors should first sit down with their pastor and have a frank and open talk about the youth program and their part in it. The pastor should still be the number one person when it comes to the youth program in his congregation. Are you growing stu-

### **Pray for the Olsons:** Kevin, Pam, Nathan, Naomi and Andrew



On January 14, 1996 Kevin Olson was ordained into the holy ministry at Faith Lutheran in Shakopee, Minnesota. AFLC President Robert Lee officiated at the 7 p.m. service. Rev. Olson is the new AFLC Youth Ministries Director.

dents into responsible adulthood or not? Where do you go from here? Since youth work has cycles because of age changes, what needs to be repeated and when? Are parents and volunteers getting good training?

Your youth work ministry needs to be evaluated by the parents! Parental input is valuable. Youth ministry will not go forward without the support of the parents of your teens. Parental involvement in the total program is an absolute must! Sometimes we hear it said that discussion will not be free and open if parents are present. This may be true, but only in part. If your teens have a good relationship with adults, including their parents, this will be the best part of the congregational youth min-

Parents like to have meetings start and end on time. They need to know schedules in advance. Parents want to know where their children are before and after the meetings.

Of course, you will want to evaluate your congregation's youth ministry with the church council or with your youth board if you have such. The congregational youth board will probably meet quarterly and church council times are usually monthly. First visit with the pastor or one or both of these boards before bringing anything to the youth. This will avoid a conflict between the leaders of the congregation, you and the youth. One should never go against the desires of the board or boards responsible for youth ministry.

You will want to meet with your youth officers. I know some congregations do not do things the "old fashioned" way. You still have certain leaders and you will want to meet with them to get their input. You can evaluate regularly with the officers and you can evaluate individual meetings to see what could be done better. In my congregation in Greenbush. I have annual "huddles." These are strategy sessions where the officers, advisors and myself as pastor look at where we have been and reach for new goals for the future.

Next, one will call a meeting of all the youth. In this it is valuable to try to reach out to the inactive as well. If they do not come to the meeting, send a check list to them. This way they will have input into the whole process. In fact, you might want to give your active students this check list too. In doing this, you will get more personal input which will be valuable in your planning. One can do this with the parents as well.

Ask yourself, "Am I training the youth to lead?" Youth directors, pastors and advisors have a tendency to do things for the students. This way they make certain it is all done. I would urge you to train them to do it all



Check out the growing list of videos available to you for \$3 plus postage. Youth Ministries Dept., 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441 or call 612-545-5631 or fax 612-545-0079.



### ARC Sno Daze reminder

There's still time to call the Association Retreat Center at 715-294-2877 and enjoy the inspiration, friends and fun! Senior High Sno Daze, February 2-4 and Junior Sno Daze, February 16-18.

themselves, including the dish washing after the meetings! There is a risk here for you but it will prove beneficial for your youth. Our teens are developing leaders and can be leaders even now in their youth group and congregation.

Are you flexible? One needs to adjust even your times and dates of meetings. Avoid scheduling youth events opposite school events. One exception might be to offer alternatives to some school activities such as dancing. One time in DeKalb, Illinois, we began meeting on Sunday mornings for breakfast because one of the girls was on a Sycamore basketball team. We had a great time.

During the year, have you planned activities to teach students ministry? Have you offered them times for worship? Have you taught them to fear, love and trust God above all things? Do they have a growing concept of who God is? Our best intentions will come to naught if we do not have a proper worship emphasis in our youth meetings. We need to help them worship the Lord and to have regular devotions.

Are we evangelistic? In all our events, are we really concerned about those lost in sin who do not have a personal relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ? Are we teaching students how to lead others to Jesus?

### **HOME MISSIONS**

### Special gifts

In 1995 the AFLC Home Missions Department was given four vehicles. Two were used for sum-

### Lutheran Brotherhood assists Home Missions

As it has for the previous 18 years, the Lutheran Brotherhood Foundation provided grants to the Home Missions Department of the AFLC during 1995. These grants have been used by the department to assist in paying the salaries of mission pastors.

Grant money received from Lutheran Brotherhood in 1995 totaled \$40,000. The funds were divided evenly between the following four mission congregations:

Redeemer Lutheran, Cambridge, Minnesota

Redeemer Lutheran, Canton, South Dakota

Trinity Lutheran, Janesville, Wisconsin

Servant of the Savior Lutheran, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

There is much to evaluate. We need "huddles" on a regular basis. In these evaluation sessions we are really setting up strategy for the future. I would recommend attendance by all involved with youth ministry at Son Life Strategy sessions. Call the AFLC youth office in Minneapolis for information.

Please give your new full-time Youth Ministries Director your kind cooperation. Pastor Kevin Olson is a man of God and he has a real concern for the youth ministry of our AFLC. And, please let me know if I can be of any help to you or the youth in your congregation.

— Rev. Dennis Gray Greenbush, Minnesota mer travel by the BARNABAS teams. According to Rev. Paul Nash, Director, "We thank God for this and all the wonderful support given to home missions this past year. Continue to pray for us. We are encouraged as we see the Lord at work and doors open."

Special prayer request: The 1996 BARNABAS teams are being selected. Pray that the young men and women of God's choosing will make up this summer's teams. Congregations who desire a BARNABAS team should be in contact with the home missions office at 612-545-5631.

Rev. Les Johnson, Lake Alma, Saskatchewan, has resigned as pastor of Faith Lutheran where he has served since 1986. He has accepted the call to Trinity and Christ Lutheran in Minnewauken and Devils Lake, North Dakota. He expects to begin his new ministry on May 1, 1996. The Devils Lake church is a home missions church.

Loveland, Colorado — a year ago, the young Lutheran Church of Hope was in the process of calling a pastor. Pastor Larry and Janice Haagenson arrived late last summer. Last year there were two Sunday school students and now nineteen participated in their Christmas program. Nine are in the youth program. Praise God for His blessings.

Pray for the Home Missions Committee and Director Paul Nash as they consider how to encourage groups in Alabama, California, Minnesota and New York recently seeking counsel from the Home Missions Department.

### WORLD MISSIONS

### Testimony from D. Luther Sastry

hat which is born of flesh is flesh and that which is born of Spirit is Spirit. Do not marvel that I said to you You must be born again" (John 3:6,7).

While flying to Minneapolis a few weeks ago, I remembered these verses. Indeed I always remember them because these verses changed my entire life. How great is God's goodness in my life.

Jesus put His finger on my deepest need when I was the house father for Moriah Children's Home (an orphanage) in 1986. I was deeply impressed by His mighty works through the AFLC-USA in India. But Jesus put aside my compliments and got down to my real problem. When I was reading the Word of God it touched my heart deeply and said, "You must be born again."

I understood prior to being born again that I must die in the old nature. If I confess my sin, Jesus is faithful and righteous to forgive my sin and to cleanse me from all unrighteousness. Then I



believed and confessed my sin in the presence of our Lord. I died to myself, my plans, my purpose, my presupposition and, by the power of God, I rose up to a new life.

To understand the Word of God more, I decided to go to a seminary. By the grace of our Lord, I completed my theological studies at the Union Biblical Seminary at Pune, graduating in 1991. I thank God for my parents. I would say that their rebirth had made them contiguously hopeful Christians. I also thank God for my wife, Sila Vardhimi. God has given me a wonderful prayer partner in my

wife and He has blessed us with two daughters.

Since my graduation at U.B.S. I have been working as an evangelist and treasurer of BFLC, affiliated with the AFLC. By the grace of our Lord and prayers of the AFLC, we, the Bible Faith Lutheran Church have established 30 congregations among Hindus. The 30 gospel workers and Bible women are working among those congregations. Our aim is evangelizing non-Christians, Hindus, Muslims and others. To achieve this aim we have been conducting open-air gospel meetings, street preaching, and tract distribution in each and every village.

A year ago we opened a Homeo Hospital when Rev. Robert Lee and Rev. Eugene Enderlein visited India. Dr. Anand Kumar Sathuluri has been helping us in this ministry. Indeed it has vigorously helped us to reach out to Hindus and others. Many have repented, renounced their gods and idols and received Jesus Christ as Lord when we preached the Word of God. I thank Rev. Enderlein, World Missions Director, and all in the AFLC who have been praying for the ministry of BFLC in India.

Finally, I would like to say this about my current studies at Free Lutheran Seminary. God has given me an opportunity to study the Book of Concord. I am impressed by the teachings of the faculty. I thank Dr. Francis Monseth for his cooperation and prayers. After completing my studies, I will go back and work in the ministry in India. I know through this ministry that thousands can come to know Jesus instead of slipping into hell. I rejoice to know that I am storming the gates of hell and impacting eternity. 36

> - Rev. D. Luther Sastry student at AFLTS

Missionaries Paul and Becky Abel and family expect to begin their furlough in March. They hope to have their home base in the Twin Cities area. Housing and a vehicle are still needed. If you can help, contact the World Missions office at 612-545-5631.

Missionaries David and Sarah Nelson completed language study and will move to the ARCA and fill in for the Paul Abels while they are on furlough. The new address for the Nelsons is: C.P. 12125, Santa Felicidade, Parana, Brazil.

Missionaries Jonathan and Tamba Abel and family are planning to begin another term in Brazil shortly. They thank God for His provision as their units of support have been completed.

Praise God for designated support goals that were met in 1995 for three missionary families - Jonathan Abel, David Nelson, and Todd Schierkolk. Continue to pray that the support for veteran missionaries Connely Dyrud and Dan Giles will be met. Missionary candidate Sonja Dahl has begun work on a visa to enter Brazil while continuing her deputation work.

Please contact the World Missions office if you or your congregation have made a commitment for a missionary support unit.

### FOR WOMEN

### The heritage that is passed on to us

ur WMF February study, "Five Kernels of Corn" ends with the statement, "Let us not lose what our fathers have obtained with so much hardship." We are challenged to choose God above all else as those early Pilgrims did. Their sacrifice as they responded to those in need challenges us to share with others. They lived with less in order to be able to share.

What did those who have gone before us obtain? A carefree life? No. But those who believed in

Posterity! You will never know how much it cost the



present generation to preserve your freedom. I hope you

will make good use of it.

- John Quincy Adams

### Women's Missionary Federation

### In Memoriams

Chad Davidson, Webster, SD Evelyn Anderson, Everett, WA Polly Lyon, Zumbrota, MN Cleone Rimer, Deer Creek, MN Agnes Utne, Ortley, SD Alma C. Evenson, Willmar, MN Vernice Johnson, Abercrombie, ND Pearl Aanstad, Hampden, ND Emma Knudsvig, Buxton, ND Steve DeVries, Valley City, ND Dr. Frank Bartlett, Pukwana, SD Mary Graves, Pukwana, SD Clarence Hermunslie, Abercrombie, ND Retta Heyen, Roseau, MN Pauline Myhre, Roseau, MN Myrtle Erickson, Page, ND Violet Tesch, Tioga, ND Myrtle Moratzka, Tioga, ND Evelyn Quanbeck, McVille, ND Horace Kasin, Wallace, SD Anna Lauen, Watertown, SD

Jesus obtained a life of trust. And yes, a happy life is the result. When they faced hard times with prayer, and perhaps fasting, as the Pilgrims did, their trust grew stronger.

The down payment was a commitment to Christ. Through the years continued payments were made as they faced the hardships brought about through economics, drought or flood, illness or death. They experienced in many ways the ongoing supply and love of God. They gave back to God on a regular basis, time and money, and were faithful to that commitment. Their guidebook was the Holy Bible. Each year it became dearer. Pages and bindings showed signs of wear. Sometimes reminders of the passing of time clippings from faded newspapers, funeral accounts, etc. were tucked in between the pages.

Is anyone so happy as the one who has seen God's faithfulness, trusts Jesus, and faces the future with the confidence of a child who trusts her father? An old saint wrote, "It is God's will that we take His comfortings as largely and as mightily as we may take them, and also He wills that we take our troubles as lightly as we may take them."

One of my spiritual mentors was my friend Emma Knudsvig. Emma's beauty reflected her love for Jesus. Married in 1928, she faced the "dirty thirties" with trust as she and her husband raised their five sons.

Today many let a thousand insignificant things crowd out time for God. Emma was a faithful steward of her life — she saw time as a gift. I was impressed by the many hours she spent assisting her daughter-in-law Karen Knudsvig, Executive Secretary

for the WMF, compile packets or other mailings. No task seemed too great or too small. Even after her health began to fail she wanted to help.

Like many of her generation, Emma never traveled far from home. She may never have visited a shelter for the homeless. But Emma was a prayer warrior. Anything she heard during the day might prompt Emma to turn it over to God in prayer. When those who were in trouble or needed advice called her on the telephone, her response was, "We just trust God — He knows what is best."

Emma taught me about loving people unconditionally. Her willingness to telephone those who were shut-in or lonely, those who were sick or mourning the loss of a loved one was what I would call "a sacrifice of thanksgiving to God."

I loved stopping at her farm home for a chat and a cup of coffee. I was always welcome. On the day my children met her, she became "Grandma Emma" to them. This continued to be true for my grandchildren as well. The oldest one once told me, "She accepts children into her life without hesitation and treats them as her own."

Last fall Emma died. To me she was an example of one who lived as though every day was a day of Thanksgiving. Her eagerness to learn and to share encouraged me, and now I want to encourage others. Her willingness to share the message of Jesus with everyone she talked to and to live by His Word, challenges me to pass on that legacy. We mustn't lose what she had.

— Mrs. Edie Gudim Mayville, North Dakota

### Chaplain Tim Skramstad, San Antonio, Texas, is leaving the U.S. Army after completing his obligation. He is available for call and can begin serving July 1, 1996.

Lisbon, Illinois — West Lisbon Lutheran shared in the commissioning service on December 17, 1995 for their pastor, Rev. Rob Lewis. The Lewis family moved to Camrose, Alberta the first week in January where Pastor Lewis takes on the responsibilities of executive director of WMPL/Canada. The congregation also held a farewell service and reception for the Lewis family on the afternoon of December 17.

El Campo, Texas — Faith Lutheran participated in a citywide evangelistic meeting on January 19, with singer/evangelist Dallas Holm at the local civic center. Members of the congregation were encouraged to bring at least one unchurched friend or neighbor to the one night crusade.

DeKalb, Illinois — On December 15, 1995, Mrs. Lily Kallem, 85, passed away. She was one of the charter members at Grace Lutheran. Earlier in the fall, two couples in the congregation celebrated special wedding anniversaries: Mr. and Mrs. Philip Baird — 50th and Mr. and Mrs. Cliff Seldal — 40th. Cliff Seldal is the chairman of the Association Retreat Center (ARC) Board.

Mr. Vince Larson of Buffalo, North Dakota, a member of Grace Free Lutheran of Valley City, North Dakota, has been appointed to fill a layman's position on the AFLC Coordinating Committee.

Rev. Merle Knutson, Hawley, Minnesota, is the interim pastor at Hope Lutheran, Ishpeming, Michigan,

### PEOPLE AND PLACES



**Underwood, Minnesota** — Tordenskjold Free Lutheran Church of rural Underwood is making plans for the celebration of the 125th Anniversary of the founding of the church. The celebration will be held Sunday, July 7, 1996. AFLC President Robert Lee will be present for the 11 a.m. service followed by a noon meal and afternoon program. The church is served by Rev. David Skordahl and youth pastor David Foss.

Rev. Walter Johnson, Shakopee, Minnesota, is the intern pastor at Hauge-Emmanuel Lutheran parish in Kenyon, Minnesota.

Deb (Woimanen) Nelson, New Hope, Minnesota, is the new assistant bookkeeper of the AFLC. She and her husband Mark are '84 and '85 graduates of AFLBS. Her previous employment was in data entry for a local corporation.

Thief River Falls, Minnesota — Our Saviour's Lutheran has seen the architect's model of their proposed new church. Ground preparation of the future site was nearly completed last fall and will be finished in the spring. Final plans will be presented at the annual meeting for approval.

Fosston, Minnesota — Calvary Lutheran has their present church building for sale. They have purchased other property and have readied it for the future construction of their new church.

Vernon, British Columbia — Living Word Lutheran women have started a bi-weekly young ladies circle which combines life skills with Scripture training for those twelve and older. Their projects have included flower arranging and sewing diapers for the Miriam Infant Home in Brazil.

Leonard Swanson, 87, passed away on December 23, 1995, in Nogales, Arizona. Funeral services were held on December 27, at Triumph Lutheran in Nogales.

### God has forgiven him

Burnsville, MN – One Sunday last September, a church member told Rev. Roger Thompson that he wanted to confess something.

"He approached me after our third service on Sunday morning, when we have a time for prayer and dealing with personal issues," said Thompson, who has pastored the 1,500-member Berean Baptist church in suburban Minneapolis for five years. "He said he wanted to confess a crime he committed many years ago,

### Leonard Swanson, 87

In Nogales, Arizona, the name of Leonard Swanson has become a household word for "man of God." He arrived in Nogales after leaving his Nebraska farm to become a self-supporting missionary with the Lawrence Dynneson family. He graduated from California Lutheran Bible School in Los Angeles in 1950.

From 1954 and on, he and his sister Olga, had a Sunday school ministry with the Dynnesons in Nogales. Later they carried on alone when the Dynnesons left for seminary. He and others started work across the border and laid the foundation for two congregations in Mexico. He was a well-known and beloved salesman of Rawleigh products in the Nogales community.

In 1964, after the return of the Dynnesons, Triumph Lutheran congregation was organized. Leonard was married in 1965 to May Rendahl, a missionary in Mazatlan, Mexico with the World Mission Prayer League. Together they ministered in Nogales, Mexico until 1978 when the WMPL took over the work.

He is survived by his wife May. His Christian witness in Nogales will not be forgotten. Blessed be his memory. and he wanted my help in talking to the authorities and making it right."

Then John Claypool, told Thompson that 20 years ago he murdered a man and his wife.

"It was a big surprise," noted Thompson, "I was naturally pretty shocked, but on the other hand I was gratified. We're in the business of wanting God to change people radically, and it's very humbling and gratifying to hear someone who has taken to heart the gospel and his own personal walk to such a depth. He fully understood that he didn't need to confess to me to get forgiveness, that God has forgiven him and washed away his sins and made him clean. But he also knew that God had been nudging him to make this right."

Claypool was 14 at the time of the killings. He told authorities that he had experimented with LSD just weeks before the killings, and had been high on drugs and alcohol the night before the shooting. He lived in Lake City, Minnesota, at the time, next door to the city's mayor Willmer "Tony" Strickland and his wife Verona. He had known them for about six years. Claypool said he liked the Stricklands, and murdered them on an impulse, just to see what it felt like to kill someone. He shot them to death with a .22-caliber rifle.

Authorities, at the time, suspected Claypool, but had no evidence to charge him. In the next few years, Claypool dropped out of school and ran away from home. In recent years he worked for various boat companies. He is divorced and has visitation rights with his two daughters. His life changed when he became a Christian. He began attending Berean Baptist Church in Burnsville about two years ago, and decided on his own that he needed to

come to terms with his past.

"When he came to me he knew what he wanted to do," said Thompson, "I didn't have to try to motivate him; he was already motivated by his relationship with God."

Claypool confessed to the crimes even though his attorney and investigators agreed that without his testimony it would be impossible to convict him.

Thompson said that while the murder of the Stricklands was reprehensible, he has nothing but praise for the way a changed Claypool has taken responsibility for his actions. "This is the way it ought to be more often." said Thompson. "I think what people are seeing is his courage, and they respect his integrity for doing something for completely spiritual reasons. From our church, what I'm hearing is respect and honor for John, thanksgiving for God, and empathy and a desire to love his children and family in some tangible ways to let them know we support them."

Claypool entered a guilty plea to two counts of second-degree homicide November 30. He waived his right to be tried as a juvenile for the crimes, and the state agreed not to seek first degree murder charges. Claypool will be sentenced January 4. County Attorney Jim Nordstrom has recommended that Claypool serve concurrent sentences of just under 10 years, and be eligible for parole in about six and a half years.

During his court appearance, Claypool's attorney read a statement in which Claypool apologized to the Strickland family, his own family, and the people of Lake City, a town of about 4,400 about 70 miles southeast of the Twin Cities. "I know that because of me, children did not have par-

(continued on next page)

### **NEWS OF INTEREST**

### NOTICE TO PASTORS

All AFLC pastors attending the Promise Keepers clergy conference in Atlanta February 13 to 15 are encouraged to meet in front of the speakers platform during the first break Wednesday morning, February 14.

MINNEAPOLIS — Fifty-six percent of Lutherans say that they understand salvation as God's gift to all people, while 34 percent say it is received only by those who are in Christ, according to a recent national survey of 1,694 conducted for Lutheran Brotherhood. The survey also found that seven percent of Lutherans viewed salvation as a reward for being good, while two percent believed there is no such thing as salvation.

Seniors (those age 65 or more) were most likely to view salvation as God's gift to all people (62 percent). This compares to 52 percent of Lutherans under age 30, 51 percent of those age 30 to 44, and 56 percent of those age 45 to

### FORGIVEN-

ents, grandchildren did not know their grandparents ... neither my actions today, nor anything I can do in the future will atone for all the wrong done."

Thompson concluded, "He's now the freest he's been in his whole life. He has the spiritual freedom of knowing that the worst secret about him has become known and can begin to be healed. His hope is that it will be healed for those victimized as well. He's a free man, even though he's in prison."

- from Evangelical Press News Service

64. Conversely, 41 percent of Lutherans under the age of 30 believed that salvation is received only by those who believe in Christ. This compares to 40 percent of Lutherans age 30 to 44, 34 percent of those age 45 to 64, and 29 percent of those age 65 or more.

Lutherans' synod affiliation also affects their understanding of salvation. While 66 percent of Lutherans who are members of Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) congregations say that salvation is God's gift to all people, less than half of Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) Lutherans and Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) Lutherans hold this view (42 percent and 45 percent, respectively). In contrast, 53 percent of LCMS Lutherans and 51 percent of WELS Lutherans say that salvation is received only by those who believe in Christ versus 28 percent of ELCA Luther-

How one interprets the Bible also influences Lutherans' understanding of salvation. Among Lutherans who interpret the Bible literally, 54 percent believe that salvation is received only by those who believe in Christ, while 43 percent believe that salvation is God's gift to all. In contrast, 26 percent of those holding a liberal interpretation of the Bible believe that salvation is received only by those who believe in Christ, while 62 percent say salvation is God's gift to all.

When asked to choose between creation or evolution as an explanation for the beginning of human life, eight in 10 Lutherans say they believe in creation. Support for the Genesis account of creation, however, decreased as people's income and education levels rose. Eighty-seven percent

of those making less than \$25,000 annually believed in creation. This compares with 81 percent of those making \$25,000 to \$49,999; 76 percent of those making \$50,000 to \$74,999; and 69 percent of those making more than \$75,000.

Similarly, 88 percent of those with less than a high school education said that creation explained the beginning of human life, compared to 86 percent of those with a high school education or some college studies, and 71 percent of those with college degrees.

Lutherans who interpret the Bible literally were 26 percent more likely to believe in the creation account than those who interpret the Bible liberally (99 percent versus 73 percent). In addition, Lutherans who attend traditional services were 10 percent more likely to believe in the creation story than those who attend contemporary services (87 percent versus 77 percent).

Note: This "Lutheran Brotherhood's Survey of Lutheran Beliefs & Practices" is a comprehensive survey on the attitudes, beliefs, and practices of Lutheran families. A nationally representative sample of 1,694 Lutheran households completed and returned a self-administered questionnaire in August 1995.

Alabama public school students will soon find a note in their biology textbooks telling them evolution is a "controversial theory," not a fact.

The state school board voted 6-1 with one abstention to put the disclaimer in the books. Gov. Fob James, the board's president, said he believes the biblical explanation of life's origins.

-AP, 11/10/95

### **EDITORIALS**

### "What is going on at that school?"

hat kind of question is asked at times when people see a Bible school or seminary graduate saying or doing things they feel are inappropriate. "It's the fault of the school. They did not educate them properly. What are they doing, turning out folks like that?"

What a graduate is like is not totally the fault or the achievement of the school. The schools most definitely can and should have an influence on students. Individuals and congregations, however, should take care not to heap praise or dump blame on the schools that more appropriately belongs at our feet.

My three years of classroom work and one year of internship while a student at the Free Lutheran Seminary had a big impact on my life. That time, however, was not the most significant influence in making me the person and pastor I am. My parents and their beliefs and values and attitude toward the Lord and the Bible and the Church had the greatest impact on my life, after the Lord Jesus Himself. The next biggest influence came from my home congregation and pastor. The four years of instruction at seminary were important but not nearly as life-changing as the 22 years of training by word and example my home congregation gave me. The largest portion of my views of church life and how to be a pastor comes from the ones I observed while growing up.

No student arrives at the Association Free Lutheran Bible School or the Free Lutheran Seminary as a blank slate. They have already been written on. They are like clay that has already been molded by people and experiences. The schools serve as another, important step in the molding process. The shaping that has already gone on, however, must not be ignored.

We are not given the call in Scripture to wait till people are old enough for Bible school till they are trained in the Word. The call instead is to "Impress (the commandments of God) upon your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up" (Deuteronomy 6:7, NIV).

In our Association we emphasize the importance of the local congregation. The schools have a significant role, but they are not to be viewed as the only, nor even the primary, influence in molding future servants for the Kingdom of God. The greatest work of training and shaping the workers of tomorrow happens today in our homes and our congregations. The schools are a great resource for providing some of the detail work. In our homes and congregations we do the laying of the foundation. The schools are doing their work well. Let us in the congregations do the same.

### **Proper Expectations**

hen I started seminary I didn't feel too bright or too mature in the Lord. I wasn't too sure why God had called me to be a pastor. (In some ways, those feelings haven't entirely gone away.) I expected everyone else at school to "have it all together." That wasn't the case.

I found during my days on campus people with great gifts and a sincere love for the Lord. They were also, however, a bunch of sinners. I fit right in.

Students and faculty are people too. They have needs and struggles and faults. Instant and complete spiritual maturity does not come upon someone simply because they step on the Bible school and seminary campus. Let us not expect it of them. Let us see that they are like each of us: people in need of forgiveness and prayer. They have all sinned and continually fall short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23).

Unrealistic expectations can lead to trouble. The world of academia can be a breeding ground for pride. The temptation exists to believe those who think that people on campus, surrounded by books and knowledge and learning, have all the answers. I admire and thank God for those who, in the midst of

the temptations, have maintained true humility.

It can be a temptation as well to try and meet the expectations. They become a cruel taskmaster who is never satisfied. They can create people who are like the Galatians; people who are trying to be justified before God by observing the law, seeking the approval of men and attempting to attain their goal by human effort (Galatians 1:10;3:3,11).

We do not need more people who are driven by human expectations. We need more people who are called by God and eager to serve out of gratefulness for what Christ has done.

People on campus are to be challenged. The standard is to be held high, but it is to be God's standard, not someone else's. The call on those on campus and in the congregations is to strive to be what God desires for us to be; not what someone else expects us to be. We cannot meet the expectations of the crowd, but we do not have to. We serve the One who calls us to great things, because He has done great things. He gives us great gifts and enables us to say, "I can do everything through him who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:13, NIV).

### THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd. Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

ccording to the Word of God, the congregation is the right form of the Kingdom of God on earth. This opening statement in the "Fundamental Principles" of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations (and the Lutheran Free Church before it) recognizes that the Word of God is an authority even when it comes to the matter of how a church should be organized. The form which a church assumes is to be determined by the Scriptures, not by tradition, not by expediency. The basis for the organizational structure of the

AFLC is the Word of God as we

have been led to understand it.

We recognize that every person who is brought to saving faith in Jesus Christ is at the same time made a member in the body of Christ, the Holy Christian Church. In that Christian Church he has daily forgiveness of all his sins and spiritual fellowship and union with all the saints of God, past, present and future. His membership and fellowship in this Church, though real and important, is, however, based purely on faith. Though he is one, by faith, with Moses, Jacob, Mary and Lydia, he cannot exercise fellowship with them. Fellowship is experienced, practically speaking, with believers who are a part of the local congregation. Though we recognize the Holy Christian Church as an important reality, we learn from the Scrip-

### **BUILDING THE BASE**

### The congregation

tures that our participation in the Christian Church is exercised in the local congregation.

The Scriptures point out the importance of the local congregation. Most of the references in the New Testament to the "church" are references to a local congregation whether the church be as small the "the church ... in your house" (Philippians 2) or as large as "the church in Ephesus" (Revelation 2:1). Letters addressed to individual congregations rebuking them for their sins and offering them admonishment or correction. as well as the fact that it was local congregations that were praised for their obedience or held responsible for their actions, indicate to us that God's work is done in and through the local congregation. The form that God's kingdom has been given in this world is the local Christian congregation.

The Christian congregation is a divine institution. It therefore follows that nothing should be allowed to dominate the congregation other than the Word and Spirit of God. Synods or groups of congregations must always be considered secondary to the congregation since they are not divinely instituted in the same sense as is the congregation. They must exist only to serve the congregation in the exercise of its mission, never to be served by the congregation or to deprive it of its responsibility or liberty. Nothing

outside the congregation is more important than the congregation.

It is also true that nothing within a congregation is more important than the congregation. Organizations within a congregation or para-church organizations should exist only to serve the congregation and assist it in accomplishing its God-given mission. They are never to replace the congregation or get in the way of its ministry by taking its funds or the energies of its members. Always they exist to serve the congregation.

We claim such important privileges for the local congregation only because the Word of God has taught us that this is God's institution. And because the congregation is God's institution where our Christian life is nurtured and from which God carries out His ministry to the world, we give her our allegiance and energies. No other institution in this world is more important in the eyes of God.



— Rev. Bruce Dalager Trinity Lutheran Grand Forks, North Dakota

### Congregations of the West Coast District invite you to the . . .

### 1996 AFLC Annual Conference, June 18-23

at Warm Beach Camps & Conference Center in Stanwood, Washington

### Information & Registration Form Please complete all sections & mail this entire pull-out

We invite you to come and enjoy the rich fellowship and share in the important business of our church body in a setting of natural beauty. Our setting on the West Coast will offer the grandeur of the Cascade & Olympic Mountain Ranges, highlighted by Mount Rainier and Mount Baker and graced by the beauty of Puget Sound and the San Juan Islands.

In these pages you'll find, first, a brief description of some of what awaits you and your family at Warm Beach. This is followed by what may seem a very complex registration form. The various housing options and meal packages necessitate this type of a format. We trust that it will make sense as you work your way through step by step. If you have questions, you are welcome to call (360) 435-9191. We pray and trust that the upcoming conference will be a special event for all who can take part. Let us know how we can serve you. - The conference committee

### There is something for the whole family!!

We are planning a full morning and afternoon schedule for all children and youth, so we encourage attendance by whole familiies. Because Warm Beach is a Christian campground facility, it offers a wide variety of activities for the young while adults are in sessions -- like

- In the mornings, beginning Wednesday, group study & fellowship times for youth and VBS for the children
- Supervised activities in the afternoon, including a pool open to all those staying in Warm Beach facilities
- Putt-putt golf and horseback riding for additional charge

Recreational vehicle & camping area: electricity, water, and sewer available

Nursery care during all business sessions, as well as the W.M.F. Day and the Pastors & Wives' Banquet

### **Description of Lodging Options at Warm Beach**

- Olympic View Lodge: Motel style rooms; 1 queen size bed and two day beds per room; linens included
- Cascadian Lodge: Lodge style rooms; 1 double bed and two day beds per room; vanity in each room; central bath in each wing; linens available at additional cost (6\$/person) or you may provide your own
- Mt. Baker Cabins: Family/dorm style rooms; 1 double bed and four single bunk-style beds per room; two rooms share bath; four rooms per cabin; linens available at additional cost (6\$/person) or you may provide your own
- Glacier & Whistler Lodges: Dormitory style cabins; 3 sleeping rooms per lodge with central lobbies and baths; 10 single bunk-style beds per sleeping room; 3 sleeping rooms per lodge; linens available at additional cost (6\$/person) or you may provide your own
- Mountain Cabins: Dormitory style cabin; twelve single bunk-style beds per cabin; separate central, modern bath; linens available at additional cost (6\$/person) or you may provide your own

Name		Phone:()_				
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SECTION A - YOUTH / CHILD	REN PROGRAMS					
	planning our work with the youth & childre ring the week. List only the numbers of chil					

Youth, 7th grade and up, who would like to be involved in the program of youth activities:	
Children, ages 4 through 6th grade, who would be involved in the VBS and children's activities:	
Children, under age 4, who would be under the care of the nursery or VBS staff, as appropriate:	

### SECTION B - TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS Flying? Check United Airlines for reduced rates by telling them you are with conference #568MB. For those traveling by air to Sea-Tac Airport (between Seattle and Tacoma), you will have the option of renting a car to come to the conference site or taking the Bellingham Airporter (transport van) to Marysville where we will shuttle you the remainder of the way to Warm Beach. Please check which you plan to do. I / we are flying out but plan to rent a car 1 / we are driving out I / we are flying out and would like you to make arrangements for me / us with the Airporter service to Marysville. No. flying in your party: \_\_\_\_\_ Airline: \_\_\_\_ Flt. No. \_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_ Time of Arrival: Make Airporter arrangements for X \$29\* (roundtrip) = (Payable directly to the 'Airporter' at boarding) (\* This is a maximum price: Seniors, \$25; 15 & under, \$15; and we may be able to arrange less expensive charters once we know arrivals & departures.) SECTION C - LODGING (including lodging & meal plan combinations) See description of lodging on page 1 If you plan to --.... camp in the Warm Beach Recreational Vehicle Area, complete Parts 1, 2 or 5, and 6 .... lodge in a Warm Beach facility with either the 4 or 5 day lodging & meal plan, complete Parts 3 & 6 .... lodge in a Warm Beach facility less than 4 nights and/or eat only selected meals at Warm Beach, complete Parts 3, 5, & 6 .... arrange your own off-site lodging, complete Parts 4, 5, & 6. Part 1: Camping in Warm Beach Recreational Vehicle Area - RV area plans do not include meals. See Part 2 or 5 for meals. 5 nights, includes site, 4 nights, includes site, Part Time Camp Site Rates, include facility use, and insurance facility use, and insurance site fee, facility use, and insurance # People Total # People Total Per night X # nights X # People = Total \$ 44 X \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_ \$ 35 X \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_ \$ 9 X \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_ 13 and up \$ 8 X \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_ \$ 37 X \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_ 5-12 yrs \$ 29 X \_\_\_\_ = \_\_\_\_ 0-4 yrs \$ 20 X = \$ 16 X = \$4 X \_\_\_\_ = \_\_ Part 1 Total: (\$200 maximum per family) (\$250 maximum per family) (\$50 maximum per night) Part 2: Meal Packages for those staying in Camp Sites 15 Meal Package for 12 Meal Package for those staying in camp sites those staying in camp sites (Tues. dinner - Sun. noon) (Wedn. dinner - Sun. noon) # People Total # People Total

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Part 3: Lodging in Warm Beach housing - Please note that the first two columns include your meals.

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	13 yrs and up	\$191 X	=	\$161 X	=	\$29 X	X	=
	5-12 yrs	\$124 X	=	\$105 X	=	\$22 X	x	=
	0-4 yrs	\$ 20 X	=	\$ 16 X	=	\$ 4 X	X	_=
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