

The Lutheran AMBASSADOR

January 5, 1999



**Evangelism
opportunities
are all
around!**



THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

January 5, 1999
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Editor: Rev. Craig Johnson
Assistant to the Editor: Solveig Hjermstad
Editorial Board: Rev. John Mundfrom, Oryen Benrud, Rev. Jerry Moan.

CONTENTS

Where is our Jerusalem?	p. 4
Learning to be a witness	p. 6
Step out of the boat	p. 9
Epiphany and Roe v. Wade	p. 14

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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

"Not that I have already obtained it, or have already become perfect, but I press on in order that I may lay hold of that for which also I was laid hold of by Christ Jesus. Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but one thing I do; forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus" — Philippians 3:12-14.

Run to win

A few years ago I was watching a high school track event. It was a 400 meter race. One young man was in third place, coming around the fourth corner of the track. He had a straight shot to the finish line and a very good chance of catching up and placing at least second. But as he hit the straight-away, he began to run out of energy. He looked like a car running out of gas.

What happened? This runner hadn't eaten properly. He was trying to run the race literally on his own reserves. It didn't work! He ended up finishing seventh out of eight competitors.

Is this a picture of you in your spiritual life?

The Apostle Paul likens the Christian life to a literal foot race. As we run, we sometimes take our eyes off the prize — eternal life in Jesus — and we get bogged down. We try to run on our own reserves and consequently we "run out of gas." Our own abilities and endurance are not enough.

When a Christian turns his eyes completely on Jesus, he can forget the past. He repents. He allows Jesus, and not himself, to be the power that takes him to the goal. When he presses toward Jesus, victory is assured.

*Turn your eyes upon
Jesus,
Look full in His
wonderful face,
And the things of earth
will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory
and grace.*

— Helen H. Lemmel

Jesus offers this prize, free to all who repent of their sins and focus on His shed blood. I encourage you to receive this free gift — a clean slate, standing before God one hundred percent spotless, enduring to the finish line, winning the race and gaining an imperishable wreath to be hung around your neck in victory!



— **Pastor James Rasmussen**
AFLC Director of Evangelism
Minneapolis, Minnesota

sound bites

Church leaders must integrate the coffee hour into their overall strategy for reaching people. Because of this, it needs

1 to be carefully thought through. A coffee hour can be a great way to welcome new people, but if it's not done correctly, it can be just another gathering from which newcomers feel excluded.

— Lynn Likkell

In addition to clearly preaching God's Word, the church must return to consistent prayer, personal witnessing, fellowship with God,

4 and a commitment to holiness. When God's people focus on these things, instead of techniques and methods of making church more attractive, the church will again begin to see growth as people come to know Christ.

— David Dunlop

6

Not one of you is too small or insignificant to reach one and help him until he can reach another, and if that goes on you can reach the world.

— Dawson Trotman

2

I have found that when I present the simple message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ with authority, quoting the very Word of God, that the Holy Spirit takes that message and drives it supernaturally into the human heart.

— Billy Graham

For the first time in the history of the world there are representatives of every nation in the world in one

3

country — the United States. ... Rather than reacting with fear, suspicion, prejudice, or neglect, the church can recognize this immigration as bringing the world within easy range of the church for evangelism and discipling.

— Gerry Johnson

The same Redeemer, who sent out the Apostles, is now sending you abroad into the same world, for the same honorable purpose: to glorify your Creator.

— Timothy Dwight

5

Where is our Jerusalem?

— Wes Patterson

As He approached Jerusalem and saw the city, He wept over it ... (Luke 19:41).

It is amazing to think that God, the Creator of all things, walked with us here on earth. The

thought of this leaves us with a sense of shame, like one would experience as they entertain a guest in an unkempt house. This world is hell-bent and set in its ways, and yet Jesus Christ chose to come here and live with His most cherished creation.

He didn't owe us His life, and He certainly didn't come down from heaven because He felt obligated. Jesus Christ came, and continues to come to us because His love is not based on what we do. Christ offers us relentless affection no matter who we are or what the circumstance. The verse from Luke 19:41 shows us the compassion of Christ as He wept for Jerusalem.

Luke depicts this significant time in the life of Jesus, the disciples, and the world. The tears of Jesus come from a man who has experienced much sorrow and grief while living here on earth. He continues to watch His children separate themselves from Him. What a time this must have been for Jesus. He rides through the outskirts of Jerusalem and is welcomed and worshipped by many who called themselves disciples. Along with the crowd were Jesus' Twelve, a mix-matched crew probably feeling somewhat proud that Jesus, the Man of the hour, had chosen them to be a part of this grand event.

However, for Jesus it was different. The weight of the world was on His shoulders. He would bare all of mankind's sin and be separated from His own Father in just under a week. Even under this crippling weight, His mournful sobs only came when He closely surveyed the city and saw the pain that would come to those who did not accept the sacrifice of His very life for their sin. He was not weeping for Himself in anticipation of the torture and separation from His Father. He was weeping for us. It is this compassion that fueled the Man of Christ to be led to the cross! Could it be that we are called to have this same compassion?

So, where is your Jerusalem?

Jesus' compassion led Him to do many things that went against the religious and

social norms of the day. He associated Himself with those deemed to be unacceptable and unlovable by the social and religious society. Matthew chapter nine records Jesus eating dinner at the tax collector's home. "For I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners," Jesus responded to the Pharisees' judgmental questions about why He would associate Himself with such people. Jesus, our pure and holy Redeemer, also associated with an adulterous woman at a well where He beckons her to throw off her sin and come to the well of living water. What amazing love!

How can we forget the crippled beggar who hadn't worked for 38 years and was left to die in the streets as society continued on it's unswerving way. Remember the lepers. The Gospels are filled with examples. Without aligning Himself to their sin, Christ ministered to those in need because of His undying love and compassion. In all of these

— Nancy L. Gould
Kirkland, Washington

Eighteen years ago the seed of God's love was being sown in young hearts at Our Redeemer Christian School, a ministry of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church in Kirkland, Washington.

Amanda Wren remembers ORCS as a place she loved as a four-year-old. The crafts, the outside picnics, and the loving teachers were all part of an inviting environment where she felt at home in God's presence. ORCS staff members were planting seeds of God's love.

For eighteen years ORCS knew nothing about the status of the seed sown in Amanda's heart. During elementary school it was apparently dormant. But she still thought of Our Redeemer as her church home even though she did not attend and ORCS was not maintaining contact.

examples, there is still no mention of the most powerful testimony of Christ's love which is found in the fact that He longs to love and befriend us!

So, how do we show Christ's love? Do we see people doing wrong and then blast them with the law without showing an ounce of compassion and love, whether it be outward or inward? Or worse yet, do we show love and tell others about Christ because we feel obligated? Do we see our Christian responsibilities as a checklist rather than an opportunity to be the hands and feet of Christ? The Lord's Church suffers if we have lost our passion to serve others as Christ taught us, no matter what the cost or the sin. It is time that we allow Christ to break our chains of nominalism so that we can run headlong into the will of God.

Jesus says in Matthew 25, that we will one day answer for our actions here on earth. "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for Me." How many around us know about Jesus because of how we act, not just what we say? When was the last time we showed Christ-like love to a homeless person, as Jesus commands? How about the homosexual or the inner-city person caught in the hopelessness and helplessness of the street? Are we reaching out to the woman who had an abor-

tion? These seem to be the lepers and the crippled beggars of the day that both society and the church shy away from. We easily call sin, sin — but in doing so we often forget to love them with Christ's love.

Along with the mighty calling we are given comes power through the Holy Spirit. Our Jerusalem lies right outside, and if we align ourselves with the work of our Father, we will minister to this world with the same driving compassion that Christ modeled. It is time that we plunge deeper into the life of Christ and get to know Him. This world desperately needs to see the love of our Maker. The gospel continually asks us to put off the things of the world so that He can lead us here on earth. Find your hope in Jesus and He will empower you to do all things (Philippians 4:13).

Finding Jerusalem wasn't hard for our Savior, and it isn't hard for us. We have been placed in its busy, people-flooded streets. We have a choice to either sit down on the curb and sluggishly wait for His Return, or we can carry the compassion of Christ to this hurting and dying world. God's Word presents this choice. It can penetrate to our very heart, if we allow it to. We cannot afford to ignore His call. What will you choose to do in your Jerusalem?



(The author is a youth worker at Ruthfred Lutheran Church and lives in Bethel Park, Pennsylvania.)

Waiting while God causes the growth

During junior high and early senior high years, a Christian friend invited Amanda to attend church and Sunday school and other youth activities. For several years she participated gladly and grew in her knowledge of God's love for her. The seed was being watered by another group of God's people. ORLC was unaware of God's ongoing work, but the seed was being nurtured and God was watching over His garden. Amanda still thought of ORLC as her church home.

While Amanda's connection with her friend's church diminished during her senior year and early college experience, God was using yet another means to water the seedling in her heart. Praying grandparents and a stirring of God's Spirit among family members brought her to desire Christian baptism. While her sib-

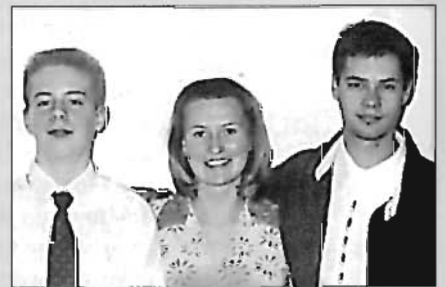
lings chose to be baptized in another denomination, Amanda placed a call to Our Redeemer Lutheran.

"Would you be willing to meet with me about being baptized?" she asked. That question began a process of her coming back to her "home church." After further study and preparation for baptism, Amanda publicly confessed her faith in Christ and received the blessing of holy baptism on November 15, 1998, eighteen years after the seed of God's love had been planted in her heart at Our Redeemer Christian School.

Amanda speaks now of an amazing peace which God gave her at baptism and a new desire to grow in God's word and in fellowship with her church. In all of this, it is God who has been faithful. Some planted, some watered, but it was God

who caused the growth. He gave the increase, even when sowers, waterers, and reapers were unaware of His work.

"I planted the seed, Apollos watered it, but God made it grow. So neither he who plants nor he who waters is anything, but only God, who makes things grow" (I Corinthians 3:6, 7).



Brendan Rose-Armstrong and Amanda Wren were baptized on the same day at Our Redeemer Lutheran. On the left is Chris Colvin, Amanda's boyfriend.

Learning to be a witness

— Joel Erickson

The subject of witnessing at the workplace, in school, or wherever you spend the majority of your waking hours, has troubled me for many years. We are called to be witnesses, yet why don't we have more experiences of observing Christians being obedient to God's command in our day-to-day lives? Perhaps we Christians are not taking the Lord's command to heart? Maybe we don't know how to evangelize? Here's my story of how the Lord taught me lessons in evangelism.

Growing up as a pastor's son, I had known since childhood that every Christian has a God-given duty to evangelize his or her corner of the world for Christ. Intellectually I understood my duty.

Following high school graduation, I worked at a variety of secular jobs while attending AFLBS until graduation from law school. It always seemed that I knew of my duty to witness at the various jobs I held, but the opportunities were never right. I was always uncomfortable with forcing conversations into the spiritual realm, when it seemed like there was no foundation for a discussion of spiritual things. What I didn't have figured out until 1983, was that evangelism (like salvation itself) is really the work of the Holy Spirit. I don't draw people to the kingdom of God because of my persuasive arguments or clever conversational techniques.

In my father's last year as pastor of Medicine Lake Lutheran, he preached a sermon on Ephesians 2:10 which helped me understand evangelism from a new perspective. In the NIV, this verse reads, "For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do." Focus for a minute on the words, "which God prepared in advance." I realized that I had been spending years trying to create "evangelism opportunities," which God had already prepared long ago. I was trying to "do something good for God," instead of walking in the path He had already arranged for me. I

saw things only from an earthly perspective. God sees and knows the eternal perspective.

Like anyone else, I am certainly capable of confronting people I encounter with the gospel. That kind of evangelism, however, is often undertaken in the flesh. Instead of waiting for God's leading, we often sprint out in front of Him trying to win people for

Christ with our limited vision of the human heart. My father's sermon struck a chord in me. If I plan to be the manager of my time on earth as a faithful steward, I need to ensure that I am operating in the center of God's will for my life. Only there will I begin to find those good works (including evangelism opportunities) which God prepared in advance for me to do.

This discovery lifted a tremendous burden from my shoulders. I don't need

to create what God has already prepared. He is the potter. I am just the clay.

God in His unfathomable mercy has equipped us with eyes to see, ears to hear, a brain to perceive and process, and a heart to feel and understand our world and the people in it. But these senses have to be tuned to the frequency of the Holy Spirit or all we will experience in life is interference and noise. If evangelism opportunities are not presenting themselves with any regularity in your life, perhaps you need to check and see if you are tuned in to the right frequency. Let me share a few experiences that I have had as illustrations.

I worked for 13 years as a corporate attorney for a Canadian telecommunications company with about 60,000 employees around the globe. There were plenty of evangelism opportunities in that field, right? But large multinational corporations do not appreciate employees proselytizing other employees, customers, suppliers or government regulators. "Keep your faith to yourself" was the advice I often heard. But God was working behind the scenes, unobtru-

"I was trying to do 'something good for God,' instead of walking in the path He had already arranged for me."

sively preparing the hearts of men and women to be open to the gospel.

One of my first lessons in seeing the Holy Spirit at work came in 1984, my first year on the job. I was at the Lester Pearson Airport in Toronto, Ontario, waiting to catch a return flight to the United States when I crossed paths unexpectedly with a colleague. I was just 30 years old. He was at least twice my years. I never would have considered this man to be a person to whom God would have me bring the good news of the gospel, but the Lord opened the door.

Guenter shared from his heart some of his experiences as a soldier in Hitler's army during the early 1940s. He had been only 17 or 18 when he was conscripted into the German Army. At the end of the war, he was captured by the Red Army and spent five years in Siberia in one of those infamous gulags. Many of his fellow German soldiers perished in Siberia. I can still recall his anguish as he spoke about "the guilt I feel over the terrible things I did as a German soldier." Can anyone but God place us in positions like this?

I wish I could report that a dramatic conversion experience took place at the airport that day. Unfortunately, I can't. But God was beginning to show me what powerful situations He would place me in, if I was willing to walk in the good works He has prepared for me to do.

In 1987, I began spending a great deal of time in our manufacturing plant in Santa Clara, California. I developed many friendships with the employees and was invited into their homes for meals, activities or sometimes even just for conversation. At first, I was overwhelmed by these experiences because I didn't expect them. My fellow attorneys who also traveled to California on business never reported having experiences like I had. Many of them had quite charismatic personalities, in stark contrast to me. But God had work for me. He opened the doors to develop relationships with people from various backgrounds.

I worked with one man for about five years before his father died. We spent a lot of time together in his home and over the phone as he struggled to cope with grief. My father passed away the next year, and this drew us even closer together as friends. Bill and his wife aren't in the kingdom yet, but I'm praying the Holy Spirit will draw them to Christ while there is still time.

Once you've experienced the workings of the Holy Spirit in your life to carry out the Great Commission you never look at life the

same way. You let go of the controls of your life and let God lead. He has good works for you to do. He wants you to do them. Are you ready to follow Him? He will take you to places you might never imagine. He will place people in your path that you wouldn't encounter on your own. As my father said in his sermon 15 years ago, there will be "so many opportunities you won't be able to fulfill them all." Heaven will be a tremendous experience for us if we truly love the Lord our God with all of our hearts and our neighbors as ourselves while we are here on this earth.



(The author is a financial advisor and lives with his wife, Jean, and two young children in Plymouth, Minnesota.)

Take note of this ...

Books on evangelism and witnessing

The Master Plan of Evangelism — Robert Coleman, Revell, 1963.

How To Be A Soul-Winner — C.S. Lovett, Gideons International, 1969.

Do the Work of an Evangelist — Carl F. Wisloff, AFLC Seminary Press, 1990.

Prayer — O. Hallesby, Augsburg Publishing, 1931.

Friendship Evangelism — booklet by the Billy Graham Association.

No Easy Road — Dick Eastman.

Basic Evangelism — booklet by Campus Crusade for Christ.

(For more resources, call the AFLC Director of Evangelism at 612-545-5631 or e-mail at: evangelism@aflc.org)

— From the Office of Parish Education —

We Believe, Therefore We Speak — David J. Valleskey

Speaking the Gospel Today — Robert Kolb

Law & Gospel: Foundation of Lutheran Ministry — Robert J. Koester

Witnessing with the Word

— A. W. Knock

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“Sometime you’ll have to tell me about that Jesus thing,”

— Greg Seeba

Cliff said as he got up to leave. My old friend from high school had stopped by to see me as he did from time to time when he was in town visiting his family. Cliff was the same friend who had told me years earlier that although he was raised in the church, he had come to be an agnostic. I had prayed that God would work in Cliff’s heart and would somehow bring him to Himself. When he said he would be coming out to visit, I asked God to provide an opportunity for me to share the gospel with him.

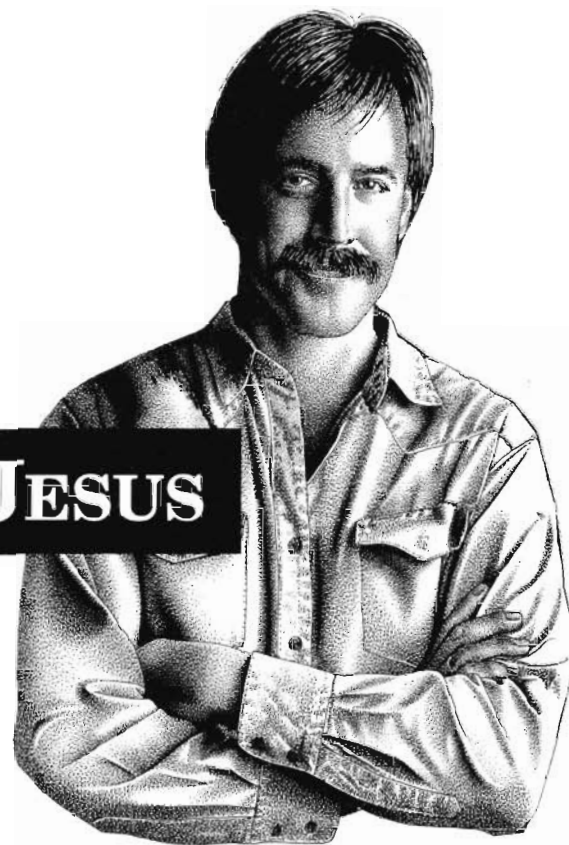
TELL ME ABOUT THAT JESUS

Cliff arrived and we spent a pleasant evening talking of old times and current happenings. As the evening drew to a close, I realized that I had failed to move our conversation from the earthly to the spiritual realm. When Cliff got up to leave, I knew I had squandered my opportunity. Then he suddenly asked that question that Christians everywhere long to hear.

I’m sure my mouth fell open at the witness of such a crystal-clear answer to prayer. As we walked out to his car, I asked Cliff to come back the following evening so we could talk about “that Jesus thing.” After he left, I prayed that God would enable me by His Spirit to clearly and accurately present the gospel while at the same time prepare Cliff’s heart to hear it.

When Cliff arrived the next night, I stumbled through some basic apologetics and discussed the four spiritual laws with him. I even remembered some of the Scripture that accompanies those laws. But it seemed the thing that interested Cliff most was when I shared the incredible things Jesus had done in my life: how He provided me with a wonderful wife; how He rescued my wife and me from a bicycle accident involving a drunken driver; how He delivered my father from four different types of cancer and how He provided me with a special peace at my mother’s death. Cliff listened attentively and asked good questions, but I did not know what effect all this would have on his heart. I was simply grateful God had given me a second chance to plant the seed of the gospel and to share my faith.

Never before nor since have I had such a straightforward request for the gospel, yet I



know that I contact people every day with just as great a need. The problem is how to reach them; how to get past the superficial to the eternal.

I remember reading an article dealing with the intimacy levels of conversations. At the lowest level of intimacy were greetings and pleasantries; then discussion of events, activities and people. Moving up the scale of intimacy were conversations about friends and family; higher up the scale were expression of feelings. The highest level involved discussions about finances and faith.

The point of the article was that since we naturally protect our intimacy, we will not allow casual excursions into its higher levels. The vast majority of our conversation, therefore, takes place in the lowest levels of intimacy. We can say, “God bless you,” when a stranger sneezes, and may even get a “thank you,” in reply. But we can’t ask the same stranger, “How has God blessed you?” if we expect the conversation to last very long.

I believe all of this is important to remember as we share our faith in Jesus Christ. Since we are dealing with the highest level of conversational intimacy, we

must be sensitive to the person who has entrusted that intimacy to us. To earn this trust, we must first establish a relationship with him. As our relationship with him develops, trust and intimacy will grow.

Last year our Bible study group watched a videotape of a conference speaker, Rebecca Manley Pippert, who spoke about the importance of establishing relationships with those outside our Christian circles. The videotape was titled, "Out of the Salt Shaker and into the World," distributed by Inter Varsity Press. During her lecture, Mrs. Pippert urged us to stop being "rabbit-hole Christians" hopping from worship services to fellowship meetings to Bible studies. While acknowledging the importance of such activities, she urged us to look for ways to be involved in the lives of others who did not know Christ.

Mrs. Pippert also spoke of better ways for us to share our faith by looking to Jesus as our model. She pointed out that in sharing our faith, most Christians **answer** questions and **preach sermons**, whereas Jesus **asked** questions and **told stories**. She made the following suggestions for us to be equipped to present the gospel:

- Pray for the person by name.
- Become involved in that person's life.
- Know some basic apologetics to have a ready defense for your faith.
- Read the Gospel accounts regularly to become intimately familiar with the life of Christ.
- Share your story to show what a relationship with Jesus is all about.

Sometimes I think that the greatest witness we have is when we truly and thoroughly live out the Christian life before others. I am always convicted when I remember a phrase I heard in a discipleship class: "You are the only Bible many people will ever read." No matter how clearly we present the gospel or how brilliantly we overcome objections, if we do not "live the life" our witness will be meaningless to those who most need to know about "that Jesus thing."



(The author works in law enforcement and lives with his wife, Mary, and two young children in Camarillo, California.)



— Brad Nelson

I recall the time, about twenty years ago, when as a new believer I attended a men's prayer breakfast along with a number of men from our church and a visiting missionary. The breakfast began with a prayer and a devotional. Afterwards, there was a brief discussion which centered around the need to share our faith. As the discussion ended, one of the men turned to me and said, "Brad, why don't you tell the group about your recent experience."

It was one of the moments in my life when I wished I could have been somewhere else. Not only was I not ready to share my faith — I didn't even want to. Why not? What was I afraid of? Why would I feel threatened in a group of Christian men? How would I ever be able to share my faith to an unbeliever if I couldn't share it with those who believed?

I also recall a more recent circumstance where the Lord opened a door. I was visiting with a lady who was hurting over a family situation and just wanted to talk. I sensed from the beginning of the conversation that this would be an opportunity to share Christ with her. We talked for quite awhile and during the conversation I felt the Lord telling me to share with her. The conversation came to a close and all I said before she left was that I would pray for her, but I didn't share Christ with her. Why not? **Why does it sometimes seem so difficult for us to share Christ with others?**

Matthew chapter fourteen tells of an early morning walk on the lake as Jesus
(continued on next page)

"I always thank my God as I remember you in my prayers, because I hear about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints. I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ. Your love has given me great joy and encouragement, because you, brother, have refreshed the hearts of the saints" (Philemon 4-7).

How congregations used their grant money

Thirty-six AFLC congregations in 1998, shared a \$40,000 grant from the Lutheran Brotherhood Foundation's Church Extension program.

The Victory and Grace Lutheran Parish in Park River and Edinburg, North Dakota, used their grant money to help distribute about 800 "Jesus" videos in the two communities. The project was part of an interdenominational effort in those towns. According to Pastor Ted Berkas, "It was a tremendous success. We expect to begin follow-up work toward spring. We also are continuing to hold the weekly prayer meetings."

In Cokato, Minnesota, Good Shepherd Lutheran hosted a golf clin-

ic and tournament for their community. They have started a "car care" service for single moms and widows. The church buys the oil filters and other small parts. Some of the money will also go to help host a "Creation Seminar" yet to be scheduled.

Hosanna Free Lutheran in St. James, Minnesota, used some of their grant dollars to upgrade their recording equipment for their weekly radio broadcast. They are encouraged with the program and hope to continue it as long as possible.

Willamette Free Lutheran in Beaverton, Oregon, purchased boxes of candy canes to distribute as Christmas gifts in the community. Included with the boxes was a description of

the symbolism of the candy cane pointing to Jesus, a Christmas tract and an invitation to Christmas activities of the congregation.

Glyndon, Minnesota —

Maranatha Free Lutheran hosted an Evangelism Rally on November 22. Evangelism commission members Gene Quist and Mike McCarlson led workshops, Pastor Rodger Olson was the worship leader and Evangelist Jim Rasmussen brought the message.

Northwestern Minnesota District Evangelism Conference is scheduled for February 5-7 at Our Saviour's Lutheran in Thief River Falls, Minnesota. Details are available from area churches.

STEP OUT

"No excuse matches the promise of what God can accomplish through you."

went out to the disciples. When the disciples saw Him, they were terrified, thinking it was a ghost. The Bible tells us they cried out in fear. But Jesus said to them, "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid." At this point Peter spoke up and said, "Lord, if it's you, tell me to come to you on the water." Peter got down out of the boat and walked on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he became afraid and as he began to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me." Jesus did just that. He reached out His hand and caught him and said, "You of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Peter's trust in Jesus wavered, yet he was the only one who replied and had enough faith to get out of the boat when they saw Jesus out on the water. What about the disciples who stayed in the boat? Jesus wasn't just speaking to Peter when He said, "Take courage!"

When you have the opportunity to share your faith, do you want to be a Peter and "step out of the boat" or do you want to be like the others and stay where you feel secure? Let's be honest, it is a choice! Staying in the boat is the most comfortable and certainly the least threatening. However, is it productive in spreading the gospel?

Hear the Lord's voice calling you to be faithful to Him (II Peter 1:4-10). God's Word clearly tells us to be witnesses (Matthew 10:18 and Acts 1:8), and that we are to disci-

ple others (John 15:8). God does not want you to sit in the boat. He wants you to step out of the boat in trust, with courage, knowing that He will always be with you. His Word assures us of that in Deuteronomy 31:8, "The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid, do not be discouraged."

He will guide us. "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" (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Our Christian walk is full of opportunities to share our faith. We have a gracious Lord who continues to open doors. In some cases, I have no idea of the results but I know the Lord provides the opportunities for a reason. Other times the results are evident. Either way, sharing Christ is a rewarding experience!

Step out of the boat and let God lead! No excuse matches the promise of what God can accomplish through you. "For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline. So do not be ashamed to testify about our Lord" (II Timothy 1:7-8).



(The author is the general manager of a manufacturing company and lives with his wife, Gail, and two children in Frontier, Saskatchewan.)

Gilbert, Arizona evangelism blitz

"This week has taught me the importance of fellowship and prayer, as well as witnessing to a lost world."

— Participant in the evangelism blitz



Our new friends, Bernice and David Rompolo, Gilbert, Arizona joined us at the Wednesday night singspiration and ice cream social.



Pastor Rodger and Helene Olson provided music during the special sessions.

photos by Rick and Carolyn Rasmussen



The Miracle Mile Team. Front row: Lay Pastor Orville Jensen, Lucy Pike, Cheryl Skordahl, Helen Martinson, Jean Jensen. Second row: Vivian Stugelmeyer, Helen Knapp, Carolyn and Rick Rasmussen, Garnett Holm, Bonnie Van Bruggan, Roland Stugelmeyer. Third row: Pastor Al Monson, Gene Quist, Home Missions Director Paul Nash, Evangelism Director Jim Rasmussen, Jeremy Vance, Pastor Steve Mundfrom, Lay Pastor Wayne Hanson, Adeline Monson, Daisy Quist, Harvey Loftsgard. Fourth row: Darrel Wiers, Helene Olson, Pastor Rodger Olson, Pastor George Knapp, Pastor Dennis Gray, Rosella and Art Synsteliën. Not pictured: LaVern and Marilyn Thompson, Pastor Frank Cherney, Pastor David Skordahl, Evelyn Systeliën, Grace Loftsgard, Pastor Orville and Shirley Olson, Vint and Leah Bruflat, and Pastor Walter Johnson.

On November 4-12, 1998, 26 members of various AFLC congregations took part in an "adventure in ministry" in Gilbert, Arizona. They were part of an "Evangelism Blitz" to help the new home missions congregation, Calvary Free Lutheran Church, get off to a running start.

Interim Pastor Walter Johnson conducted the congregation's first worship service on November 1. It was the culmination of years of prayer and planning by many individuals and the AFLC Home Missions Department. The service was not an end, but a commencement of the real work of growing and sustaining a new congregation.

The participants in the blitz joined the group from Calvary Lutheran and mounted a door-to-door campaign. The Miracle Mile Ministry materials were used as a tool to gauge the religious interest of people in the area and plant the seeds of the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Miracle Mile system emphasizes laying a strong groundwork of prayer. Vivian Stugelmeyer of Valley City, North Dakota, reflected on her experience: "My first thought in regard to coming down here was, 'Am I good enough? How much can I do for them?' I found out right away. Prayer just took over. It never stopped helping me and all of us. This Miracle Mile opened the gates. It was unbelievable. I grew so much in heart and soul. It was just great. We were like a big family. God does great wonders."

Pastor Johnson estimated that about 1000 homes were visited, and 50% of the families accepted the offer of a cassette tape explaining the way of salvation, and allowed the Calvary team to take their names and phone numbers. One homeowner said, "We are happy that other churches besides the Mormons are interested in our neighborhood." The follow-up workload for Calvary Lutheran is tremendous, but the moving of the Spirit of God

(continued on next page)



Prayer was the essential element of the evangelism blitz.

ARIZONA BLITZ

is obvious. Pastor Johnson says there is an urgent need for a parish worker to minister to children in that community, mostly populated by young families.

The church is being planted in a developing area of the fastest growing community in Arizona. Calvary Free is not intended to be a snowbird church, but to serve the permanent residents of a bustling metropolitan area and by God's grace to grow with it. The primary goal is not numerical growth but the salvation, care and feeding of souls. Its ministry can only be accomplished by diligent work and prayer.

Special appreciation goes to local families, some of whom are "snowbirds," for their hard work in coordinating the transportation, lodging and meals for the team.

They have a mission vision for that community! Helen Martinson, Dalton, Minnesota, returned home after the blitz and said, "It was a real eye-opener for me when I heard some of the answers to the question about how to go to heaven. How we need to pray for these people, that they may know the Way, and accept Christ as their personal Savior."

Please pray for Pastor Johnson and the members of Calvary Lutheran. Pray that Christ will be the Victor in the spiritual warfare that is certain to occur because the Spirit of God has opened so many doors in that community. The congregation is seeking God's will in the calling of a permanent pastor.

— *Larry Walker,
Rick and Carolyn Rasmussen,
and Solveig Hjermstad*



Pastor Frank Cherney, Tucson, led one of the devotional times.



Marilyn and LaVern Tompson, Tucson, came up to Gilbert to assist with the blitz.



Pastor Jim Rasmussen and Pastor David Skordahl found a few minutes to visit in the warm sunshine.



Darrel Wiers assisted Pastor Wayne Hanson and Pastor Paul Nash in role playing a house call during a training session.



Eden Prairie, Minnesota — Larry and Mary Ann Hammer shared the Christmas story with the King of Glory Lutheran congregation and all who passed by with their hand-made gift of the manger scene which they installed the evening of the congregation's Christmas dinner.

Newark, Illinois — Helmar Lutheran distributed nearly 400 "Jesus" videos in a six-mile radius around the church on December 13. The videos were also available for members to give their friends, neighbors and co-workers.

■ Share the Good News! ■



Tulia, Texas — Sherlan and Raenita White and Betsy Lawson took a 10-week adult confirmation class at Christ Lutheran. Steven and Troy White were baptized the same day the adults joined the congregation. Pictured with them is Pastor Tom Baker.

■ Opportunities abound! ■

Naknek, Alaska — Short-term, self-supporting mission workers are being prayed for by the congregations in Naknek and South Naknek, Alaska. Particular areas in which assistance is needed and opportuni-

ties to serve exist include maintenance, auto mechanic, carpentry, and radio work both on and off the air. For more information contact Pastor Tom Olson, P.O. Box 450, Naknek, AK 99633; phone 907-246-6624.



Pastor Paul Nash headed the kitchen staff.



Sonoma Ranch Elementary School is the current home of Calvary Free Lutheran.

Epiphany and Roe v. Wade

— Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb,
Executive Director,
Lutherans For Life

B Besides the fact that both are observed in January, what in the world is the relationship between Epiphany and Roe v. Wade? It is one of light and darkness.

On January 22, 1973 the U. S. Supreme Court legalized abortion and darkness began to spread from abortion clinics to assisted suicide laws to prime time euthanasia. It continues to spread to embryo research laboratories and fetal tissue experimentation.

The Light came as a baby 2,000 years ago to rescue those in darkness, which is the state of each human heart. "I have come into the world as a light, so that no one who believes in Me should stay in darkness" (John 12:46).

Light is the symbol of the Epiphany season that begins January 6. It is the time of making known the Light to the darkness of human hearts.

The relationship between Roe v. Wade and Epiphany is that the darkness created by Roe v. Wade gives opportunities for sharing the Light. When the Church tries to ignore this particular darkness by referring to it as "political" or "social," it is ignoring opportunities for evangelism.

Expose the Deeds of Darkness

Abraham Lincoln, speaking of slavery to some of his opponents, said, "There is no place, according to you, where this wrong thing can properly be called wrong." Satan, that deceptive "angel of light," is busy these days keeping people from

calling wrong things wrong. He likes to make the darkness appear as if it is really light. Even Christians can get caught up in his beguiling rhetoric. "Jesus wouldn't want grandma to suffer like this." "Jesus wouldn't want a child born into circumstances where he or she might be abused."

Paul writes, "Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them" (Ephesians 5:9). Using the light of God's truth, Christians need never be ashamed to expose the deeds of darkness committed against the sacredness of human life. They need never be timid about calling wrong things wrong.

Share the Light of the Gospel

Calling wrong things wrong has as its goal the evangelistic purpose of preparing hearts to hear what God has done in Christ to deal with wrong things. People trapped in the darkness of their sin need to hear that they do not have to stay in the darkness. The pregnant teen filled with remorse, the post-abortive woman who feels she can never be forgiven, and the family filled with guilt over the removal of a feeding tube need to hear, "Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1).

These situations give opportunity to tell how Jesus entered our darkness, took our sin upon Himself, suffered its horrible consequences on the cross, and rose again to give us the light of hope and healing. As one woman put it, "I never realized that Jesus was willing to get down into my muck and miry life and lift me up out of the sewage of my problems. He has since shown me, He really is."

Be the Light of the Gospel

St. Francis of Assisi once said, "Preach the Gospel at all times. Use words if necessary." Jesus who said, "I am the light of the world," also said, "You are the light of the world." The life issues of our day not only give us opportunity to tell others about the loving arms of Jesus, they give us opportunity to be those arms. The pregnant teen needs to hear that Jesus loves her, but she may also need a place to stay, a ride to the doctor or help to finish her schooling after the baby is born. Those wounded in the aftermath of an abortion need to hear of God's forgiveness, but they may also need a listening ear, a supportive tract or someone to go with them to a support group.

Caring pregnancy centers, hospice centers, and other agencies provide many opportunities for Christians to share the light of Christ by letting their own lights shine in the darkness.

Epiphany is the season of light. The life issues we face today are the cause of much darkness, but they also give us opportunity for evangelism, to share the Light of Jesus Christ who dispels the darkness and brings hope.



(Lutherans For Life is a Bible-based, Christ-centered organization that exists to help congregations share the Light of Christ. They provide resource material on all the life issues. For more information on how you can receive materials or be involved, call 1-888-364-LIFE.)



Mama's cup collection

Mama had a beautiful cup collection! She had about 100 cups that she received as gifts from family and friends. Each one had a unique story.

I would often ask, "Mama, who gave you this cup?" Then she would smile and tell me which part of the world it came from and the story of the loving giver.

Some of the stories were sad and some were happy and yet they all brought special meaning and joy to her heart. She would conclude by saying, "It's the inner joy that only Jesus can give that helps us through our walk in life."

Mama herself experienced many hardships. In later years she became diabetic and then suffered mini-strokes. The last four years of her life were spent in a nursing home where she eventually was unable to walk, talk or feed herself. We would take turns to go and help feed her. She loved to sing while I played the piano. Even though she couldn't talk, she sang parts of the many hymns she had learned from childhood. The glow on her face was telling me of her inner peace and joy. This was not joy in her circumstances, but joy in the Lord.

She would listen intently when we read God's Word to her. Mama loved the 23rd Psalm. It was an expression of her faith and trust in the goodness, love and grace of God and Jesus her Savior. When we came to the last part of verse five, "my cup runneth over," I could feel her grati-

tude to God for her full measure of spiritual blessings and joy!

Daughter like mother — I too, have a cup collection. I have a plain cup that tells the story of an elderly woman from Norway who came to America. She lost her husband and was alone. When I would visit her, she always had a lunch prepared. It would be just the two of us and yet there were three places set at the table. After several visits, I asked, "Why the third place setting?" She responded with a special glow, "It is for Jesus!" "Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again; Rejoice!" (Philippians 4:4).

A friend of mine had gone through a difficult relationship with her mother who told her she didn't love her. Whatever she tried to do to rekindle their relationship failed. Her mother passed away. She gave me a cup given to her by her mother because she didn't want to be reminded of this sad experience. She moved to another town and asked for prayer that she would find forgiveness in her heart toward her mother. A few years went by and one day I received a letter asking if I would be willing to part with the cup. Our prayers had been answered! She forgave her mother and is experiencing an inner peace and joy. As a result of trials, God makes of our lives that which will bring honor, praise and glory at His appearing.

In my collection I also have a variety of cups overflowing with treasured memories of my own life! Some are stories of happiness, dis-

— Karen Knudsvig
Ny Stavanger Lutheran
Buxton, North Dakota

appointments, failures, trials and success. In every story there is joy because I know He walks with me through every valley, comforts me in trials, gives spiritual food and drink, supplies all my needs and keeps me content in whatever state I am in!

"Though you have not seen him, you love him; and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy" (1 Peter 1:8).



Miriam needs help with the laundry



The Miriam Infant Home in Brazil is currently doing laundry for 18 toddlers and infants (including cloth diapers) on a scrub board, wringer washer, and clothesline. As you can imagine, this has become a full-time task, and occasionally is a health hazard using these primitive methods.

The Minneapolis District Women's Missionary Federation has decided to take on a fundraising project to purchase an industrial-size washer and dryer for the Miriam Home. They have raised \$1200 toward this \$5000 project, which has been approved by the AFLC World Missions Department. Any contribution is welcome. Write to WMF-Minneapolis District, in care of Tammy Vukonich, treasurer, 1180 - 30th Ave., Amery, WI 54001. Indicate "for Miriam's laundry."

Campo Mourão, Brazil —

Sonja Dahl is currently living at the AFLC World Missions Home at 2344 30th Ave., Osceola, Wisconsin 54020 (715-294-3645) while applying for a new visa. Sonja recently wrote, "I did not imagine that two years could go by so quickly. I will probably never know the full impact that the Miriam Infant Home has made on the lives of hundreds of children. I often wonder how much they will remember after they leave the home. Will they remember watching the "Jesus" film and "Psalty Sing-Along" enough times to know the words by heart in English? Then there's the bed-time prayers, the moments of discipline, the limitless hugs and kisses, and the wonderful toys and clothes given to them. Only the Lord knows the impact.

"Thank you for your continued prayers and support as we reach out to the abused and abandoned children! I look forward to seeing many of you during this time in the States and ask for continued prayers that doors would be open to Brazil."

Curitiba, Brazil — At Christmas, Becca Welsch returned to her home in Amery, Wisconsin after several months of working with Mis-



Missionary Sonja Dahl and Valdenei, age three, at the Miriam Infant Home.

sionaries Paul and Becky Abel. In January, the Abels will host a group of seven people from Cokato, Minnesota, to help with the construction of the church in nearby Bateias.

Cesky Tesin, Czech Republic

— On November 17, 1998, Peter Timothy was born to Missionaries Tim and Renata Hinrichs. He is their first child.



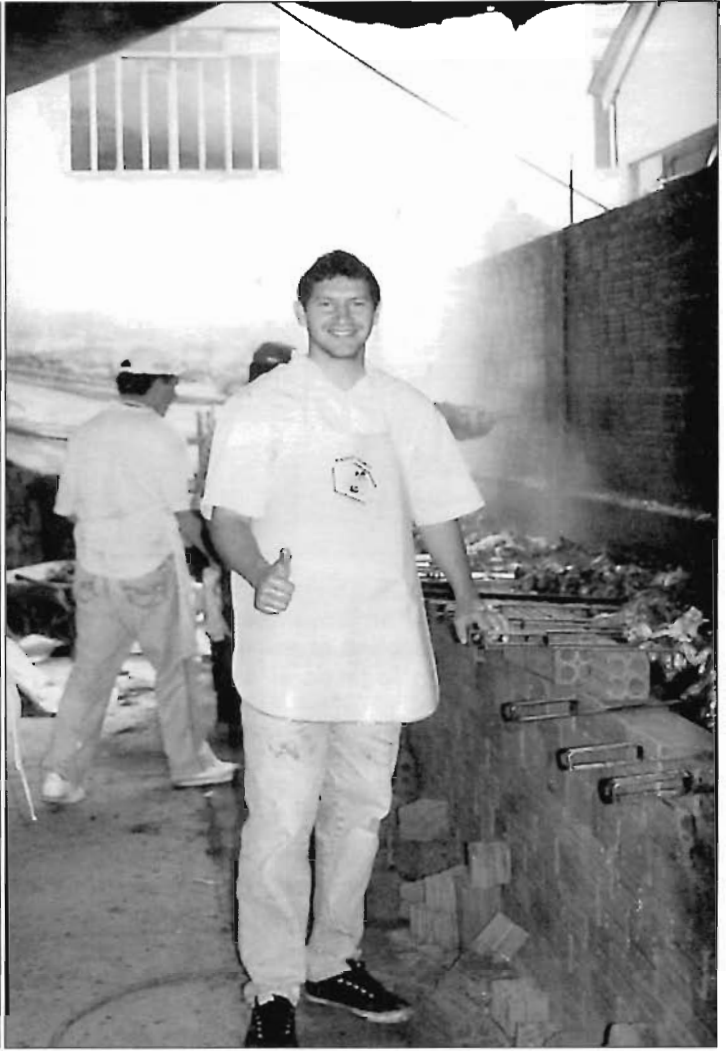
WMF Honorary Membership pins — Pictured are eight ladies from Maple Bay Free Lutheran near Fertile, Minnesota and three ladies from Faith Lutheran Church of Running Valley, Colfax, Wisconsin who recently received honorary membership pins. The pins and certificates provide an opportunity to honor faithful members from the local con-



gregation. The national WMF 1998 Honorary Membership and In Memoriam budget is \$5000. This is used to help support the pastors and national workers in Brazil, Mexico, and India. Pins may be ordered from the WMF treasurer, Jeanette Benson, Box 220, Upsala, MN 56384.



Last October the Central Church of Campo Mourao, hosted a "charrasco," a Brazilian barbecue, to help with the finishing expenses of the church sanctuary. Church construction began in 1989, and the members have been working on completing the building by 2000. This charrasco is one of many promotions the people have done over the years. They have worked hard and the Lord has blessed them with a beautiful new building. Pictured are the barbecue pits



where over 500 pounds of meat were cooked. Also pictured is a very pleased Pastor Iran Goes, who serves the congregation. (Missionaries Connely and Carolyn Dyrud have returned to Campo Mourao after being in the states for their daughter's wedding. They will help host the Brazil-AFLC annual conference in January, and are preparing for the new school year which begins in February.



Pastor Michael Crowell, Lake Stevens, Washington, has resigned as pastor of Elim Lutheran where he has served since 1994. He has accepted a position as executive director of Mission Aviation Training Academy, located in Arlington, Washington.

Pastor Eugene Enderlein, World Missions Director has a new e-mail address: enderlein@afcl.org, or call him at 612-545-5631 to schedule a time for him to share with your congregation about AFLC world missions.

Kirkland, Washington — Our Redeemer Lutheran Church hosted a two-day conference on "The Mission of Christ's Church," November 20-21 with guest speaker Pastor John Abel, retired AFLC missionary to Brazil. Pastor Abel and his wife, Ruby, visited congregations in the Pacific Northwest in November. They are traveling to Brazil in January and plan to remain there several weeks before returning to their home in Hitterdal, Minnesota.



Sioux Falls, South Dakota — Abiding Savior Free Lutheran Church was dedicated on November 15, 1998. AFLC President Robert Lee preached at the afternoon service. The 600-seat facility is located at 4100 S. Bahnson

Avenue. The church's phone number is (605) 371-3800. The fax line is (605) 371-3870. Pastor Michael Brandt serves the congregation.

Erik Apland, Bruce, South Dakota is joining the "President's Own" Marine Corps Band in Washington, D.C. Auditions were held in December. He is one of three pianists in the Marine Band Operations. Erik has been an organist at Grace Lutheran Church since he was a young teenager.

Phil Chapman, Newark, Illinois, began serving as Director of Student Ministries on January 1, 1999 at Emmaus Lutheran in Bloomington, Minnesota. He graduated from Northern Illinois University in December and had been the youth worker at Helmar Lutheran Church near Newark.

Andy Britz, is the youth worker for St. Paul's Lutheran in Cloquet, Minnesota. He began his new ministry after graduation last summer from Northwestern College in Roseville, Minnesota.

Everett, Washington — The Calvary Lutheran Christmas party was held on December 13, with Pastor Rick and Barb Long and family from nearby Arlington, sharing special music and the meditation.

The Pacific Northwest District, has published the second issue of their newsletter sent to all congregations in the district. The newsletter is sent from Calvary Lutheran in Everett, Washington.

Pastor Dennis Gray, Newfolden, Minnesota, is serving Bethel Lutheran in Grafton, North Dakota, as an interim pastor. His office phone number is (701) 352-0307.

Pastor Roy Johnson, Wichita Falls, Texas, has resigned as pastor of Christ Lutheran Church where he has served since 1996, and has accepted the call to Ortleby

Lutheran and Calvary Lutheran Parish of Ortleby and Wallace, South Dakota. He began his new ministry in January, 1999.

Pastor Michael Peterson, Whitestown, Indiana, has resigned as pastor of St. Mark's Lutheran Church where he has served since 1996. He hopes to pursue graduate studies in the classical languages.



Cranberry Township, Pennsylvania — St. John's Lutheran Church of Lovi is the most recent congregation to join the AFLC and yet is older than any other AFLC congregation. Then known as Daniel's Church, the congregation organized in 1834. The church is located 20 miles north of Pittsburgh, in a growing area. They have not had a full-time pastor for eight years. St. John's will be subsidized by Ruthfred Lutheran in nearby Bethel Park, in the calling of a full-time pastor.



1999 AFLC

CALENDAR of Events

FLS Inter-Term

Jan. 4-8 — "Creationism"
Jan. 11-15 — "AFLC History and Aims"
Jan. 25-29 — "Confirmation Ministry"

AFLC Missions Week

Jan. 11-14 at the AFLC Schools' campus.
Missionary Marilyn Laszlo — guest speaker.
Pastor Mark Molstre, Tioga, North Dakota — evening speaker.

Mission Trip to India

Jan. 4-22

Missions Director Eugene Enderlein is coordinating this first trip with students to our work in southern India. Dr. Francis Monseth, Free Lutheran Seminary Dean, is conducting a two-week seminar for the evangelists and Bible women. Missionary Sonja Dahl will be working with Dr. Kumar and his wife, Florence Nightingale as they offer health clinics in the villages. Pastor Doug Wagley, Spokane, Washington, will join the team. He is speaking in churches north of the BFLC region where he previously served as a missionary. The six Association Free Lutheran Bible School students traveling to India are: Matt Bruce, Joel Fugleberg, Kevin Groven, Paul Haugen, Sarah Johnson, and Andrea Nelson. The students may receive two mission credits for this trip.

Mission Trip to Mexico

Jan. 8-22

About eight AFLBS students will join with others on the Partners in Mission Outreach bus trip to Obergon, Mexico. They may receive two mission credits for this trip.

Youth Workers' Retreat

Jan. 15-17 at The ARC

AFLC Pastors and Wives Conference

Jan. 19 -21 at The ARC

The newly formatted conference opens with a Pastors Appreciation Service on Tuesday evening and concludes Thursday evening with a Communion Service.

*Please note the year-around retreats and camps at the AFLC's retreat center, **The ARC**, near Osceola, Wisconsin. Their schedule for 1999 is listed on page 24 of this issue.



Canadian Annual Conference

April 9-11 at Bethel Lutheran, Frontier, Saskatchewan

AFLBS Spring Choir Tours

April 2-18

AFLBS Spring Campus Days

April 23-25

Evangelism Rally and Workshops

April 30, 4:30 p.m.-May 1, 3 p.m.
at Emmaus Lutheran, Bloomington, MN

AFLC Schools Spring Concert

May 21, 8 p.m.
Graduation, May 22, 1 p.m.

AFLC Annual Conference

Fergus Falls, Minnesota
June 16-20

For more information regarding the annual conference contact Calvary Free Lutheran Church, 1602 Co. Rd. 111, Fergus Falls, MN 56537; phone 218-736-4282; e-mail Greg Olson at golson@otpc.com.

Free Lutheran Youth Convention

Estes Park, Colorado
June 28-July 3

Lake Bronson Family Camp

July 11-16

Wilderness Camp

July 13-18 at Lake Park, Minnesota

The ARC Family Camp

August 1-7

Summer Institute of Theology

August 2-6 at FLS campus

Opening of the Fall Semester at FLS

Sept. 1

Canadian Pastors/Laymen's Retreat

Sept. 6-10 at Vernon, B.C.

Opening of the Fall Semester at AFLBS

Sept. 8

All Boards Meeting

Sept. 28 at The ARC

Third Annual AFLC Chaplains' Conference

Sept. 30-Oct. 2 at The ARC

AFLBS Fall Campus Days

Oct. 22-24

AFLBS Parents' Day

Dec. 4
Schools' Christmas Concert, Dec. 5

City of Plymouth approves school's building project

The AFLC Schools' campus expansion campaign cleared a significant hurdle on Wednesday, December 16. After nine months of debate, the Plymouth City Council voted to approve land-use guidelines for the Bible school and seminary building project. They have operated on the 23-acre campus near Medicine Lake since 1962.

"Now the work begins," said Project Director Tonnes Pollestad, coordinator of the Vision 2004 project. The AFLC hopes to construct a four-building complex — including dormitories, gymnasium, and student center — to accommodate growing enrollment at the two-year Bible school.

"We're relieved and pleased," said AFLBS Dean, Pastor James L. Johnson. "We wanted to stay here in Plymouth." Since 1996, AFLBS enrollment has grown from 100 to 140, Johnson said. "We're at capacity at 146." The school has converted old offices and meeting rooms into student housing. The seminary's enrollment is at 12 this year.

When Vision 2004 team leaders last winter proposed Bible school enrollment figures for the future at 450-550, council members, neighbors and the Plymouth Planning commission balked. A neighborhood group of 25 petitioned the state on December 2, forcing a two-week delay in the Plymouth vote. The neighborhood group said they hoped to limit the size of the project, or to convince the AFLC to expand elsewhere.

During the last 11 months, Pollestad worked with neighbors and the Plymouth city staff to seek options that would work for both the city and neighbors. Amid some neighborhood opposition, the city on June 12, agreed to proceed with a Planned Unit Development (PUD) rezoning solution. As part of the compromise,

AFLC Annual Conference

June 16-20

Fergus Falls Middle School, Fergus Falls, Minnesota

Motel Listing

Americinn — 218-739-3900
I-94 & Hwy 210
50 rooms set aside until May 15
Pool, continental breakfast
\$61.90-\$109.90 plus tax

Comfort Inn — 218-736-5787
I-94 & Hwy 210
30 rooms set aside until May 25
Continental breakfast
\$49-\$59 plus tax, for two adults,
\$5 each additional adult

Best Western — 218-739-2211
I-94 & Hwy 210
99 rooms set aside until May 15
Pool
\$62.91-\$71.91 plus tax

Days Inn — 218-736-3311
I-94 & Hwy 210
56 rooms set aside until April 1
Pool, continental breakfast
\$38.61-\$67.50 plus tax

Super 8 Motel — 218-736-3261
I-94 & Hwy 210
21 rooms set aside until June 1
Continental breakfast
\$41.88-\$56.88 plus tax

Motel Seven — 218-736-2554
I-94 & Hwy 210
No block of rooms set aside
\$38.61-44.01 plus tax

Surrounding Area Campgrounds

Elks Point, Fergus Falls
Phone — 218-736-5244
(Lodge)
218-736-4292
(Campground)

Sunset Beach Resort & Campground
Battle Lake
Phone — 218-583-2750
888-583-2750

Swan Lake Resort
Fergus Falls
Phone — 218-736-4626

Otter Tail Lake Campground
Battle Lake
Phone — 218-864-5848

Information available on the internet at:
www.fergusfalls.com
 (click on links)
www.ottercountry.com

For a list of the resorts and the bed-breakfast locations in the area send a self-addressed stamped, legal size envelope to:
 Calvary Free Lutheran Church
 1602 Co. Rd. 111
 Fergus Falls, MN 56537

the AFLC dropped resident enrollment goals, limited square footage, reduced parking area, and improved water management.

Council member, Christian Preus, along with four others voted in favor of the AFLC application. During discussion, Preus reflected on his 16 years growing up on seminary campuses, two of which were land-locked by residential housing. In one case, said Preus, the seminary for which his father worked was forced to move, "and that was the worst thing that could have happened to that neighborhood," he said.

"We cannot find better neighbors than these," said Preus, son of Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod theologian Robert Preus. "We do not want to lose the Bible school and seminary as neighbors."

Pollestad was both relieved and excited. "God's hand was working," said Pollestad, who will help lead a campaign to raise \$9 million from AFLC members and supporters. "Now we can start setting the details for the buildings and the site and pray that the money will come in so construction can begin."

The AFLC School Board of Trustees has decided that 75 percent of needed funds must be in hand in the form of cash or pledges before groundbreaking begins.



1999 AFLC directory of officers and boards

Officers

President

Rev. Robert Lee
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, MN 55441
612-545-5631
President@aflc.org

Vice president

Rev. Elden Nelson
Kandiyohi, Minnesota

Secretary

Rev. Brian Davidson
Weslaco, Texas

Coordinating Committee

Chairman

Rev. Kenneth Moland
Kirkland, WA
425-821-2424
KMoland527@aol.com

Members

Rev. Terry Olson
Thief River Falls, MN
Rev. Les Galland
Everett, WA
Ralph Peterson
Portland, ND
Marlin Benrud
Goodhue, MN
James Boe
Ottawa, IL
Vincent Larson
Buffalo, ND

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Chairman

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Cokato, MN
320-286-5275
db.enterprises@cmgate.com

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Emory Flaten
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Lowden, IA
Wayne Floan
Fertile, MN
Rev. Rodger Olson
Fergus Falls, MN
Rev. Mark Olson
Arlington, SD

Deans

Dr. Francis Monseth, FLS
Rev. James L. Johnson, AFLBS
Minneapolis, MN
612-544-9501

Home Missions Committee

Chairman

Rev. Allen Monson
Lakeville, MN
612-432-7197

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Brandon, MN
Rev. Stephen Mundfrom
Sebeka, MN
Robert Christian
Newark, IL
Halvor Knapp
Kandiyohi, MN
Rev. Mike Crowell
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Eldwyn Van Bruggen
Valley City, ND

Director

Rev. Paul Nash
Minneapolis, MN
612-545-5631

World Missions Committee

Chairman

Vernon Russum
Grafton, ND
906-486-8847

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Ishpeming, MI
Randy Sommer
Sparland, IL
Rev. Jeff Swanson
Newark, IL
Kermit Berge
Larimore, ND
Rev. Stephen Odegaard
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Rev. Tom Tuura
St. James, MN

Director

Rev. Eugene Enderlein
Minneapolis, MN
612-545-5631

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Culbertson, MT
406-787-9930

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612-545-5631

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Chairman

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Bloomington, MN
612-835-3768
heq@pclink.com

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Bruce, SD
Michael McC Carlson
Webster, SD
Pastor Irvin Schmitke
Thief River Falls, MN
Rev. Michael Brandt
Sioux Falls, SD

Director

Rev. James Rasmussen
Minneapolis, MN
612-545-5631

Youth Board

Chairman

Rev. Lloyd Quanbeck
Minot, ND
701-852-6492

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Rev. Alan Arneson
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612-545-5631

Christian Academic Education Board

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Rev. Brian Davidson
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956-968-2342

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Chairman

Allen Anderson
Clear Lake, WI
715-268-9463

Members

Dale Bentley
Mounds View, MN
Rev. Tonnes Pollestad
Andover, MN
Rev. Todd Klemme
Metropolis, IL
Dr. Steven Johnson
Upsala, MN

Director

Eric Westlake
Osceola, WI
715-294-2877

Pension Board

Chairman

Tony Onnen
Cokato, MN
320-286-2772

Members

Rev. Lynn Wilson
Roslyn, SD
Rodney Kjersten
Roseau, MN
Rev. Rodney Johnson
Stanley, ND
Leroy Sletten
Larimore, ND

Stewardship Board

Chairman

Rev. Mark Antal
Leeds, ND
701-466-2963

Members

LaVern Thompson
Fergus Falls, MN
Joel Hanson
Fergus Falls, MN
Arnold Johnson
Larimore, ND
Rev. James Fugleberg
Fargo, ND

Budget Analysis Committee

Chairman

Pastor Dale Finstrom
Glyndon, MN
218-498-2808

AFLC Foundation

Chairman

James Rolf
Brandon, MN
612-834-4821

WMF

President

Faith Nelson
Kandiyohi, MN
320-382-6550

AFLC memorials

October and November 1998

(Department given to,
in memory of...)

Home Missions

Pastor Albert Hautamaki
Ellen Skramstad
Gilbert Bruflat

General Fund

Pastor Albert Hautamaki
Inga Raaen
Pastor Richard Snipstead
Dean Brockhoff
Elmer Benson

Evangelist

Ingvald Storley
Rose Anderson

AFLBS

Lily Kirchhoff
William Bubs
Jack Schlener
Vern Shaner
Donald Jacobson
Gerald Beehler
LaVerne Vogsland
Bruce Beaumont
Pastor Richard Snipstead
Dean Brockhoff
Orrin Nyhus
Selma Haroldson
Ethelyn and Cynthia
Bottolfson
Lowell Huglen
Minnie Leedahl
Shairl Oelkers
Lila Huffman
Edith Arnstad
Gladys Smith
Robert Norquist

Vision 2004

Dean Brockhoff
Orrin Nyhus

World Missions

Tilford Audem
Gilbert Bruflat
Pastor Albert Hautamaki
Dean Brokhoff
Hazel Langness
Riley Fraley
Millie Hanley
Evelyn Pedersen

AFLTS

Gilbert Bruflat
James A. Pies
William Bubs
LaVerne Vogsland
Dagna Mulholland
Bruce Skramstad
Alvida Salte
Carol Holapa
Emily Ann Wulfekuhle
Ethelyn and Cynthia
Bottolfson
Bruce Beaumont

Parish Education

LaVerne Vogsland
Dean Brokhoff

Home Missions

Dean Brockhoff
Emily Ann Wulfekuhle

Church Extension

Pam Sundhagen

(Correction: from the July, 1998
Memorials — Charlotte Funseth
should be Carlott Funseth.)

Pastor Oliver Sidney, age 87,
died on November 26, 1998 at the
Knute Nelson Memorial Home in
Alexandria, Minnesota.

Pastor Sidney graduated from
Augsburg College in 1936 and Augs-
burg Seminary in 1939. He served
parishes in Medicine Lake, Montana;
Harvey, Grafton and Pembina, North
Dakota; Starbuck, Hoffman and
Brainerd, Minnesota; and seven
years as a chaplain at the Knute Nel-
son Memorial Home in Alexandria.

He is survived by his wife, Elisa-
beth, four sons and two daughters.

Badger, Minnesota — Badger
Creek Free Lutheran has a "Tube
Organ" to give away. If interested
call Dwight Lange at (218) 528-
3238. The congregation also has
approximately 50 *Concordia Hym-*
nals that are in decent condition and
are no longer being used. If you are
interested in them you may also con-
tact Dwight Lange.

Shakopee, Minnesota — On
January 17, 1999, Faith Lutheran
will celebrate the tenth anniversary
of the construction of their building.
They have started a building fund
for an addition to the facility.

Branson, Missouri — St.
Paul's Lutheran of Branson notified
the AFLC Coordinating Committee
of their recent vote to withdraw
from affiliation with the AFLC.

Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

AFLC Benevolences (11 months) – January 1 - November 30, 1998

FUND	TOTAL Subsidy	REC'D IN NOVEMBER	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	% TOTAL
General Fund	\$224,870.00	\$15,041.06	218,340.045	97
Seminary	112,558.00	9,201.62	90,237.33	80
Bible School	180,678.00	14,101.32	131,627.11	73
Home Missions.	260,263.00	14,267.75	198,543.03	76
World Missions.	420,686.00	27,468.63	334,152.92	79
Capital Investment . . .	16,276.00	1,555.05	13,308.23	82
Parish Education . . .	50,335.00	2,748.98	52,571.56	1.04
Church Extension . . .	18,092.00	3,267.50	20,993.00	1.60
TOTALS	\$1,278,758.00	87,651.91	1,059,773.22	83
TOTALS 1997	1,223,905.00	113,694.96	940,890.49	77
Goal 92%				

The AFLC Foundation

- **Providing** stewardship opportunities for your accumulated assets.
- **Supporting** AFLC ministries
- **Arranging** for your gifts to grow beyond face value, benefiting you and the AFLC.

Contact:

AFLC headquarters
612-545-5631 or
Mark D. Johnson
1-800-950-2109

Prepare by sharing the good news

On New Year's Day 1999, many people wondered what will happen on the next New Year's Day. We are told that on January 1, 2000 many computers will think it is January 1, 1900. Much work has and will continue to be done to correct the problem, but many believe it won't be completely fixed in time.

Various theories exist as to how much trouble will result. Some foresee massive chaos. They claim electricity throughout the nation will shut down. The stock market will collapse. Banks will be unable to operate. Planes will crash. Food supply to many areas will be slowed to a trickle. And life as we know it will cease to exist — according to some.

It is said the day to start adequately preparing has already passed, but a person should begin immediately doing what they can. The advice given is to take money out of the bank and convert it into gold. Stock up on canned goods and freeze-dried food. Buy a generator. Find a safe shelter to retreat to when anarchy breaks out.

I don't know what is going to happen on January 1, 2000. It could be a day full of catastrophe. Or it could be a day when the news headlines are simply about football games and parades. We may never see that day, because Jesus may return beforehand. Whatever the case may be, I'm not real worried because my trust is not in the computers to keep track of what day it is, but in Jesus Christ.

If January 1, 2000 comes, nothing will happen on that day that will surprise the Lord. He already has it all under control. "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future" (Jeremiah 29:11, NIV). Those include plans for the year 2000. God is prepared.

Does that mean we do not prepare? No. We should use the wisdom God provides and follow as He guides. It is good people are at work fixing the computers. It is always smart to have some canned goods around. But we also must face up to the reality that we cannot prepare for every possible future scenario.

Some seem to think they can buy all that will be needed and do whatever will be required to face the future. That is foolish arrogance. How can we prepare for every future challenge? We do not even

know what the challenges of tomorrow will be.

In response to those who say, "Today or tomorrow we will go to this or that city, spend a year there, carry on business and make money," James says, "Instead, you ought to say, 'If it is the Lord's will we will live and do this or that'" (James 4:13, 15, NIV).

We can't fully prepare for what is coming. We don't even know what is coming. But we can trust in the One who knows exactly what is up ahead and is completely ready to handle it all.

We fear what may happen if our technology collapses because we have far too much trust in our technology.

I use a computer a lot. I'm using electricity every time I turn around. I don't know for sure what

I would do if I was told, "You won't have any power for a month." But God would know what to do, and He will help you and me to handle whatever is going to happen. He is the One we depend upon.

We prepare by trusting in the Lord and not worrying. Jesus says, "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own" (Matthew 6:33, 34, NIV).

Let us follow God today and leave January 1, 2000 in God's hands. He is much better prepared. He says, "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (Isaiah 41:10, NIV).

The coming of the year 2000 will provide some great opportunities for evangelism. Many people are fearful. They need to hear the good news that God is in control. They need to hear that they can be ready for whatever is going to come by confessing their sins and trusting in Jesus who died for their sins and rose again. In preparing people for the year 2000, we don't need to tell them where to buy freeze-dried food as much as we need to tell them about Jesus.

Let's prepare by being a confident people — confident in Christ. Let's prepare by sharing with people who are expecting a lot of bad news the great news that Jesus died for us, He loves us and wants to take care of us, now and forevermore.

— **Pastor Craig Johnson**

**"So do not
fear, for I am
with you;
do not be
dismayed
for I am
your God."**

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

Periodicals



Lots of changes with the facilities at The Association Retreat Center have occurred in recent years. The Bethel Chapel, pictured on the inside, has been remodeled. This building across from the Tabernacle was used as classrooms for vacation Bible school during Family Camp. It is now a year-around facility.



Pictured is the building just to the left of the "Welcome" sign as you enter the grounds. It formerly was a storage building, but now it serves as our first aid station, camp store, and group registration building. The current building project is the construction of a gymnasium located near the House of Matthew (camp office). We praise God for His continuous blessings and care! We are grateful to all our friends and prayer supporters in the AFLC. It's with excitement and anticipation, we enter this final year of the 20th century.

Grow with us in 1999

The Association Retreat Center

"Show me your ways, O Lord, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long." — Psalm 25:4-5

The 1999 theme for The ARC is "Getting Personal with God." As we searched for an appropriate theme for this year, many great ideas were considered. Preparation for the new millennium, missions/outreach, personal growth, personal devotion, and the list went on. The Lord showed us that many of these things could be a result of personal devotion. God wants us to give our time to Him and ask Him to prepare us for life. We believe God is calling us to develop our personal relationship with Him so that we can be more effective in our relationships with others. "Show me — Teach me — Guide me — For You are God" is our desire and we pray it is your desire too.

✓ **Mark your 1999 calendars!**
Here is our new schedule:

January 15-16 — Youth Workers' Retreat

January 18-19 — Home Mission Pastors'

Retreat

January 19-21 — AFLC Pastors' Conference

February 5-7 — Side by Side (grades 8-12)

February 19-21 — Junior SnoDaze (grades 4-7)

March 5-6 — Men's Retreat

April 30-May 2 — Women's Retreat

June 27-July 2 — Junior Camp (grades 4-7)

July 12-18 — LFE Family Camp

August 1-7 — AFLC Family Camp

October 1-3 — Classic's Retreat

October 22-23 — AFLC Family Retreat

For more information call The ARC at **1-800-294-2877** or e-mail us at: **thearc@centuryinter.net**