

THE 

JUNE 2017

# LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

*stories  
of God  
at work*

# EVANGELISM





## THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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### EDITOR

Pastor Robert L. Lee  
rlee@aflc.org

### MANAGING EDITOR

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ruthg@aflc.org

### CIRCULATION

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emily.goff@aflc.org

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luthamb@aflc.org

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# THE CALL AND THE PASSION

BY PASTOR STEVE LOMBARDO

"O Lord God, dear Father in heaven, I am indeed unworthy of the office and ministry in which I am to make thy glory and to nurture and to serve this congregation. But since thou hast appointed me to be a pastor and teacher, and the people are in need of the teaching and the instruction, O be thou my helper and let thy holy angels attend me. Then if thou art pleased to accomplish anything through me, to thy glory and not to mine or to the praise of men, grant me, out of thy pure grace and mercy, a right understanding of thy word and that I may also diligently perform it. O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, thou shepherd and bishop of our souls, send thy Holy Spirit that he may work with me, yea, that he may work in me to will and to do through thy divine strength according to thy good pleasure. Amen."

(Martin Luther's Sacristy Prayer)

W

e need Luthers today. That is, pastors who thunder biblical, bold messages, passionately pointing to sin and grace. Phillips Brooks said that preaching is the communication of truth through personality. Luther was a unique personality ministering in a particular time and place. We live in a different age. Our job isn't to imitate Luther; it is to proclaim the Word in the spirit of Luther for our day.

- Recognizing that when the preacher is faithful to the text, God Himself is speaking. This realization calls pastors to greater responsibility in preparing sermons, and the congregation to a higher view of preaching.
- Remembering, as Steve J. Lawson writes, that the preacher cannot study the Scriptures with pride in his heart (*The Heroic Boldness of Martin Luther*).
- Knowing that Spirit-directed preaching attacks sin in the church and culture. "In all of his preaching he assails the abuses of the church of his day and the culture ... in which he lived ..." wrote Hughes Oliphant Old (*The Reading and Preaching of the Scriptures Vol. IV*).

- Viewing the sermon as a sacrifice of praise to God. "For him, preaching constituted the highest praise of God, even higher than prayer," wrote Fred W. Meuser (*Luther the Preacher*).
- Committing to energetic and engaging proclamation of Christ, empowered by the fire of the Holy Spirit.

In many quarters, biblical preaching today is in decline. Charles Spurgeon, in the 19th century, cried out: "We want again Luthers, Calvins, Bunyans, Whitefields, men fit to mark eras, whose names breathe terror in our foemen's ears. We have dire need of such ... They are the gifts of Jesus Christ to the Church ... I do not look for any other means of converting men beyond the simple preaching of the gospel and the opening of men's ears to hear it. The moment the Church of God shall despise the pulpit, God will despise her" (Lawson). O Lord, may it never be!

*Lombardo, retired AFLC pastor living in Yorkville, Ill., spoke on "Luther As Preacher" during the fall Revival Conference at the AFLC Schools.*

It is the conviction, grounded in the good news that “God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself,” that makes evangelism immensely more than a theory or a slogan. It brings it into focus as a necessity.

—Paul S. Rees

Evangelism is witness. It is one beggar telling another beggar where to find food. The Christian does not offer out of his bounty. He has no bounty. He is simply guest at his Master's table and, as evangelist, he calls others too.

—D.T. Niles

Only that evangelism which has as its objectives making lifetime followers of Jesus Christ and incorporating them into the church is classical, apostolic, Great Commission evangelism.

—George W. Hunter

That man is evangelistic who realizes that men are without Christ and that the gospel is the only way of salvation.

—J. Wilbur Chapman

The noblest and greatest work and the most important service we can perform for God on earth is bringing other people, and especially those who are entrusted to us, to the knowledge of God by the holy Gospel.

—Martin Luther



# *how college students are reaching their generation*





# EVANGELISM 2.0

BY ALEX WOODWORTH

**A**s a college student, I was open to accepting truth wherever I could find it. I studied sociology and anthropology at the University of Minnesota, where I was open to learning about all religions, cultures, and philosophies. But, like most college students, I lived for the things that were to be had outside of the classroom. My time and identity were filled with basketball and weekend drinking. These were my tactics in an endless search for love characterized by one futile attempt after another.

What started as a fun weekend activity soon became a necessity. There's something to be said about having that fire-in-your-veins feeling. There's also something to be said about the shame that can't be washed off in the shower the next morning. I've been in both of those places, but I still held to the illusion that I was a good person.

At the time, my perception of Christianity was limited to being good and following the rules. But honestly, it was getting harder and harder to keep calling myself a Christian. So I began to justify my wrongs. "Maybe if I just ..." became my anthem.

That all changed when I read the Word of God—specifically Romans. Wait,

everyone has fallen short? Wait, Jesus died on the cross in my place? Wait, I'm forgiven and loved even though I've done all these wrongs?

Deep in sin, I was headed for a prison of agony without parole. By the grace of God, Jesus showed me His sufficient work of redemption on the cross in my place. This was the love I had been searching for.

Can I get an amen?

Within the year, I found myself studying at the Association Free Lutheran Bible School, where I received grace upon grace—and even realized some of it, too.

In tasting the sweetness of grace, I couldn't forget the abyss from which Jesus had saved me. My heart became increasingly burdened as I reflected upon those who were still living apart from Him. How could I not share with them the One who is making all the difference in my eternity?

God made it clear to me that I was to go back and share the gospel in Dinkytown, the U of M's neighborhood. I had no idea what that was to look like, or what He was about to do.

I'll never forget the first time a few of my AFLBS friends and I went to Dinkytown late one night. We had no props to get anyone's attention. We were just four dudes, paralyzed with fear. But God worked despite us. I can't even begin to describe the first time that we connected with someone out there. Watching my friends share the gospel with him—what turned out to be multiple times, over several months—was incredible.

I don't know where the name "water bottle ministry" came from, but that's what everyone started calling it though the actual ministry has nothing to do with water bottles. Early on, someone suggested handing out water bottles—we were surrounded by bars, usually around closing time—to have a reason to talk to people about Jesus. It's a funny thing, but many people who have been out drinking believe that water

will help them recover from the affects of alcohol the next morning.

As the weekends passed by, more AFLBS students and others wanted to come with us for our late-night ministry. Person after person would ask us: "What are you doing?" or, "Why are you handing these out?" Well, what do you say? You're filled with fear. You know you look like the crazy one. And over and over and over, God answered our prayer, "Lord, please give us the words to say."

The people we met in Dinkytown responded in a variety of ways. Many liked to stop and share their world view. Only by the grace of God were we able to point them to the cross of Christ Jesus. Often times, people would leave our conversations with a Bible. These were and are exciting things to ponder.

I recently had an opportunity to join this year's group of AFLBS students in Dinkytown. It was amazing to see what they were doing. God used Damien Johnson, a senior, in a conversation with a man who "grew up in the church, but wanted nothing to do with its hypocrisy." Damien said, "Do you want to talk about it?" All I know is that they talked for well over an hour. God can work though that.

I know that there is a mixed bag of opinions regarding the method. I struggle with it, too. But, if God could reach through my confused mind and claim me, who is to say that He can't win some more? Not only have I lived such a life, but I've seen hurt and heartache in people. The reality of the truth of a living Savior full of grace, mercy, and love changes everything.

When Christ said, "I love you and I forgive you," O reader, woe is me if I do not share this good news. He commanded us to preach this gospel to all creation. Even Dinkytown in the middle of the night. To Jesus be all the glory. Tell everyone, everywhere!

*Woodworth, a 2016 graduate of AFLBS, attends Grace Free Lutheran, Valley City, N.D.*



# OUR ROLE

## *how one little boy and his family came to know Jesus*

BY SUSAN PETERSON

I am a mom, wife, and music teacher. But God used me. I'd like to tell you a story about a little Chinese boy named Raymond and how he came to know the Lord.

My daughter, Kaylee, was a first grader when she met Raymond. They were in the same class together, and Raymond was having a tough time as a new kid who wasn't able to speak any English. Kaylee became friends with Raymond during the school year.

In the summer, we saw Raymond at his parents' Chinese restaurant in town. Kaylee wanted to invite Raymond to play at the park with us, but because his parents did not speak English, and I did not know how to tell his parents who I was or what we wanted.

But Raymond knew who I was; I was his music teacher at school. Because he wanted to go to the park with us, he translated our request to his parents. They both said yes. So instead of an afternoon like all the others where he sat and played games on his iPad at the Chinese restaurant, Raymond went to the park with my two girls and myself. We had a lot of fun that afternoon.

When we were done playing at the park, Kaylee wanted to invite Raymond to vacation Bible school that evening at our church. Again, I did not know how to ask his parents or even what spiritual beliefs they had. I asked Raymond if he knew what church was and he said no. He also did not know how to ask his parents if he could go to VBS since he did not know what it was himself. So I decided to have him translate to them that VBS was like school at a different building, and that we would bring him home when it was done.

His parents agreed to let him come to VBS with us. That night, we sang songs, played outside, did crafts, ate a snack, and had a Bible lesson. We brought him home afterward, and he told us that he wanted to come to VBS the rest of the week. So every day we brought Raymond with us. At the end of the last day when we dropped him off at his family's restaurant, his parents gave us a whole bunch of food to feed the teachers. They really appreciated what we did for their son.

After that, with the help of Pastor Eric Westlake and his family and some of the church family, Raymond started coming regularly to Sunday school and church. Someone from the church picked up Raymond from his family's restaurant and brought him home every Sunday, or for any other event that happened at our church. He was also welcomed by someone in the church body so that he always had someone to sit with during the church service. He has always been grateful for anyone who helped him.

In third grade, Raymond wrote a letter at school about what he was thankful for during the Thanksgiving season. He wrote: "Being thankful means helpful, grateful, and kind." Then he added a picture of a cross on a hill and continued writing, "I am thankful for my mom and dad because they take care of me. I'm thankful for

God because he protects me, he gave me my mom and dad to take care of me and God sacrificed his son, Jesus, because he wants to save us from sin." When my husband and I saw this hanging on the wall outside his classroom, we were in awe. What a miracle!

Raymond's parents started coming to church shortly after Thanksgiving. And now his sister, Alyssa, who is a kindergartener, and brother, Henry, who is in first grade, have moved to Zumbrota with their family and all of them attend our church. All three kids come weekly to Sunday school, our Wednesday Wings program, and Junior Youth Group. And of course VBS in the summer. They are a great family to have in our church. The kids are very polite, respectful, friendly, and silly to be around.

Kaylee and Raymond are now in fifth grade. They are still friends and enjoy spending time together with friends and the church family. Highlights of their time at church include children sermons with Pastor Eric and VBS. Kaylee also states that their Sunday school and youth group leaders throughout the years have had a huge positive impact on all of her church friends.

I could not be more excited to have had a small role in the spiritual journey of this little boy and now his whole family. I was just a music teacher and a mom, but with childhood friendships and a willingness to work out of our comfort zone, it is truly amazing what the Lord has in store for each of us. We just need to be willing to step out and try.

*Peterson is a member of Our Saviour's Lutheran, Zumbrota, Minn. Written with the help of her daughter, Kaylee.*









*a new way  
to look at  
discipleship*



# APPRENTICE MAKER

BY MICAH JOHNSON

**T**he command, “go and make disciples” (Matthew 28:19), was Christ’s final charge to His followers before He ascended into heaven. This statement was Christ’s final motivational speech to His team before they headed into battle. It was His way of encouraging His disciples to take everything that He taught them, apply it, live by it, and train others to do the same.

I’ve grown up in the Church. I was baptized, confirmed, and professed a personal relationship with Christ from a very young age. However, as I have grown up, I’ve noticed a very troubling trend within myself, and the body of Christ, the Christian Church. There seems to be a lackluster approach to true disciple-making the way Christ intended; and the Church is hurting because of it.

To begin, we need to better understand what Christ meant when He said, “make disciples.” The Greek word for *disciple* is μαθητής (mathētēs), which is more closely translated, *apprentice*. Much like the relationship between Christ and His disciples, an apprentice would follow the teaching and training of his master with the intent to master a specific skillset and pass it on to future generations. This meant going deeper than a simple demonstration from the master. An apprentice

would be thoroughly nurtured throughout the growth process. He would be allowed to ask tough questions and seek answers to confusing concepts. The apprentice would be allowed to try something new—and fail—just so the master could offer gentle correction.

In similar fashion Paul wrote, “We prove to be gentle among you, as a nursing mother cares for her own children” (1 Thessalonians 2:7).

As the master fostered a learning environment and taught the apprentice how to pursue his passions, it would naturally create multiplication within that specific trade. This apprenticeship also provided the learner with the necessary tools to pass the skillset on to future generations.

Jesus, being the son of a carpenter, would have understood the significance of an apprenticeship. If a carpenter had no apprentice, his craft would not be passed on to future generations, and the art of carpentry would eventually become extinct. It is this fear of extinction that has many business owners, parents, teachers, and spiritual leaders praying that the legacy they leave will have an impact on future generations. It is this same fear of extinction our churches are facing today because we have forgotten how to “make disciples.”

Before you disagree with me, let’s take a look at the facts. In February 2017, the American Culture & Faith Institute (ACFI) published a survey<sup>1</sup> with shocking results. The research found, of professing Christians between the ages of 18-29 (millennials), only 4 percent were proactively seeking to disciple others. The numbers increase as the age increases: 30-49 years—7 percent, 50-64 years—15 percent, 65 and older—17 percent. This means that, on average, only 10 percent of professing Christians are actively sharing their faith with others and training them to multiply. Additionally, more than half of this group consists of Christians who will, most likely, not be with us in the next 20-30 years.

Does that scare you? If you are a born-again Christian, I think it should. If nothing else, it

should drive you to your knees in prayer asking God to use you in ways that multiply the body of Christ. Please, don’t misunderstand my intent. I do believe there are new believers entering our churches on a regular basis. However, I also believe we leave the back door to our sanctuaries wide open, allowing the new believer to be coerced back into worldly ways without the proper nurturing and spiritual growth that needs to take place. We find a similar scenario in Christ’s Parable of the Seed, where “the thorns came up and choked [the new plant], and it yielded no fruit” (Mark 4:7).

I’ve heard people say that nurturing is the job of the pastor, youth pastor, deacons, etc. True. However, Christ’s call to “make disciples” extends to all believers, not just those in spiritual leadership. In fact, Paul and Timothy, in their letter to the Philippians, reiterated this fact: “Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you” (Philippians 4:9). This message was not only for the spiritual leaders of the day, but for all born-again Christians. It was multiplication in action.

By the grace of God, I have had the opportunity to train people within my local congregation to go and make disciples. This training goes beyond simply telling others about Christ. It involves nurturing new believers in their walk with Christ and training them to share their faith in a way that promotes biblical multiplication. Yes, the lack of biblical disciple making is a significant issue facing the Church today. The task is great, but it starts with one person. It starts with you. So, are you making disciples?

*Johnson is a member of Grace Free Lutheran Church, Maple Grove, Minn.*

<sup>1</sup> [www.culturefaith.com/groundbreaking-survey-by-acfi-reveals-how-many-american-adults-have-a-biblical-worldview/](http://www.culturefaith.com/groundbreaking-survey-by-acfi-reveals-how-many-american-adults-have-a-biblical-worldview/)



Is there still a need for evangelistic preaching in our day? Evangelistic services? Spiritual life services? In other words, a series of evening services devoted to evangelistic preaching of God's Word in the local congregation?

Our heritage and beliefs say, yes!

Fundamental Principle No. 4 of the AFLC states, "Members of the organized congregation are not, in every instance, believers, and such members often derive false hope from their external connection with the congregation. It is therefore the sacred obligation of the congregation to purify itself by the quickening preaching of the Word of God, by earnest admonition and exhortation, and by expelling the openly sinful and perverse."

In explaining this principle, Lutheran Free Church founder Georg Sverdrup wrote, "Therefore, in a congregation, it is necessary to use awakening, exhortation, and repentance preachers, in the same way as the evangelists and awakening preachers are called to convict."

I believe revival is God's will for His Church. Consider what three current authors have written about the prevailing church climate.

"Churches in our nation are less evangelistic today than they were in the recent past," wrote Thom Rainer, president and CEO of LifeWay Christian Resources, in a 2015 blog post.

"An alarming convergence of theological and cultural trends in contemporary

evangelism is pushing gospel preaching out of many churches," wrote pastor and author Bob DeWaay in a Critical Issues Commentary.

"Preaching is becoming too academic and less evangelistic," wrote pastor, professor, and author David Murray in an online article titled, "What Is Evangelistic Preaching?"

The Church of Jesus Christ needs revival when we have lost our first love for Jesus; when we have the appearance of godliness, but deny its power (II Timothy 3:5); when we wallow in sin and are unwilling to repent; when we continually neglect our relationship with Christ; when we are no longer zealous for the things of God; and when we are lukewarm in faith. Revival comes through the preaching of the law and gospel to show our need of repentance and a new obedience.

But there is also the ongoing need to reach lost souls in our communities and congregations. God still uses the preaching of His Word, "For the Word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart ..." (Hebrews 4:12, 13). God's Word does not return empty but always accomplishes His purpose.

Pastors often say that people are too busy these days to attend a series of preaching services, but is there ever a perfect time? God uses His Word whenever and wherever it is preached. Many congregations are unwilling to invest in the essential elements—time, effort, and prayer. It takes time to build relationships with people. It takes time to plan and prepare. We can't just schedule a series of preaching services and expect people to show up. If we don't pray, plan, and prepare we can't expect God to bless an event with either revival of God's people or conversion of souls to Christ.

There are many practical ways to prepare for a series of preaching services. A team of people, along with the pastor and deacons, need to plan and prepare for the services.

"It is imperative that these people are 100 percent in support of evangelism," wrote Pastor Herb Franz in *Preparing for Evangelistic Meetings*. "It is not committees we need, but people who love the Lord and want to see souls saved"

The pastor sets the pace. Together with the

pastor, the leadership of a congregation needs to prioritize the services and plan for the financial costs. Here are a few suggestions to consider as you plan an event:

#### PRAYER

Pray, pray and pray! "You do not have because you do not ask," wrote James in his letter to the Jerusalem church (4:2). Pray for the meetings during the Sunday worship services to raise awareness. Organize and engage people to pray for people to invite. Schedule a 24-hour prayer vigil. Invite people to pray with the speaker before each service. Prepare Christians to pray with people at the close of services. Consider one or two to pray during the services.

#### INCLUSION

Seek to make the services a congregational event by inviting men to a breakfast, women to a noon luncheon, and youth to a pizza night. Seek to make it as convenient as possible for people to come directly from work or school to the services by having an evening meal at church. Involve different groups in the congregation and community to provide special music. Involve children in the services by having a children's sermon and/or a children's bulletin for them to work on during the worship time. Invite people who have a living faith in Christ from the congregation or community to share a short testimony of faith. Provide invitations or flyers to distribute.

Many congregations have given up on a series of preaching services because of busyness, lack of interest, or poor attendance. We need to ask ourselves if we have lost our God-given passion for souls both within and outside the congregation. Are we willing to set aside three or four evenings each year devoted to evangelistic preaching of God's Word?

"It is not meetings that we need in our churches, but a meeting with God," wrote Pastor Franz. "Evangelism is the church's task, not one week a year but continually."

*Monson serves Calvary Free Lutheran, Mesa, Ariz.*

*a special series of services*

# MEETING WITH GOD

BY PASTOR AL MONSON







# EVANGELISM 101:

*a pastor learns  
how to share his faith*

BY PASTOR KEN MARQUARDT

grew up on a farm in South Dakota with parents who were members of an ALC Lutheran congregation.

My spiritual journey began with baptism and was affirmed through confirmation. I realized the Lord had a hand on me for ministry when I was in the third grade. I never considered any other vocation seriously besides ministry and I never knew a day outside the Church during my college and seminary education.

After graduating from Wartburg College and Seminary, I served a parish in Birnamwood, Wis., for three and one-half years when the call came from First Lutheran of Crystal, Brooklyn Park, Minn., to be an associate in evangelism and youth ministry. I didn't know beans about either one. I had one course in evangelism in the seminary and it was theoretical only, nothing practical.

I walked into a congregation of 2,000 members and one pastor burning himself out at both ends of the wick. There were four services every Sunday, with a stack of visitors each week. It was my responsibility to visit these families before the next Sunday service. My evangelism process consisted of sharing a brochure on what our congregation had to offer a family and then we had a reception of new members every three months. After meeting with the family I would say, "Goodbye, see you in three months." The upshot was that people were going out the back door faster than I could bring them in the front.

In August 1967 a brochure came to my desk about a Lay Institute for Evangelism, a one-

week course conducted by Campus Crusade for Christ which would be held at the Minneapolis Auditorium. I decided I needed to attend to find out what evangelism was all about.

The first night Bill Bright, founder of Campus Crusade, sat down with me to talk about my spiritual journey. He asked me two questions:

"Ken, if you were to die tonight, would you have the assurance of being with Christ in heaven?"

"Of course," I responded.

Then he asked: "Ken, if you were to stand before God in judgment and He were to ask you, 'Why should I let you in?' what would you say?"

"I'm a pastor, I read the Bible, I'm in church every Sunday, I try to live my life according to the Ten Commandments the best I know how," I said.

"How well do you think you have to do these things to be sure of your salvation?" he asked.

I didn't think anybody could be sure. With that, Bill knew he had some work to do on this pastor who had no clue how to share the gospel.

He shared the Four Spiritual Laws with me. From my confirmation instruction, I knew that God loved me (1), that I was a sinner separated from God (2), and that Jesus Christ was God's only provision for my sin (3). But the clincher for me was that I had never prayed to receive Jesus Christ into my heart (4).

As Bill shared Revelation 3:20 and led me in prayer, I knew Jesus became my Savior because of the promise of Scripture. For the first time in my life, I had assurance of my salvation. My faith moved 18 inches from my head to my heart.,

The purpose of the Lay Institute was to train individuals in how to share the gospel. At the close of the week, we were asked to pair up and go to downtown Minneapolis, knocking on doors cold turkey. I wouldn't be caught dead doing that because that was what the cults were doing. So I did nothing with that training for a whole year.

In September 1968 Billy Graham and Dr. Oswald Hoffman from the Lutheran Hour conducted the U.S. Congress on Evangelism at the same auditorium. I had to go and find out what that was all about. At the close of the Congress, when Billy Graham gave his closing message, the Lord said to me in no uncertain terms: "Ken, if you want to continue in ministry, you either get with it or get out." I knew immediately what He meant. God was saying: "When you visit with

people, don't talk about your church. Talk about Me!"

The next Monday I was determined to take the stack of visitor cards and go out calling. I drove around the first home six times, all the while praying that there wouldn't be anybody at home. That way I could say to God: "See, I tried, but I knew it wouldn't work." The seventh time I stopped, knocked on the door, and behold it opened. A lady invited me in, and her husband was home, as well.

I remember saying to God: "Lord, you promised in Acts 1:8 that I would receive power when the Holy Spirit would come upon me. Okay, Lord, here I am at this home, now let's see the power."

I felt like a bull in a china closet, but within five minutes I asked them if they had ever heard of the Four Spiritual Laws. When they said no, I said, "It really made a lot of sense to me, mind if I share it with you?"

This couple prayed to receive the Lord that day. That was all I needed to know that God honors His Word, which will never return empty without accomplishing the purpose for which He sent it.

From that time on I had a way to share the gospel with confidence. I have learned how to take a person's spiritual temperature and lead a conversation centered on Jesus Christ. This became a turning point in my ministry—from a social gospel to a burden for reaching the lost.

I praise God for taking me from a "maybe" salvation to a "know so" salvation. The Lord doesn't call everyone to be an evangelist, but He does call all of us to be witnesses for Him. He wants us to be intentional about sharing our faith in Christ. Sharing the gospel need not be complicated. It is putting food on the lowest shelf so anyone and everyone can receive it.

*Marquardt, a retired AFLC pastor, lives in Forest Lake, Minn.*



# PAST & PRESENT

WHAT IS YOUR FIRST MEMORY OF EVANGELISM?

My parents were brought up in good Swedish Lutheran homes, attending Sunday school and church every week. They were baptized as infants, and confirmed at age 13 or 14. In 1929 they heard about a childhood friend who had become a preacher, so they went to hear Evald Johnson (he later added Conrad as his legal name). He was talking about knowing Jesus personally; not just a God in heaven to be obeyed, but One who could actually make a difference in their lives. Jesus forgives sins, and would direct their lives if they asked Him to come into their hearts; so my parents invited Jesus in. I was 6 years old.

TELL US ABOUT PASTOR EVALD CONRAD.

Evald Conrad graduated from the seminary of the Augustana Synod. He was called to Trinity Lutheran Church of Minnehaha Falls, south Minneapolis, as a seminary student, and would serve there after graduation and ordination for many years.

Pastor Conrad was burdened for the many people who came to church but did not know Jesus as their personal Savior. One day he asked his board if he could invite some of his friends from seminary days to come to Minneapolis to share thoughts and concerns. Ten young preachers came, and this was the beginning of what would become the Lutheran Evangelistic Movement (LEM).

The Holy Spirit was stirring many hearts. The first evangelism conference was held on January 5-7, 1937, in temperatures below 0 at Trinity Church. Pastor C.K. Solberg encouraged everyone present to be able to “give an account of the faith that is in him.” Pastor Odd Gornitzka spoke of repentance: deep sorrow over sin, coming to the end of the rope in our own strength. I remember that there were sessions on personal work, led by Pastor A.W. Knock, reminding us that we who were professing Christians had a responsibility to talk to people about the salvation of their souls.

WHAT WERE SOME OF TRINITY’S EVANGELISM OUTREACH PROGRAMS?

“The Little Homelike Church” had a radio hour on WDGY every Sunday afternoon. Pastor Conrad always preached a simple sermon offering salvation to sinners. Souls found peace with God through the radio ministry. Saturday night street meetings, led by a faithful group of maybe six or seven people, were evangelistic, and salvation was offered in the name of Jesus. Tract distribution was another fruitful ministry. One day my dad (Evangelist Clifford Anderson) went to the fairgrounds in St. Paul and asked if they could have a space to hand out Christian literature, and he was given permission.

There was also mission outreach on “skid row.” Several of us went to sing, along with a preacher. We invited anyone to come, where they were fed and told “the way to salvation.” Lives that were dominated by satanic addiction have changed completely. Families have been restored.

TELL US ABOUT NEW EVANGELISTIC OUTREACH AT TRINITY AFTER PASTOR CONRAD’S YEARS.

In the 1970s, Evangelism Explosion (EE) was introduced to our lives. Pastor D. James Kennedy, Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., wanted to reach people with the saving gospel. He was concerned about people who came to church but did not know Jesus personally (the same concern Pastor Conrad had in the 1930s).

Pastor Kennedy taught people how to approach strangers by using Jesus’ example. First we were taught to connect with them and their interests, then ask their permission to ask a question. The question was, “If you were to die

tonight and you would come to heaven, and God asked, ‘Why should I let you into my heaven?’, what would be your response?” Some people would say they have been baptized, confirmed, etc; others would say they have been pretty good (never murdered or stole). We learned how to tell the listener that we are not saved by works, but are saved by grace and thus able to enter heaven. We learned to use Scripture verses to point to grace, man, God, Christ, and faith.

Trinity sent the pastor and one staff member to Florida to learn this style of evangelism, and they came home and taught others. Eventually we had 50 teams, some going out in the afternoon and some in the evening. We always returned to report, just as the disciples did, and pray for the people we had visited. We got names of people to visit from children who came to Sunday school, vacation Bible school, and other children’s activities. Sometimes we went “cold” from door to door, but we always asked permission to visit. EE was strong at Trinity for seven to eight years. Personally, I count those years as a special blessing from God.

IS A DIFFERENT MESSAGE NEEDED FOR TODAY?

No, the message has not changed, because Jesus and His Word have not changed. We can still use the same words: conviction, repentance, heaven and hell. Methods will vary, of course. Some use music, some use service, and some use old-fashioned talking to people. “Who is Jesus Christ?” or “Do you believe in heaven/hell?” or “Have you thought about what will happen to you if you die?” or “Do you know that God loves you?” And, with God’s help, be ready to answer questions. The following Scripture verses and others may be used:

**Grace:** Ephesians 2:8-9

**Man:** Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23

**God:** Jeremiah 31:3 and John 3:16

**Christ:** John 1:1 and 1:14

**Faith:** Acts 16:31

*Zipf, age 94, an active member of Good Shepherd, Cokato, Minn., for many years, currently lives in south Minneapolis. Some of our readers will recall the evangelism ministries of her father and of Dave Anderson, her brother.*



# *evangelism in the lutheran church*

AN INTERVIEW WITH  
GLENYCE ANDERSON ZIPF







## *We all believe in one true God*

**M**

artin Luther's hymn, "We All Believe in One True God," is the Catechism chorale

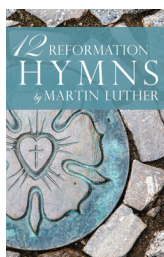
based on the Nicene Creed. In the German church service, this hymn took the place of the Latin Creed.

In each stanza, there are several notes for the word "all" to emphasize that all Christians are to believe and confess this creed. In the same way, there are several notes for the words "careth," "crucified," "flesh," "might," "men," and "be" to underscore the comforting truths of how our God cares for us, redeems us, and raises us up to eternal life.

J. S. Bach used Luther's setting of this chorale in the Klavierübung, Part III. There Bach used the repeating ostinato ground of several notes to underscore the truth that the Creed is the foundation of our Christian faith.

~Pastor Gordon Waterman  
Crown of Life Lutheran  
Tomball, Texas

1. We all believe in one true God,  
Who created earth and heaven,  
The Father, who to us in love  
Hath the right of children given.  
He both soul and body feedeth,  
All we need He doth provide us;  
He through snares and perils leadeth,  
Watching that no harm betide us.  
He careth for us day and night,  
All things are governed by His might.
2. We all believe in Jesus Christ,  
His own Son, our Lord, possessing  
An equal Godhead, throne, and might,  
Source of every grace and blessing.  
Born of Mary, virgin mother,  
By the power of the Spirit,  
Made true man, our elder Brother,  
That the lost might life inherit;  
Was crucified for sinful men  
And raised by God to life again.
3. We all confess the Holy Ghost,  
Who sweet grace and comfort giveth  
And with the Father and the Son  
In eternal glory liveth;  
Who the Church, His own creation,  
Keeps in unity of spirit.  
Here forgiveness and salvation  
Daily come through Jesus' merit.  
All flesh shall rise, and we shall be  
In bliss with God eternally.
5. Grant that neither shame nor death we heed,  
That e'en then our courage may never fail us  
When the Foe shall accuse and assail us.  
Lord, have mercy!  
Amen.



These hymns are featured in a new booklet from Ambassador Publications, *12 Reformation Hymns by Martin Luther*. Featuring a hymn of Luther for each month of the year, the booklet is available for \$2/each. For more information, visit [ambassadorpublications.org](http://ambassadorpublications.org).



# WMF

WOMEN'S  
MISSIONARY  
FEDERATION



# CARING FOR OUR NEIGHBORS

BY ESTHER HYLDEN

*“For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me” (Matthew 25:35-36).*

**U**sually I’m the strong one. I am a registered nurse and love helping people when they are sick by checking in on them or bringing a meal. However, this spring was different. I was the sick one, sidelined by a partial knee replacement. My husband was taking care of me and my dear family and friends were bringing us food, sending cards, flowers, visiting and calling. Meals showed up at our house regularly—at the exact time that we needed them. I felt loved.

Isn’t that how we are to live? In Luke 10:25 we find Jesus visiting with a lawyer. “Teacher, what shall I do to inherit eternal

life?” Jesus answers, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart ... and your neighbor as yourself.” The lawyer continues his questions, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus responds with the Parable of the Good Samaritan. At the end of the parable, Jesus asks the lawyer, “Which of these three proved to be a neighbor to the man who fell among the robbers.” The lawyer answered, “The one who showed mercy.” Jesus said, “You go, and do likewise.”

This April, I was the one who was hurting, I was the one who felt despair—and I was the one who was lavished with mercy.

Ladies, let’s look around us. Who is hurting, who is overwhelmed by responsibilities, who is drowning in fresh grief? Let us remember what our Lord said, and “go and do likewise.”

“Blessed are the merciful” (Matthew 5:7).

*Hylden, first vice president of the WMF, is a member of Bethel Free Lutheran, Grafton, N.D. At right is one dish she was served while she was recuperating. Join the conversation about encouragement on the WMF’s facebook page ([facebook.com/womensmissionaryfederation](https://facebook.com/womensmissionaryfederation)).*



## Carol Hensrud’s Beef Pie

**Line** crescent rolls in a greased pie plate

### Mix:

1 cup grated cheese (American or Colby Jack)  
1 egg  
Spread over dough

### Brown together:

1 1/2 lbs hamburger  
1/4 C green pepper  
1 tbsp minced onion

### Add to browned mixture:

1 8 oz can tomato sauce  
1/4 tsp garlic salt  
1/2 tsp cumin seed  
Spread on top of crust.

### Spread:

1 can drained green beans on top of hamburger mixture, then add another cup of grated cheese on top.

**Bake** at 375 degrees for 25 minutes.

# Rautio joins ARC leadership

As executive director, he will help the camp ministry navigate through the restructuring process

**K**irk Rautio, 38, from Janesville, Wis., has been hired as the executive director of the Association Retreat Center, located near Osceola, Wis. He is married to Ruth, his wife of 10 years, and they are parents to Allyanna (7), Titus (5), and Ezekiel (2).

Rautio says he is blessed to serve the ARC, a place he hopes will continue to provide Christians and non-Christians alike space to “come away and rest awhile,” but most importantly he desires to continue to offer people a place to meet Jesus while they rest and have fun.

“I know the ARC is a unique mission field where the opportunities come to us ... for a specific reason,” said Rautio. “My hope for the ARC is that the facilities, the staff and volunteers are equipped, ready,

and willing to answer each opportunity that God lays before us.”

Rautio has a passion for reaching the lost and for effective business and leadership management patterned after Jesus’ example in the Scriptures. Through transparent communication and current technologies, Rautio says he is driven to equip the ARC and its staff to be effective missionaries to the people they come into contact with today and for years to come.

Rautio graduated in 2016 with a degree in organizational management in Christian leadership, and for the last nine years worked as a senior supply chain coordinator. He also volunteered as a youth director for seven years. The Rautios now live on the ARC campus.



Kirk Rautio, from Janesville, Wis., has accepted a call to serve as executive director of the Association Retreat Center, located near Osceola, Wis. Married to Ruth, they have three children: Allyanna, Titus, and Ezekiel.

## Reformation conferences planned for East, West & Northwest

**T**o mark the quincentenary of the Lutheran Reformation, the AFLC will host four regional Reformation conferences and a hymn festival this summer and fall.

Five hundred years ago, Martin Luther nailed his 95 *Theses* to the door of the Wittenberg Castle Church. His statement,

“Here I stand,” has summarized his defense of the theology of the Word of God alone, faith alone, grace alone, and Christ alone. This year, the Protestant Church around the world will remember and celebrate these life-giving

truths in various ways.

“For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith, as it is written ‘The righteous shall live by faith’” (Romans 1:16-17).

The Association of Free Lutheran Congregations is planning to observe this historic landmark with a prayerful desire that the Holy Spirit and Word of God will work once again through His transforming grace in our congregations.

Reformation regional conferences have been planned through a grant provided by Thrivent. They will be hosted by three AFLC congregations. Speakers and their topics at the three conferences will be:

- Pastor Wade Mobley, president of the AFLC Schools, will speak on “The Mind of the Reformation: How People Thought in 16th Century Europe.”
- Pastor Robert Lee, professor at the AFLC Schools and editor of *The Lutheran Ambassador*, will speak on “The History of the Reformation: A Brief Retelling of the Protestant Reformation.”
- Pastor Brett Boe, pastor and adjunct teacher at the AFLC Schools, will speak on “The Heart of the Reformation: Justification by Grace Through Faith.”

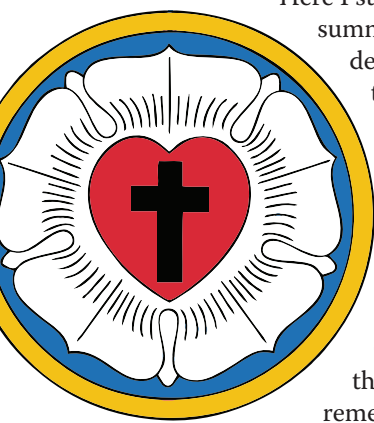
Dates and locations for the regional conferences include:

- October 6-8: Ruthfred Evangelical Lutheran Church, Bethel Park, Pa.
- October 27-29: Atonement Free Lutheran Church, Arlington, Wash.
- November 17-19: St. Ansgar’s Lutheran Church, Salinas, Calif.

In addition, all three speakers will present their Reformation messages during the AFLC Annual Conference June 13-16, which will be held at the AFLC Schools in Plymouth, Minn. Time will be set aside at the end of each day’s business session for these three presentations.

Finally, the AFLC Schools will host a Reformation Hymn Festival on Nov. 10 in Hauge Chapel on the School’s Plymouth, Minn., campus. Andrew Hanson, AFLBS music director, and Marian Christopherson, director of Parish Education, will lead the hymn sing, which will also feature choral presentations by a festival choir made up of students, alumni, and friends.

More information regarding these events will be posted on the AFLC website ([aflc.org](http://aflc.org)). If you have any questions, please contact Pastor Terry Olson at the AFLC headquarters: (763) 545-5631.





N

early 1,800 young adults are expected to attend the FLY Convention next month.

This biennial event has grown significantly since its beginning as the Luther League Conventions. Yet while attendance has changed, its purpose has not—to provide congregations with a tool for winning the lost, building the believer, and encouraging student disciple-making in the local congregation.

These three points give the conventions a clear purpose, but how do they play out in our local congregations?

Back in 1991 a self-proclaimed “apathetic, moralistic, agnostic” young man attended his first FLY Convention at the age of 18. He went with a friend, and they planned to ignore the teaching and “Jesus people” they encountered. Things went according to plan until the second evening session when the speaker proclaimed that night may be their last chance to hear the gospel.

The young man felt the Spirit wrestling with his heart and mind as he wondered what would happen if he rejected this

# ONE LIFE IMPACTED

BY PASTOR SETH FORNESS

message once again. He began to feel his barriers collapse as he listened to the evening message, the same message he had heard from his mom and pastor back home. That evening he remembers saying, “OK Lord, I’m done,” and surrendered his life to Christ.

As he left the session he sensed the changes beginning. He looked up at the mountains and realized that the proof he sought for God’s existence stood right in front of him. He saw the painful reality of sin in his life and the depravity of his actions. He experienced the instant removal of the constant anger in his mind. He developed a hunger for reading the Word, and enjoyed attending worship services. He wanted to help out in his congregation rather than avoid it.

Those who knew this young man before his conversion could not help but notice the change that a relationship with Jesus made in his life.

Fast forward 26 years and you will find this man sitting in the office of the president of AFLC Schools and dean of AFLTS. Pastor Wade Mobley attributes much of what has transpired in his life to his attendance at the 1991 FLY Convention. He found himself serving in a leadership role on the FLY Committee planning team, which led him to attend the Association Free Lutheran Bible School (AFLBS). While at AFLBS he sensed the call to go to seminary at AFLTS. Through all of

these phases of life, Wade believes that he was being trained and prepared for his current role.

“I don’t know where I would be today without AFLC Youth Ministries,” he said.

We’re excited about the opportunity to minister to more young people at each convention. But increasing attendance means there is a constant need to reserve more rooms each year, which increases cost. Some youths were nearly turned away at our last convention in 2015 due to a lack of space.

In 2016, members of the AFLC Youth Board introduced an initiative called Fortify FLY. The focus of this appeal is to raise \$70,000 to offset rising costs and prevent young people from being turned away at FLY. As of this writing, \$19,432 has been given toward this goal.

Would you pray with us as we await the next convention in July? And would you pray with us as we ask God to fully fund Fortify FLY? Finally, would you pray with us that the young people who attend the FLY Convention this summer would encounter, much like young Wade in 1991, our living Lord Jesus?

*Forness, chairman of the Youth Board, is the pastor of youth and family ministry at Christ the King Free Lutheran, Pipestone, Minn.*

## PEOPLE &amp; PLACES

**John and Hannah Lee** have accepted a call from AFLC World Missions. They will serve in a predominantly Muslim country in Asia where security is a concern. Therefore, the Lees' exact location is not being publicly disclosed. After his graduation from the Free Lutheran Seminary in May and deputation, they will spend the first year of ministry learning the culture and language. John will be involved in planting and nurturing Lutheran congregations, and training church leaders. Members of the World Missions Committee seek to send others to this same country to work alongside the Lees. Please be in prayer for John and Hannah as they follow God's leading in this call.

**Pastor Brent and Emily Raan** have accepted a call from AFLC World Missions to serve in Jinja, Uganda. They will begin work as church planters when they move to Uganda in September. The Raans recently returned from their first call as missionaries to Asia, but due to visa issues were unable to remain there.

**Paul Kinney**, who graduated in May from the Free Lutheran Seminary, has accepted a call to serve Zion Lutheran, Silverhill, Ala.

**Pastor Nathan Olson**, a 2014 graduate of the Free Lutheran Seminary, has accepted a call to serve Living Word Lutheran, Eagan, Minn. Olson has spent the last three years studying for his PhD in doctrinal theology from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. While there, he has served Gloria Dei Free Lutheran.

**Pastor David Lusk** has accepted a call to serve Mt. Zion Lutheran, Landisburg, Pa., and Tressler Memorial Free Lutheran, Loysville, Pa. Lusk currently serves Faith Lutheran, Durant, Okla.

Members of **Hope Free Evangelical Lutheran Church**, Ishpeming, Mich., celebrated the congregation's 50th anniversary on May 7 with a celebration worship service. Participating in the service were former pastors Paul Nash and Micah Hjermstad. Also present were members of the family of Pastor Harvey Jackson, who also served the congregation. The congregation is currently served by Pastor David Ryerson.

**Alisha Kneeland**, a 2015 graduate of AFLBS and member of Solid Rock Free Lutheran, Anoka, Minn., will join the Alaska vacation Bible school team this summer. Other members include Heather Hanson and Paul and Carissa Eikom.

## Canton congregation uses prayer box to minister to their local community

After having been inspired by a church member to reach out to their community and to pray for their specific prayer needs, the leaders of Redeemer Free Lutheran Church of Canton, S.D., began a prayerful search of how something like this could be implemented tactfully at their church. The final inspiration came from neighborhood library boxes. Instead of sheltering books from the outside elements while waiting to be traded with neighbors, this little shelter house would harbor the prayer requests of those members of the community who are in need.

In the fall of 2016, the prayer box was built near the end of the church's driveway for people who may want a more inconspicuous and quick way to leave a prayer request or for individuals who may not feel comfortable in a church setting.

This well-designed prayer box is fitted with a small front door, which contains a pencil and paper to write down prayer needs and maybe a phone number for a follow-up call or visit. Requests are then dropped in to the locked slot to be retrieved by the person who gathers the requests. This person then shares them during prayer time and last, but not least, lifts these requests up in prayer.

The congregation periodically announces this service in their local newspaper to inform Canton residents and the surrounding areas about the prayer box.

James 5:16 says, "Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much." May we be inspired by the desire of members of Redeemer Free Lutheran to reach their community. Let us join them in the "effective prayers" to help "heal" the needs of not only their community, but also each of ours.

*By Carol Rosgaard, a member of Abiding Savior Free Lutheran, Sioux Falls, S.D.*



## AFLC moves forward with Charles property purchase

Members of the AFLC Coordinating Committee have approved moving forward with the intent to purchase a property which abuts the entrance to the AFLC campus in Plymouth, Minn. The family of Mr. and Mrs. Wallace Charles, now deceased, offered the property to the AFLC at a reduced price of \$650,000 with the understanding that the offer stood until the end of May.

The Coordinating Committee is now working with the property owners to make the purchase the 1.2 acres of property official. The purchase will complete the rectangle of property owned by the AFLC in Plymouth.

As of press time, gifts toward the purchase of the property total more than \$210,000. To give toward this fund, contact Pastor Tonnes Pollestad, director of Development at (763) 545-5631.

## Galilee Bible Camp schedules summer camps

Galilee Bible Camp will host two AFLC camps this summer. Teen camp is scheduled for June 20-25, with a Bible camp Sunday service at 10:30 a.m. on June 25. Pre-teen camp is scheduled for June 25-29.

Galilee Bible Camp is located within the boundaries of Lake Bronson State Park, Lake Bronson, Minn. The camp is

on a site of nearly 10 acres on the shores of Lake Bronson. The camp is operated by a 12-member board, all of whom are members of an AFLC church from the Northwest Minnesota District.

For more information and for reservations, contact Curtis Thompson at (218) 874-7945. Or visit the camp web site at [wikel.net/GalileeBibleCamp](http://wikel.net/GalileeBibleCamp)



**L**úcia Ingles is a soul in the grip of grace who has made a difference in our world through

AFLC churches in Brazil.

One of ten children, Lúcia grew up on a simple farm in Paraná, Brazil. As one of the oldest, she had many responsibilities and chores each day. Her father was a hard and ruthless man. He demanded that she work really hard and would punish her severely if she did not obey.

When she was 16 years old, Otávio, a single man, saw her working on the farm and inquired about her. He met with her father and arranged to marry her a few months later. Lúcia did not know Otávio, she only saw him briefly on that day when her father announced her marriage in two months' time. The next time she saw Otávio was on their wedding day.

Being married had its challenges—she lost a baby and suffered different hardships. But she had a neighbor who was devoted to God, a prayer warrior who modeled a life of service to people. After watching her neighbor, Lúcia realized she needed God in her life. Dona Maria and her husband became Christian role models to Lúcia and Otávio as they lived as true examples of transformed lives. So Lúcia and

# LÚCIA'S STORY

BY TAMBA ABEL

Otávio received Christ.

Soon they were participating regularly in our AFLC church, growing daily in the Lord. When Dona Maria and her family had to move, she asked Lúcia and Otávio to take over the care of the church, keeping things going and receiving the different leaders and students from the Bible school who would minister there.

On one occasion, a Kombi full of students arrived unexpectedly at dinner time. Lúcia barely had enough food for her own family that day. She recalled Dona Maria being in a similar situation and praying that God would multiply the food, so she also claimed that prayer for herself that day. She recalls how her small pan of rice, beans, veggies, and a little meat—plus a loaf of bread with butter—had everyone well fed that night with leftovers in her pan. She knew then that God would continue to bless their work with the church and answer many prayers.

In 2003 Lúcia and Otávio moved to Maringá, joined by her sons and their families, with a dream to start an AFLC church there. In the years since, Lúcia has experienced God's grace by

being healed from cancer and other health issues. Like Dorcas in the New Testament, Lúcia has

reached out to her neighbors, constantly caring for them in their illness, feeding, cleaning, and praying for them—really being a light for Jesus. Their prayers for a church have been answered, and many of our new families are lives that she has touched by her faithful example.

Lúcia is more than glad to share a favorite Brazilian tea, chimarrão, with anyone who stops by, just as she is glad to share the hope that is within her because she is a person in the grip of God's grace.



*Abel and her husband, Pastor Jonathan, serve as AFLC missionaries in Maringá, Brazil.*



APRIL MEMORIALS

- AFLBS**  
Ruth Claus  
Marlys Johnson  
Kaare Berge  
Pat Haire  
Betsy Reiff (2)  
Ruth Jameson (2)  
LuVern Jones (3)  
Darline Kruse  
Don Evenson  
John Larson  
Percy & Judith Strant

**AFLTS**  
Pastor Dale Battleson

**Parish Education**  
Joel Rogenes

**General Fund**  
Twyla Ulrich Odegard
- Evangelism**  
LuVern Jones  
Adeline Monson

**Home Missions**  
Joel Rogenes  
Howard Christian  
Adeline Monson (3)

**WMF**  
Lorrayne Lindsoe  
Twyla Odegard

**World Missions**  
Joel Rogenes  
... in honor of

**Home Missions**  
Carol Dietsche (2)



AFLC offers in-depth financial reporting

aflc.org/giving

In an effort to provide consistent and comparable financial data to supporters, the AFLC family will now have access to enhanced financial reporting from each of the AFLC departments and ministries. By visiting [aflc.org/giving](http://aflc.org/giving), readers will find the following information for each department:

- Annual Conference adopted subsidy amount
- Year-to-date giving
- Year-to-date subsidy goal
- Year-to-date giving for prior year
- Subsidy as percentage of total department income

These amounts will be updated on a quarterly basis and include remarks from each department to provide the best financial picture available to the congregations and friends of the AFLC. Online giving is also accessible at that site. Additional financial details are alternatively available by contacting each department.

Bierles take call as AFLBS dorm heads

Brad and Sarah Bierle, Sioux Falls, S.D., have accepted a call from the Association Free Lutheran Bible School to serve as men’s and women’s resident heads beginning August 1. The husband and wife team will serve the student body, overseeing discipleship and organization of both the men’s and women’s residence halls.

“God has given [them] gifts in the areas of discipleship, leadership, and hospitality,” said AFLBS Dean Joel Rolf.

The Bierles, who are members of Abiding Savior Free Lutheran, Sioux Falls, S.D., bring a variety of ministry experiences to these positions, including serving as youth leaders, mentors, adult Sunday school teachers, and small group facilitators. They recently served as missionaries in Ecuador, directing the spiritual life and formation of a K-12 international Christian school in Quito.

The Bierles look forward to being immersed in a school that values and prioritizes the Word of God as central to life and community.

“To be surrounded by students who are forming their worldviews, experiencing increased independence, and wrestling with life’s most important questions will be both a privilege and a daunting task,” they said. “We envision a ‘big family’ concept of student life at AFLBS. We desire to build and contribute to a community marked by hospitality, account-



ability, and genuine love and concern for the interest of others within a fun and supportive home environment.”

Brad and Sarah have three teen children, Joshua (19), lives in Sioux Falls; Jacob (16), will begin his first year at AFLBS this fall; and Tessa (14).

AFLBS has been blessed by the ministry of current resident heads, Liz McCarlson (eight years) and Matthew Quanbeck (three years). Quanbeck is currently serving his seminary internship year at Ruthfred Evangelical Lutheran, Bethel Park, Pa. McCarlson is currently deciding between several options.

AFLC BENEVOLENCES January 1-April 30, 2017			
FUND	REC'D IN APRIL	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	PRIOR YEAR-TO-DATE
General Fund	\$29,279	\$159,296	\$132,895
Evangelism	7,745	38,291	36,311
Youth Ministries	8,945	29,497	32,586
Parish Education	12,330	58,989	37,551
Seminary	18,814	86,440	79,602
Bible School	74,374	176,066	158,499
Home Missions	55,437	212,484	167,837
World Missions	29,281	142,771	196,968
Personal Support	45,648	204,985	217,603
TOTALS	\$281,854	\$1,108,819	\$1,059,834
Contact the individual departments for further information about specific financial needs.			



# HOW NEW ARE YOU?

**D**id you know that a former FBI agent was once in charge of student accounts for our Bible school? That was Anker Harbo, son of the first president of the Lutheran Free Church, who attended our seminary after retiring from the FBI. He served for several years on campus during the 1970s in several capacities.



Pastor Robert Lee

I recall hearing him preach in chapel on only one occasion. He spoke sparingly of his years in government service, mentioning

the time when he and his family lived in a metropolitan Midwestern city. They found a church home where the Word of God was proclaimed. One Sunday, however, the pastor quoted II Corinthians 5:17 and asked a question as the conclusion of his sermon, "How new are you?"

This was a bit of a eureka moment for Mr. Harbo, for he suddenly became aware that this was the first time he ever recalled hearing the pastor make any sort of personal application in his messages. How different, he realized, from his father and from the pastors under whose ministry he was raised, who did not hesitate to personally apply the Scriptures to their hearers and to call for a response.

It seems that this is a pattern that can be found in the preaching of Jesus. "I am the resurrection and the life; he who believes in Me shall live even if he dies, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die." And then He called for a response by asking, "Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26).

It was not only from the pulpit that evangelists in the past might call for a response. This issue contains a journey down memory lane with the daughter of Evangelist Clifford Anderson, who is

remembered for often asking, "How is it with you and the Lord?" when people shook hands with him at the door after one of his services. One man recalls trying to leave the church by the back way in order to avoid meeting the evangelist at the door and hearing that question. "But he caught me outside," he said. A lady came under deep conviction of sin after giving a positive reply when she knew that things were not right between her and the Lord. "I had always prided myself on my honesty," she said several weeks afterward when she prayed to receive Christ as her personal Savior.

The call to evangelize is part of the AFLC's DNA. But what about baptism? *Do the Work of an Evangelist* by Dr. Carl F. Wisløff is

comprised of a series of lectures by the Norwegian theologian given on our campus in 1987. Dr. Wisløff declared: "Pietism taught that one was accepted by Jesus and adopted as a child of God in baptism. Thank God for that. But a vital question must be asked: Do you really belong to Him today? If not, then you must be converted and receive a new heart" (p. 85). The first question in the old Pontoppidan's catechism, used for more than 150 years in Norway, asks: "Dear child, would you like to be happy on earth and blessed in heaven?" The heartfelt answer to this question surely lays a firm foundation for all the instruction that follows.

The Fundamental Principles of the AFLC state that members of an organized congregation are not, in every instance,

believers, and may derive false hope from their outward church membership (no. 4). So it is the pastor's calling to evangelize those who may be within the congregation as well as those outside. A guest speaker was told that only members were present for the evening service, so an evangelistic message would not be necessary. A Bible camp speaker was cautioned that only encouraging messages are appropriate at their camp, since everyone there is right with the Lord. Tragic!

An experience in my early years of ministry still highlights this concern for me. A lady who was a life-long member of the congregation, deeply involved in various activities, was asked if she knew that she

was saved. "No one ever asked me this question before," she said, and it led to days of soul struggle before she rested in Christ and the assurance of salvation in Him. People will be surprised, I told her, because everyone had assumed that you were a Christian. "I don't know why," she replied,

"because I never said that I was."

How is it with you and the Lord, dear reader? Perhaps you once knew real peace in Christ, but life has become so complicated and busy, and sin has been so enticing and entangling. Come to Jesus. He is waiting to welcome you home, and He will never turn away the one who comes to Him (John 6:37).

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

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*something to share*

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# WHEN GRAND PLANS FAIL, GOD CAN

BY JENN THORSON

**A**s I sat writing this article on May 1, my 3 and 6 year old children were playing in our backyard in the snow. Yes, you read that right, the snow. They very much enjoyed it, though I couldn't say the same for myself!

As I looked at my raspberry bushes bent down under the weight of new snow after already being covered in leaves, it got me thinking.

Life throws unexpected things our way, typically when we least expect it. A loved one gets cancer. A child rebels. Job security is no longer a guarantee. Finances dry up. Grand plans fail. And when these devastating or discouraging events hurl their way into our lives without invitation, we often bend under the weight, unable to lift ourselves up without help.

The simple remedy is to turn to Christ. He alone can bear our burdens and carry our griefs. Yet that isn't our usual human response. We know that God cares and is trustworthy, but we don't always immedi-

ately understand His plan or purpose when we are weighed down underneath a difficult situation.

In the Book of Ephesians, Paul prays that the people of Ephesus would be strengthened through the Holy Spirit and understand more deeply the love of Christ. They were struggling under the weight of trying to live as believers in a chaotic and hostile culture where the worship of idols was common and conversion to Christianity was unpopular and made life difficult for them in many ways.

Chapter three of the book of Ephesians ends with a powerful truth, in verses 17-21: "That you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church

and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen."

God's deep love for us is unchanging and nothing is too hard for Him. He can do exceedingly and abundantly more to help us and provide for even the most difficult situation, far beyond our limited human capacity to understand.

From sorrow He can bring joy. He can lift us up, just like my raspberry bushes reached tall and green toward the sky after the wet snow was cleaned off of its branches.

We can trust the Lord to help us in our most difficult times, not just because it's the right thing to do, but because we know deeply the love of the One in whom we place our confidence.

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*Thorson is a member of Living Word Free Lutheran, Sioux Falls, S.D. Her blog can be found at [thepurposefulmom.com](http://thepurposefulmom.com).*