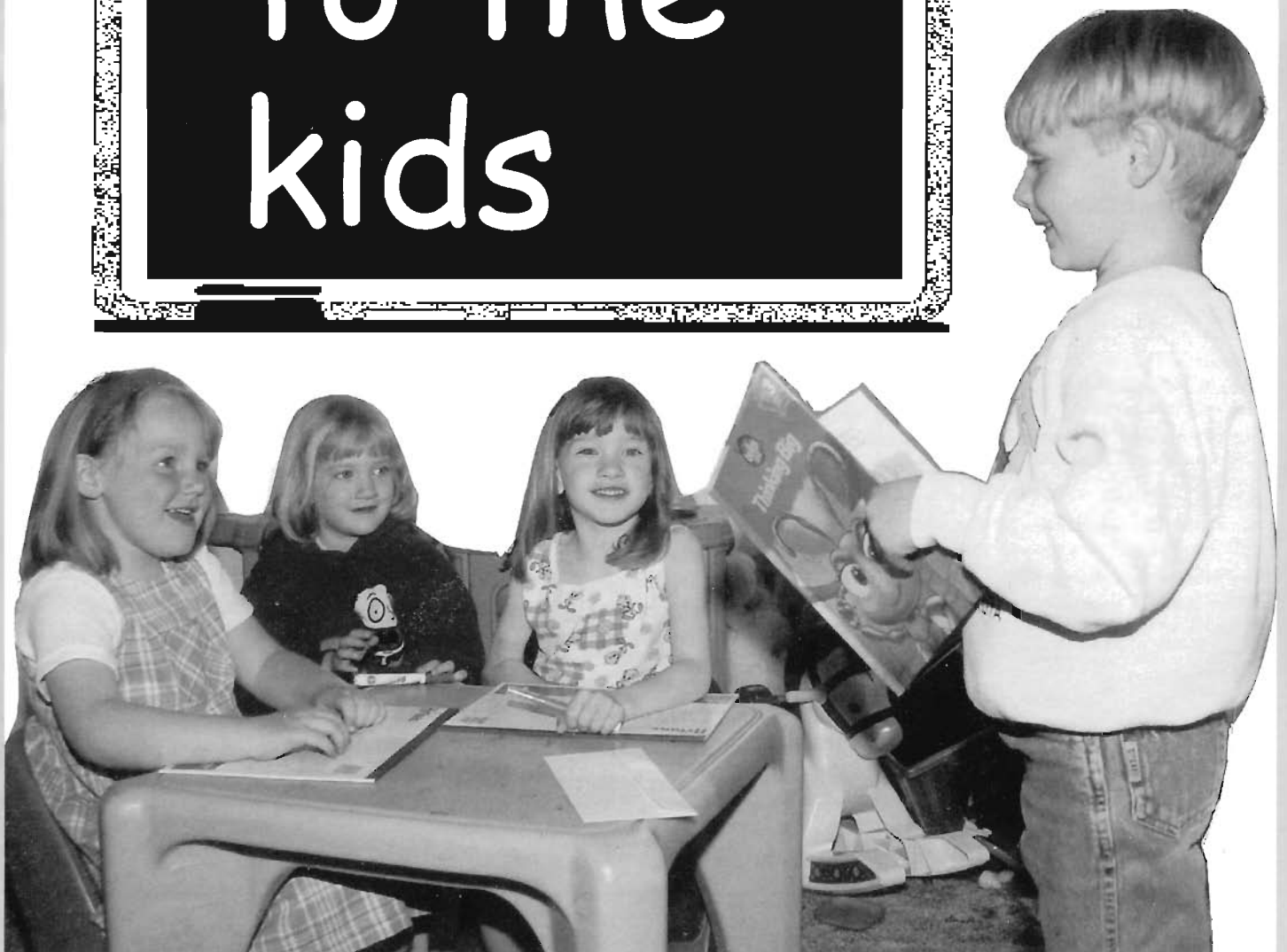


# The Lutheran AMBASSADOR

June 8, 1999

Listen  
to the  
kids



# THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

June 8 1999  
Volume 37, Number 8



The magazine of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, 3110 East Medicine Lake Blvd., Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441. (612) 545-5631

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## AN ENCOURAGING WORD

### The greatest invitation

"And they were bringing children to Him so that He might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw this, He was indignant and said to them, 'Permit the children to come to Me; do not hinder them: for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child shall not enter it at all'" (Mark 10:13-16, NASB).

**T**hink of Jesus' love and compassion for those little children. He wanted all, regardless of age, to come to Him. Sometimes we think that certain people do not deserve to come. Yet in this passage Jesus says, "Let the little ones come to me." He says that we adults have to come to Him just as a child does, with total trust and total faith.

That's difficult for us adults. We often question some aspect of the Bible and doubt. We apply it to someone else, but not to ourselves!

Jesus tells us in Matthew 11:28, "Come to Me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." Jesus extends this invitation, not just to children but to all — to everyone who is weary and burdened. This invitation is an encouragement to all who read it, and has been proven completely true in the lives of many.

I knew a young man once who had been in the pit of despair. He was on the brink of losing both his home and his business. He was consumed by sin.

When this verse was shared with him, he believed it. His life was transformed and Christ gave him the peace he had been longing for. He found rest for his soul. His career and family life turned around 180 degrees. Christ is the only One who can do this.

The little children in Mark 10 came to Jesus. He picked them up in His arms and blessed them. They knew they were loved.

How about you? Do you know God's love? The greatest encouragement anyone can give is to direct

people to the One who can and will give unconditional love, peace, joy and contentment to all who totally yield their lives to Him.

Encouragement can be found in God's Word. The Bible is loaded with help for anyone who will seek it. We need to get back into the Word, instead of other books and men's interpretations. There are great jewels throughout the Bible for all who will seek them. I am reminded of a hymn (*Ambassador* 264) entitled, "Thy Word Is Like a Garden, Lord," by Edwin Hodder. The first verse says:

*Thy Word is like a garden,  
Lord, With flowers bright and fair.  
And ev'ryone who seeks may  
pluck a lovely cluster there.*

*Thy Word is like a deep, deep  
mine; and jewels rich and rare  
Are hidden in its mighty depths  
For ev'ry searcher there.*

Need encouragement? Walk in the garden of God's Word. Everything you need for life is in the Bible. The mine is so full of precious gems that you will never be able to reach the end of them. Get into the Word!



— by **Pastor Jim Rasmussen**  
**AFLC Director of Evangelism**

## sound bites

**Excellence in childrearing does not evolve from**

**1 making fewer mistakes than everybody else. it evolves from making plenty of mistakes and learning from them.**

— Ray Guarendi

Our challenge is to really trust the Word of God when we speak it, teach it, and share it in conversation. A speaker I once heard said, "The farmer doesn't plant the seed, then stand over it, and scream at it to grow!" Can we trust the Word that is "sharper than any double-edged sword"?

**4** ... my job as a parent is a temporary responsibility with eternal consequences.

— Tiger McLuen

**6**

**The best way to protect your children from the wrong messages is to see that they are exposed to the right ones.**

— Doug Fields

**2**

The average preschooler in America watches 27 hours of television a week. The average child gets more one-on-one communication from TV than from all her parents and teachers combined.

— Dave Grossman

The life that has grown up and developed without laughter, and without the sunny brightness which youth justly claims as its right lacks buoyancy and elasticity, and becomes heavy and unsympathetic, if not harsh and morose.

— G. S. Reany

**3**

Everyday life must always be lived out against the backdrop of eternity ... my job as a parent is a temporary responsibility with eternal consequences.

— Tim Kimmel

**5**

— by Angie Nagel and Lisa Osmond  
Newark Lutheran and  
West Lisbon Lutheran  
Newark, Illinois

# The cost of following Jesus

**I**n today's society, being a teenager is not always easy. Between the ages of 15 and 25 years old, we will confront decisions that will affect the rest of our lives. In this decade we will discover what our beliefs, morals and goals will be. Today we are busy making choices that will impact our lives, such as who we spend the rest of our life with and what career we pursue.

Even though these are very important decisions, none of them are the most important decision. Each of us has to make the choice of what we will do about our relationship with Jesus. Many people hope that by just ignoring that Jesus died for them, they won't have to make a decision on whom they

will serve. On the other side of the spectrum are people who believe there is a God, but they don't serve Him.

There is a saying that says, "Salvation is free, but discipleship will cost you everything you've got." Our Christian life is not supposed to end the moment we are saved. That is just the beginning! We are called to give our lives to God to be used for his purposes. Romans 12:1 says, "Therefore, I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual act of worship."

Conflicts have not changed that much over the last 2,000 years. Every day, we are asked questions about our commitment to Jesus Christ. Cassie Bernall, a 17-year-old junior at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, was asked the ultimate question while peering down the barrel of a gun. When the two gunmen asked her, "Do you believe in God?" she calmly answered, "Yes, I believe in God."

She paid for it with her life.

She regarded her devotion to her Lord as more important than the things of this earth. Jim Elliott once said, "He is no fool who gives up what he cannot keep to gain what he cannot lose." Because of Cassie's devotion, her testimony has reached all over the United States.

According to the *The Boston Globe* on the night of her death, Cassie's brother Chris found a poem Cassie had written just two days prior to her death. It read:

*Now I have given up on everything else  
I have found it to be the only way  
To really know Christ and to experience  
The mighty power that brought  
Him back to life again, and to find  
Out what it means to suffer and to  
Die with him. So, whatever it takes  
I will be one who lives in the fresh  
Newness of life of those who are  
Alive from the dead.*

Each of us are called to make a decision about our relationship with Jesus. We can either choose to embrace that Jesus died for us and accept forgiveness for our sins, or we can choose to reject or ignore Jesus's love for us. We need to weigh the costs and decide whom we will serve. In Joshua 22:5 it says, "Love the Lord your God and walk in all His ways and keep His commandments and hold fast to Him and serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul."



# A jar of college Jelly Bellies

— by Jill E. Tonneson  
Northwestern College  
Roseville, Minnesota

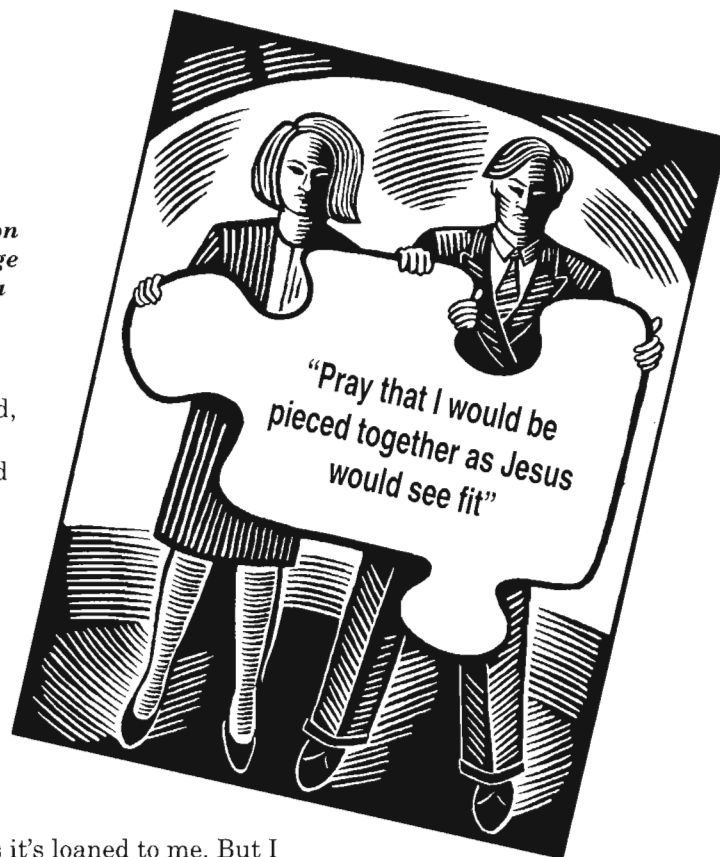
**T**he contemporary songwriter “Eli” has a song reverberating over Christian radio waves entitled, “Things I Prayed For.” He begins with his childhood concerns — his hair not sticking up in weird places, and then moves into his teens when his hair “should” stick up, and he needs forgiveness from his evil deeds. He finishes with the concerns of his 20s — that God would still love him and his hair wouldn’t fall out in weird places. At each road sign of his life he needs something different. The last phrase is the crux of his prayers, “that I’d be someone someday.”

College is such an insane, jumbled bunch of years, like a glass jar of world renowned, multicolored Jelly Bellies. Each bean is a different part of your life. Chocolate pudding is your friendships, buttered popcorn your habit of procrastination, kiwi-lime is your relationship with God, and coconut your amazingly healthy diet of pizza and Mountain Dew. Each bean has a place in the jar, some closer to the top and others hidden in the middle somewhere.

When you go to college, you pick the jar up off the seldom used desk, toss it in the back seat of your Escort, and traverse the miles to the university. When you finally remember those jelly beans, partially molting in your back seat, a lot has changed in your little jar. Everything is rearranged, and the flavors that once made you convulse are a little more intriguing now. Beans are shifting all over the place, and all at once — a Jelly Bellies tornado, if you will.

As an 18 to 20-something plugging through the four or five years we call college (depending on just how many career changes I go through), everything I treasure, every annoying habit and rigid belief I own, is extracted from the jar of mine and inspected because, for the first time, I’m the only one deciding what goes and what matters. I get to arrange my own beans.

Now, as a college senior, standing on the precipice of the whole world cramming to shove a diploma in my pocket, I have a whole slug of dreams. I want to matter. I want to be somebody someday, like in Eli’s song. I have a peace Band-Aid I want to slap on the world’s gashes, and I want to soak in what I have for



as long as it’s loaned to me. But I haven’t the foggiest how on earth to go about attaining my starlet aspirations. These dreams, along with the hope of making a family, developing lifelong friends, and discovering a meaningful occupation are rolling around my brain, and I know I put that little slip that had “Divine Purpose” scribbled on it somewhere. I need a whole bunch of help from the folks that know and love me, as well as my brothers and sisters in Christ who God will introduce me to on the flip-side. I need prayer.

If you would, pray that God would take me (and every other searching young adult) by the hand, and that I’d be willing to walk along with Him, whatever forest He treads through. Pray that I would understand the unique passions He’s threaded through my heart so that I can figure out how to better use my tools for His good purpose. Pray that He’d cement my faith and soften my heart to those I walk the path with. Pray for a shield of protection as I dissect what I’ve always held as truth and collide with oodles of different world views that will try to subtly shred my foundation.

Pray that I would be pieced together as Jesus would see fit, that God would handpick the place for each jelly bean in the jar of my life (as opposed to what Jill or Andy or Meg would have), so that this small glass vessel wouldn’t cloud the wonderfully loving God who created it.

And thanks, on this side of forever, for praying.



— by Joe Faldet, 16  
Trinity Lutheran  
McIntosh, Minnesota

# Tempted by fear



“There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear. For fear has to do with punishment, and he who fears is not perfected in love.”

I John 4:18

**F**ear is a sneaky temptation for Christians to deal with. That is because fear comes in many forms. It can be as worry or anxiety, as doubt or it may be a healthy respect for something.

Also fear can do many things to a Christian. It can make one feel self-conscious about what they do to spread the Word. It can even make them not want to spread the Word.

Fear is a doorway to many sins. Fear conditions us for doubt. The more we fear the things of this world the less trust we have that God will provide for us and take care of us. Another way fear leads us to doubt is if we fear death, hell, or the devil. Jesus, on the cross, defeated all three of those. If we fear them we display a lack of faith that Jesus defeated them when He died on the cross.

A major temptation for teenagers is the fear of rejection by our peers. We are so afraid that we stop or maybe don't even start witnessing. That is not love. If we truly love our fellow brother or sister we will tell them about the sins that will ultimately kill them, and about the saving grace of Jesus. When we fear being rejected so much that we stop spreading the gospel, we disobey a direct command made by Jesus: “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations” (Matthew 28:19).

How can we assist in making disciples if we suffer paralysis from fear of what our peers might think of us? Why do we fear our peers? They are no better than us for we all are made in God's image. They have nothing over us. Our friends for that matter, have the same temptations and struggles that we do.

This is also a time of worry for many high schoolers as they plan for college and careers. The worries set in about how to receive scholarships and if there will be enough for tuition and other costs. In Luke 12:25 we are asked if by worrying we can add a “cubit to our height.” This, too, is a lack of trust in God who knows the plans He has “to give you a future and a hope” (Jeremiah 29:11). Nevertheless, how often we allow these worries to accumulate “in a bunch” and soon our Lord is neglected.

We as Christians are to love God and man. Fear has no place in this love. If there is any fear in your love, seek Jesus. He will set you straight in the end. “The Lord is for me; I will not fear. What can man do to me?” (Psalm 118:6).





— by Larry Houston

Twenty-eight years ago, Ken and Melodee Sortedahl traveled from Minneapolis, Minnesota to Colfax, Wisconsin, where Ken provided weekend pulpit supply. Ken was a student at AFLTS and the weekend assignment was routine for seminar-ians. But God had events in place that weekend in Colfax that would forever change the lives of the Sortedahls and over 2,000 young people who have journeyed through the doors at Peniel Christian School.

During that weekend in 1971, God used Ken to minister the love of Jesus to a young boy. This teen would have been placed with adult men in a regular jail if Ken had not been there by the all-knowing direction of God. "Ken was there, he was willing, and God was able," said Pastor Mike Brandt, a seminary classmate. "It was obvious that their hearts were focused on the spiritual needs of people. To say the least, Ken was bold and direct. You did not have to wonder what Ken believed about spiritual truths, especially how he felt about Jesus." Pastor Brandt concluded that it came as no surprise that day in class after the experience in Wisconsin, when Ken announced he had a burden to take troubled youth into their home.

Ken and Melodee continued to travel to Colfax on weekends and began praying about a place to start Peniel.

God provided. The Sortedahls

## Reaching troubled youth for Jesus— the ministry of the Peniel Christian School

with their two small sons, Ken and Joe, moved into an old farm house on a 77-acre farm near Spring Valley, Wisconsin, just one mile off Interstate 94 about 30 miles east of the Wisconsin-Minnesota border.

Young people with problems in their homes and communities were lovingly, yet with firm discipline, welcomed to Peniel. ("And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel, for I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved" Genesis 32:20.) They have come from families whose parents have been doctors, lawyers, stockbrokers, teachers, farmers, even pastor's children and from the inner cities of Chicago and New York.

Though the problems of the young people and the lives of families have changed since 1971, the basic need has not changed. "That ol'devil is hard at work," as Ken often says. Everyone still needs a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Pastor Steve Lombardo says he is thankful for Pastor Ken's evangelistic zeal. "I have heard him emphasize the necessity of compelling people to come to Christ. He has been a real soul winner!" This is what brings about the changed lives.

The following testimony by Anders Macy, of Resurrection Lutheran in Beltrami, Minnesota, is typical of the students who come to Peniel.

"Through my early teen years, drugs, drinking, and juvenile delinquency controlled my activities. My relationship with my parents became very strained. I had problems with my school and with the police in our small town of Lake Stevens, Washington. On December 7, 1975, my father informed me that I could no longer live at home. I was fifteen years old when I arrived three days later at Peniel.

"It was a whole new way of seeing my life and the way I related to it. Over the next two years, God revealed Himself to me by the example of Ken and Melodee, the counselors and Christian people we met as we traveled with the home. Each day the Word of God was taught and then lived out before our eyes. I saw miracles performed where only a loving God could have worked it out. Jesus softened my heart, opened my eyes and invited me to have a relationship with Him. In the summer of 1978, I received Jesus as my Savior and Lord.

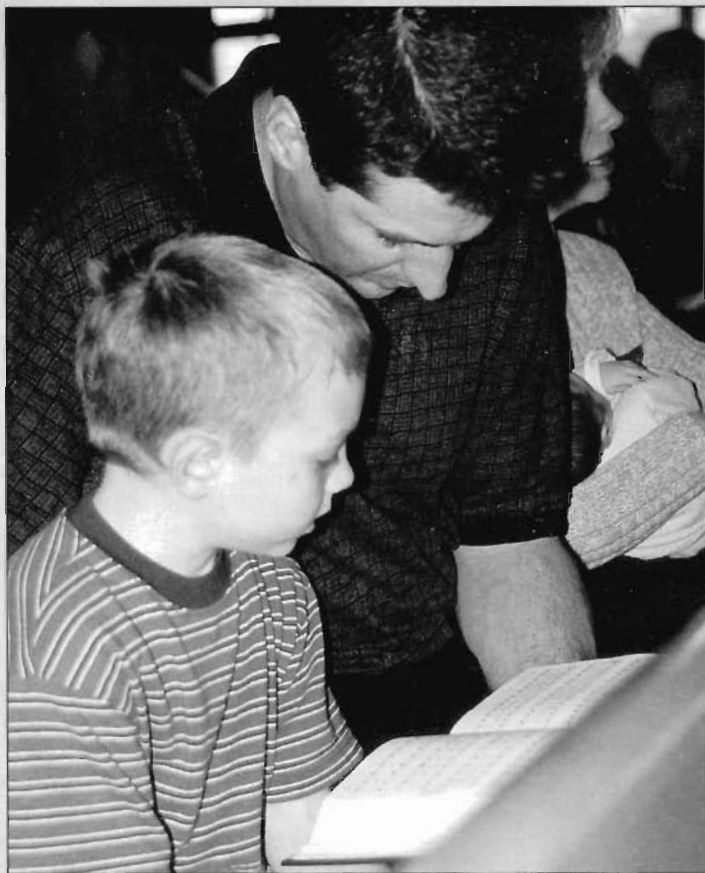
"God used Peniel Christian School to show me that He is real and alive, He loves me and has a plan for my life. After graduating from Peniel in 1979, God led me to AFLBS and the University of Minnesota. Today I am a funeral director, living in Fertile, Minnesota, with my beautiful wife Nancy and four boys, Nathanael, Benjamin, Michael, and Samuel. My mission is to direct people to the hope of Jesus in their dark hours."

"Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ" (II Timothy 2:3). From this biblical reference the incorporated business name is taken — Soldiers of Jesus Christ, Inc. And this is how Ken and Melodee describe themselves — good soldiers of the Lord Jesus Christ, just faithfully reporting for duty each day.

From the beginning Peniel has been the Lord's ministry, continuing (continued on next page)



Students, staff, friends and family surprised Melodee with a birthday dinner last Christmas. Pastor Ken and Melodee are seated on the left.



## Receiving the faith of your parents ...

Receiving your parents' faith is more learning from examples and their response to mistakes that you see them, and other people, make. If your parents have faith in Christ, you end up learning something from them and through the Word of God. I cannot receive my parents' faith as if it were passed on through the genes. But by good example, I have been taught to have faith for myself. My parents showed me how to believe without doubt and I have accepted their religion and received faith in Christ.

Asher Hefty, 14  
Faith Free Lutheran, Kalispell, Montana

## PENIEL

ously sustained by prayers and the faithfulness of God. Ken and Melodee have only looked to God through His people to provide for all the needs to operate Peniel. The students come at no set charge and the parents pay what they can afford. Throughout the years many churches and individuals have become monthly supporters of Peniel.

Each year they visit churches throughout the Midwest plus the annual late winter western

tour to Washington, Oregon and California — a highlight of the students' time at Peniel. On tour at the churches the young people sing and share their testimonies, then Pastor Ken shares a message.

For more information about Peniel, contact them at Box 457, Spring Valley, WI 54767 or at [www.Peniel.net](http://www.Peniel.net). Pastor Ken has written the story of his life, "Declaration of Dependence," and a copy may be obtained through Peniel Christian School.



— by Pastor Les and Jan Galland  
Calvary Lutheran  
Everett, Washington

W

With wide eyes and a smile, Nessa looked up at me and said, "My mother asks me many questions about Jesus and I can answer her questions."

I asked, "Where did you learn about Jesus?"

She said, "From Jan in our music and from Tina who is my teacher!"

Then there was the day I picked up Chris to bring him to church. "How can I accept Jesus as my Savior?" His question thrilled me and I led him to Jesus there in the car on the way to church!

Many Wednesdays we hear the words, "I love to come to Pioneer Club!" or "I want to be baptized."

One of the missions of Calvary Lutheran where we serve as pastor and family is the children's ministry through our Pioneer Club. The theme verse is found in Psalm 119:105 where it says, "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."

*"The Lord is good to all, and His tender mercies are over all His works."*

Psalm 145:9

A

America is one of the most blessed nations of the world and yet I would venture to say that we are also one of the most ungrateful. How has God blessed us? How has God blessed me? Following is my testimony which I pray is an encouragement to you to share with others what God has done in your life.

On May 3, 1980, I was born into a nation and family which were both uniquely blessed. We as a nation have experienced Proverbs 14:34 where it says, "Righteousness exalts a nation." America has been blessed because it was founded on Christian principles. Many of us own more than one Bible, and if for some reason, we needed another one, we would have no problem coming up with an unlimited selection. This I find to be one of the blessings that I seem to take for granted the most and yet the Bible is a



# Sharing Jesus with the children

What a privilege it is to share the Word with the children each Wednesday evening. It has given our congregation new life and a purpose for being here almost 100 years.

The greater percentage of our children come from homes that are unchurched, one-parent homes, live-in boyfriends, different fathers for each of the children and many personal problems. As the children come to us they love to receive our love and attention. Many have never been in church before and have no clue who really is Jesus Christ.

Our mission is to help children and youth put Christ in every phase of life by recognizing Him as Savior and Lord and developing a lifestyle based on biblical values.

Our goals are to enable children to enter into a personal relationship with Christ and to know His Word. They can experience sal-

Recent cradle roll at Salem Lutheran, Freeman, South Dakota



**But Jesus said, "Let the children alone, and do not hinder them from coming to Me; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."**

Matthew 19:14

vation and grow spiritually through the study of Scripture and then apply it to their daily lives in their families and community. We also pray that our children will learn to form healthy relationships with their peers and adults. We desire them to grow as whole persons with positive attitudes toward God, themselves and others.

Our club materials consist of weekly meeting plan books, club members' activity (continued on next page)

## God has blessed me

— by Jesse Long  
Atonement Free Lutheran  
Arlington, Washington

priceless gift from God Himself.

As for the blessing of my family, there are some things about us that are kind of unique. Take, for example, the fact that I have five awesome brothers and three wonderful sisters. But, believe it or not, this is not even the most wonderful thing about my family. The greatest thing is that we have godly parents who, despite living in a nation that is turning its back on God, have had the courage to raise each one of us to love God with our whole heart and to show it by loving one another. My testimony could be put into one verse, Ephesians 1:3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us (me) with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ."

Apart from all the spiritual blessings, are all the ways that God has blessed me physically. Every day God watches over us and protects us from dangers that we don't even realize. Daily we hear news from around the world of endless tragedies and

disasters. I often wonder, "What keeps us from experiencing all of these hardships? Why those people and not us?" I cannot help but think that our turn for God's judgment is coming, especially if we continue in the way we are going right now. But we must never lose our focus on what Christ has done and continues to do in our lives.

Has God blessed you? I'm sure that if you look around, you will see that God has abundantly fulfilled His promise to each one of us. "And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:19).

As Christians we have been blessed and we have a responsibility to pass the blessing on to those around us. "But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9).



books and take-home papers, activity awards and badges that we give at Christmas and at the end of the school year.

Each Wednesday evening begins with a dinner time, followed by music, recreation, lesson and memorization of God's Word and a craft time. The children are with us for two hours.

The members of Calvary Lutheran give in many ways — teachers, helpers, van drivers or use their own cars, food preparation and most of all through their prayers. Our older members who are unable to come and help are diligent in prayer and giving of monetary gifts for expenses. We have many involved in praying for five Pioneer Club families for five minutes a day. We don't charge a registration fee because many children would not be able to come if money were expected. We have received grants from Lutheran Brotherhood through the AFLC Evangelism Commission. We also have a fundraiser each year when we serve coffee and goodies at our nearby Interstate 5 rest area.

We try to incorporate the Pioneer Club in our worship service one Sunday a month as well as Junior Church on Sunday mornings.

This is our third year of Pioneer Club at Calvary. We started with about ten children and have approximately 75 enrolled this year. The average Wednesday evening attendance is about 50 with around twenty adults helping.

This summer we hope to offer a "Jesus" video to each family with the hope of returning and presenting the way of salvation to them. We also desire to start support

groups to help with personal problems. We are praying that these families will become involved within the congregation and come to know Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Without the dedication and commitment of our congregation we would never be able to continue with the mission. Our prayer is that the verses, lessons, songs and the love we show will continue to bear fruit for many years to come. Recently two adults shared how God planted a seed in their hearts through Pioneer Clubs as children and years later they remembered those things. God's Word will never return void. What a joy it has been to share Jesus in this way. Call us at (425) 252-6775 if we can be of any help to you with a children's ministry in your congregation.



— by Pastor Craig Johnson  
Lutheran Ambassador Editor  
Beaverton, Oregon



**Missionary Dan Giles asks if children can come to a kid's club meeting held in a suburb of Aguascalientes, Mexico.**

**G** "Go and make disciples ..." is the call Jesus has given His Church (Matthew 28:19). In response to that call, disciples of Jesus Christ are being made as part of the AFLC World Missions work in Mexico.

Two of the Mexican pastors involved in this work are Pastors Milton Flores and Raul Hernandez. They pastor AFLC congregations in the towns of Celaya and Irapuato. I began my recent trip to Mexico by spending the day with them in Mexico City.

The huge cathedrals in the city remind a person of the heavy Catholic influence in the country. Evangelical bookstores are somewhat scarce, in comparison to the United States. A good store does exist in Mexico City, however, and Milton and Raul took advantage of their visit to the city to visit the store and get some necessary resources.

I next traveled to the city of Aguascalientes, where Missionaries Dan and Debbie Giles and Todd and Barb Schierkolk and their families live and serve.

Aguascalientes is a large, busy, quite modern, growing city. It has a Wal-Mart, American fast food places, and large numbers of people who don't know Jesus.



# Making disciples in Mexico

The missionaries have found many in the city who resist God's Word or seem uninterested. But the seed of the gospel has found good soil in some lives. The first member of Spring of Living Water, the AFLC congregation in the city, now has a daughter and son-in-law who have recently completed their internship on the AFLC mission field in Brazil and plan to go out as cross-cultural missionaries. Their names are Fernando and Monse.

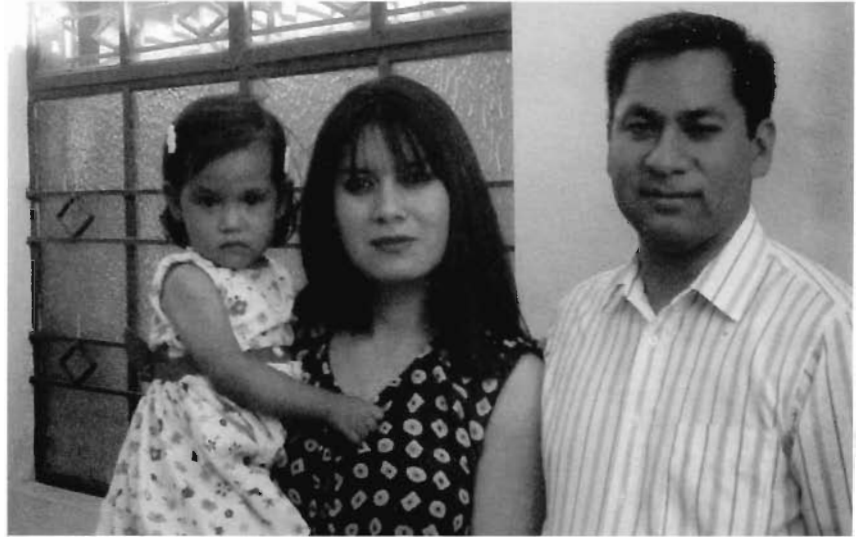
Some more good soil was found in the life of a professional basson player named Ricardo. He will soon complete training at a Bible school in Mazatlan, Mexico that is part of the ministry of the Lutheran mission society, World Mission Prayer League (WMPL). His course has been in pastoral studies and his plan is, Lord willing, to serve as a pastor with the AFLC in Mexico.

The congregation was recently able to begin renting an additional portion of the building they have been meeting in for a number of years. This meets a need of more space for worship services along with additional classrooms. A new need has arisen, though, of a roof over this space. The congregation is trusting God will provide the funds necessary for it to be roofed before the soon-to-arrive rainy season.

Much help in making this site suitable for worship services was provided by a group from Medicine Lake Lutheran Academy of Golden Valley, Minnesota. These well prepared high school students and advisors recently visited Aguascalientes and did manual labor, puppet presentations, shared dramas and music and helped pass out tracts.

In a growing area on the outskirts of town an additional work has begun. Missionaries Giles and Schierkolk travel to this area called Palimino on Sunday afternoons, after morning worship service and Sunday school downtown. A man wants to see a church next door to his home and so he has given land for a future church building. In this area Bible studies are held by Dan and kids' clubs are led by Todd. Later each Sunday they move to a nearby home where a Bible study and worship is held and led by Dan, while Todd meets elsewhere with a group of youth.

Mexico is a country with many kids and youth. The ministry in Palimino in particu-



**Ricardo and Adriana and their daughter. Ricardo is in the process of completing his studies for serving as a pastor in Mexico.**

lar has seen kids, starving for hope and love, respond to the good news of God's Word. The missionaries have been encouraged in seeing the changes Christ makes in the lives of kids.

From Aguascalientes I traveled to the city of Puebla. Two AFLC missionary couples who are on loan to WMPL serve in this area: Pastor Richard and Clara Gunderson and Darwin and MaryAnn Jackson. Their ministry is one of Bible training, evangelism and disciple making.

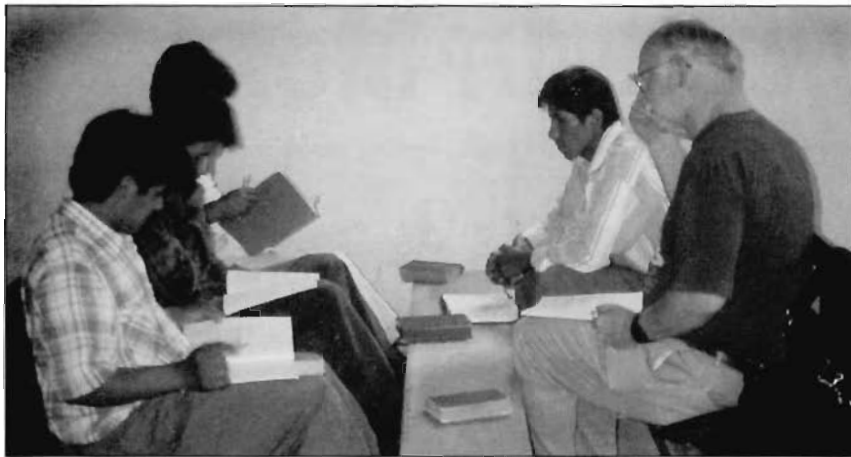
Most weekends Pastor Gunderson is "on the road." He travels to various towns and villages outside of Puebla and conducts Bible training courses.

It's a couple hours of driving up and down and around mountains to get to a town

(continued on next page)



**Missionary Todd Schierkolk with some of the kids at Palimino.**



**Pastor Richard Gunderson, teaching a Bible course in Huitzilán, Mexico.**

## MEXICO

called Zacapoaxtla and a Bible class around a kitchen table. Then a couple more hours, much of it on gravel roads, to get to a church building and a meeting with youth in Huitzilán. A Sunday worship service is held in a living room back in Zacapoaxtla followed by a Bible class in a home in Huahuaxtla. This is followed by some hours driving on gravel to get to the village of Pepexta for a Bible study.

The portion of the Bible being studied in Pepexta is I Corinthians 1:5-7, "For in him you have been enriched in every way ... you do not lack any spiritual gift ...." As we study we are sitting on some benches, under some roofing material being held up by four poles. I have to ask myself, "Do I really believe this group has been 'enriched in every way,' that they 'do not lack any spiritual gift?'" They are not rich by American standards. They lack many things we in the United States think are essential for having a church. But they have the Word and the Spirit of God. Through that Word, the Lord is able to raise up powerful disciples for Him.

An emphasis of the Jacksons' ministry is training lay people in doing personal evangelism. After a few more months in Puebla, they plan to move out to the country to live among and train the people there. Many of the people in that area, while they speak Spanish, are more comfortable speaking the Nahuatl tribal language. The Jacksons are working on learning that language themselves.

The mission work in Mexico may not seem dramatic or impressive to some human eyes, but our eyes often fail to see that which is most important and lasting. The Word of God is being taught. Free and living congregations are being built up. Disciples are being made. For that we can give thanks and praise to God, and pray that it will continue.



Six months ago my family and I were getting ready to go and serve for a year of missionary internship under our brothers of the Free Lutheran Church of Brazil. Going out as a missionary is a tremendous struggle. Many of our friends told us we were crazy, but we had decided we would go, even if people called us crazy or foolish for Christ's sake.

In our own home church, Spring of Living Water in Aguascalientes, México, many people thought that sending missionaries to other countries was a crazy idea. They said it was financially impossible for such a small church to support a missionary family. If we couldn't afford to support a pastor full time, how could we send a missionary overseas?

We asked for prayer and financial help from other churches as well. Between all the churches everything finally worked out so that we were able to go.

We no sooner got to Brazil than I had the opportunity to share a testimony twice and I got to speak with a young man named Joel about Jesus.

After just three days of ministry there we had seen two people come to Christ and one of them, Joel, has become a faithful member of his church!

We went to Campo Mourão, where we would spend the greater part of our time in Brazil, and I had the opportunity to share the gospel with several people; sometimes from the pulpit and sometimes in the street.



**Fernando and Monse and their son.**

# The importance of cross-cultural missions in the local church

Thanks to the Lord one of the girls who was saved through this ministry is now studying in the Bible school, with a call from the Lord to serve in cross-cultural missions herself. Several young people made decisions for Christ during the Bible camp held by the AFLC in Brazil at the time of Carnaval. Others heard the Word, although there was no immediate response. Praise God! It was all very good.

One thing we found fascinating was that while we, those stubborn missionaries, "crazed" with the vision God had given us were gone, the local church we belonged to back home grew, taking in members, after ten years of very slow growth. The building was enlarged, doubling its capacity. The church was having a burst of growth! We came home to a whole new church!

Could it be that God blessed our home

church, opening the doors of heaven for it to grow when the church decided to obey God's call to send missionaries to all the nations? After seeing this, we realized that the service of a missionary family outside of its own country can also be very fruitful in their home church!

Our next step will be to finish our studies in theology here in Mexico and, if God wills, next year I will be ordained as a pastor in our association. The next step after that will probably be in one of the countries of the "tri-national vision" the AFLC of Brazil has had for many years: Paraguay!

How much will our home church grow after four years of supporting a missionary family in service in Paraguay, if in six months of internship in Brazil God blesses us with such growth?



## Giving back to our donors

— by Mark D. Johnson  
Fountain Hills, Arizona

Some of you have remembered to name the AFLC in your will or trust to honor the Lord with your substance. You are being a good steward of the assets that have been entrusted to you. You selected the AFLC because you believe in our mission and want to make a difference in people's lives for eternity. We are thankful for these bequests and appreciate the confidence you have placed in our ministry. We also know that many of you would like to give a substantial gift now but are unable to because you need your resources to provide for your own family. There is an alternative called a charitable gift annuity that allows you to give a substantial gift now and still provide for your family's needs. If you give money or stock for a charitable gift annuity, you will receive annual payments for the rest of your life or lives if married.

### Here is how it works:

Mr. and Mrs. Donor give \$50,000 to the AFLC Foundation for a charitable gift annuity. The annuity contract obligates the AFLC Foundation

to pay them a set amount every year, either monthly, quarterly, semi-annually or annually. The amount they receive is determined by their ages. Part of the payment is tax-free. Since Mr. Donor is 80 and Mrs. Donor is 75 when the annuity is established, their annuity rate is 7.5 percent. This means they will receive fixed amounts every year totaling \$3,750. These payments will continue until both of them are gone.

### Single Life Rates

Age	Rate
60	6.7%
65	7.0%
70	7.5%
80	9.2%
90	12%

### Two Life Rates

Ages		Rate
60	55	6.3%
65	60	6.4%
70	65	6.7%
80	75	7.5%
90	85	9.6%

### The AFLC Foundation utilizes gift annuities:

To help our members who want

to make larger gifts but do not want to reduce their cash flow.

To help our members, who have made provisions in their will or trust for a bequest, to also make a gift now so they can take advantage of an income tax charitable deduction.

To help our older members to receive a higher income from their assets than they might otherwise receive. A portion of the income is tax-free.

To help our members avoid capital gains tax.

To help our members remove those assets from probate.

To help our members experience the joy of giving.

Call our gift planning department for a free proposal to determine your payout rate, your charitable deduction, and your lifetime income payment. Contact: Mark D. Johnson, CFP, AFLC Development Consultant at 800-950-2109.



# Preparing for our missionary furlough

Four years and a few months have passed since we boarded the airplane destined for Sao Paulo, Brazil. The few months preceding that flight we had been busy with the birth of our son Samuel, packing and re-packing boxes for our move to Brazil and saying goodbye to our family and friends.

As the day approaches for our flight to the United States, we find ourselves experiencing many of the same things. We were blessed with another son ten months ago, Benjamin. The boxes have been labeled and stored in one of our house's bedrooms, and the goodbyes are said in Portuguese, rather than English.

We were asked two questions: "What does a missionary coming home need, physically, emotionally and spiritually?" and "What are challenges faced in preparing to leave the work here for a year?"

Our main need is prayer. We are so thankful for the strong prayer support that has upheld our family the past four years. Please remember us in prayer as we are on furlough as well. It is not an extended "R & R." It is a time when we will be visiting many churches, camps and individuals sharing about the work to which the Lord has called us in Brazil. Yes, we will have many sweet times of fellowship, and new adventures, but we still need your dedicated prayers as we travel.

Physically, our biggest need, housing, has been lovingly taken care of thanks to the world missions board and the national women's missionary federation. We are so thankful for the beautiful home in which we will be staying during our year's furlough. It is a huge relief to not have to find housing and all the items to set up house. Thanks to all of you who have contributed to this home.

In addition, we all need to visit the doctor for thorough physicals. The "older" Nelsons have had some unexplained aches and pains that need to be examined. Perhaps just an amoeba or two, or the natural

progression of age. Samuel, four, needs some extensive allergy testing to better treat his suffering with excema and bronchitis. The whole family needs to visit our friend, the dentist. While we have good medical care in Brazil, there are some areas that still lack the advanced technology.

Spiritually, we are also looking forward to sitting under the teaching and preaching of the Word of God in our native language. We get excited thinking about singing songs and choruses in English with a group of believers. Yes, it will be good to get our batteries charged.

Three of our four children will be introduced to life in the States for basically the first time when we arrive the end of May. Samuel was only two months old when we arrived in Brazil so it's all new for him. Their home is Brazil, so America will be a shock to them at first. Josiah and Rachel are looking for-

ward to studying with other English-speaking children for a year.

The Bible school here has been able to juggle classes around our leaving. Other teachers will be taking David's place until we return. The house mother from the Miriam Home is taking over the Bible clubs in Sarah's absence. As excited as we are to get back to the States, we are enthused about our return to Brazil and the beautiful people with whom we are called to work.

Thanks to all of you who are so faithful and sacrificial in your support! Please feel free to stop by the Mission Home and share a cup of Brazilian coffee with us.

**Missionaries David  
and Sarah Nelson  
with Josiah (7), Rachel (4), Samuel  
(4), and Benjamin (9 mos.)**  
<http://www.start.com.br/nelson>  
**Furlough address: 2344 30th Ave.  
Osceola, WI 54020  
715-294-3645**



The Sunday school outside their church building in Campo Grande, Brazil. The congregation plans to add the second story as funds are available. Missionaries Jonathan and Tamba Abel are serving in Campo Grande.

— by Linda Korhonen  
Good Shepherd Lutheran  
Cokato, Minnesota

# Beauty that never grows old

Isn't it fun to look at old photographs? Reactions range from shy smiles to gasps of surprise or even tears at the evidence of years gone by.

When I was a young girl, I remember being amazed as I observed old pictures, to see that my parents and grandparents were once kids just like me!

Although the years change all of us outwardly, each of us by faith can experience that "inwardly we are being renewed day by day." This is the work of God's Spirit in the heart yielded to Him. "So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal" (II Corinthians 4:16,18).

How about you? Is the beauty of Jesus seen in your life? Our women's missionary federation Bible study for July focuses on I Peter 3:1-12. Listen to God's wisdom in verses 3-4: "Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God's sight."

I don't believe this Scripture is condemning our desire to look nice or trying to take care of our body, which is God's temple. Instead it is teaching us where to put our main emphasis: on our inner attitudes and spirit. Do you spend more time each morning putting on your make-up than cleansing and refreshing your heart and mind in God's Word and prayer? Do you spend more money on new clothes than you invest for eternity by giving to God's work? What do people notice about you: your jewelry and make-up or your Christ-like spirit? Are you more concerned about what people think or about what God thinks? Do you try to impress people or honor God?

We are all aware of the distorted view of beauty in our deteriorating

society. It bombards us everywhere we look. Young people are especially deceived by believing Satan's lies and overemphasis on appearance.

Many years ago I heard a message to teenagers where a pastor purposely misquoted this commandment to teach a lesson. He said, "Thou shalt not commit adultery, boys." He went on to clarify himself by telling the teenage girls that one way they break this commandment is by the way they dress. When a woman dresses to "catch the eyes" of men and cause them to lust after her, then she is sinning by the way she dresses. This is blunt, but isn't it the truth that our young people need to understand?

God is looking for those radiant inner qualities that give the true

picture of a beautiful woman. Perhaps there's not a woman alive who feels that's true of her. Yet the issue is not how you feel, but that you commit yourself to the authority of Scripture to obey what God says. Joy and fulfillment in life comes not from getting our own way but from saying, "Yes, Lord."

Scripture is full of clear pictures (old photographs) to give us examples, guidelines, and encouragement. "This is how the holy women of the past, who put their hope in God, used to make themselves beautiful: They were submissive to their own husbands" (I Peter 3:5). Take a close look. It will help you be the beautiful woman that God wants you to be!



## 100 years of radiating the beauty of Jesus



**Ishpeming, Michigan —** Hope Free Evangelical Lutheran WMF recently honored Helen Simons, now a beautiful 100 years old. Born in Champion, Michigan, then known as Beacon, she was one of six children of Finnish immigrants. She later moved to Ishpeming where she still resides. She was the first woman to get her driver's license in Ishpeming. Her husband of 60 years, Harold Simons passed away in 1980.

Helen has been an active member of the congregation since it began in 1971. Her faithful attendance continues for worship ser-

vices but she is no longer always able to participate in WMF. Helen is known as the lady who gives and receives lots of hugs with kind words readily shared with everyone. She is an encouragement to the body of Christ and freely shares her faith in her Lord.

When asked what has been her joy and purpose in life, she said, "My life centers around Jesus. I've been faithful in daily devotions and prayers. I've often said, 'The more I give to those in need and to the Lord, it's always returned back to me two-fold. The Lord loves a cheerful giver.'"

Family and neighbors are always welcome and are sure to get a cup of coffee or tea to sip while listening to her stories spanning a century. "I've seen a lot of changes in our community and nation. I'm appalled to see what's happening with so many things not right. Perhaps the Lord is soon to come." Though her ears do not hear so well, she's certain to clearly hear that trumpet sound when Christ returns!

## From the Evangelism Department

### Evangelism Rally

The second annual Spring Evangelism Rally was held April 30 and May 1, at Emmaus Lutheran Church in Bloomington, Minnesota. Over fifty attended the Friday evening pastors' banquet. Pastor Jim Ritter of Emmaus brought a challenging message on evangelism later that evening.

The Saturday sessions were led by Dr. Don Bierle on "friendship evangelism." A number of AFLBS students attended along with others from the four-state region. A couple of congregations are now interested in hosting the seminar in their communities. For more information, call Pastor Jim Rasmussen at (612) 545-5631.

### Associate Evangelist Workshop

We have talked much about associate evangelists in our evangelism commission meetings. We have visited with many of you and we sense many are interested in this type of ministry opportunity. We are offering a workshop at the annual conference in Fergus Falls, Minnesota.

Join us on Wednesday, June 16, at 1:45 p.m. for an information-packed, one-hour workshop. Applications will be available for those wishing to become associate evangelists.

Information on the location of the workshop will be available at the registration desk. We expect our session to close when the WMF session is completed. We look forward to seeing you at the conference!

For further information, contact Pastor Rasmussen at 612-545-5631.

## Home Missions employee sign 3-year book deal

Larry Walker, administrative assistant in the AFLC Home Missions Department has signed a three-book contract with Baen Books of Riverdale, New York. Baen is the publisher of Larry's (who writes under the name "Lars Walker") first novel, "Erling's Word."

The agreement calls for the publication in June 1999, of "Wolf Time," a fantasy novel set in a small Lutheran college in Minnesota in the early 21st century. The novel tells the story of Carl Martell, a history professor who discovers that he has become a "human lie detector." He can tell when other people are lying, and he cannot himself lie. Against his will, he finds himself drawn into a confrontation with Sigfod Oski, a Nobel-prize winning Norwegian poet who has come to do research at the college and seems to be trying to revive the worship of the old Norse gods. Martell is forced to consider the claims of Jesus Christ as he finds himself dealing with challenges he can't handle in his own strength.

It is particularly noteworthy that Baen Books, the publisher, is not a Christian publishing house, and will be marketing the book through mainstream bookstores.

The second novel covered in the contract is a work-in-progress, a sequel to "Erling's Word," and tentatively titled "The Year Of The Warrior," scheduled for publication in 2000. It continues the saga of the historical figure Erling Skjalgsson following Erling's marriage to the sister of King Olaf Tygvesson of Norway, through the aftermath of Olaf's death at the battle of Svold in the year 1000 A.D.

The third novel will be named at a later date.

Walker grew up in Kenyon, Minnesota, where Hauge Lutheran Church was his home congregation. He is currently a member of Medicine Lake Lutheran Church and lives in Plymouth, Minnesota.

## New resources from Parish Education

*Instruments of Grace* — a video on recruiting and equipping volunteer teachers.

*Then and Now Bible Map Book* — full color with overlays of modern-day cities and countries.

*Bible Map Activities* — reproducible worksheets, Bible searches,

and puzzles on Old Testament people and places.

*Family Tree from Adam to Jesus* — 27" x 38" full-color poster traces Jesus' ancestry, including hundreds of names and Scripture references.

*100 Bible Stories and Activity Book* — (ages 8-12), NIV text, illustrations, explanatory notes, questions for reflection, and memory verses; supplementary workbook for review.

*All God's People Sing* — more than 200 hymns, carols, and choruses for children grades 3-8. Includes worship resources, prayers, and "Luther's Small Catechism."

*What Jesus Means to Me* — simple devotional reading on the treasures of knowing Christ: life, pardon, peace, power, hope, assurance, joy. Recommended for youth and others who need encouragement and comfort.

— Available from AFLC Parish Education  
612-545-5631  
parished@aflc.org

### Miriam's Laundry Project —

In response to a fund drive by the Minneapolis District WMF, \$5400 has been raised which will be used for remodeling of the Miriam Infant Home laundry room.

The AFLC-Canada has raised about the same amount of money which will be used for a commercial washer and dryer.

Any excess funds will go toward purchasing a much needed walk-in cooler for the infant home and Campo Mourao Bible school and seminary.

Thank you for your part in this amazing way that God is providing for the Miriam Infant Home.

— Tammy Vukonich  
Treasurer, Minneapolis District

## YOUTH UPDATE

### From the Youth Ministries office

**1.** Praise the Lord for the pre-registration response to the FLY Convention in Colorado. There are 1400 registered at this time, and another 150 expected before the event.

Praise the Lord for the great response to the need for counselors.

**2.** The youth team that will be going to Alaska is getting ready. There are four planning on working with the church doing everything from vacation Bible school, announcing for the radio station, helping people in the community, and painting the parsonage. Pray for them as they continue to raise \$1750 to pay for the trip.

**3.** Pastor Kevin will be traveling through Arizona, California, Montana and North Dakota this summer after the FLY Convention. It will be a mix of visiting churches and vacationing as a family.

**4.** The Youth Ministry Training Team is receiving applications and scheduling for next September and October. This team of three youth workers will have four objectives as it visits churches:

- To help cast a vision for the youth ministry and establish a purpose statement for the youth group.
- To train volunteer youth leaders in youth ministry foundations.
- To assist youth leaders as they run meetings and visit youth.
- To establish a calendar for one full year of youth ministry.

**5.** Pray for the youth budget. It is only at 10 percent of the needed support as of the end of April.

**6.** The 2000 Leadership Training Conference is scheduled for July 17-22 at the Association Retreat Center near Osceola, Wisconsin. It's a week designed to help youth grow out of their comfort zone and see God in action. Learn from hands-on experience that focuses on building a strong youth group in your church to impact your community.

— **Pastor Kevin Olson**  
**AFLC Youth Ministries Director**  
[youthmin@aflc.org](mailto:youthmin@aflc.org)  
<http://www.aflc.org>  
 612-545-5631



The Free Lutheran Youth Convention Planning Team held a Prayer Retreat last April. Over 1500 youth and counselors are expected to attend the June 28 through July 3 convention in Estes Park, Colorado.



AFLBS students and graduates working in Alaska this summer at the Naknek mission station and the salmon canneries nearby are: Shane Foley, Little Falls, Minnesota; Ingrid Giles, Aguascalientes, Mexico; Rachel Jordan, Faith, South Dakota; Carla Mattson, Greenbush, Minnesota; and Heather Olson, Astoria, Oregon. Not pictured are Joshua Fish, Everett, Washington; Cari Mowbray, LaCrosse, Wisconsin; and Mitzi Boerner, Jamestown, North Dakota.

Nate Jore, a 1999 member of the AFLBS Ambassador team will join the staff at Ruthfred Lutheran Church in Bethel Park, Pennsylvania, in September where he will serve as youth intern. Nate is the son of missionaries to Brazil, originally from McIntosh, Minnesota. The April 27, 1999 Ambassador incorrectly stated his home congregation as Mt. Carmel Lutheran. Our Savior's Lutheran is the Jore's home congregation.



Lidia Herrera, Aguascalientes, Mexico, and Emily Baker, Bloomington, Minnesota, are working with the English Language Camp in Russia. The girls will leave in June with Pastor Don Richman of the East European Missions Network.



# The 1999 summer gospel teams

**The Ambassadors:** Dan Keinanen, Cloquet, Minnesota; Nate Jore, Cuiaba, Brazil; Kelli Floan, Fertile, Minnesota; Rhoda Monseth, Rogers, Minnesota; and Kristi Forness, Abercrombie, North Dakota.



**Cornerstone:** Jason Gudim, Rockford, Minnesota; Nick Dyrud, Golden Valley, Minnesota; Laura Melby, Badger, Minnesota; Kristen Antal, Leeds, North Dakota; and Devon Erhardt, Lake Stevens, Washington. The team will work with congregations in Greenbush, Kasson-Dexter, and Plymouth, Minnesota; Wallace, Sioux Falls, and Canton, South Dakota; and Deshler, Nebraska. Their schedule includes three Bible camps and the FLY convention.



**Majesty:** Nate Anderson, Ames, Iowa; Tim Borg, Cokato, Minnesota; Mandy McEachran, Maple Lake, Minnesota; Andrea Valdez, Maple Grove, Minnesota; Jessi Abbott, Sheridan, Illinois. They will work with vacation Bible school ministries in Brockton-Culbertson, Montana; Beaverton, Oregon; Everett, Kirkland, Buckley and Lake Stevens, Washington; and Wadena, Minnesota. They will also be counselors at two Bible camps, the FLY convention and assist at the annual conference in Fergus Falls, Minnesota.





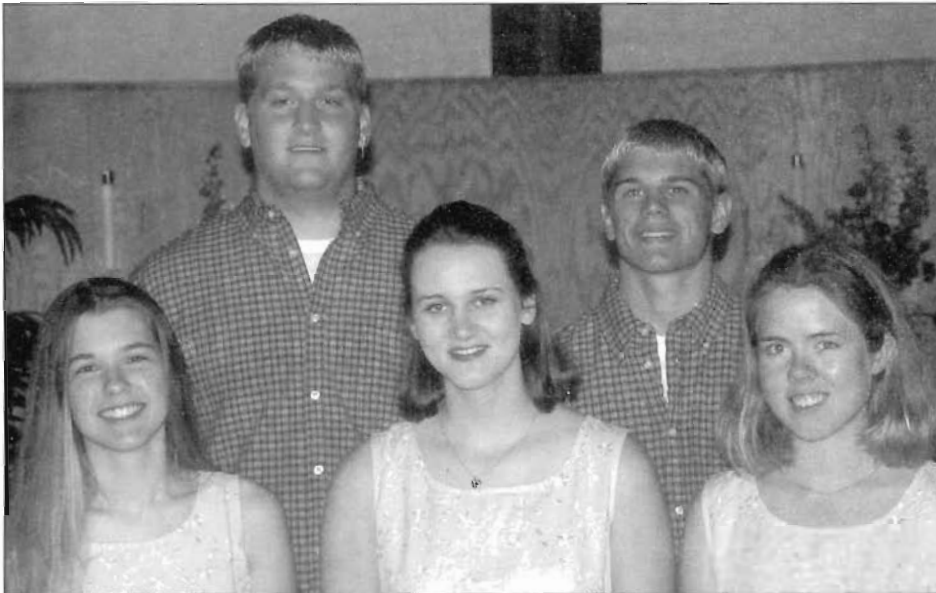
# Three Home Missions teams



Each congregation or camp sponsor that hosts a team is asked to contribute \$600 to help defray expenses. This does not cover the actual costs of training, equipping and sending a team, plus the \$100 honorarium paid to team members.

Designate gifts to AFLC Home Missions.

**Southern Barnabas:** Kevin Groven, Northwood, North Dakota; Andrea Nelson, LaCrosse, Wisconsin; Katie Nelson, LaCrosse, Wisconsin and Micah Swenson, Clarkdale, Arizona. This team will minister in Gruver, Amarillo, Tulia, and Wichita Falls, Texas, plus Durant and Ponca City, Oklahoma. They will serve as our counselors at the South Central District camp in Anadarko, Oklahoma and at the FLY convention.



**Southwest Barnabas:** Luke Rasmussen, Maple Grove, Minnesota; Joel Fugleberg, Roseau, Minnesota; Samantha Voldan, El Campo, Texas; Sarah Johnson, Sacred Heart, Minnesota; and Kristin Agrimson, Maple Grove, Minnesota. Their three weeks in June before going to Estes Park for the convention will be working with the congregations in Amery, Wisconsin; and Brandon and Beltrami, Minnesota. From Colorado, they will work in Tucson and Gilbert, Arizona and Oceanside, California.



**Northern Barnabas:** Members of this third Home Missions team are: Eric Christianson, Fergus Falls, Minnesota; Annie Olson, Fosston, Minnesota; Tara Callander, Maple Grove, Minnesota; Kayelynn Dannielsen, Lake Preston, South Dakota; and Paul Haugen, Culbertson, Montana. They will work with vacation Bible school ministries in Thief River Falls, Ortonville, East Grand Forks, and Pipestone, Minnesota; Loveland, Colorado; Montgomery, Illinois; and Brodhead, Wisconsin. They plan to be counselors at two Bible camps and the FLY convention.

# Groundbreaking for seminary housing held



Dr. Francis Monseth, FLS dean, led the devotions at the 11 a.m. ceremony on May 22, 1999. Also pictured are Pastor Tonnes Pollestad, Vision 2004 project director, and David Borg, chairman of the AFLC Schools Board of Trustees.



AFLC President Robert Lee officiated at the groundbreaking ceremony for a four-plex married student house located south of the administration building at the Medicine Lake campus.

## Seminary offers Summer Institute of Theology

The Free Lutheran Seminary has scheduled their annual Summer Institute of Theology for the week of July 26-30, 1999. The two morning classes are "Studies in the Pastoral Epistles" with Pastor Jerry Moan and "Denominational Differences" with Dr. Francis Monseth. Afternoon and evening classes are "Studies in Nehemiah" with Pastor Jerry Holmaas and "Evangelism in the Local Congregation" with Pastor Jim Rasmussen.

For more information and a brochure, call 612-544-9501.

**Kenyon, Minnesota** — Hauge Lutheran Church is celebrating its 140th anniversary on June 27, 1999 at the Old Stone Church in rural Kenyon.



**Windom, Minnesota** — Living Word Lutheran burned its church building mortgage on Easter Sunday. The congregation was chartered in March of 1988 and saved for six years before building its facility in 1995. Through strong stewardship and the generosity of our Lord, the congregation was able to pay off the balance of about \$155,000 this last January. They waited until Easter Sunday to celebrate the mortgage burning when the congregation would be together in a single worship service, rather than the usual two services. Pictured left to right are: the pastor, Dr. Richard Frederick, and the five men who have served as chairman of the congregation; Clyde Johnson, Dr. C. O. Castledine, George Bakalyar, Mick Hanson, and Lyle Osland.

## South Dakota church joins AFLC

Trondhjem Lutheran Church of rural Volin, South Dakota was received to the AFLC congregational roster by the coordinating committee at their April meeting. Volin is about 60 miles southwest of Sioux Falls. The congregation celebrated its 125th anniversary in 1997.

Trondhjem began in 1882 as a member of the Hauge Synod. Twenty years later a storm blew the church down. It was rebuilt but in 1952, lightning struck the church and burned it to the ground. The next year the congregation built a 400-seat brick structure. After the congregation was merged as Faith United Church, Trondhjem members began meeting in homes in 1996. The building sat vacant for a time and last November, the church was deeded back to the congregation



by the ELCA. The congregation began meeting back in their church immediately and are now served by retired Pastor Robert Fedde of Cen-

terville. (Pastor Fedde is the father of Miriam Klemme, wife of AFLC Pastor Todd Klemme.) The membership is currently about 60.

## Attention AFLBS alumni and AFLC church members — Looking to get away this summer?



Are you visiting in the Minneapolis/St. Paul area this summer? Check out our affordable housing on the AFLBS campus! Call Michele Deubner at (612) 544-9501 or evenings at (612) 545-9317. Available June 1 through August 30.

**Pastor Mark Antal**, Leeds, North Dakota, has resigned as pastor of Lebanon and North Prairie Lutheran in Leeds and Hope Lutheran in Rugby where he has served since 1993 in order to accept the call from Victory Lutheran in Park River and Grace Lutheran in Edinburg, North Dakota. He expects to begin his new ministry later this summer.



Eden Prairie, Minnesota — Pictured is Erling Emerson beside the newly installed steeple at King of Glory Lutheran. Pastor Richard Anderson serves the congregation.



Minot, North Dakota — Bethel Lutheran recently welcomed these new members. The congregation's pastor, Lloyd Quanbeck is pictured in the back row, far right.

**East Grand Forks, Minnesota** — Christ the King Church held their Easter Sunday worship service at the Empire Arts Center in downtown Grand Forks, North Dakota. The service was a community outreach with the choir and worship team singing a variety of traditional and contemporary musical numbers. The response was 315 attending the service. The average Easter atten-

dance over the past five years has been 155.

**Help Wanted:** Christ the King Free Lutheran Church is accepting applications for the full-time position of director of youth ministry. The director will be responsible for the creation, planning, coordination, implementation and administration of the congregation's ministry to ages infant to 12th grade. A college

degree and experience with youth ministry is preferred. The King's Kids Learning Center is also accepting applications for the full-time position of director of the pre-school and after-school learning center. A ministry of the congregation, the school is licensed to minister up to 40 children.

Please send cover letter and resume to: Rev. Daniel Klug, P.O. Box 645, East Grand Forks, MN 56721.

**Pastor Todd Klemme**, Metropolis, Illinois, has resigned as pastor of Faith Lutheran where he has served since 1997 in order to accept the call from Minnewaska Lutheran in Starbuck, Minnesota. He will begin his new ministry in July 1999.



Pictured are some of the pastors of the Pacific Northwest District, in attendance at a pastors' prayer retreat April 12-14. They were joined by Pastor Robert Lee, president of the AFLC. A grant from Aid Association of Lutherans, given to promote pastor retreats of this kind, was used in meeting the costs of the retreat.

## Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

### AFLC Benevolences (4 months) — January 1 - April 30, 1999

FUND	TOTAL Subsidy	REC'D IN APRIL	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	% TOTAL
General Fund . . . . .	\$234,385.00	\$27,797.86	77,692.32	33
Seminary . . . . .	110,296.00	9,705.26	42,124.91	38
Bible School . . . . .	147,674.00	14,086.49	63,450.95	43
Home Missions. . . . .	238,152.00	24,238.45	73,126.75	31
World Missions. . . . .	190,909.00	14,485.03	45,927.35	24
Capital Investment . .	14,065.00	681.74	1,856.35	13
Parish Education . . .	56,854.00	4,165.508	25,026.39	44
Church Extension . . .	21,051.00	803.89	8,057.24	38
<b>TOTALS . . . . .</b>	<b>\$1,013,386.00</b>	<b>95,964.22</b>	<b>337,262.26</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>TOTALS 1997 . . . . .</b>	<b>1,278,758.00</b>	<b>94,313.67</b>	<b>385,263.95</b>	<b>30</b>
<b>Goal 33%</b>				
Evangelism department received \$4,103.07 in April.				

## AFLC Memorials

April, 1999

### Department given to

*Given in memory of...*

#### Home Missions

*Warren Peterson*

*Pastor Merle Fagerberg*

*Bernice Adrian*

#### General Fund

*Rev. Harvey Carlson*

*Anker Harbo*

#### World Missions

*T. Raymond Knutson*

*Gertie Hughes*

*Rev. Ernest Langness*

*Eldor Strand*

#### Evangelism

*Rev. Harvey Carlson*

*Evangelist Clifford Anderson*

*Pastor Merle Fagerberg*

#### AFLBS

*Emma Afrig*

*James Fleming*

*T. Raymond Knutson*

*Rev. Ernest Langness*

*Leslie Kent*

#### AFLTS

*Elder Strand*

*Burton Boyum*

*Dorothy Torgrude*

*Margrete Fostevold*

*Emma Hovland*

#### Youth Ministries

*Katrina Jenema*



# Lessons from Columbine

**O**n April 20, lessons were learned at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado in a tragic and painful way. Two students entered the school with guns and bombs and a cruel plan to use them. When they were done 12 other students, a teacher and the shooters themselves were dead.

We wish the only knowledge gained that day had been in subjects like history, math and science. Some lessons, however, can and must be learned from this horrendous tragedy.

**Lesson one:** Human life has been tragically devalued by many in our society. One news account described the killers as “killing machines without a hint of remorse.” Inflicting pain and ending young lives seemed to be a game to them; a game they enjoyed. The lives of others, and even their own lives, mattered very little.

Each human life is a special creation of God. It is deemed to be of such value that the blood of Jesus was shed for that life. It is viewed by God as a precious jewel — even if that life is unborn, disabled, ailing, needy, quite different than us in some way — whatever the condition, a life created by God is of immeasurable worth.

**Lesson two:** Some kids feel like lonely, alienated outsiders. The shooters in Colorado were described as outcasts. They were seeking revenge on the supposed “in” crowd.

A study claims that loneliness ranks at the top of the list of issues that trouble adolescents. While teenagers may say they want privacy, they crave and need attention — and they’re not getting it. The author of “A Tribe Apart,” Patricia Hersch, profiled teens and discovered that, “Every kid I talked to at length eventually came around to saying without my asking that they wished they had more adults in their lives, especially their parents.”

Many teens don’t have a parent playing an active role in their life, so they seek someone to fill the void. They look for someone who will accept them and make them feel welcome. They want to be “in” somewhere and with someone.

They can be, and need to be “in” with Jesus.

Throughout the Gospels we see Jesus spending time with outcasts. The “in” crowd of the day complained saying, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and ‘sinners’?” Jesus answered them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repen-

tance” (Luke 5:30-32, NIV).

Jesus loves the outcasts, and so should we.

**Lesson three:** One person can make a difference. All of the sorrow, the fear, the proposed legislation, the studies, the articles, the possible changes in schools around the country — it has all been caused by the actions of just two kids.

One kid is also able to make a positive difference. Some, when asked by the shooters if they believed in God, answered, “yes,” even though they knew that answer would cost them their lives. Their courage and testimony has been broadcast around the world.

Some of the memorial services were shown live, in their entirety throughout the world by CNN. The services contained clear proclamations of the gospel along with invitations to know the same Jesus these courageous young people knew. A CNN representative commented regarding one of the services that it had possibly one of the largest viewing audiences in their history.

The bullets did not silence the testimony of these teenagers. Instead it is now being proclaimed louder than it ever was before.

**Lesson four:** God can bring good out of terrible situations. “And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him” (Romans 8:28, NIV). It doesn’t mean this is a good situation. It isn’t in any way. But God is doing something good in the midst of it.

The shooters were looking to kill Christians, and they did, but they did not defeat God. He still reigns and He is still at work. In the midst of all this, people are coming to Christ. Young people are being strengthened in their faith in Jesus.

One young person said regarding one of those who answered “yes,” a girl named Cassie Bernall, “The intent of the gunmen to kill a Christian backfired. People around the world have heard about this, the girl who died a martyr.”

**Lesson five:** Jesus is the answer. Attention has been given to the issue of young people and violence. Governmental summits have been held. Studies have been done. Books have been written. Legislation has been passed. Security has been tightened. Changes have been made. And still violence goes on.

While some of these other things maybe can and should be done, the root of the problem is spiritual. Kids need Jesus. They long for hope. They want to know they are loved. They have needs that can only be met by Christ. “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved” (Acts 4:12, NIV).

— **Pastor Craig Johnson**

**“Each human  
life is a  
special  
creation of  
God.”**



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SOMETHING TO SHARE

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## Pre-prayed

**E**very house we have lived in has been located on a curved street. Our first home was nestled amidst towering fir and cedar trees on a sharply curved road in Lake Stevens, Washington. It was a real house. No more apartments, duplexes or funeral home flats. At last, we could make noise if we wanted to! I was excited about the many "firsts" that accompanied our move to Washington: our first church, our first child and our first neighborhood.

I baked cookies and pies to aid in meeting the neighbors, but encountered obstacles: tall fences at one place, a virtual moat to cross at another, and a German Shepherd who backed us up against the garage door. Though I was eager to be a witness for Christ in my neighborhood, I was frustrated at every attempt. It should have been no surprise. I was going out with my winsome friendliness and in my own strength.

The challenging solution came through a simple devotional book which quoted, "Talk to God about men before you talk to men about God."

Of course! I drew up my prayer list of several neighbors and began to pray for them by name. It was my mini-conception of praying-around-the-world, focusing on each individual who lived on our curved

street. As I began to pre-pray for my neighbors, I laid aside all of my plans and witnessing techniques, and purposed only to be open to the Lord myself.

I became so enthralled and interested in praying that I can't even remember how it happened that my moat-neighbor allowed me to lead a Bible study/coffee in her home. Before I realized it, the dentist's wife had become a believer. The Holy Spirit was doing an amazing work, and I continued to pray.

Prayer is the indispensable preparation for sharing my faith. The Bible says, "Devote yourselves to prayer, keeping alert in it with an attitude of thanksgiving ... that God may open to us a door for the word, so that we may speak forth the mystery of Christ" (Colossians 4:2-3). I believe the Holy Spirit works in three ways when I start with a prayer list.

First, He prepares my neighbor, working up the soil of her heart to a consistency that is ready for the seed of the gospel. Events take place in her life that create a longing in her soul. She becomes receptive.

Second, He arranges opportunities. He opens doors. The circumstances of her life coincide with the circumstances in my life. The timing fits together uniquely as only God can design.

Third, perhaps the most impor-

tant, He prepares **me** in a spirit of readiness, nourishing my heart with just the right devotional material for the need ahead, implanting a particular Bible verse, or fostering within me the need of a daily attitude of love for others. He causes me to be alert to the opportunity He has arranged, and seemingly without effort, I may walk through the door and begin to "speak forth" the gospel.

I dare not "go, ye," or "speak forth," without the initial groundwork of prayer. Thanksgiving becomes a natural attitude, for it is so obvious that Jesus does it all in spite of my winsome friendliness! Now I must close these thoughts, for the Holy Spirit has nudged me to share my fresh chocolate-chip cookies with my new "pre-prayed-for" neighbor around the curve of Connor Trail.



— by Jeannie Brandt  
*Abiding Savior Lutheran  
Sioux Falls, South Dakota*