
The Lutheran AMBASSADOR

June 9, 1998

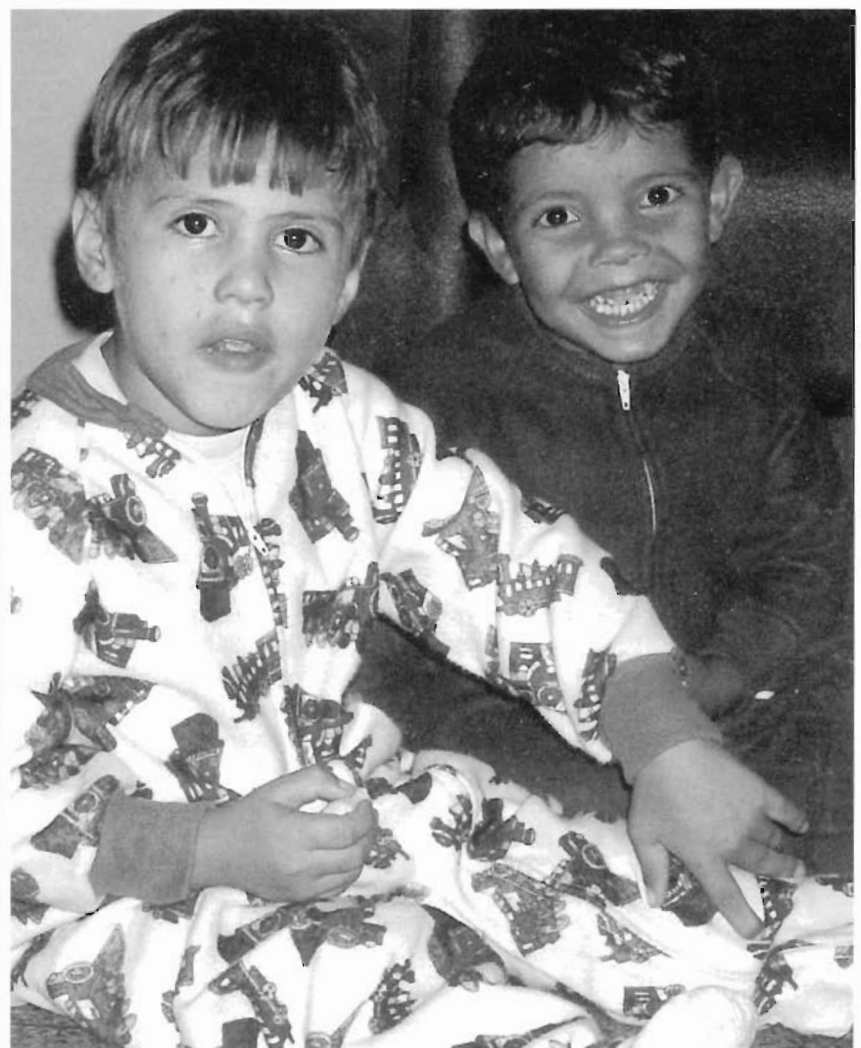
Hope for
troubled youth

Fear not,
young parent

Teach the
children well

Missions update
AFLBS
Summer teams

PROTECTING
the precious ones



THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

June 9, 1998
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CONTENTS

Hope for troubled youth	p. 4
Teach the children well	p. 6
Looking for a youth worker?	p. 9
Did you say you are too small?	p. 10

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AN ENCOURAGING WORD

God's healing balm

The closing words of James are to be an encouragement to all. James wrote, "Is any one of you in trouble? He should pray. Is anyone happy? Let him sing songs of praise" (5:13).

In the hymn *What a Friend we have in Jesus*, Joseph Scriven was correct when he wrote: "Have we trials and temptations, is there trouble anywhere? We should never be discouraged, take it to the Lord in prayer." Are you having a wonderful day? Then you are encouraged to sing praises. At all times, acknowledge God whether in prayer or praise.

In the next verse, James asks, "Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord." What are we to do when we are sick? Call upon the elders/pastor of the church for prayer. Prayer changes things!

But how are we to understand the "anointing him with oil"? There are two words in the Greek for anointing. *Chrio* is the root word for "Christ" and "Christian" which means *anointed One / anointed ones*. This word used in a religious sense only appears five times.

The second Greek word is *aleipho* which is used many times in the New Testament such as in Matthew 6:17, "But when you fast, put oil on your head and wash your face." Here it simply means to put oil on your hair for appearance purposes. One commentator views *aleipho* as the mundane word, whereas, *chrio* is the sacred and religious word. It is *aleipho* that James used, which means to rub with oil as a common practice to sooth the body as a form of medicine. James is saying minister to the body and soul. Receive medical and spiritual help.

We practice proper balance by caring for both the body and soul.

As needed, we go to doctors and hospitals and we remember to pray for the sick. Many of us are involved in prayer chains. Remember, a chain is only as strong as the weakest link. If involved in this vital ministry, please be sure to keep the message going until the last person has been called.

Does verse 15 mean that no Christian will remain sick or not die? "And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven." As mentioned earlier in James, it still remains in the hands of the Lord. We are to remember to pray, "if the Lord wills." Faith trusts the Lord to accomplish His purposes according to His plan and for His glory.

At times, sin is the culprit of our sickness. James wrote, "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective." A great deal of sickness is based upon unhealed hurts, unresolved anger, bitterness, resentment. These emotions fill the soul, which affects the whole person — body, soul and spirit. By not dealing with sin, we become miserable. What blessed relief and healing comes when we practice forgiveness according to James and Paul in Ephesians 4:26-31.



— **Pastor Jerry Peterson**
First Lutheran Church
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

sound bites

The necessity for providing significant adult models for young people cannot be oversold. Make certain your kids have the

1 chance to be around adult Christians who are making every effort to live out their faith — which does not mean that adults must be perfect Christians to be exemplary models and mentors. ... God finds ways to use all of us imperfect ones.

— Bill McNabb

Fatherlessness is now approaching parity with fatherhood as a defining feature of American childhood. Tonight, more than one-third of our nation's children will go to sleep in homes in which

4 their fathers do not live. Before they reach age 18, more than half of our nation's children are likely to spend at least a significant portion of their childhood living apart from their fathers. Never before in our nation's history have so many children been voluntarily abandoned by their fathers.

— David Blankenhorn

2 Home should be a retreat to which a son or daughter can return in triumph or defeat, in victory or disgrace, and know they will be loved.

— Author unknown

If our goal is to reach out and touch teenagers with the gospel of Christ, we can do no less than our master. We need to get out among kids, go where they go, and put ourselves in situations in which we can build relationships with them.

— Duffy Robbins

The greatest delusion is to suppose that our children will be devout Christians simply because their parents have been, or that any of them will enter into the Christian faith in any other

way than through their parents' deep travail of prayer and faith.

— James Dobson

6 The man who lets his children take second place to his work will live to regret it.

— Author unknown

Hope for troubled youth

God helped me through my struggles, and He can help others too

— *Dr. Renee Oscarson*
Brookings, South Dakota

“When did you drop out of school?” asked a student who was in my office to tell me she was withdrawing from the university. Several months earlier when encouraging her to seek help, I mentioned to her that I, too, had left college for a time.

During the years I have been teaching, I have met many students who have experienced emotional struggles, including several who have needed to withdraw in the middle of the term. Each of these students shared one characteristic: he or she felt different from everyone else.

We do not hand out awards for getting out of bed, getting dressed, and going out in public. Yet for me, no academic degree was as difficult as minimal functioning during the worst times of depression. Some students put forth more effort to show up for class once a month than others do who are regularly in class. Maybe I will start granting Ph.D.s to certain students who withdraw from school — a *Pretty heroic Decision*.

Christian youth are not immune to severe emotional stresses. Troubled youth who have tasted the joy of the Lord may even experience more guilt and confusion than their unbelieving peers as they question their own relationship with God. When the limited experience of youth is combined with human suffering, the pain may seem unbearable.

How can we, as part of the Body of Christ, reach out in friendship to help bear the burdens of youth and young adults who are in such deep pain? My experiences as a struggling college student taught me that one of the best ways to help a young person who is troubled is to simply be there, to give the gift of my presence. Although the concept of being with someone seems simple, people who are not careful may increase rather than relieve pain. The intended helpfulness of some Christians hurt me. Many others eased my burden and helped to strengthen my faith.

As a college senior, I was diagnosed with depression. Every minute, I fought a battle to function. By the time I moved to Minot, North Dakota, for a required student practicum, I was fighting a seemingly losing battle. Moreover, after a summer job at a federal psychiatric hospital, I was terrified of being hospitalized. I do not remember portions of the early 1980s. I do remember, however, talking to Pastor Terry Olson, who was serving the AFLC congregation in Minot at the time I was completing my practicum. He told me God would be with me in the hospital. His reminder of God's promise to be with me is one of the most significant things anyone has ever said to me. His words gave me the courage to admit myself to the hospital a few weeks after graduation.

Perhaps what Pastor Olson did not say was equally important. He did not

make promises he could not keep. For example, he didn't say I would be better after graduation or that I would not be hospitalized. Nor did he attempt to "fix" me. Most troubled young people who I have worked with, have struggled for months before letting anyone know of their problem. Telling them to "cheer up" or discipline themselves may cause further withdrawal. To offer easy answers may be insulting and holds out false hope.

We can offer true hope — hope found in Jesus Christ. We have been promised that God "himself will restore (us) and make (us) strong, firm, and steadfast" (I Peter 5:10).

Even Christians may feel hopeless. We can have hope for these young people, however, by believing that God can work in their lives. One factor that differentiates youth at risk who thrive from those who do not, is whether they have someone who believes in them. Our belief that troubled adolescents have potential may be just what they need to "hang on" and remain faithful to God. There was a time when my own perceptions were so distorted I had to trust the beliefs of other Christians and promises of mental health professionals in order to face life.

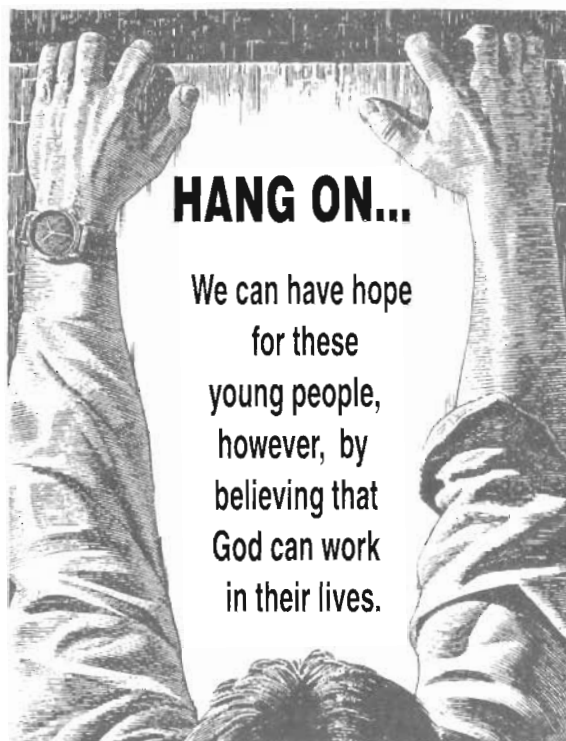
In reaching out to troubled young people, our attitudes are as important, if not more important, than knowledge or behavior.

When I withdrew from school while working toward a master's degree, I also quit a part-time job on campus. After being discharged from a long hospitalization, I was introduced to people who asked, "What do you do?"

I responded, "Nothing!"

Doing nothing taught me that my worth is in Christ, not in doing. I also understood more clearly that I can do nothing to earn God's favor (Ephesians 2:8-9). I have messed up! The Bible says that about each of us. Troubled youth already feel as if they are worse than or different from others. When I recognize that "God, who is rich in mercy, made (me) alive with Christ even when (I was) dead in transgressions" (Ephesians 2:4-5), I am less likely to come across as better than those who are hurting.

Despite my own experiences and some training in working with youth at risk, I cannot completely understand another person's hurts. When Pastor Rob Lewis visited me during my first hospitalization for depression, I had been a college student who did not regularly go home on weekends, and we did not know each other well. When he visited me in the hospital, he acknowledged that he was not sure what to do or say, and he lis-



tened. I talked! Because he listened, my burden was lightened.

The best we can do for troubled youth is to pray, pray, and then pray more. However, prayer requests can be a mechanism for sharing information. In the church, trust is sometimes betrayed through sharing of prayer requests about others. (How much easier it is to request prayer for someone else's struggles than our own!) When Pastor Lewis visited me in the hospital, he asked permission to share with Pat, his wife, what I had told him so that they could pray for me. I knew Christians were praying for me, but having someone ask permission to share a prayer request was a new experience. My level of trust skyrocketed!

Although our abilities to understand the pain of others are limited, there is One who understands completely. "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:15-16). The Great Physician mends broken lives. We can confidently ask Him for wisdom in seeking to be agents of His healing in the lives of troubled youth. We have the privilege of praying for young people.

I am living proof that God answers those prayers.



Careful, it's still wet!

— John Hite
Emmaus Lutheran
Bloomington,
Minnesota

Averagetown, U.S.A. A local city worker is charged with the task of installing a new sidewalk. The location is a growing subdivision on the north side of town. Upon arriving he evaluates the site and unloads the needed tools. He starts his work by leveling the earth, turning it into a smooth compact surface on which to build. The sidewalk forms are completely installed by the noon whistle. These will act as the boundaries for the wet concrete.

After a quick trip through the McDonald's drive-through, our man is back at work. He carefully mixes the cement with just the right amounts of sand, gravel and water. He knows that the wrong amounts will create a weak sidewalk. The walkway is all shaped and formed by the time the sun starts to set. It's a job well done.

Arriving the next morning, he is filled with horror to discover foot and hand prints decorating his walkway. With the shake of his head the realization sinks in that he forgot to put up a barrier. It was left unprotected and unwatched during its critical period.

As parents, God has given us wet

Helping children to form well

cement in the form of children. He has given us the privilege of being subcontractors to the master builder. He wants us to shape and smooth their lives until they are "dry" enough to stand on their own. Realizing this should cause us to drop to our knees asking for forgiveness, guidance and wisdom.

One issue we face as parents is violence. It affects our lives and our children's. Everyday the news is filled with hateful acts. Teens shooting classmates, drive-by shootings, child abuse and government sponsored violence are lead stories on the five o'clock news.

What tools do we have to teach our children about violence? How should they deal with it? How do we help them not to lead lives that become battered and bruised? Our desire is to model, instruct and explain in a manner that will not leave disfiguring marks on their lives.

Build a solid base.

The definition of violence I am using, is any physical act or forceful action, triggered by our sinful nature, against another. Physically stopping a rapist from acting would be forceful action, but not violence. Since the fall of man we see story after story

An excerpt from *A father for all seasons*

by Bob Welch

We teach our children even when we don't think school is in session. In the father-son relationship, summer vacation and spring break do not exist. We teach every minute. We teach

when they see us in action, hear our words, listen to our prayers, feel our frustrations.

Too often, we think our lessons are the sit-down kind, the planned-out kind, the sweaty-palmed kind while sitting on a rock beside a river. And they are. But our lessons are also how we react as a Little League coach when the ump blows a call, and how we treat our wives after we've both had rugged days at work, and what we say when we see a homeless man on the street, and what we do when the clerk accidentally gives us a dollar too much change.

Sometimes our lessons are good ones. Like everyone, I have racial prejudices I need to frequently confront. But I hope my sons — without me saying a word — have become more color-blind as they've seen the

photos of their mother cleaning scabies off Haitian babies and by our attending a church with a black pastor and linking arms with a black ministry in rural Mississippi.

Sometimes my lessons are the wrong kind. As a boy, what hurt so deeply was to hear my mother and father fight; though it wasn't a common scene, the most perfect day could turn blustery cold when their relationship iced up. Without intending to, I've taught a few similarly chilly lessons to my own sons.

Our sons are sponges, quietly soaking up all we say and do. And we're not the only teacher in the classroom. Our culture is sending some messages that reinforce our lessons and others that sabotage them: Buy this. Wear that. Do this. Do that.

If, as father-teachers, our goal is to turn our sons into clones of ourselves, we're shooting far too low. We're assuming a perfection in us that's reserved for Him. Better to teach our sons the selfless character of Christ than the flawed character of ourselves. And if, as earthly fathers, we mirror our heavenly Father, wonderful; the angels will rejoice. But if we don't, expect a visit

Teach
the
children
well

in the midst of a violent world

of man's sinful violence. It began with Cain raising his hand against Abel and continues today. When you see a one-year-old ball up his fist to strike at a sibling, you are witnessing violence.

As parents we need to understand and believe that the self-centered, violent nature that lives within each of us can only be overcome by a personal commitment to Jesus Christ. Jesus needs to deal with our nature before we can help our children deal with theirs and others. Second, in order for our children to "dry" strong and pure, they need a solid, immovable base found in Jesus Christ.

Once Jesus is living within our hearts and our children's lives, we need to ask a few questions. Do we like to watch violence on TV? How do we deal with it? Have we become desensitized to acts of cruelty and disrespect? If this is the pattern we are modeling for our children, they will grow up to accept violence. They will view it as normal and a method of solving conflict. After all, most television shows and movies end with the hero "getting even" or "taking revenge" on his enemy.

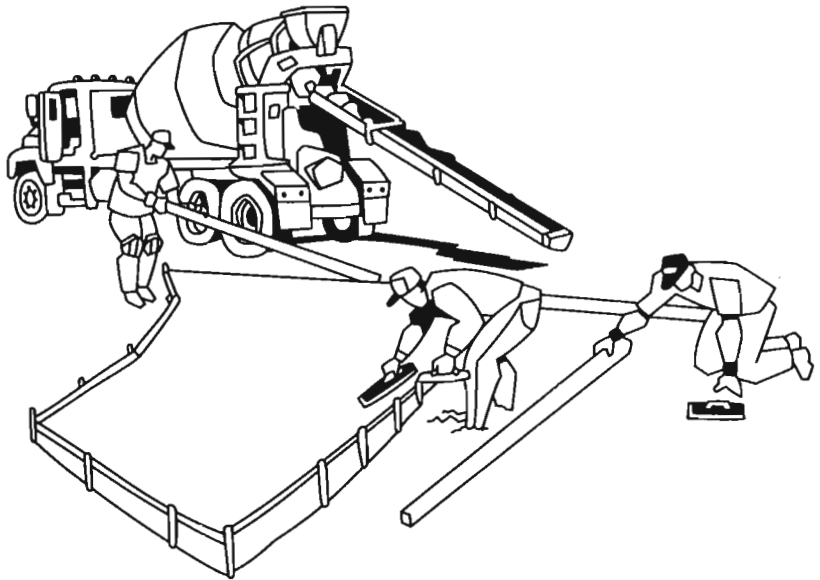
Set boundaries.

Forms are placed and anchored in the base to keep the cement from flowing in all

from the mockingbird, who will constantly remind us what we're passing on.

We should not teach our sons with flash cards that do nothing but embed in their minds memorized facts. Instead, we should teach our sons to seek wisdom from the Word. We should teach them less calculation and more character. We should teach them not to blindly follow the world, but to faithfully follow the truth.

Editor's note: In *A father for all seasons*, author Bob Welch writes as one in transition. His father died in 1996 and his oldest son recently moved away from home to attend college. He has experienced the various seasons of being a son and a father. In this book he writes from his heart regarding those seasons with engaging and enjoyable stories and encouraging insights, pointing us to the heavenly Father and His Son. It would make for an excellent Father's Day gift for someone no matter what season of life he is in. It was published in 1998 by Harvest House Publishers of Eugene, Oregon.



directions without a purpose. They also allow the mason to work on shaping and smoothing the finish without having to spend his time just keeping it in place.

Children need boundaries. My wife and I have a willful eighteen-month-old who hits whenever he gets angry or doesn't get his way. If we were to allow that to continue, he would learn (for we would teach him by our inaction) that violence is a way to solve conflicts. He would never learn to deal with his anger or to turn the other cheek as Jesus taught. Boundaries must be set by us and understood by him so that character development in him might take place.

Put up barriers.

Boundaries are placed to keep the child's nature in check. Barriers are constructed to keep things away, in this case violence. Children should not be left alone to learn about violence through TV, newspapers or other children. With God's help, we as parents need to remove or limit the intake of violence. This way we can determine what is age appropriate and what is not. We can take time to explain news stories or even Bible stories from a Christian world view (something the newspaper will not give). When they are confronted with violence, they will then know how to respond.

If we do nothing and allow society to raise our children, they will be taught two things about violence: First, that it is a normal and accepted means to resolve problems. Secondly, that individual human life has little value. Once these are accepted, the floodgate is open for any kind of chaos.

Now is the time to commit your work to the Lord, grab your tools, put up forms, and start to shape your concrete. Remember it will dry slowly, so give it lots of time and attention.



An open letter to our children

Dear Phil, Beth, David and Becky,

God has been exceedingly good to us. Your Dad and I love you and we know that you love us. You are a blessing to us and to others as well.

When you were small, I was at times impatient with you. I fussed over clutter, finger prints on clean window panes and mud tracked in on the freshly-waxed linoleum, not realizing how quickly the years would pass and you would be gone.

I cringe when I read of how yelling at children causes just as much damage as physical abuse. I just read somewhere that "ninety percent of the friction of daily life is caused by the wrong tone of voice." We have talked about the importance of speaking as courteously and kindly to our children as to anyone else.

I have a copy of "A Child's Advice to His Parents." I'll quote: "My feelings are tender. Please be sensitive to my needs. Treat me as you would like to be treated. I am a special gift from God. Treasure me as God intended, holding me accountable for my actions, giving me guidelines to live by, and disciplining me in a loving manner."

I am thankful that all of you were "color blind." Growing up in Bolivia contributed to that of course. Undoubtedly you will or have already passed that virtue on to your children.

How I enjoyed reading to you and am happy that all of your children love books — reading them and having them read aloud. And we listened to music. Remember the record player when we lived in La Paz and played "Only A Boy Named David"? That

FEAR not, young parent

— Margaret Kittleson
Helmar Lutheran
Newark, Illinois

was a favorite when you were small, and I know you still enjoy good music.

You are generous and you love to give of your means, your time and your love. Generosity is a good virtue to instill in children. Modeling is the best way to teach.

You enjoyed going to Bible camp and now your children do also. On the back of one of our Sunday bulletins there was this quote from one who brings his church's youth to the ARC: "One week of camp is comparable to one year of Sunday school."

I don't recall we overemphasized good grades while you were in school and I know you don't pressure your children unreasonably either.

Remember Friday nights? They were family nights. Besides playing games you were allowed to go to the little store around the corner and buy soda pop as a special treat.

May God help you to make time to play together, pray together and eat together. Mealtimes should be happy times with plenty of laughter, which aids digestion, by the way.

Of course time for God and His Word is a priority. Modeling this will impact your children and help create in them a thirst for God and His Word.

It has been said that when children are small you have small problems but when they are big you have big problems. Don't believe it! Ask God for wisdom Who gives liberally (James 1:5).

Encourage Scripture memorization and choosing a life verse or motto. Philippians 4:8 is a great one.

Our God is a great God! Never give up hope or give in to despair.

Love,
Mom



Looking for a youth worker?

Ring, Ring.

"Hello, AFLC Youth Ministries. Pastor Kevin Olson speaking."

"Hello, our church would like a youth worker."

"Ok, could you give me a little more information about your need?"

"Sure, we are looking for someone to head up our Sunday school, oversee a Wednesday night children's ministry, and run our junior and senior high youth program. We have some youth that are very wild and need strong discipline and others that are on the fringes that need to be drawn in. My child needs a more in-depth Bible study, you know, skip the "fun" stuff and get right to the meat of the lesson. We would like someone that is young enough to relate to the youth, but old enough to carry the responsibilities of any problems that arise. Last, we need someone who has good business sense and can raise the money for our youth to go to the youth convention. By the way, Pastor Olson, do you think this should be a paid position?"

People have many different expectations of youth workers. Everyone seems to have their own idea of what a youth worker is suppose to do and how they are to do it. It may be impossible to fulfill every expectation, but first some simple evaluation will help set your course and allow an opportunity for you to seek the Lord for direction.

Why are we doing youth ministry?

This is a great opportunity to seek the Lord in prayer. Ask Him if this is a ministry that your church should expand. Is your emphasis: Leading youth who don't know Jesus into a new relationship with Him? Challenging those who are already Christians to live for Him? Training your youth to reach their peers for Christ?

Who are we trying to reach?

Is the focus of your youth ministry to those within the church, the friends of those in the church, or all of the unchurched youth in your community? Is your target a younger or an older group?

Once you recognize who you are trying to reach then you can ask, How are we going to reach them? You will have to use different methods to reach different types of people. The uninterested, the resistive, the content,

the seeker and the committed will all respond to different approaches.

The message of the gospel remains the same, but the method to reach the type of youth in your town must be unique to their needs. It is essential to seek the Lord for His direction for your ministry, because where He leads, He always provides.

The second step is to consider how to best fill the needed leadership for the ministry that the Lord puts before you.

Some churches function well with volunteer youth workers, especially if there are several adults who see the need and are willing to invest their lives in the lives of the youth from the community. Although the youth ministry will be limited to the amount of time the people are willing to invest, when several people share the planning the result can be multiplied.

The key to effective youth ministry is relationships. The church that has three volunteer youth workers will have three times as many significant relationships as the church with one. The church that is able to pay for a part-time youth worker will have a more focused and consistent ministry than the church with only volunteer help. Someone that can spend more time in the ministry can make relationships beyond those within the church. The full-time youth worker can do long-term planning, organization, goal setting, and community outreach that is difficult without a significant time commitment.

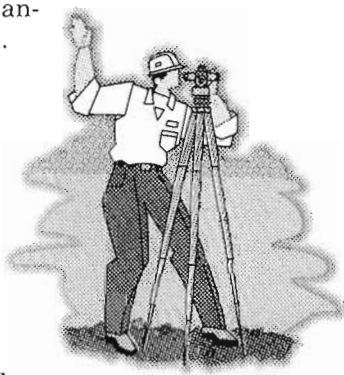
The third step is finding the person that would best fit the need that the Lord has put before you. One youth worker asked if he was qualified to do youth ministry. I told him that he wasn't, and neither is anyone. The youth worker that sees his or her dependence on the Lord is the one that can be most effective. The Lord is the only one that can make a person sufficient for the task. The entire congregation must get behind their leaders in prayer.

Several resource pools can be considered as you look for someone to lead the youth ministry.

- Those within the church. These people are often the most effective because their commitment tends to be long term and



— **Pastor Kevin Olson**
AFLC Youth
Ministries Director



(continued on next page)



Did you say you are too **SMALL?**

— *Pastor Tim Johnson
with the BYG advisors
Beltrami, Minnesota*

We're small. Beltrami, Minnesota, boasts of its population of 137 and a mall containing a cafe, gas station, post office, and hair salon. And there's the elevator across the highway.

This farming community sends its school children to Fertile (population 850), twelve miles away. However, we do have a community youth group averaging around 15 youth

at our meetings.

The Beltrami Youth Group (BYG) began in the early 1970s with two Lutheran and one Methodist congregations participating. When Resurrection Free Lutheran Church was born in 1988, we inherited BYG since the volunteer youth advisors, Donovan and Dawn Edlund, were now a part of the new church. The other congregations did not attempt to have their own youth groups, so Resurrection decided to continue the BYG as opposed to starting their own. At times numbers were as low as four youth, but the Edlunds faithfully continued on as advisors. They were convinced the ministry was too important to let die.

Over the last ten years, the youth group has experienced an average meeting attendance of as many as 30 youth and has become a multi-community group from the towns of Ada, Crookston and Fertile (some 20 miles away). This includes three school districts. Perhaps more amazing than the group's dynamics and perseverance is the fact that the Edlunds are still youth advisors — 11 years and counting.

When asked why they keep on keeping on, Donovan said: "We just feel called to do it. And our desire to share the gospel with the youth has grown over the years."

YOUTH WORKER

there is much training available to help them get ready.

- Bible school students or graduates. We are very fortunate to have a two-year Bible training opportunity and students that sense a call into ministry. These students are in high demand and often feel pulled between team ministry, parish ministry, financial constraints, and home.

- District youth event counselors. They have already had some experience and often they are familiar with the area.

- Local Christian campus ministries, Tent-makers, and Sonlife. All train youth workers and each one has their own strengths.

There have been a growing number of churches that see youth ministry as a vital part of their church's responsibility within their community. We have so many more churches that do not have any active youth program. Please pray that every young person in the AFLC would have a youth group to help them grow in Jesus. Also, please consider financially supporting AFLC Youth Ministries so that these efforts to reach youth can continue.



What I have

Youth work is fun. It has always been the most enjoyable part of my ministry. Over the years, God has used parents, teens, His Word, and my mistakes to teach me several principles of youth ministry. Here they are in a nutshell.

1. Assisting Parents. The role of the youth worker is to assist parents in raising godly teens. A youth worker must be receptive to the goals and concerns of parents. He will be most effective when he is working with them, not against them. The worker is to encourage teens to obey God's command to honor their father and mother.

2. Word-Centered. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Romans 10:17). As with any other ministry, youth ministry must be based on the Bible. Our primary youth activity is a weekly Bible study. I often let the youth choose which book we will study.

3. Prayer-Centered. Spending time in prayer together gives youth a new appreciation for the importance of spending time with the Lord. Group intercessory prayer

Four years ago Dennis and Dina Hanson, also from Resurrection Free Lutheran, answered the call to work with the Edlunds. Now we refer to Donovan, Dawn, Dennis and Dina as the four "Ds." Both couples have a sincere desire for the youth to personally know Jesus as their Savior. They keep sharing the salvation message even if many of the youth are from Christian families. They do not want to assume the teens are saved, rather they want to know they are saved. Another conviction of the advisors is to see the youth apply God's Word to their lives so they can grow as Christians. And finally, they seek to encourage the youth to have Christian fellowship with one another.

The BYG meets twice a month with occasional special activities such as retreats, canoe trips, sporting events, Christian concerts, etc. A typical meeting includes a fun time (usually a funny game), a time of Bible study (often led by one of the advisors), open prayer, and of course, fellowship throughout. The meetings last no longer than an hour and a half with no special program or hype; just a sincerity in the Lord exhibited by the advisors and caught by the youth.

Recently our congregation sent a team of six on a mission trip to Guatemala. Two teens experienced positive changes in their

spiritual lives as did the adults. Now in June, we'll send six more people on a mission trip to Costa Rica. This team consists of nearly all youth as the oldest is 21. These young people are going because they believe God is calling them to go. The congregation believes God will bless such a willing and obedient spirit. They too will come back changed. Time will tell how this will affect BYG and the families and congregations. It's an exciting time for our small town!

Without a doubt, at times the advisors were ready to give up. But they have seen teens accept the Lord, heard of their witness in school, felt their hunger for the Word of God, and rejoiced in seeing them live for Christ and marry Christian spouses. These are eternal changes!

Ministry to youth is worth the effort. No town or church is too small. Have you given the Lord an opportunity to grow a youth group in your congregation?



learned about working with youth

also opens their eyes to the needs of the congregation and the community. We have seen God do amazing things in answer to the prayers of our youth. For example, our youth prayed that God would close an immoral business in our town. The business was closed shortly after and one of the former employees came to the Lord through our door-to-door ministry.

4. Age Integration. All ages of youth from confirmation up are welcome at our youth group. The younger teens learn from the example of their elders. Older youth realize their responsibility to set a good example and develop their leadership skills.

5. Absence of Trendiness. Jesus said we are to be in the world, but not of it. Trendy ministry is following the ways and wisdom of man and brings confusion. The vision and direction for the youth worker must come from God's Word.

6. Fellowship-Oriented. Our youth are free to be themselves and interact with everyone at our youth functions because dating is discouraged. Although it may be hard to imag-

ine, in view of the strong emphasis placed on dating by our culture, our young people have enjoyed this freedom. There is no pressure to impress someone of the opposite sex.

7. Ministry-Oriented. The Bible says it is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth. The focus of our youth group is ministry, not fun. Although we have a good time together, fun is not our primary objective. Our congregation believes the youth should learn to minister when they are young. When they are older they will not be a mission field, but will be on the mission field. Our youth serve both as a group and as individuals. The group ministry activities include visiting nursing homes, doing yard work for church members, and traveling to other churches to conduct outreach Vacation Bible Schools.

Individually, our youth help with ushering, teaching Sunday school, singing in the choir, playing in the orchestra, and door-to-door evangelism. They are learning by the grace of God to minister to a world that needs to know and trust in our Saviour, Jesus Christ.

*—Pastor Gerald Gettis
Vernon,
British Columbia*



A call to persevere

From Hebrews 10:22-25

As I write this I am weary and my heart is heavy. My husband is on the West Coast, and I feel a little stretched. My "hold on the hope" of verse 23 seems rather weak. "Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful." The adjective "unswervingly" does not describe my condition today.

When we began this study in Hebrews in our Women's Missionary Federation, I was reminded that this book was written to struggling Christians. Today I find myself in this category — perhaps, tomorrow

God is at work in Eastern Europe

We are overjoyed at the privilege of seeing God at work in the country of Poland. We glorify Him for His faithfulness. He is just about to fulfill the vision of a Bible school and He is merciful to use us in His plan. The process of rebuilding an older structure to use for a school should be finished by September. Due to a smaller budget, we had to fit the dorm, offices, staff apartment, classrooms and the dining hall in the old building. We still hope that within a few years a new addition will be built.

The Lord has provided Bible teachers for our school. Tim will be teaching mainly Old Testament classes and I will translate for him. We will also be involved in other aspects of student ministry.

We thank God for providing a new apartment for us in Cesky Tesin. It is difficult to find apartments in the Czech Republic.

We are returning to the States on June 14 to begin our summer furlough. We hope to see most, if not all, of our supporters then. You may contact us at the East European Missions Network office at (612) 881-3554.

—Tim and Renata Hinrichs
Cesky Tesin, Czech Republic

Laurie Nash
Solid Rock Lutheran
Osseo, Minnesota

you will find yourself there. We all struggle at times. But today several instructions caught my eye as I prayerfully looked at these verses.

Instruction #1

Draw near to God! The author tells these struggling Hebrew Christians they can draw near to God. They can do so in confidence because they have a great high priest, Jesus. My mind remembers a previous lesson and the verses used from Hebrews 4:15-16. This is a very special High Priest. He sympathizes with my weakness. He understands my circumstances. He lived here for some thirty years. Because of this, I can draw near to God and find cleansing, compassion, mercy and grace in times of need — yes, in my struggles.

Instruction #2

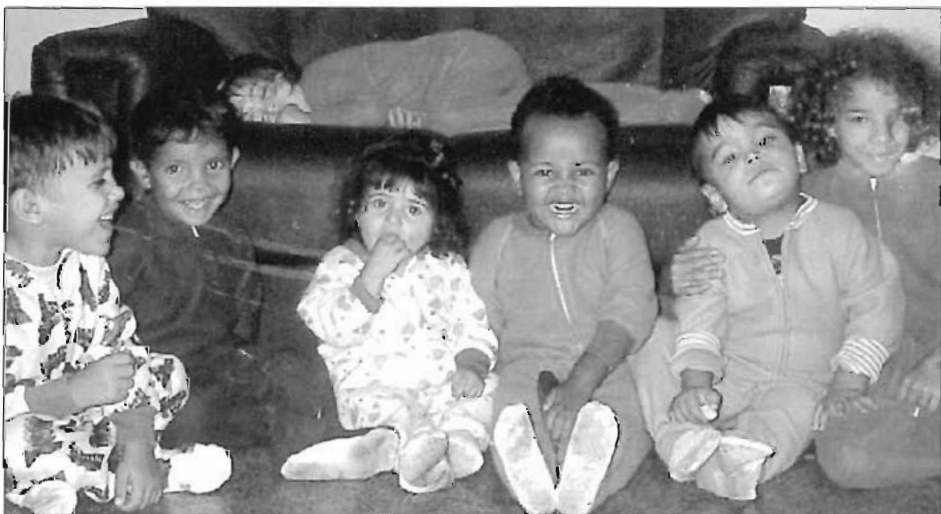
Hold unswervingly to the hope we profess. How? The author finishes the verse, "For He who promised is faithful." He is our focus. He is faithful! I am fickle, but His promises and His Word are steadfast and sure. They undergird my hope. In

my struggles, my focus needs to turn from myself to a faithful God and His promises. Consider this hope: salvation, heaven, a mansion, meeting Jesus Himself. Hold on!

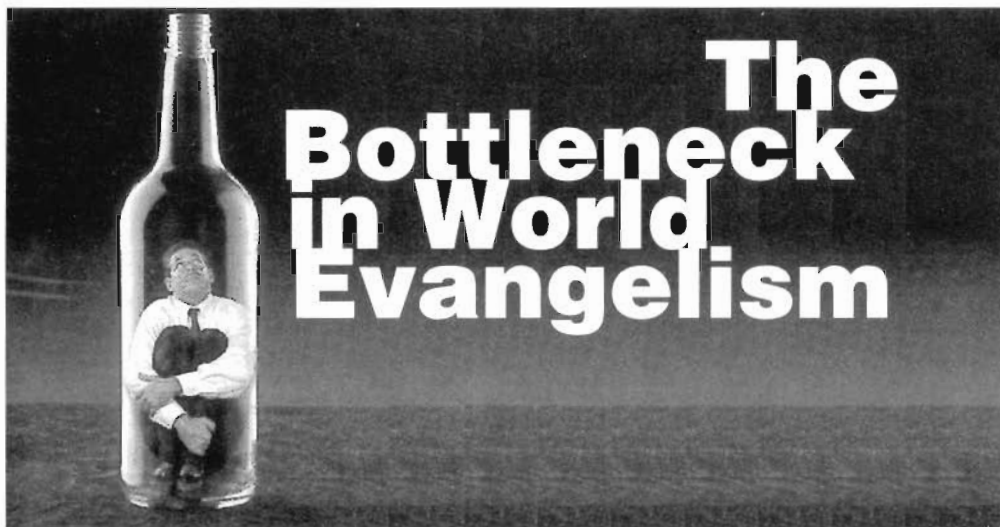
Instruction #3

Encourage one another, spur one another on. God understands me and knows my need for a support system. This comes from my Christian brothers and sisters in the Lord — my church. This same God who knows me, clearly instructs me to remain committed to this support system. God realizes that in my struggles, I am tempted to "let go" of my hold and pull away from this support. This is not the time to neglect coming together in this assembly of support. Here I am to encourage and be encouraged, to watch over another and be watched over and to love and be loved. My church is a means of perseverance.

The phone just interrupted my work on this article. After a few minutes of conversation, the caller asked if I am tired or discouraged. She listened and then encouraged. Later at a Bible study which I almost didn't go to, someone prays for me. My church, His support system for me, has ministered to me again.



The Miriam Infant Home in Campo Mourão, Brazil, currently has twelve children ages nine months to 12 years, with many three-year-olds. Cooler nights have brought out the sleepers sent to the home by many AFLC friends in the States. Missionary Sonja Dahl wrote, "Thank you for the overwhelming response to the need for sleepers."



— Dr. Francis Monseth
FLS Dean

We are living in a time of unprecedented opportunity in missions around the world. Doors that have been closed to the gospel have miraculously opened. People who have been starved for the gospel for so long are waiting for someone to share with them the Bread of Life.

While many are responding to God's call and going out to the whitened fields of spiritual harvest, there are multitudes who remain unreached and untouched.

What is the problem? Where is the bottleneck? Let me suggest two reasons why so many are not hearing the precious gospel of Christ.

1. It's not men but money.

Missionary work involves two groups of people (Romans 10:14-15) — the *givers* and the *senders*. To suggest that everybody ought to be a foreign missionary is just as foolish as to say everyone should be in the army and sent overseas during a war.

There needs to be a supply line at home. Paul was sent by the church at Antioch and was supported by many other congregations. Not all are called to the "front lines" of the battle. Rather, some are called to maintain the supply at home where there may not be as much glory or adventure.

Mission work is simply not being done! Millions of people have not seen their first mission and calling! Do we lack would-be "goers" or is it a lack of "senders"? I believe the greatest need is for a whole new company of support personnel at home.

Our Bible school graduates about fifty people this year. Many of them would like to go to the mission field. The doors are opening to our AFLC in new fields besides our great opportunities in Brazil, Mexico and India. Eastern Europe, Portugal, Mozambique, Angola, Tanzania, and other places are asking us to "come over and help." The Macedonian call is real.

May we be among those who will say to our young people as they respond to God's call. "We'll send you to the field! We'll stand behind you in prayer and financial support! We'll write letters of encouragement. We won't forget you."

2. It's not our tithe but our total.

As God calls us to stand in the gap as supporters of mission work around the world, He does not ask us for our tithe but for our total. There is nothing wrong with tithing. If some Christians did not tithe, they would give practically nothing to the work of God. However, the tithe was simply a minimum percentage set by God for the Jews. The tithe was by no means the ideal of giving even in

the Old Testament days. The tithe was owed to God as a matter of obligation.

In the New Testament, the principle is obviously changed. Not only does the tithe belong to God, but also everything a believer possesses (Romans 12:1-2). If our body is the property of God, then everything that is in our possession in reality belongs to God (I Corinthians 6:19-20).

In I Corinthians 4:2, Paul describes the believers as "stewards." A steward is never the owner. The property and the money he may have belongs to his Master.

I believe God is calling us to a new realization of our stewardship as it relates to the great cause of world evangelization. The doors of opportunity are open. People are stepping forward in obedience to the Great Commission. The urgent question is this: will the rest of us who profess Christ as our Savior, give to Him our all in unselfish and sacrificial support of His great plan for His Church? May God enable and empower us. In the words of the martyred missionary to the Aucas of Ecuador, Jim Elliot: "After all Jesus has done for me, how can I do less than give my all for Him!"



Bill and Rachel Chesley
begin Bible translation
work among the Migaami

Bringing the good news to central Chad

— Rachel (Mundfrom) Chesley
Wycliffe Bible Translators

Baro is a village of 3000 people in central Chad, flanked on two sides by the Abou Telfane mountain range. Most of its people are subsistence farmers, who work with crude hand tools to sow fields of millet, peanuts and sesame in the surrounding areas. A few are merchants, and a handful are teachers or other professionals. We pray that someday there will be an evangelical church among the Migaami people, with their own Scriptures in the language they know best.

Our family moved here last June, after Bill had requested a plot of land from the village and supervised the construction of a home. Our purpose here is to learn Migaama, the local language, and then translate the Scriptures. Baro is the main village where Migaama is spoken, but this ethnic group, one of more than 100 in Chad, encompasses 20 to 30 smaller villages, with a total population of about 25,000. Ninety-eight percent are Muslim, a

few are animist and there is one established church, here in Baro, founded by Catholic missionaries in the 1950s.

Life here is uncomplicated. The homes are round, built of mud brick with roofs of thatch. Furnishings are sparse or nonexistent: perhaps a bed made of sticks tied together with goat hide, maybe a rickety table. Most of life is carried on outdoors, as the climate varies from mild in the winter to very hot in late spring, before the rains begin. Cooking is done outdoors, over an open fire. Eating also is done outdoors, with everyone sharing from a common bowl while sitting on a straw mat. Poor as they appear, their hospitality is genuine and generous. We are always welcome in our neighbors' homes, and will usually be served a glass of strong, sweet tea.

Baro is becoming home for our three children: Emily, 5; Lydia, 4; and David, 2. They love our daily

visits and tea drinking, and, slowly but surely are making friends among the villagers. They are learning languages, too, Migaama, Arabic and French, all of which are heard in this village.

A week ago we were invited to a neighbor's home to join in the Muslim celebration of the "Fete de Mouton," or the Festival of the Sheep. On this day they remember the lamb that God provided, so that Abraham was spared from sacrificing his son. However, they believe it was Ishmael who was the intended sacrifice, rather than Isaac. Each family celebrates by butchering a sheep early in the morning, and then they gather at the mosque for their traditional memorized and recited in unison prayers. Following this, the sheep is cooked in a sauce, and served with millet boule, the daily fare. The rest of the day is spent eating, visiting and greeting neighbors. Children expect candy or money for coming to wish you a "Happy Holiday."

We welcome these opportunities to visit, since the current focus of our work is language learning. There are no books or courses for the study of Migaama, and this language is unlike any we've studied before, so we must learn from those who speak it. And to learn it well, we need lots of practice.

In the midst of this, God is providing opportunities to share the gospel. Since last October, three individuals have expressed a desire to follow Christ. For Zakariah, a teenager, becoming a Christian meant he was no longer welcome in his aunt's home. So he moved out, along with his younger brother and sister, and now struggles to provide for them. We help by giving food, clothing and work when we can.



Rachel and her children in their garden. The wall around their lot is for security from wild animals as their home is at the edge of the village.

The second convert, Jaffia, a mother of four children, made a decision for Christ during an evangelistic campaign after Christmas. She was one of several in her village who expressed an interest in Christianity. However, under pressure from family members, most turned back from their decisions. Several of these were older people, and their children threatened to disown them in their old age, leaving them with no one to care for them. But Jaffia stands firm in her decision, and expresses a joy in knowing Christ that shines through her life of hard work and poverty. We have also helped her with gifts of food and clothing. But we must be careful not to give too much, or we'll find people turning to Christ for the wrong reasons.

A middle-aged man named Abakar, came to Bill a couple of weeks ago. Using some French and some Migaama, Bill explained to him the way of salvation. Though Abakar has some relatives in the Catholic Church, he expressed a desire to be a Protestant. He made an appointment to speak again with Bill, but when his wife became ill he was unable to keep it. We haven't heard from him since.

So we pray for Abakar, Jaffia, Zakariah, and others. We are thankful that we are accepted here, and the Lord is faithful to bring fruit as His Word is proclaimed.



Dear Christian friends in the AFLC,

We want to thank you all for your fellowship and love shown us these months while in the United States on furlough. We were warmly received and welcomed everywhere we went. We wish we could have been in each one of our Free Lutheran churches, but we regretfully turned down invitations simply for lack of time.

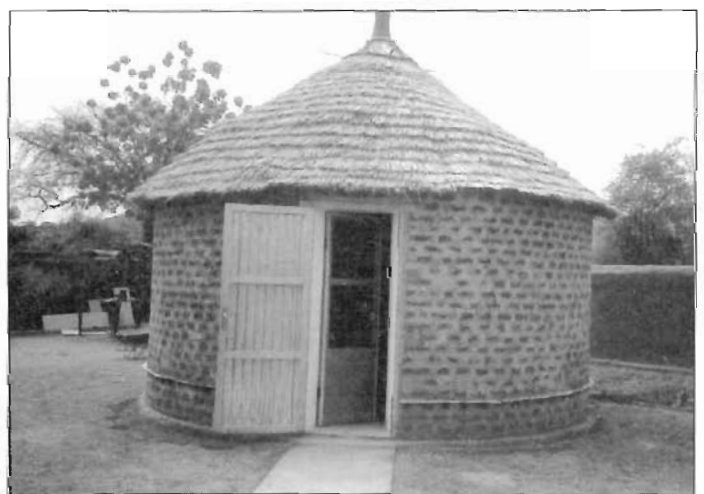
The people of the AFLC have not only provided our salary and everything necessary for the mission work over these years, but you have taken us into your hearts and looked for more ways to show God's love to us on this furlough year. Aside from the Eagles' Nest home at the ARC, which will provide a home in the U.S. for all of our missionaries for many years to come, every need that we have mentioned at any time this year has been taken as a goal and a challenge. People have gone out of their way and made sacrifices to see to it that those needs were met in short order.

Some of the ways this has happened include our old van being replaced with a newer one given to us, and the new van being gone over mechanically and renewed so that we have a dependable car for the return to Mexico on June 6, 1998. When my guitar broke, we were given two new guitars in its place. We now have the computers that were needed to do the translation project that we hope will provide good, biblical Lutheran material in Spanish for Sunday schools all over Latin America.

***Thank you. We appreciate you. Pray for us!
— the Dan and Debbie Giles family***



Emily and Lydia and one of their helpers stand by their outdoor oven.



This round house was Amy Greene's (AFLBS '97), sleeping room and the children's schoolroom. Amy returned in May to her home in Grand Forks, North Dakota, after nearly a year of working with the Chesleys.

Tent evangelism in Brazil

— Pastor John and Ruby Abel

Almost three months have passed since Ruby and I landed in Brazil. We had three evangelistic tent campaigns and camp work scheduled, plus a desire to visit our children and grandchildren.

While visiting in the Curitiba area we purchased a double-cab '86 pickup which hauled our evangelism tent. We drove over 10,000 miles in Brazil during these months.

The second week of March, the two of us and Jesuel, one of our Brazilian helpers, headed out for our first campaign. I call Jesuel "my man Friday." A few years ago he was a teenage convert who seemingly could learn anything manual. Now he works at the Bible school and Bible camp and we call him our "tent engineer." We drove 1000 miles across two states to the capital of Mato Grosso called Campo Grande. Here our son Jonathan and his wife Tamba have been working for two years and are building their first church. The lots in this city are expensive so they planned a two-story church, with the first floor now in use. We set up our big tent on the second story reinforced concrete floor. This is the first time I've placed a tent for 120 people on the top of a church! It didn't blow away despite a few rain storms we had during our ten-day campaign! Eleven souls came to Christ and seven others dedicated their lives for service to the Lord. The last Sunday, Jonathan had several baptisms and the tent was filled to capacity.

Vernon and Dorothy Russum, Grafton, North Dakota, and a member of our World Missions Committee, arrived for two weeks' stay and were present for part of the campaign. They traveled the 15-hour trip to Campo Mourão with us in the pickup to visit our mission headquarters and schools before going to Curitiba to see the work in the capital city.

After a few days in Campo Mourão we drove to Curitiba with our "tent team" and set up in a new

housing area that last year had no church whatsoever. We worked with Pastor Clovis, president of our Brazilian AFLC and pastor of a church in Curitiba, started by Missionary Paul Abel several years ago. The main avenue tent location was visible and the attendance was good. A pastor and team from our Bible school joined us for the last few days. Sixteen souls made decisions and many others came with prayer burdens. Pastor Clovis has just rented a storefront for the beginnings of a congregation in this new place. He said, "Come again next year and I'll have a new area where we can have a campaign and maybe start another congregation."

Our next move was across the city to the little community of Batieas where Pastor Paul and Becky Abel are working. Their congregation recently acquired property to build their first church. It is on a hill with a leveled area — perfect for setting up the tent. This was our most receptive area. The tent was filled even on the first night, but halfway through the service we had to stop as a strong rain and heavy wind hit. I've never seen such a wind hit our tent before and Paul asked me, "Dad, is this thing going to blow away?" Praise the Lord, it stood the test!

The other nights were well attended and on Sunday we had 145 in an overflowing tent. Twenty-eight souls were prayed with and many others came forward for other prayer requests. Again a group from the Bible school and a converted Catholic priest (who now teaches in our Bible school) helped in the campaign.

On May 12 we returned home to the U.S. This summer and fall we will be available to show videos and slides of these meetings. If interested, please contact us at: Box 97, Hitterdal, MN 56552 or call 218-962-3458. We thank our Savior for all who prayed for this mission opportunity. What a joy to serve in His Kingdom.



Under the

Report from the AFLC Bible school in Brazil

The early sea navigators 600 years ago set their instruments to the *Southern Cross*. It guided them to lands unknown in the southern hemisphere. Those stars in a cross formation pointed them to the South Pole.

There is nothing more significant for me than to look up into the clear night sky from our school campus and see that constellation, *the Cross*, and imagine how many ships were brought safely into port because they were guided by it.

Today young people are looking at a very dark world and the cross of Jesus shines brighter than ever. Our Bible school and seminary still points to the fixed cross of Christ and His salvation for all mankind. They can fix their faith and trust on His finished work on the cross and He alone will guide them safely home to heaven.

Our schools in Brazil have experienced significant growth these last two years. Our enrollment doubled last year and this year's record enrollment has more than tripled. I've never been so impressed to see these fine students as I was when I walked into chapel that first night. Some have told me that the reason they came to study at our school is that there are so many false teachings and doctrines that scare them. They want to study the Bible, not about the Bible.

One of the better changes made in our school was to adapt to the Brazilian culture. We shifted our morning classes to night classes. They are accustomed to that. Also our school is located in an interior city, and not that well known in Brazil. We've been running simple Bible school advertisements in a large, respected, evangelical magazine that is read throughout all of Brazil. We now have students coming to us from as far away as the Amazon region.

One of our new teachers is a converted priest with a doctorate in

Southern Cross

— *Pastor Connely Dyrud*
Campo Mourão, Brazil

church history and missions. He read about our school in that magazine and came to visit us two years ago. He had been studying about Luther and Spenner and was so impressed by the pietistic movement that he asked if he could share with our students. We thank the Lord for this devoted teacher who is with us today.

Many of our students aren't satisfied with just one or two years of Bible school. They want more. They are talking about missions: local, national and international. As I travel to visit our churches, the pastors and laymen ask if we could prepare extension seminary courses for their study in their local churches.

How far will this go? Only the Lord knows. A group in Portugal has expressed a desire to affiliate with us. We already are sending Portuguese literature to Mozambique and other groups are contacting us. God's world is big and He wants us to work until He returns.



The Bible school and seminary campus in Campo Mourão, Brazil

Seeing lives changed

— *Paul and Becky Abel*
Santa Felicidade, Brazil

It's neat to see lives being transformed by the grace of Jesus and the working of the Holy Spirit.

A reason for rejoicing is the beginning phase of our church construction here in the Bateias area, near Curitiba, Brazil. We are step-

ping out in faith with the little we have and trusting God to provide as we move ahead in faith. The church will be located in a beautiful high spot on the road to our home and retreat center, the ARCA. There is excitement in the air as our people dream about having a church of their own!

The ministry in Sao Braz is going well, too. Sunday nights the church is full with people sitting in chairs in the aisles. Hamilton has been a great help and has been approved by the congregation to continue on as an assistant. He is working on finishing his seminary classes by extension.

This morning a young father passed away. Paul had helped him often to get medical help and had shared the gospel with him. However, to our knowledge, he was not in a right relationship with the Lord as he breathed his last. Tonight we will spend part of the night at a wake for a person who could have had an everlasting hope but chose not to. Once again we realize the need to call people to repentance and point the way to Jesus. Pray that we can make the message clear as we proclaim the truth of life.



The Bible school and seminary staff in Brazil, (l. to r.): Sarah Nelson — Christian education; Pastor David Nelson — New Testament and Greek; Pastor Connely Dyrud — dean and teacher of doctrine and Old Testament; Pastor Iran Goes — homiletics and evangelism; Dr. Agricio Vale — church history and missions; Pastor Oseias Camara — school administrator; and Betty Camara — music.

The Ambassadors



AMBASSADORS (l. to r.) Erin Kuster, Wheatland, Iowa (soprano); Dan Keinanen, Cloquet, Minnesota (tenor); Anne Keranen, Sebeka, Minnesota (piano); Ben Floan, Fertile, Minnesota (bass); and Shawn Danielson, Lake Preston, South Dakota (alto).

Ministry: Sharing the message of Jesus in music, in a different church every day, the Ambassadors will travel to about 60 churches across the Midwest and as far east as Pennsylvania. Five of the members are graduates, one (Dan Keinanen) is returning next fall.

Tabernacle Team



TABERNACLE TEAM members (l. to r.) Lynette Mooney, Greenbush, Minnesota; Joye Erickson, New York Mills, Minnesota; and Brooke Schrage, Wheatland, Iowa.

Ministry: The new Tabernacle team will spend the summer working with Christian Free Lutheran youth pastor Eddie Britz. In an attempt at more long-term ministry, the team will "come and dwell among" 50 to 60 area youth for three months, building relationships, nurturing believers and doing evangelism in an area of Iowa with relatively little youth work going on. Their ministry begins June 1 and ends August 15.

Summer ministry teams training at AFLBS

Six teams are spending two weeks of training at the AFLBS campus, and will begin their travels on June 14. The Brazil and Tanzania mission teams spent the first week of June also on campus preparing to leave on June 6. Following are the pictures and brief descriptions of each of the AFLBS and Home Mission 1998 summer teams.

Cornerstone Team



CORNERSTONE members (l. to r.) Kayelynn Danielson, Lake Preston, SD; Nathan Hembree, Houston, TX; Carla Mattson, Greenbush, Minnesota; Nick Dyrud, Golden Valley, Minnesota; Arta Cesle, Latvia.

Ministry: This AFLBS team will travel to Montgomery and Ottawa, Illinois; Sioux Falls, and Canton, South Dakota; Janesville, Wisconsin and Sebeka and Byron, Minnesota. With two graduates (Nathan is 28 and Arta is 23) and three juniors, Cornerstone will work at seven churches for one-week periods teaching VBS. They will also spend one week at Pickeral Lake Bible Camp in South Dakota and a week at Galilee Bible Camp at Lake Bronson, Minnesota.



Majesty Team

MAJESTY members (l. to r.) Mandy McEachran, Annandale, Minnesota (soprano); Tim Borg, Cokato, Minnesota (bass); Audrey Rolf, Brandon, Minnesota (alto); Nate Jore, Brasilia, Brazil and McIntosh, Minnesota (tenor); and Rhoda Monseth, Rogers, Minnesota (piano).

Ministry: A gifted musical ensemble, Majesty will spend most of its time with Vacation Bible School and Bible camp ministries, sharing several concerts along the way. The team will spend five weeks on the West Coast, and a week each in Williston and Minot, North Dakota.

Barnabas South

Ministry: This team will spend their summer working in home mission churches and VBS ministries in California, Arizona and Texas.

Foundation Team



BARNABAS SOUTH members (l. to r.) Kristi Larson, Beltrami, Minnesota; Scott Christianson, Greenbush, Minnesota; Annie Olson, Fosston, Minnesota; Larry Myhrer, Thief River Falls, Minnesota; and Caese Haroldson, Fosston, Minnesota.

Ministry: Formerly planned as a Barnabas team, this group of mostly first-year students from northern Minnesota will travel under the auspices of AFLBS. Team members are working three weeks at Bible camps and six weeks as VBS workers at churches in Minnesota (Argyle, Hawley, East Grand Forks, Upsala, Zumbrota) and one week in Amery, Wisconsin.

AFLBS applies for permission to build

The Association Free Lutheran Bible School's Vision 2004 Planning Team encountered a hurdle May 5 when the City of Plymouth Planning Commission denied the rezoning appeal for the 23-acre campus. In a three to two vote, the planning commission chose to uphold city policy that the AFLC campus neighborhood be preserved for low-density, single-family residences.

But the decision is not final nor fatal. On May 20, the decision moves to the Plymouth city council, which votes on the rezoning application.

Pastor Tonnes Pollestad, Vision 2004 director since August, presented a 35-minute case for the rezoning before the commission and a group of about 200 others, including AFLBS students, faculty and staff, supportive neighbors, and residents in opposition to expansion.

In his appeal, Pastor Pollestad shared that the AFLC has history on its side. "We've been at this site for 34 years," he told the planning commission, "and we purchased it with the specific purpose of a seminary and Bible school for our church body. We have worked with the City of Plymouth for six months in planning the project and to this point have held six neighborhood meetings."

Since 1996, the campus has operated under "lawful non-conforming use" status as an institution in a residential zone, due to a new zoning plan implemented by the City of Plymouth two years ago.

Perhaps the most succinct argument against rezoning for the AFLC expansion plan was voiced by commission member Allen Ribbe, who asked: "Is Plymouth the right place for you to grow? I think this is the wrong place for an expansion."

City Planner Shawn Drill agreed. "The current student count is 143, and the school is planning for 450 students." Such growth, said

(continued on next page)

PERMISSION

Drill, "is not appropriate for the character of the area."

Ten of 18 residents who spoke at the hearing agreed with Drill's assessment — at the same time complimenting the Bible school in its work. "The kids are fantastic," said a woman who lived in one of the newer and more expensive homes south of the property. Still, she contended that "the expansion plans would change the character of the area."

Another neighbor, an ELCA pastor, said, "We enjoy them as neighbors, but it's the wrong place for a denomination that is growing and a fellowship that has a tremendous vision for mission." Another man voiced, "We're willing to discuss alternatives."

Several others spoke in support of the expansion. "The school has been a wonderful light in our neighborhood," said a man whose house is adjacent to the campus. "I hope we can find some way to keep this school in our neighborhood." One of the older neighbors who has lived there since 1956 said, "I am a social worker, and this school is a dynamic force to bring good to our neighborhood and our society."

The project Pastor Pollestad described to the commission boiled down to eight seminary housing units and a single building between the two AFLBS dormitories. The all-purpose building included several classrooms and offices, a library, cafeteria, gymnasium and another shell on the third floor that could accommodate about 60 dorm rooms. Neighbors and commission members balked at the proposed maximum enrollment of 450, a total of 375 parking spaces, and the proposed maintenance garage on the east end.

After two hours of discussion, commission member Robert Stein moved to deny the application for rezoning. After discussion it was commission chair Michael Stulberg who gave the deciding vote in favor of denial.

Commissioner Jeff Thompson argued at length in favor of rezoning, contending that the request was essentially to go back to the zoning status the AFLC enjoyed before 1996.

He also supported the AFLC's constitutional right to develop its own private property, and lamented that "the decision smacks of discriminatory land-use controls against religious groups ... and it smacks of impropriety I haven't heard a single neighborhood complaint about the school."

Despite the three to two vote against the expansion project, Pastor Pollestad and others felt encouraged. God is still in control. May God's will be clear.

— Pastor James L. Johnson
AFLBS Dean

Editor's note: At the May 20 meeting of the Plymouth City Council, the proposed zoning motion was tabled until the June 24 meeting.

Summer Institute at FLS

For the second year, the AFLC's seminary is offering their Summer Institute of Theology during one week with two 4-hour class sessions in the morning and evening. Previously the Institute was held during a two-week period. This summer's classes will be held August 3-7. Classes offered include: *Ezekiel's Message For Today; Lessons From Revival History; New Testament Church Government; and Principles of Interpreting The Bible*. Cost for the summer term is \$15. Contact the Free Lutheran Seminary at 3120 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Plymouth, MN 55441 or call (612) 544-9501.

AFLC Memorial Gifts

Name	Given By	Department
Norman E. Olson	Phyllis Olson	AFLTS
Alvin Pederson	Clarence/Edna Quanbeck	
Calvin Egeberg	Gary Egeberg	
Helen Rux	Pastor Earl/Joan Korhonen	
Larry Miedema	William/Marilyn Parker	
	Thilda/Lena Vangstad	
	Ernie/Darlene Miedema	Schools
	Faye James	
	Clyde/Pat Hendrickson	AFLBS
	Vernon/Dorothy Russum	
	Beatrice Anderson	General Fund
	Pastor Ted/Dee Berkas	
	Aini Myking	
	Marlene Unverzagt	
	Pastor Laurel/Joan Udden	
	Dr. Francis/Ellen Monseth	
	Pastor James/Jane Rasmussen	Evangelist
	Robert/Carol Dietsche	Home Missions
	Kenneth/Mary Nash	
	Sheldon/Dorothy Een	Missions
	Pastor Ken/Marilyn Thoreson	ARC
	Irene Beyer	
	Ella Rekedal	
	R. R. Lofthus	AFLBS
	Valborg Hedman	
	Amanda Breden	
	Pastor Tim/Evonne Skramstad	
	Carrol/Joyce Rognlie	
	Drummond WMF, Drummond, WI	
	Pastor Ernest/Hazel Langness	
	Paul/Elaine Eliason	
	Wayne/Jeanne Oien	
	Pastor Lyle/Mary Aadahl	
	Kent/Mabel Quanbeck	
	Ernest/Jean Nash	
	Owen/Lois Myhre	
	Pastor Raynard Huglen	
	Pastor Bruce/Phyllis Peterson	
	Mr/Mrs. Adolph Kordahl	
	Dagne Faust	Home Missions
	Kenneth/Mary Nash	
Alvin H. Pederson		
Doris Berg		
Anna Duncan		
Esther Buck		
Mabel Eastburn		
Minnie Olson		
Darlene Quanbeck		
Jeff Kampaugh		

AFLC Schools receive grant money

AFLTS recently received \$3,500 from Lutheran Brotherhood through the Member Matching Gift program. The payment matches 38 gifts from Lutheran Brotherhood members made during the first quarter of 1998. During the same quarter, 60 gifts were given to AFLBS for a matched total of \$5,800. Lutheran Brotherhood's IMPACT program matches members' gifts of \$25 to \$100 per year to Lutheran institutions of higher learning nationwide.



Norman Domier with his replica of Zoar Free Lutheran, Hatton, North Dakota.

Ardith Throngard	Dorothy L. Nelson	AFLBS
Lucille Gaetke	Gordon/Gladys Rugland	
Pearl Peterson	Our Saviour's, Zumbrota, MN	All Funds
George Johnson	Kenneth/Viola Williams	World Missions
Detleph Nelson	Mr/Mrs. Allen Nelson	
	Gordon/Selma Hanson	
Annabelle Johnson	Allan/Arlitte Swenson	
Mabel VanSickle	Wilma McGowan	
Arnold Mathison	Albin/Carol Haugen	
and Bjorne Martinson		
Johnny Stene	Allen/Naomi Dahl	
Laura Hegge	Peter/Martha Hill	
Ardene Thompson	Western ND/Eastern MT District WMF	
Larry Thompson	Anna Thompson	
	Kenneth/Luella Loomis	
Mrs. Gerald Blais, Sr.	Dr. Gerald Blais, Jr.	
Anna Duncan	St. Paul's Mission Society, Fargo, ND	
Agnes Ostrem and	Irvin/Janice Schmitke	Evangelism
Viola Grimstad		
Rev. Lawrence	Pastor James/Jane Rasmussen	
Rasmussen		
Neil Sorenson	Luther/Adeline Monson	Home Missions
Mary Stockeland	Thomas/Marion Stockeland	
and James Cherney		
Mrs. Duwayne Baldwin	Kenneth/Mary Nash	
and Ulrica Gunness		
Viola Grimstad	Pastor Raynard Huglen	
Grace Beck	Arlis Fixen	
	Lois Oscarson	
	Dagne Faust	
	Kenneth/Mary Nash	
	Kermit Nash	
	Thilda/Lena Vangstad	
	Ella Oscarson	
	Kenneth/Mary Nash	
	Kenneth/Mary Nash	
	Earnest/Jean Nash	
	Lois Oscarson	AFLBS
	Dr. Francis/Ellen Monseth	General Fund
	Meredith Bursheim	
	Floan family	AFLBS
	Kenneth/Marlys Johnson	
	Ken/Phyllis Pederson	
	Pastor Tonnes/Mary Pollestad	
	Wayne/Jeanne Oien	
Mrs. Mark Fahsholz		
Clifford Mackey		
Carol James		
Wesley Floan		
Agnes Saxberg		

Hatton, North Dakota — Zoar Free Lutheran Church will celebrate their Centennial July 18-19. Their theme is "Blest Be The Tie That Binds." All members and former members and friends are welcome to join the congregation at a banquet on Saturday evening. Former pastors are welcome to share at this time. AFLC President Robert Lee will be the Sunday morning worship speaker at the 10 a.m. service.

Matthew Greven, Lake Stevens, Washington, has resigned as youth director at Elim Lutheran Church where he has served for three and a half years. He concluded his work on May 19 and returned to his parent's home in Newark, Illinois. This summer he is leading a ministry team to Hungary, representing Hauge Foreign Mission. Their primary task will be to help the pastors, in at least two Lutheran congregations, and share Christ with the children and youth in those communities. The three high school team members working with him are Lisa Osmond from West Lisbon Lutheran in Newark and Karissa Johnson and Heather Larson, both from Faith Free Lutheran in Detroit Lakes, Minnesota.

Pastor Brian Davidson has a new address: 908 W. 3rd St., Weslaco, TX 78596; phone numbers are (956) 968-2376 (h) and 968-2342 (o).

Meet new AFLC congregations



Lord of the Harvest Lutheran, Fairbank, Iowa.

Lord of the Harvest Lutheran of Fairbank, Iowa, was accepted on the congregational roster of the AFLC on March 30, 1998. The congregation began in the fall of 1987 and within months leased the former Bentley Chevrolet building on Main Street of this Iowa community 25 miles northeast of Waterloo. The congregation of about 130 members was formerly a member of the American Association of Lutheran Churches.

Pictured at right is the congregation's pastor, Rev. Scott Jans. Pastor Jans and his wife Nancy have been at the church since its beginning. He is now on the AFLC's Fellowship Clergy Roster.

Another new AFLC congregation is **St. Matthias Lutheran in Shoreline, Washington**. Pastor James Westgate serves the Seattle suburb community. He also is one of this year's twelve new men on the AFLC's Fellowship Clergy Roster. Four of those 12 are lay pastors.

Paradise Lutheran in Canfield, Ohio, completes the list of most recent AFLC congregations accepted by the coordinating committee. Pastor Alex Hilliard serves the congregation.

Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Lincoln, Illinois, voted on April 19, 1998 to affiliate with the AFLC. The congregation, which is served by Lay Pastor Roger David, also approved the purchase of land in the northwest portion of the central Illinois city for the building of a new church.



Construction at Faith Lutheran, Metropolis, Illinois.

Metropolis, Illinois — Faith Lutheran is building their new church. An unusually rainy spring has delayed the construction. The congregation is looking for eighteen 16 foot pews in good condition. For more information call Pastor Todd Klemme at (618) 524-1174.

Hazel E. Langness, 76, formerly of Ishpeming, Michigan, went to be with the Lord on May 4, 1998 at the Norlite Nursing Center in nearby Marquette. Hazel was born July 28, 1921 in Des Moines, Iowa to Jarrett and Mabel Goodman, Sr. She was a member of the Hope Free Evangelical Lutheran Church and had faithfully served parishes in Washington, Saskatchewan, North Dakota, Michigan and South Dakota with her husband, Rev. Ernest Langness.

Survivors include her husband Ernest, also of Marquette; four daughters, Ruth Eloise (Paul) Cadieux of Edmonton, Alberta; Emma Jean (Wayne) Oien of Binford, North Dakota; Elaine (Paul) Eliason of Champion, Michigan; and Marliyn (Scott) Williams of Portage, Michigan; two sons, Jerrold (Char) Langness of Fargo, North Dakota and Erling (Nancy) Langness of Ishpeming; two sisters, two brothers, 13 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held May 8, at the Hope Free Lutheran Church in Ishpeming with Pastors Herb Franz and Merle Knutson officiating. Burial was in the Humboldt Cemetery.

Blessed be her memory.



Pastor Scott Jans

Williston, North Dakota — Trinity Christian School is looking for people to fill two positions: full-time K-6 principal — requires valid North Dakota teaching certificate, computer proficiency, and administrative experience in education or related field; and a junior high teacher in language arts and science. For more information contact the school at 213 26th St. E., Williston, ND 58801 or call (701) 744-9056.

Editor's note: The April 28, 1998 issue of *The Lutheran Ambassador*, inadvertently misquoted the author in the article on page 7, "Functioning as a healthy body," by Leila Gilman. The second to the last paragraph should have stated, "When we bury hurt feelings and harbor grudges against another we are not listening to and obeying the Head, as a result, we cannot truly experience entering His presence with joy."

This is what I would like to see

The children and youth in our congregations are works of art in progress. The Molder and Shaper of them is Christ. He gives us who are adults in the congregation the great privilege of being instruments He uses in His work of forming them into the beautiful masterpieces He desires.

Unlike paint brushes and canvas, we can refuse to be willing instruments and youth can resist God's molding of their life. But when He is permitted to work ...

What does God want the work of art called the young people of our congregations to eventually look like? What do I want the young people of my congregation to be like if Jesus does not return first and they are permitted to grow into adulthood?

I want them to know Jesus loves them and to love Him in return. I want them to see that Christianity is not simply about keeping a bunch of rules. It is not about trying to be good enough to earn points with God so that He might bless us. It is about having a loving, living, growing, personal relationship with Jesus.

I want them to be trusting in and focused on what God has done for them more than what they have done for God. I would enjoy hearing them talk much about what the Lord has done and is doing, in particular in giving His life on the cross for our sins and rising again from the dead. I hope they will be people who spend little time talking about their own accomplishments. May they live out what the Lord says in Jeremiah 9:24: "Let him who boasts boast about this: that he understands and knows me."

It would be great to see them having as their chief goal in life letting other people know what Jesus has done for them. They'll be spreading the good news because their heart is so full of love for Jesus it overflows. They'll do it as a natural part of their life, seeking to find out how God has uniquely gifted them and to what area of service God has called them.

Some may demonstrate and spread God's love while working in an office, some while being a stay-at-home parent. Some may do it while being pastors, others while being plumbers. Some may do it while being missionaries, others while being mechanics.

I know there will be a lot of diversity in the ways God will want to use them. I don't want them to think they have to be just like this person or that one. I want them to each be the person God has gifted and called them to be.

I want the young people in our congregation to be thinkers. I enjoy the confirmation students who ask questions and to keep seeking after truth. I want them to be like the Bereans who "received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true" (Acts 17:11, NIV).

A lot of the issues they may deal with in the future are unknown to us today.

Therefore, I want them to have the ability to search the Scriptures and wrestle in prayer in order to make decisions that are based on the Bible and honor God.

I want them to love God's Word like the Psalmist who said, "Oh, how I love your law! I meditate on it all day long" (Psalm 119:97, NIV). I long for them to begin now and make a lifelong practice of spending time each day reading in the Bible and talking with its Author in prayer.

It will give my heart great joy if the kids of our congregation have joy in their heart when they grow up. This world is full of sin and trials. We ourselves and the people around us continually fall far short of where we

should be. That is all true, and not to be ignored. But I want our youth to also see how great it is to be a child of God, to be forgiven and to know Jesus. No matter what foolish things we humans do, the good news of what Christ has done is still true, and that is reason to smile, laugh and celebrate.

I want our kids to be quick to forgive and slow to condemn. I want them to have more interest in building people up than tearing them down. May they spend more time looking for the good they can praise in others, rather than the bad they can judge. May they have a longing to see unity among God's children.

I want the youth of our congregation to mature into the beautiful masterpieces God desires. My hope for seeing that happen is based solely on my knowledge of the One who is doing the molding and shaping. Christ, the great Master Artist, is at work.

— **Pastor Craig Johnson**

**I want them
to know
Jesus
loves them
and
to love Him
in return.**

SOMETHING TO SHARE

Follow those hot tips

An eighty-year-old fisherman who lives on a lake once told me on the way out of church that the crappies were biting north of the public landing on French Lake just before sunset. The next night some friends and I were able to get out and fish. Thirty crappies later I knew he was right.

Lesson: When you get a hot tip from a veteran fisherman, follow it up the next chance you get or you may miss your opportunity.

On the way out of church a few years later, I got a tip that someone wanted to join the church. It was a young man suffering from a severe disease who had been to church a few times. I shared with him and he prayed with me to ask Jesus to forgive him of his sins and to come into his life. What a joy to see a new birth once again after years of not seeing any.

Conclusion: Had I done anything different? No, I simply followed up on a lead.

When it comes to fishing, in order to follow a hot tip, you better have your equipment in order and maintained or you will wind up in preparation when the fish have their mouths open. In the spiritual realm it is similar. Keep in the Word on a daily basis and talking with your Father regularly. If you use some kind of an outline to share your faith, review it along with the Bible verses and illustrations so the Holy Spirit has much to use when the opportunity comes.

I find that when my boat and tackle are in good shape and ready, I can go in a moment's notice. When we are praying for souls and in the Word, God can get us to where he wants us very quickly, because we are ready. Does He at times have to prompt other believers to those hungry "open-mouthed" souls because time is

critical? Do we miss out because we are not equipped to share what Jesus has done for us? God alone knows the answer to these questions, but our responsibility is "to be ready at all times to give an answer to the hope that lies within us" (I Peter 3:15).

So when you hear of an acquaintance or neighbor who has just found out he has cancer or some other time of need, pay a visit immediately. God may be gently prying open the mouth of a soul to hunger for Him.



— *Pastor Lyndon Korhonen*
Good Shepherd Lutheran
Cokato, Minnesota