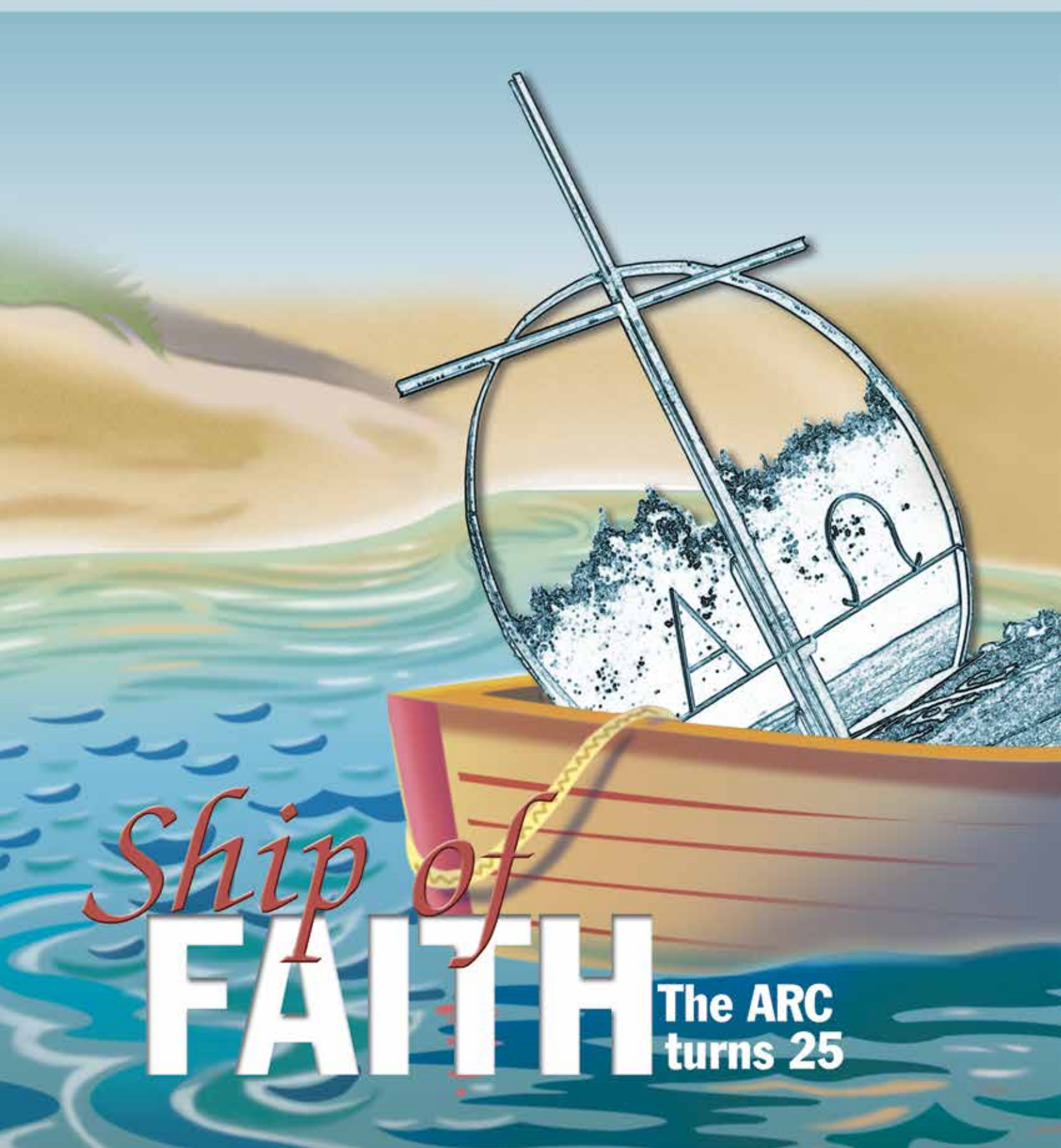


# THE LUTHERAN **AMBASSADOR**

MAY 2004



## *Ship of* **FAITH**

**The ARC  
turns 25**



**Liz Johnson**  
Living Hope  
St. Michael, MN

“God has a purpose in my suffering, and if I’m patient and persevere through it, I will be blessed.”

I thought I would get a tan. I couldn’t have been more wrong. The sun disappeared behind the clouds the minute we stepped into our canoes. It was my first Boundary Waters trip, and little did I know it would be like dying a painfully drawn out death. There was a time at the beginning, though, when I suspected that this trip would be a little rough. Maybe it came when my dad told me that I was in charge of carrying the cooler (filled with very heavy steaks) through portages, or maybe it was when I realized how cold it was, and remembered that I had only packed for warm weather. Maybe it was when I saw the food that we would be living off of for the next three days.

I made it through the portages (even though the cooler felt like it weighed 1,000 lbs.) and finally arrived at our campsite with large calluses forming on my hands. The rain started coming the next morning, and from then on it didn’t stop. At night it seeped through the bottom of our tent, soaking through our sleeping bags and leaving us drenched and freezing with no place to go. I remember waking up at 4 a.m. being so wet and cold that my bones ached (they were also aching because there was a very pointy rock jabbing into my side as I tried to sleep). There were no dry clothes to change into, no hot cocoa to sip on, and no warm blanket to wrap myself in. It was pitch black. I could imagine what was lurking outside my tent, just waiting to attack me on my next trip to the latrine. I’ve never looked forward to morning as

much as I did that night. The sun didn’t reappear until just as we paddled in to the lodge. I don’t think I knew the meaning of suffering until I survived this trip.

But I only know the surface of it. So many people have suffered not only physically, but spiritually their whole lives. I’ve never faced cancer or diabetes. I’ve never had one of my family members die. I’ve never been persecuted because of my faith. I’ve never suffered from depression. There are so many things that I’ve never had to deal with — so many things I don’t think I would ever make it through.

I may not know a lot about suffering, but I have had a couple tastes of it and James 5:10 was really encouraging to me: “Brothers, as an example of patience in suffering, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. As you know, we consider blessed those who have persevered. You have seen what the Lord finally brought about. The Lord is full of compassion and mercy.”

God has a purpose in my suffering, and if I’m patient and persevere through it, I will be blessed. During a time of suffering I can find comfort in the Lord’s mercy and look to his promises for hope. Psalm 119:50 says, “My comfort in my suffering is this: your promise preserves my life.”

Job’s life is very encouraging. Job 36:15 says, “But those who suffer he delivers in their suffering; he speaks to them in their affliction.” I think that God speaks to us the most during hard times. That’s why it’s important to listen, even though it’s hard.

May 2004  
Volume 42, Number 5



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# expect more

**.. the AFLC is essentially a spiritual movement and ... conferences are prayerfully planned to be “spiritual powerhouses,” as one of our Free Lutheran forefathers declared, rather than legislative assemblies.**

**T**he annual conference sessions have opened for the past few years with an introductory presentation intended to prepare us for the proceedings to follow. One of the expressions used to describe the conference is: **It may not be what you think.** This statement is a reminder that the AFLC is essentially a spiritual movement and that conferences are prayerfully planned to be “spiritual powerhouses,” as one of our Free Lutheran forefathers declared, rather than legislative assemblies. First-time attendees especially have found the introduction to be quite helpful.



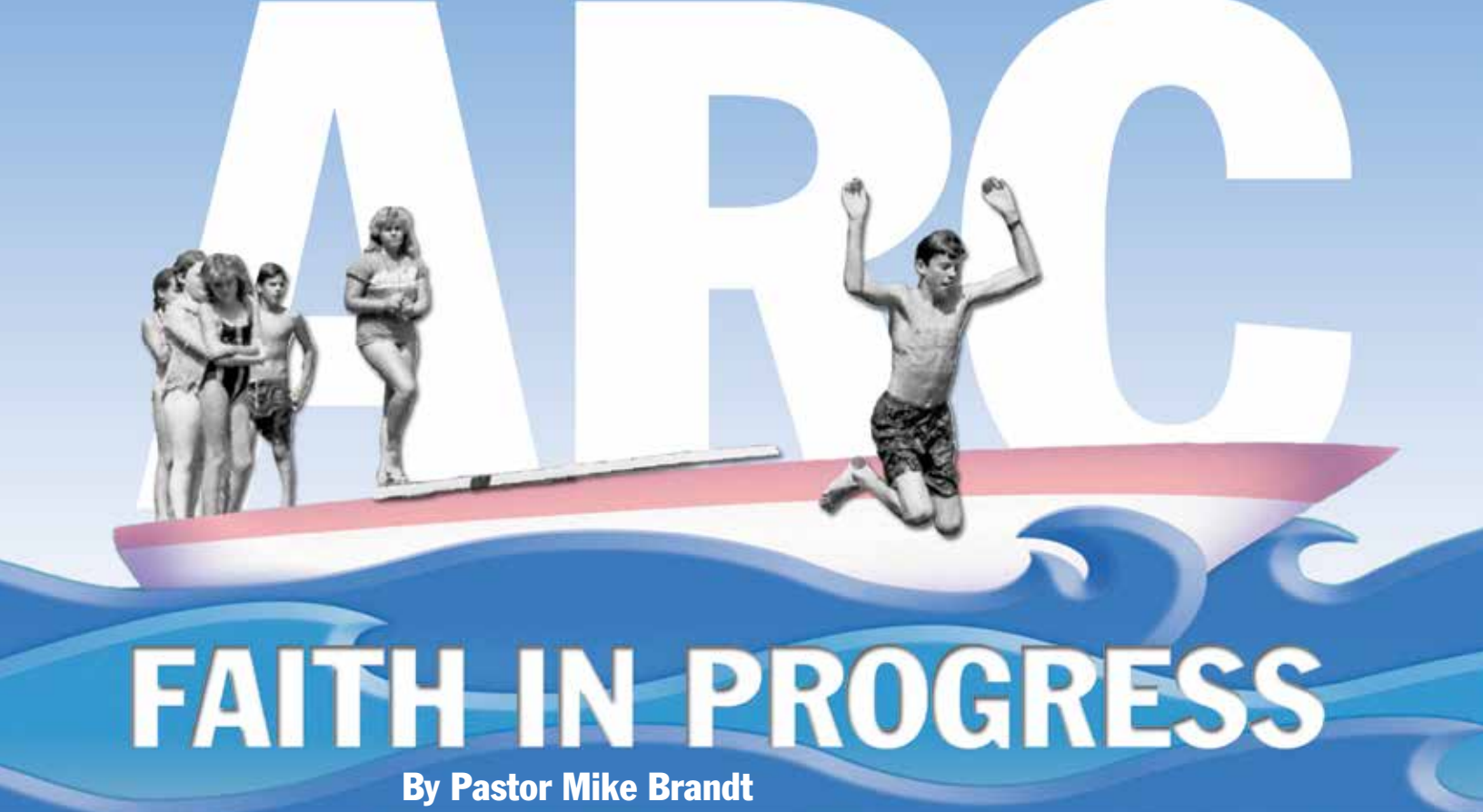
**Robert Lee**

You are invited to join in prayer this year, however, to ask the Lord to make our annual conference **more than we expect** in every way. I am convinced that it is quite possible for most of us who attend to be aware that the conference is not a gathering of delegates to approve legislation; yet perhaps it has become for some a cozy reunion, a comfortable and inspiring retreat, or an even platform for personal agendas. How many return to our homes and congregations convicted, challenged and changed, renewed in our commitment to Christ and His kingdom?

Our 2004 conference theme comes from the closing verse of Psalm 100: “For the Lord is good; His lovingkindness is everlasting, and His faithfulness to all generations.” This portion of God’s Word is a call to thankful worship, centered on who He is and His faithful covenant love for His people. The focus of the theme is a reminder that each generation is precious in His sight, to be reached and retained with the gospel of salvation.

We look forward to the great hospitality that our Association Retreat Center offers, to making and maintaining special friendships with fellow Free Lutherans from across the United States and Canada. We expect warm fellowship, Word-centered worship and inspiring preaching in the midst of informative sessions. Great! Now let’s ask the Lord to prepare our hearts and minds for more than we expect. Come with no agenda but the expectation of a meeting with Him.

Annual Conference, page 12



**T**he Association Retreat Center was on God's radar screen from the beginning, the very beginning. It may have seemed like a tiny blip on the world's radar screen, but from God's point of view, it was huge.

On a freezing cold night in November 1977, I found myself sleeping in the former officers' quarters of the U.S. Air Force's radar base in rural Osceola, Wis. I had recently accepted a call to be pastor of a newly organized Home Mission church in Amery, Wis. Soon my family would be moving from Washington State, and we needed housing. I was on a mission. Roger Krueger, chairman of Amery Free Lutheran, had picked me up at the airport and taken me to the 80-acre former radar base. Little did I know what plans God had for the very place in which I was sleeping.

Roger and his family were making the officers' quarters their home away from home. Their permanent residence was in Amery, and he was the founder and director of Crestview Plaza, a nursing home facility in Amery. At the same time, he and a California business associate were developing this former radar base. They had envisioned a beautiful senior citizens' complex and retirement village. Roger was and is a visionary, with a heart for Christ and His Kingdom. From overseeing a mission school in Africa, to starting a Christian school in Amery, the Kruegers have been people of faith — a faith that has always been Christ focused and Word centered. Unknown to Roger, God was about to turn this vision upside down. And unknown to me, my ministry at Amery would be right in the middle of this great faith venture.

In the midst of seeking God's will, the vision of a Christian retirement community came to an end. The death of a vision is hard to accept. However, God had a greater plan. Just like Noah's ark was raised up in the midst of death, so, too, God took the death of one vision and raised up an ARC at Osceola! The thought that came to Roger was, "Could this be a possible retreat and conference site directed by the AFLC?" He and his business associate presented their concept. God's vision came into focus through a prayerful Annual Conference decision in Montana in 1979.

Since that day, the Association Retreat Center has been a ship of faith in progress. God called Noah-like people, such as Bob and Carol Dietsche, to be copilots. In the early days, a host of shipmates from Amery volunteered. As they embraced God's vision, their personal faith was strengthened. It caused the parishioners at Amery to see ministry beyond their own four walls. Eventually, God called many new crewmembers from throughout the AFLC, both paid and volunteer. Following His design, the ARC's ministry was built into a glorious vessel.

At the right time, God opened the door, and one by one, and in some cases two by two, Christ brought men and women, boys and girls to the ARC. For some, it has been a place of rescue. For others, it has been a place of refuge and rest. As a ship of faith in the storms of life, the ARC continues to be a place of safety for all. It still may be a tiny blip on the world's radar screen, but this blip is bringing glory to God.

Brandt is the pastor of Abiding Savior Free Lutheran, Sioux Falls, S.D.

## “Make yourself an ark ... thus Noah did.” — Genesis 6:14a, 22



By Betsy Parsley

I was 7 the first time I heard about the ARC in Osceola, Wis. My parents announced that our whole family was going to a camp in August. That first year of family camp turned out to be a very memorable one — all eight of us were in one room, with three sets of bunk beds and two cribs. My baby brother, Owen, was cutting teeth, my 1-year-old sister, Carmen, wouldn't let go of Dad's leg, and one of my other sisters, Elise, smacked her head on the playground and had to go to the emergency room. Our initial experience was so great, we decided to go back the next year, and the next, and the next. This summer will be year 15.

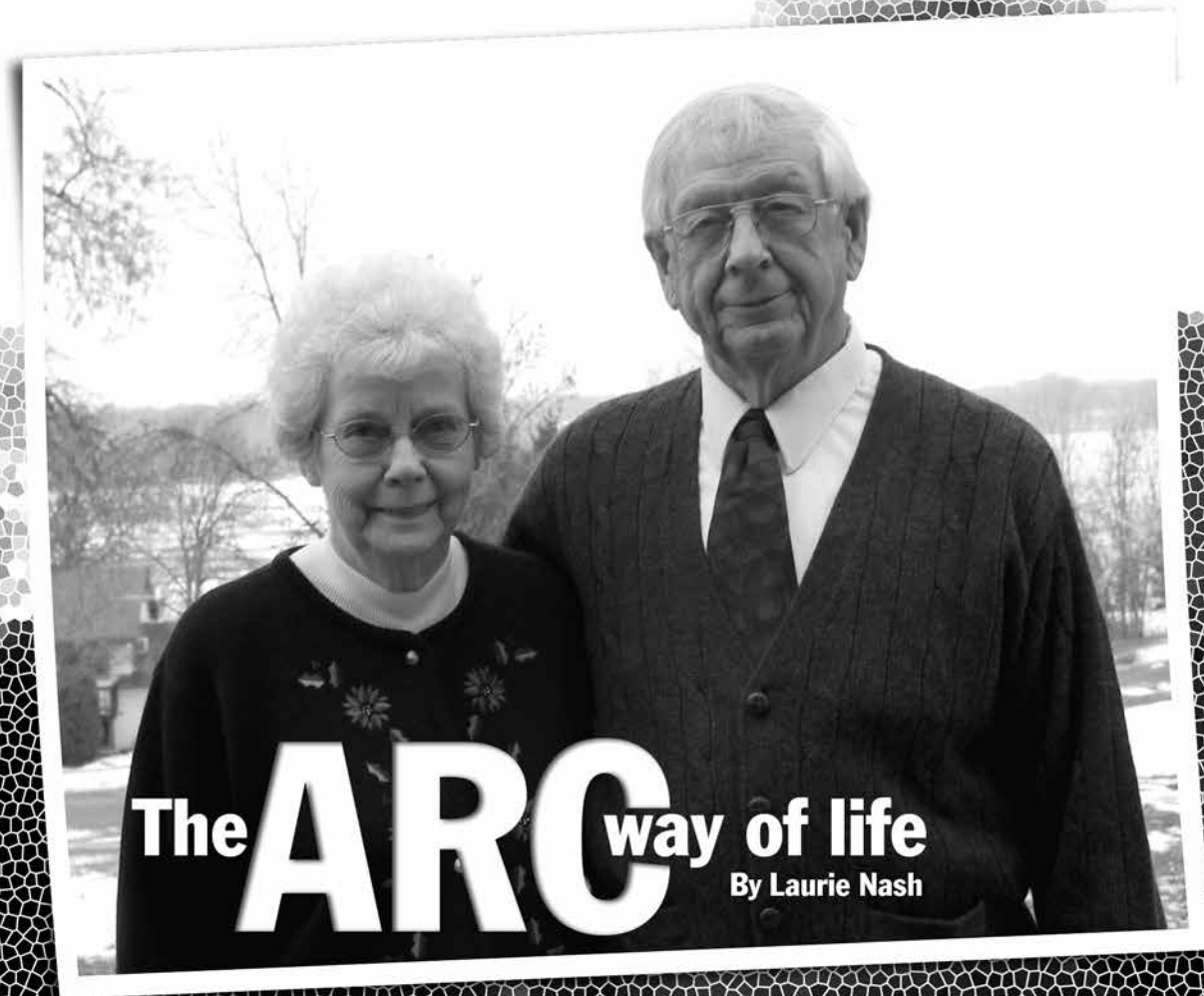
Even though I have been to several different types of camps at the ARC through the years, when I think of the ARC I think of family camp first. Many happy memories come to mind: wake-up calls at 7 in the morning (they don't do that anymore), VBS taught by Bible school students, action songs, goofy puppets, picnic lunches on Mount Ararat, obstacle course competitions, softball and ultimate Frisbee on 95-degree afternoons, seaweed fights in the pond, foosball and volleyball tournaments, family Olympics, the crazy teen dorm, card games on rainy days, and evening services in the tabernacle, to name a few. Since graduating from high school, I have been on a summer team from the Bible school that taught VBS at family camp, and last summer I was dean of women. It's been a blessing to me to be on both sides of the spectrum — being a camper and then serving the campers.

One aspect I remember well about family camp as a child was the evening campfire. It encouraged me that young people would openly share how they were growing

spiritually, what God was doing in their lives, and how they were being refined in their faith. I can easily recall the first time I felt the Lord leading me to say something at a campfire. I think I was around 12; my heart was pounding and I was very nervous. I don't remember what I said, but I will never forget the words of Luke 12:8-9, where Jesus says, "I tell you, whoever acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man will also acknowledge him before the angels of God. But he who disowns me before men will be disowned before the angels of God." At that moment, it seemed to me that not following the Lord's prompting would be denying Him; I couldn't do that. I felt the strong need to tell others what God had done for me, and so I did.

As I think more about the ARC, I wonder — what makes it so special? What made my brothers, sisters and I count down the weeks, the days until the next family camp? Was it the fun and games, Christian friends, the Bible lessons? I believe it's all of these, but it's also those "campfire-like times" — with testimonies clearly demonstrating that Jesus Christ was and is Lord of the camp, the staff, and the campers. I'm thankful that He has blessed the AFLC with this wonderful retreat center. Through His provision, its ministry continues to grow and be used as a vessel to touch the lives of many.

Parsley, a 2002 graduate of AFLBS, is from Flandreau, S.D. She currently attends North Hennepin Community College in the Twin Cities.



**A**s a young child, I remember them attending evangelistic meetings in our church, the pastor coming to visit our home and hearing adults talking late into the night. There was a change in our home from that point forward — for Dad and Mom accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. Not only was Jesus their Savior, but He was also their Lord, and they began to serve Him with their whole hearts. They got involved in their church, the Gideons and the newly formed AFLC. My brother, sister and I were introduced to Bible camps, and soon Dad was involved with helping the Lake Geneva camps and AFLC committees. Mom served on the national WMF board. Life was good. Together they ran three TV sales and service stores and an aerial photography business. They built their dream home on the Red Cedar River in Sand Creek, Wis., and were content to spend the rest of

“To God be the glory, great things He has done!” These are the opening words of my father’s favorite hymn, evidenced when he joyfully sings out the bass line praising His Lord. I have been blessed beyond measure with wonderful Christian parents — Bob and Carol Dietsche — who love and serve the Lord!

their days there.

And then the Lord called.

At our AFLC Annual Conference in 1979 at Kalispell, Mont., after much discussion and prayer, a decision was made to purchase the former U.S. Air Force radar base at Osceola, Wis., for \$200,000.

Some called it a “white elephant.” My father is a visionary. He had visited the base and could see the potential; you could almost hear his mind whirling with ideas. At the age of 50, he volunteered to be the director and was hired by the AFLC’s Coordinating Committee.

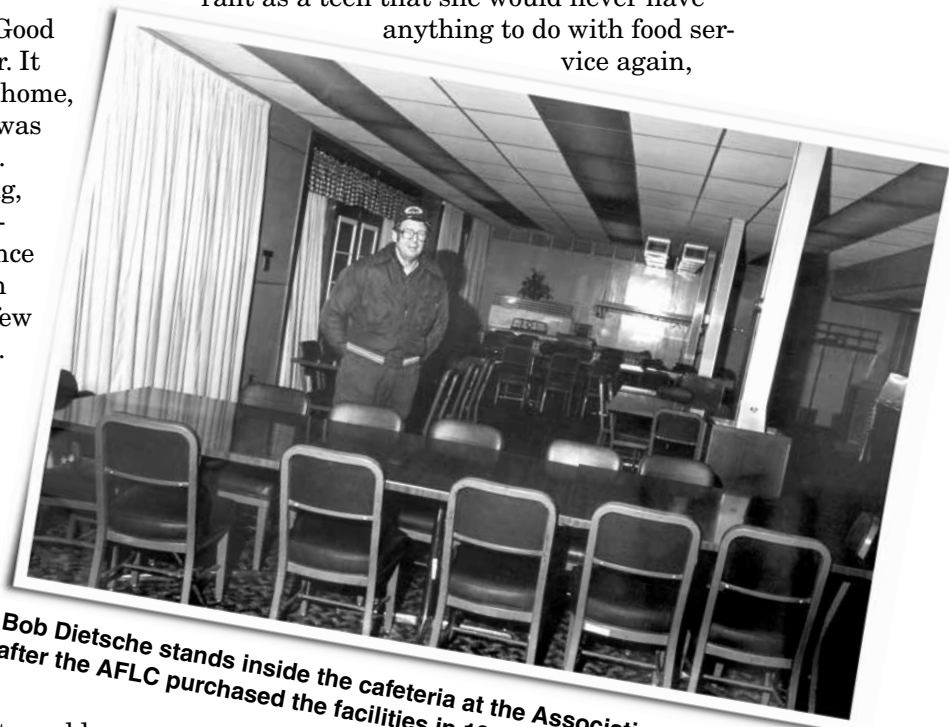
They moved to an apartment in the Good News Lodge in November that same year. It was harder for Mom to leave a beautiful home, friends and family, but she, too, felt this was God’s will. That first winter was difficult. There was little insulation in the building, the windows were terrible and the apartment was cold. The first pastor’s conference was held at the newly named Association Retreat Center in January 1980, only a few weeks after the final papers were signed.

Work began in buildings that had been unoccupied for many years. My sister, Chris, graduated from AFLBS and moved to our new home to help. My brother, Cary, also worked at the ARC. They cleaned and cleaned! One never knew what kind of critter could be found as doors and closets were opened. Blackened plumbing fixtures came clean with strong chemical cleaners, but there was no guarantee that once the water was turned on that it would work or that you wouldn’t get an unexpected shower.

My family worked day and night to have things somewhat ready for the first ARC Family Camp that was held that same year in August. This would be their way of life for the next 15 years as buildings were remodeled and readied to make more room for the next event at the ARC. Dad drew ideas on napkins at the dinner table and Mom prayed. If Dad didn’t know how something worked, he studied and figured it out. He took classes to be certified to run the water treatment plant. A bomb shelter became the Tabernacle — a meeting area for 500 people. A portion of the circular radar tower was used for the cross and circle metal sculpture at the entrance to the ARC. A swimming pool in Michigan was dug up, moved and installed at the ARC. We were dumbfounded when Dad announced he was going to build a lake where a forest stood!

In all of this, God provided! People came to help, and people gave. God arranged wonderful deals at auctions, and they came home smiling. God provided amazing coincidences so that every need was met. Equipment was donated or often loaned. God provided staff and helpers to come alongside and help carry the load. Gene Vukovich is one who has faithfully worked at the ARC for 20 years.

Mom is the organizer, and her infamous “to-do” lists sometimes grew very long. She had decided after working one summer at a restaurant as a teen that she would never have anything to do with food service again,



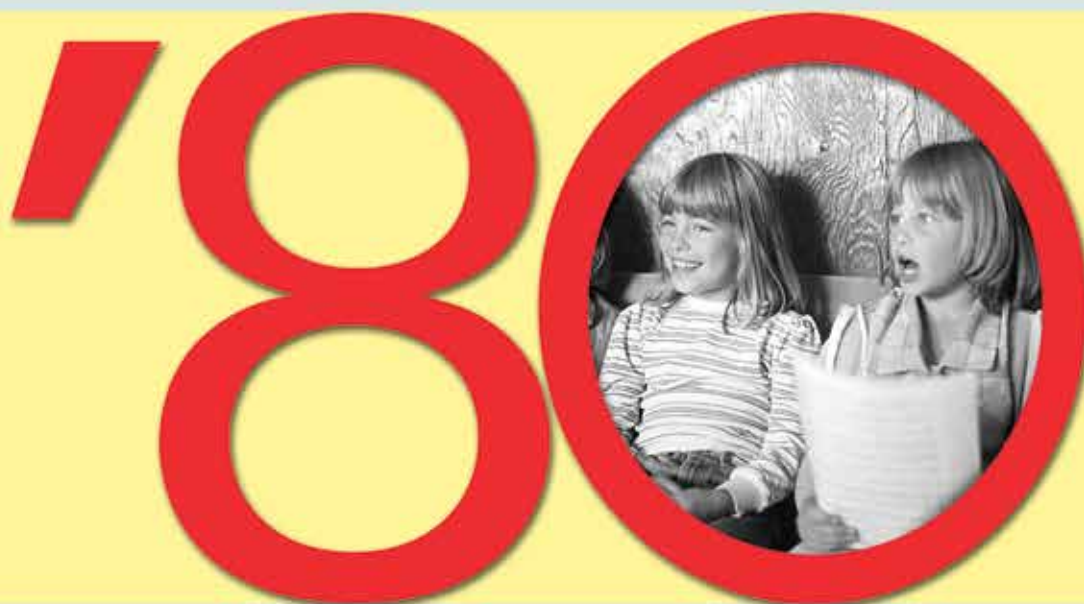
*Bob Dietsche stands inside the cafeteria at the Association Retreat Center after the AFLC purchased the facilities in 1979.*

but here she was feeding the multitudes at the ARC. She now laughs at where the Lord placed her. She served as bookkeeper, decorator and retreat coordinator filling in wherever needed.

Yes, my parents were stretched and often exhausted; as kids we worried about them. But when the Word of God was preached and people came to know Jesus in those buildings, they both declared that it was and is worth it all. “To God be the glory, great things He hath done!”

Even though they retired nine years ago, Dad works at the ARC just about every day. Mom still helps with the decorating touches at special events and banquets.

*Nash is a member of Solid Rock Free Lutheran,  
Anoka, Minn.*



Family  
at the  
Association  
Retreat  
Center



and  
beyond

**“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer” (Acts 2:42).**

**I**t was 24 years ago when my good friend, Cary Dietsche, gently urged us to attend a new family camp at the ARC. After a couple of calls from Cary, we hesitantly decided to give it a try. We laid claim to the corner room, called “Luke,” on the second floor of the Good News Lodge. Twenty-three years later, we feel we have homestead rights to that room. It has been our summer retreat. Even though we have watched as other ARC buildings were steadily renovated and updated, we have remained in our retreat very contentedly.

Through all the changes over the years, from the tireless work of Bob and Carol Dietsche and their staff to the new energies put in by Eric and Wendy Westlake and their staff, we are thrilled that the emphasis on God’s holy Word has never changed. I always look forward to that week with great anticipation. It is a blessing to get away from the everyday cares and pressures of life to be reunited with family and friends who are of like mind, intent on serving our Lord.

I look forward to the teaching and preaching that convicts, challenges, and encourages us in our faith. The early Christians in the book of Acts gathered together for prayer and fellowship. I think it is absolutely essential that we also gather to encourage one another and build each other up in the faith.

I am so grateful to my parents for their devotion to God and His Word. They made Bible camp a very important part of my growing up, and we tried to do the same for our kids. We wanted family camp to be a great summer outing and an annual event that would become somewhat of a habit, something that we expect would happen each year. We have missed just one year in the last 23, and along the way have made so many friendships that will last through eternity. Each year is like a homecoming, catching up on all that’s happened the previous year.

I have a lot of fond memories of the ARC, from the late nights in the lodge playing games and fellowshiping, pizza runs into Dresser, Wis., or just seeing who would stay up later (Steve Johnson or Erling Langness). But what I like the best is the feeling of safe haven at the ARC, a haven to get away to and trust the teaching of God’s Word, leaving behind all the hustle and bustle of the busy world that we live in. There we find people who truly care for and love each other, as family should. Thank you ARC staff for making that place available. And thank you, Cary, for that invitation so many years ago.

*— Ivar Berge  
St. Paul’s Free Lutheran  
Fargo, N.D.*

## Remembering family

Helen Knapp  
Maranatha Free Lutheran  
Willmar, Minn.

The ARC is such a good place to create family memories that last a lifetime. In 1987 our family had a reunion at family camp. We had 10 grandchildren present. George and I were on furlough from our AFLC mission at Campo Mourão, Paraná, Brazil. We had brought with us yellow, green and blue t-shirts for everyone to wear. The family picture taken that day remains in my mind. What a grand location to be together under the Word of God as a family.

I remember that we organized a softball team and cheered on our family members. George was catcher, Charles pitcher, Calvin on first and Halvor on third. Too bad I didn’t also write down the score, but of course I’m sure we won! There wasn’t much for playground equipment in those early years, but what little there was got put to good use. The children attended VBS; Carol had a paper bag puppet story for the approximately 150 children one day, and Helen did some crayon stories and our men’s quartet sang at an evening service.

Mealtimes were special too, with plenty of tasteful, nutritious food prepared by a cheerful, smiling staff. Bob and Carol Dietsche were serving and always looking after everyone’s comfort and needs.

The lodging was adequate, but not overly. Lounge chairs and sofas were someone’s castoffs. But they still served a purpose and we were glad to sit in

**Concluded on page 11**

# Medical Mission

By Pastor Craig Johnson

**W**hen Jesus sent His disciples out He told them: "As you go, preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near.' Heal the sick ..." (Matthew 10:7, 8, NIV). That combination of preaching the message and healing the sick is being done today in India.

Dr. Anand Kumar and his wife, Dr. Florence Nightingale, moved to the city of Piler in southern India in 1999. They are involved in a ministry of providing medical services and planting new congrega-

tions. They operate a medical clinic in the city of Piler, but much of their work goes on in surrounding villages.

In an effort to provide medical attention to as many children as possible, Dr. Kumar visits schools in the area regularly. In one place he meets monthly with teachers from 48 different schools, who serve 9,000 different students. He educates the teachers on prevention of communicable diseases and basic health care.

During these training times, he provides medicines and vaccines to the teachers and instructs them on how to administer them to their students. The doctors are continually looking to a variety of sources to try to find the proper and necessary medicines.

The government schools in these rural areas are often overwhelmed with the needs and open to help from wherever they can find it. In each school I visited with Dr. Kumar they graciously welcomed me and permitted me to share the good news of Jesus and have prayer.

A lady who believes in Jesus lives across the road from one school we visited. She wants to donate the land where she is living for the building of a church. She would be content to have a simple room in the

church and care for the building.

A teacher in another school also hopes for a church in his area one day. He wants to give Bibles to 1,000 children who have no knowledge of Jesus or the Bible.

The doctors travel to 30 different villages to provide medical services. They try to get to each village once every two months. While in the villages they set up medical camps at which they see 150 to 200 people a day. The doctors have been able to put together a team of 10 people to assist them in their medical work.

The people of the villages usually go into the clinic in town only when their conditions are quite serious. Other times they try remedies that are actually very harmful and administered by ones with no medical training. Dr. Kumar knows a man who lost his eyesight because of one of these misguided attempts at providing assistance.

While caring for people's physical needs, Dr. Kumar has been able to find out about their spiritual needs. He develops a relationship and trust with the people and is then able to come back to the village and conduct evangelistic meetings and begin the work of church planting. He has a team of four people who help him in that work.

The villages have few and sometimes no Christians, and Dr. Kumar's work is the only Christian work in the area. Encouraging someone to convert is a serious matter. One man from a Muslim family has become interested in Christianity and Dr. Kumar's work. It has caused him troubles with his family and community. Others from Hindu backgrounds encounter difficulties because they do not wear the Hindu symbols. And yet when we went to these villages and had a meeting in the road because no building existed, practically the whole village would turn out and listen. A mother with two young children told of her great desire to see a Christian congregation in her village. Otherwise it is a 10-mile walk for her to get to a place where the Bible is taught. People in another village spoke of their longing for someone to come and teach them about Jesus. Those with faith in Christ told of how their lives have been improved and changed after coming to know the Savior. Dr. Kumar's desire is that many others will have the same experience.



**Dr. Anand Kumar, his wife, Dr. Florence Nightingale, and their children.**

## Remembering family

Pastor George Knapp  
Maranatha Free Lutheran  
Willmar, Minn.

The ARC has been a refuge in times past.

In 1980 we had a family reunion there during Christmas. It was a nice spot for such an event. Present were Helen's father, Karen and Carlos, who were visiting us from Brazil, and another Brazilian friend, Vania. We spent three days there just relaxing and enjoying the family. Being wintertime, we enjoyed playing table games, watching black and white TV, and exchanging gifts. Our first three grandchildren had more fun with the boxes than the gifts! Helen had made large Christmas stockings for everyone, and they were hung on the doorknob of each family's room to be discovered Christmas morning. The large, cozy lounge at Good News Lodge was a very comfortable retreat for our growing family to create memories.

All in all, the ARC has been a refuge for the weary to come and be refreshed, a place away from the hustle and bustle of the world.

from page 9

them to visit with new friends from other churches and states. There was no air conditioning; everyone had fans running at full speed.

Now with grandchildren in college and married, it is not so easy to arrange to attend family Bible camp together. But the ARC continues to be a grand place for men's and women's retreats. We are looking forward to being in attendance there with family and friends at our AFLC Annual Conference in June.

Jeremiah 6:16 "This is what the Lord says: "Stand at the crossroads and look; ask for the ancient paths, ask where the good way is and walk in it, and you will find rest for your souls."

The good way to walk really does bring rest for one's soul. This is taught at the ARC in all its activities throughout the year. We are thankful for the ARC.

## WMF proposed constitutional changes

At last year's WMF convention, a reworked constitution was presented and reviewed. This year, a final presentation of the proposed changes will be made. Here are highlights of some of the changes that were proposed and approved last year.

### Constitution

If approved, officers' term lengths will change from a two-year term to a three-year term. Because of the increasing responsibilities that come with growth, longer terms will give new officers an opportunity to better understand their positions and provide stability on the board.

After working with a parliamentarian on the proper process for amending the constitution, a two-year process to change the constitution has been proposed. An amendment shall be presented at a convention, voted on and, if accepted, then presented again the following year. A two-third vote of the convention is required to approve an amendment.

Also included in this proposal is that the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern all proceedings of this organization where the constitution and by-laws are silent.

### By-laws

The by-laws were reordered to correspond bet-

ter with the constitution.

Non-elected positions (or "called" positions) were placed in an article to better define these positions and the process of establishing new positions in the future as the need arises.

The addition of an advisory committee was also proposed. This committee, composed of district WMF presidents and/or representatives, will provide counsel to members of the national board.

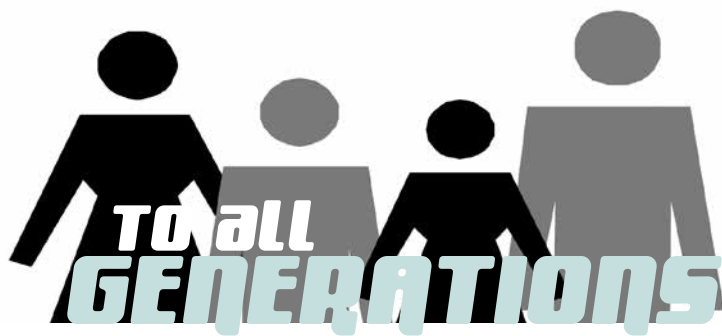
Also proposed is the inclusion of a procedure for amending the by-laws. The proposed process would be simpler because it is the working part of the constitution. By following the proposed procedure, a by-law could be accepted and added to the constitution if the requirements are met.

Spend time in prayer for all that will take place at the conference this year. If you do not have a copy of the proposed constitutional amendments, and would like one prior to the WMF National Convention in June, please contact Executive Secretary Sharon Borg, (763) 416-1375 or email [wmf@afcl.org](mailto:wmf@afcl.org).

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# 2004 Annual Conference

June 16-20, 2004

Association Retreat Center

Osceola, Wisconsin

Psalm 100:5

## Wednesday, June 16

- 9 a.m. The conference committees meet for devotions, instructions and room assignments.
- 7:30 p.m. The opening service of the conference  
Leader: To be named  
Speaker: Pastor Timothy Johnson, Fertile, Minn.  
AFLC President Pastor Robert Lee will open the conference and appoint necessary committees.

Noon

1:30 p.m.

Builders Fellowship Luncheon  
Chaplains Luncheon (Institutional, military, police & fire)

Devotions  
Report of Credentials Committee  
Election Procedures  
Elections  
● President — Three-year term  
● Vice President — One-year term  
● Secretary — One-year term  
Selection of nominees to the Home Missions Committee — For the position of two pastors & one layman; World Missions Committee — For the position of one pastor & one layman; Board of Trustees — For the position of one layman; ARC Board — For the position of one layman  
Report of Committee No. 1 (Administration)  
Election of nominees to the Coordinating Committee — Two pastors  
Election of Committee No. 1 for the 2005 Conference

5:30 p.m. Schools Corporation annual meeting

7 p.m. The Mission Festival Service conducted by the Women's Missionary Federation  
Speaker: Pastor Jonathan Abel, AFLC Missionary to Brazil

## Thursday, June 17

- 7:30 a.m. Schools' Breakfast
- 9 a.m. Devotions  
Report of the Credentials Committee  
Adoption of the Conference Agenda  
Election of the Nominating Committee for the 2005 Conference  
The President's Report  
Report of the Chairman of the Coordinating Committee, Pastor Kenneth Moland, Kirkland, Wash.  
Report of the Director of Development and AFLC Foundation, Jon Galland, Minneapolis  
Reports of Chaplaincy Ministries  
● Institutional: Pastor Kerwin Sletto, Ottawa, Ill.  
● Military: Pastor Tim Skramstad, Eagan, Minn.  
Report of the Director of the ARC, Eric Westlake, Osceola, Wis.  
Financial Report, AFLC Bookkeeper, Andrew Anderson, New Hope, Minn.  
Report of the Family Bible Camps  
● Lake Bronson — Treasurer, Sonia Balmer, Thief River Falls, Minn.  
● Wilderness — Treasurer, Jon Dryburgh, Grafton, N.D.  
Report of the Budget Analysis Committee, Tim Berntson, Buffalo, N.D.  
Report of the Nominating Committee, always in order  
Election of nominees for the Missions, Schools & ARC corporations
- 11:30 a.m. Prayer Hour — Leader: Pastor Rodger Olson, Camarillo, Calif.

5:30 p.m.

7 p.m.

## Friday, June 18

- 7 a.m. Missions Corporation annual meeting
- 9 a.m. Devotions  
Report of the Credentials Committee  
Report of the Chairman of the Stewardship Board, David Bjornson, Valley City, N.D.  
Report of the Chairman of the Board of Pensions, Glenn Espe, Thief River Falls, Minn.  
Report of Committee No. 5 (Stewardship & Pensions)  
Election of member to the Stewardship Board — One layman  
Election of member to the Board of Pensions — One layman  
Election of Committee No. 5 for the 2005 Conference

	Report of the Chairman of the Board of Trustees, Dr. Dan Mundfrom, Greeley, Colo. Report of the Dean of the Seminary, Dr. Francis Monseth, Rogers, Minn. Report of the Dean of the Bible School, Pastor James L. Johnson, Plymouth, Minn. Report of Vision 2004, Karen Floan, Plymouth, Minn. Report of Ministry Training Institute, Pastor Richard Gunderson, Cambridge, Minn. Report of Committee No. 2 (Schools)	11:30 a.m.	Report of the Director of Parish Education, Marian Christopherson, Crystal, Minn.
11:30 a.m.	Prayer Hour — Pastor Rodger Olson	Noon	Prayer Hour — Pastor Rodger Olson  AFLC Foundation Lunch
Noon	The ARC Corporation annual meeting Partners in Mission Outreach annual meeting	1:30 p.m.	Devotions Report of Credentials Committee Report of the President of the Free Lutheran Youth, Pastor Jason Holt, Fergus Falls, Minn. Report of Youth Ministries Director, Pastor Kevin Olson, Savage, Minn. Report of Committee No. 4 (Publications, Parish Education and Youth Work) Election of member to the Board of Publications and Parish Education — One layman Election of member to the Youth Board — One layman Election of Committee No. 4 for the 2005 Conference Report of the Chairman of the Colloquy Committee — Pastor Joel Rolf, Valley City, N.D. Election of Colloquy Committee for the 2005 Conference Report of special committees Election of three members to the Budget Analysis Committee — Two three-year terms; One two-year term Report of Committee No. 1 as the Committee on General Resolutions Other Reports
1:30 p.m.	Devotions Report of the Credentials Committee Continuing discussion of Committee No. 2 Election of Committee No. 2 for the 2005 Conference Report of Schools Corporation annual meeting Report of the Chairman of the World Missions Committee, Tom Caouette, Brooklyn Park, Minn. Report of the Director of World Missions, Pastor Del Palmer, Shakopee, Minn. Report of Partners in Mission Outreach Board President, Kenneth Sletten, Duluth, Minn. Report of the Chairman of the Home Missions Committee, Pastor Stephen Mundfrom, Arlington, S.D. Report of the Director of Home Missions, Pastor Paul Nash, Brooklyn Park, Minn. Report of FLAPS Executive Director, Lavon Bohling, Golden Valley, Minn. Report of the Chairman of the Commission on Evangelism, Gene Quist, Bloomington, Minn. Report of the Director of Evangelism, Pastor James Rasmussen, Maple Grove, Minn.	5:30 p.m.	Youth Banquet
		7:30 p.m.	Youth Night at the Conference Leader: To be named Speaker: Eric Christenson, New Hope, Minn.
5:30 p.m.	Pastors Banquet		
7:30 p.m.	Laymen's Service Leader: Gene Vukonich, Amery, Wis. Speaker: Eric Westlake, Osceola, Wis.	8 a.m.	Communion Service Leader: Pastor Todd Erickson, Lakeville, Minn. Speaker: Pastor Dana Coyle, Ottawa, Ill.

## Sunday, June 20

# Saturday, June 19

9 a.m.

- Devotions
- Report of the Credentials Committee
- Report of Committee No. 3 (Missions and Evangelism)
- Report of Missions Corporation annual meeting
- Election of member to the Commission on Evangelism —  
One layman
- Election of Committee No. 3 for the 2005 Conference
- Report of the Chairman of the Board of Publications and  
Parish Education, Pastor Philip Haugen, Crystal,  
Minn.

8 a.m.	Communion Service Leader: Pastor Todd Erickson, Lakeville, Minn. Speaker: Pastor Dana Coyle, Ottawa, Ill.
10:30 a.m.	Worship Service Leader: Pastor John Mundfrom, Eugene, Ore. Speaker: Pastor Stephen Mundfrom, Arlington, S.D.
	Conference Committee Pastor Robert Lee, President Pastor Brian Davidson, Secretary

# VOTE

## Nominees presented to the 2004 AFLC Annual Conference

\* Incumbents

X Nominees not named by publishing deadline



### Nominating Committee members

Tim Berntson, Buffalo, N.D. — Eastern North Dakota  
Ron Jorgenson, Beulah, N.D. — Western North Dakota/Eastern Montana  
Denis Parsley, Flandreau, S.D. — South Dakota  
Pastor Ken Hart, Greenbush, Minn. — Northwestern Minnesota  
Pastor Martin Horn, Kenyon, Minn. — North Central Minnesota  
George Hartman, Dalton, Minn. — Southwest Central Minnesota  
Rodney Kirchhoff, Hebron, Neb. — Nebraska/Kansas/Colorado  
Pastor Frank Cherney, Duluth, Minn. — Lake Superior  
Joel Erickson, Maple Grove, Minn. — Minneapolis  
Pastor Lyle Aadahl, Kasson, Minn. — Central Tri-State  
David Blake, Ontonagon, Mich. — Northern Michigan  
Pastor Clyde Grier, El Campo, Texas — South Central  
Vint Bruflat, Mesa, Ariz. — Southwestern  
Bill Fish, Everett, Wash. — Pacific Northwest  
Pastor James Molstre, Bethel Park, Pa. — Eastern  
Mark Fagerstrom, DeKalb, Ill. — Illinois

### Coordinating Committee

(One pastor, 5-year term)

\*Pastor David Skordahl, St. Michael, Minn.

Pastor Lyndon Korhonen, Cokato, Minn.

(One pastor, two-year term to fill resignation)

\*Pastor Gary Jorgenson, Durant, Okla.

Pastor Walter Johnson, Shakopee, Minn.

### AFLC Schools

#### Board of Trustees

Voted on by corporation members

(One layman, five-year term)

Art Wilson, Pittsburgh, Pa.

James Rolf, Brandon, Minn.

### World Missions Committee

Voted on by corporation members

(One pastor, five-year term)

\*Pastor Tom Tuura, St. James, Minn.

Pastor Jim Fugleberg, Fargo, N.D.

(One layman, five-year term)

\*Lyle Mattson, Greenbush, Minn.

Ken Sletten, Duluth, Minn.

### Home Missions Committee

Voted on by corporation members

(One pastor, five-year term)

Pastor Gerald Peterson, Oklahoma City, Okla.

Pastor Dale Finstrom, Glyndon, Minn.

(One pastor, two-year term to fill resignation)

\*Pastor Rick Long, Arlington, Wash.

X

(One layman, five-year term)

Willis Kettelhut, Deshler, Neb.

Scott Erickson, Badger, Minn.

### ARC Board

Voted on by corporation members

(One layman, five-year term)

\*Cliff Seldal, DeKalb, Ill.

Steve Lehmann, Milford, Ill.

### Stewardship Board

(One layman, five-year term)

Brad Putman, Cloquet, Minn.

Jeremy Zeltinger, Jamestown, N.D.

### Youth Board

(One layman, five-year term)

Gary Buenteimeier, Northome, Minn.

X

### Commission on Evangelism

(One layman, five-year term)

\*Gene Quist, Bloomington, Minn.

Cliff Eastvold, Duluth, Minn.

### FLAPS Board of Managers

Voted on by corporation members

(One pastor, five-year term)

\*Pastor Tom Tuura, St. James, Minn.

Pastor Eugene Enderlein, Plymouth, Minn.

### Board of Publications and Parish Education

(One layman, five-year term)

\*Jan Strand, Kenyon, Minn.

X

## **Board of Pensions**

(One layman, five-year term)

X

X

## **Missions Corporation**

(20 terms of five years each)

\*Bud Anderson, Lake Preston, S.D.

\*Pastor Richard Anderson, Elk River, Minn.

\*Pastor Ted Berkas, Bloomington, Minn.

\*Tom Caouette, Brooklyn Park, Minn.

\*Wayne Deubner, Brockton, Mont.

\*Pastor Dean Franz, Dollar Bay, Mich.

\*Pastor Alvin Grothe, Astoria, Ore.

\*Pastor Wayne Hanson, Minnetonka, Minn.

\*George Hartman, Dalton, Minn.

\*Pastor Orville Hiepler, Fallbrook, Calif.

\*Phil Jensen, Sioux Falls, S.D.

\*Karen Knudsvig, Buxton, N.D.

\*Pastor Rick Long, Arlington, Wash.

\*Pastor Bruce Peterson, Minneapolis, Minn.

\*Paul Slaamot, Tioga, N.D.

\*Ken Sletten, Duluth, Minn.

\*Pastor Jeff Swanson, Newark, Ill.

\*Jim Taylor, Pittsburgh, Pa.

\*Pastor Craig Wentzel, Edmore, N.D.

Wilson Bamesberger, Sioux Falls, S.D.

William Buck, Sinai, S.D.

Pastor John Chandler, Amarillo, Texas

Pastor Jim Christenson, Wahpeton, N.D.

Allan Clair, Springfield, Mo.

Cliff Eastvold, Hermantown, Minn.

Pastor James Gerdeen, Springfield, Mo.

Pastor Richard Gilmore, Onalaska, Wis.

Henry Hagenbuch, Utica, Ill.

Suzanne Hass, Zumbrota, Minn.

Erna Jochum, Bridgeville, Pa.

Paul Kylo, Byron, Minn.

Glenn Lee, Duluth, Minn.

Lester Mickelsen, Tioga, N.D.

Pastor Jerome Nikunen, Bertrand, Neb.

Pastor Greg Schram, Northwood, N.D.

Gene Schriefer, Dodgeville, Wis.

Pastor Warren Swanson, Tucson, Ariz.

Enoch Thorsgard, Northwood, N.D.

Tim Urbaniak, Argyle, Minn.

Lowell Varness, Ottawa, Ill.

## **Schools Corporation**

(Ten terms of five years each)

\*Pastor Lyle Aadahl, Byron, Minn.

\*David Anderson, Osceola, Wis.

\*Joel Erickson, Oslo, Minn.

\*Emory Flaten, Newfolden, Minn.

\*Wayne Floan, Plymouth, Minn.

\*Pastor Les Galland, Shakopee, Minn.

\*John Schlenk, Brooklyn Park, Minn.

\*Paul Strand, Kenyon, Minn.

\*Pastor Jon Wellumson, Williston, N.D.

\*Bruce Wolla, Minot, N.D.

Shawn Adrian, Valley City, N.D.

Gary Buenteimer, Northome, Minn.

Nathan Dalager, Argyle, Minn.

Phil Jensen, Sioux Falls, S.D.

Tim Johnson, Mentor, Minn.

Nathaniel Olson, Fargo, N.D.

Ralph Peterson, Portland, N.D.

Don Savage, Northwood, N.D.

Greg Schmitke, Glyndon, Minn.

Ron Thorson, Yorkville, Ill.

## **ARC Corporation**

(Ten terms of five years each)

\*Allen Anderson, Clear Lake, Wis.

\*Paul Handsaker, Radcliffe, Iowa

\*Pete Hill, Osceola, Wis.

\*Pastor Rodney Johnson, Stanley, N.D.

\*Pastor Walter Johnson, Shakopee, Minn.

\*Penny Nash, Lidgerwood, N.D.

\*Brian Rice, Balsam Lake, Wis.

\*Randy Sommer, Sparland, Ill.

\*Curt Twedt, Fargo, N.D.

Arne Anderson, Dassel, Minn.

David Blake, Ontonagon, Mich.

Pastor Rich Carr, Minneapolis

Ernie Hilbert, Wheatland, Iowa

John Eric Knuutila, South Range, Mich.

Pastor Clifford Johnson, Cloquet, Minn.

Dan Larson, Savage, Minn.

Ken Lehman, Onarga, Ill.

Jesse Long, Arlington, Wash.

Dan Nelson, Kandiyohi, Minn.

Dave Osthus, Eagan, Minn.

## **Nominees to serve at the 2005 Annual Conference**

### **Committee No. 1**

#### **(Administration)**

Pastor Dennis Gray, Newfolden, Minn.

Pastor Tom Brock, Brooklyn Center, Minn.

X

X

X

### **Committee No. 2**

#### **(Schools)**

Pastor Dale Mellgren, McIntosh, Minn.

Pastor Wade Mobley, Sioux Falls, S.D.

Ivar Berge, Fargo, N.D.

Jon Dryburgh, Grafton, N.D.

Phil Jensen, Sioux Falls, S.D.

### **Committee No. 3**

#### **(Missions and Evangelism)**

Pastor David Hinrichs, Ortonville, Minn.

Pastor Todd Erickson, Apple Valley, Minn.

Vint Bruflat, Chandler, Ariz.

X

X

### **Committee No. 4**

#### **(Publications and Parish Education)**

Pastor Todd Klemme, Starbuck, Minn.

Pastor Kent Sperry, DeKalb, Ill.

X

X

X

### **Committee No. 5**

#### **(Pensions and Stewardship)**

Pastor Jerry Nelson, LaCrosse, Wis.

Pastor Greg Schram, Northwood, N.D.

Joe Volz, Parker, S.D.

Harold Erickson, Wadena, Minn.

LaVern Thompson, Fergus Falls, Minn.

[WMF]

# National Convention

## Wednesday, June 16

- 8 a.m. Registration  
9 a.m. Bible study  
10:45 a.m. Business meeting  
Noon Lunch with Brita Ylitalo  
1:40 p.m. Workshop with Abels  
2:30 p.m. Business meeting  
4:30 p.m. Closing

## Thursday, June 17

- 7 a.m. Breakfast  
7 p.m. Service

“But for you who reverence my name, the sun of righteousness will rise with healing in its wings. And you will go free, leaping with joy ...” (Malachi 4:2).

“Healing in His Wings” is the theme chosen for the WMF convention June 16-17 at the ARC, Osceola, Wis. The meetings begin at 9 a.m. June 16, when Pastor Steve Carlson, who serves a three-church parish in Dalton, Minn., will speak on “The Healthy Christian Body, Soul and Spirit” for the morning Bible study. Leading devotions will be musicians from Emmaus Lutheran, Bloomington, Minn., and Living Word, St. Michael, Minn., under the direction of Josh and Amy Skogerboe.

Brita Ylitalo, Cokato, Minn., will speak at the luncheon. Ylitalo, who lost a child to AIDS, has spoken to church groups for several years. Her talk is titled, “Resting in His Wings.” Pastor Jonathan and Tamba Abel, missionaries to Brazil, will share in the afternoon workshop.

Because of the 25th anniversary celebration for the ARC planned for the evening of June 16, a time when we normally have our banquet, we are returning to our former format of having a women’s breakfast on June 17. Ellen Monseth and her daughter, Rhoda Jore, will share about their summer teaching mission to East Africa.

During the business meetings, elections will be held for a first vice president and secretary. We will also give final consideration to amending the constitution and continue a discussion on the position of women’s outreach coordinator. On June 17, the Mission Festival Service will feature the Abel family singing and sharing. Pastor Abel will bring the message.

All meals will be provided for at the ARC. Nurseries will also be available, as well as vacation Bible school for children and activities for youths.

— Elaine Kohl  
WMF secretary

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City / state / zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Congregation: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City / state / zip: \_\_\_\_\_

**FEES:**  
**Registration: \$7** (required)  
**Luncheon: \$7** ☐  
**Breakfast: \$7** ☐

**Make checks payable to Dawn Johnson WMF and send  
to 2997 30th Ave. Wilson, WI 54027.**

Registrations received after June 1 must add a \$3 late fee.

# [2004 Annual Conference]



**June 16-20 Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wis.**

**Hosts:** Amery Free Lutheran, Amery, Wis.; Christ the King Lutheran, Wilson, Wis.; Hosanna Free Lutheran, Cumberland, Wis.; Sunnyside Lutheran, Stacy, Minn.; Timberland-Ringebu Free Lutheran, Barronette, Wis.

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Spouse:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone (D):** \_\_\_\_\_ **(E):** \_\_\_\_\_

**City / state / zip:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Congregation:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Are you:** pastor / visiting pastor / lay member / lay visitor

**Spouse:** pastor / visiting pastor / lay member / lay visitor

**Registration: \$30 single, \$40 couple**

**Make checks payable to AFLC and send to  
3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Plymouth, MN 55441.**

Registrations received after June 1 must add a \$5 late fee.

## LODGING

**ARC:** 1-800-294-2877

**River Valley Inn:** (715) 294-4060 Located 6 miles away.

**Dalles House Motel:** (715) 483-3206 Located 11 miles away.

**Holiday Inn:** (715) 483-5775 Located 12 miles away.

Camping available at the ARC. Call for information.

MEAL		#
ARC bar-be-cue banquet (Wed.)		
Thursday	Schools breakfast	
	Conference breakfast	
	Chaplain's lunch	
	Builders fellowship lunch	
	Conference lunch	
	Schools Corp. dinner	
	Conference dinner	
Friday	Missions Corp. breakfast	
	Conference breakfast	
	ARC Corp. lunch	
	Conference lunch	
	Pastors banquet	
Saturday	Conference dinner	
	Conference breakfast	
	Foundation lunch	
	Conference lunch	
	Youth banquet	
Conference dinner		
<b>All meals: \$6</b>		
<b>Pastors banquet: \$10</b>		

# CHAPLAINCY

## in the nursing home

1

I have heard it said that for pastors, behind door no. 1 is the parish ministry. For myself, door no. 2 has brought a passion for the police and sheriff chaplaincy. Both of these doors have been filled with great joy and fulfillment. Little did I think that there would be a door no. 3. The prompting of God's Spirit to open that door led me to become the spiritual care director at Country Manor in Sartell, Minn. What a prize it has become!

2

Being a chaplain here has brought such peace and purpose to my life. I enjoy working with a dedicated team, from management to housekeeping. The residents — many of who were busy preparing for their retirement, raising their families or pursuing other interests — now have the time and awareness to include God in their lives.

3

It is a joy to be involved in these residents' lives. To visit, share the Word of God and pray with them brings such satisfaction — and frustration. To see healthy bodies with minds that do not function like they used to is difficult. Music and worship are two avenues where we can still meet. Simple songs like

"Jesus Loves Me" and "Amazing Grace" are sung by nearly all our residents. They also join in when we pray the Lord's Prayer.

The staff become so attached to the residents who stay weeks, months or even years. They gather with family and friends for a bedside service upon the death of one of these special ones. They are there when there are no family or friends.

For many years, my wife and I have worked hard to build free and living Lutheran congregations. We were always looking for those who would be open to God's love. We loved reaching out to others and sharing Christ with them. In our new ministry, the people are already there. It is just difficult finding enough time to care for all the needs that come before us. Let us not forget those who now have time to contemplate the things that really matter.

— Pastor Gary Skramstad  
Sartell, Minn.

## Your path to service

I have learned some of the most touching lessons of my life from those I have taken care of. Both of my grandmothers often told me that being a nurse is a gift, and also a mission.

God led me to my current position at Country Manor in March 2001. We serve the aging population. Everyday I am blessed with the joy of seeing the spark of recognition in the eyes of an employee who understands that there is more to taking care of a person than helping them get dressed or bathe — when they understand that the people we serve are valuable, with a rich history to share. Likewise, it is a joy to break

down the old ideas of "the nursing home" and help residents live to their fullest potentials. It is a joy to hear laughter in the halls, see smiles and find staff members from all departments developing bonds with residents and families.

We all need to be fortified in prayer and in the Word to effectively serve and praise God in our day. At times we serve as role models, other times we offer support or education to resolve problems. Often, we celebrate successes. At times there are problems that seem as big as mountains, and I know that we are given trials so that we can learn to better serve others. The frustrating days

are far outnumbered by days of sunshine. With trust in God, our day is full of not only hard work, but also blessings.

We all have varied pathways in our lives. At times we may think we are too busy to deal with seemingly minor concerns. But do not pass up the opportunity to serve others. Look into the corners of your day, and you will find the Lord has led someone to you through an unexpected path.

— Denise (Berg) Rudningen, R.N.  
St. Cloud, Minn.  
1985 graduate of AFLBS

# Progress



[World Missions]

**O**n a recent Sunday, MTI intern Justin Kantonen made the two-hour drive down to Aguascalientes with me. It was my turn to preach for the congregation there, and we took the opportunity to introduce Justin to the church that had been planted in that city. As we headed back home after the service Justin asked a great question, “After the same amount of time in Aguascalientes as you and the Giles have been in Jerez, how do the results compare?”



**Todd Schierkolk**

I passed that question on to my fellow-workers, Dan and Debbie Giles, who ministered in Aguascalientes in the early years of the congregation. It provided a great opportunity for some reflection about the ministry here. The end result is that we’re doing all right in comparison.

In Jerez we have a ministry team of six people: three pastors and their wives. We have about seven adults coming on a somewhat consistent basis to our Sunday morning worship services. If everyone came at the same time, we’d probably see around 35 in all. In addition to those seven adults,

though, we have about 20 kids in three Sunday school classes, 20-30 kids in the Kid’s Club in our neighborhood, another 20 in the Kid’s Club in Pastor Ricardo’s neighborhood. There are also about 15 who might show up for the Boy’s Club outreach ministry, midweek men’s and women’s Bible studies, a grade school English class with up to 30 kids in it, an adult English class with about eight in the current class, a small English worship service and a Bible study outreach to the Americans and Canadians living here in Jerez.

Thanks for the question, Justin.

Outreach and ministry in Jerez falls into four categories. First is community involvement. Whether through playing basketball, being at meetings of the local paramedics, singing in the town kid’s choir or visiting the many contacts we have through businesses here, being involved in the community enables us to get to know people and let them get to know and begin to trust us.

Second is helps ministries. When the chips are down for people in the congregation, it is a vital testimony to people around when they see Christians taking care of each other. Many times the helping hand is extended to people who are not in our congregation, as well.

Third is specific outreach ministries, which include personal visitations, Kid’s Clubs, English VBS, Spanish VBS, and evangelistic events that well-prepared mission teams can put on.

Fourth is discipleship, which includes Sunday worship and Sunday school classes, youth group, midweek Bible studies and one-on-one studies with men and women. It also includes the translation of Sunday school curriculum by Dan and Debbie, which has led to a number of open doors for ministry. On a broader scale, discipleship ministry includes Dan’s teaching at a local Bible school in town and the Lutheran Bible school located about 10 hours away for two weeks a year.

That isn’t everything that goes on in the life and times of your missionaries in Mexico, but it’s a good basic picture of the ministry.



# Summer teams ready for ministry

## *Vans need replacing*

As the AFLBS summer teams are once again preparing for several months of travel to minister to AFLC congregations, I'd like to ask you for two things. First, please pray for them as they go out after graduation and share in their various ministries. Second, I ask you to consider the needs our schools face for vehicles for these teams.

As I was getting the vans ready for weekend ministry teams recently, I was very concerned about the reliability of these vehicles and the condition that they are in. During the school year, the vans are used by various ministry teams and the basketball teams. In the summer, the Ambassador, Majesty, Cornerstone, and Foundation teams travel in these vans sharing with more than 85 congregations. The three oldest vehicles have ultra high mileage and body rust. The newest van, a 1999 Ford, has 155,000 miles.

In praying about this situation, I felt led to bring the need to replace these vans before you. Already, the school has received one van from an AFLC congregation. I realize that financial requests come from many different ministries, so I am seeking the Lord's will for this. Whatever the outcome is, it will give me direction and I thank you for considering this. Please call or email me if you should have any questions. Email: waynef@aflc.org, cell phone: 612-751-3072.

— Wayne Floan  
Head of maintenance  
AFLC Schools

## Volunteer opportunity available on campus of AFLC schools

AFLC Schools and FLAPS are partnering together this summer for several work projects on the AFLC Schools campus in Plymouth, Minn. The projects include remodeling work in the chapel and dorm buildings. Several project work dates have been established: June 1-12 (any or all days), July 15-17 and July 22-24.

Specifically, the projects at the chapel building include landscaping, painting, refinishing pews and woodwork, repair of gutters, paneling and ceiling tiles and general cleaning. Dorm work includes painting inside and out, repairing ceiling tiles, floor tiles, outside faucets and cement steps; building a bike rack; replacing carpet and general cleaning. The maintenance garage also needs roof repairs.



**A work crew from the Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wis., spent the first weeks of April replacing the roof of the AFLC schools chapel building.**

Housing and meals will be provided. Evenings will be free, although some special events have been planned.

To volunteer for any of these dates, please call FLAPS at (763) 545-5631 or email at flaps@aflc.org. A registration form is available. Volunteers will also be accepted for dates other than those listed.

## Alaska mission summer project

The Lutheran Mission Societies (LMS) has received funding for large maintenance projects at Naknek Lutheran Community Church and KAKN radio station in Naknek, Alaska. AFLC licensed pastor Henry Mohagen serves as field director of the mission. Volunteer work teams are currently being assembled to complete the work, which includes a new roof and windows at the church, maintenance and remodeling for a rear arctic entry at the radio station and an addition of a bathroom and Sunday school rooms to the South Naknek Lutheran Church. Self-motivated carpenters, plumbers, metal workers, electricians, general laborers and cooks are needed.

Volunteers must pay for their own transportation to King Salmon, Alaska. The best time to come is from July 15-30 or a bit into August. Stuff your suitcase full of food, a compact sleeping bag, work clothes and come help us get our aging facilities back in good repair. Lord willing, we will provide all the fresh salmon you can eat!

If interested in being part of an exciting building project this summer, contact Pastor Tom Olson, LMS president, at 218-879-3113 or pastortomolson@aol.com.

A funeral service for **Pastor Arnold Stone**, 92, was held in Alexandria, Minn., on March 29. Pastor Stone was a part-time instructor at AFLC schools for 12 years while he served a large congregation in Fridley, Minn. He also taught at the old Lutheran Bible Institute branches in Minneapolis, California, Washington and Hawaii. During his retirement years, he served as an evangelist and Bible teacher for the Lutheran Evangelistic Movement. Survivors include his wife, Evelyn; a son, Dale; a daughter, Dorayne; and four grandchildren.

**Ebenezer Free Lutheran**, a new congregation recently formed in Humbolt, Tenn., was granted Home Missions status by the AFLC. The church, which is non-subsidized, is served by a lay pastor. Pastor Brent Logeman, Metropolis, Ill., is overseeing the work.

**Pastor Donald Greven**, Newark, Ill., has accepted a call to serve Bad Axe Lutheran, rural Viroqua, Wis., an independent congregation. He serves West Lisbon Evangelical Lutheran, Newark.

## Crossings available at Parish Education

Book marks anniversary of large-scale Norwegian immigration to United States

A historic volume recently printed by the Norwegian-American Historical Association marks the 175th anniversary of the beginning of large-scale Norwegian immigration to the United States. "Crossings: Norwegian-American Lutheranism as a Transatlantic Tradition" compares the histories of two similar but distinct versions of the same religious tradition, Norwegian Lutheranism and Norwegian-American Lutheranism.

The book also explores the exchange of influences between the Church of Norway and the Norwegian-American Lutheran churches in the United States. Chapters include "The Perils of 'Freedom' in the American Immigrant Church," "Religion and Church in Early Immigrant Letters," and "Suffered under Pontius Pontoppidan' or 'Good, Old Pontoppidan'?" The book is available from AFLC Parish Education.



## Florida congregation joins AFLC

**C**hrist the Messiah Lutheran is located on a busy street in South Jacksonville. Initially, our congregation was formed by the American Lutheran Church around 1947 and later became part of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The congregation was always biblically based and strong in the Word of the Lord. But for many years, the congregation had been upset by the liberal stands by the ELCA on abortion, interpretation of Scripture, and homosexual rights. Our current pastor, Pastor Walter Enquist, came to us in June 1998. The congregation had gone through several splits and some hard times, but now we feel we are where we're supposed to be — in the AFLC. We want to emphasize Jesus and the Word as well as outreach to the lost. God willing, we shall have a greater impact on Jacksonville.

We have found through knocking on doors that a sizeable Muslim population from Albania and Bosnia lives in nearby projects. We have been praying for ways to reach them and a very large Jewish population near us. About one and a half years ago a woman with an outreach to youths came to our congregation and brought a youth group made up of Albanian and Bosnian teens with her. They are now a regular part of our worshipping community.

Originally, our congregation was called Christ Lutheran. But after joining the AFLC, we felt we should emphasize the change by renaming our church. By "Messiah," we hope to subtly speak to the Jewish community with the message, "Christ is the Messiah."

Our congregation is racially diverse, with Anglos, Hispanics, East Indians, and African-Americans. We have a fairly informal worship style with hymns, praise and worship, Scripture readings, the Creed, the sermon, free prayers, and Holy Communion each Sunday. We have been blessed to have two buildings in a good location. We're also blessed with some mature believers who are knowledgeable about the Word and who wish to reach out to the lost.

**Pastor Jerome Nikunen**, Bertrand, Neb., accepted a call to serve Zoar Free Lutheran, Hatton, N.D. His call also includes the chaplaincy position at the Tri-County Retirement and Nursing Home in Hatton. He is currently serving Faith Free Lutheran, Bertrand, Neb., and tentatively plans to move June 1.

**Pastor Gary Jorgenson**, Durant, Okla., accepted a call to serve Christ the King Lutheran, East Grand Forks, Minn. Jorgenson currently serves Faith Lutheran, Durant.

Seminarian **Brent Olson** has accepted a call to serve on the pastoral staff of Ruthfred Lutheran Church, Bethel Park, Pa., where he is completing his internship.

Seminarian **Jason Siemens** has accepted a call to serve St. Matthews Evangelical Lutheran, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada. The congregation joined the AFLC in June 2003. Siemens will graduate from AFLTS this spring and his family plans to move to Edmonton at the end of July.

Members of the coordinating committee of the **AFLC in Canada** granted a house fellowship group called "Church for the People Who Do Not Want to Go to Church Any more" home missions status. Pastor Ken Wilsdon leads the group, which meets in Calgary, Alberta, in worship.

**Bethlehem Lutheran**, Calgary, has voted to withdraw its membership from the AFLC Canada.

Internships for senior seminarians have been assigned:

● **Dale Lankford** will spend his year-long internship at Ny Stavanger Free Lutheran, Buxton, N.D., and Valley Free Lutheran, Portland, N.D., under the guidance of Pastor Greg Schram, who serves Ebenezer Lutheran, Northwood, N.D.

● **Scott Guhl** will work at Vision of Glory Lutheran, Plymouth, Minn., with senior pastor Dr. Mark Herringshaw.

● **Dennis Norby** will work with Pastor Steve Carlson at Kvam Free Lutheran and Zion-Sarpsburg Lutheran in Dalton, Minn., and Tordenskjold Lutheran in Underwood, Minn.

● **Craig Scavo** will work with Pastor James Gerdeen at Immanuel Lutheran, Springfield, MO.

● **Calvin Willard** will work with Pastor David Barnhart at Peace Lutheran in Canal Winchester, Ohio.

## AFLC memorials — March

### AFLBS

*Betty Waterworth, Myrtle Tungseth, Oswald Torkelson, Orlie Moland, David Anderson*

### AFLTS

*Ellis Mueller, Lillian Bergan, Lt. Col. Raymond McKelvey*

### Evangelism

*Reuben Zabel, Chance Olson, Norris Fugleberg*

### FLAPS

*Josephine Bohling*

### Home Missions

*Joanne Berg, David Anderson, Mildred Bjornson (2), Jan Fatland, Mildred Mathison, Joey Rezac, Ole*

### Berg

### Parish Education

*Flo Ann Bredeson, Edna Ohnstad, David Anderson*

### Vision 2004

*William and Elna Barrington, Pam Sundhagen, Evelyn Buck, Dr. Arnold Stone, Gertrude Berhow, David Gunderson*

### World Missions

*William and Elna Barrington, Mildred Bjornson, Mildred Mathison*

*... in honor of*

### AFLBS

*Clara Gunderson*

**Emma Larson**, 80, widow of AFLC Pastor Alvin Larson, died Jan. 2 at Detroit Lakes, Minn. Surviving are three sons, A. David (Joanne) Larson, Santa Ana, Calif., James (Ruth) Larson, El Cajon, Calif., and Paul (Dawn) Larson, Callaway, Minn.; two daughters, Marlene Unverzagt, Detroit Lakes, and Mary (Pastor Don) Greven, Newark, Ill.; 14

grandchildren and 21 great-grandchildren.

**Mildred Mathison**, 91, widow of AFLC lay pastor Ed Mathison, died Oct. 21, 2003. Her funeral service was held at Rice Lutheran, rural Bagley, Minn., where they had been members since the 1930s.

### Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

### AFLC Benevolences (3 month) – January 1 - March 31, 2004

FUND	TOTAL Subsidy	REC'D IN MARCH	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	% TOTAL
General Fund . . . . .	\$288,771	\$24,451.38	\$75,129.36	26
Youth Ministries . . .	54,024	5,488.80	18,408.12	34
Parish Education . . .	82,062	12,052.42	21,401.65	26
Seminary . . . . .	154,195	17,110.68	50,457.43	33
Bible School . . . . .	264,089	14,623.18	44,254.61	17
Home Missions. . . . .	287,115	21,711.02	59,998.16	21
Church Extension . . .	24,576	348.63	1,377.99	6
World Missions. . . . .	256,326	19,582.14	46,439.18	18
Personal Support . . .	328,311	27,962.16	86,403.03	26
<b>TOTALS . . . . .</b>	<b>\$1,739,469</b>	<b>\$143,330.41</b>	<b>\$403,869.53</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>TOTALS 2003 . . . . .</b>	<b>\$1,740,325</b>	<b>\$114,341.24</b>	<b>\$378,503.60</b>	<b>22</b>

### Goal 25%

The Evangelism Department received \$11,812.20 in March.

The office of director of Development received \$125 in March.

# Small is special

[Editorial]

**T**he AFLC has a lot of small congregations. It is not just us, though. Megachurches with thousands of people get a lot of attention. But according to a Barna research report, the typical Protestant church has 89 adults in attendance during an average weekend. In total, 60 percent of Protestant churches have 100 or fewer adults on a typical weekend, while slightly less than 2 percent have 1,000 or more adults.



**Craig Johnson**

We who belong to what the world may consider a small congregation are in the majority, but we often don't feel that way. Small congregations get tempted to view themselves as insignificant. The pastor may wonder what he is doing wrong. The congregation may question if the work matters and if there is any point to carrying on.

Bob Ray works with bivocational ministers (ones who work other jobs in addition to pastoring a church) and smaller churches in the Baptist General Convention of Texas. In a recent article he wrote of how work in smaller congregations "is seen as less prestigious in the eyes of some. ... Small-church ministry is viewed as a stepping-stone to larger churches with better-paying positions. ... To compound the issue, the number of smaller churches is increasing as larger congregations decline. Small churches are the future, and ministers will need to lead them. ... More people would feel called to smaller churches if congregations and seminaries encouraged believers to consider bivocational minis-

try and service in smaller venues."

The AFLC has traditionally encouraged "service in smaller venues." I believe it is one of our strengths. Some congregations have joined our group, finding a welcome when another church body encouraged them to close because of their small numbers. We have treated each congregation as valuable and important, no matter its size. Our first Fundamental Principle declares that "the congregation is the right form of the Kingdom of God on earth." That is not dependent on the size of the congregation.

A number of years ago our Bible school choir put on a concert for the congregation I was serving in Eugene, Ore. It was a big event for the congregation if 50 people were in attendance. Thinking in purely practical terms, there wasn't any good reason for a choir on tour from the Minneapolis area to go out of their way to serve a little congregation like ours. But still they came. That is something I appreciate about the AFLC. We appreciate the small congregation.

Jesus said, "For where two or three come together in my name, there am I with them" (Matthew 18:20, NIV). Jesus considers the coming together of two or three an important enough event that He is willing to show up for it. It should not require two or three hundred before we get interested.

The numbers don't tell the whole story. Low attendance numbers could mean something is wrong in the congregation, but that is not always the case. Likewise, big numbers don't mean everything is great. They also don't mean, as some in small congregations are tempted to think, that the large group must be compromising their teaching of the Word and that is why they are drawing a crowd.

The numbers  
don't tell the  
whole story.

Sometimes in Jesus' ministry He had large crowds following Him. Other times the crowds deserted Him and He had only a handful who were faithful and interested.

In I Corinthians 1:27-29 it says, "But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. He chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things — and the things that are not — to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him." We usually apply those verses to individuals, which is fine, but considering the context, they can first be applied to congregations. The verses are part of a letter written to a congregation that in many ways was foolish, weak and lowly. And yet that congregation was chosen by God and important to Him. It may have been despised by the world with little reason to boast. But that is just the type of congregation that God can use to do great and mighty things.

We are to be concerned with numbers — numbers in the kingdom of God. The Lord often uses small congregations to increase those numbers, to impact lives and bring many to a saving faith in Jesus. We give thanks for the surprising ways God works and the big things He can do through small congregations.

# Under control or under grace?

**D**id you ever think you had everything completely under control only to find out that, in fact, everything was out of control?

A few years ago following a Sunday evening missions meeting, two small children (one of them my daughter) went into my office and spilled some copier toner — a fine black powder that looks very messy on light blue carpet. I went to my office the next day and knelt down on the floor with my wet-dry vacuum and cleaned up the mess. Amazingly, it vacuumed up perfectly and completely. I was so pleased — until I turned around to see that the fine, black powder had been blown out of the filter-less exhaust of my vacuum all over my office.

I thought I had everything under control when really it was out of control. Now I had a bigger mess to deal with than when I started.

Life can be like that. We think we can handle it on our own, but all too often we find ourselves facing so much that is beyond our control, out of control or at least out of *our* control.

Sin is like that, too. The Lord warned Cain in Genesis 4:7, “If you do well, will not your countenance be lifted up? And if you do not do well, sin is crouching at the door, and its desire is

for you, but you must master it.”

Sin, in all its forms, crouches at the door luring us, tempting us and longing to destroy us. But we can handle it, right? We have everything under control, right?

If we really have everything under control, then why do we need alcoholics anonymous, gamblers anonymous, or overeaters anonymous? Why do we have people addicted to Internet pornography and all the abuses that our culture has? Why are we frustrated when we can’t pull off the simplest of things like being consistently kind, loving and caring in word and deed? Why do we relate so well with Paul in Romans 7: doing what we don’t want to do and not doing what we know we should do?

Sadly, I’ve met quite a few people over the years who have said, “I tried the Christianity thing, but I couldn’t pull it off. It didn’t work for me.” This kind of thinking reveals a very wrong conception of Christianity. We can’t “pull it off” and were never intended to.

I am thankful that salvation and the Christian life are not about me having everything under control. I look to Jesus because so much of my life is out of control, and I know sin could devastate my life and destroy my soul forever. I need grace, God’s

## [Building the Base]

**“Now I had a bigger mess to deal with than when I started. Life can be like that. We think we can handle it on our own ...”**

amazing, forgiving, undeserved grace. We can be saved by grace, live by grace and live “under” grace. “For sin shall not be master over you, for you are not under law, but under grace” (Romans 6:14).

How are you doing? Is your life under control, out of control or under grace? “As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him” (Colossians 2:7).

Saved by grace. Walk by grace.

— Pastor Jeff Swanson  
Helmar Lutheran  
Helmar, Ill.