

THE LUTHERAN 

MAY 2014

AMBASSADOR



OUR
GREATEST
WORK

Is it still finished?

BY ANDREW KNEELAND

Easter is over, at least according to the calendar. Palm branches and decorative bunnies are being shoved back into closets, and summer projects and vacations are starting to be scheduled.

But, as a pastor I heard recently said, I'm the kind of guy who needs to hear something over and over for it to stick.

Even though Jesus' triumphant defeat of death and sin was officially celebrated a few weeks ago, the truths of Easter Sunday are important every day of the year. They're as crucial to us today as they were on April 20. In fact, if the resurrection weren't true, Christianity would be nothing more than an elaborate hoax.

Paul says in I Corinthians 15:17, "If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins." The entirety of the Christian faith rests on whether or not Jesus arose from the dead. This resurrection is certainly worth remembering for more than just one day out of the year.

As Christians, we believe in our heads that Jesus arose from the dead. Every sect and branch and denomination of the Christian Church believes that. But it can be easy to gloss over the reason Jesus chose to die, and what He accomplished by miraculously becoming alive again.

"*Tetelestai*" was the last thing Jesus said before He died, recorded in John 19:30. Also the theme of the FLY youth convention in 2003, *tetelestai* means "it is finished." Jesus knew exactly what He was doing on that cross, and He knew exactly what He had accomplished when He rose from the grave three days later.



Jesus said it was finished then, but is it still finished? Can we still cling to the promise that our sins are forgiven and we're welcome to spend eternity with Christ?

Yes, absolutely. With apologies to those who don't get as excited about grammar as I do, it's important to know that the word *tetelestai* has deep, significant meaning that we can't easily see in English. The word is in perfect indicative tense in the original Greek language, meaning that it refers to an actual event that was completed in the past, but has ongoing effects.

Jesus' death and resurrection were definite and real, but the scope of their impact stretched far beyond that hill outside Jerusalem.

Jesus accomplished quite a bit on that weekend about 2,000 years ago. He made a final and absolute payment for sin. Once, for everyone, of everywhere, of every time. His work bridged the gap between sinful man and perfect God: Jesus assumed the punishment we deserve, took it upon Himself, and made a way for us to spend forever with Him.

"It is finished" means that nothing else needs to be added; Jesus' work is final and complete. And it is just as exciting for us to understand today as it was on Easter Sunday.

It is easy to believe that Christ rose from the dead. But Jesus invites us to believe that His redemptive work is still finished. Just like He said.

Kneeland, a 2013 graduate of AFLBS, attends Atonement Free Lutheran, Arlington, Wash.

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Editor Pastor Robert L. Lee
rlee@aflc.org

Managing Editor Ruth Gunderson
ruthg@aflc.org

Editorial Board Oryen Benrud
Pastor Jerry Moan
Pastor James L. Johnson

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

—Martin Luther

I've seen far too many Christians who are more than willing to travel halfway around the world to volunteer for a week in an orphanage, but who cannot bring themselves to take the personal risk of sharing Jesus with the co-worker who sits day after day in the cubicle right next to them.

—Lee Strobel

Life is war. That's not all it is. But it is always that. Our weakness in prayer is owing largely to our neglect of this truth. Prayer is primarily a wartime walkie-talkie for the mission of the church as it advances against the powers of darkness and unbelief.

—John Piper

I've heard people say, "I want more of a heart for missions." I always respond, "Jesus tells you exactly how to get it. Put your money in missions—and in your church and the poor—and your heart will follow."

—Randy Alcorn



HOW BEAUTIFUL THE FEET

by Kirstie Schierkolk



From the moment my parents stepped onto the mission field, they knew that their daughters' lives would be completely different from their own. They may have foreseen the 16th century cathedrals and the cacti, but the cowbell announcing the garbage truck, the midnight mariachi concerts outside the window, and their Scandinavian daughters drenching their popcorn in hot sauce may have caught them a bit by surprise. They may have foreseen that their daughters would spend only limited time with their grandparents, or that they wouldn't be able to participate in "normal" extracurricular activities; but they never anticipated that all three girls would grow up to be

bilingual and actually be a part of the ministry with them. Yes, they knew it was going to be a different kind of life, with challenges and blessings that would be different than most. But they also knew that it was Jesus who had called them to it. And for that reason alone, they trusted it would be the absolute best life for their daughters—no matter how different.

The apostle Paul says in Romans that the feet that bring the good news of Jesus are beautiful. We tend to picture beautiful feet as having soft, pink baby skin; but to bring peace all over the world, your beautiful feet have got to be tough. And sometimes, they get a few blisters along the way.

Life as a missionary kid is definitely not always easy. It isn't easy to have to go a year without see-



ing your cousins, or to have to settle for a fuzzy Skype conversation with Grandma and Grandpa when some of your American friends get to see their grandparents every couple of months. It isn't easy to have to say goodbye repeatedly, sometimes without knowing when you'll see your loved ones again. When I was little, it was even crushing that we couldn't buy apple cider and cocoa packets during the Christmas season.

But what I have found is that each of these crosses has been redeemed in some way. Yes, I often only get to see my cousins and grandparents once a year. But now, when I *do* get to see them, the reunions become a treasure to me. Yes, goodbyes are hard, but they make the next hello

Kirstie is the daughter of Pastor Todd and Barb Schierkolk, AFLC missionaries serving in Jerez, Mexico.

HOWEVER BLISTERED OUR FEET GET IN THE PROCESS, LIFE WITH JESUS IS SIMPLY GLORIOUS.

even sweeter. Sure, we can't get cocoa packets here, but it's a Christmas present in itself when a church sends us a box with cocoa in it!

God has also been unendingly gracious to us—in the difficult aspects of our ministry, as well. From the time I was 6 years old, all of my Mexican friends' parents were divorced, separated, or unfaithful to each other. From the time I started teaching kids' club classes when I was 12, I'd seen everything from witch doctors' granddaughters, to troubled boys with ADHD, to 4-year-olds who flinch when I hug them. I've seen children who are soft to the things of God, and I've seen kids who have a heartbreaking hardness in their eyes. But the years I have lived here have taught me that sometimes all you can do is lift up your face to God and beg Him to hold these people in His loving hands. And not only does He hold them, but He holds those with the blistered feet, as well.

It's true, my own feet have a few blisters. But I honestly believe that every cross God has asked me and my family to carry because of the life we live has been doubly repaid by the blessings we experience because of this life. Some of the blessings are quite simple, really. The fact that my two sisters and I are fluent in Spanish and English is a blessing that will open up countless doors in our future. Teaching first- and second-graders for three years has helped me know how to work with and relate to kids all around the world. Growing up in a foreign country has opened my eyes to the differences and similarities among all cultures, and embedded in me a love for all countries and all peoples. I can honestly say that I would not be the person I am today if I hadn't had the opportunity to love unloved children like Fátima, Áxel, and Pedro. Being a missionary kid has given me so many glimpses into what the heart of God is like, and that's a blessing I wouldn't trade for the world.

Yes, it *is* a different kind of life. Most 15-year-olds probably don't get giddy over cocoa packets. Then again, most 15-year-olds probably don't get to be hugged by 50 pairs of brown arms every week. As in every kind of life, there are valleys and mountains. Some of my valleys and mountains are quite different than yours, and maybe some are actually the same.

But, as He promises in Matthew 28, Jesus is with us, every step of the way. Wherever those steps take us, and however blistered our feet get in the process, life with Jesus is simply glorious. And for that reason alone, my life really has been just what my parents prayed it would be: the best life possible for me.



RARE SOUVENIRS

by Pastor Eugene Enderlein

W

hen you go on a trip, you anticipate many various experiences: exciting excursions, interesting sites, and local food fare. Shopping is a must because you want to bring home something unique as a souvenir to remind you of your travels.

The 14 members of Minneapolis' Hope Lutheran Church India Team (HIT) had those same ideas as they embarked for India on a beautiful evening in late September 2013. But their initial goals would soon be surpassed by the meaningful experiences and relationships that awaited them.

How had this all come about? Early in 2013 the pastors of Hope Lutheran, with the blessing of elders and members, began to pray about a mission team to India, which would hopefully be the first of regularly scheduled mission trips for the congregation. Senior Pastor Tom Parrish had enlisted my commitment to lead the group long before we made the opportunity public.

Traveling to our AFLC mission endeavors and encouraging national pastors and believers had been my privileged assignment during the 30 years that I had served, both on the AFLC World Mission Committee and 23 years as missions director. What a joy it would be for me to lead a team of adults to one of our partnering missions.

We prayed fervently for God's selection of those who should go. God began to stir specific peoples' hearts and minds. We set up training sessions as people began to commit to the trip—prayer, Bible study, cultural information, medical issues, and group dynam-

ics. One by one, people stepped forward to join the team. Some had the money in hand, others began to prayerfully raise the money from those who wished to sponsor them.

By summer, 14 people were officially on the HIT mission, from ages 13 through the mid-70s. Team members represented many different vocations and experiences, but they were united in their prayerful goal of serving their sisters and brothers in a foreign land.

The team was amazed at the fantastic welcome that they received because of the wonderful people waiting to receive them as friends. More than simply seeing a beautiful country and its people—along with new tastes, sounds, transportation and methods—team members soon were impacted beyond their expectations by the power of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The team visited the headquarters of the AFLC India, in the state of Andhra Pradesh. Seventy-some smiling children from the Horeb Children's Home, St. Paul's Lutheran School children, staff, faculty, and related families lined the entryway as we arrived, and happily placed leis of sweetly scented flowers around our necks. Handshakes and hugs from national pastors, workers, and their families immediately made us all feel wanted and needed.

We settled into the rooms in the new AFLCI headquarters and school building, which was still under construction, and anticipated living among and working alongside all of these children, teachers, and people of that area who would come for fellowship or invite us to their towns and churches for the next two weeks.

Teaching children in St. Paul's School was a joy for team



members. The two girls on our team stayed in the dormitory and forged close relationships with the school children. Our adults shared with the children in their classes on the campus. They participated in study groups and fellowship times, walked through towns making friends and witnessing, traveled to various church services and outdoor worship services, and visited in homes to pray with needy people. Throughout, they shared their love for Jesus and His love and atoning work for all people.

Tears flowed freely when our departure drew near. Children and adults from the school, the children's home, and nearby congregations gathered at the center as we prepared to leave. Promises of writing or contacting on Facebook brought some comfort. As we traveled westward back home, we knew that we would never be the same again. We left our hearts in India, as the saying is often expressed.

Souvenirs? Pretty little things to show our families at home? They became secondary compared with the rare experiences of taking new friends into our hearts.

"We're taking the memory of these sweet faces and lovely friends with us," someone exclaimed.

"The children, the young people, those wonderful widows, the dedicated pastors, they are our treasures," exclaimed another.

Enderlein, Plymouth, Minn., is the visitation pastor at Hope Lutheran, Minneapolis.

Members of the Hope Lutheran's short-term mission team to India include (front, from left) Chris McKenzie, Pastor Jay Eberth, Adeline and Stephanie Abbott, Juanita Vanderpoel, Mike Phillips (back row, from left) Katie Kozicky, Jim Lilly, Alex, Isabel and Rachael Chernyavsky, Joan Smith, Pastor Eugene Enderlein, and Carla Davis.

Middle: Mike Phillips helps a student at St. Paul's Lutheran School.

In the morning I awake to the sounds of the Muslim call to worship. I am relieved as you lead me to the chapel and show me the songs of praise to Jesus you have learned. Tears of joy stream down my face as you sing louder and louder proclaiming Jesus is king. ...

It is the dark of night when I arrive in your village. ... I am amazed as each of you come in and set the fruits of your labor at the altar, giving what you have to the Lord. I listen for at least an hour as you sing praises and recite Scripture. I do not understand what I am hearing but I look out into your faces and see what it tells me of your life. ...

You ask me to pray for you. I want to tell you how much this softens my heart. It brings me joy to lay my hands on your head and ask Jesus to be with you. Do not thank me, dear friend, do not kiss my feet; we are the same. Jesus died for all of us. Continue to sing praises to Him, for as sweet as it is to my ears it is so much more to Him. ...

I sit in the quiet and ask God, "Have I done what you sent me to do? Time is running out. What more can I do?"

My question is answered as three teen boys join us. As we worship Him in song and prayer, they join in. I can hear at least one of them crying. Then one by one they get on their knees and pray out loud in their native tongue. Thank you, Jesus, for this blessing.

—Joan Smith

My experience in India gave me a whole new outlook on life. I had a basic idea of what [India] looked like from TV and pictures. But it is like the Grand Canyon: you see pictures and are amazed; then you go there and you are completely overwhelmed by it. India was like that. There was too much to take in with just one trip.

To see how people live and how happy most of them are made me realize how blessed I am. Spending time in different villages and seeing the love they have for God despite their living conditions showed me even more how selfish [we] are ... It makes me wonder, do we really love God or are we only going through the motions?

The children at the Horeb Children's Home were the best. ... They are determined to make better lives for themselves. ... I would like our young people to see how we can become better people by working together.

—Mike Phillips



he day after my husband, Dave, and I arrived home from Brazil, our 6-year-old granddaughter, Annabella, called us with a question, “What did you learn while you were gone on your short-term mission trip, Grandma?”

Before asking the question for an Awana project, she had shared a memory verse with me: Proverbs 3:5.

My answer to her question was, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not unto your own understanding.”

God had been working in our hearts, teaching us to trust Him.

Dave and I spent 16 days in Brazil, dividing our time between the different areas of AFLC work, including the Miriam Infant Home and Bible school in Campo Mourão, and the ARCA in Curitiba. We visited AFLC missionaries Jonathan and Tamba Abel, Paul and Becky Abel, and Jonni Sliver. And we traveled for a short time with AFLC World Missions Director Del Palmer and his wife, Karen.

We met Jonni before our trip to Brazil, when she visited our church and shared about her work at the infant home. Jonni shared about the importance of prayer in the lives of these children. She told us that even if a child is only 2 weeks old, God speaks to the child’s spirit. She shared many stories of how God had been working in the lives of these children, some only babies, even many years later. God worked in the lives of many of the families of these children, as well.

Before we left for Brazil, we were asked, “What are you going to be doing?”

Not knowing the answer, we arrived in Brazil, and Jonni told us, “Just love these kids.”

And that is what we did. Every chance we had, we hugged, kissed, and held onto the children. While we held them, we prayed for them. The first night there, I couldn’t sleep. I was overwhelmed and I couldn’t stop thinking about the 12 children living there. All night long, as each one came to mind, I lifted each one up to the Lord, begging Him for their freedom.

We spent eight days at the home, playing with the children, washing laundry, organizing clothing and whatever else was needed. Dave joined Pastor Jonathan Abel or Pastor Silvio with work around the compound and also at the farm, where Bible camps are held. There was no end to the work available to either of us. But it was some of the most rewarding and enjoyable work we had ever done.

We didn’t work alone in Brazil. We were joined in prayer with the members of our church, Christian Free Lutheran in Wheatland, Iowa. They traveled right alongside of us and were very busy praying for us before we left and while we were gone. They encouraged us in many other ways.

The Women’s Missionary Federation group from our church sponsored a baby shower for the infant home. So many items were given that they had to send six large boxes through the mail.

Our church’s quilting ministry was also busy making quilts for the children of the infant home. Each child is given a quilt when he or she leaves the home as a reminder of Jesus’s love for them. Jonni tells each child who receives a quilt of the love of the grandmas back in the states for each of them. We wrote a Scripture verse on the back of each quilt as a

Betsy and Dave Von Muenster (left) are pictured with Pastor Del and Karen Palmer and Becky and Paul Abel in Brazil.

The Von Muensters are members of Christian Free Lutheran, Wheatland, Iowa.



by Betsy Von Muenster

TRUST THE LORD

reminder of this very thing. “He tends his flock like a shepherd; He gathers the lambs in his arms and carries them close to his heart; he gently leads those that have young” (Isaiah 40:11). Dave and I were honored to take 17 quilts in two large suitcases with us to Brazil, and we considered them precious cargo.

We will never forget the two weeks we spent in Brazil and hope to return one day. What an honor to meet and work with our missionaries, as well as the national workers. Many of them worked to make our arrangements, housing us, feeding us, explaining their work ... and never begrudgingly, but always with so much grace. What a blessing it was for us to see Christ at work through their lives.

We wanted our grandchildren to learn about missions and to help them consider the needs of others, especially those less fortunate. This trip was a very good opportunity for us to teach them these very principles. One way we did so was to put a big box in our house with “Miriam Infant Home” written on the outside. We encouraged them to begin putting items in the box. Our hope was that they would give some out of their plenty. We did eventually fill the box with toys and fun things for the children, but it was quite a process. We are reminded of our “plenty” here in the states. We are

reminded that we need to pray for our children, grandchildren, and the children in our Sunday schools, that they would remember the orphans and those less fortunate. We now pray with this specifically in mind, that God would give these little ones a heart for missions, and for those less fortunate.

When my granddaughter asked me what I learned, my response to her was “trust in the Lord.” There were many trying things in our lives as we left for this trip, things that weighed heavily on our hearts. But as we worked alongside the missionaries and little children at the infant home, those struggles and worries left our hearts and minds for a little while. We were allowed the opportunity to serve God by serving others.

When we returned home, our struggles were still there, but they didn’t have control over us like they did before we left. Annabella’s memory verse was a perfect one for us, and perhaps it will be for you, as well.

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not unto your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him and he shall direct your paths” (Proverbs 3:5-6).



Year after year, season after season, seeds are planted beneath the fertile soil. The potential for life is bound up inside each husk, and waits only for the right mix of conditions—water, nutrients, sun. For ages past, the farmer has worked in concert with this unchangeable cycle of life—planting, tending, and harvesting. But his tools, whether hand or machine, have changed with time and

innovation.

Just as the hard working farmer has adjusted his strategy to meet the changes in technology, so we must adapt and adjust our strategy for planting the seed of the Word. But the gospel message—the seed—*must* remain the same. Like the seed for the farmer, God’s Word must be the center and the focus of every endeavor; but the means of transmission should be flexible.

Those of us working for AFLC Home Missions sense that now is the time for us to do some adjusting, some rethinking of our old patterns and ideas. We are deliberately crying out, seeking the Lord for His direction concerning what sort of medium He would like us to use in reaching beyond what we have thought possible. We want to move into a new arena where the message of the gospel and the AFLC doctrinal distinctions can be shared with anyone who has access to a computer, tablet, or a smart phone.

At the 2013 Annual Conference, members of the Home Missions Committee announced a prayerful goal of establishing a new disciple-making gathering in every major U.S. city within the next 15 years. Sounds impossible, doesn’t it? Maybe you think we should set a more realistic goal. But this vision is the result of much prayer. It is our desire that you would *come join us* in this prayerful goal, as well.

Consider this: Often times in ministry, we fill our time with simply *doing things*—maybe because of tradition or routine. These activities may be good. Yet there is a deeper question that we should ask ourselves: “Is this what the Lord wants us to do?” After a careful evaluation, I believe the one thing that Jesus wants His disciples and His Church to be engaged in is making disciples who make

disciples, fulfilling the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20).

The desire of Home Missions has always been to uphold the precious name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ and to proclaim the message of His gospel. To meet our vision, we face the unique challenge of using various communication outlets in a way that will reach the masses. We want to draw new families and ethnic groups into small fellowship and discipleship gatherings where they can be lovingly led and grow gracefully into a deeper knowledge of Christ and His Great Commission.

With this in mind, members of the Home Missions Committee met in February for our Leadership Retreat in Mesa, Ariz.



by Pastor Paul Nash

SOWING HIS PRECIOUS WORD

We began examining some of the different methods that we could use to accomplish the goal of making disciples across our land. We evaluated those methods in the light of Scripture.

It is no secret that with the advent of social media tools such as Facebook and Twitter, newspapers and printed media have lost readership. It is time for Home Missions to look at new vehicles to bring the precious message of Christ into our culture and world.

At our Leadership Retreat, we brought in someone who is well versed in social media management and asked him to help us use our resources in efficiently spreading the gospel. Changing our media strategy means that we will need to train our pastors and lay leaders. After all, they are our key in communicating with our congregations—whether through worship services, teaching, or training—while keeping a Lutheran emphasis on doctrine and the sacraments.

In stepping out into this new frontier of communication, we realize there will be some bumps and mistakes along the way. We

are asking that you would *come join us* in praying that the mistakes and bumps will be only minimal, resulting in a profound honoring of the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Someone once said the dying words of a church are, “We have never done it this way before!” I’m well aware that there will be some who think our goal extravagant and possibly even fruitless. I hope that we would be like many of the faithful farmers who work endless hours to sow the seed. They wait patiently for a harvest to be gathered, bringing glory to the Lord. Would you please *come join us* in praying for the completion of this goal, to the glory of God the Father?

I pray that we may be open to God’s leading to sow the precious Word out in the highways and byways, wherever and however He pleases.

Nash, Brooklyn Park, Minn., is the director of AFLC Home Missions.

Joshua Skogerboe

My parents are Neil and Celeste Skogerboe, and both come from generations of Lutheran Christ followers. They raised me to know, love, and fear the Lord. I was born on July 28, 1972, in Houston, Texas, while my dad was in medical school.



By my third birthday we had moved to Roseau, Minn., where I quickly learned I was already two years behind in their beginners hockey program. By age 6, our family

had settled in the north woods of Bemidji, Minn.

In 1990, I came to the Association Free Lutheran Bible School, Plymouth, Minn., where I not only secured my faith and studied the Word of God, I also fell in love. Amy Lee, daughter of Pastor Robert Lee, miraculously became Amy Skogerboe on a sunny day in July 1994, and I still can hardly believe it. We both attended Northwestern College, where I received my B.S. in Educational Studies with an emphasis on Music Education. Since then, Amy and I have called the Twin Cities home, until this last year's internship.

Amy and I have five great boys: Seth (16), Isaac (13), Levi (10), Joshua (10), and Ezra (5). All of us have loved this year serving Ruthfred Lutheran in Bethel Park, Pa., and we have grown many deep friendships with the generous-hearted people of Pittsburgh.

Over these last several years serving as a worship and arts pastor at Emmaus Lutheran in Bloomington, Minn., and Living Hope Church in St. Michael, Minn., God has been awakening my heart more and more to the depth of joy and freedom that are only available through relationship with Jesus Christ. Since the Lord called me to AFLTS, my convictions have deepened, and my passion for the gospel has increased. God's Word is alive, faultless, inspired, and it is still saving lives today. It has been a joy to serve at Ruthfred this past year, getting a lot of experience preaching the Word and loving people. Our whole family is excited to see what the Lord has next for us. Wherever He leads, it will be good.

Jesse Kneeland

I was brought up in a Christian home, baptized, taught *Luther's Catechism*, and confirmed. However, I was just going through the motions. I labeled Christians and the Church as hypocritical, though I was one of them. I wondered, "If they knew



the real God and the Bible was truth, why didn't they live it out?" In the eyes of my church and family nothing was wrong with me, but I was turning away from God and to the pleasures of the

world. An unrealized selfishness ruled my life. What I did, I did for me. My decisions, my future, my life were all about me.

Yet God pursued me, and put believers in my life who actively lived out His will. And when they failed, they repented. I wanted to know *this* God, the one whose people followed His ways. Through a return to the Scriptures, I began to realize the truth about the self-centered life I was living. This process broke me. I became obsessed with reading my Bible, with seeking the living God and knowing His will and ways. I failed, of course, time and time again. As I did I experienced Him leading me to the pure grace of His forgiveness, and a call to repentance from His Word.

My old flesh still fights against the Spirit within me. I am thankful for the training in the Word received at seminary. The more I grow in my understanding of His Word, and by grace apply His Word to my life, the more I desire Psalm 40:8 to ring true within me: "I delight to do Your will, O my God; Your Law is within my heart."

My parents are Tom and Patty Gardner, and I was born Aug. 10, 1981. My hometown is Corcoran, Minn., and my home church is Solid Rock Free Lutheran, Anoka, Minn. I studied at North Hennepin Community College, AFLBS, and Northwestern College before attending AFLTS. I am married to Paula (Weinries), and our children are: Arielle (10), Hannah (9), Grace (8), Seth (6), Hope (5), Aaron (3), Dominic (2), and Chara (9 months).

I served my internship at Prince of Peace Lutheran, Beulah, N.D. To get to know me and my family more visit TheKneelandsBlog.com.

Ben Jore

Growing up in Brazil as a missionary kid shaped my perception of life. Long before I was born (on March 25, 1983), my parents, Dan and Cheryl Jore, followed the Lord's leading to be missionaries to the Bible-less indigenous of Brazil. Watching



first-hand the struggles and successes of missionaries instilled in me a desire to make an eternal difference with my life.

After graduating from high school in Brazil,

I returned to Minnesota to attend the Association Free Lutheran Bible School in Plymouth. While I was there, God used a broken hip sustained while playing pick-up football and the struggles that followed to call me to a deeper walk with Him. Following my graduation from AFLBS, I finished a bachelor's in Biblical Studies at Northwestern College in St. Paul, Minn.

Shortly after graduation, I found myself in Tanzania, East Africa. My co-worker, Jesse Long of Astoria, Ore., and I ended up spending four years teaching at Waama Bible School and traveling to villages to show the Jesus Film. God blessed this time, grew us, and brought Waama to the point of financial self-sufficiency.

While I was living in Tanzania, I took a short trip back to the States where I met my eventual bride, Adela Hein. She is a nurse from Texas who quickly became the love of my life. We were married in 2010 and God has blessed us with two children, Stefan (2) and Sabina (6 months).

In the fall of 2010, I started at AFLTS. Through studying His Word with godly men under some very godly, Bible-loving pastors, God again called us to a deeper walk with Him. Upon completion of our internship year at Our Savior's Free Lutheran, Stanley, N.D., and First English Lutheran, Lostwood, N.D., we will be based in Minneapolis, working as AFLC World Missionaries on loan to Distant Shores Media.

2014 annual conference

WELCOME

June 10-13, Grace Free Lutheran, Valley City, N.D.

I WELCOME YOU TO COME TO THE STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA for the 52nd Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. It will be June 10-13 at Grace Free Lutheran Church in Valley City, N.D. The theme is "Rise Up and Build" from Nehemiah 2:18.

The state of North Dakota stands as a testament that surprising things still happen in our world. Who would have thought, when the AFLC began, that this state would play a major role in producing the oil that is needed to run this nation? Who would have thought that people would come from all across the U.S. to find work in North Dakota? As I reflect back on last year's conference, who would have thought that I would be the one who would be inviting you to North Dakota? (I repent for all those jokes I told in seminary about North Dakota being a foreign mission field.) So we continue to live in a land and in fellowship with Christ, Who is still doing surprising things in our land and in our time. Could this be a conference in which we will look back in history and see that God did something very surprising in our midst? May it be so! May we be empowered by His Spirit to rise up and build His kingdom as we submit ourselves afresh to Jesus and trust Him to visit us by His Spirit, working through the Word of God.

**RISE UP
AND BUILD**
NEHEMIAH 2:18



Pastor Lyndon Korhonen
AFLC President

One continued change I would like to see in this conference is making excellent use of the time God has given us. I do not believe that evening services must be long. I urge all of you involved in speaking and planning to be prepared and write down what you are going to say. I want the evening services to be conducive to young families coming and the whole family worshipping together. I want to hear someone say, "I wish that service would have been a little longer!" I want to witness God empowering us to rise up as never before to give ourselves to the task of rising and building free and living congregations throughout this world.

You ask: How is this going to happen? I have no idea, but our God is still the God of surprises, and nothing is impossible to Him. I believe the angel's words still ring true today from Luke 1:37: "For nothing will be impossible with God."

My desire is that in our business sessions, speaking would be limited to five minutes each for those speaking to a resolution, to allow ample time for the rest of the body to also speak. I like what has been done by the past president, who gave each department a set number of minutes to present their work. (There is no limit on how much department leaders want to write in their reports so that all the AFLC can rejoice in what God is doing.) I urge devotional leaders to stay within their allotted time, unless the Holy Spirit so obviously interrupts—which I would welcome and pray for at any time. My desire is not to rush through conference, but to do business in an orderly way that honors our Lord. Wouldn't it be wonderful if we finished early and had more time to pray, share testimonies, and even time for sanctified brainstorming of what God might do through us? It is so easy in any organization to slip into a maintenance mode and have no time for future planning.

Thank you, members of Grace Free Lutheran and those on conference planning committees, for all you are doing to host us. We look forward to meeting in the facility that God has given you. Little did Ernie Miedema, our past business administrator, know that the building that was once his furniture store would host the AFLC, which he loved. Surprising? It is to us, but not to God!

LORD, come and do something surprising and wonderful in our midst in North Dakota.

2014 annual conference AGENDA

“And I told them of the hand of my God that had been upon me for good, and also of the words that the king had spoken to me. And they said, ‘Let us rise up and build.’ So they strengthened their hands for the good work” (Nehemiah 2:18).

RISE UP AND BUILD

NEHEMIAH 2:18

DATES: June 10-13

SITE: Grace Free Lutheran Church

2351 West Main St., Valley City, ND 58072

HOST: Grace Free Lutheran Church, Valley City, ND.

TUESDAY, JUNE 10

9 a.m.

The conference committees meet for devotions, instructions and room assignments.

7:30 p.m.

The Opening Service of the conference, with Communion
Leader: Pastor Robert Rieth, Bothell, Wash.

Speaker: Pastor Richard Gunderson, Cambridge, Minn.

AFLC President Pastor Lyndon Korhonen will open the conference and appoint necessary committees.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11

9 a.m.

Devotions: Ben Jore, AFLTS intern at Stanley, N.D.

Report of the Credentials Committee

Adoption of the Conference Agenda

Approval of 2013 Annual Conference Report

Selection of nominees for corporations:

Missions Corporation

Schools Corporation

ARC Corporations

The President's Report

Reports of AFLC ministries—General

Report of the Chairman of the Coordinating Committee

Report of the Director of Development

Report of the Chairman of the AFLC Foundation

Reports of Chaplaincy Ministries

Institutional

Military

Report of the Director of the ARC

Selection of nominees for corporation meetings:

• Home Missions Committee—one layman, one pastor;

• Bay Broadcasting Committee—one layman (three-year term);

• FLAPS Board of Managers—one pastor;

• World Missions Committee—one pastor; one layman

• Board of Trustees—one layman;

• ARC Board—one layman

11:30 a.m.

Prayer Hour: Pastor Les Johnson, Wilson, Wis.

Noon

Conference Lunch

Home Missions Lunch

Chaplains Lunch

AFLBS Alumni Lunch

1:30 p.m.

Devotions: Jesse Kneeland, AFLTS intern, Beulah, N.D.,

1:45 p.m.

Report of the Credentials Committee

Reports of AFLC ministries—General, cont.

AFLC Financial Report

Report of the Family Bible Camps

• Lake Bronson

• Wilderness

Report of the Budget Analysis Committee

Reports of AFLC ministries—Missions and Evangelism

Report of the Chairman and Director of World Missions Committee

Report of the Chairman of the Home Missions Committee

Report of the Director of Home Missions

Report of Executive Director of FLAPS

Report of WMF President

Report of the Chairman of the Commission on Evangelism

Report of the Director of Evangelism

Reports of AFLC ministries—Publications, Parish Education, Youth

Report of the Chairman of the Board of Publications and Parish Education

Report of the Director of Parish Education

Report of the Chairman of the Youth Board

Report of the President of the Free Lutheran Youth

Report of Youth Ministries Director

Reports of AFLC ministries—Stewardship and Benefits
 Report of the Chairman of the Stewardship Board
 Report of the Chairman of the Benefits Board
 Reports of AFLC ministries—AFLC Schools
 Report of the Chairman of the Board of Trustees
 Report of the Interim Dean of the Seminary
 Report of the Dean of the Bible School
 Report of AFLC Schools Vision

5:30 p.m.

Conference Dinner
 Schools Corporation Annual Meeting

7 p.m.

The Mission Festival Service conducted by the WMF
 Speaker: Michael Furchert

THURSDAY, JUNE 12

7 a.m.

Mission Corporation Annual Meeting

9 a.m.

Devotions: Joshua Skogerboe, AFLTS intern, Bethel Park, Pa.
 Report of the Credentials Committee
 Report of the Nominating Committee
 Election of the Nominating Committee for the 2015 Conference
 Election Procedures
 Elections: (all terms five years unless noted)
 • Vice President—one-year term
 • Secretary—one-year term
 Report of Committee No. 1 (Administration)
 Report of Nominating Committee
 Selection of nominees to the Coordinating Committee—one pastor
 Election of Committee No. 1 for the 2015 Conference
 Report of Committee No. 3 (Missions and Evangelism)
 Report of the Nominating Committee
 Selection of nominees to:
 Commission on Evangelism—one layman
 Election of Committee No. 3 for the 2014 Conference

11:35 a.m.

Prayer Hour: Pastor Les Johnson, Wilson, Wis.

Noon

Conference Lunch
 The ARC Corporation Annual Meeting

1:30 p.m.

Devotions: Pastor Gerald Steele, Morris, Ill.
 Report of the Credentials Committee
 Report of Committee No. 4
 (Publications, Parish Education and Youth Work)
 Report of Nominating Committee
 Selection of nominees to:
 Board of Publications and Parish Education—one layman
 Youth Board—one layman

Election of Committee No. 4 for the 2015 Conference
 Report of Corporations
 Schools Corporation Annual Meeting
 ARC Corporation Annual Meeting
 Missions Corporation Annual Meeting
 Report of Committee No. 5 (Stewardship and Benefits)
 Report of Nominating Committee
 Selection of nominees to:
 Stewardship Board—one layman
 Benefits Board—one layman; one pastor (two-year term)
 Election of Committee No. 5 for the 2015 conference
 Report of Committee No. 2 (Schools)
 Report of the Nominating Committee
 Election of Committee No. 2 for the 2015 Conference

5:30 p.m.

Pastors' Banquet
 Laymen's Dinner/Service

8:15 p.m.

Youth Service
 Speaker: Alex Amiot, Plymouth, Minn.

FRIDAY, JUNE 13

7 a.m.

FLAPS informational breakfast

9 a.m.

Devotions: Matthew Ballmann, Sioux Falls, S.D.
 Report of the Credentials Committee
 Report of Special Committees
 Report of the Colloquy Committee
 Election of Colloquy Committee for the 2015 Conference
 Election of Budget Analysis Committee:
 two laymen (three-year terms)
 Report of Committee No. 1 as the Committee on General Resolutions
 Other Reports

11:30 a.m.

Prayer Hour: Pastor Les Johnson, Wilson, Wis.

Noon

Conference Lunch
 AFLC Foundation Lunch

1:30 p.m.

Devotions: Pastor Brian Ricke, Arlington, S.D.
 Report of Credentials Committee
 Remaining conference business

7:30 p.m.

Ordination/Closing Service
 Speaker: Pastor Lyndon Korhonen, Plymouth, Minn.
 Conference Committee
 Pastor Lyndon Korhonen, President
 Pastor Brian Davidson, Secretary

52nd annual conference NOMINEES

Coordinating Committee

(One pastor, five-year term)

Pastor Craig Benson, Armour, S.D.
Pastor Herbert Hoff, Salinas, Calif.

Schools Board of Trustees

Voted on by corporation members

(One layman, five-year term)

Donald Balmer, Thief River Falls, Minn.
X

World Missions Committee

Voted on by corporation members

(One layman, five-year term)

**Daniel Rugroden, Hickson, N.D.
X

(One pastor, five-year term)

Pastor Larry Haagenson, Loveland, Colo.
Pastor Kent Sperry, Northwood, N.D.

Bay Broadcasting

Voted on by corporation members

(One pastor, three-year term)

*Eldwyn VanBruggen, Valley City, N.D.
X

ARC Board

Voted on by corporation members

(One layman, five-year term)

*Steve Lehmann, Milford, Ill.
Tom Asfeldt, Sioux Falls, S.D.

FLAPS Board of Managers

Voted on by corporation members

(One pastor, five-year term)

Pastor Richard Gunderson,
Cambridge, Minn.
Pastor Eugene Enderlein,
Plymouth, Minn.

* Incumbents

** Must be re-elected to corporation to remain on committee or board

X Nominations not named by press deadline

Home Missions Committee

Voted on by corporation members

(One layman, five-year term)

X
X

(One pastor, five-year term)

*Pastor Joe Ocker, Frost, Minn.
Pastor Allen Monson, Mesa, Ariz.

Stewardship Committee

(One layman, five-year term)

*Cory Buck, New Hope, Minn.
X

Board of Publications & Parish Education

(One layman, five-year term)

Scott Ducote, Durant, Okla.
X

Youth Board

(One layman, five-year term)

*Jordan Langness, Beulah, N.D.
Gary Maxwell, Gifford, Ill.

Benefits Board

(One layman, five-year term)

Alan Spadine, Minneapolis, Minn.
X

(One pastor, two-year term)

Pastor Les Galland, Shakopee, Minn.
X

Commission on Evangelism

(One layman, five-year term)

*Michael Lynnes, Leonard, N.D.
X

ARC Corporation

(10 terms of five years each)

**Dan Ballmann, Hico, Texas
Pastor Rich Carr, Tioga, N.D.
Paul Danielson, Lake Preston, S.D.
Jim Fink, Monterey Calif.
*Pastor Leroy Flickinger, TRF, Minn.
*Pastor Walter Johnson, Shakopee, Minn.
Lori Lyon, Kenyon, Minn.
Faylin Myhre, Abercrombie, N.D.
*Penny Nash, Lidgerwood, N.D.
*Curt Twedt, Oxbow, N.D.
Chad Rieschl, Maple Grove, Minn.
9 more nominees needed

Schools Corporation

(10 terms of five years each)

Pastor Ron Brubakken, Argyle, Wis.
Gary Erickson, Dalton, Minn.
*Joel Erickson, Oslo, Minn.
Brad Folsland, Oldham, S.D.
Pastor Les Galland, Shakopee, Minn.
*Bonnie Handsaker, Radcliffe, Iowa
Dean Herbst, Dimock, S.D.
Robin Johnson, Esko, Minn.
John Keranen, Menahga, Minn.
*Ralph Peterson, Portland, N.D.
Pastor Craig Scavo, Durant, Okla.
Chuck Siems, Urbana, Ill.
*Pastor Kirk Thorson, Larimore, N.D.
*Pastor Peter Ward, Ottawa, Ill.
*Pastor Jon Wellumson, Williston, N.D.
Five more nominees needed

Missions Corporation

(20 terms of five years each)

*Pastor Ray Ballmann, Glen Rose, Texas
Duane Burchill, Valley City, N.D.
Deb Burmeister, Mount Vernon, S.D.
*Linda Fugleberg, Moorhead, Minn.
*Pastor Marlin Harris, Mora, Minn.
Bud Haugen, Snohomish, Wash.
Phil Johnson, Esko, Minn.
Tim Jordan, Valley City, N.D.
*Rod Kjersten, Roseau, Minn.
Dan Kleinjan, Lake Norden, S.D.
Stan Koppang, Jamestown, N.D.
Vince Larson, Buffalo, N.D.
Pastor Jerome Nikunen, Cloquet, Minn.
Gary Retterath, Valley City, N.D.
Pastor Mark Richardson, Wahpeton, N.D.
Pastor James Ritter, Prior Lake, Minn.
**Daniel Rugroden, Hickson, N.D.
Nick Schultz, Sioux Falls, S.D.
*Ken Sletten, Duluth, Minn.
Pastor Scott Stroud, Salinas, Calif.
*Roger Tollefson, Crookston, Minn.
Pastor Jonathan Unverzagt, Sparta, Wis.
Eddi Walty, Lake Stevens, Wash.
*Pastor Craig Wentzel, Edmore, N.D.
*Dr. Lyle Westrom, Crookston, Minn.
15 more nominees needed

Resolutions to pray about

BY DR. DANIEL MUNDFROM

At the upcoming Annual Conference in June at Valley City, N.D. we will be voting on two resolutions that were passed at last year's Annual Conference in regard to the office of Vice President of the AFLC.

- Be it resolved the Rules for Work of the AFLC that paragraph 7(b) be changed to read: "beginning 2014, the Vice-President shall be elected to a four year term and will serve as the full time Assistant to the President. In the absence of the President, he will perform the duties of the President. The election of the President and Vice-President shall be staggered so that an officer is elected every two years."
 - Be it resolved the Rules for Work of the AFLC that paragraph 9(e) be changed to read: "It shall have charge of the AFLC General Fund from which shall be paid the salaries of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, office and support staff, travelling expenses, and expenses incurred in connection with the Annual Conference and operation of the AFLC offices."
- Until now the Vice-President has not been a paid position. Because of the increased work load of the President, the Coordinating Committee, in 2007, created a half-time paid position, Assistant to the President. The President selected this pastor and the Coordinating Committee approved him. Here are two sentences from the Coordinating Committee's minutes from 2007.

The committee indicated that the person hired must be able to present himself and the AFLC professionally and the person must be able to listen to pastors in a counseling role. ... Discussion included hiring the right person for the job, availability, and a person whom has a great listening heart.

In recent years, the workload for the Assistant to the President has increased to the point where the Coordinating Committee felt that this position should change from half-time to full-time. Consequently, the Coordinating Committee passed the following resolution: "In the event that the Rules for Work are not amended at the 2014 Annual Conference to make the Vice-President a full-time

position, the Assistant to the President will become a full-time position."

If the two resolutions were to pass, then the conference would be electing the Vice President to serve with the President full time and to fulfill the duties and responsibilities currently performed by the Assistant to the President. Currently the Vice President has no official responsibilities on an on-going basis, other than "to perform the duties of the President" in his absence. This potential change raises a couple of questions and issues that would impact us in several ways.

- Will the individual elected by the Annual Conference have the people skills to relate well to pastors and congregations as outlined by the Coordinating Committee back in 2007?
- Will the individual elected by the Annual Conference be able to work well with the president?
- The people of the AFLC, through the Annual Conference, would decide who this individual is. Currently, these people have no voice in the selection of this individual who frequently serves as the face of the AFLC at official functions when the President is unable to attend.

Consequently, the president would have no say-so in who his close working partner would be. Currently, the Assistant to the President is hired by the Coordinating Committee working closely with the President in the selection process.

There may be additional questions or possible impact other than those presented here. We recognize that all of us may not view this potential change in the same manner, some focusing on positive impacts to our structure and functioning and others perhaps seeing negative aspects. It is not the purpose of this writing to present this decision in either a negative or positive light. Rather, we encourage all of us to pray fervently for God's guidance and direction as this important decision is made.

Certainly we all believe that God is able to accomplish His will through the workings of the Annual Conference and the voting process, and we trust that our AFLC people in attendance at the Conference will seek God's direction and guidance as they pray about this potential change to how we function as the AFLC.

Mundfrom is the chairman of the AFLC Coordinating Committee.

Nominees to serve at the 2015 conference

Committee No. 1

(Administration)

Pastor Les Galland, Shakopee, Minn.
Pastor Jim Johnson, Fergus Falls, Minn.
Pastor Steve Mundfrom, Valley City, N.D.
X
X

Committee No. 2

(Schools)

Pastor Ron Brubakken, Argyle, Wis.
Scott Ducote, Mead, Okla.
John Keranen, Menahga, Minn.
Pastor Adam Osier, Wadena, Minn.
Harold Erickson, Wadena, Minn.

Committee No. 3

(Missions and Evangelism)

Ernest Kronquist, Arlington, Wash.
Bud Haugen, Shohomish, Wash.
X
X
X

Committee No. 4

(Publications and Parish Education)

X
X
X
X
X

Committee No. 5

(Stewardship and Pensions)

X
X
X
X
X

52nd annual conference REGISTRATION

June 10-13, 2014, at Grace Free Lutheran Church, Valley City, N.D.

For a downloadable form, and for more information, go to www.aflc.org and click on "conferences"

First name: _____ Spouse (if attending): _____

Last name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

AFLC Congregation: _____

Other Congregation: _____

Membership (Check one)

You: _____ Rostered AFLC Pastor or serving AFLC church _____ Visiting Pastor _____ Lay Member _____ Lay Visitor

Spouse: _____ Rostered AFLC Pastor or serving AFLC church _____ Visiting Pastor _____ Lay Member _____ Lay Visitor

* Child designation is for those 12 and younger.

| Meals | Adult | # | Child | # | Total |
|---|-------|---|-------|---|-----------|
| Tuesday lunch | \$13 | | \$6 | | \$ |
| Wednesday Conference lunch | \$8 | | \$4 | | \$ |
| Wednesday Chaplains lunch | \$8 | | n/a | | \$ |
| Wednesday Home Missions lunch | \$8 | | n/a | | \$ |
| Wednesday AFLBS Alumni lunch | \$8 | | n/a | | \$ |
| Wednesday Conference dinner | \$12 | | \$6 | | \$ |
| Wednesday Schools Corporation dinner | \$12 | | n/a | | \$ |
| Thursday Missions Corporation breakfast | \$7 | | n/a | | \$ |
| Thursday Conference lunch | \$8 | | \$4 | | \$ |
| Thursday ARC Corporation lunch | \$8 | | n/a | | \$ |
| Thursday Conference dinner | \$12 | | \$6 | | \$ |
| Thursday Pastors' Banquet | \$20 | | n/a | | \$ |
| Friday FLAPS breakfast | \$7 | | n/a | | \$ |
| Friday Conference lunch | \$8 | | \$4 | | \$ |
| Friday Foundation lunch | \$8 | | n/a | | \$ |
| Friday Conference dinner | \$12 | | \$6 | | \$ |
| Total meals | | | | | \$ |
| *Conference registration fee (\$35 single/\$50 couple) | | | | | \$ |
| Total registration and meals | | | | | \$ |

*The registration fee is required for all attending the AFLC Conference. **Make checks payable to "AFLC" and mail to: AFLC, c/o Conference Registrations, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Plymouth, MN 55441.** Registrations must be received by May 30.

Come, follow me

BY DAWN JOHNSON

Make plans to attend the national convention of the WMF on June 10

Jesus said to him, "If you wish to be complete, go and sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me" (Matthew 19:21, NASB).

You are invited to attend the 52nd annual WMF Day on June 10 in Valley City, N.D., which is held in conjunction with the AFLC Annual Conference. Registration will begin at 8 a.m., and a day's worth of programming starts at 9 a.m. This year's program will include a WMF Day choir, which will practice at 8:30 a.m. and will perform later in the morning. You may practice "Savior Like a Shepherd Lead Us" (Ambassador Hymnal no. 450) ahead of time.

Our 2014 WMF Bible study author Vicki Johnson will lead our morning Bible study and will also present a dramatic monologue in the afternoon. This year we are again offering several workshops throughout the day. They include: "Missionaries," by short-term missionary assistant to Uganda Katelyn Gudim; "Christian Education," by Director of Parish Education Marian Christopherson; "Journaling," by Lori Willard, WMF second vice president; and "Be Hospitable, Without Grumbling," by Esther Hylden, WMF first vice president.

If your congregation has had members pass away this year, you may email the funeral bulletin to Dawn Johnson at ctk@wwt.

net or send to 2991 30th Ave., Wilson, WI 54027 and they will be recognized during the memorial service.

Our Wednesday evening Missions Festival Service speaker will be Michael Furchert, a Christian speaker, pianist, and writer who grew up behind the Berlin Wall and brings an inspiring message of hope, faith, and freedom. From the Nazi regime of Hitler Germany, throughout WWII and communism, from the rise of the Berlin Wall to its celebrated fall, three generations of his family held true to their faith and experienced God's sustaining power throughout turbulent times of European history. To see more about his story, visit his website at miachaelfurchert.com. The evening service will also include a presentation by the puppeteers from Dickinson, N.D.



Michael Furchert

Speaking at the WMF breakfast will be Justo and Patricia Pillman, AFLC missionaries, who will share about the work they are involved with in Ecuador.

Johnson, the executive secretary of the WME, is a member of Christ the King Lutheran, Wilson, Wis.

2014 WMF Convention • June 10 • Grace Free Lutheran Church, Valley City, N.D.

Please use this form to register for the WMF Convention and luncheon on Tuesday, June 10, and for the WMF breakfast on Wednesday, June 11.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home congregation: _____

Address: _____

| Item | Cost | # | Total |
|---------------------|------|---|-------|
| *Registration | \$9 | | \$ |
| Tuesday luncheon | \$13 | | \$ |
| Wednesday breakfast | \$8 | | \$ |
| Total | | | \$ |

The registration fee is required for all attending the convention. **Make checks payable to "WMF of AFLC" and mail to: WMF Treasurer, Lois Grothe, 3745 Franklin Ave., Astoria, OR 97103. Registrations must be postmarked by May 31. Preregistration is required to attend the luncheon. Childcare and VBS will be provided.*

Children, youth at conference

Be sure to sign up for VBS and other planned activities

Annual Conference hosts at Grace Free Lutheran, Valley City, N.D., have planned a vacation Bible school for children ages

4 through sixth grade and activities for youth in grades seven through twelve. Classes will be held from 9 a.m. to noon and activities are planned from 1:30 to 4 p.m. Tuesday, June 10, through Friday, June 13. A registration form is available on the AFLC website at www.aflc.org. A fee of \$3/day (max \$10/four days) applies. Nursery preschool will also be provided during the same hours as the VBS and youth schedule.

**RISE UP
AND BUILD**

NEHEMIAH 2:18

Remembering John Mundfrom

AFLC pastor also served on Board of Parish Education

Pastor John Mundfrom, 63, of Beresford, S.D., died March 29 at his home. Born Oct. 17, 1950, in Austin, Minn., he was the son of Pastor Gerald and Margaret (Lindquist) Mundfrom.

He graduated from Kimball (South Dakota) High School in 1968. He attended the Association Free Lutheran Bible School, Plymouth, Minn., and graduated from the University of North Dakota in 1974 with a degree in political science and broadcasting. He married Lorilee Torgerson on Jan. 5, 1974. He worked at KFNW radio station in Fargo, N.D., as the news and traffic director for five years. He enrolled at the Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary and served as dean of men at the Association Free Lutheran Bible School. After graduating from seminary, he served many AFLC congregations, including Calvary Lutheran in Eben Junction, Mich., Calvary Lutheran in Bismarck, N.D., Prince of Peace Lutheran in Beulah, N.D., Spencer Creek Lutheran in Eugene, Ore., and was currently serving at Skrefsrud Lutheran in rural Beresford, S.D.

John gave his life to serving God and

was very active in the Association Free Lutheran Congregations, having most recently served on the Board of Publications and Parish Education. He coached little league baseball and youth basketball, was a former Kiwanis member, and enjoyed attending sporting events of all kinds. He was an avid fan of the Oregon Ducks, the University of North Dakota and the Minnesota Twins and Vikings. He also participated in Special Olympics as a unified partner with his son, Joshua, in bowling.

Surviving are his wife, Lorilee, Beresford, S.D., his mother, Margaret, Kenyon, Minn.; two sons, Timothy Mundfrom, Eugene, Ore., and Joshua Mundfrom, Beresford, S.D.; two brothers, Daniel (Elaine) Mundfrom, Richmond, Ken., and Stephen (Joanne) Mundfrom, Valley City, N.D.; and three sisters, Ruth (Mark) Antal, Park River, N.D., Rachel (Bill) Chesley, Mesa, Ariz., and Priscilla (Martin) Horn, Kenyon, Minn.

The service was April 3 at Living Word Free Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls. Burial was in Vang Cemetery, Fergus Falls, Minn.

Housing options for the 2014 conference in Valley City, N.D.

The host committee for the 2014 Annual Conference have announced housing options available in the Valley City, N.D., area. The conference will be held June 10-13 at Grace Free Lutheran, Valley City.

Hotels and Motels

AmericInn

280 Winter Show Road
73 rooms blocked for AFLC or Grace Free; indoor hot tub and pool, fitness room, meeting room, complimentary breakfast, executive suites, cribs available.
701-845-5551 or 877-845-0007
www.americinn.com/hotels/ND/ValleyCity

Super 8

822 11th Street SW
30 rooms; family restaurant next door, outside outlets, cribs.
701-845-1140 or 800-800-8000.
www.super8.com

Wagon Wheel Inn

455 Winter Show Road
88 rooms; lounge, fitness room, meeting room, executive suites, laundry facilities,

complimentary continental breakfast.
701-845-5333 or 800-319-5333
www.wagonwheelinn.com

Valley City State University

Suites (2 rooms with a shared bathroom)
\$35/night for 1; \$28/night for 2
Linens are available for \$10.
Contact Kayla (701)845-7124
Email: housing@vcsu.edu

Bed & Breakfasts, Inns

Beste Mor Guest Inn

113 2nd Ave, Kathryn, ND
701-845-1995
www.mybestemor.com

Lakeside Bed & Breakfast

113 Lee's Subdivision, Lake Ashtabula
701-646-6759
\$110/night or \$750 week

Tower City Inn Bed & Breakfast

502 Church Street, Tower City
Contact Joanne: 701-749-2660
towerbedandbreakfast.com

President's House Guest Inn

VCSU campus
701-845-7122; www.presidentshouse.com

Sheyenne Riverbend Farm Inn

3716 117th Ave SE, Valley City
701-845-1377
www.riverbendfarm.com

Three Oaks Guest Inn

530 3rd St. SE, Valley City, ND
701-490-6000 or 701-845-4571

Victorian Charm Guest Inn

535 Central Ave N, Valley City, ND
701-845-0887; \$58 flat rate

Camping/RV Stations

Municipal Tourist park

Business Loop I-94
All hook-ups. Showers and water available.
701-845-3294

Wagon Wheel RV Park

I-94 exit 292, right on Winter Show Road
24 drive through sites with full hook-ups
701-845-5333 or 1-800-319-5333

Serving through hardship

BY PASTOR MARK ANTAL

When I look back on 27 years of military service with the United States Army, hardship is not the first word that comes to my mind. God blessed me in many ways as I served as a chaplain assistant/combat engineer for seven years, and then as a chaplain for 20 years. There were several situations that were not pleasant and some that were down right miserable, but so is the plight for every man and woman who serves in the military.

A strong bond of fellowship develops as we encounter hardship alongside fellow military members. It is inevitable that a military member will be separated from family for long periods of time. I spent my first wedding anniversary in basic training at Fort Dix, New Jersey. Because our wedding date is in June, and National Guard two-week summer camps often fall in June, my wife, Ruth, and I spent better than half of our anniversaries apart. While deployed I missed out on many family events.

Weather conditions for the military can be terrible at times. I spent a night in a fox hole with only a poncho and my rifle. Rain fell most of the night. My rifle stayed dry, me, not so much. I ate many meals standing outside with rain falling from my helmet into my plate of food. I was so thankful for a hot meal and something to fill my belly. While on a mobilization to the country of Honduras, I encountered temperatures of 120 degrees, with high humidity. On the flip side of the thermometer I remember a winter encampment where we experienced -15 degrees at night. Being shot at while sitting in the doorway of a Huey helicopter was another tense moment while wearing the uniform.

As an Army chaplain I had the privilege of counseling many soldiers with myriad family and personal problems.

I am fully aware that when it comes to military service I had it good. Many military members have suffered great hardship for prolonged periods of time, to the extent of loss of limb, eye sight and even loss of life. Many of my closest friends suffer from PTSD (Post Traumatic Stress Disorder). All of these brothers and sisters and their families have my undying gratitude.

As I sit reflecting back on my military service I cannot help but think of my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. "Therefore, since we

are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinners, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart" (Hebrews 12:1-3).

Many have gone before us to point the way to Jesus. Many have endured great hardship for the love of Jesus. We are encouraged today to remember those dear ones who have passed into eternity to be with Christ. God gave them the strength to carry on through persecution, great trials of the faith, and the onslaughts of the evil one—and our Lord carried them through.

We are called to cast off everything that hinders the kingdom work, namely our personal sin that so easily entangles us and distracts us from Jesus. Instead, run with perseverance the course the Father has set out for us.

How can we do such a monumental task? We can by the grace of God, by fixing our eyes on Jesus. He is the author and finisher of our faith. Oh friend, consider what the Lord Jesus Christ did for you. He knew that the cross awaited Him. Yet, with love for you—with joy—He endured the cross, scorning its shame. He who was there at creation, He who could have called on a thousand angels to fight this horrible battle, with one thought could have destroyed His enemies, lovingly said, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do."

Consider Jesus today. He endured such opposition from sinners like you and me. Consider His love, mercy, and forgiveness pointed directly at you, for you. It is because of Christ, as forgiven sinners, we can drive on and not grow weary and lose heart. Trust not in your ability, but in the finished work of Christ. Oh what a wonderful Savior we have.

Pro Deo et Patria (For God and country).

Antal, who serves Victory Free Lutheran, Park River, N.D., and Grace Free Lutheran, Edinburg, N.D., is a retired U.S. Army chaplain (MAJ).

People and places

Correction: The author of the article, "Preached Among the Nations and Believed On In the World," in the May issue was misidentified. The author is Sherry Mork, Buffalo, Minn. We regret the error.

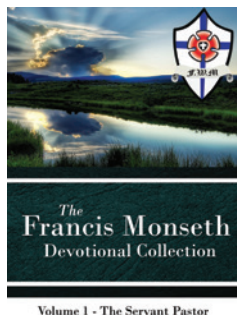
Pastor Mark Richardson has accepted a call to serve Emmanuel Free Lutheran, Eagle Butte, S.D., and Bethel Lutheran, Faith, S.D. He has served at Bethany Free Lutheran, Abercrombie, N.D.

Norma (Ness) Pederson, 65, of Colorado Springs, Co., died April 3. She was in the first graduating class of the Association Free Lutheran Bible School. She was the wife of Wayne Pederson, a graduate of the Free Lutheran Seminary who is the president of Reach Beyond (formerly HCJB Global) and former president of the National Religious Broadcasters. Her funeral was April 10 at Calvary Church, Roseville, Minn., and burial was in Maple Bay Free Lutheran Cemetery, Mentor, Minn.

Katarina Reimer, a senior at the Association Free Lutheran Bible School, Plymouth, Minn., has accepted a position as a Home Missions Parish Builder at Calvary Free Lutheran, Mesa, Ariz.

A team of four volunteers will spend the summer in the Alaska Mission, leading vacation Bible school for several churches, many reachable only by plane. The team members will be **Josiah and Courtney Rolf**, Golden Valley, Minn., **Stephanie Kantonen**, Cloquet, Minn., and **Michelle Alverson**, Osakis, Minn. Serving at The NET in Naknek, Alaska, will be **Bobbie Overgaard**, Santa Barbara, Calif., **Les and Kathy Carlson**, Balsam Lake, Wis., and a work team from Wilson, Wis.

Andrew Olson, a junior at the Free Lutheran Seminary, is currently working on a personal project to commemorate the life of Dr. Francis Monseth, former dean of the seminary. The project, which has the family's approval, aims to compile the writings of Dr. Monseth into a devotional book. Olson hopes to have the volume printed and available by conference. For more information, contact Olson at emptypipe@gmail.com.



Pastor Adam Osier, Wadena, Minn., has accepted a call to serve on the pastoral staff at Ruthfred Evangelical Lutheran, Bethel Park, Pa., and will begin his ministry there in July.

Graduating seminarian **Jesse Kneeland** has accepted a call to serve Hope Lutheran, Northome, Minn., and Bethesda Lutheran, Mizpah, Minn.



New members at Newark Lutheran Church

New members were recognized at Newark Lutheran, Newark, Ill. Pictured (from left) are Gary Underhill, Don and Tricia Marvin, Gabrielle Speerly, Justin Nichols, Brenda Barnes, Elizabeth Barnes, Stephanie Underhill and Pastor Luke Emerson.

AFLC memorials: March

AFLBS

Ken Nash (3)
Ardell Grothe
Randy Peterson
Joanne Rykken
Grant Torgerson (2)
Diane Pletcher
Orvil Skordahl
Carley Olson
Paul Ryder
Eleanor Hegseth

AFLT

William Schipper
Ovidie Dyrud
Helen Dahl (2)
Reggie Olson

Evangelism

Geri Graham
Helene Dahl
Diane Pletcher
Wallace Erickson
Gene Quist
Pastor John Mundfrom

Home Missions

Murell Knudsvig
Ken Nash
Edith Gudim
Geri Graham

World Missions

Carley Olson
Edith Gudim

Miriam Infant Home

Sue Johnson
Betty Johnson
Diane Pletcher

Parish Education

Edith Gudim
Grant Torgerson
Loren Berkness

Vision

Murell Knudsvig
... in honor of

World Missions

Don and Mariana Johnson

AFLC BENEVOLENCES Jan. 1-March 31, 2014

| FUND | REC'D IN MARCH | TOTAL REC'D TO DATE | PRIOR YEAR-TO-DATE |
|------------------|------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| General Fund | \$22,369 | \$83,634 | \$88,916 |
| Evangelism | 12,771 | 34,832 | 37,345 |
| Youth Ministries | 26,511 | 44,374 | 30,398 |
| Parish Education | 10,437 | 30,240 | 27,879 |
| Seminary | 19,861 | 64,528 | 62,202 |
| Bible School | 33,098 | 87,406 | 93,282 |
| Home Missions | 44,077 | 103,028 | 104,227 |
| World Missions | 32,364 | 104,348 | 108,528 |
| Personal Support | 27,635 | 106,421 | 113,910 |
| TOTALS | \$229,124 | \$658,811 | \$666,687 |

Contact the individual departments for further information about specific financial needs.

Missions in the 21st century

"The mission field has moved." This statement was made by the author of a book* published almost 10 years ago as he outlined the differences between what used to be true and what is true today. Many of our readers grew up with a concept of missions as something "over there." Madagascar, India, Brazil, Tanzania, Bolivia, etc., were mission fields to which

we sent missionaries, and support was raised from individuals and congregations. Funds were channeled through denominational offices and mission societies to establish Bible

schools and seminaries, hospitals, to build churches and pay national workers. Mission work in the local community was directed toward the needy in our society ... the homeless and hungry, prisoners, drunkards, and other unfortunate people.

But the mission field has moved. Though the needs in foreign lands are still great, many if not most of the national churches have assumed significant responsibility for the mission work in their own lands, and many missionaries serve with or under local leaders rather than over them. Mission boards and societies have become aware of the danger of creating an unhealthy dependency on outside resources instead of self-reliance, and now seek to repair the damages perpetuated by past programs. (For a full study of this issue, read *When Charity Destroys Dignity* by Glenn J. Schwartz.)

Some congregations have posted a sign above the inside door of their church, saying to people who are leaving the building something like this: "You are now

entering the mission field." What does this mean? First, it means that the fastest growing religion today in the United States is "no religion," according to every indicator. Young people with church backgrounds, even some who may have been raised in our congregations, no longer have any meaningful connection with a church of any kind. Even though they may have been baptized and confirmed, they need to be evangelized, and this is indeed a large mission field right at our doorstep.

Second, the world mission field has come to us. Several students and faculty members from our Bible school and seminary took a City Vision bus tour a few years ago, and were overwhelmed to see the growing presence of so-called "third world" people in the Twin Cities ... Southeast Asia, Somalia, Tibet, Ethiopia, Mexico, India, Liberia ... the list of homelands almost seems endless. Most of these people brought their religions with them, and we saw mosques and temples of various faiths, a few even meeting in buildings that formerly housed Christian congregations. This mission field is not across the oceans anymore, for it has come to us. This mission work is not the responsibility of a few missionaries; it is the calling of every Christian.

Jesus did not tell us to stay and wait for the lost to come. The going to them seems to be taken for granted in Matthew 28. His charge to us was to make disciples. In other lands. Here at home. On His authority. And He will be with us. Always.

Of the making of hymnals

Those of us who grew up Lutheran probably are accustomed to referring to

our hymnals by the color rather than the name ... the blue hymnal, the black hymnal, the red hymnal, the green hymnal. This was mercifully confused 20 years ago when our AFLC *Ambassador Hymnal* was published and made available in two colors, red and blue. This is an anniversary year for our hymnal, and an article next month by one of the original committee will mark this important occasion.

This year marks the centennial year of another hymnal that some will remember, *The Lutheran Hymnary* or the black hymnal. This was the hymnal that my father remembered from his youth, the one used in old Trinity church near the Augsburg campus in Minneapolis during my college years, and the hymnal at Helmar Lutheran Church, Newark, Ill., when I was

His charge to us was to make disciples. In other lands. Here at home. On His authority. And He will be with us. Always.

the pastor there in the early '90s. One of its unique features was an arrangement of hymns according to the Sundays of the church year (such as ones for each Sunday in the Trinity season), and the collects or pastoral prayers were also included. Its main successor today is *The Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary*, published in 1996 by the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Though our *Ambassador Hymnal* is primarily an adaptation and updating of the old *Concordia Hymnal* (1932), it also is indebted to the black hymnal for one unique feature: the inclusion of the creeds, the Augsburg Confession, and *Luther's Small Catechism*, our foundational doctrinal statements and Lutheran confessions. And so we celebrate its anniversary, too.

**In Search of the Unchurched* by Alan C. Klaas, The Alban Institute, 1996



Pastor Robert Lee

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Spiritual legacies

BY TIM LARSON

Some of my most cherished memories from my childhood years are the times spent with my grandparents at the breakfast table spending time in God's Word and reading the daily passage from *Christ in Our Home*, which I'm sure many of you are familiar with. Looking back, this was not an extravagant time spent in the Word nor was it a lengthy sermon during which I took notes. However, it spoke volumes to me. That my grandparents, at the time in their mid-70s to early 80s, would take the time each day to spend *together* in God's Word was an important testimony—something that I will never forget; this was their spiritual legacy.

Even if we have a rich Christian heritage, this does not solidify our own salvation. Riding the proverbial coattails of our Christian parents or grandparents is a false hope. We must be followers of Christ ourselves and trust in Him as *our* savior.

Deuteronomy 7:9 says: "Know therefore that the LORD your God is God, the faithful God who keeps covenant and steadfast love with those who love him and keep his commandments, to a thousand generations." A thousand generations? That could entail a seemingly endless amount of people! It is amazing to think what far-reaching effects the simple prayers of my Norwegian ancestors and others like them have had. This is something that we probably will never know.

Attending church regularly and spending time with other Christian friends and family are important aspects of a living faith. Those of us who have the opportunity to attend Bible studies or

spend meaningful time with likeminded brothers and sisters in Christ encouraging one another in our daily walk know what a blessing this is. Matthew 18:20 says: "For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them."

Fellowship is a wonderful thing. However, we do need to follow Christ's example and take time each and every day to spend time with God in His Word and in prayer. Friends, what does this look like in your life? Are you doing this *every* day? This is not always easy in this fast-paced, instant-gratification kind of world we live in today. Matthew 6:6 gives us a picture of what Christ taught: "But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you."

On another level, parents, are you taking the time each day at some point to have devotions with each other and as a family? These are times that can be so memorable and used as valuable teaching opportunities. Even if you don't specifically say something about a passage, the time you spend in God's Word will be at work in the hearts of those who hear it. God's Word is powerful and is living and active, even if we can't necessarily see that at the precise moment that we read it.

And so I ask, what kind of spiritual legacy will you leave?

Larson, a 2009 graduate of the Association Free Lutheran Bible School, lives in Osakis, Minn.