

THE LUTHERAN  SEPTEMBER 2008
AMBASSADOR



Our



Provider

BY AMY ANDRESEN

A couple of years ago, as I was on my hands and knees weeding in my garden, I spoke confessions, praises, and requests to God. I recall specifically being thankful that I had the energy to get done the work that needed to be done. Nearing the end of the last row, I looked up to see a luminous-looking cloud rolling in from the west. It was quickly blowing its way into our yard.

"Lord, I just want to get to the end of the row and finish the weeding. Is that OK?" I prayed.

I listened for the answer and heard a definite, "Get inside the house, now."

I sprang up from the dirt and hustled into the house. I gazed out the picture window into the garden and saw a bolt of lightning hit the ground not far from where I had been. As the kids would say, it was totally awesome! "Wow, Lord!" I said. "Thanks for helping me get out of the way!"

The feeling I had was not what I had expected. I wasn't afraid of what might have been. I had a peace inside knowing that God was caring for me and that He was in control. I simply need to listen to Him and obey what He says.

Needless to say, I don't always listen and obey God. But He is full of mercy and continues to teach me more and more about His great love, forgiveness and faithfulness.

This summer my husband and I planted more varieties of vegetables than usual. I wanted a freezer and pantry full of produce to enjoy in the winter months to come. Sufficient rain has provided

a bumper crop. A friend told me she was surprised the rabbits weren't eating a particularly beautiful row of lettuce as it was a favorite of theirs.

My mouth dropped. I had never considered the rabbits before. Living on acreage in the country, we have countless rabbits hopping around our property. The next morning I picked lettuce and nine plate-size heads of broccoli. Rinsing them at the kitchen sink I was thanking God with near tears in my eyes for His glorious provision for us this summer. "Thank you God for protecting our garden from the rabbits. ... It's a miracle, Lord, and it is all because of You."

I had cleaned the last head of broccoli when I saw a small white grub on the stem. I felt God say, "I saved the plants from grubs, too!" It was such a great moment of joy, laughter and awe with my heavenly Father.

When I have days that don't go as sweetly and easily as those special days in the garden, I am reminded that God is with me, in control, and waiting to bless me with his rest, love, refreshment, and—most of all—forgiveness. I need to get my eyes on Him and His glory, and praise and thank Him for who He is, not what I might be focusing on.

God provided Abraham with the ram he needed. God has provided for us by giving us His Son to save us from our terrible sin. God longs to provide even more for us while we live on Earth and trust Him. He is Jehovah Jireh, the God who sees or provides. Let's trust Him to be our provision in all areas of our lives ... even in the garden.

Andresen is a member of Good Shepherd Free Lutheran, Madison, S.D.

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Christian families—my own included—need to remember that we can only “save” the family by losing ourselves in service to God and neighbor.

— W. Bradford Wilcox

Students are the church of today. We must create an environment where students are challenged to serve others, and discover the significant life God has called them to live.

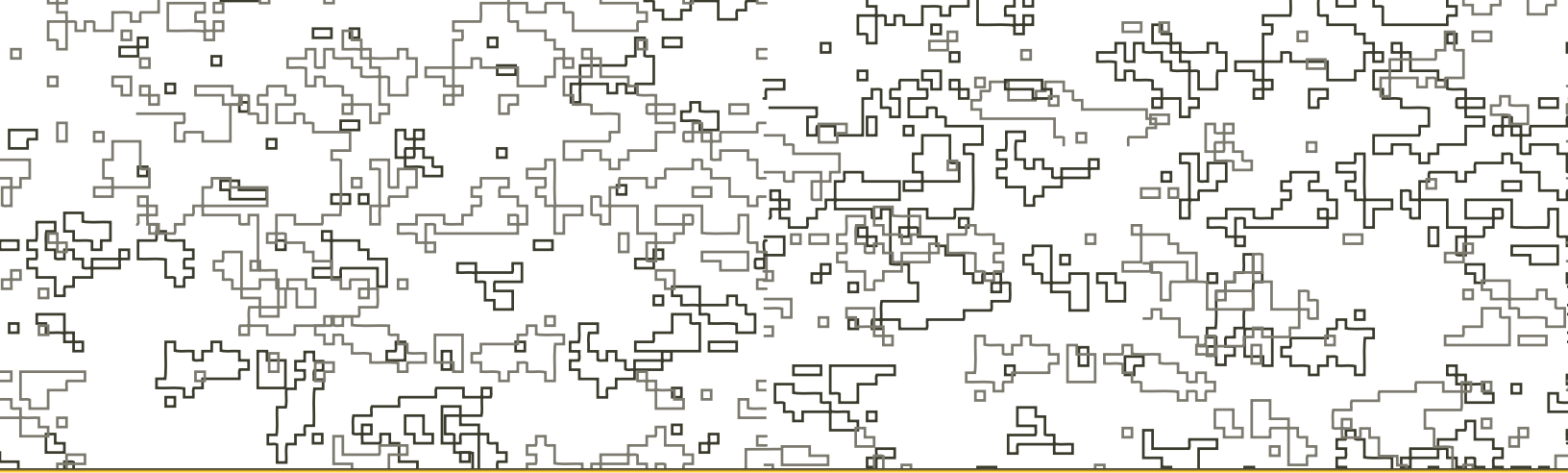
— Doug Fields

[Youth workers find themselves in an age of great opportunity. Interest in spirituality is growing, and the church has the answer to that need. The only way we can communicate that message to the world is if we live and speak the gospel in the culture of our students.]

— Walt Mueller

There’s no doubt that a family’s faith, especially if it is truly integrated into the everyday lives of parents, has the most striking correlation to kids reporting that their faith is an important part of their lives. ... If kids see adults who care and aren’t out for themselves, they might start thinking that God cares and that their faith means something.

— Chap Clark



CULTURE QUICKSAND

BY PASTOR JASON HOLT

“**W**HERE DID THAT QUICKSAND COME FROM?”

It was one of my first times playing *Pitfall!* by Activision. I was 11 years old. The game had been around for months and all my friends had played it, but now I was finding out firsthand just how challenging it really was. My character, Pitfall Harry, had successfully traversed some hazards in the jungle video game made for Atari, including rolling logs and crocodile-infested waters. But my vision did not detect the dangerous quicksand on the screen. Harry was down and my turn was done.

This early virtual quicksand encounter left me with a respect for the slippery stuff. It is one of those surprises in nature, like the duck-billed platypus, that leave me in awe of our magnificent creator God. Why do I find quicksand so interesting? It looks solid, but it is not. If a person does not recognize it, then it may capture him. If one struggles against it, then one sinks deeper down into it.

Recently I have found myself drawn to the picture of quicksand when I think about culture. As believers in Jesus seeking to stand on the inerrant and infallible Word of God, we are in culture, and it is helpful to take a moment to recognize it.

One of Merriam Webster's online definitions of “culture” in this context is “the characteristic features of everyday existence (as diversions or a way of life) shared by people in a place or time.” Culture is our customs and our social forms. It impacts us from all angles. It influences us. Two lessons about culture that I am learning are to recognize that I am in it and to remember that I need to respond to it.

YOU ARE IN IT

Culture is not only the stuff around us, but the stuff we interact with daily. Like a person standing waist-deep in quicksand would be foolish to say he is on solid ground, it's wrong to say we are not in culture. Music, movies, trends—they all impact our priorities and ideas. In short, culture impacts life.

If you have concluded that culture is relegated to the catch phrases from popular movies and music on youths' iPod playlists, then allow me to demonstrate that you are just as immersed in culture as the next reader.

Have you ever shaken someone's hand in meeting them? In the United States, this action is a proper greeting. In other parts of the world, it would be too personal because a respectful bow is in order. In yet other places, it would be too cold, since an embrace is custom. Have you ever used the words “gift horse” or “pulling my leg”? Culture is the context; neither of the last phrases have anything to do with becoming an equestrian athlete or physically grabbing someone's limb.

The apostle Paul understood culture, recognized he was in it, and then used it to communicate about Jesus. In Acts 17:22-31, the Areopagus address demonstrates that Paul observed the culture (v. 23) and communicated the truth about Jesus while directly citing their poetry (v. 28). Paul's example standing in Athens underscores that we are better equipped to share Jesus when we see the culture we are within. Seeing that we are “in it” is necessary to be able to respond to it.



BOOT CAMP

HIT IT

Mark Cahill was our national guest speaker on personal evangelism at FLY Boot Camp this summer. This soft-spoken and relaxed former college basketball player was an engaging personality. His 80-minute talk was riveting.

"I've got to hit," Mark explained, as he walked up to me the next morning with his Styrofoam breakfast box from the Manna Inn at the ARC. Setting his box down on a picnic table, we gave a brother-to-brother hug—each other's right hands clasped as if we were arm wrestling in the air, left arms reaching around the other person to give a tap on the back.

If I had not spent a few hours listening to and interacting with Mark, I would not have known his expression meant it was time to "hit the road" nor to expect the hug. His culture assisted me with a response.

So how do we hit it? How do we respond to our culture?

One tool that I am finding very valuable in addressing culture with teenagers comes from the Center for Parent Youth Understanding (www.cpyu.org). It is called a 3-D Review. This tool is geared for media, but it can be applied by any age to anything in our culture. There are three parts.

Discover

As we encounter things in our culture, it is valuable to ask, "What is the message or worldview of this area?" We do not need to see, hear, and experience everything in our culture to ask this

question. Quality Christian resources are available like Focus on the Family's *PluggedIn* that will do the discover step for you.

Discern

After we see what the piece of culture is communicating, then we can hold that message up against truth. God's Word is our source and norm for faith and life. It is the vine that we can depend on in the midst of the cultural quicksand. It is clinging to the supernatural reality that the Lord has revealed in His Word which enables us to see if the message or worldview we find is consistent with a biblical one.

Decide

Once we discover and discern a message in culture, we must not stop. If we do not press through to a response, then we are subject to the quicksand's grip. We sink. When we decide—to resist because it is not biblical or to participate because it is consistent with God's Word—then we are interacting with our culture in a godly fashion.

In reading about quicksand, I was reminded that it is the person who does not panic who is best prepared to lay down flat and slowly climb to safety. Believers of all ages can interact with our culture by resisting the urge to panic, even though we are in it, and by pursuing responses that are rooted in God's truth.

Holt is director of AFLC Youth Ministries.

TAKE OWNERSHIP

BY SUSAN WELSCH

YOU HAVE JUST BEGUN TO READ THIS AND ALREADY TWO people have died somewhere in the world ... maybe more. On average, two people die every second. Does this concern you? Do you find yourself wondering if those people were saved by the grace of God or not? Where will they spend eternity? Does it grieve you that one, if not both, of those people will spend their eternity in hell—with no mercy?

Romans 6:23 clearly states that the wages of sin is death (hell) but the gift of God is eternal life. There are two options. You see, our decision as Christians affects where others spend eternity. Are we going to tell them the secret to eternal life or don't we *care* that their future is one of suffering and pain?

God wanted me at FLY Boot Camp 2008, along with all the other students He led there, to hear this simple message once again: "Go and make disciples of all nations ..." (Matthew 28:19). Mark Cahill, full-time evangelist, author, and public speaker, came and spoke to us one evening at the Association Retreat Center in Osceola, Wis. What he said that night convicted everyone in that room. The question is not, "How can we share our faith?" rather, "How can we *not* share our faith?" When the option is heaven or hell, is it fair that some people don't even know how to get to heaven?

II Corinthians 5:15 says, "He died for all, so that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for Him who for their sake died and was raised." I want to be sure that when I stand before my King one day, I can give an account of my life and say that I was not ashamed of the gospel (Romans 1:16), but was obedient to His command in telling of His saving grace. Why is it that as Christians we are so often embarrassed to give an account for the hope that is in us? Are we afraid of getting rejected? For most Christians, standing up for one's faith is one of the most frightening things to do alone. How wonderful it is, then, to know that we *don't* do it alone! Jesus specifically tells us that when we are rejected, it is not us that people are rejecting, but Christ who lives in us.

In Matthew 10:32-33, Jesus speaks plainly: "Everyone who acknowledges me before men, I will also acknowledge before my father who is in Heaven, but whoever denies me before men, I will also deny before my Father who is in Heaven." God tells us clearly that we are not on this earth for ourselves but to live for Him and do His will.

And I Timothy 2:4 says that God "desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth." How can I say that I love

Jesus Christ and grieve Him by not sharing Him with others? How can I say that I love others if it doesn't bother me that they spend eternity in hell?

Boot Camp equipped me to share my faith in everyday conversations with everyone I come into contact with—*without* being scared to death of even mentioning Christ. We had the opportunity to go street witnessing one afternoon as well, and even though we were frequently rejected, even this was a blessing, just knowing that we had been faithful and obedient. Some, however, did respond positively to the gospel, praise Jesus! Aside from the wonderful friendships made and the great fun had, we students walked away from Boot Camp with a new perspective on life, a learned method of witnessing, and—most importantly—a heart to see people as God sees people.

Each session left me with something new to think about, some new angle to apply to my life. But one of the greatest things of the week was the emphasis on memorizing God's Word. We were all given ten verses to memorize, which we used in the witnessing method "Sharing Jesus without Fear" by Bill Fay. The emphasis in this method of evangelism is letting God do the work completely through His Word. We just ask questions to activate thought and "turn the pages," so to speak.

The thought crossed many minds at camp that week, "Why have so few of us been witnessed to?" If we all honestly think about our past, was there ever a time when we were witnessed to? If your answer is yes, then praise the Lord! But most of us would probably say no. Why? When Christians have the hope of eternal life in us, how can we keep from telling people about it? Have we failed? Many Christians have in that they have kept their faith hidden. Friends, let's be faithful. May we *never* shame our Lord so that He does not even acknowledge us before His Father in Heaven!

"But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the fruit you get leads to sanctification and its end, eternal life." (Romans 6:22). Brothers and sisters in Christ, never think for a moment that you have something more important to do than to tell someone about the hope that is in you. Another second could go by and two more people will meet judgment. Your choice could affect where they spend eternity. We are simply called to be obedient, and what great reward results!

MARK CAHILL

WITNESSING

BIBLE VERSES

PRACTICING



Click on a thumbnail to see the full-sized version.



Welsch, a member of Amery Free Lutheran, Amery, Wis., is starting her senior year in high school. She spent her summer working for Child Evangelism Fellowship.



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AND STORIES FROM
FLY BOOT CAMP, VISIT
WWW.AFLC.ORG/YOUTH





STUDENT

BOOT CAMP



TESTIMONIES

ONE OF THE MEMORY VERSES FOR THE week at FLY Boot Camp explains very well the change that many of us have experienced. That verse is II Corinthians 5:15, "And He died for all that those who live should no longer live for themselves but for him who died for them and was raised again." Many teenagers here at FLY Boot Camp had life-changing experiences that prayerfully will never leave them. The lesson that they and I experienced was the urgency of reaching out to men and women of this world who have not claimed Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. One of our inspiring evening speakers, Mark Cahill, pointed out that two people die every second, and he illustrated these tragic deaths with a loud snap of his fingers. This definitely made an impression on me and awoke me to what is important in this life, living your entire life for Christ and His will ... A wise lesson I took from Mark Cahill I share with you now: Those who want to win the world for Christ must have the courage to come into conflict with it. God bless.

Hans Tanner, Living Word Free Lutheran Church, Sioux Falls, SD

WHEN I WENT OUT WITNESSING ON Thursday, I was frightened to even approach anyone. Once I started, though, it began to feel natural to just start asking people what they believed. Awkward, yes, but not really abnormal. And for once in my life, I was actually opening my mouth for Jesus. Simply realizing that I was obeying God's commission made me feel like the rejections could not discourage me. So I was almost surprised when two teenage boys responded to our questions, welcomed the Bible verses, and accepted Jesus as their Savior. Their receptivity shocked me until I realized that God must have been preparing their hearts beforehand. I simply made myself available and God worked through my fumbling words to bring two souls into His kingdom. As II Corinthians 12:9 says, "My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness." Now I trust that God will nurture and strengthen their newfound faith and also give me the courage to continue sharing my faith with others.

Kaila Paige, Faith Lutheran Church, Shakopee, MN

THIS YEAR AT FLY BOOT CAMP I learned to stand up boldly for my faith. There are so many people out there who are confused and hurting. Thursday we went out on the streets to witness and it broke my heart to see so many people who didn't know Jesus. I met a girl who believed in reincarnation [and] evolution, but she also believed in a creator. She was so confused. Even though we didn't get to read the Bible verses with her, I hope we planted a seed. Something else I learned was success is not bringing someone to Christ. Success is opening your mouth to share God's Word. I'm definitely bringing that back to my home town.

Tabitha Beard, Faith Lutheran Church, El Campo, Texas





AFTER MONTHS OF WAITING AND repeatedly asking my dad if we could get a Facebook account, he finally checked it out for himself and said yes. My sister and I were thrilled! For those of you who aren't familiar with Facebook, it's a Web site that was originally created for people who have lost touch with old friends or classmates. It is an easy way for them to reconnect and stay in touch. Web sites like Facebook can be a safe way to connect with your friends and have become extremely popular in the last few years with teens and adult. Facebook pages reveal a lot of personal information about the member, so in many ways it is like an open book of someone's life.

Facebook and other social networking Web sites tell a lot about people—their likes and dislikes, what their priorities are,

and what kind of morals they have. Morals are very evident on members' pages when you glance over their bumper stickers, read their quotes or even by just seeing what applications they have (all of which are some specific features of Facebook). A couple of months ago I found a friend of mine on Facebook that I hadn't seen in a couple of years, and after just a few minutes of looking over her pictures, I could tell that she was different. The way she dressed had changed a lot, and now drinking, smoking, and partying were a big part of her life.

I just recently read an article entitled, "Don't Drink and Drive, then Post on Facebook," (Eric Tucker; *MSN Today*; July 24, 2008). It talked about many cases of drunk drivers and how the prosecutors were able to find incriminating pictures of them on

their Facebook or MySpace page, which resulted in a much stricter sentencing for them. The article ended with saying, "If it shows up under your name you own it," he said, 'and you better understand that people look for that stuff.'" In other words, people are quick to spot inconsistencies between what you say and how you live.

In the same way, your Facebook page should be evidence of your love for Christ and how you live your life for Him. It can be a personal testament to Jesus Christ, and I don't mean just saying you're a Christian in your personal profile on Facebook. Make it very evident that Jesus is your Savior and Lord. The religion section in your profile is a great place to start, though. I know lots of people who just simply say they are a Christian, but I have one dear friend who

BY GRETCHEN UNVERZAGT

iEvangelism

MYSPACE? FACEBOOK? YES, GOD CAN IMPACT LIVES THROUGH YOUR WORDS

put, "I'm not in a religion, I'm in a relationship with Jesus Christ." You can clearly show your faith and love for Jesus in the way you carry on conversations with your friends on Facebook, and you can be a big witness through your attitude. You can also put Bible verses up on your Facebook page. "So shall My word be which goes forth from my mouth; it shall not return to me empty, without accomplishing what I desire, and without succeeding in the matter of which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11). The language you use and the pictures you display should be glorifying to God, not crude or risqué.

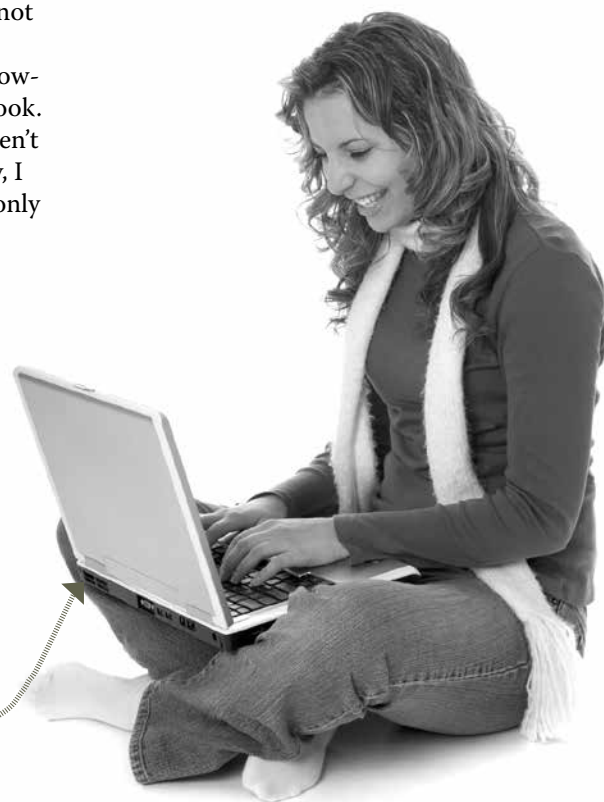
God can use your Facebook page to impact lives! Sounds crazy, right? But networks like these give you the ability to talk to lots of friends easily, encourage them, and have fellowship with them. You

can develop great friendships by talking regularly to people and caring about them. Sometimes little things can mean the world to people, like just sending them a small note, an online bumper sticker, a hug, or even drawing a picture for them!

Witnessing and encouraging people spiritually doesn't have to be hard or anything big. It can be the simplest thing: letting friends know that you care and that Jesus loves them! I have a friend who doesn't really have a youth group and not many Christian friends near her at all. We've really enjoyed the Christian fellowship we've been able to have on Facebook. It's encouraging to both of us. If it weren't for Facebook and the easy accessibility, I don't think we'd be as close, and we'd only see each other every two years at FLY!

To some people, Facebook is just a way to stay in touch with friends. For others it's a way to glorify God! "Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God" (I Corinthians 10:31). Your Facebook page is an open book of your life. Is Christ evident there?

Unverzagt, 17, is a member of Christ Is Lord Free Lutheran, Onalaska, Wis.





ON THE

UNLIKE THE TYPICAL BIBLE SCHOOL student, Paul Dyrud spent parts of three years on the AFLBS campus. The dissimilarities don't end there with Dyrud, a member of Grace Free Lutheran, Maple Grove, Minn. Dyrud is a world-class speed skater currently training for the 2010 winter Olympics in Vancouver, British Columbia.

He is a member of the U.S. All-Around team and skates long track, which consists of skating with one other skater and then matching up times at the end of the event rather than having heats. Races range from 1,500 meter mid-range sized races to up to 10,000 meter distance competitions.

Most of his counterparts began skating at an early age. But Dyrud wasn't born with a pair of skates on. In fact, it wasn't until the age of 8 that Dyrud started skating.

"My parents didn't really want me to play hockey," He said. "My mom heard about a Fire and Ice festival, so my dad and I decided to check it out. Not long after that I started skating on Parker's Lake and have been skating since."

With that, Dyrud skated all the way through school and in high school proved to be a dynamic athlete. He played golf, dabbled in baseball, and perhaps most notably, played soccer. He was an All-State honorable mention during his senior year.

In the spring of 2004 Paul graduated from Heritage Christian Academy, Maple Grove, and decided to enroll at AFLBS. In retrospect, Dyrud admitted his intentions weren't where they likely needed to be.

"My motivation for Bible school that year was entirely because I thought training outdoors in Minnesota would be advantageous because the World Junior Championships were going to be held outdoors in Finland, and I thought I could buy some time by staying in Minnesota and training at the outdoor facility in Roseville," Paul admitted.

The training certainly did work out for Paul in the realm of skating. In the fall of 2004, he skated in a Can-Am event in Calgary and broke four Junior National records, one of which still stands. At the Junior World Championships the following

spring in Finland, Dyrud placed fifth.

With the quality finishes from Calgary and Finland in tow, Dyrud packed and moved to Park City, Utah, to train without thoughts of ever returning to AFLBS to finish. Over the course of the year, Paul trained with many notable athletes. These athletes ranged from Olympians Joey Cheek, Jen Rodriguez, and KC Boutiette in long-track to some team pursuit training with Olympians Derek Parra and Chad Hedrick. Paul said he regretted not using the year training with this talent to his ultimate advantage.

"The biggest mistake I made in Park City was just not making the right decisions. I took the opportunity of training with the national team for granted," Dyrud said.

The bad year of skating culminated with Dyrud being the only person on his eight-member training squad to be left off the Olympic roster. This left Paul with a choice.

"When they went to Italy for about a month and a half, I could have stayed in

RIGHT TRACK

BY BRANDON WARNE

Utah and done nothing, or moved back to Minnesota. God called me back here.”

Dyrud moved back to Minnesota and re-enrolled at AFLBS.

“I think the thing that brought me back to Christ was a bad year of skating. While reflecting on my priorities, I felt God calling me back to Bible school. He really changed me,” Dyrud said. “It was a call I knew I couldn’t resist.”

Dyrud felt it was as though God had issued him an ultimatum. He could move back to AFLBS and get back to work, or he could stay in Utah and reject God’s call. Dyrud likened this to God hardening Pharaoh’s heart, which left an incredible impression on Paul and made his decision very easy.

“That was a decision that would have affected me for the rest of my life.”

Dyrud said that it was his final two semesters at Bible school, the spring and fall of 2006, that really has helped him find his faith. It was during this time that he reworked his priorities in a sense.

“School is definitely a priority for me,”

said Dyrud, who lists his father, heart surgeon Peter Dyrud, as well as his mother and older sisters, both nurses, as his influences to go into the medical field.

Dyrud’s training didn’t end with his sub-standard stay in Park City. He continued to train on his own in the Twin Cities, something he admitted is considerably tougher than training with a team.

“Sometimes it’s boring and really hard to motivate yourself when training alone,” he acknowledged.

He missed out on the World Cup team this past skating season, but won’t complain.

“I feel like I should have qualified, but I had a terrible race in the fall and in the winter I missed by a tenth of a second. In retrospect that’s probably alright because at the time I was taking a full load of credits at the University of Minnesota during first semester and a full load at the University of Utah in the second, so it’s been a blessing in disguise of sorts,” Dyrud said.

His ultimate goal is to compete in the 2010 Winter Olympic Games. In spite of

the failure that he has had to deal with, the verse that sticks with Paul most is Proverbs 3:5-6, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all ways acknowledge him, and he will make your paths straight” (NIV).

“Those verses were something I just kept telling myself. I didn’t necessarily know why things were going the way they were, but they did and I found comfort in those words. The lesson I’ve learned is that God’s way isn’t necessarily our way, and I wouldn’t have necessarily seen me focusing on school over skating or not doing as well as I would have liked in skating, but I wouldn’t change the way things happened even if I could.”

Warne, a 2006 graduate of AFLBS, is from Plymouth, Minn.

they love the Bible



A missionary can become known for many different things. Some are known for being eloquent speakers and gifted with languages. Others for their organizational ability or building campaigns they have led. Pastor Nate Jore, missionary to Uganda, wants to be known as a missionary who loves the Word of God.

Jore's love for the Word is shown in his work with a group of pastors in Uganda. Jore and the pastors meet most every Saturday, often around the Jores' dining room table. Jore teaches from the Word, and the group shares with one another and prays together. The goal is to train these pastors so that they will be better equipped to teach the Word of God to people in their villages. The desire is to live out the instruction of II Timothy 2:2: "And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others."

Jore's love for the Bible is also shown in what he gives away.

I had the opportunity to be in Uganda this past May. One day we traveled to a village outside of Jinja, the city where the Jores live. One of the pastors Jore meets with has been doing some outreach work in that village. It had rained that morning but it was clearing up. A meeting area was chosen under some trees and benches were set up. The school children were let out of class and

directed to the meeting area. It appeared most everyone in the village was there.

Often when a foreign visitor comes to a village in that area they announce that some type of aid is being given. Nate thought there might be anticipation of something like that.

We didn't give them any money that day. We didn't announce any building project. We gave them something even better. We gave them the Word of God.

We had some time of sharing, testimonies and preaching from the Bible. After that we had some Bibles, translated into the local tribal language, to give away. Jore let the Ugandan pastor take the lead in handing them out.

It appeared many in the crowd would have liked to receive a Bible, but we only had a few to give away. The pastor started asking questions to see who had listened to the message. Since I had preached the message I was glad there were at least a few who could answer the questions right. The pastor wanted to give the Bibles to those who seemed to be truly interested. His hope was that the Bibles would get into the hands of ones who would read them and share what they learned with others.

The mayor of the village was there. He was one of the first ones to stick his hand up and start answering questions correctly. The pastor gave him one of the Bibles. As soon

by pastor craig johnson

as he got it he opened it and started looking at it, while the man sitting next to him started looking at it too. Later I spotted him holding his newly received Bible close to his chest, the way someone wraps their arms around a precious gift.

The way some people in the crowd reacted and spoke, I got a sense that the mayor wouldn't have been the first person some in the village would expect would be interested in a Bible. But the Holy Spirit was at work and created an interest in God's Word. By God's grace the number of people in Uganda who love the Word of God keeps growing.

Johnson, Astoria, Ore., is editor of the Lutheran Ambassador.



write it out ...

BY PASTOR MARK JOHNSON

Think for a second of all the books in the world. There are volumes and volumes of written material where authors took the time to write about something that they thought was important to them. There is something about putting things on paper, whether it is a to-do list, your family history, poetry, or a short story. Have you ever considered the importance of writing out your personal testimony of faith?

One of sessions at this year's FLY Boot Camp at the ARC included a time for students to write out their faith story so that they would be "ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15). Later that afternoon the students had an opportunity to go out and share the love of Jesus and use their personal testimony in this way. In preparation for this I shared some thoughts about testimonies before the students worked on writing them down with their counselors and sharing them with each other. Here are some of the things that we considered together in chronicling God's faithful work in their lives.

A personal testimony of faith should be all about Jesus and His grace and mercy in saving us. We are reminded in Scripture that God alone should receive the glory in everything we do or say. "I am the Lord, that is My name; I will not give my glory to another" (Isaiah 42:8a). I encouraged the students to begin by sharing what their lives were like before they came to assurance of salvation, much like what Paul shared in Philippians 3 and Acts 22. There Paul laid out what his life was like before he encountered Jesus.

Then I encouraged the students to share the "after" that happened in their lives. Paul's experience was a dramatic encounter with Jesus on the road to Damascus. For many of us the "after"

may not seem so fantastic and dramatic. That's OK. Every testimony is precious to God. His steady work of faith in a life for a number of years is just as dramatic as Paul's flash-of-light experience. Each and every story of salvation is an amazing miracle with its roots in the love, grace and mercy of God and in the finished work of Jesus' death on the cross.

Last, I encouraged the students to share the "now" that is happening in their lives. How is God shaping and changing you through the power of His Word and His Holy Spirit? Every earnest, growing Christian should have something to share about their "now." A testimony of faith should also include Scripture. This is when a testimony really becomes powerful and God can use it for the salvation of souls.

Let's write our stories down. It's the most important one we have to tell. As we put it down God will help us to be "ready to give a defense." It will be prayed over, well thought out, and organized, clear and useful in building God's kingdom to His honor and glory. "Oh give thanks to the Lord for He is good; for His lovingkindness is everlasting. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, Whom He has redeemed from the hand of the adversary, and gathered from the lands, from the east and the west, from the north and the south" (Psalm 107:1-3).

Johnson, Dalton, Minn., is a member of the AFLC Youth Board.

Fifth grade

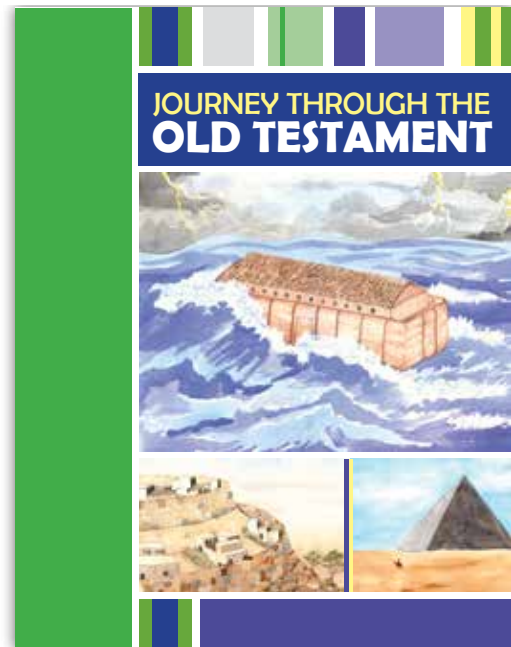
AFLC's Parish Education readies new Sunday school curriculum

After years of development and countless hours of work by volunteers who have created Bible lessons and illustrations, AFLC Parish Education is pleased to introduce the new fifth grade Sunday school curriculum, *Journey Through the Old Testament*. The biblical lessons help students dig into God's Word while learning more about the geography and culture of Old Testament times. The lessons with colorful illustrations also feature special sections called Word Works, Fast Fact, and Catechism Corner. The new curriculum has 36 lessons all in one book instead of three separate quarterly books with 12 lessons each.

Pre-publication orders for the new curriculum are now being accepted. Our goal is to ship the new student books around September 24. Since many classes will need student books prior to that time, we have prepared six full-color lessons in booklet form which will be ready to ship by August 1. Congregations may order any quantity needed, and there will be no charge for the booklet of six lessons. Please call or e-mail if you have questions: (763) 545-5631 or parished@aflc.org

The Ambassador Sunday School Series is written by the people of the AFLC to serve our AFLC congregations and systematically gives students a complete overview of the Scriptures as they move through the series. Beginning in second grade, the biblical lessons also lead students through *Luther's Small Catechism*. The second grade curriculum focuses on the Ten Commandments, third grade on The Lord's Prayer, and fourth grade on The Apostles' Creed, giving elementary age students a foundation for confirmation. The catechism section of the new fifth grade curriculum teaches about the Means of Grace (the Word, Baptism, and the Lord's Supper). New curricula for preschool, kindergarten, and grades one through five have been completed in the Ambassador Sunday School Series. Grades six through eight are in the process of being written, and the members of the Board of Publications hope to begin design and layout work for one of these grade levels in 2009.

Christopherson is director of Publications and Parish Education.



• Lesson 9

JOSEPH

Have you ever known someone who was "teacher's pet"? Have you ever accused your parents of having favorites because one of your brothers or sisters received what you thought was special treatment?

That was the situation with a boy named Joseph. Jacob had twelve sons, but Joseph was clearly his favorite. Joseph received special treatment. Genesis 37:3 says that Jacob "loved Joseph more than all his sons," and he made a special robe for Joseph.

1. How did Joseph's brothers react to their father's favoritism? (v.4)

One day Joseph's brothers had a chance to get even. Joseph had come to see how they were doing with their father's flocks. He found them near Dothan. Dothan was close to the *Via Plana*, which was the main trade route through Palestine. Caravans passed by frequently on their way to Egypt. Some of Joseph's brothers sold him to passing merchants, who took him to Egypt. There Joseph was sold again, this time to Potiphar, the captain of the bodyguard for the Pharaoh.

Memory Verse

And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose.

Romans 8:28

Word Works

Joseph did not hold a grudge against his brothers but willingly forgave them. There are two very important lessons we can learn from the story of Joseph. Complete the puzzle below to discover the first lesson. Find the missing letter of the alphabet in each line and write it in the spaces below.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

Catechism Corner

Joseph was only seventeen years old. Now he was far away from home and family and had become a slave. These were not ideal circumstances. He could have given up in despair. But he did not. He trusted God and continued to live his life in obedience to the God of his father, Jacob. And the Lord blessed him. He was successful. Potiphar promoted him to the top official in his house. While serving faithfully as top official, Joseph had an unfortunate encounter with Potiphar's wife. She accused Joseph of doing something he didn't do, and he ended up in jail. Definitely a demotion! But even there, God was with him. The chief jailer put Joseph in charge of all the prisoners. God had a plan for Joseph's life, and all this was part of that plan.

In prison Joseph met the cupbearer and baker from Pharaoh's household. He rightly interpreted dreams they had in prison. Several years later when Pharaoh had troubling dreams which no one could interpret, the cupbearer remembered Joseph. When asked to interpret the Pharaoh's dreams, Joseph made it very clear that this was God's work, not his. He told Pharaoh of the coming years of plenty followed by years of famine and made a suggestion as to what Pharaoh should do about it. Pharaoh was so impressed that he gave thirty-year-old Joseph

Top: The cover of the new fifth grade curriculum, which focuses on the Old Testament.

Bottom: Lessons like this one on Joseph were written and illustrated by members of AFLC congregations.

[effective] PREACHING

BY PASTOR DEL PALMER

Solid preaching of the Word is the most effective tool to empower missions. Such preaching creates a new heart, which changes the way a person lives.

Often our sermons focus on the way we live as a means of promoting missions. When the focus of preaching is on actions rather than the heart, the focus is on the symptoms and not the cause.

Over the last two years I experienced tremendous pain down my right leg. I tried everything to get the pain to go away. I tried walking, going to the chiropractor, physical therapy, surgery to have the varicose veins in my leg removed, spinal injections and pain medication of every kind. The pain never went away.

One day I found out I was only treating the symptoms and not the cause of my pain. After an MRI my doctor told me I had a fractured vertebra in my spine. The problem in my spine pinched the nerves going down my leg, giving me the symptom of pain. The only solution was to treat the real cause of the pain with radical surgery. When the cause was corrected with surgery the symptoms were completely gone.

Solid preaching that empowers missions must perform radical surgery on the heart. The Physician of our soul must perform a transplant. He's looked at our hearts and this is His diagnosis, "The heart is deceitful above all things and beyond cure" (Jeremiah 17:9). The prognosis is not good as we face sure eternal death. Although our heart is beyond cure the Physician assures us that we can be saved with a transplant, "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will be careful to observe My ordinances. You will live in the land that I gave to your forefathers; so you will be My people, and I will be your God" (Ezekiel 36:25-28).

We experience a radical change when our old sinful heart is put to death and we receive the Spirit of God and a new heart. When we treat the cause the symptoms go away. When the heart

is changed we have a new mission zeal that is motivated by gratitude and empowered by God Himself.

Solid law and gospel preaching is the most effective tool to bring about this radical change. When the law is preached so that we notice the prognosis is death and judgment from God, it kills the pride of our lives. Preaching the law is the only thing that makes us willing to undergo the scalpel of the Great Physician. Without the clear diagnosis of the law we will always think our sin disease is not that bad and that we can cure it.

Once we are dead we must be brought back to life. The gospel is the only thing that can accomplish this. "I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: first for the Jew, then for the Gentile" (Romans 1:16).

Missions must be empowered by the radical change that only solid law and gospel preaching brings about. Anything less is a powerless attempt to accomplish mission work through the spiritually dead.

Palmer, Shakopee, Minn., is the director of AFLC World Missions.



living water

BY BUNNY MEYER

Without water, where would we be? We wouldn't even exist! God created us and our world with an abundance of water, which is necessary for our existence. It makes up a large percentage of our body and two-thirds of Earth. There are amazing facts that one can learn of the components of water and its importance in all aspects of life just by searching for "water" on an Internet search engine or checking your library resources. We take so much for granted in our daily activities when it comes to this natural resource.

The topic ties in well with what the Bible says regarding Jesus, our Living Water, in John 7. People throughout the world are dying in their sins without Jesus. When Jesus speaks of living water, He speaks of the water that brings us forgiveness and life eternal. How uplifting! I studied several passages in Scripture related to water and made the connection to our Savior in the WMF Bible study for 2009 called "Living Water."

Billions of people around the world lack sufficient water resources. When safe water is available, entire village economies change and the lives of inhabitants are transformed from disease and malnutrition to hope and success. Jesus comes with life-giving water to nourish our souls. He can transform

our minds and sin-sick bodies into vessels of honor for Him.

In this study of the Scriptures we can find God's grace connected with water starting with the opening verses of Genesis. Later in this study we read how God washed our sinful world with the flood, at the same time saving Noah and his family. We are led by the still waters in the Psalms, encouraged by the promises of rain for dry land, and refreshed by the verses which tell us that He satisfies the thirsty. Jesus went into the waters of the Jordan River to be baptized by John, to fulfill all righteousness for us. He chose some of His disciples as they were fishing and later provided a miraculous catch of fish for them. He meets the Samaritan woman at the well and offers her the living water. He stills the raging waves for His fearful friends and followers and washes their feet the night before His crucifixion.

As believers we look forward to the eternal rest where we will see the River of Life flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb. May your hearts be refreshed by the Holy Spirit as you study these lessons.

Meyer, who lives in South Bend, Ind., authored the WMF Bible study, "Living Water."

Living Water Bible study

Number of books ordered (\$8 each) _____

Name: _____

Street Address/ PO Box _____

City/ State/ Zip Code _____

Church/City/State _____

Write checks to "National WMF" and mail to Executive Secretary Dawn Johnson, 2991 30th Ave., Wilson, WI 54027, e-mail wmf.es@aflc.org or ctk@wwt.net, or call (715) 772-4454. Please order your books by October 1.



FLAPS delivers plane to Naknek, Alaska

Lavon Bohling (director of FLAPS) and Jeremy Crowell left July 7 from Anoka County Airport, Anoka, Minn., flying the FLAPS Cessna 175 to southwestern Alaska, where the plane will be used for mission work. The trip took four days, with a route over North Dakota, Saskatchewan, British Columbia and on to Alaska. The plane was loaded with supplies for KAKN radio, as well as a generator and winter flying necessities.

Pictured above are (clockwise from top left) Pastor Jeff Swanson (left) and Jeremy Crowell at the plane's final destination, Naknek. Lavon Bohling and Jeremy Crowell just before takeoff on their continental trip. Fern Bohling, Jeremy Crowell, Lavon Bohling and Lacey Crowell in a small commuter plane operated by Mission Aviation used between Naknek and Anchorage. A church service at Naknek where Pastor Jeff Swanson serves (top) and the chapel at South Naknek. A view out the Cessna 175 along the trek to Naknek.

Seminary hosts Summer Institute of Theology



It was a week of studies for the nearly 70 attendees of the Summer Institute of Theology held Aug. 4-8 on the campus of the AFLC Schools in Plymouth, Minn.

Put on by the Free Lutheran Seminary, the institute offers continuing education classes for lay pastors as well as courses available for anyone interested in theological studies.

Courses offered this summer included "Studies in the Gospel of Mark," by Pastor Jerry Moan; "The Lord's Supper," by Dr. Francis Monseth; "Missions and the Congregation," by Pastor Del Palmer; and "History of Lutheran Pietism," by Pastor Robert Lee.



TOP: Nearly 70 people registered for the 2008 Summer Institute of Theology.

MIDDLE: Pastor Robert Lee teaches on the "History of Lutheran Pietism."

BOTTOM: Eric Westlake takes notes.

Labor Day retreat at Wilderness Bible Camp

Come to Wilderness Camp for the Labor Day Weekend Retreat. The retreat begins August 30 with a bring-your-own-meat barbeque at 5 p.m. Sessions will be led by Pastor Jim Christiansen of Badger, Minn. A Sunday night hymn sing and a pancake breakfast round out the weekend. The retreat ends after the Monday morning Bible study.

Wilderness Bible Camp is a place to come together with brothers and sisters in Christ and grow in the Word of God, with a schedule leisurely enough to enjoy the peace and quiet of a secluded spot. Located 11 miles south of Lake Park, Minn., Wilderness Camp offers hiking trails cut through hardwood-forested hills, space and opportunity for volleyball, basketball, softball, horseshoes, and other outdoor activities. Sleeping rooms are available, as well as RV and tent campsites. A large bath house with modern facilities is centrally located. The kitchen and dining room provide food storage and preparation facilities as well as plenty of room to eat.

Come and spend time at Wilderness Camp, studying the Word of God, having fellowship with the body of Christ, and finding time for rest and relaxation in the midst of God's creation. For more information, please contact Nathan Dalager at 218-437-6035. To reserve sleeping rooms, call Dick Hanson at 218-847-7780.

Klempay will highlight organ dedication concert

AFLC Schools will host a concert to dedicate the complete installation of the Wicks pipe organ. The concert is scheduled for 4 p.m. Sept. 14 in the campus chapel, with guest organist Dr. Desiderius Klempay performing.

A native of Pancevo, Yugoslavia, Klempay has been principal organist at Wooddale Church in Eden Prairie, Minn., since 1988. He received a Doctor of Musical Arts Degree in Organ Performance from the University of Minnesota and an Organ Diploma from the Mozarteum Conservatory in Salzburg, Austria.

A lunch will follow the concert and an offering will be taken to help retire the remaining debt on the organ installation project.

AFLC memorials: July

AFLBS

LuAnn Dotzenrod
Amy Foss
Jon Riebeling
Carol Nelson

AFLTS

Delbert Jones

Evangelism

Carol Nelson

Home Missions

James Anderson
Zelda Baker

Parish Education

Pastor John Strand

World Missions

LaVerne Grimm

Youth Ministries

John Riebeling

... in honor of

Ambassador Institute

Alyce Olson

Evangelism

Kermit Haakenson

World Missions

Quam/Hafvenstein
wedding

Thrivent grants \$60,000 to AFLC

Tom Johnston (left), a representative from Thrivent Financial for Lutherans, presented a church-wide grant of \$60,000 to Pastor Elden Nelson, president of the AFLC. The grant monies were split between several AFLC departments. Schools received \$9,000, Youth Ministries received \$3,500, Parish Education received \$5,000, Evangelism received \$31,000 and the World Missions Department received \$11,500.



ARC Classics Retreat Sept. 19-21

The Association Retreat Center, Osceola, Wis., will host one AFLC event this fall under the theme: "God's Plan of Salvation" (Ephesians 2:4-5).

The **Classics' Retreat** (for those 55+) will be Sept. 19-21 with Pastor Richard and Clara Gunderson speaking and Pastor Roger and Rose David leading worship. The cost is \$75 per person and \$125 per couple.

For more information on the retreat, call (800) 294-2877 or visit the ARC's Web site at www.arc-aflc.org.

Congregations encouraged to order Parish Ed's *Missionary Chronicles*

Parish Education would like to invite congregations to consider ordering a few extra copies of the new *Missionary Chronicles* book to have on display and available for purchase (\$10 each). The book, containing 43 short stories recently published by Ambassador Publications, is a wonderful resource for individual or family devotional reading to encourage a greater awareness of God's work through missions around the world. Contact AFLC Parish Education for more details: parished@aflc.org or (763) 545-5631.

People and places

AFLC Schools has hired **Andrew Hanson** as the director of music. He began work on Aug. 1. Hanson, who replaces Jerry Nelson, is from Coon Rapids, Minn. His experience includes six years as director of vocal music at St. Francis Public Schools and seven years as worship leader at Grace Free Lutheran, Maple Grove, Minn.

Pastor Marc Rakow was ordained on June 22 at Abiding Savior Free Lutheran, Sioux Falls, S.D., with Pastor Elden Nelson, AFLC president, officiating.

Jordan Langness, a 2005 graduate of AFLBS and a 2008 graduate of Northwestern College, has accepted a position as youth director at Prince of Peace Lutheran, Beulah, N.D.

Mercy and Truth offers Abel autobiography

Two new books are available through Mercy and Truth Publishing. The first, *Fifty Years Under the Southern Cross*, is the autobiography of Pastor John and Ruby Abel. It is available for a contribution of \$14.50 plus a \$2.50 handling charge for a total of \$17. Proceeds from the book will be donated to the AFLC mission field in Brazil. For more information, contact Pastor Abel at PO Box 97, Hitterdahl, MN 56552 or Pastor Dennis Gray at 15994 350th St. NW, Newfolden, Minn., or call ((218) 874-2101.

The second is *The Young Earth—The Bible and Science Can Agree!*, published by Mercy and Truth. Written by Pastor Roger Melquist (uncle of AFLC Pastor Todd Klemme), the book shows his years of experience as a teacher and educator. It can be ordered for \$10.60 from www.Xulon.com.

AFLC BENEVOLENCES Jan. 1- July 31, 2008

FUND	TOTAL (subsidy)	REC'D IN JULY	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	% TOTAL
General Fund	\$360,331	\$32,288	\$210,724	58
Evangelism	113,084	10,346	53,280	47
Youth Ministries	71,249	8,227	58,065	81
Parish Education	116,771	6,642	60,543	52
Seminary	220,252	15,888	106,712	48
Bible School	346,706	45,682	201,841	58
Home Missions	332,985	25,498	161,829	49
World Missions	288,948	30,562	178,782	62
Personal Support	457,495	42,584	274,590	60
TOTALS	\$2,307,821	\$217,715	\$1,306,367	57
TOTALS 2007	\$2,220,688	\$191,358	\$1,282,786	58

Goal 58%

These are the Annual Conference-approved budgets but do not reflect all the financial needs of the departments. Contact the individual departments for further information.

Somebody to LISTEN

On the radio show “A Prairie Home Companion” Garrison Keillor tells about the Drifter who visited his hometown of Lake Wobegon. The Drifter stopped at the Chatterbox Café and asked if he could do some work in exchange for a meal. He offered to wash dishes. Dorothy, who runs the café, said she already had that covered. He asked if he could mow her lawn. She brought him a meal but told him she already had somebody who took care of her lawn. He asked, “What can I do for you?” She told him there was one thing he could do that she couldn’t get anybody else to do. That was to talk with her.



Pastor Craig Johnson

It is not just Dorothy who has trouble finding somebody who will talk with her. Lots of children and young people are in need of somebody who will truly listen to them.

Many students are like Dorothy in that they have their other needs taken care of. Some have an abundance of material items. They have a vast array of entertainment options. They can find places on the Internet that will inform them and tutor them. But they still need people who will listen to them and talk with them.

A lawyer finished covering the details of the case with her client, but the client continued to talk. The lawyer told her she

would have to charge her by the hour for the amount of time she stayed in her office. It could get to be an expensive conversation. The lady said the cost didn’t matter to her. She was willing to spend hundreds of dollars an hour just to have somebody who would listen to her.

Many in this world would rejoice if they could find somebody who is “quick to listen, slow to speak and slow to become angry” (James 1:19, NIV).

One of the greatest gifts I received as a child happened each day after school. My mother was available and interested in listening to me tell about my day.

It can be easy for a child’s afternoons and evenings to get filled with lessons, practices and homework. You try to squeeze in a bite to eat and pretty soon it’s time for bed. The hours were spent trying to be productive, mark things off the to-do list and meet the demands of the schedule. You have done what you think is necessary to train your daughter, prepare her for the future and increase her opportunities. You have made time to take your son all over the place and try to provide for his needs. But have you taken time to truly listen?

It might sound impossible, but maybe some things can be cut out of the schedule. “But if they don’t play on the kindergarten all-star team they’ll probably never get a college scholarship.” Take the chance. “The best musicians start taking lessons twice a week at age 3.” Don’t worry about meeting

the expectations of the crowd. Don’t listen to the world more than you listen to your child.

Those who don’t have a young person in their home should still have their eyes open to look for a student who needs a listening ear. I’ve never heard a student say, “I have too many people in my life who listen to me and care about me.”

Finding time to listen to a student isn’t easy. We live in a busy, noisy world that tries to crowd out listening time. Young

You have made time to take your son all over the place and try to provide for his needs. But have you taken time to truly listen?

people often aren’t comfortable sharing what’s going on in their lives the instant they are asked. And sometimes it can seem like they are speaking a foreign language. Keep trying.

We listen to others because the Lord listens to us. “I love the Lord, for he heard my voice; he heard my cry for mercy. Because he turned his ear to me, I will call on him as long as I live” (Psalm 116:1-2). As followers of the One who turns His ear toward us, we need to turn our ears toward others who are longing for someone who will listen.

something to share

Leading like JESUS

BY NATHAN OLSON

Christians often think of Jesus as a strong and bold leader who was constantly going, going, going during His three years of public ministry. However, when the life of Jesus is examined, we find that he also took on the role of a leader behind the scenes. He let His disciples go on ahead of Him in a boat. He empowered both His 12 disciples and the 70 followers to be sent out to preach. He washed His disciples' feet. And He utilized those around Him to do the things that He could have easily done Himself as God's Son. Jesus shows us the perfect example of servant leadership!

We are all called to follow the instruction and leading of Christ in our world today. When we try to be godly leaders it is easy to feel like we need to be out in front and be recognized as important and influential. However, in our attempt to model our lives after Christ and become more like Jesus in thought, word, and deed, we need to realize that our Lord calls us to a different approach in our ministries: service.

The leaders of the FLY convention have long joked about the prominence of their positions. They have quietly counted how many times they have been asked if they were going to the convention or if they have ever been to one, for that matter, amidst their years on the committee. In fact, at the time of the last convention, FLY Committee president Paul Kneeland was asked by one of his own students if he was going to be there. Yet

Kneeland and the committee were able to plan and lead a great convention, all behind the scenes and with a servant's spirit.

This concept of servant leadership is a hard thing to grasp because it is nice to be recognized for our efforts. We like to be served. We want to get the things that we want, the way we want them, and when we want them. It's the American way. But leading like Jesus means going about things in a totally different way. In Luke 22:26, Jesus is talking to his disciples, those who had been with him through everything. He instructs them to be servants. "Let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves."

Ultimately, this command is for us, too. So what will your response be? Will you look for ways to empower others to jump into the ministry with you? Will you work together as the body of Christ, making sure that everyone is utilized to their fullest potential?

Each and every one of us is called to take on an approach of humility as we serve the Lord. Take on the role of a servant and lead behind the scenes! Whether we are leaders at the workplace, in the church, at school, in our daily activities, or in the home, Jesus calls each of us to lead "as one who serves."

Olson, a senior at AFLBS, is a member of Faith Free Lutheran, Shakopee, Minn.