

# The Lutheran AMBASSADOR

September 26, 1995



*Blessed  
are the  
Peacemakers*

# THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

September 26, 1995  
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**Editor:** Rev. Craig Johnson  
**Assistant to the Editor:** Solveig Hjermstad  
**Editorial Board:** Rev. John Mundfrom, Dr. Craig Jennings, Oryen Benrud.

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### The Lutheran Ambassador

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**For editorial inquiries and information:**  
The Lutheran Ambassador, Box 423, Faith, SD 57626; (605) 967-2381; fax (605) 967-2382. E-Mail Craig JN @ aol.com.

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## AN ENCOURAGING WORD

### Proof of discipleship

*By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.*

John 15:8

The chief end of prayer is to glorify God. Jesus continues His discourse by showing us two things that glorify God, that we bear much fruit and prove to be (His) disciples.

#### Fruitful prayer

Jesus has already promised in verse five that those who abide in Him will enjoy a fruitful prayer life. It's easy to pray in a warm, sunny sanctuary Sunday morning when you are feeling inspired about God, but where do you find yourself on those cold, rainy Wednesday evenings? It is so easy to settle down in the easy chair instead of going to the prayer meeting. Avoid the temptation and discipline yourself to wrestle with God with the small band of dedicated prayer warriors. That's where prayer meets the nitty-gritty details of life!

God is pulling for you. He wants you to enjoy a fruitful prayer life — not necessarily a successful prayer life but definitely a fruitful one. Galatians 5:22 reminds us, "The fruit of the spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." There is the evidence of a fruitful prayer life.

Many want a fruitful ministry in the congregation but few are willing to sacrifice comfort and time to pray about it. There will be no spiritual increase if there is little prayer and much unbelief in prayer. I say, "Give me five crippled prayer warriors instead of five hundred church members too busy to pray, and God will change the world!"

#### Prayer and discipleship

One of the most obvious proofs of discipleship is a fruitful prayer life. Discipleship involves sacrifice and a willingness to take up the cross of Jesus Christ. N3

either of these commitments can be maintained without prayer.

Recently I read a little book, *The Stundists*, about the persecution of believers in Russia at the close of the last century. These words on the back of the book deeply convicted me: "We live in an age of affluence and luxury in which suffering is feared more than sin." How dare we conveniently skip the prayer meeting and call ourselves disciples of Jesus Christ! What must God do to humble us again in His holy presence and cause us to pray for forgiveness and victory over sin?

I have grown to love the hymn "Sweet Hour of Prayer." These words especially encourage me to persevere in prayer and prove to be a disciple of Jesus Christ: "And since He bids me seek His face, believe His Word, and trust His grace, I'll cast on Him my ev'ry care, and wait for thee, sweet hour of prayer."

May God continue to encourage us to enjoy a fruitful prayer life and prove to be His disciples.



— by Rev.  
Joel Lohafer  
Ferndale,  
Washington

The early Church fathers loved to speak of the part of the Church which is still on earth as the *Church militant*.

**T**he present generation of true Christians is that militant Church. We are engaged in constant struggle or warfare, and that position affects our daily life.

The Christian today is in the middle of the great struggle between light and darkness that is taking place in our world. The Apostle Paul found himself in the thick of this battle raging "not against flesh and blood, but against ... the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places" (Ephesians 6:12).

Every congregation that realizes it is a part of the Church militant must of necessity come to grips with its ministry being not just part of some interesting, traditional, theological or social situation but part of the clash between the evil powers of darkness that struggle against the revelation of God in Christ Jesus. Skip over this conflict and we miss entirely what God is doing in His Church.

If we take seriously the presence of darkness and examine the problems that cause divisions and interrupt the harmony in the Body of Christ, our findings will bring us back to this conflict between light and darkness. Satan is smart enough to know he must draw near Christ to get the power to perform his filthy works. Saint Paul understood this when he said to the early Church at Corinth: "God never sent those men at all; they are 'phonies' who have fooled you into thinking they are Christ's apostles. Yet I am not surprised! Satan can change himself into an angel of light, so it is no wonder his servants can do it too and seem like godly ministers" (II Corinthians 11:13-16, Living Bible).


Only when this absolute distinction between light and darkness is clear and rooted in our minds, will we be able to understand what is causing the unrest and lack of oneness in so many congregations.



# Why is there controversy in the congregation?

It's frustrating to discover how the little evil digs, slurs and lies thrive so well in the disguise of the good and the devout. This should not discourage us since all history is a realm where good is mixed with evil, both inside and outside the Church.

The task of the Church militant is to let Christ separate the good from the evil through the gospel. He who is the Head of the Church understands that "an enemy hath done this," and bids us, "Let both the wheat and tares grow together until the harvest and He will say unto His reapers, gather together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn" (Matthew 13:28-31).

In the striving within our churches for control, it is easy to claim for ourselves what belongs to Christ, and thus suppress the claim of His saving presence. We are over-shadowed as we learn to claim His victory and realize that our Church is also His Body. More important than our will to believe was His will that we believe; and that is what saves us. 



— by Rev. Vince Will  
Immanuel Lutheran  
Springfield, Missouri



# Harmony in the Home

***Do you long for harmony in your home?  
Do you become frustrated and blame others?  
Is your positive Christian witness tarnished  
by family conflict?***

***Your family discord can be tuned to  
be more harmonious; but it takes  
growth, effort and practice.***

Each individual needs to be in the process of becoming what God wants him to be, centering his life around Christ. Each person, although different, can blend in harmony with other family members. How can this be?

Start by evaluating yourself; not your spouse, children or parents. Pray and spend time in the Word to become more Christlike and allow Him to be the Lord of all your life. Replace self-centeredness, a critical spirit, pride, selfishness, stubbornness, blaming others, an unforgiving spirit, etc. with a Christlike spirit.

Reduce stress in your life. All too often stress in its various forms causes a person to lash out at his family, even though he really doesn't mean to hurt his loved ones. Financial pressures add to these

stresses. Put your situation into proper perspective, using God's values rather than worldly values. Set priorities in the areas of family, church, job, social and so on and develop common goals. Reducing stress also encourages good physical health which in turn promotes family harmony.

Be a servant. The lost art of servanthood needs to be revived in the family as well as in all of life. What would happen in a family if each spouse or child would try to out-serve the other?

Marriages cannot be perfect, but they can improve. The Bible says to love your wife as Christ loved the Church (Ephesians 5:25). Your spouse should be your best friend; one you constantly build up and encourage. A marriage does not depend upon the ring around the finger, but rather the ring around the heart. What would your spouse say if you suddenly did one of those stupid, little, loving things that enhanced your love in the dating days? Practice that love you feel in your heart!

God instituted marriages to be very special for you and your spouse. As years go by people can change, and marriages too, evolve as a couple matures. Romans 15:7 says, "Accept one another then just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God." Praise the Lord for what God has done in your lives!

"Children are a gift from the Lord" (Psalm 127:3). Harmony in the home depends on how we are training our children. "Train up a child in the way he should go" (Proverbs 22:6). Start that training the day they are born. A child wants to know the limits of freedom. Set boundaries when your child is young, then loosen those restraints as your child proves himself worthy.

Teach not only what you believe, but why you believe the way you do. Let God use you to guide and teach your child then let God work. Ephesians 6:4 advises: "And now a word to you parents. Don't keep scolding and nagging your children, making them angry and resentful. Rather, bring them up with the loving discipline the Lord Himself approves, with suggestions and godly service." Allow your child to understand the framework upon which he should base his life. Remember that teaching by example

## Wisdom from Proverbs 17

- >Better a dry crust with peace and quiet than a house full of feasting, with strife.*
- >Starting a quarrel is like breaching a dam; so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out.*
- >He who loves a quarrel loves sin; he who builds a high gate invites destruction.*
- >A man of knowledge uses words with restraint, and a man of understanding is even-tempered.*

# Life hurts with the people in it

## A mother's message to her daughter

— by Lois Grothe  
Bethany Lutheran  
Astoria, Oregon

Dear Melissa,

Do you remember the time after devotions when Daddy and Matthew were playing "here is the church, here is the steeple"? They always start with the "people" outside the church so the church is empty when they get to the end. Then they do it again with the "people" inside. When you tried to do the game with the people inside the church your knuckles pinched each other and you said, "Mommy, it hurts with all the people inside!"

You may not have realized it at the time but you had just stumbled on a fact of life. Sometimes life does hurt with all the people in it.

For example, you were sure excited when Matthew was born, but now sometimes he drives you crazy when he plays with all your stuff. (To be fair, sometimes you drive him crazy!)

The important thing is: no matter how much you drive each other nuts, you love each other more.

When I think of your comment, "It hurts with the people in it," I want to teach you about how to react when you get hurt by someone, and how to ask forgiveness and make amends when you hurt someone.

Instead of causing a lot of hurts, we need to show a lot of love; the kind of love described on that picture in Mom and Dad's room: "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ... Love never fails" (I Corinthians 13:4-6,8, NIV).

Teaching you and Matthew to be people who show love instead of causing hurts is a tough job. It takes courage. Most of all it takes depending on God for wisdom and patience, and lots of prayer for you two.

We pray that we will be good role models in a day when there are so many bad ones. We are thankful to know that God desires what is best for you and Matthew and He will work to make that happen in your lives.

Love,  
Mom

works better than the typical lecture method.

Take time to show genuine love and interest in each child as an individual loved by God and provide a security that is based not on things, but on love.

Still have problems with sibling rivalry? Try practicing sibling harmony. Take the time with your children, making sure they understand the purpose to actually practice the art of creating harmony. Keep practicing until it becomes a new habit. Refresher sessions may be needed!

Think ahead and be prepared for potential problems, such as long car trips. Yes, it does take time and effort and the cooperation of the whole family. Is the effort worth it? In spite of all you do or don't do, the legacy of your beliefs to influence society will be left basically

through your children. Don't give up! Isaiah 40:30 says, "Those who hope in the Lord shall renew their strength."

If we say as did Joshua: "As for me and my house, we will serve the Lord" (24:15), we must rely on Christ to be the Head of the family. Then, as each individual grows in Christ, harmony will increase.

Try it. You'll like it.



— by Bob and Pam Christian  
Helmar Lutheran  
Newark, Illinois

*(The authors have been happily married for 27 years and have two grown children. Pam is a kindergarten teacher and Bob counsels families on insurance matters. They are actively involved in Helmar Lutheran and Bob is a member of the AFLC Home Missions Committee.)*

# Being a peacemaker in the community

In September of 1988 I attended my first ministerial meeting in our little north-western Wisconsin town of Cumberland. I was excited to get to know other pastors and pray for our area. The atmosphere at the meeting was cold and tense. One pastor did not even know, or seem to care to know, another whose church was on the same block as his. The only thing agreed upon was that they didn't want to meet together anymore. The ministerial died.

A handful of the pastors began to meet informally for prayer and encouragement. We decided it was important that we keep meeting. We all loved Jesus, believed the Bible and wanted God's Kingdom to advance in our community. We wanted to be at peace as far as we were able.

After seven years of meeting together, I have concluded that it is valuable to get into the community and work peacefully with other like-minded Christians. Here are some reasons why:

It is a testimony to the community that we are trying to work together. School officials and city fathers are more quick to listen to a request if most of the churches agree. Our local school wanted to drop Wednesday church night and schedule

athletic practice during that time. A couple individual pastors complained and got nowhere. When our pastoral fellowship agreed, the school was more interested in listening.

It cuts down on church hopping. When people with destructive attitudes leave one church and go to another they are running from their problems. When we communicate about troubled people, the church they run to can be better prepared to help them.

It strengthens our appreciation for our own congregations. When I find out that other churches have similar (and worse) problems, I don't feel quite as alone in my struggles.

It enhances our effectiveness in prayer. Our little pastors' fellowship is a community-minded prayer cell. We pray for all the churches. When other congregations are calling a pastor we pray that God will send His man. We were thrilled when God sent us a truly saved and "on fire" United Methodist pastor in answer to prayer. We want to see all the churches have revival; not just our own.

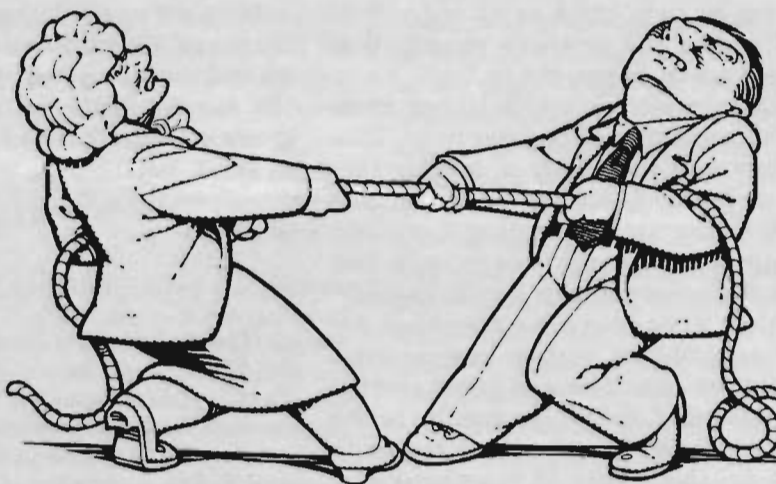
To influence our communities we have to keep the Great Commandment (Mark 12:30-31) and the Great Commission

Differences are to be expected even among Christians. Differences should be discussed, debated, analyzed, and handled with respect and reason ... Differences are too often attributed to personal vices and dishonorable motives in order to discredit not only ideas but persons who hold them.

— Roberta Hestenes

We need to create in the church a sense of value and integrity so that we can conduct our debates in ways different from the world.

— Darrell Bock



(Matthew 28:19-20) primary. We have to agree that the Bible is God's Word. We cannot compromise on Jesus or salvation. We also have to agree to disagree on secondary issues.


Our community fellowship is most powerful when we focus on the Word and prayer. God's hand moves among us with power when we really love each other, build one another up with the Scriptures, keep accountable and pray. Politics and programs seem to stifle God's Spirit.

Those who tend to be separatists will criticize me for associating with pastors from other churches. But I disagree with separatism. As long as Jesus and the Bible are first, we must have a relationship with the whole body of Christ. I love my godly brothers from other churches. They love me. They pray for me.

I have heard that very few communities have this kind of love and fellowship among pastors. It probably is not possible

in places where pastors do not love Jesus and His Word. The Bible says, "If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men" (Romans 12:18). I sense that making an effort to be at peace with the other pastors in Cumberland is bringing our community closer to a heaven-sent revival.

Since true Christians are going to spend all eternity together, we might as well start enjoying each other right now. This is not liberal and shallow ecumenical union; I don't want to touch that. This is brothers in the Lord loving one another in the last days. The world takes notice when Christians from many denominations love one another like many do in our little community.

God's Word tells us to be peacemakers. Are you a wedge or a peacemaker in your community? 



— by Rev. Tom Olson

*Timberland and Hosanna Lutheran Parish  
Cumberland, Wisconsin*

**O**n June 14, 1995 the Coordinating Committee formed the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations Foundation. The reason for forming the foundation was explained at the annual conference by Edward S. Hagerty and David W. Johnson of the law firm of Hagerty, Johnson, Albrightson & Beitz, P.A., of Minneapolis.

They explained that the purpose of the foundation is to encourage and manage deferred gifts by members to the AFLC. These deferred gifts may be made to local churches or to the AFLC Foundation.

The foundation will be managed by eight trustees. Each of the four constituent corporations of the AFLC (the Missions Corporation, Schools Corporation, ARC Corporation and the Coordinating Committee) will elect two trustees. Each trustee may serve two three-year terms. The terms will be staggered to provide continuity.


The trustees will be responsible for managing the funds of the foundation for the benefit of the separate constituent corporations. When gifts are made to the foun-

## The AFLC forms a foundation

dation they will be allocated for the benefit of the constituent corporation chosen by the donor. For instance, if a donor makes a gift for the benefit of the Schools Corporation, those funds will be managed by the foundation for the benefit of the Schools Corporation.

Gifts in the form of an endowment will provide interest or income which will be used to support the work of the constituent corporation while the principal remains intact. Gifts may be made

for specific purposes, and those funds will be spent for the benefit of the separate corporation as chosen by the donor. The foundation's goal is not to operate for its own benefit, but to further the ministry of the AFLC.

Deferred gifts include devises in wills, gift annuities and charitable trusts. Further information on forms of deferred giving will be discussed in future issues of *The Lutheran Ambassador*. 



Mr. David Johnson and Mr. Ed Hagerty with Mr. Ernie Meidema, the AFLC's Director of Development.

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***Two evangelical politicians  
discuss dealing with differences  
in the political arena.***

# Same religion, different politics

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## Senator Mark Hatfield

Sen. Hatfield has grown accustomed to being attacked on his political views during his eight years as governor of Oregon and 28 years in the United States Senate. What he finds particularly troublesome is when he is attacked regarding the sincerity of his faith in Jesus:

“A political agenda is too often used as a measure of one’s commitment to Christ. A particular agenda must not be substituted for the biblical gospel — whether it comes from the left or the right. Our relationship with Christ is based on how we respond to the question Jesus asked of Peter, ‘Who do you say I am?’ (Matthew 16:15). It is not that plus holding to certain political views.”

His years as a Christian in politics has taught Sen. Hatfield concerning the difficulty of determining the “Christian” position on many issues. “We all have different experiences and different viewpoints. We don’t have to agree on every issue. We can learn from each other.”

Not every part of the body of Christ is the same. Much diversity exists. According to Sen. Hatfield that diversity gives us the opportunity “to prove the reality of Christ in everyday life. How you treat people — and not just your own kind — is very important.”

Sen. Hatfield spoke of the need for Christians to strive to avoid arrogance and instead seek for understanding and

shared religious beliefs do not always lead to shared political beliefs. Two men who know that quite well are Mark Hatfield, a Republican United States Senator from Oregon and Al Quie, a former Republican Congressman and Governor of Minnesota. Both are well-known for their evangelical testimonies of faith in Christ. They have also both known conflict during their political careers. Some of the strongest disagreement has come from people who also testify to being members of the body of Christ.

In recent interviews with *The Lutheran Ambassador* both men were asked how they deal with disagreements and what lessons they have learned.

sensitivity for why others believe as they do.

The increasingly critical, adversarial and contentious nature of society troubles the Senator. He sees a role for Christians to play in providing balance: “We need to be corrective, but also affirming. It is easy to criticize. We need to encourage just as easily.”

## Governor Al Quie

Al Quie entered the United States House of Representatives in 1958. He left at the end of 1978 to serve as governor of Minnesota. He completed his term in 1983.

Like anyone in politics, Gov. Quie has faced opposition. Those times, he feels, are opportunities to demonstrate the love of Christ. “One’s relationship with Jesus Christ has to do with love. The evidence that Christ’s love is operative is when people who are at odds with one another, care for each other. If you get along with those you agree with, what is that? Jesus said even the pagans love those who love them” (Matthew 5:46-47).

When Gov. Quie was in the U.S. House of Representatives, he was involved in a Congressional prayer group. “I really worked at getting people who were more liberal to participate because there was a tendency for it to be dominated by conservatives. Everybody likes to be comfortable, and you’re more comfortable when you’re with people



## CAMPUS

### Seminary enrollment up

For the first time in several years, five first-year students are enrolled at AFLTS. According to the dean, Dr. Francis Monseth: "More than ever before, older students are coming. These men are counting the cost, and have left professional careers to begin seminary." Total seminary enrollment is expected to be 17 or 18 men, including part-time students. Classes began on September 8, 1995.

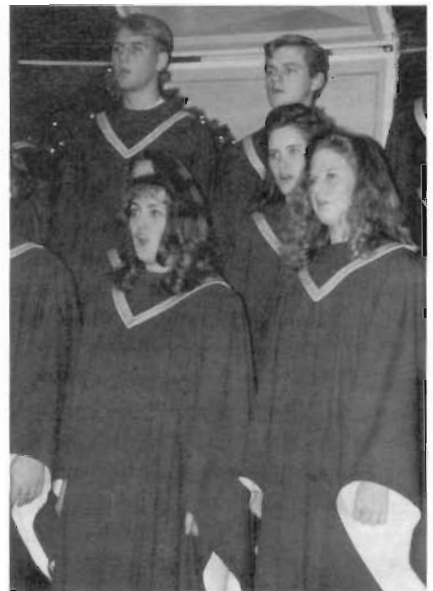
### Needs at AFLBS

A general contractor is needed to oversee two apartment remodeling projects in the dormitories at the Association Free Lutheran Bible School (AFLBS). Also needed are sub-contractors for electrical, plumbing, carpentry and a small amount of masonry. Interested parties are asked to contact School Board Chairman, Pastor Lyndon Korhonen at (612) 286-2861.

A second cook is needed at the AFLBS cafeteria. If interested, please contact Dr. Francis Monseth at (612) 544-9501.

### FLY gives offering

On Thursday evening during last July's FLY Convention in Estes Park, Colorado, the youth were challenged to give toward a "seed" offering designated for an AFLBS Student Center/Auditorium to be built someday on the Minneapolis campus. The offering amounted to \$1,549.86 and has been sent to the Bible School.




Pictured is last year's AFLBS choral club at a concert. According to Mr. Jerry Johnson, music director, this year's choral club is tentatively scheduled to tour this spring in the southwest while the AFLBS choir plans to tour in Norway later in May. AFLBS classes began on September 11 with 109 expected enrollment.

of your own political philosophy."

The prayer group was significant because it led to relationships being developed across political divisions. Those relationships, Gov. Quie feels, can lead to people seeing the gospel lived out. "Most people who come to know Christ do so because they see Christ in someone else."

Gov. Quie sees it as crucial for a Christian who is involved in politics at any level to remember the command of Christ to "love your enemy." "Returning good for evil is one of the powerful, unique things that Christ did. Without that love, none of the rest makes much of a difference."

It is fine for Christians to hold strong views, Gov. Quie believes. But they should express those views in love. Respect is also crucial. "If you respect another person, they are more likely to respect you."

To those who have trouble with another who takes a political stance that does not seem to coincide with the evangelical belief the person claims to have, Gov. Quie said, "Look first at what it means to follow Christ. He loved us and died for us before we were ever shaped up. Why should we expect somebody else to shape up before we can love them? Because of Christ's love we should be able to talk through our differences." 

—by Rev. Craig Johnson  
Editor



Pictured are some of the Summer Institute of Theology students who attended during the July 24 - August 4, 1995 classes at AFLTS. Thirty students participated during the two-week sessions.

# People in our lives

**P**uebla is full of people — about four million of them! The city experienced rapid growth after the Mexico City earthquake when the worry of another catastrophe moved people to safer ground.

We chose to live in the center of the city rather than in the suburbs; primarily to have easy access to all the services we would need as well as to be accessible for others.

I was delighted to discover the colonial downtown where the narrow streets and the stores are teeming with people, where the buildings are of the 14th century vintage and where the plaza continues to be the central meeting place. There you can find old bookstores, ice cream stands, streets filled with just fabric stores, others with just candy stores and dominating all other commercial products are the shoe stores.

One day while waiting for my husband, Dick, to get the car from a parking lot a young lady approached me and asked if I spoke English. It seems my Scandinavian background always shines through in spite of my tanned skin and my equally French heritage! We had been happy to walk on the streets unnoticed, even though this is not a big tourist city. But the desire to learn English is everywhere and it is what motivated her to stop me.

Talking with her we learned she, Claudia, is a university student with the goal of teaching English in the grade schools. Our conversation concluded with our inviting her to our home the next week.

For several Mondays she came

and we talked in English about her life and about ours. After several weeks she said she wanted to do something for us, what would be our pleasure? She eagerly accepted our request to show us some historical sites in town.

In the course of this sightseeing tour, she took us to a large Catholic church. While touring it, she expressed her desire to teach her young son the Bible. How could she go about it?

It would have been impossible for her to miss the excitement in Dick's eyes as he asked her if she would like to have a Bible study at our home. She couldn't have known we had been praying for just such an opening since meeting her.

This was definitely one of those "Philip and the Ethiopian" times (Acts 8:26-39) as we sat together. Through Dick, the Holy Spirit opened up the Scriptures to her. Her response was positive and beautiful! Will you pray with us for Claudia's continued understanding and openness to all that God has for her and her son?

Mexico is a blossoming country; no longer to be considered third world. All the modern vehicles on the streets are one evidence of this. We had been concerned about what type of vehicle we would have, not wanting anything that would draw attention. We didn't need to worry because there are many newer and bigger ones than ours. God provided another open door to share the gospel while seeking good coverage for our Chevy S-10 pickup. We met Maria del Carmen, a delightful lady who spent much time with us to get the proper insurance coverage.

Over time our relationship

## Do these people know Jesus?

**V**accinations are a part of every child's life. In Brazil, children receive life-saving injections without cost. Samuel was due for his six-month shots as we waited in the crowded health clinic for the nurse to call our name. Several babies were present, sitting in their mothers' laps. An older woman, suffering from a harsh cough waited patiently for a doctor to examine her. A lazy dog lay in the entry of the clinic, not minding the people stepping over her.

As we batted the gnats away from our faces, three-year-old Josiah looked up at me and asked, "Mommy, do these people know Jesus?"

"I don't know," I replied.

"Well, Mommy we better ask them if they know Jesus, because if they don't know Him, they will go to jail!" Jail is Josiah's word for hell. For him, it's simply a mispro-

developed from purely business to a warm friendship; inviting each other over for dinner and good conversation. We have shared the gospel with Maria and her three young adult daughters. They have responded warmly and I believe Maria understands. Yet though sometimes we use the same words, I wonder if the meanings are the same? I know the Lord wants this family for His own. I know our contact didn't just happen. I know we want to be friends with them and we know that God wants to use this friendship to bring this family into a living relationship with Himself.

These are just two of the fami-

*Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it.*

— Mark 10:15

nunciation, but yet how accurate in its meaning. Unlike the jails on earth, where prisoners have a good chance to one day be freed, hell is a jail without promise of parole.

My son continued in his urgency that I ask the people in the waiting room if they knew Jesus. Embarrassed, I told him that it wasn't customary to ask someone you don't know if they knew the Lord.

"Why not, Mommy?"

I didn't have an answer. It was a challenge from a little child to make the telling of Christ's saving love an everyday part of my conversation and lifestyle.

When I look at people here in Brazil, the question on my heart will be, "Do these people know Jesus?"

— by Mrs. Sarah Nelson  
AFLC missionary  
Campo Mourão, Brazil

lies we have had the privilege of meeting in this large metropolitan city — a city filled with Catholic churches which in turn are filled with people day after day. The worship of the virgin Mary predominates. We know that in our eagerness to be a part of this life here we must open our hearts and home to its inhabitants.

Pray with us that the growth of God's Word will be as rapid as the growth of this city, and that in a spiritual sense they will have moved to "safer ground" in Christ Jesus.

— by Mrs. Clara Gunderson  
Puebla, Mexico

# Mexico calls you

This winter join AFLC Partners in Mission Outreach on a two-week trip into the heart of the Mexican mission field. Participate in church construction, street evangelism and distribute Bibles and tracts. Experience the mission field for yourself and see a hunger for God's Word that you will never forget.

Families are welcome, minimum age of five years old. There are jobs for everyone, whatever your capabilities might be. The fellowship with other Christians will be an experience you will treasure forever.

The cost is approximately \$500 per person, including food, lodging and transportation to Obregon (about 350 miles south of Nogales, Arizona).

## Scheduled dates

December 27 — January 10, 1996 departing from the Newark, Illinois area.

January 26 — February 9 departing from northwestern Minnesota/North Dakota area.

February 23 — March 8 departing from the Minneapolis, Minnesota area.

June, 1996 departing from the Glyndon, Minnesota area. This trip will go to the Agascalientes, Leon and Celaya areas in central Mexico and will be primarily for youth, but adults are welcome.

For more information contact:

Mr. Al Brazier  
Rt. 2 Box 338  
Greenbush, MN 56726  
(218) 782-2456

## Missionary candidate begins deputation

Sonja Dahl has begun her deputation and hopes to have enough support to begin mission work at Campo Mourao, Brazil, in early 1996. For arrangements to have her visit your church, contact the World Missions office or Sonja at her new address: 270 Center St., Apt. A, Winona, MN 55987, or call her at (507) 453-0889.

## A testimony from a short-term missionary

# It's the children

These last months God has given me the wonderful and unique opportunity of working in the Miriam Infant Home (Lar Miriam) in Campo Mourão, Brazil. I originally planned to work at another children's home and when those plans failed, God opened the doors at Lar Miriam.

This home takes in children who have either been abandoned by their parents or taken from them by the authorities. On paper this act of Christian charity sounds wonderful. In reality this is a difficult and demanding task with corresponding rewards.

In Brazil as in other countries, there is a tendency for people, both Christian or non-Christian, to not acknowledge their responsibility to the orphans in their communities. Today, as in biblical times, the orphan is the least and the last. These children come from poverty, hunger and homelessness. A shelter and three meals a day would radically improve their standard of living. Many believe that alone is enough to provide. Thankfully Lar Miriam does not have that attitude.

The philosophy at Lar Miriam





The author with children at the Miriam Infant Home.

is to understand that the children who pass through their door are just children. Their needs are as any child and in many ways they are greater. Lar Miriam meets their needs emotionally, physically and especially spiritually. The children know and appreciate that.

I heard comments that the orphans at the Lar have "a good life (because they) live in a nice house, eat well, have nice clean clothes and play all day." Often that comment is followed by: "Why don't they work for their keep?" The response was always: "They didn't ask to be orphan, but we were asked to take them in and we said yes."

When a child is first brought to the home they are frightened and quiet. They know only two things: they've been left and they want to go home. After a few weeks that quiet child usually transforms into a rambunctious and talkative kid.

The first thing the children are taught is that they are unconditionally loved and wanted, and not only by those who work at the home. The children are taught the gospel and told that no matter who they are Jesus loves them. It is just unbelievable how receptive to the gospel these kids are.

My job was to organize the kids' day with activities such as sports, games, crafts and whatever

else the kids decide would be fun. This is easier said than done. These kids are survivors and thus fighters as well. Sportsmanship and cooperation are not high on their list of attributes. Most of our time together is spent explaining why it's important to be good sports, share and work out differences without fighting. If we got through a day without a fight, we had a good day. Over the last few months those good days came more frequently and that was rewarding.

Working with orphans is a unique experience. People like to look back on a job and see an end result. I can't do that. I will not return to Oregon with a list of accomplishments and say: "Look what I did. Am I not great?" No, I go home saying: "What more can I still do? The kids have given me so much more than I could ever give them and I am forever thankful."

— by Laura Snyder  
Trinity Lutheran Church  
Dallas, Oregon

*(Laura really loved the children and they her. Many tears were shed when she had to leave. Our children still ask about Laura and when she will be back. We need more young people to come and work a short time here in Brazil with the children who need much love and care.*

— Missionary Carolyn Dyrud)

## God still moves

When I walked into the morning chapel service at Northwestern College, St. Paul, Minnesota on April 3, 1995, I didn't notice anything out of the ordinary. True, there had been signs posted all around the campus advertising that some students were coming from Wheaton College to speak, but for most of us, it was just another day filled with studies and chapel humdrum.

Something was different, however, because when the Wheaton students got up to speak, the entire student body was so entranced that the normal whispering was not heard. Dead silence filled the auditorium, as the two students recounted the story of how a revival had hit their campus like wildfire, prompting hundreds of students to get up and confess their sins.

Northwestern's Intra-Campus Ministries Coordinator, Dave Spooner opened up the mikes for any student to come up and confess.

No one moved or made a sound for about four minutes. Then, one of the more outgoing students (the football mascot) got up to speak and the response was overwhelming. Student after student, came forward to confess sins ranging from pornography and sexual sins to alcohol and hatred. As soon as a student had spoken, he/she came down from the stage and was instantly surrounded in a giant group hug by a crowd of comforters, usually friends or people who could relate to that specific struggle in their life. In the hug, prayer would be said for that person, tears would be shed and differences would be dead, as the blood of Christ covered a multitude of sins.

Spurred on by the Holy Spirit, hundreds addressed the crowd that gradually thinned out as the day went on.



## PEOPLE AND PLACES



**Ferndale, Washington** — Pictured are the new members recently accepted at Triumph Lutheran in Ferndale.

**Rev. Robert Schemm**, Columbia City, Indiana resigned as pastor of St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, Churubusco. Future plans have not been finalized.

**Rev. Thomas Tuura**, DeKalb, Illinois resigned as pastor of Grace Lutheran and has accepted a call to serve Hosanna Lutheran Church, St. James, Minnesota. The St. James congregation has been jointly served with Word of

I finally felt the prodding of the Holy Spirit sometime in the early afternoon. I got in line, which wound all the way to the back, leading to the stage. The Lord really must have been breaking me, for I didn't get to the front of that line until 5 p.m. Under no circumstances would I, by my own free will, stand in a line for that long.

There were about 250 people scattered throughout the auditorium and I nervously confessed. No sooner had I asked for the Lord's forgiveness, than I felt more freedom than a kite without a string. My load of junk, with Satan riding on it, was at the Lord's feet.

The revival went on from 10 a.m. until 8:30 p.m. when confessions and songs of praise were adjourned until the following evening. Thus began an entire week of meetings, packed with students and teachers who were on fire for God.

However, some students were

skeptical, doubting that the confessions were of the Holy Spirit. Discussion went on for the entire week, dominating almost every conversation.

Although some continued to doubt that God had moved at Northwestern, smiles on the face of those who confessed told the real story. Relationships were born and re-established, binding sins were defeated at the feet of the Lord and accountability groups were springing up as fast as the saints could pray.

The key to the whole revival was prayer, as we learned that there were people in churches across the Twin Cities praying for each and every one of us by name before the revival began. The power of that prayer was manifested in the form of the Holy Spirit, who is continuing to change lives all across North America.

— by Jefferson Hagen  
Solid Rock Lutheran  
Camrose, Alberta, Canada



**Pickeral Lake Bible Camp** — At the annual South Dakota district Bible camp in June, Mrs. Ramona Rudebusch, Ortle, South Dakota was honored for her 17 years as a camp cook. Pictured with Ramona is the camp dean, Rev. Jon Benson.

Life Lutheran in Mankato, by Rev. Marlyn Kruse, who will continue as pastor of the latter.

**Kirkland, Washington** — Beginning this fall, Our Redeemer Lutheran is adding a kindergarten to their preschool program. The congregation has offered preschool classes for two-, three- and four-year-olds for 14 years. The kindergarten that is being added will be a full-week program for nearly three hours each day. The congregation hopes the addition will further the goal for the educational program to be a "mission outreach to the community."

**Lake Stevens, Washington** — Elim Free Lutheran of Lake Stevens, Washington took an active role in the July 28-30 Aquafest Celebration in their community. The congregation entered a float in both the children's and the festival's main parade. The float promoted the congregation's Vacation Bible School. Elim's youth worker, Matt Greven, played in the festival's tennis tournament and placed 2nd in the men's singles open division. Members of the congregation also helped out in a children's evangelism tent.

## NEWS YOU CAN USE

**Minneapolis, MN** — The Rev. H. George Anderson, president of Luther College in Decorah, Iowa, was elected bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) August 19. Anderson led balloting throughout the national assembly of the 5.2-million-member church body, and won election on the fifth ballot.

Anderson succeeds the Rev. Herbert Chilstrom, who was the first national bishop of the church he helped form in a 1987 merger of three Lutheran bodies. Chilstrom, 63, chose not to seek reelection and will retire November 1. Anderson said, "I'm the first of many who'll look back and bless the Chilstroms for the foundations they've laid."

Anderson, 63, is seen as a middle-of-the-road candidate who is unlikely to change the church's direction. For instance, when asked for his position on the ordination of homosexuals, he said, "I'm where the church is on that. I'm still trying to figure it out for myself."

Anderson said he agreed with the church body's decision to delay action on a social statement on human sexuality. "We still

have really some foundational discussion to do as a church on the authority of Scripture as it relates to homosexuality," he said.

The original draft said the church should endorse homosexual relationships. More than 21,000 responses were received, most of which were highly critical of the report. The ELCA decided to postpone action on such a statement indefinitely, since seven years of discussion have failed to produce any consensus on issues relating to homosexuality.

**St. Paul, MN** — James E. Minor, a founder of the American Association of Lutheran Churches (AALC), died of a brain tumor August 9. He was 66. In 1986 Minor helped found the AALC, which is made up of Lutheran congregations who objected to the merger which formed the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). AALC churches are more conservative theologically than the ELCA, and teach that the Bible is authoritative and infallible. Minor served as volunteer treasurer for the AALC for seven years. The AALC began with 12 churches, and now has 18,999 members in 110 congregations.

**Beijing, China** — Christian teachers in China report an

increasing "spiritual curiosity" among Chinese students, according to Christian Reformed World Missions. Students have approached teachers daily with questions about prayer, church and God. There are many reasons for this curiosity, the organization said. Some students have heard references to Easter on the radio and want to know more about the holiday, while others hear religious broadcasts from Hong Kong. Some have interest in religion because of the "uncertainty in the country," the organization added.

**Pretoria, South Africa** — A number of commuters in South Africa have expressed interest in Christianity after hearing cassette tapes with Christian music and short gospel messages that are being played by approximately 100 of the country's "combie drivers" ferrying up to 16 people each, combie minibuses transport millions of the country's workforce every day, according to Youth With a Mission (YWAM), the organization providing the tapes. So far, YWAM has distributed about 100 tapes and has received 130 responses from passengers seeking additional information about Christianity.

*(The above stories used with permission from the EP News Service)*

### AFLC awarded \$15,000 in AAL grants

The Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, Minneapolis, has been awarded \$15,000 in grants from Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL).

A \$10,000 grant will fund a leadership and stewardship training seminar for AFLC pastors and lay leaders. The seminar will be held in January at the Association Retreat Center in Osceola, Wisconsin. A \$5,000 grant will be used to study current AFLC evangelism programs and determine future evangelism needs.

### 1995 WMF fall rally schedule

Central Tri-State – October 7 – Our Savior's, Zumbrota, MN  
Eastern North Dakota – October 7 – Bethany, Binford, ND  
Illinois – October 14 – St. John's, Milford, IL  
Lake Superior – September 23 – Drummond, Drummond, WI  
Minneapolis – October 21 – Good Shepherd, Cokato, MN  
North Central Minnesota – October 14 – Trinity, Bemidji, MN  
Northern Michigan – September 23 – Grace, Pelpie, MI  
Northwestern MN – October 14 – Christ the King, E. Grand Forks, MN  
South Dakota – September 30 – Bethel, Faith, SD  
Southwest Central Minnesota – October 7 – Chippewa, Brandon, MN  
West Coast – September 16 – Atonement, Arlington, WA  
Western ND – September 30 – Our Saviour's, Dickinson, ND

### Teammates, not competitors

**T**he person I had just been introduced to discovered I was a pastor. He said he was recently with "one of my competitors," the pastor of a Bible-believing, evangelical church. I said, "He is not one of my competitors; he is one of my teammates."

It is important in any team game to know for sure, who is on your side and who is on the other side. It is vital that Christians seek after the same kind of understanding.

Far too often we are mistaken as to who is the competition and who is on our side. We fight and battle against those who belong to the same team and serve the same Lord. The real enemy, the devil, gets off far too easy, because instead of attacking him, we attack one another.

"There is one body and one Spirit ... one Lord, one faith" (Ephesians 4:4,5, NIV). "We are all members of one body" (Ephesians 4:25, NIV). "The body is a unit, though it is made up of many parts; and though all its parts are many, they form one body. So it is with Christ" (I Corinthians 12:12, NIV).

Someone who would take a hammer and purposefully start beating on their own hand would be considered rather ill. It should be looked at as just as strange to attack a fellow member of the body of Christ; even if that fellow member is part of a different denomination, has some different ideas and ways of living. If we are united with them by faith in Christ and believing the Scriptures, we must treat

them with respect, patience and love and "make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3, NIV).

At one time I was suspicious whenever I would hear "calls for unity." I was in favor of being united with those who thought exactly like I did, but when people had different worship styles, different beliefs on secondary issues, some different ways of living out their Christian faith; calls to unite with them sounded like calls to compromise. I tended to think a concern for unity was a concern held by a Bible-compromising liberal.

I was greatly mistaken. The concern for unity is a concern that is deep within the heart of Christ.

God stirred my heart and brought me to repentance through a study of John 17. We could imagine many things Jesus would want to pray about the night before He died on the cross. What is recorded is His prayer for unity. "I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. ... May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" (John 17:20,21,23, NIV).

Unity is on the heart of Christ? Is it on our heart? When it doesn't exist does it bother us? Is it something we work for and strive after? We do, when we have the heart of Christ.

### Weed and Seed

**L**awn care is definitely not a big interest in my life. Consequently, I am not a frequent listener of the radio shows that give gardening tips. Once, however, I caught a portion of one. The expert was advising the caller concerning what kind of grass seed to use. He talked about a certain kind of seed that is especially effective in crowding out weeds. It sounded to my untrained ear like he was talking about a seed that was more powerful than weeds.

I may have misunderstood. That kind of seed may not exist for lawns. I know for certain, however, that a seed like that exists for lives. The seed of the gospel of Jesus Christ is more powerful than any weed that may arise.

Each of our lives contains some weeds, some things that should not be there. We have weeds of ignorance and arrogance, sinful habits and confused thinking and many others too numerous to mention. We should strive, by God's grace and depending on His power, to root them out. The encouragement to do so comes from the knowledge that the seed of the

gospel is greater than any weed. Jesus can pull out that which does not belong and make our lives like clean, healthy soil where good things can grow.

As we deal with other people it is quite apparent they have weeds also. We often see their weeds better than we see our own. The call of Christ to deal with the plank in our own eye before attempting to remove the speck in our brother's eye needs to be remembered (Luke 6:41-42).

We also need to remember the power of the seed of the gospel. Many of the conflicts that arise in the Church come about because of people consumed with pulling out weeds and not giving nearly enough attention to planting seed.

None of us have been given the primary calling of straightening out everybody else's doctrine and lifestyle. We have each been given the calling and privilege of planting the seed and spreading the good news of what Jesus has done. More time needs to be spent planting seed and letting God pull out weeds.

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SOMETHING TO SHARE

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## Cutting it straight

**S**ome call it "Murphy's Law." Whatever can go wrong will go wrong ... and probably all at once! For example, the chances of the bread falling with the peanut-butter-and-jelly side down are directly proportional to the cost of your carpet. Perhaps you could come up with a few corollaries of your own!

Have you ever suspected that Murphy's Law goes into effect the moment you open your mouth to share your faith in Christ? You swallow hard and your palms grow sweaty while your train of thought becomes hopelessly derailed. Many times, if it were not for God's Word, I would have had precious little to share. What real and lasting help and hope can we offer a hurting soul in and of ourselves? Thank God for the sure foundation.

Armed with His Word we do have something to share!

Consider II Timothy 2:15: "Be diligent to present yourself approved to God as a workman who does not need to be ashamed, handling accurately the word of truth" (NASB). What does this verse have to do with witnessing? For starters, it highlights the reliability of God's Word; second, it describes our responsibility in the way we handle it.

### Reliability

Paul calls our message the

word of truth. He assumes the inerrancy of Scripture. If God is true, then His Word is true. It is without error from cover to cover. That's precisely what Psalm 119:160 is saying: The sum of Thy word is truth. We do not need to change the Word. The Word needs to change us!

C. H. Spurgeon once wrote that the greatest compliment ever paid to him was by one of his most antagonistic opponents who taunted: "Here is a man who has not moved an inch forward in all his ministry. At the close of the 19th century, he's teaching the theology of the first century." What a compliment to have it said that we are holding to the teachings of the Word.

### Responsibility

The reliability of the Scriptures leads to a great responsibility on our part. We need faithfulness in the way we handle the Word. We are to be diligent. John Wesley prayed for God to make him "a man of one book." Isn't that a great prayer?

A faithful workman is one who is handling accurately the Word of Truth, or "cutting it straight." This choice word was used of a guide who could "cut a straight path" or of a priest who was to slice the animal just right according to God's instructions. It was employed to describe a builder

who needed to cut rocks to fit precisely together. This same word was further utilized in speaking of a tailor or tentmaker (like Paul) making a straight cut in a piece of cloth.

My dad is one who can always plow a straight furrow. Cutting a straight furrow is yet another way in which this unique word was used. The point? Our desire as we handle the Word of God is to "cut it straight," giving it out just as God has given it to us, to make His way plain. That means I am accountable before God for the way in which I have handled and applied His truth.

Our Lord declares in Isaiah 66:2, "But to this one I will look, to him who is humble and contrite of spirit, and who trembles at My word." What a responsibility is entrusted to us! But at the same time, what a comfort to be reminded that by grace, faithful workers don't need to stand ashamed. Oh, to one day hear, "Well done, My good and faithful servant."

(P.S. Stop worrying, then, about Murphy!)



— by Rev.  
Jerry Moan  
Professor,  
AFLC Schools  
Minneapolis,  
Minnesota