

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

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CONTENTS

On the outside page 4

Youth leadership page 6

In His power page 8

Talk about it page 10

A curriculum pioneer page 12

The Lutheran Ambassador

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AN ENCOURAGING WORD

Fire from heaven

ur community has developed two athletic parks on the south side of town. One has three baseball fields with new scoreboards and new parking lots. The other has three soccer fields.

My problem is that these facilities are right along the road between our house and the church. I am not much of a sports fan so they don't have any attraction for me. But as I go past them I can't help but notice the large crowds. On Wednesday evenings and even some Sunday mornings the parking lots are packed with shiny new mini-vans, SUVs and four-wheel drive pickup trucks. There are often games on every field. I drive by with my old Volkswagen to a Bible study of about 20 people or a church service and Sunday school with half the attendance there was 20 years ago.

I glare at the baseball crowds and think about the words from II Timothy that tell us that in the last days men will be "lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God." I must admit that I even have felt like asking the Lord the question his disciples asked in Luke 9:54, "Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" Have you ever felt that way?

Since my son signed up for youth soccer, my attitude is slowly changing. Three nights a week we tote him to practices and games all over creation. At these games I stand beside other parents. As I get to know these "sinners," I am coming to realize that many are people who simply need the Lord. A percentage of them have no close connection to real Christians. If my son wasn't in soccer, I would never get to know these people. I would never pray for them or witness to them.

Now I am ashamed of my atti-

tude toward those soccer and little league parents. Jesus spoke about me when He said, "You do not know what kind of spirit you are of: for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives but to save them" (Luke 9:55-56). My new shame is that more Christians are not on the sidelines encouraging the children and befriending their parents.

I am glad that God doesn't answer the prayers of angry and discouraged Christians who drive by the athletic fields and wish fire from heaven to fall on the pleasure-loving, end-time "worldlings," especially now that I am milling around near the bull's eye of that potential heaven-sent lightning bolt. Perhaps that is where real evangelism might begin. I am quite sure God wants me there. The contacts we make might even help boost our declining Sunday school enrollment with children who have never heard about Jesus. Now the fire from heaven I need is passion for the souls of soccer families. Lord, send the fire. But send it to me!

> — Pastor Tom Olson St. Paul's Lutheran Cloquet, Minn.



SOUND BITES

True, the estate of teachers has, in general, been little respected, especially in ages gone by; and as far as the teachers of the Word of God are concerned, they are, of all men, most despised and even hated by the world. Nevertheless their estate and office is the most glorious of all,

— C. F. W. Walther
The Proper Distinction Between Law
and Gospel

ew things are more disrespectful to students than a teacher who knows it all. We are too willing to correct instead of respect the insights of our students. So become a student while you teach.

— *Bill McNabb, Steven Mabry* Teaching the Bible Creatively

You should also take pains to urge governing authorities and parents to rule wisely and educate their children. They must be shown that they are obliged to do so, and that they are guilty of damnable sin if they do not do so, for by such neglect they undermine and lay waste both the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world and are the worst enemies of God and man.

Martin LutherPreface to theSmall Catechism

t's fun to teach. I know it's a heavy responsibility, it takes time for preparation, it ties me down, it's draining, it's hard to get through the lessons when I have a headache — but it's fun.

— Joseph Bayly
I Love to Tell the Story

On the OUTSIDE

any of you have faced the challenge of teaching a Sunday school class with some students who don't know the names of the books of the Bible and others who are more mature in their faith. Here are some suggestions to encourage you in your task.

Some things are common for every teacher and class. Make sure you prepare well. Do you understand the material you are teaching, and are you prepared with a teaching plan? Do your homework before you get to class, and that doesn't mean 20 minutes before the students arrive. Good preparation is the key to successful teaching. Pray for your students and for yourself. God is willing to give wwisdom to those who ask. The Holy Spirit will lead you through the class if you ask and expect Him to guide you. Finally, take a personal interest in your students. Teaching involves developing relationships with your students. Share your faith and love of Jesus with them – let them see that you believe what you are teaching.

Teaching a class with a variety of students may be challenging, but it still can be a rewarding experience for both the teacher and class. The truth is, we will see more and more children and adults who know very little about the Bible. How we respond to this trend reflects our commitment to the Great Commission of Christ: "To make disciples of all nations." Our congregations are not meant to be only a group of believers concerned about their personal spiritual growth. Instead, it is to be a place where everyone who needs the gospel can have the opportunity to learn and grow spiritually. I have found these words written by the Apostle Paul both convicting and encouraging, "I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do this for the sake of the gospel, that I many share in its blessings" (I Corinthians 9:22-23). Remember dear friends, you teach "for the sake of the gospel" and not just for your own personal gain or spiritual growth.

Teaching involves much more than just sharing information with a class. Effective teachers create an environment that encourages the students to discover biblical truth themselves. The lecture method may be the easiest for the teacher, but it is the least effective way of learning for the student. Do you encourage your students to ask questions and reas-

sure them that there is no dumb question? Are you patient with the students, stopping now and then, allowing God's Word to make an impression on their minds and hearts?

Teaching with illustrations is especially important for those unfamiliar with the Bible. Make sure your stories and examples are relevant to your age group in class. Illustrations are meant to point us to the biblical truth, so always bring the point back to the Scripture itself.

Finally, remember the power of God's Word itself. "For the Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and intentions of the heart" (Hebrews 4:12). "The grass withers and the flowers fall, but the Word of our God stands forever" (Isaiah 40:8). "For prophesy never had its origin in the will of man, but men spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit" (II Peter 1:21).

Last fall I met a young boy who knew virtually nothing about the Bible or Jesus. He had asked my son if he could be baptized. I will never forget meeting with him and his parents. I told him about his sins, and asked him to imagine them written all over the blackboard at school. Then I told him that when Jesus forgives him it is like all his sins were erased from the blackboard by Jesus. I told him how Jesus died on the cross to forgive him and that He rose again and is living in heaven. It was not an impressive lesson, and I suppose you could find some theological errors if you looked long enough, but I will never forget the look in his eyes when I told him about Jesus' forgiveness. It was a look of relief and astonishment. That look reminded me why I became a pastor — to help one receive the assurance of forgiveness and salvation.

So when you face the challenge of teaching those students with little or no biblical knowledge, please don't lose heart. Prepare well and pray hard. Create a safe environment to encourage questions fro, the class. Depend upon the power of God's Word. And above all, remember, "Whoever turns a sinner from the error of his way will save him from death and cover a multitude of sins" (James 5:20).

— Pastor Joel Lohafer Triumph Lutheran Ferndale, Wash.



Who can tell me the names of the 12 apostles?

What happened on the third day after Jesus died

Do you know who Moses was?

Tommy gets a gold star today.

Turn in your Bibles to John 3:16.

The coat of many colors ...









youth

he heat is intense, flowing over my body like a waterfall of fire. I find myself in a state of some serious pouring out of both my soul and sweat. My focus is so fixated on praising God that I neglect to recognize the hundreds of other students that surround me.

Once the awesome time of worship is over and I realize how drenched I am in sweat, I have to remind myself that praising God is serious business.

You may be wondering where in the world could such an experience be found. At the 2002 AFLC Youth Ministries Leadership Training Conference at the ARC, of course. It's an entire week of learning how to become leaders for Christ in our churches and communities. A week filled with fellowship, new friends, challenges, and blessings that are unheard of in my "normal" life. Experiences such as leading a worship service, teaching vacation Bible school, learning how to share your testimony, and learning how to build a sturdy group on the strong foundation of Christ. As one of the leaders put it best, "It's like drinking out of a fire hose."

The week is now over, we are all back at home, and it is time to put what we learned the past week into use. At first, I wasn't sure how I was going to "bring leadership back to the church." I mean, I am active in the church and all, but I didn't think it would be possible for me to hold a position of leadership in the church. It took me a while to realize that the church isn't a building, but the body of believers who fill the building. With this knowledge, I am striving toward the goal of applying this information in areas where I am a leader. These leadership positions are my school's Bible study and another Bible study directed toward and attended by high school students. This past week has shown me some of the major responsibilities involved in being a leader of youth. Things such as praying for the lesson before you give it and that you can't fake out your "students" by wearing a mask over your struggles in life and faith. If these responsibilities are not taken care of, your lesson will not be as effective, life changing, or touching as you had hoped for. I have also learned to trust and rely on God more. Allow for Him to speak through me to others in both my lessons and my life.

Thanks to the ARC and staff present for their hard work and effort at the conference. Please continue to pray for us as we lead Bible studies and practice our leadership roles in the body of Christ. God bless.

— Jordan Langness Hope Free Evangelical Lutheran Ishpeming, Mich.

leaders

t was mid-July in the year 2000; I was about ready to meet with my youth group at church. I rolled down my window and said, "You know, Chad, I can't believe I'm going to a Bible camp. How did I ever get suckered into doing this anyhow?"

"Yeah, well at least you get to get away for a week," he responded. We cranked up the Metallica, turned it to "Enter Sandman" (that was our favorite song) and sang our spiritually hardened hearts out all the way to the church.

That evening my youth group and I were in Wisconsin at the evening session of the AFLC's Leadership Training Conference. Everyone would sing songs, and I would stand there, not even opening my mouth. Everyone seemed so happy and filled with something, but I couldn't figure out what it was. The next night I found out what it was when I asked Jesus to come into my life — for real this time. That week the Lord trained me and changed me. After that week, nothing has been the same.

As I look back on what happened two years ago, I am consistently amazed at what the Lord has done in my life since then. In the last two years I have accomplished amazing tasks by the Lord's strength. I graduated from AFLBS this year, and I have spent the last two summers working with a senior high youth group in Milford, Ill. The Lord knows what He's doing!

I have seen a very consistent change in the last two years within the Sunday school class at my home church in Sioux Falls, S.D. These changes have had a great deal to do with the Leadership Training Conferences held bi-annually at the ARC in Wisconsin. The knowledge that is supplied at these conferences, along with the transformation of this knowledge into wisdom by the Lord within the mind of the believer, has made an extremely significant impact in our churches around the country — to this extent I have been a witness and am a testimony of the change.

I would encourage you to look back and see what implementations of this knowledge have affected your church in one way or another. I know for a fact that anyone who has been willingly active in implementing these God-blessed, Bible-based principles can testify to the significant change within the lives of our young believers. Let's all pray for and encourage our youths toward godliness and discipline in devotion to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

— Tony Brynjulson St. John's Lutheran Milford, Ill.











September 3, 2002



everal years ago, there was a news story from Glasgow, Ken. It read: "Leslie Puckett, after struggling to start his car, lifted the hood and discovered that someone had stolen the motor."

About this time every summer, congregations are getting ready for Sunday school. Young people will soon be coming into the church, gathering in classrooms, expecting to hear someone tell them about Jesus and the difference that faith in the Savior makes in people's lives. And the question is: who will teach them about Jesus?

Should you be that teacher? It is so easy to feel so alone and so inadequate to the task. It's so easy to want to be there for the children, but to feel overwhelmed by the responsibility. It's so easy to feel powerless, like the motor is missing.

But the ability to teach other people about our great Savior does not come from you. The good news is that it doesn't have to. You have what it takes if (1) you love the children, (2) you love Jesus, and (3) you want the children to get to know Jesus and to know Him better.

God leaves no Christian teacher alone. God offers His help.

You can be equipped with Scripture

If you know and love Scripture, then you can share Scripture. Any time you share Scripture, you are sharing the voice of God with someone. When He was here in this world, Jesus would pick up children and welcome them onto His lap; and He still wants to reach children with the heavenly words that you can share.

Scripture is not merely a guide book or a rule book. Instead, Scripture is God talking to people, and it is the voice of God that has the power.

So often, God tells us in Scripture to take the time to listen to the questions that children ask and to try to honestly answer them. Look at Exodus 13:14, Deuteronomy 6:20, Joshua 4:6 and Joshua 4:21. God knows that children ask questions, and they're good ones.

So how does anyone answer some of the questions that are asked? Where is the Garden of Eden now? What was Jesus' last name? Do animals go to Heaven too? Do people become angels when they die? When is Jesus coming back? Can I give Jesus a big hug when I see Him? And the list goes on. And the questions are good — it means that the children want to know Jesus and know Him better.

Take the questions as encouragement. Pass along a love for God's Word by searching for the answers together as a class. Search resources such as a reliable concordance or Bible dictionary. Ask the pastor if he knows the answer.

You can trust Scripture. God says that the pur-

pose of Scripture is "so that the man of God may be adequate, equipped for every good work" (II Timothy 3:17). Teaching about Jesus is a very important work, so God gives us Scripture.

You can be equipped by the Holy Spirit

Again, you are not teaching by your own authority. When you share God's Word, the Holy Spirit takes that Word and reaches into people's lives with it. Some hearts are already open. And some hearts are locked hard against it, but it is the Holy Spirit who can break through the hardness. No Sunday school teacher is teaching alone, but God Himself is at work with you.

The Holy Spirit is an equipper. He gives you what you need to do the task to which He has called you. Hebrews 13:21 calls on the "God of peace" to "equip you in every good thing to do His will."

In I Corinthians 12, God tells us that the Holy Spirit gives different people what they need to do His work. In verse 11, God tells us, "But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills." Part of what that

Teachers, you are not alone

means is that, if God wants you to teach, then the Holy Spirit will be working with you while you teach.

Daniel Webster once wrote, "If we work on marble, it will perish. If we work on brass, time will efface it. If we rear temples, they will crumble into dust. But if we work on men's immortal minds, if we imbue them with high principles, with just fear of God and love of their fellow-men, we engrave on those tables something which time cannot efface, and which will brighten and brighten to all eternitv."

The highest principles are in Scripture. Through Scripture, with the Spirit's help, the young minds in our classrooms can grow brighter and brighter, even into eternity.

God wants to reach our children with His words of everlasting life. And He is always with His people when they bring that Word.

Whoever God calls to teach His Word, He helps them to teach.

> — Pastor Ken Hart United Free Lutheran Greenbush, Minn.



ALK ABOUT

Bringing the sermon into Sunday school

few years ago I took a survey in our younger adult Sunday school class. I asked them the question, "What did you remember about this morning's worship service and message?" I received quite a few different answers. Many remembered the service and some remembered parts of the message.

I thought to myself how nice it would be to have a class that would go over the sermon we had listened to only a short time before. It would primarily be for parents with younger children, because of their distracted focus during the message. I often found myself wandering from the pastor's message as well simply because of a few distractions during the message. So I asked our parish education board for permission to start a new class, and they said yes.

I remember when I was first married, we used to sit in the front pew of the church and we weren't distracted from the focus of the message. But then our children — Stephen, Ruth and John came into our lives and we moved further back to let others not be distracted by our lively family. It's amazing how you can hear only your family members when they aren't paying attention. We also decided that taking notes during the message was a sure way to remember the pastor's message. I usually take the notes and my wife patiently takes care of the children. This brought a burden in my heart to share the message of God's Word. It has been a real blessing not only to my wife and me, but also to those who come to our class. They bring their children with them to class and with these notes to read will receive a little more of the message that was missed the first time. Sometimes our memory is so short, I know from experience that I can't remember what I did or heard only a short time before because of the many distractions that come my way.

Our pastor, Terry Olson, has been very under-

standing of my situation in leading this class. He stresses his points very well in his message and he will also use a children's message to relay the points across to the children and to us. This is very helpful, and the first question I usually ask my class is, "What was the children's sermon about?" The next question I ask them is, without handing them my notes, "What did you remember about this morning's message?" After hearing their answers, we open with prayer, hand out my notes and begin to go over the message of God's Word again. It is simply amazing how God works through His Word and continues to bless us time and time again.

Another part of our class is our guest appearance time when we ask an experienced parent or parents, those with grown children, to come to our class to answer a few questions for those of us with less experience. We ask them questions like, "How did you find time for each other? How did you handle discipline at home and at church? Would you change anything?" These times have been a blessing to our class.

Sometimes we get Pastor Olson to come to our class and explain his points in more detail, and that, too, is a real blessing to us. Sometimes we'll hear a message over and over and then it will suddenly be made clearer than ever before. We praise God for the Word that is being proclaimed to us every Sunday morning and for opening our hearts and minds and ears to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"Truly, truly, I say unto you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life" (John 5:24).

— Wayne Peterson Our Saviour's Lutheran Thief River Falls, Minn.



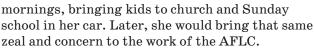


curriculum loneer

Wold lead Parish Education in publishing first Sunday school material

ost people who have been members of the AFLC for the past 20 years know Judith Wold. She was the AFLC's first full-time Parish Education director, a position she held for 12 years, as well as being executive director of the WMF.

An elementary teacher in Thief River Falls, Minn., for many years, Wold had also been an active Sunday school organizer in her local church, Our Saviour's Lutheran. There she was known for her outstanding Christmas programs and tireless concern for the spiritual welfare of children. She would canvass the neighborhood Sunday



During the organizational meeting of the AFLC in Thief River Falls in October 1962, a temporary Publications and Parish Education Committee was established with two major directives: publish a biweekly paper and evaluate materials for use in our Sunday schools. Pastor Raynard Huglen was elected to this committee. The first directive was realized in February 1963 when the first issue of The Lutheran *Ambassador* was published with Huglen as editor.

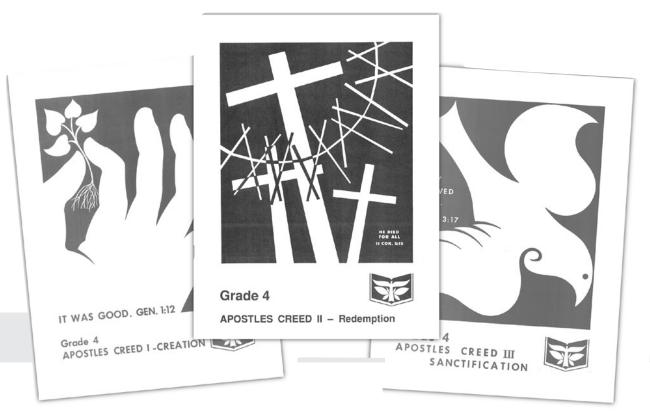
Evaluating Sunday school material did not begin until after the 1963 Annual Conference. After studying many different series, it did not take the committee long to recognize a dilemma. Nondenominational material, though warm and attractive,

made no mention of infant baptism and, if anything, downplayed the sacraments. And though Lutheran material included the sacraments to the committee's liking, it had a colder approach and did not always reflect the AFLC's piety. Because the Lutheran Free Church (forerunner to the AFLC) had not published its own grade-by-grade materials, and because the committee was not satisfied with what was on the market, it became apparent that the AFLC, sooner or later, would have to publish its own material.

Coincidentally, Wold was first elected to the Publication and Parish Education Committee at the 1963 conference. That fall, she and other committee members began setting up weekend workshops. In October, the committee began publishing a monthly activity in The Lutheran Ambassador, which would continue for the next several years.

The 1965 Annual Conference established the Parish Education department and called for a parttime executive secretary. The position was filled by Helen Nelson, who continued until resigning in 1968. In spite of the loss of a director, the committee decided to begin the enormous task of writing AFLC curriculum, something they had been struggling with for the past five years. A call went out in *The* Lutheran Ambassador for volunteer writers to have the first quarter done of at least five grade levels by the fall of 1969.

During the summer of 1969, Wold finally resigned from her teaching position and accepted the call as full-time director. She had always felt a call to full-time Christian service, but it was a larger task than she had expected. While pondering the letter of call, John 21:6 came to her: "And He said to



them, 'Cast the net on the right side of the boat, and you will find some.' So they cast, and now they were not able to draw it in because of the multitude of fish."

She wondered, "Does He have new fishing grounds for me? By faith I stepped out on this promise."

In July 1969, the committee announced the first quarter ready: grade four, "The Apostles' Creed;" grade five, "Old Testament History;" seven, "Christ in the Bible;" eight, "The Book of Acts;" nine, "The Overall Study of the Bible;" and senior high, "Stewardship and Teens." Most of the lessons were typed and mimeographed by Clifford Johnson in Esko, Minn. He hauled them to Thief River Falls, where Wold and some of her friends from Our Saviour's collated the material. The finished copies were stored in her garage. Later, materials were printed in a shop in Thief River.

Wold worked out of her home, and all the materials were shipped from there during the 12 years she served as director. Though volunteers wrote the lessons, Wold was responsible for writing the teacher's manuals for all grade levels.

The most challenging part of her work was putting on workshops around the country. She would fill the trunk of her trusty turquoise 1964 Oldsmobile Cutlass with materials and spend the fall on the road. From Seattle, Wash., and Eugene, Ore., to Ontonagon, Mich., and from DeKalb, Ill., to Radcliffe, Iowa, and endless communities in Minnesota,

North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin, Wold was on the move. Thinking about it now, she says she gets goose bumps.

"God was so kind and protected me during all those travels. I was never in an accident or had a breakdown. I had only one flat tire the whole time and that was while the car was parked in my garage."

In 1981, Wold retired as director, but those who know her know that she never really retires from anything. She continued to serve as Sunday school superintendent for several more years at Our Saviour's (23 years in all). She also taught release-time classes. And though she retired as national WMF executive secretary in 1987, she has remained active in her local WMF.

Ever the "master teacher," Wold, at age 84, is still faithfully teaching a Sunday school class at Our Saviour's that she calls, "The Gleaners."

As we look back at the AFLC over the past 40 years, we thank God for raising up key people like Wold, who were willing to use their talents for the furtherance of His kingdom, locally and nationally. We owe a special debt to her and to others on those early committees, who, after realizing the need, took on the enormous task of pioneering our Ambassador Sunday School Series. Today, Parish Education continues to revise and publish our own materials.

> — Loiell Dyrud Board of Publications and Parish Education



PARISH ED Music CD



Mary Jo Dyrud, musical coordinator for the Hosanna Children's Choir, gives the kids some direction while taping songs to go with the Ambassador kindergarten materials.

Grant funds Sunday school recording project

everal years ago, someone asked if Parish Education had ever thought of putting the Bible stories from our Sunday school lessons on cassette tape so that young children could listen to them again in their homes besides hearing them in class. The Parish Education board agreed it could be a valuable teaching tool and submitted a grant proposal to Aid Association for Lutherans (AAL) to produce six Bible teaching tapes and CDs to correlate with our kindergarten and grade one curriculum. However, we did not receive the grant at that time, and the board realized that though it was a worthwhile project, it would need to wait since we did not have the funds to move forward. Several

months later, a surprising letter arrived from AAL awarding Parish Education a \$17,500 Discretionary Lutheran Grant specifically for this project. The Lord provided the funds in His time and His way.

During the past year, storytellers Pastors John Mundfrom of Eugene, Ore., and Marsha Johnson from Fergus Falls, Minn., recorded all 72 Bible stories from the kindergarten and first grade materials. In the fall of 2001, Hosanna Children's Choir at Grace Free Lutheran (formerly Medicine Lake Lutheran), Plymouth, Minn., began rehearsing music from the Ambassador kindergarten materials and completed their third recording session this spring. Mary Jo Dyrud serves as music coordinator, assisted by Sara Johnson

and Rachel Jones. Various instruments accompany the children's voices including piano, organ, harp, oboe, flute, viola and cello. This year, the children will record music to correlate with the first grade curriculum.

The tapes and CDs, which will hopefully be available within the next year, will be helpful tools in the classroom and may also be used to teach the truths of God's Word in the home. Please continue to pray for all who are involved with this important project and that the recordings might be used to bring the wonderful gospel message to children and their families.

— Marian Christopherson Director

Parish Education



Resources: Parish Education

New grade three curriculum: The Lord's Prayer



Lessons based on the introduction. petitions, and conclusion of The Lord's Prayer encourage children to pray to our Heavenly Father in Jesus' name.

QUARTER 1 — Our Father . . .

Introductory lessons help students understand what prayer is, why we pray, how we pray, who teaches us to pray, and what to pray for. Includes four lessons on the First Petition.

Goal for printing: fall 2002

QUARTER 2 — Thy Kingdom Come . . . Lessons on the second, third, and

fourth petitions teach children about God's kingdom, His will, and our daily bread.

Goal for printing: winter 2002

QUARTER 3 — Forgive Us . . .

The sixth and seventh petitions and Conclusion discuss temptation and forgiveness and assure us that God is the only One who has the power to answer our prayers.

Goal for printing: spring 2003

Teaching resources from Parish Education



The Middle East — Then and Now map

This wall map compares a map of the Middle East in Bible times side by side with a modern-day map. The clear, colorful map with large print provides a helpful tool for teaching many Old Testament Bible stories including Abraham, Isaac,

Jacob, Adam and Eve, Noah's Ark, the Tower of Babel, Daniel, Esther, and more. (19" x 26" chart \$7.15; laminated \$11.65)



52 Opening Talks for Children

A year of weekly meditations covering holidays, the Commandments, Apostles' Creed, and Lord's Prayer.

Includes reproducible prayers and patterns. \$8.00

Many other maps and charts are also available

Then and Now Bible Map Transparencies; The Holy Land; Middle East with Afghanistan & Pakistan; Where Jesus Walked; Paul's Journeys; World Map; 100 Prophecies Fulfilled by Jesus; The Armor of God; The Beatitudes; Books of the Bible; Christianity, Cults & Religions; How We Got the Bible; Kings and Prophets; Old and New Testament Timelines; Palm Sunday; The Tabernacle; The Temple; The Trinity

Everyday Life in Bible Times

Take a trip back to Bible times with this fascinating look at the customs, food, furnishings, and occupations of the Bible. Provides Scripture references and brief depictions with some line drawings of tools, clothing, plants, and more. Each chapter includes review questions and suggested

hands-on activities. A helpful resource for teachers or an interesting study for adults. \$8.95

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100 Years

Tabor Lutheran

Webster, S.D.

abor Lutheran Church
Webster, S.D., was organized Jan 12, 1902, with
Pastor J.U. Pedersen as
the first pastor. He served
until 1903 and was instrumental in
planning Tabor Church, which was
built a year later. The first service
was held there July 12, 1903.

Andrew Dalager selected the name Tabor after Mount Tabor, which rises 1,843 feet in the valley of Jezreel, six miles east of Nazareth.

Pastor K. Knutson served Tabor from 1905 to 1915. An artist, Knutson painted the altar picture and completed the interior of the church. The baptismal font was made and donated by Rudolf Nortvedt. Peder Davidson donated the spire for the steeple, built in 1908. In 1911, a parsonage and small barn were built on eight acres. Skudesness and Tabor congregations

united as one parish until 1915, when Skudesness

joined the Bergen-Falness pastorate of the United Lutheran Church.

Tabor joined with Waubay Lutheran in 1916, with Pastor H.M. Hemmingson serving every fourth Sunday. He resigned in 1917. Pastor H.O. Lee served from 1918 to 1919 and Pastor O.C. Olson served from 1919 to 1923.

When the parsonage was sold, the money was kept in a memorial fund until 1937, when it was used to build the parish hall.

Tabor was the first parish Pastor Trygve Dahle served (1923-1928). In 1928, Pastor E.S. Vik, upon his ordination, became pastor and served for 35 years.

In 1946, Tabor was wired for

electricity. In 1952, a Wurlitzer organ was purchased with funds raised by the senior choir. The organ was dedicated in 1955.

In August 1962, members of Tabor voted to remain apart from the merger of the Lutheran Free Church into the American Lutheran Church. Instead, they joined the newly organized AFLC. Pastor Vik and the Waubay congregation joined the merged church, ending their union with Tabor.

On March 23, 1963, a new parish was formed with Hope and Saron congregations and named Lake Region Parish. A new parsonage was

See TABOR, page 22



First Lutheran

Oklahoma City, Okla.

irst Lutheran Church began as a mission church of the General Synod. Pastor R.H. Williams was commissioned to take up the work as the city's first minister. The first service was held in late December 1901.

The First English Evangelical Lutheran Church was organized on Jan. 12, 1902, with 19 charter members. During that month, a vacant church edifice was purchased for \$3,000. On April 6, 1902, it was rededicated.

The congregation broke ground for a new church edifice in 1909 and the church was dedicated on June 30, 1912. The Historical Preservation and Landmark Commission of Oklahoma City has recognized the church as a



oar Congregation was organized in April 1902 under the Lutheran Free Church with six families and five other charter members. In 1903, Pastor Nils Harveland began to serve the congregation, along with groups at Alsen and Weaver, N.D. He retired in 1909 to devote his time to farming.

In the fall of 1903, the congregation began a building project in a township that would be incorporated as Hampden. With donations of money and material coming from throughout the community, the building costs totaled \$2,537.67.

Pastor Ludvig Pederson was called in 1909. He did not accept the call, but did serve for a year. Pastor Gustave Nordberg accepted the call, and served also at Alsen, Weaver, Aadalen and Hitterdal. He left in 1914.

Pastor P.O. Laurhammer began to serve Hampden in 1915. He left in 1925. Pastor George Larson served the

100 Years

Zoar Lutheran

Hampden, N.D.

congregation for one year.

The parish was reorganized in 1929 when a new congregation named Bethany and Zion congregation at Alsen formed a three-point parish with Zoar, with the parsonage in Hampden. Pastor John Hjelmeland came from Newfolden, Minn., in 1927 and remained two years. Pastor Morris Eggen from Faith, S.D., began serving the congregation in 1930. During his tenure, property was purchased in town for the church. It was moved there in 1940.

In 1938, Pastor Sigurd Berg, a skilled carpenter, accepted a call to serve the congregation. The dedication of the remodeled building was in 1941.

Pastor Lawrence Rasmussen began serving the church in 1944 after graduation from Augsburg Seminary. Pastor Hans Tollefson, began serving the church in 1950 and resigned in 1955. Pastor George Amundson served from 1957 to 1964.

The church building went through remodeling of the sanctuary in 1963 and 1964, and the fellowship room in

See ZOAR, page 21

historical landmark.

Sunday school, Ladies Aid, Luther League and Lutheran Brotherhood were organized in the ensuing years. The Second Mile Club, a girls club, was organized in 1910. Mr. and Mrs. Peter Nordstrom gave the church bell in 1911. In 1912, the congregation purchased their historic Moeller pipe organ for \$3,200. Philanthropist Andrew Carnegie paid for half of it.

Members of the Ladies Aid Society were responsible for the Century Chest, filled with historical items and proclamations and buried April 22, 1913. It will be opened on April 22, 2013.

In the 1950s, Pastor Fred Bloch

worked to help displaced persons from Eastern Europe who had moved to the United States. Fifty families were helped through this ministry.

A parish building meant to help with the dire need for Sunday school space and offices was completed in 1964. A prayer chapel, located on the north end of the narthex, was built as a memorial to Pastor Louis deFreese's ministry. It was dedicated in November 1963. In 1995, the outside walls of the sanctuary were completely restored and waterproofed. The inside of the sanctuary was restored in 2001.

Through synod mergers, the church has been affiliated with the General Synod, United Lutheran Church in America (ULCA), and Lutheran Church in America (LCA). In 1987, the congregation voted to sever ties with the LCA and affiliate with the World Confessional Lutheran Association (WCLA). In 1992, the congregation joined the AFLC.

Nine pastors have served the congregation: R.H. Williams (1901-1903), William Kelly (1904-1906), George Beiswanger (1906-1909), Newton H. Royer (1909-1930), Clarence N. Swihart (1931-1938), Fred Bloch (1938-1952), Louis deFreese (1952-1981), James Stern (1981-1986) and Gerald Peterson (1987-present).

WMF New Image study

t's 9 a.m. Wednesday and I'm at church. It's time for our weekly Bible study to start, though women are still arriving - some with three or four children in tow. They are rushing to take them to the nursery or to one of the preschool classes before coming in to the study.

The singing has started now - praise songs that will lead us to forget the hustle of our lives and prepare our hearts for the message God has for us.

I glance into the room. Women are seated around 12 tables in their own particular group where they are getting to know and care about each other.

We're in the middle of a study on "How God Restores His People," looking at Old Testament characters to see what we can learn for our lives today. This week's character is Daniel and it's my turn to lead the lecture. I've been praying that I would be able to help women see what Daniel's courage in the face of persecution means for women living in our culture. I know it has to be a practical message; women today have busy schedules with many pressures, and they are looking for biblical principals they can apply to their daily lives.

Some of the women have been Christians a long time. Others are searching for something and are here because a friend invited them. When they discover what it means to have a personal relationship with Jesus and they see it affect their marriages and families, they, too, will invite others. Hardly a week goes by without at least one first-timer walking in.

After the message, each of the groups will discuss the study questions guided by a trained member of our board who's committed to weekly meetings following the study. Then — and this is probably the highlight for many — the members of the group will pray for each other. Not general prayers, but for specific needs. At 11 a.m., when they leave, each one will have been touched by God's love through the other women in her group.

> — Audrey Gilmore Christ is Lord Free Lutheran Onalaska, Wis.

New Image Ministries is the women's ministry of Christ is Lord Free Lutheran.





TOP: One of the 12 small groups discusses the study questions.

ABOVE: One of the moms arrives with her kids.

MISSIONS Africa

t a time when Christianity seems to be experiencing new challenges on many fronts, the Lord continues to open new doors of opportunity for ministry. There is growing interest in the AFLC's seminary and Bible school training from Christians in East Africa. In recent years, seminary students from Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya and Nigeria have been studying at the Free Lutheran Seminary. Last year, two additional candidates from East Africa were unable to get visas to enter the USA.

In September 2000, Pastor David Natema, founder and president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Uganda (ELCU), visited the AFLC campus and met with its staff, looking for a Bible-believing church with whom to affiliate. Started in 1995, the ELCU has about 40 preaching points around the country. Nearly all of them are led by lay-pastors who want to receive additional training.

Dr. Norvald Yri and his wife, Anna, of Norway, serve on the mission field in northern Tanzania, in the large Rift Valley. Native tribes heretofore closed to the Gospel message are now open to receiving the Good News. Dr. Yri has personally experienced conversions and baptisms of about 900 souls there in less than two years, plus a total of 11 new church starts. "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring glad tidings of good things" (Rom. 10:15b).

Many indicators are pointing toward the need to train people in East Africa rather than having them come to AFLTS. Visas for entry into the US are increasingly difficult to obtain, especially after last Sept. 11. Students coming here to study normally need to stay for extended time periods due to travel costs and the uncertainty of getting a visa to come back to the US once they leave.

Men who study here leave wives and children behind and are separated from them for long periods of time. Once here, African students make significant cultural adjustments since they typically come from areas without conveniences such as air conditioning, indoor plumbing, refrigeration, fast food, etc. For some, it can be difficult to return to their homeland once they've experienced modern western culture.

Continuing contact is received from church leaders in other countries in Africa as well, including Ghana and the Congo. A training site somewhere in East Africa could also serve these areas.

The AFLC Annual Conference has recommended moving ahead with this new training concept as soon





TOP: Pastor David Natema, president of ESCU. ABOVE: A woman from the Hadzebe tribe in Tanzania.

as funding becomes available. Please pray that the Lord would grant wisdom and insight to committees and boards as they seek to know His will concerning this possible new work. "Behold, I say to you, lift up your eyes, and look on the fields, that they are white for harvest" (John 4:35b).

> - Lavon O. Bohling Director, Resource Management AFLC Missions

VISION 2004 Site work



roverbs 16:9 says, "The mind of a man plans his way, but the Lord directs his steps." With the funds that God has graciously provided, site work is well under way on the campus of the AFLC schools. Tree removal is complete and excavation is in progress. Site work for all phases of the master plan — utilities for sewer and water; asphalt and blacktop for new roadway and parking areas; building pads for all future buildings and curbing with sidewalks — is required before any buildings can be started. Berm areas are also part of the site work, which will require planting 180 or more new trees throughout the campus.

With more than \$1 million in cash and pledges raised so far, site work expenses of approximately \$750,000 have been provided. The

goal of raising at least \$2 million in cash and pledges by March 1, 2003, has been set so that we can begin building the \$3 million student center in 2003.

The long-range plan for the campus includes two new dormitories, when enrollments require them, a multipurpose auditorium/gymnasium, and additional seminary housing units when funds become available.

TOP: The view from the chapel where trees were removed and the former road was ground up into gravel. MIDDLE: Behind the men's dorm, the parking lot is excavated and a new road mapped out. RIGHT: A construction worker levels out the pad for the new gymnasium behind the men's dorm.







Record enrollment was set with 50 registering for the Summer Institute of Theology August 5-9 at the Free Lutheran Seminary.

Summer Institute sets enrollment record

I find it difficult to adequately describe my experience at the AFLTS Summer Institute of Theology. The fellowship and care into which Micah and I were received was characterized by a genuine and living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The relationships alone that were formed would have made the trip worthwhile. All those involved — from the administration, staff and faculty - were sincere in welcoming us and were truly passionate in their sphere of ministry.

I was both humbled and encouraged in my personal relationship with God and in the work He has for us here. May God continue to bless the AFLC, and may it remain faithful until His return.

> — Joel D. (Jody) Hall Groesbeck, Texas

ZOAR, from page 17

Lay Pastor Roy Quanrud served the church in 1965. Roger Strom served in 1966 while studying at Valley City, N.D. Pastor Howard Kjos served from 1967 to 1972. Pastor Hubert Deboer then served the church in 1973. Pastor Raymond Larson served from January through August of 1974. Kenneth Heppner, a neighboring pastor, served through part of 1975. Pastor Wes Langaas accepted a call in July 1975.

Bethany congregation at Derrick, N.D., joined Zoar in 1978. Pastor Ragene Hodnefield accepted a call to serve in 1980. In 1982, Zion congregation at Alsen, N.D., joined Zoar. Pastor Hodnefield resigned in 1985. Pastor Christian Oswood was installed April 27, 1986. A year later the Methodist Church at Hampden dissolved and joined Zoar.

In 1987, Zoar formed a two-

point parish with Living Word at Edmore, N.D., on a trial basis. In December that year, the congregation voted to give the Methodist church building to Christ Free Lutheran in Devils Lake, N.D.

In 1988, members voted to construct an addition to the east side of the church building. They also ratified the two-point parish with Edmore.

Pastor Oswood resigned in 1989. The new addition to the church was dedicated on May 7, 1989. In September that year, Pastor Walter Beaman accepted a call to serve the church. He resigned and left in 1992. Later that year, Pastor Craig Wentzel began to serve the congregation.

The congregation celebrated its centennial on June 2 with a worship service led by Pastor Robert Lee, AFLC president.

Home Missions Department asks for prayer, funds to meet church needs

Floods, drought, heat, fires and hail have headlined the news reports throughout the summer. We have watched our northern Minnesota family suffer the loss of property and income. Our western Dakotas and Nebraska families have experienced drought, and family members in other areas have seen heat and hail and other natural disasters. We must continue to pray for these AFLC family members as they market their livelihood in cattle, and as they struggle to find hay for the herds they hang onto for the future. Our prayers are with them.

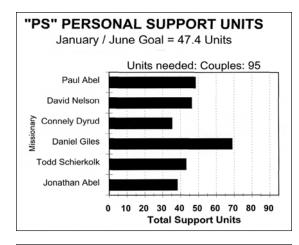
We in AFLC Home Missions have experienced a little drought of our own, and were unable to send our August subsidy checks out to our congregations. Will you also join with us in prayer over these needs?

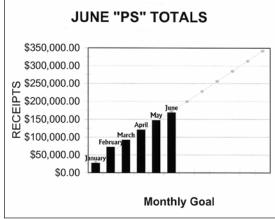
It is not our intent to place a greater burden on you or on our AFLC family or congregations, but you have asked us to alert you to our needs when they arise. So we are responding to your request to make the need known.

We know you have been praying for us. We know you have given sacrificially. We know God is allowing us to go through a testing. Actually, we are excited to see what God will do.

Please watch with us as we continue to go to God Almighty and watch Him at work. It is our desire that He alone be praised as He provides.

> — Pastor Paul Nash Home Missions Director





Memorials — July

Department given to ... *In memory of...*

Vision 2004

Etta Swanson (2)	Alvhild Nelson
Edroy Troftgruber	Lars Hegseth
Alvin Larson	$Ron\ Nelson$
Russell Johnson	Arvid Berg
Gerald Knudsvig	_

Home Missions

Roy Finstad	Lars Hegseth
Gerald Knudsvig	$Alvin\ Larson$
4 TT T C	

AFLBS

Etta Swanson	Mrs. Bernhard Nelson
Alvin Larson	Gerald Knudsvig
Margie Gabrielson	Brian Bjerke
Marie Schlenk	

AFLTS

Etta Swanson	$Russell\ Johnson$			
World Missions				

 $Roy\ Finstad$ Alvin Jorgenson Alvin Larson Russell Johnson Evangelism

Ray Miller

General Fund

Gerald Knudsvig Lars Hegseth

New members were received at Solid Rock Lutheran, Anoka, Minn., on Aug. 4. Pictured are interim Pastor Richard Gunderson: Scott. Arlyce and Hannah St. Cyr; Phillip, Marilee, Cecilee and AJ Watland; and Ryan and Rebecca Opdahl.



TABOR, from page 16

built in 1963. Pastor Raynard Huglen accepted a call to serve the church in 1963.

In 1966, the original church was enlarged with volunteer labor. The parish hall was moved into the basement west of the church. An addition was built between the church and hall and a large narthex was added and the chancel enlarged.

In 1971, Buffalo Lake congregation joined the parish. Huglen resigned Sept. 11, 1972. Pastor Howard Kjos accepted a call in the fall of 1972. He resigned in 1980.

In 1980, the congregation purchased property and a year later the parsonage and double garage were moved onto it. Pastor Rodney Stueland was called in 1981 and resigned in 1988. Pastor Lynn Wilson accepted a call to serve on Aug. 1, 1989, and still serves there.

On July 6-7, the congregation celebrated its centennial with a memorial service, music festival and worship service. Pastor Raynard Huglen and Pastor Howard Kjos were special speakers. The centennial committee picked Psalm 89:12a as the theme: "Tabor shall rejoice and sing for joy at Thy name."

Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

3110 East Medicine Lake Boulevard Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

AFLC Benevolences (7 months) – January 1 - July 31, 2002

FUND	TOTAL Subsidy	REC'D IN JULY	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	% TOTAL
General Fund	\$268,060.00	\$23,169.19	\$140,346.32	52
Seminary	118,938.00	8,037.99	81,402.92	68
Bible School	217,227.00	23,521.77	171,526.57	79
Home Missions	278,872.00	27,929.73	135,581.67	49
World Missions	199,994.00	12,489.07	123,250.34	62
Personal Support	288,000.00	29,444.39	210,297.37	73
Youth Ministries	55,413.00	6,081.49	29,647.70	54
Parish Education	71,687.00	3,379.19	35,733.31	50
Church Extension	23,093.00	520.51	14,897.52	65
TOTALS	\$1,521,284.00	\$134,572.83	\$942,683.72	62
TOTALS 2001	.\$1,119,759.00	\$82,934.06	\$674,640.06	60
Goal 58%	. , ,	, ,	. ,	
The Evengeliam Departm	ant massized \$16.70	5 00 in July		

Care enough to be creative

The method

should not get

in the way of

the message.

n their book Teaching the Bible Creatively, Bill McNabb and Steven Mabry tell of a woman who read that dogs were healthier if fed a tablespoon of cod liver oil each day. So each day she would chase her dog till she caught it, wrestle it down and then force the fishy remedy down the dog's throat.

One day, in the middle of the daily wrestling match, the bottle of cod liver oil was kicked over. The lady loosed her grip on the dog to clean up the mess only to watch the dog trot to the puddle and begin lapping up. The dog loved cod liver oil. It was just the owner's method of application the dog objected to.

The authors go on to state: "We have noticed that almost everyone wants to learn more about God and the Bible — but they are turned off by our method of

application. ... They have been turned off by boring, predictable, unchallenging, irrelevant, sophomoric attempts to teach them God's Word."

I'm afraid some people in Sunday schools and congregations may feel like that dog did as it was chased, dragged around and wrestled down. They have an interest in the Bible and learning its message; but the method in which it is often taught turns them off.

It is to be expected that some will be turned off by the message. "For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing" (I Corinthians 1:18, NIV). But if anything is going to offend and be dismissed as foolishness it is to be the message, and not the method in which we present it. Some who we may think have been offended by the cross and are opposed to Christ, have actually never heard the message of the cross. They have been so offended by Christians they have never met Christ.

The method should not get in the way of the message. The method should not be glorified. It is simply a means of presenting the message. It is the message that is unchangeable. The method of presenting it can and sometimes should be changed. The teacher should be engaged in an ongoing effort to find the most effective means for the day and age of presenting the message.

The method used in teaching can be compared to trucks used in transporting cargo. One truck may be best for going over mountains while another is best suited for desert conditions. In a similar way, one

teaching method is best for one class, while another method works better in a different class. We should not say one method is what all classes must use.

A driver might grow quite fond of his truck. It holds many great memories for him. But then he discovers a new truck that is best for delivering cargo to a certain location. The memories he has of his truck's past effectiveness should not prevent him from using a new truck. Likewise a certain method of teaching may have worked well in the past. It may be the way we were taught. It may be the most effective way of presenting truth today — or it may not. What method we have used in the past, what has worked in the past are not the only, or even the most important questions to ask. The issue is what is the most effective means of

presenting the truth today?

importance of what we are delivering demands that we strive to present the truth in the best manner possible. It is the holy and precious Word of God that is being shared. It is the most interesting and exciting story the human ear has ever heard. It is shameful to not try to present it in the most interesting way we

Just

doing it how it has always been

done, just pulling out a lesson plan an hour before class, just doing it as it says in the teacher's guide without exerting any creative thought is easy. It seems safer. It requires less time and effort. But it is not an appropriate way to handle the Word of God.

A call to being creative intimidates some. "I'm not the creative type," they say. The Bible says, "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him" (James 1:5). It also says, "I can do everything through him who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:13).

Creativity is not a skill possessed by only a few, but a gift God wants to give in abundance to His people. If God has called you to teach, He also wants to enable you to do the task in an interesting and effective manner. Seek wisdom from the Lord and work at doing your best. The message we are presenting deserves nothing less.

— Pastor Craig Johnson

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR

3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd. Minneapolis, Minnesota 55441

SOMETHING TO SHARE

Experiencing the presence of God

iving in the Seattle area, one can't help but be taken in by Mariners' mania. The Seattle Mariners baseball team came close to earning a World Series berth last year and, right along with Starbuck's coffee, is one of the boasts of the Pacific Northwest.

Last summer, I was invited to a Mariners celebrity Bowl-A-Thon sponsored by the Jamie Moyer Foundation. Moyer is the Mariners' prized pitcher. The event was a fund-raiser to start a grief camp for children who have recently suffered a loss.

Moyer had managed to get almost every player from the Mariners starting line-up to volunteer their time for this event — Bret Boone, Dan Wilson, Kazuhiro Sasaki, John Olerud, Joel Pineiro and others. They rotated through the swarming crowd of bowlers and fans, throwing strikes, spares and an occasional gutter ball, making sure everyone had a great time. These ballplayers were wonderful and engaging.

I was amazed to watch people clamor to be in the presence of each baseball hero. Arm-in-arm photos were taken, autographs of balls, programs, hats, napkins even clothing were being requested — one woman had her white pants autographed. Children were ushered up to get a

high-five from their favorite athlete. Folks were awestruck that they were standing with those of such fame and high esteem.

That morning, I had read in II Samuel 6 about King David's response when bringing the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem. In verse 5 it says, "David and the whole house of Israel were celebrating with all

God is to be revered, His presence savored and enjoyed. Maybe what it comes down to is passion.

their might before the Lord, with songs and harps, lyres, tambourines and cymbals." It goes on to say in verse 14 that "David danced before the Lord with all his might." David exploded in joy while experiencing the presence of God. He was elated and celebrated God's presence with unabandoned glee. That morning I questioned myself — what is my

response when in the incredible presence of God?

That evening, as I watched this parade of Mariners' enthusiasts scramble to be near their favorite ballplayer, I was reminded of David's experience in the presence of God. It seemed rather odd to honor and value these men simply based on their ability to play baseball, while many people largely ignore the Creator of the universe. While those around me were thanking these men for providing valuable autographs, I was thinking about God's eternal autograph on my heart. And photos — everyone would hurry to get theirs developed to prove to friends and family that they had been with the Mariners that night. Yet, whom had I told about my time in the presence of God that morning? And would a snapshot of my life prove that I was in God's presence that day?

God is to be revered, His presence savored and enjoyed. Maybe what it comes down to is passion. Much like those people at the bowling alley with unabashed elation to be with their beloved Mariners, David was clearly passionate about his relationship with God and was not ashamed to express it. I learned a lot that day.

— Cheri (Carter) Russum Elim Lutheran Lake Stevens, Wash.