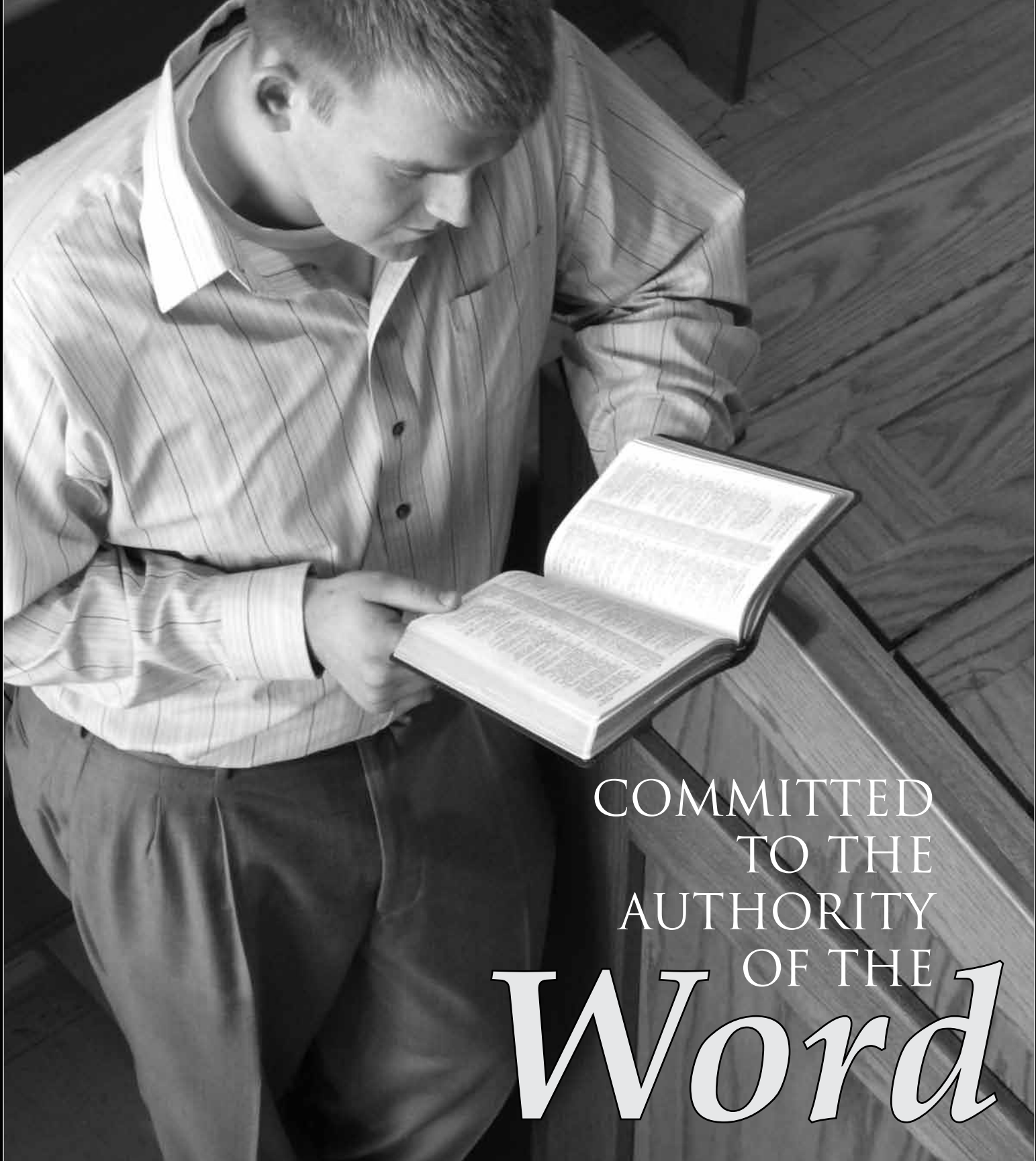


Servant Pastor

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COMMITTED
TO THE
AUTHORITY
OF THE

Word

THE AFLTS SERVANT PASTOR

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Founded in 1964, AFLTS is owned and operated by the AFLC Schools Corporation, whose 50 members are nominated by the Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. AFLTS is a graduate school of theology and grew out of the need for a seminary to equip biblically trained pastors and Christian workers in the tradition of orthodox Lutheran Pietism.



Full-time members of the AFLTS faculty include (from left) Pastor Jerry Moan, New Testament; Pastor Phil Haugen, New Testament; Dr. Francis Monseth, AFLTS dean, systematic theology; Andrew Hanson, music; Pastor Joel Rolf, AFLBS dean; Pastor Jerry Holmaas, Old Testament; and Pastor Robert Lee, Church history and practical theology.

2009 graduates

Nine men will receive seminary degrees May 16 in graduation exercises on the campus. Of these, seven will have completed internships in cooperating AFLC congregations during the past year in fulfillment of the final requirement for graduation and ministry in the AFLC. They are as follows: Joel Baker (Bethany, Abercrombie, N.D.; Emmaus, Bloomington, Minn.), Joe Faldet (Abiding Savior, Sioux Falls, S.D.), Seth Forness (Emmanuel, Williston, N.D.), Stephen Larson (Grace, Deephaven, Minn.), Patrick Lohse (Bethlehem, Morris, Ill.), Eric Swenson (Bethel, Minot, N.D.), and Sam Wellumson (St. Ansgar's, Salinas, Calif.).

The seminary is deeply grateful to each of the participating congregations in this year's internship program and the following pastors who have served as internship supervisors: Kirk Flaa, Tom Gilman, Herb Hoff, Lee Hoops, Lloyd Quanbeck, David Skordahl, Dan Sollie, and Jon Wellumson.

Others receiving degrees and completing programs who will be recognized in the May ceremonies are Darwin Paccha (Graduate in Theology) and Al Bedard (Certificate of Pastoral Studies).

Summer Institute of Theology August 3-7

Five courses will be offered during the annual summer institute held August 3-7 on the Medicine Lake campus. The courses and their instructors for the daytime classes include: "Studies in the Book of Hebrews," Pastor Jerry Moan; "Doctrine of the Church," Dr. Fran Monseth; "The Ten Commandments for Today," Pastor John Eidsmoe; and "Church Leadership and Administration," Pastor Bob Lee. Pastor Lee will also teach an evening class during the week, "History and Aims of the AFLC." A descriptive brochure is available through the seminary office or at its Web site. The classes are open to all interested friends.

Moan earns master's in sacred theology

Thesis focused on women in ministry

By Pastor Jerry Moan

A Biblical Understanding of Women in Ministry: An Investigation of I Timothy 2:8-15." Such is the title of the thesis marking the completion of my STM (master's in sacred theology) graduate studies at Concordia Seminary in Ft. Wayne, Ind. Some may be puzzled over my attraction to the topic. It all started about a dozen years ago while perusing a slim volume (*Women in Church's Ministry: A Test Case for Biblical Interpretation*, by R.T. France) written by a well-known evangelical who challenged the historic, traditional interpretation of this very passage which he identified as "the storm-centre of debate."

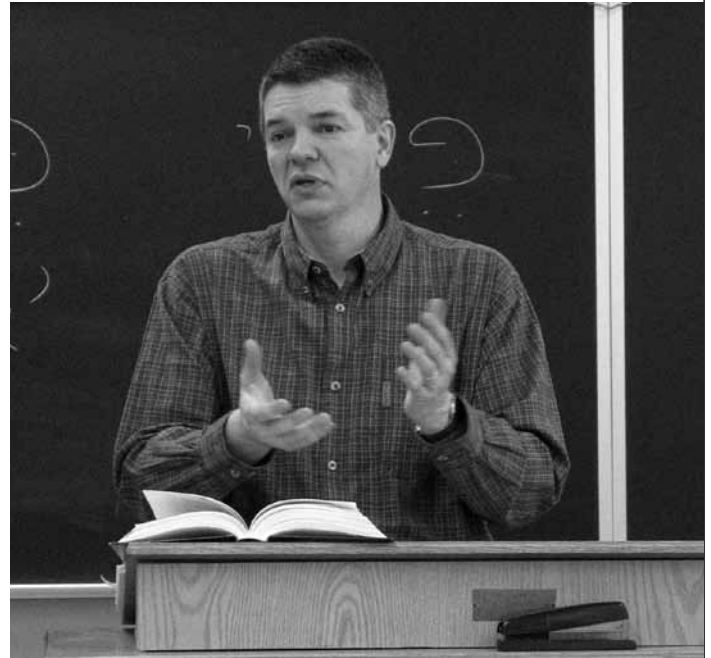
It is no secret that the issue of women in ministry has greatly impacted a broad spectrum of denominations during the last half century. The questions raised are legion, e.g.: Is it appropriate for a woman to preach the Word of God or to lead in worship? Can she serve as a deacon or teach an adult Bible class? Can she administer the sacraments or be ordained as a pastor? What exactly is the role of women in the church?

These are questions which must be faced squarely and biblically. They cannot be ignored in the naïve assumption that the storm of con-

troversy will soon blow over. Our own culture has been inundated by an avalanche of feminist literature arguing that there is no appreciable difference between the roles of men and women. The politically correct thinking of our day would legislate that anyone in support of gender-based role distinctions is guilty of blatant discrimination.

Such thinking has permeated the church at large, affecting the so-called evangelical churches as well as the more liberal-leaning denominations. The result has been mass confusion and frustration. Churches and seminaries are divided over whether women should be allowed to be theologically trained and ordained. Some folks can't understand what all the fuss is about.

Here is the issue: *What does the Word of God say?* Has the Lord provided sufficient guidance for His people in these matters? And are we willing to follow the teachings of Scripture in an age when nobody seems to



care anymore? My investigation of I Timothy 2:8-15 has heightened my appreciation for the leadership structure which God has established for our blessing and protection.

It is crucial for the life of the congregation that believing men and women embrace what Scripture *forbids* as well as what it *affirms* here in I Timothy 2. Taking such a stand will no doubt be regarded by some as biased and hopelessly out of step with the cultural and religious trends of the day. Still, the bottom line is: Who do we aim to please? And to whom must we give account?

Moan is a professor at AFLTS.

Internship assignments for 2009-10 school year

Internship assignments were recently announced for six students who are completing their final year of studies on the campus. The students and the congregations to which they have been assigned are: Brett Boe, Bethel, Grafton, N.D. (Tim Carlson, pastoral supervisor); Jeremy Crowell, Naknek Lutheran Mission, Naknek,

Alaska (Jeff Swanson, pastoral supervisor); Micah Hjermstad, Ruthfred, Bethel Park, Pa. (James Molstre, pastoral supervisor); Michael Johnson, Emmanuel, Williston, N.D. (Jon Wel-lumson, pastoral supervisor); Bob W. Lee, St. Ansgar's, Salinas, Calif. (Herb Hoff, pastoral supervisor); and Tom Olson, Prince of Peace, Beulah, N.D. (Kris Nyman, pastoral supervisor).

The internship assignments extend from June 1 of this year to the

end of May 2010. Jeremy Crowell will spend the first six months in Alaska and the final six months in a congregation in "the lower 48." A faculty advisor monitors the progress of the intern and presents a final report to the seminary. Pending final recommendations in early 2010, these men will be eligible for call on March 1, 2010.

NEWS continued on page 13

AFLTS JUNIORS

Barry Nelson, 33, spent a year in Afghanistan as a member of the US Army Reserves. It was at that time that he sensed confirmation of the Lord's call to the seminary. Barry and Kiri were married in August and their campus apartment is their first home. Maranatha Free Lutheran in Glyndon, Minn., is Barry's home congregation.



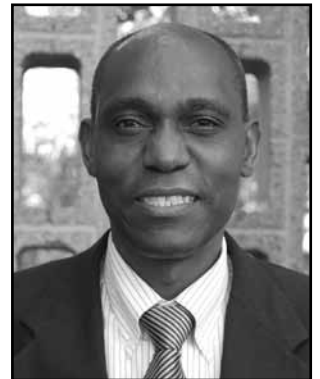
Adam Osier, 25, is a graduate of AFLBS and Northwestern College. He and Courtney were married last summer. Both Adam and Courtney have served as short-term assistants in both Home and World Missions. Adam serves AFLBS as the men's resident head and athletic director. His home church is Grace Free Lutheran, Valley City, N.D.



George Lautner, 44, left a career in mechanical construction to follow God's call to ministry. George, his wife Christine, and children Andrew and Hannah moved to campus last summer from Bethel Park, Pa., where they are members of Ruthfred Evangelical Lutheran Church.



Nicolaus Nsanganzeli, 53, a junior, has served as a youth worker, as a pastor, as dean of Waama Bible College and as an assistant to the bishop in his home country of Tanzania. He is married to Elimiliki and they have been blessed with eight children. His goal is to use his education to help church leaders and lay people to grow in true faith through Jesus Christ. After spending the summer in Tanzania with his family, Nicolaus plans to return to AFLTS for a second year.



William Kireri, 31, a junior from Jinja, Uganda, is the pastor of former graduate and missionary, Rev. Nate Jore. He has found his classes to be extremely helpful and plans to continue his studies at AFLTS next year.



Sam Menge, 23, a junior from Enderlin, N.D., and his wife Rachel are student mission coordinators with AFLC Youth Ministries. Their son, Jericho, born in November, will be taking two mission trips this summer! This young family will visit Uganda in June and Arizona and Mexico in August. Sam's home church is Grace Free Lutheran in Valley City, N.D.



PART-TIME STUDENTS

Bob Halvorson, Elk River, Minn.
Glenn Mork, Bloomington, Minn.

David Franz, 25, a middler from Maple Grove, Minn., comes from a heritage of AFLC pastors. He is the son of Pastor Peter Franz and the grandson of the late Pastor Herb Franz. David is a graduate of Northwestern College and both he and his wife, Whitney, are AFLBS graduates. They are members of Grace Free Lutheran Church in Maple Grove.



Jason Gudim, 28, a middler from Shakopee, Minn., is a graduate of AFLBS and Crown College. He has been employed by FaithSearch International for the past four years. Jason and his wife, Esther, are members of Faith Lutheran in Shakopee and are the parents of 3-year-old Noah and newborn Grace.



Scott Stroud, 40, a middler from Minneapolis, is a barber by trade. He serves as the student body chaplain this year. Scott is married to Mary and together they are the parents of Peter, Elijah, Cassie and Seth. The Stroud's are members of Hope Lutheran in Minneapolis.



Brian Ricke, 42, is the seminary technology expert. He keeps a very busy schedule as media director at his church, Hope Lutheran in Minneapolis, as well as teaching media ministry classes at AFLBS. Brian and his wife, Connie, are the parents of Zachariah, Samuel, Eliah and Andrew.



Ryan Mairs, 34, a middler from Fergus Falls, Minn., left a chiropractic practice to pursue his call to the ministry. While in seminary he enjoys the opportunity to serve as youth leader at Solid Rock Free Lutheran Church in Anoka. Ryan and his wife, Tanya, have three daughters, Morgan, Bethany, and Clarissa. Their home church is Calvary Free Lutheran in Fergus Falls.



Erlend Straume, 38, returned to Norway after his first year of studies at AFLTS. After taking inter-term classes via Skype (a computer connection), he has returned to the seminary for the remainder of his middler year. Erlend has been fortunate to be able to take leave from his position as a research scientist. He is a member of the Church of Norway and is active in Norwegian Lutheran Missions work.



AFLTS SENIORS

Tom Olson, 37, a senior from Edinburg, N.D., and his wife, Beth, are AFLBS graduates. They have been blessed with five children, Isak, Kelvin, Kiana, Josiah, and Karina. While in seminary, Tom works at Heritage Christian Academy. His home church is Grace Free Lutheran, Edinburg, N.D.



Brett Boe, 25, is a senior from Newark, Ill. He and his wife, Theresa, are both AFLBS graduates and they are the parents of 1-year-old Gideon. Brett has also worked in the AFLC's Parish Education Department for the past three years. His home congregation is Helmar Lutheran Church.



Jeremy Crowell, 28, is a senior with a heart for mission aviation. During his time at seminary he has worked in aircraft maintenance and flight instruction.



Both Jeremy and his wife, Lacy, are AFLBS alumni whose home church is Atonement Free Lutheran in Arlington, Wash.

Darwin Paccha, 27, is a senior from Cuenca, Ecuador. He and his wife, Kirsten, are both AFLBS graduates. Darwin chose AFLTS because he has "seen that the teachers live their Christianity in and out of the classrooms. Their testimony has been pivotal in my decision in going to this particular seminary."



Michael Johnson, 29, a senior from Richfield, Minn., is the son of AFLC pastor David Johnson of Silverhill, Ala. Michael is a graduate of AFLBS and Crown College. He is active in his home church, Faith Lutheran in Minneapolis, and has a heart for service.



Micah Hjermstad, 26, is a senior from Bruce, S.D., where his father, AFLC Pastor Wayne Hjermstad, currently serves Grace Lutheran. A graduate of AFLBS and Minnesota State University, Moorhead, he also serves as basketball coach at AFLBS.



Bob Lee, 56, a senior, has the distinction of being the "other Bob Lee," sharing the name with his professor, Rev. Robert Lee. Bob and his wife, Margaret, are members of Hope Lutheran in Minneapolis and are the parents of four grown children, the youngest of whom will graduate from AFLBS this year.

Stephen Larson, 27, served his internship at Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Deephaven, Minn. He is a graduate of AFLBS and South Dakota State University. He is married to Frieda, who is attending nursing school in the Twin Cities. His home congregation is Resurrection Free Lutheran, Beltrami, Minn.



Joe Faldet, 26, served his internship at Abiding Savior Free Lutheran Church in Sioux Falls, S.D., under the supervision of Pastor Kirk Flaa. Joe and Kirsten were married in October of his internship year. He is a graduate of AFLBS and Northwestern College. Joe's home congregation is Trinity Free Lutheran in McIntosh, Minn.



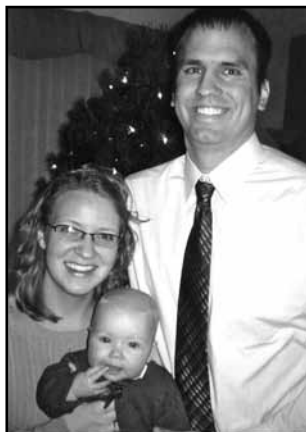
Sam Wellumson, 28, is an intern from Williston, N.D. Both he and his wife, Sarah, are graduates of AFLBS and Northwestern College. They spent their internship year at St. Ansgar's Lutheran, Salinas, Calif. They are parents of Elijah (2) and newborn Annalise. Sam's home congregation is Emmanuel Free Lutheran, Williston, where his father, Rev. Jon Wellumson, serves as pastor.



Joel Baker, 57, is an intern from St. Paul. He served the first part of his internship at Bethany Lutheran in Abercrombie, N.D., and the second part at his home church, Emmaus Lutheran in Bloomington, Minn. Joel and his wife, Susan, are parents of three grown children.



Eric Swenson, 28, an intern from Jewell, Iowa, served his internship at Bethel Free Lutheran in Minot, N.D. While there, he and his wife, Kristi, became parents of Vivian. Eric is a graduate of AFLBS and Northwestern College. His home congregation is St. Paul's Free Lutheran, Stanhope, Iowa.



Patrick Lohse, 27, an intern from Coon Rapids, Minn., is a graduate of the University of Minnesota. Patrick and his wife, Jenny, spent their internship year in Morris, Ill., at Bethlehem Lutheran Church. He is a member of Hope Lutheran, in Minneapolis.

Seth Forness, 29, an intern from Colfax, N.D., is a graduate of AFLBS and the University of Minnesota. He served his internship in Williston, N.D. His home congregation is Bethany Free Lutheran in Abercrombie, N.D.



The Word

COMMITTED TO

From its inception in 1964, AFLTS has prayerfully sought to train and equip servant pastors for ministry in local congregations. But what kind of servanthood is meant? A servant of what? A servant to whom? Fundamentally, and most importantly, it is servanthood to the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. Arising from a growing realization of the grace of God in Christ, there is a consequent and growing desire born of the Holy Spirit to live in daily surrender to His lordship. With the Apostle Paul, one humbly and gladly identifies himself a “bond-servant of Jesus Christ” (Romans 1:1).

But there is another vital aspect to the servanthood of a pastor, and it is inseparably linked with his relationship as a servant of Christ. That is his Spirit-wrought commitment and allegiance to the written Word of God. In consonance with his Savior and Lord, he joyfully confesses that the Bible is the fully inspired (plenary inspiration) and completely inerrant (verbal inspiration) Word of God, yielding implicit trust and loving obedience to the Scriptures. With Martin Luther, he gives witness in word and in deed that as a servant of Jesus Christ he is “captive to the Word of God.”



**Dr. Francis
Monseth, Dean**

Arising from the servant pastor’s God-given commitment to Christ and the authority of His Word is a corresponding desire to faithfully minister to the body of Christ, the Christian Church, as manifested in the local congregation to which he has been called.

That consecrated service is centered on *preaching the Word*, faithfully and courageously, proclaiming the law and the gospel in truth and purity.

OUR LORD’S TEACHING AND EXAMPLE

As one who confesses Jesus Christ as the Word made flesh, God incarnate, and trusts in Him as Savior and Lord, a servant pastor finds in Him the supreme example of submission to the written Word of God. The question of the authority of Scripture is settled for him as he observes how the Lord conducted His earthly ministry in regard for it. It is not only Christ’s exposition of Scripture but also His perfect example of submission to it that together comprise the perfect expression of being a servant of the Word. A survey of our Lord’s handling of the Scripture confirms His absolute surrender to all matters of which it treats.

Our Lord’s earthly teaching ministry was saturated with Scripture. René Pache reports that approximately one tenth of His words were taken from the Old Testament. In the four Gospels, 180 of the 1,800 verses which speak of His teaching ministry are either quotations from the Old Testament or else direct references to it.¹

When our Lord declared, “Scripture cannot be broken” (John 10:35), He testified to the unchanging nature of the Word of God that is always relevant and reliable in its promises and precepts. It will never fail because it cannot be altered or compromised. In His statement, “It is easier for heaven and earth to pass away, than for one tittle of the law to fail,” He emphasized the absolute trustworthiness of every word of Scripture down to the smallest strokes on a letter. Everything else may disappear, but God’s Word and promises will endure.

Our Lord placed the text of Scripture on the same plane as His own words, divine and infallible, which will endure forever. He proclaimed, “Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will not pass away” (Matthew 24:35). In His response to the assaults of Satan in the threefold attempt he made to cause our Lord to fall, He answered each approach with the statement, “It is written,” taking His rebuttal of the temptations from the Scripture (Deuteronomy 6:13; 8:3; 6:16). For our Lord, the Word of God was the authoritative and powerful “sword of the Spirit” (Ephesians 6:17).

In our Lord’s frequent interchanges with His Jewish adversaries, He constantly repeated in response to their questions, “Have you not read ...?” in reference to Scripture (e.g., Matthew 12:3, 5). The clear implication was that if only the Pharisees would read the Scriptures, they would know the truth. The Word of God was the final authority in all matters of faith and life for our Lord.

Again and again our Lord cited Scripture in His teaching ministry as well as when He responded to His opponents (e.g., Matthew 21:16, 42; Mark 10:2-3; John 10:34). In His manifold references to Scripture,



ITS AUTHORITY

our Lord confirmed the historicity and accuracy of the main events and accounts of the Old Testament. It is clear that He did not consider these accounts to be myths or legends as is often the contention of liberal theologians today.

For our Lord, all of the events recorded in the Scripture were historical facts, including the creation account (Matthew 19:4-5), the worldwide flood (Matthew 24:37), the swallowing of Jonah by a great fish (Matthew 12:40-41), etc. He confirmed the canonicity and unity of Isaiah long before the remarkable discovery of the entire scroll of Isaiah at Qumran in 1947 (the Dead Sea Scrolls). He made no distinction between the first 39 chapters of Isaiah and the rest of the book. He quoted from both sections of Isaiah, attributing the common authorship to none other than Isaiah himself! Likewise, our Lord identified Moses as the single author of the Pentateuch with no suggestion of multiple editors and redactors.

Was He merely a “child of His times” as some suggest, naively but sincerely believing contemporary superstition and folklore which liberal theology allegedly has demonstrated to be implausible? If that were true, our Lord could not be as He claimed, the very Son of God. He could not be “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). He could not be our Savior!

In his book, *It Is Written*, J.A.O. Preus concludes on the basis of our Lord’s treatment of Scripture, “... Jesus believed in the absolute and

supreme authority of the Holy Scripture. As true man He submitted Himself, His conduct, His activities, His very life, to Scripture. For Him who is the incarnate Word, the Scripture settled every doctrinal discussion. Even as true God the Son, He is bound by Scripture and does not go beyond it.”²

The attitude of total confidence in the Scripture which our Lord displayed as well as His complete surrender to it is decisive for the servant pastor and all believing people of God. He is our dear Savior! He is our loving Lord! He is the Son of God! He is “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). Faith in Him as Savior and Lord is inseparably connected with trust in the authoritative Scripture, which reveals Him and which He consistently confirmed as divine truth. If one acknowledges in faith the deity of our Lord and the authority that accompanies His Person, then one can do nothing else than joyfully believe in and surrender to the entire Scripture as the very Word of

God. H.C.G. Moule gives humble testimony to the only appropriate response to the teaching and example of our Lord regarding Scripture:

“He (Christ) absolutely trusted the Bible; and though there are in it things inexplicable and intricate that have puzzled me so much, I am going, not in a blind sense, but reverently, to trust the Book because of Him.”³

THE WITNESS OF OUR LUTHERAN FOREFATHERS

An American theologian laments the use of revered church leaders such as Martin Luther to give testimony to the full authority of Scripture. He labels as a fearful approach “the literalists attempt to affirm the authority of Scripture by eliciting the help of commonly accepted heroes.”⁴ Despite such disparagement of those who would value the faithful witness of the past, it is without apology that we recall the faith of our fathers in regard to the authority of Scripture.

While there are several implications of the Reformation axiom, “the Word alone” (*Sola Scriptura*), the most prominent application in the life and ministry of Luther was his surrender to the absolute authority of the Word of God in all matters of faith and life. There are few truths that Luther emphasized more than the Scripture’s full and final authority. In a sermon preached in 1534 on Luke 18:31-43, he declared,

“We should not take offense at the Word of God even though it may sound strange, unlikely, and impossible; but we should firmly insist that if God has said it, it must also come to pass. For no one should ask whether it is possible but should only determine whether God has said it. He is mighty and faithful also to do it. Therefore, we should believe it. But he who does not want to believe it blasphemes God to the highest degree.”⁵

Luther believed the all-important consideration was to ascertain if God’s Word had spoken on an issue. If it had, the matter was settled. It remained only to acknowledge it as true and then to apply it to one’s life. Though one’s reason might balk at the acceptance of certain aspects of Biblical revelation, nevertheless, for Luther and for us, all Scripture remains the absolute truth of God, worthy of full confidence and glad surrender.

Luther’s forthright stand on the authority of Scripture needs fresh enunciation and application in our own day as we observe with sadness many who seek to go beyond the Bible for some message from God. Whether the Church attempts to be that medium or whether it is an alleged extra-biblical “revelation,” both serve the purpose of undermining and overthrowing the authority of God’s written Word. Without the Word of God as the full and final authority in all matters of faith and life, indeed, in all matters of which it treats, every aspect of the Christian faith becomes tentative and open to question. One is ultimately robbed of the true knowledge of Christ, the assurance of God’s forgiveness, the gracious ministry of the Holy Spirit, and eternal salvation itself. In its place is the quicksand of human and satanic opinion and deception, which, if followed, leads to eternal damnation.

We thank God for the Bible-believing testimony of Luther and other reformers of the sixteenth century. We rejoice in the clear and faithful witness of our Lutheran confessions, which echo the stand of Luther.

“We believe, teach, and confess that the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments are the only rule and norm according to which all doctrines and teachers alike must be appraised and judged, as it is written in Psalm 119:105, ‘Thy Word is a lamp to my feet and a light to my path.’ Holy Scripture remains the only judge, rule, and norm and touchstone according to which all doctrines should and must be understood and judged as good or evil, right or wrong.”⁶

It is this attitude and approach to the Scripture that has characterized faithful servants of God of all time and must describe faithful servant pastors today if they would follow the teaching and example of our Lord and the witness of His believing Church.

THE AUTHORITY OF THE WORD IN MINISTRY

In our Lord’s restoration of the Apostle Peter after his grievous denial, He gave him a renewed commission. Peter was entrusted with a task that reflected not only Christ’s concern for His own but also the main means of caring for His believing Church - “Feed My sheep” (John 21:15-17). The call to all undershepherds of Christ is no different today. To feed our Lord’s sheep is to preach and teach His Word.

The Apostle Paul solemnly charged “Pastor” Timothy to “preach the Word” (II Timothy 4:2). The preaching that is to characterize a servant pastor is described as reproving, rebuking, and exhorting – and doing so with “great patience” (II Timothy 4:3). Convinced of the absolute authority of the Word of God, the servant pastor, in humble submission to His gracious Lord and in dependence upon the Spirit of God, courageously and compassionately preaches the uncompromising and unalterable law and the unconditional and unlimited gospel to the congregation he is privileged to serve as a minister of Jesus Christ.

¹ René Pache, *The Inspiration and Authority of Scripture* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1969), p. 221.

² Jacob Preus, *It Is Written* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1971), p. 20.

³ H.C.G. Moule, cited in Frank Gaebelein, *The Meaning of Scripture* (Chicago: Inter-Varsity, 1950), p. 25.

⁴ Robert Roth, “Seeing the Bible,” *The Lutheran*, Oct. 5, 1980, p. 6.

⁵ Ewald Plass, ed., *What Luther Says*, Vol. III (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959), p. 1472.

⁶ Theodore Tappert, ed., *The Book of Concord* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), pp. 464-465.

THE SIGNS

Paccha remembers God's clear call to him to enter the ministry

By Darwin Paccha

I am one of those people who do not remember the exact hour, day or year of my salvation. I am glad, however, that God has not forgotten that day. His faithfulness has always been with me both before and after I came to the cross to leave my burden with Him. As I look back at my younger years in Ecuador, I see all sorts of signs—some clearer than others—that God used to call me into ministry.

One of these clear experiences in my life God used to soften my heart happened when I was 19 years old. Through many unexpected situations, God put me to work with a missionary whom I had never met before in my life. Our job was to go back to the villages where this missionary had served about 12 years before and encourage the people. To get to each village, we had to walk a couple of miles every day. When we arrived at those villages, the believers had multiplied by hundreds since the missionary left them, and now the ones who once were persecuted by other religions and cults had become the leaders in Quito's North Country. During our walk between villages we would see many other towns far away in the mountains where the gospel had not yet reached. After visiting the believers and seeing the joy and love they had for Christ, we returned home by the same roads, seeing the same villages far away in the mountains but without the joy and love we had just witnessed.

Since then, I began to think that perhaps one day God could use me to bring the gospel to those towns or to other people in need of salvation. That experience and others were the beginning of a spiritual journey in my life that finally led me to Bible school and then to seminary.

In His wisdom, God knew that preparation and training were needed before I could be sent somewhere. After much prayer, God graciously opened the doors to what I now call my spiritual home—the AFLC. My training began in 2004 at AFLBS, where for the first time the sense of God calling me to proclaim His Word was clearly present in my heart. After



Bible school I went to seminary, where for the past three years I have been immersed in His Word. Now the time has come to return home to serve. Of course, after seminary there is still much to be learned. For now God has decided that the learning will take place in Ecuador, where I will be preaching and sharing the Word with others.

More than 50 years ago, American missionaries Jim Elliot, Ed McCully, Roger Youderian, Pete Fleming and Nate Saint were murdered in Ecuador because of their faith. As a result, revival spread around the world. Missionaries all over the globe were packing their suitcases and leaving home to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. Almost 20 years after these missionaries died, a young American missionary by the name of Bill Lackey (a former student at AFLTS), who was inspired by their testimony and touched by this revival, went to Ecuador. He lived a couple of houses down the road from my home. He was my neighbor, and God used him in a very special and powerful way to impact my own life as I was growing up. About 30 years later, I am going back to the same land to keep on preaching the same Word.

Revival has not ceased; the cross is still being lifted up. Please pray that the revival will continue and increase in Ecuador. Pray also for more workers. There are still villages with people who have not yet heard the message of the cross.

Paccha will return to Cuenca, Ecuador, after graduating in May.

The decline of CHRISTIAN HERITAGE *in American colleges and universities*

The Dying of the Light: The Disengagement of Colleges and Universities from their Christian Churches by James Tunstead Burtchaell.

Some of our faculty members heard a reference to this book at a recent conference, and my interest was stirred enough to tackle its 800-plus pages—a size, says the author, usually reserved for major wars. I think that it may be quite appropriate to see the development of the theme in warfare terms, although the battles usually quietly ended with a whimper instead of a shout.

The book is organized by denominations, and Burtchaell begins with the Congregationalists, continues with the Presbyterians, the Methodists, the Baptists, the Lutherans, the Catholics, and the Evangelicals, and concludes with a summary chapter entitled, “The Story Within the Stories.” He “rages,” according to one reviewer, against the decline and loss of a distinct Christian heritage by almost all of these institutions, and against the passive responses of those who established them.



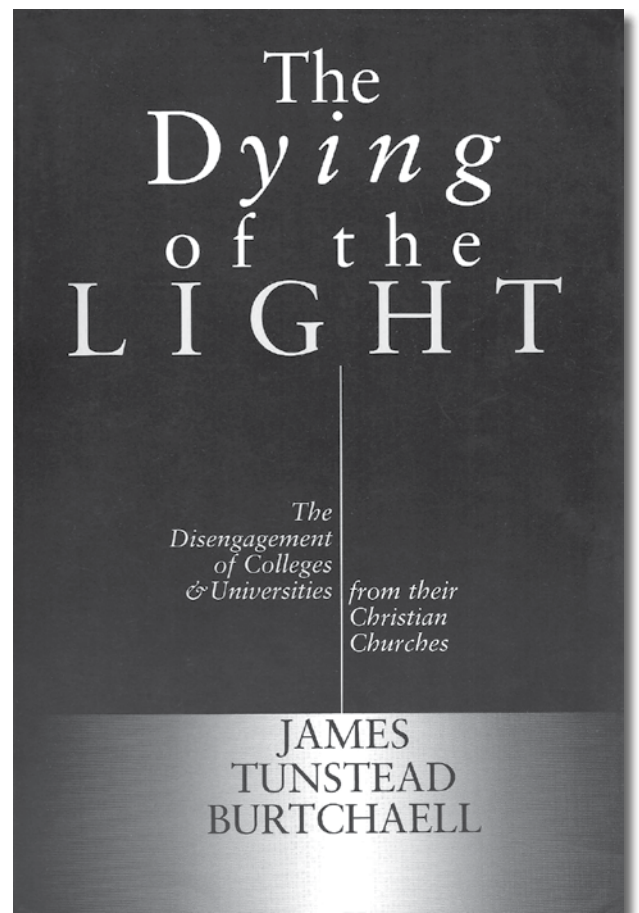
Robert Lee

I was especially interested in the Lutheran stories, of course, which focused on Gettysburg, St. Olaf, and Concordia-River Forest. Each of these colleges began on a very conservative Lutheran foundation, with a primary goal to prepare pastors and other workers for their supporting churches. At the time of the book’s publication, Lutherans were a minority on each campus, and “creed” was a category no longer to

be considered in personnel and academic decisions. (Some will recall the news story a couple of years ago that a Hindu was chairman of the religion department at St. Olaf.)

In his summary chapter the author suggests that the educators’ preference for autonomy, the influence of the president, changes in governance, and the religious indifference of the faculty are key elements in the process of disengagement. This reviewer suspects that the academic study of religion promoted by the author means acceptance of a higher critical approach to Scripture, which in my opinion simply furthers the secularizing process. Also, I think that his negative comments on the influence of pietism reveal his misunderstanding of the movement.

Lee is a professor of Church history and practical theology at AFLTS.



The Dying of the Light: The Disengagement of Colleges and Universities from their Christian Churches by James Tunstead Burtchaell, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Grand Rapids, Mich., 1998.



Inter-term course offered for junior students

A new course, "Protecting the Shepherd and His Flock," was offered for all first-year students in January of this past school year. Taught this first year by Dr. Irv Woolf, director of the National Coalition for Purity, it focused on issues relating to moral purity from a biblical and practical perspective and provided an opportunity for personal inventory and evaluation. A regular faculty member will continue the course in the coming year.

Focus on debt retirement for chapel renovations

Significant debt was incurred by the seminary as a result of extensive remodeling made necessary by the installation of a 2,000-pipe organ in the AFLC Schools' chapel last year, as well as other improvements to the interior and exterior of the seminary/chapel building (grading and paving the parking lots, and tiling around the base of the building to prevent further water seepage). With the debt at more than \$200,000, the seminary is prayer-

fully seeking to alert its AFLC constituency of this financial need in the coming year with the goal of reducing if not retiring this debt.

Campus hosts annual conference in 2010

Pastor Bob Lee is heading up a committee to plan for the annual conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations in June of 2010 on the campus of the seminary and Bible school. A committee made up of campus personnel and area congregational representatives is being formed in the effort to prepare for this special event. Planning includes the preparation of the chapel auditorium for the daytime sessions as well as the evening services during the conference. Dormitories and some seminary apartments will be available for lodging during the meetings.

Fall Revival Conference

Pastor Dana Coyle, Ottawa, Ill., will be the guest speaker at the Campus Revival Conference Sept. 27-Oct. 1. Coyle will preach at evening services beginning Sunday through Wednesday as well as during chapel

services on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. Currently serving Helmar Lutheran Church near Newark, Ill., Coyle is a member of the Board of Trustees of AFLC Schools. He is a 2002 graduate of AFLTS.

Faculty in the news

Pastor Jerry Moan, professor of New Testament studies at AFLTS, recently completed a graduate program at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., and will receive a Master of Sacred Theology degree (STM) in graduate exercises at Concordia in May. His master's thesis focused on the role of women in the Church in a close study of I Timothy 2:8-15.

Pastor Phil Haugen continues doctoral studies (D.Min.) through Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., on a part-time basis. With classes in June and January, he is able to maintain his full-time teaching load at the seminary and Bible school.

Andrew Hanson, new director of music for AFLC Schools and conductor of the seminary chorus, is continuing studies toward a master's degree in choral conducting at St. Cloud State University.

Finding victory through SURRENDER

In my personal walk with the Lord, I constantly ask myself, "Am I surrendering to Christ, or am I trying to do things my own way?" In our spiritual journeys, we all struggle with stubborn habits, secret sins, and spiritual strongholds. The key is not how committed we are to the battle, but how surrendered we are. The Seminettes turned to a wonderful small book

entitled, *Surrender: The Heart God Controls*, by Nancy Leigh DeMoss, which discusses these issues. Through this study we find that surrender does not mean, "I give up!" but rather, "Victory at last." The only way for us to have true victory is through surrender.

Therefore, this year's theme verse for Seminettes was taken from Romans 12:1-2, "I appeal to you therefore, brothers, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God,

which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." (ESV)

Life is full of challenges as the seminary wives have continued to juggle duties at home, young children, older children, school and work responsibilities, husbands in school, their work and homework. Through all of this we have continued to grow in our personal Christian walk.

Seminettes has been a place for the women to break away and meet for spiritual renewal, pray with one another, bear one another's burdens, laugh and cry together. We began the year with many of us strangers to each other and ended the year with newfound friendships and spiritual support.

Each month we have had a Bible study and a social event which included various fun activities, such as a progressive supper, packing Operation Christmas Child shoe boxes, a Christmas party, baby showers, comedy night, and bowling. A highlight of the year was when Faylin Myhre spoke to us about "taking off the bad" and "putting on the good" in a WMF-sponsored event. Also, the faculty wives have been a great blessing to us as we prepare to be pastors' wives. They have encouraged and helped us fulfill the Seminette goals of growing and maturing in our Christian life, becoming united as a group in Christian fellowship, becoming good helpmates to our husbands, and growing in our understanding of Christian family living.

It has been a privilege to be part of Seminettes. We are learning and growing as the Lord does His work in us, transforming us by the renewing of our minds, that by testing we may discern God's will, what is good, acceptable and perfect. We look forward to the future He has in store for us. May we each gain true victory through surrender to our holy and righteous God.

Lee is the wife of Bob Lee, a third-year student at AFLTS. They will serve their internship at St. Ansgar's Lutheran, Salinas, Calif.



Margaret Lee

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Tool of the **TRADE**

Nelson recounts the importance of God's Word in his ministry

By Pastor Elden Nelson

My father was a carpenter. He loved working with wood, and he insisted on having good tools. He watched his spending, but when it came to tools he wanted the best available because his tools were directly related to the finished product. The tools in his box were always sharp and in good repair. From my father I learned much about the tools of his trade. There was another tool that he used, and it was the Word of God.

Like his carpentry tools, my father's Bible was well worn and gave evidence of regular use. More important than wear on his Bible was the evidence of that Word being a part, yes a very vital part, of him. The prophet Jeremiah describes the Word as a hammer. And so it is, but it is much more than a tool. To do ministry without the Word would be like a carpenter building a house without a square, a level, a hammer, a saw, and building materials. There is no substitute for the Word of God.

It was that Word that first called me to a living relationship with Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit worked faithfully to call, gather and enlighten. Upon that relationship being established it was the Word that again called me to service. Like Moses, I offered my excuse, "Who am I that I should go?" But His Spirit working through that same Word was persistent and encouraged me to answer, "Yes, I will go."

Bible school and seminary were special times of being taught and equipped for the task to which He had called me. Yes, we were taught the Scriptures in an academic

way, but we were also taught, by the example of our instructors, the life and light of the Word as it was shared. It became a fire within my soul, a spring within me that overflowed as His Spirit brought me to recognize and experience His truth and power. And as God promised Moses, "I will certainly be with you," He has faithfully been my teacher through all the years of my ministry.

It is through His Word that I find counsel, answers, encouragement and comfort for the challenges, testings, tough situations and difficult questions of life and ministry. It is the daily life line that supplies my need. Therein I meet Him. Therein I hear Him and know His way for the needs I have within my own personal life as well as for the ministry to which He has called and equipped me.

Indeed, His Word is life; it is power and it is the authority in all matters. How thankful I am for that familiar phrase in Scripture: "Thus saith the Lord." It is not what I or others think or say about the Word, but it is all about what He says. As the writer of the book of Hebrews states, "For the Word of God is living and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the division of soul and spirit, and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart" (4:12) His Word speaks with authority, and it sharpens this instrument and fills this vessel with all that is needed to do His will. "Thanks be to God for His inexpressible gift" (II Corinthians 9:15).

Nelson is the president of the AFLC.

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OUR SEMINARY BELIEVES

DECLARATION OF FAITH

The doctrinal position of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations

(Church Polity)

1. We believe that final human authority in the churches is vested in the local congregations, subject to the Word of God and the Holy Spirit.

2. Scripture does not command or forbid any particular organization for fellowship of congregations. In the absence of this, we believe it is most safe to operate in a democratic way.

3. Conferences of the congregations of our fellowship do not enact law for the congregations, but simply recommend actions and practices.

4. In a free association of congregations such as this, neither its officers or conferences can negotiate the union

of any or all of the congregations with another fellowship of congregations. This is an individual matter for the congregation.

5. We accept the Guiding Principles of the Lutheran Free Church as a true statement of our belief in regard to church polity.

6. The Holy Christian Church consists of those who in their hearts truly believe in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

7. A free congregation selects and calls its own pastor, conducts its own program of worship, fellowship and service, and owns and maintains its own property.

WE UPHOLD

Biblical inerrancy

The Bible is God's Word in its entirety, completely without error (II Timothy 3:16).

Salvation in Christ

Salvation is by grace alone and is received through faith alone in Christ alone (Acts 4:12; John 1:12).

Free and living congregations

Free and living congregations are built through the ministry of the Word and sacraments (Mark 15:15-16).

Servant leadership

Pastors are servants of Christ who lead and equip believers through the Word and by example (Ephesians 4:11-13).