

THE LUTHERAN 

MAY 2013

AMBASSADOR



S
PIRIT
GLORIFIED
BORN
GIFTED
SENT

Boldness in the Spirit

BY PASTOR KEN MOLAND

It was a Pentecostal-Holiness pastor friend of mine who posed the question, “Ken, what is the unmistakable sign of the filling of the Holy Spirit in the Book of Acts?” Knowing that we had some differences in our theology of the Holy Spirit, I hesitated. Then he answered his own question, “It’s always evident in the boldness of the proclamation of the Word of God.” I was happy that we weren’t headed for a discussion of speaking in tongues, and I was happy that we could agree on the primacy of the proclamation of the Word of God.

As we anticipate and celebrate Pentecost these weeks, we reflect on the many ways the work of the Holy Spirit affects our lives. Let me focus on this one important and crucial aspect of the Holy Spirit’s work: He fills our lives on a continual basis so that we are sustained in our boldness to speak God’s truth to one another and to the world.

This work of the Holy Spirit is so crucial in our day when the world around us is seeking to silence Christians and our message of truth as revealed in God’s Word. As the world seeks to squeeze the Church into its mold, the dynamite power of the Holy Spirit is needed to keep the believer from the submission of silence. The call to God’s people to be prophetic, to be speaking God’s truth fearlessly, is a vital call for today.

As we look at the developing Church in the Book of Acts, there is no clearer example of this miraculous gift of the Holy Spirit than what we see on the day of Pentecost itself. In Peter’s sermon, we see the direct influence of the Holy Spirit’s power to sustain boldness in proclaiming God’s Word. He was standing



before some of the same people who had put Jesus to death, but he confidently declared God’s truth as revealed in the Scriptures.

Remember that Peter had cowered before these same people only a few weeks earlier. His testimony had been muffled by the intimidating forces of darkness, even to the point of denying His Lord three times. Tragically, his example in those hours of trial illustrates the weakness of human flesh too evident in God’s people even today. The sin of silence, a grievous sin of omission, leaves the world without a clear message from God regarding sin, righteousness, and judgment.

It is to this desperate situation that God brings the gracious filling of the Holy Spirit. Again, let us learn from Peter’s example: There was repentance for his denial and his sin of silence. There was also gracious restoration by Jesus as they met on the shore of the Sea of Galilee and Peter was led once again to a loving obedience to Jesus’ calling in his life. All of this was by the power of the Holy Spirit, even before the day of Pentecost itself, and illustrates for us the preparatory work of the Spirit for His filling.

And then, again following Peter’s example, let us put ourselves in a place of prayerful expectation, waiting upon the Lord to fulfill His promise of giving us boldness in our proclamation of His truth. The day of Pentecost assures us that the Church of Christ will never lack the gifts needed to fulfill God’s purpose in the world. As you and I find our place under the control and filling of the Holy Spirit, the earth will hear His voice!

Moland serves Our Redeemer Lutheran, Kirkland, Wash.

May 2013 >>

THE LUTHERAN AMBASSADOR vol. 51, no. 5

Editor Pastor Robert L. Lee
rlee@afcl.org

Managing Editor Ruth Gunderson
ruthg@afcl.org

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

The Lutheran Ambassador (USPS 588-620 ISSN 0746-3413) is published monthly by the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations. AFLC headquarters and publications office is at 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Plymouth, MN 55441. Phone (763) 545-5631; fax 763-545-0079.

For subscription changes and information: The Lutheran Ambassador, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Plymouth, MN 55441. 763-545-5631 or e-mail at luthamb@afcl.org.

Subscription rates:
\$19 a year, Group Rate, U.S.
\$20 a year, Individual, U.S.
\$22 a year, International
Periodicals postage paid at Minneapolis, MN, and additional mailing office.

Postmaster: Send address changes to The Lutheran Ambassador, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Plymouth, MN 55441.

Holy Spirit, as the wind is thy symbol, so forward our goings, as the dove, so launch us heavenwards, as water, so purify our spirits, as a cloud, so abate our temptations, as dew, so revive our languor, as fire, so purge out our dross.

—Christina Rossetti

The most urgent necessity today is to start taking seriously the good news of the Holy Spirit indwelling the church with power and glory, so that while the church thanks God for all the ways in which He has appeared, far more it reaches out to the future, realizing that there are signs and wonders still, that Christ is still stronger than the enemy, and that where sin abounds grace much more abounds, and that still across this darkened earth there rings the music of the redeemed, the new colossal chorus of the morning stars singing together and the sons of God shouting for joy. This is what differentiates a dynamic infectious faith from the dull tedium of conventional religion.

—James S. Stewart

Breathe on me, Breath of God; fill me with life anew,
that I may love what Thou dost love, and do what
Thou wouldst do.

—Edwin Hatch

Oh, it is an living, creative, active, mighty thing, this faith! ... Faith is a daring confidence in God's grace, so sure that it would die a thousand times for it. Such confidence and such knowledge of God's grace makes a person joyous, glad, bold and merry toward God and all creatures. That is what the Holy Spirit does in faith.

—Martin Luther



Being asked to address this topic is quite a challenge because who of us fully understands the Glory of Christ? However, it is the Holy Spirit's work to help us. May we grow in our knowledge of Christ as we study this topic in the Gospel of John.

What is glory?

It was more than 50 years ago when, as a Michigan Tech student anticipating of a "glorious" career, I was confronted with a message by a pastor on Galatians 6:14, "God forbid that I should glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ." Oops!

Ever since then I have been curious and have wondered about

the meaning of the word *glory*, especially when we apply it to God and to Christ. There are more than 300 references to the word *glory* in the English Bible, and in contemporary English the word *glory* can have various meanings, according to the Merriam-Webster dictionary. It can mean praise, honor, worshipful praise (giving glory to God), something that secures praise or renown (the glory of a brilliant career), great beauty and splendor (the glory of ancient Greece or Rome), beauty (a perfect glory of a day), the splendor and happiness of heaven, gratification or exaltation (when she's acting she's in her glory), height of prosperity or achievement, a ring or spot of light like a halo appearing around the shadow of an object.

These many expressions of human glory can hinder us from appreciating the glory of God and the glory of Christ. For example, we have no glory in ourselves to give to God. We praise God for His glory. Human glory cannot be compared to God's glory. The glory of empires like Greece have faded away whereas the glory of God is eternal. Self-exaltation is not sacred glory. It is pride, the greatest sin. Light in itself is not glory, but with respect to God, holy light is the radiance of His glory.

In the New Testament, *doxa* is the Greek word for glory. In worship we sing the doxology, by which we praise God. In the Old Testament we find a definition of the glory of God in Isaiah 60:19, "But you will have the LORD for an everlasting light, And your God for your glory," i.e., holy light is the self-manifestation of the glory of God Himself. In Isaiah 42:8, God says, "I am the LORD, that is My name; I will not give My glory to another."

How then does the Holy Spirit glorify Christ?

John 16:13-14 says, "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you." In these verses we learn much about the work of the Holy Spirit and gain some insight into the mystery of the Trinity and the relationship between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

SPIRIT GLORIFIED

By Pastor Jim Gerdeen

WHEN HE COMES

Jesus said that after He ascended He would ask the Father for another helper to be with us and in us forever (John 14:16-18). The Counselor is another helper of the *same kind*, according to the Greek text (ref. Sinclair Ferguson). The same kind means the Holy Spirit is one with Christ, and He is “Christ in us the hope of glory,” (Colossians 1:27). Sometimes we wish we could have lived when Jesus was on earth. However, He is with and in the believer now. The Holy Spirit, according to Ferguson, is a divine homemaker. He makes a home for Christ in our hearts. When Jesus said, “I go to prepare a place for you” (John 14:2), He was talking about the future, but also about an eternal presence now.

THE SPIRIT OF TRUTH

The Holy Spirit is truth, but Jesus said in John 14:6, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life.” When the Holy Spirit teaches us the truth, He is glorifying Christ. All Scripture is inspired by the Holy Spirit. As we read the Bible and trust the Holy Spirit for understanding, He is bringing glory to Christ.

GUIDING YOU INTO ALL TRUTH

Jesus said, “I am the way ...” When the Holy Spirit guides us in the truth He is glorifying Christ. “He will not speak on his own; He will speak only what He hears” (John 16:13). Christ and the Holy Spirit are in constant communication on the glory channel. Are you tuned in?

John 16:8 says, “And He, when He comes, will convict the world concerning sin and righteousness and judgment ...” When the Holy Spirit convicts of sin, reveals the righteousness of Christ, and reminds us of the judgment to come, He is glorifying Christ. Martin Luther explained the meaning of the third article of the Apostles’ Creed in this way:

I believe that I cannot by my own reason or strength believe in Jesus Christ, my Lord, or come to Him; but the Holy

Spirit has called me through the Gospel, enlightened me with His gifts, and sanctified and preserved me in the true faith; in like manner He calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth, and preserves it in union with Jesus Christ in the one true faith; in this Christian Church, He daily forgives abundantly all my sins and the sins of all believers, and at the last day He will raise up me and all the dead and will grant everlasting life to me and to all who believe in Christ. This is most certainly true.

The Holy Spirit calls us through the gospel. Have you answered His call? The Holy Spirit enlightens us, and that inward light of His presence in our hearts is a manifestation of the glory of Christ. Is His presence evident in your life? There are examples in the Bible of what happens when one is in the presence of God. For example, Exodus 34:29 says, “When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the covenant law in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the LORD.” And Acts 6:15 says, “All who were sitting in the Sanhedrin looked intently at Stephen, and they saw that his face was like the face of an angel.”

A visiting scholar was returning to China after visiting with us for about a year. He said he was converting his beliefs from Buddhism to Christianity and when he returned home he was going to tell people about God. We asked what made him change. He said, “It shows on your faces.”

May we all be able to say with John, 1:14: “And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.”

Gerdeen, Columbia, Mo., a retired AFLC pastor and professor, is a part-time staff member at Faculty Commons, a ministry to Christian faculty and international students at the University of Missouri.

A blue-toned photograph of a dove in flight, splashing water, with a large white 'S' on the left. The dove is captured in mid-flight, its wings spread, and it is surrounded by a large splash of water. The background is a soft, out-of-focus blue. The overall mood is serene and spiritual.

SPIRIT BORN

By Wendy Kupser

In John 3:5-8 we see Nicodemus, an important man, a member of the Sanhedrin, a scribe, a teacher of the law, an Old Testament scholar—one of the greatest teachers in all of Israel. And, yet, in the back of his mind is a question, one that plagues all of mankind: how do I get into the Kingdom of God?

In his search for the answer, Nicodemus looked to the Old Testament and saw the promised Kingdom. He struggled his whole life to be a part of that Kingdom. In his heart, he wanted to know how to get to God, how to be a part of God's world, how to stand with God, live with God, and dwell in His Kingdom. He wasn't all wrapped up in religion just for exercise. He embraced religion because he was passionately seeking the Kingdom of God.

I have asked the same questions as Nicodemus, and I bet you have also. Have I done enough? Am I a good parent, spouse, and ministry leader? I teach Sunday school, clean the church, sit on the council, execute many programs, lead Bible study, men's group, and have quiet time every day. I don't lie, steal or cheat. I'm faithful. But when I die, will God say: "Well done good and faithful servant"? Will He be happy with me or disappointed? How can I stand before a holy God and not be condemned?

Nicodemus was also a Pharisee and, therefore, a strict observer of Mosaic Law. The Pharisees were right about some things. They were right about man's moral responsibility. They were right in teaching immortality. They were right in teaching the resurrection of the body. They were right about teaching rewards and punishments. They produced some great men like Gamaliel the Elder, Saul (who became Paul), and probably Josephus. But they had one big problem. They externalized religion. They had only a form of godliness. But if we are honest with ourselves, isn't that the case with many in our churches today? Don't I also slip into that mind-set?

Nicodemus was a very religious man, but he was not a child of God. What a shock it must have been to learn that his religion was not enough! Nicodemus called Jesus "Teacher," but Jesus knew that he needed more than a teacher—he needed a Savior. He needed more than religion—he needed regeneration. He needed more than law—he needed life.

Nicodemus was so hung up on the law (religious activity) that when Christ came teaching grace and new birth, Nicodemus' mind was confused. He couldn't understand when Jesus said, "You must be born again." Born again ... what do you mean? It meant that he had to start all over again. Observing and teaching the law had done nothing to justify him. In his study guide on the *Book of John*, John MacArthur wrote, "All the religion in the world never got anybody

close to God. What it does is give them a horrible false sense of security in their isolation from God."

So Nicodemus asks, "Can a man enter a second time into his mother's womb?" If he were born of his mother a hundred times, he would still be flesh. That which is born of the flesh is flesh. Corruption and sin are woven into our nature; we are born in iniquity.

Jesus, in response, said that we must be born of water and the Spirit. To be born again is to be born of the Spirit—to be made spiritual, not religious. You have to be re-created, not on the basis of works, but on the basis of faith. The Holy Spirit takes the Word of God and purifies the soul of a man. He cleanses and purifies our souls as water, taking away its filth. Ephesians 5:26 says Christ sanctifies us by the "washing with water through the word." My flesh needs to be purified. That purification is accomplished by the Holy Spirit through the power of the Word of God.

In essence, Jesus is telling Nicodemus that regeneration is an inside job done by the Spirit. He could not recreate himself. Religious emotions, religious feelings and religious activities are pointless. It's an inside job done by the Holy Spirit, making you a new creation, giving you a new mind, a new heart, a new desire, and a new purpose for life.

John tells us in vs. 8 that the same Spirit of God who hovered over the darkness of the earth during creation (Genesis 1:2) is like a wind blowing into human lives. He gives light to people who cannot see Christ's glory, and brings new life to people who are dead towards God. The Holy Spirit is the only one who can hover over the dark chaos of your life and make you a new creation in Christ. Jesus told Nicodemus that the Holy Spirit is like the wind. Nicodemus could see his law of works, but those works didn't do him any good. On the other hand, Nicodemus couldn't see the Holy Spirit, but he could see the evidence of His presence.

What Nicodemus needed was not more little treks to the temple, more rules, more services, more sacrifices, more prayers, more candles, more anything else. What Nicodemus needed was to be born again. And that's the message to every one of us. All the religion in the world doesn't do any of us a bit of good. We must experience new birth. And that new birth comes when we, by faith through the prompting of the Holy Spirit, trust Christ as our Savior and He makes us new creations.

Kupser, a member of The Gathering, Hastings, Minn., lives in Ellsworth, Wis.



PIRIT GIFTED

By Pastor David Johnson

As I looked forward to my last year of seminary, I thought I had a pretty good grip on what made the Church tick. As a pastor's kid, I grew up in the Church. I went to Bible school and worked as a youth pastor. But it wasn't until I got *out* of the classroom that I realized how woefully lacking I was in my understanding of the Body of Christ.

My first year of pastoral ministry was spent working with a new church plant. Leading this group was like shepherding a herd of cats. I began to pray, "Lord, help me understand Your people and how to lead them." God's prescription was restaurant management. For several years I managed seafood restaurants while volunteering in the churches we attended. This season brought invaluable lessons which were unavailable to me in a seminary classroom. I learned a deeper appreciation for the dynamics of God's design for His Body, the Church.

As a manager, I learned how critical it was to have a contented and well-trained crew. I studied how God's Word describing the function of His Church also applied to the environment I was trying to develop. My goal was to create an efficient work environment that would serve my customers, please my employer, and show respect for my staff. But for this to happen, we needed shared values and a unified identity. And, Praise God, I was used to transform six different restaurants from places of discontent and deficits to productive and happy establishments.

Paul writes in I Corinthians 12:11-14, "But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually just as He wills. For even as the body is one and yet has many members, and all the members of the body, though they are many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many."

What were the lessons I learned?

ONLY ONE HEAD

My staff couldn't improve by chasing their own self-seeking interests. They existed to serve the goals of the company. They had disregarded the company's priorities and were now in a mess. I was sent, as the emissary of the company, to redirect and train them. Similarly, Christ is the Head of His Body (Romans 12:5; Colossians 1:18). The Holy Spirit comes as Jesus' emissary, trainer, and manager. The Body of Christ will only succeed if its members abandon their selfish ways and pursue the objectives of their Lord by the direction and empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

A TRANSFORMED HEART

The attitudes and priorities of my crews had to change. I needed to draw them away from a combative, critical view of each other to one which saw others as necessary and valuable. Jesus sent the Holy Spirit to transform the individualistic mentality of His disciples into a corporate identity. The Body of Christ can't progress if its members don't understand the value and importance of the "whole." The Holy Spirit must change the "me" and "my" in the Body to "we" and "our."

VARIOUS BACKGROUNDS

When you see with critical eyes, prejudice becomes a way of life. As a manager, I had to help my crew see each other's diversity as a strength; a way to broaden our overall view on success. New ideas often come when a new person is added to the mix. Age brings perspective while youth brings passion and enthusiasm. Ladies often pick up on relational needs while guys frequently identify the mechanical or systemic concerns (generally speaking). Paul wrote, "... whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were all made to drink of one Spirit" (vs. 13). The Holy Spirit draws diversity into a corporate continuity.

PLAY TO YOUR STRENGTHS

Cross-training, training a person for multiple positions, was necessary for success. Some, however, had a natural ability for one position. I taught all my employees to cut fish, but only some became proficient. Likewise, some were natural greeters, cooks, managers, or custodians. I Corinthians 12 and Romans 12 tell us that the Holy Spirit gifts the Body of Christ with various inherent abilities: service, teaching, exhortation, giving, leadership, mercy, words of wisdom, words of knowledge, faith, healing, working of miracles, prophecy, distinguishing of spirits, various kinds of tongues, interpretation of tongues. Though the Holy Spirit sometimes "cross-trains," our challenge in the Body of Christ is to play to our strengths. We must value the diversity of our gifts and look to one another as we encourage the development of these gifts and their use.

To build up the Body of Christ, we must remember that those church members sitting in the pew next to us are our allies. Their gifts and unique quirks help to complete us. The Holy Spirit is our manager, instructor, and encourager. May we commit ourselves to His direction, pursuing the objectives of our Head, Jesus Christ.

Johnson serves Living Faith Lutheran, Boyertown, Pa., and Disciple Lutheran Fellowship, Reading, Pa.







PIRIT POWERED & SENT

By Pastor Dan Giles

A few years ago (okay, 30) I was a missionary on furlough, back from a first term on the mission field. My wife, Debbie, and I were linguists serving in Ecuador. Our first term was spent developing a literacy program. Our goal was to get the people group with which we worked ready so that when the Bible was translated into their language they would be able to read it. It was fascinating and rewarding work and I enjoyed it. But toward the end of our first term I began to see that what the people needed more than anything else was not a community development expert, but a pastor. I saw needs that I knew I didn't have the tools to meet. I decided to enroll in seminary during furlough to get those tools.

When we came back to the United States, I was shocked to see how much had changed in the Lutheran Church during the few years we had been gone. The material I got back from the seminary I thought I would attend was dismaying. The questions they asked had nothing to do with spiritual life, and there was an attitude that was openly and disdainfully hostile toward the Christian faith I had learned as a child in Sunday school. I went to the campus, anyway, and spent a day poking around just to see what it felt like there. When I came home I told Debbie, "I don't want to be disciplined by those people!" I was heartbroken.

We were staying at the World Mission Prayer League headquarters in Minneapolis at that time, and one day Theodore Manaen, a good friend from India who worked for WMPL, called to me as I passed his office.

"Dan, what are you planning to do with your furlough year?" he asked.

When I told him about my disappointment in the seminary, he said, "Why don't you call the Association? They have a seminary right here in Minneapolis."

I had no idea what an "Association" was. But Theodore picked up his desk phone, hit a speed dial number, and when the person on the other end answered, said he had a missionary on furlough who wanted to enroll in their seminary. Then he handed the phone to me.

The man on the other end said that classes started Monday—four days away. He said that I had to have an interview with a faculty member before I could enroll in the seminary. Then he wanted to know if I could come in the next day.

When I got there I met Dr. Francis Monseth, who was just starting his first semester as the new seminary dean. Pastor Amos Dyrud, the retiring dean, was there, too. Dr. Monseth began the interview by asking me if I was sure of my own salvation. If so, how

long had I known the Lord?

That was when I knew that I was in the right place. A Lutheran theologian wanted to know first of all if I, the furloughing missionary, was saved. I didn't know there were any of those left.

Both seminaries were ready to teach me how to be a pastor. Both had a "box of tools" to give me that I needed badly. But this professor understood that even good tools were useless unless I was empowered and sent out by the Holy Spirit.

Jesus said to His disciples, "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth" (Acts 1:8). In fact, the power that the Holy Spirit could give them was so important that He also told them, "... stay in the city [Jerusalem] until you are clothed with power from on high" (Luke 24:49).

You and I are not the hope of the world. Oh, we can give advice. We can try to explain what's wrong with the world and reason with people. We can even organize, protest, and try to change the system of the world that surrounds us. But that will always be a losing battle. Even if we go to college, and Bible school, and seminary and get a whole box full of tools for that work, you and I aren't what people need.

Only the Holy Spirit can convert the heart. Only Jesus can deliver people from sin and all its consequences. Only He can set people free from the addictions and sinful habits that enslave them. Only He can turn on the lights in their hearts so that they can see what we might otherwise try so hard—and in vain—to convince them to believe.

The first missionaries knew this 2,000 years ago. They waited on God in prayer until the promise of Holy Spirit power was fulfilled. They waited on God in prayer for direction about where to go and how to proceed until they got it. When considering a call, their only consideration was, "Lord, where will You send me next?"

"So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, they went down to Seleucia, and from there they sailed to Cyprus ..." (Acts 13:4).

And those few men and women turned the world upside down. Even as the Roman Empire and all civilization crumbled around them, the Kingdom of God was established on earth, by the Holy Spirit's power.

Giles, a former AFLC missionary to Mexico, is a member of Calvary Free Lutheran, Mesa, Ariz.



Building a solid foundation

BY PASTOR MARLIN HARRIS

It has been said that “there are no atheists in fox holes.” That might be true if you were in the Army or Marines. However, after 26 years in the military—six years as a machinist mate in the Navy and 20 years as a chaplain in the Air Force—my experience was quite different.

In my conversations about the Christian faith with the men and women with whom I served, I found many who said that they were atheists and did not believe in God. I also found men and women struggling with their faith, as I did as a young sailor away from home for the first time in the late 1960s during the height of the Vietnam War. However, because of the solid foundation and solid truths of God’s Word that I received as a child, my faith was strengthened through the different challenges I encountered. I thank the Lord Jesus Christ for that.

God’s Word was and is the basis for my walk with Him. His Word reveals that Jesus is the only way to heaven. Scripture is inspired by God (II Timothy 3:16) and God’s Word is trustworthy. God tells us in Hebrews 13:5, “Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you.” Having a relationship with Jesus and His Word, I could say with King David, He “gave me a firm place to stand” (Psalm 40:2). It was a great start to building the base in my relationship with Jesus Christ.

King David, in Psalm 40, expressed his uncertainties and struggles. He described himself as being in a slimy pit. His situation was desperate. He had no strength to fight free from the mud

and mire that engulfed him. Aware of his sin and the power of his enemies, he cried out to the Lord for help. “I waited patiently for the Lord; he turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire; he set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in him” (verses 1-3). Joyfully David proclaimed God as his rock. God lifted him out of the mud and mire. David was secure. His problems and troubles remained and sin still afflicted him, but God brought him deliverance.

In building the base of our faith we seek God and cry out to Him from the mud and mire of our sinful lives. And God rescues us. Matthew 7:24-27 reminds us that God sent His Son Jesus Christ as the rock of our salvation, the rock upon which He builds the Church. Jesus, by virtue of His life, death, and resurrection, stands firm and unshakable. When we build our lives and homes on this rock, we have a firm foundation.

Problems and troubles will remain in this world. We will continue to have challenges and issues, but we have the risen Christ as the solid rock and His unfailing Word. We can rejoice and say with David from Psalm 40:3, “He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. Many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in him.”

Harris serves True Vine Lutheran, Mora, Minn.

2013 annual conference WELCOME

June 11-14, Association Retreat Center, near Osceola, Wis.

There is hope for your future

Jeremiah 31:17

IT IS MY PRIVILEGE TO INVITE YOU to the 51st Annual Conference of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations on June 11-14 at the Association Retreat Center near Osceola, Wis. I do so expecting that week will be a special time for many from our congregations all across our country. As I write there is still plenty of snow on the ground here in Minneapolis, but my wife saw a first robin this morning. That robin seemed a little bewildered as she pranced across the snow bank outside our kitchen window, and Faith and I were encouraged by this sure sign of spring.

Conference week is only weeks away, and already there are signs of that week to which we are looking forward. One of the signs is Pat Flanders, ARC director, and his faithful crew making plans and preparing for our days of conference activity. The activities of the week will include reports and resolutions regarding every department of the AFLC. It will include times of prayer and worship. There will be three square meals offered each day plus numerous coffee breaks (more than necessary, but always appreciated). The ARC food service never leaves us hungry or disappointed. There will also be rich fellowship, renewing of old acquaintances and making new friends. Other signs are registration forms showing up on our Web page, and messages in e-mail inboxes all across AFLC land reminding many of due dates for all the written reports.



Pastor Elden Nelson

Our schedule for the week will be pretty much as it has been in recent years—with the exception of a change in Wednesday's schedule. We are making some slight changes in response to resolutions passed at last year's conference regarding the desire to shorten the time spent on reading reports. Wednesday's schedule will begin as always at 9 a.m. and proceed immediately to selection of nominees for the Missions, Schools and ARC corporations. Then we will hear reports from all departments of the AFLC in summary form. Our schedule of reports will go through the afternoon and be completed by 4:30 p.m. On Thursday we will pick up the schedule as we have done in years past. You will find the agenda on pages 14 and 15.

Our theme for this 51st conference is from Jeremiah 31:17, "There is Hope for Your Future." The world in which we live sometimes seems to be in a hopeless state, but our eternal Father has given us His Word of promised hope. We don't know what the future holds, but we do know the One who holds the future. It has oft been said, "The future is as bright as the promises of God." So I invite you to set aside the dates of June 11-14 and begin making your preparations to join with brothers and sisters from across our country as we turn our attention to our God and matters of His Kingdom. If you haven't already begun to pray for His blessing to rain down upon us, I ask and encourage you to do so today. There are many things to pray about and for, and His Holy Spirit will lead us in that regard. As you know, we will be electing a new president, and that is a special request we must be holding before Him.

I look forward to seeing you at the ARC and to what He will do for us and with us as we meet in the days that ensue. Let us together seek Him to raise up the one of His choice to lead us into the days ahead.

2013 annual conference AGENDA

“So there is hope for your future,’ declares the Lord” (Jeremiah 31:17).

DATES: June 11-14

SITE: Association Retreat Center

2372 30th Ave., Osceola, WI 54020

HOSTS: Christ the King, Wilson, Wis.; The Gathering, Hastings, Minn.; Amery Free Lutheran, Amery, Wis.

TUESDAY, JUNE 11

9 a.m.

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

7:30 p.m.

The Opening Service of the conference, with Communion

Speaker: Pastor Elden Nelson, Rockford, Minn.

AFLC President Pastor Elden Nelson will open the conference and appoint necessary committees.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12

9 a.m.

Devotions

Report of the Credentials Committee

Adoption of the Conference Agenda

Approval of 2012 Annual Conference Report

Selection of nominees for corporations:

Missions Corporation

Schools Corporation

ARC Corporations

The President's Report

Reports of AFLC ministries—General

Report of the Chairman of the Coordinating Committee

Report of the Director of Development

Reports of AFLC ministries—General, cont.

Report of the Chairman of the AFLC Foundation

Reports of Chaplaincy Ministries

Institutional

Military

Report of the Director of the ARC

Selection of nominees for corporation meetings:

• Home Missions Committee—two laymen;

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

• FLAPS Board of Managers—one layman;

• World Missions Committee—one pastor; one layman

• Board of Trustees—one pastor; one layman;

• ARC Board—one layman

11:30 a.m.

Prayer Hour

Noon

Conference Lunch

Home Missions Lunch

Chaplains Lunch

AFLBS Alumni Lunch

1:30 p.m.

Devotions

1:45 p.m.

Report of the Credentials Committee

Reports of AFLC ministries—General, cont.

AFLC Financial Report,

Report of the Family Bible Camps

• Lake Bronson

• Wilderness

Report of the Budget Analysis Committee

Reports of AFLC ministries—Publications, Parish Education, Youth

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

Report of the Director of Parish Education

Report of the Chairman of the Youth Board

Report of the President of the Free Lutheran Youth

Report of Youth Ministries Director

Reports of AFLC ministries—Stewardship and Benefits

Report of the Chairman of the Stewardship Board

Report of the Chairman of the Benefits Board

Reports of AFLC ministries—AFLC Schools

Report of the Chairman of the Board of Trustees

Report of the Dean of the Seminary

Report of the Dean of the Bible School

Report of AFLC Schools Vision

Reports of AFLC ministries—Missions and Evangelism
 Report of the Chairman and Director of World Missions Committee
 Report of the Chairman of the Home Missions Committee
 Report of the Director of Home Missions
 Report of Executive Director of FLAPS
 Report of WMF President
 Report of the Chairman of the Commission on Evangelism
 Report of the Director of Evangelism

5:30 p.m.

Conference Dinner
 Schools Corporation Annual Meeting

7 p.m.

The Mission Festival Service conducted by the WMF
 Speaker: Pastor Silvio Santos Paes

THURSDAY, JUNE 13

7 a.m.

Mission Corporation Annual Meeting

9 a.m.

Devotions
 Report of the Credentials Committee
 Report of the Nominating Committee
 Election of the Nominating Committee for the 2014 Conference
 Election Procedures
 Elections: (all terms five years unless noted)

- President—three-year term
- Vice President—one-year term
- Secretary—one-year term

Report of Committee No. 1 (Administration)
 Report of Nominating Committee
 Selection of nominees to the Coordinating Committee—
 one pastor

Election of Committee No. 1 for the 2014 Conference
 Report of Committee No. 4

(Publications, Parish Education and Youth Work)

Report of Nominating Committee

Selection of nominees to:

Board of Publications and Parish Education—one layman
 Youth Board—one layman

Election of Committee No. 4 for the 2014 Conference
 Report of Committee No. 5 (Stewardship and Benefits)

Report of Nominating Committee

Selection of nominees to:

Stewardship Board—one pastor
 Benefits Board—one layman

Election of Committee No. 5 for the 2014 conference

11:35 a.m.

Prayer Hour

Noon

Conference Lunch
 The ARC Corporation Annual Meeting

1:30 p.m.

Devotions
 Report of the Credentials Committee
 Report of Corporations
 Schools Corporation Annual Meeting
 ARC Corporation Annual Meeting
 Missions Corporation Annual Meeting
 Report of Committee No. 2 (Schools)
 Report of the Nominating Committee
 Election of Committee No. 2 for the 2014 Conference

5:30 p.m.

Pastors' Banquet
 Laymen's Picnic

8:15 p.m.

Youth Service

FRIDAY, JUNE 14

7 a.m.

FLAPS informational breakfast

9 a.m.

Devotions
 Report of the Credentials Committee
 Report of Committee No. 3 (Missions and Evangelism)
 Report of the Nominating Committee
 Selection of nominees to:
 Commission on Evangelism—one layman;
 one pastor (two-year term)
 Election of Committee No. 3 for the 2014 Conference
 Report of Special Committees
 Report of the Colloquy Committee
 Election of Colloquy Committee for the 2014 Conference
 Election of Budget Analysis Committee:
 one layman (three-year term), one pastor (three-year term)
 Report of Committee No. 1 as the Committee on General Resolutions
 Other Reports

11:30 a.m.

Prayer Hour

Noon

Conference Lunch
 AFLC Foundation Lunch

1:30 p.m.

Devotions
 Report of Credentials Committee
 Remaining conference business

7:30 p.m.

Ordination/Closing Service
 Speaker: Pastor Curtis Emerson, Canal Winchester, Ohio

Conference Committee
 Pastor Elden Nelson, President
 Pastor Brian Davidson, Secretary

51st annual conference

NOMINEES

Coordinating Committee

(One pastor, five-year term)

*Pastor Timothy Skramstad, Egan, Minn.
Pastor Tom Schierkolk, Eben Junction, Mich.
Pastor James R. Johnson, Fergus Falls, Minn.
Pastor Joel Walde, Dillon, Mont.

Schools Board of Trustees

Voted on by corporation members

(One layman, five-year term)

*John Talley, Newark, Ill.

X

(One pastor, five-year term)

Pastor Todd Erickson, Roseau, Minn.
Pastor Jon Benson, Janesville, Wis.

World Missions Committee

Voted on by corporation members

(One layman, five-year term)

*Paul Handsaker, Radcliffe, Iowa

X

(One pastor, five-year term)

Pastor George Lautner, Deshler, Neb.

X

Home Missions Committee

Voted on by corporation members

(One layman, five-year term)

*Carl Busse, Humboldt, Tenn.

X

(One layman, five-year term)

X

X

Bay Broadcasting

Voted on by corporation members

(One pastor, three-year term)

X

X

ARC Board

Voted on by corporation members

(One layman, five-year term)

*Roger VanSomeren, Amery, Wis.

X

FLAPS Board of Managers

Voted on by corporation members

(One layman, five-year term)

*Kevin Hoops, Byron, Neb.

David Handsaker, Radcliffe, Iowa

Stewardship Committee

(One pastor, five-year term)

*Pastor Richard Ramsbacher, Springfield, Mo.

X

Board of Publications & Parish Education

(One layman, five-year term)

*Bonnie Handsaker, Radcliffe, Iowa

X

Youth Board

(One layman, five-year term)

Nate Nash, Northwood, N.D.

X

Benefits Board

(One layman, five-year term)

X

X

Commission on Evangelism

(One layman, five-year term)

X

X

(One pastor, two-year term)

Pastor Lee Hoops, Kindred, N.D.

X



* Incumbents

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

X Nominations not named by press deadline

Nominees to serve at the 2014 conference

Committee No. 1

(Administration)

Bill Fish, Everett, Wash.

Pastor Dennis Gray, Newfolden, Minn.

Pastor Ray Ballmann, Kopperl, Texas

Todd Peterson, Fertile, Minn.

X

Committee No. 2

(Schools)

Roger Quanbeck, Hallock, Minn.

X

X

X

X

Committee No. 3

(Missions and Evangelism)

Ken Pederson, Fertile, Minn.

Lyle Westrom, Crookston, Minn.

X

X

X

Committee No. 4

(Publications and Parish Education)

Sue Westrom, Crookston, Minn.

Pastor Cal Willard, Everett, Wash.

X

X

X

Committee No. 5

(Stewardship and Pensions)

X

X

X

X

X

ARC Corporation

(10 terms of five years each)

Wyatt Fernow, Enderlin, N.D.

*Dennis Holman, Minneapolis

Roger Klingman, Pipestone, Minn.

Elwood Manninen, Annandale, Minn.

Pastor Brian Ricke, Arlington, S.D.

**Roger VanSomeren, Amery, Wis.

14 more nominees needed

Schools Corporation

(10 terms of five years each)

Scott Adolphsen, Breezy Point, Minn.

Donald Balmer, Thief River Falls, Minn.

**Pastor Jon Benson, Janesville, Wis.

*Arne Berge, Binford, N.D.

*Bill Buck, Sinai, S.D.

**Pastor Todd Erickson, Roseau, Minn.

Mark Fagerstrom, DeKalb, Ill.

Brad Folsland, Oldham, S.D.

Pastor Les Galland, Shakopee, Minn.

Pastor Jason Gudim, Golden Valley, Minn.

*Steve Jankord, Surprise, Ariz.

*Ken Loken, Fargo, N.D.

Russ Hannu, Springfield, Mo.

*Darrell Haugen, Binford, N.D.

Pastor Adam Osier, Wadena, Minn.

*Pastor Lloyd Quanbeck, Moorhead, Minn.

Pastor Craig Scavo, Durant, Okla.

Three more nominees needed

Missions Corporation

(20 terms of five years each)

*Pastor Mark Antal, Park River, N.D.

Josh Berge, Hutchinson, Minn.

Deb Burmeister, Mount Vernon, S.D.

*Pastor Eugene Enderlein, Plymouth, Minn.

*Tom Fugleberg, Roseau, Minn.

Dean Herbst, Dimock, S.D.

Pastor Les Johnson, Wilson, Wis.

**Pastor George Lautner, Deshler, Neb.

*Dr. Kevin Lee, Beulah, N.D.

*Pastor Tom Olson, Newark, Ohio

Roberta Overgaard, Santa Barbara, Calif.

Pastor LeRoy Petersen, Greenbush, Minn.

*Lee Schierkolk, Valley City, N.D.

Cheryl Skordahl, Pipestone, Minn.

Pastor Kent Sperry, Northwood, N.D.

Kristin Tanner, Sioux Falls, S.D.

Pastor Tom Tuura, Stover, Mo.

David Warnke, Stover, Mo.

22 more nominees needed

51st annual conference REGISTRATION

June 11-14, 2013, at the Association Retreat Center, near Osceola, Wis.

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

First name: _____ Spouse (if attending): _____

Last name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

AFLC Congregation: _____

Other Congregation: _____

Membership (Check one)

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

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

Meal	Adult	#	Child (4-12)	#	Total
Tuesday breakfast (for committees)	\$7		\$4		\$
Tuesday lunch (for committees)	\$8		\$5		\$
Tuesday dinner	\$9		\$6		\$
Wednesday Conference breakfast	\$7		\$4		\$
Wednesday Conference lunch (children and adults)	\$8		\$5		\$
Wednesday Chaplains lunch	\$10		n/a		\$
Wednesday Home Missions lunch	\$10		n/a		\$
Wednesday AFLBS Alumni lunch	\$10		n/a		\$
Wednesday Conference dinner	\$9		\$6		\$
Wednesday Schools Corporation dinner	\$12		n/a		\$
Thursday Conference breakfast	\$7		\$4		\$
Thursday Missions Corporation breakfast	\$9		n/a		\$
Thursday Conference lunch	\$8		\$5		\$
Thursday ARC Corporation lunch	\$10		n/a		\$
Thursday Pastors' banquet	\$18		n/a		\$
Thursday Laymen's picnic banquet	\$12		\$7		\$
Friday Conference breakfast	\$7		\$4		\$
Friday FLAPS breakfast	\$9		n/a		\$
Friday Conference lunch	\$8		\$5		\$
Friday Foundation lunch	\$10		n/a		\$
Friday Conference dinner	\$9		\$6		\$
Total meals					\$
*Conference registration fee (\$35 single/\$50 couple)					\$
Total registration and meals					\$

*The registration fee is required for all attending the AFLC Conference. **Make checks payable to "AFLC" and mail to: AFLC, c/o Conference Registrations, 3110 E. Medicine Lake Blvd., Plymouth, MN 55441. Registrations must be received by May 31.**

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Forever, O LORD

Make plans to attend the national convention of the WMF on June 11

BY DAWN JOHNSON

"Your Word, O Lord, is eternal; it stands firm in the heavens. Your faithfulness continues through all generations; you established the earth, and it endures" (Psalm 119:89-90)

You are invited to attend the Women's Missionary Federation Convention, which will be held in conjunction with the AFLC's 51st annual conference. The convention will be held June 11 at the Association Retreat Center, located near Osceola, Wis. The theme is "Forever, O Lord, Your Settled Word, Your Enduring Faithfulness."

The WMF convention will be a day to reflect, rejoice, and be renewed in our assurance of God's grace and love. We will hear from AFLC missionary to Brazil, Becky Abel. Other presenters include Sandra Weaver (2013 WMF Bible study author), Barbara Gustafson (Calvary Free Lutheran staff member), and Paula Nyman (WMF's Facebook page creator). Our Wednesday WMF breakfast speaker will be Monica Coyle, an AFLC missionary on

loan to the East European Missions Network serving in Ukraine.

For many, the WMF day has been referred to as a family reunion as they truly meet up with mothers, aunts, sisters, and cousins. For others, the family reunion refers to AFLBS classmates, Bible camp friends, or acquaintances from the FLY Convention, as well as acquaintances made through the years at previous conferences. It is a huge blessing to be part of the family of God.

Members of the WMF national board have rearranged the schedule in hopes the day will provide maximum blessing for all. The day will begin with a Bible study in the morning, followed by workshops held in the morning and afternoon, and the business meeting will be held in the afternoon. Due to time constraints we will not have a Tuesday evening banquet.

We look forward to seeing you.

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

2013 WMF Convention • June 11 • Association Retreat Center, near Osceola, Wis.

Please use this form to register for the WMF Convention and luncheon on Tuesday, June 11, and for the WMF leadership breakfast on Wednesday, June 12.

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Home congregation: _____

Address: _____

Item	Cost	#	Total
*Registration	\$7.50		\$
Tuesday luncheon	\$11		\$
Wednesday breakfast	\$10		\$
		Total	\$

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

Free Lutheran Seminary graduates

Luke Emerson

On March 26, 1971, I was born to Pastor Curt and Jane Emerson in Edina, Minn. I grew up a pastor's kid with my sister, Rebekah, and brother, Joshua. It was great being raised in a household that loved Jesus and with parents who were willing to do His will. Kelly Pletcher and I met when we attended



AFLBS. We were married on July 18, 1992. God's call for me into ministry was always there, but I did everything that I could do to distract my attention away from it. We moved many times for my career in the jewelry industry, including Minnesota, Illinois and Florida, with a brief stop in Missouri. During our travels we were blessed with two awesome children, Dylan (16) and Avery (6).

Money and self-gratification were my main focus for many years. It took a promotion to a job in Missouri for God to get my attention. He started to work on my life, and through this time I knew that He needed me to surrender all to Him. Then, He could and would use me.

After many conversations and prayer, Kelly and I knew that we were being called to full-time ministry. We were accepted by AFLTS and began training. I was able to have many opportunities to share my testimony and also was able to work with AFLC Home Missions at The Gathering, Hastings, Minn. We are currently finishing our last few weeks of internship at St. John's Lutheran Church in Newark, Ohio, under the direction of Pastor Tom Olson.

These have been an unbelievable four years. I have received outstanding training in the Word of God. We have cheerfully accepted the call to serve Newark Lutheran Church in Newark, Ill., as pastor. Thank you to everyone who has encouraged, supported, and prayed for us during this time of training.

Jerrell Hein

I was born March 6, 1960, in Columbia, Mo., the second child of Virgil and Judith Hein. Our family moved to Reading, Pa., when I was 2 years old, and I graduated from Penn State University with a degree in electrical engineering (BSEE) in 1982. Wanda Good and I met as fellow engineering students at Penn State and were married following our gradu-



ation, after which we moved to Palo Alto, Calif., where I obtained my MSEE from Stanford in 1983. I then began my career in the semiconductor industry as an integrated circuit designer, marketing manager, and engineering director.

Even though Wanda and I could clearly recall our childhood faith, we had both departed from the faith in our teenage years. However, the Lord had mercy on us and called us back to Him when we were in our late 20s. Wanda and I both repented and began life together as disciples of Jesus.

I retired in 2007 and taught mathematics at Texas State University, and at Veritas Christian Academy. From 2000 to 2008, I co-pastored a house church in San Marcos, Texas, served on the board of directors of a micro-finance ministry in Honduras, and began speaking as a representative for Voice of the Martyrs. During our 30 years of marriage, Wanda and I have been blessed with nine children, ranging in age from 5 to 28.

I enrolled at AFLTS in order to concentrate on learning the Word of God more thoroughly, and to seek God's leading for future ministry work. I have studied under men who hold the Word of God in the highest regard. During this time, the Lord has shown me many aspects of His sovereign plan to orchestrate all history around the saving work of Jesus at the cross. The more I have studied the Word, the more I am amazed at its intricate complexity, historical accuracy, and simple message of salvation. Returning to Texas, we look forward to what lies ahead as we serve Him.

Kurt Hein

On March 7, 1985, my mom, Wanda, birthed me one day too late to join my dad, Jerrell, for his 25th birthday celebration. However, 28 years later, my father and I will be graduating from seminary on the very same day.



I grew up in the Texas Hill Country surrounding Austin, Texas. Seminary has been a good and needed time for me. Through the ups and downs, God has

continued to press the sweetness and necessity of His gospel into my heart. Even after three years of studying theology, it seems that I need Jesus more than when I started. Ultimately, I think that is the mark of successful seminary training.

I'm excited to discover what the Lord has for me next. Currently I'm praying and exploring various opportunities that God is opening to me. I have a unique background: I studied biology for my undergrad and I completed my first master's degree in acupuncture medicine in 2007. I then started up my own clinic and practiced for about two years before God changed my direction and transported me to a much colder climate.

While here in the Twin Cities, I've made Faith Free Lutheran my home church. I want to thank them for the kindness they've extended to me throughout my time here. I regret that my erratic lifestyle of ministering, preaching, and traveling has prevented me from more regular attendance.

I know the expression is hackneyed, but it's so because it is true—it is hard to believe how fast the three years of seminary speed by. It reminds me of the brevity of life and the incredible vanity of attempting to grasp onto anything in this life except Jesus. The gospel is absolutely important. Please take a moment right now and pray for me and all of the seminarians at AFLTS, as well as the ministers and lay people worldwide who are going out to preach the vital saving work of Jesus. "Finally, brothers, pray for us, that the word of the Lord may speed ahead" (II Thessalonians 5:1a ESV). Thank you.

AFLC mourns seminary dean

Dr. Francis W. Monseth served the AFLC Schools for 42 years

Francis Wesley Monseth, beloved husband, father, grandfather, brother, pastor, teacher and friend met his Jesus face to face when he passed from this life into glory on Good Friday March 29. He was 71 years old.

He was preceded in death by parents, Pastor Fritjof and Olga Monseth. He is survived by his beloved wife of 46 years, Ellen Mae; six children, Naomi (Bob) Halvorson, Nathan (Julie) Monseth, Rachel (Justin) Jones, Rebecca (Kyle) Torfin, Benjamin (Andrea) Monseth, and Rhoda (Nate) Jore; one sister, Rhoda (Pastor Erling) Huglen; 27 grandchildren and many nieces, nephews and cousins.



Dr. Francis Monseth

Dr. Monseth was born Nov. 24, 1941, in Minot, N.D. He spent his early years growing up in Zahl, N.D., Valley City, N.D., and Superior, Wis. He graduated from Oak Grove Lutheran High School in Fargo, N.D., in 1959. He attended the Lutheran Bible Institute and Augsburg College in Minneapolis before finishing at Valley City State with a bachelor of arts degree in English. He attended the Association Free Lutheran Theological Seminary, graduating in 1967. He served his first parish at Calvary Free Lutheran, Everett, Wash., (1967-1971) before being called to teach full-time at AFLTS and AFLBS in 1971. He completed a Master's Degree at Seattle Pacific, a Master of Divinity at AFLTS, Master of Sacred Theology and Doctor of Theology at Concordia in St. Louis, Mo. He went on to become the Dean of AFLTS in 1981, and served there until the present.

Dr. Monseth was a wise man with many intellectual achievements; however, what mattered to him most was his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. His greatest desire was to see people come to know Jesus personally, and he shared his love for Jesus when-



Pastor Elden Nelson, AFLC president, gives a eulogy for Dr. Francis Monseth during the memorial service April 6 at the AFLC chapel.

ever he could. Many lives were blessed by his spoken and written words. His ministry took him all around the world and included work in Brazil, India, Sri Lanka, Estonia, Latvia, Uganda and Tanzania. He loved his AFLC family and cherished the relationships he made with fellow professors, students and friends of the AFLC. He attended Grace Free Lutheran (formerly Medicine Lake Lutheran) in Maple Grove, Minn., for the last 42 years and developed lasting friendships with many dear people.

Dr. Monseth loved his family so much. He loved to travel and enjoy God's beautiful creation with Ellen. He loved to work in his garden, take care of the animals on their hobby farm and build with his hands. He loved people. He loved his church family and the AFLC. He loved to read and study the Word of God. He loved Jesus.

The service was held April 6 at the AFLC chapel, with Pastor Peter Franz officiating. Memorials are preferred to AFLTS, AFLBS or AFLC World Missions.

Blessed be his memory.

Trustees make interim plans for future of seminary

Members of the AFLC Schools Board of Trustees met April 5 to consider and pray over decisions regarding the leadership of the Free Lutheran Seminary.

The bylaws of the Schools Corporation provide the process through which a dean of the seminary will be called. Members of the Board of Trustees, together with the faculty of the schools, will constitute a nominating committee. This committee will solicit recommendations from congregations and individual members of the AFLC. From these recommendations, the committee will conduct interviews and will then bring a candidate to the Annual Conference for approval and call. The committee will begin this work immediately and, with the Lord's blessing, looks to bring the candidate to the conference in 2014.

The trustees have recognized their immediate duty to see that certain needs are met in the day-to-day working of the seminary. Therefore, they have appointed Pastor Joel Rolf as acting dean of the seminary in addition to his duties as dean of the Bible school.

This appointment is limited to the 2012-13 school year, ending in May of this year.

The trustees will appoint an interim dean for the period between May 2013 and the summer of 2014. Members of the board will meet again in April and it is their intention to make this appointment.

The trustees ask for your prayer as the board works through all of these matters. We also ask you to be in prayer that the Lord will be working by his Spirit in preparing the one whom He has chosen to serve as interim dean and, beyond that, the man whom He has chosen to serve as the new dean of the seminary. Finally, be of good cheer in the Lord. Encourage one another. Serve well and be sensitive to the needs of those around you as we all grieve this loss and undertake new duties as we continue.

If you have any questions, contact Pastor Martin Horn, chairman, by phone at 507-789-5851, or by email at haugepastor@hotmail.com.



Plan to attend Adoration Worship Event May 3

Adoration Worship Event: Generation Hymns, a multi-church celebration of worship, is planned for 7 p.m. May 3 at Emmaus Lutheran Church, Bloomington, Minn. The event will include bands, singers, and choirs leading a night of worship for all generations, focusing on the theme, "Multiple Churches. One King. One Voice."

Speaking at the worship service will be Pastor Peter Franz, AFLC vice president, who serves Grace Free Lutheran, Maple Grove, Minn.

For more information about this event, visit the organizers' Web site at www.adorationworship.com.

Conference housing info

Housing information for the Annual Conference, which is scheduled for June 11-14 at the Association Retreat Center located near Osceola, Wis. The ARC has many housing options available on site, including dormitory, lodge, and motel-style housing options. Camping sites are also available on site.

Housing registration for the ARC is available on its Web site at www.arc-aflc.com. More information is also available by contacting the ARC by phone at 715-294-2877 or e-mailing info@arc-aflc.org.

Rooms have also been blocked off for the conference at nearby hotels. They include:

- Holiday Inn Express, St. Croix Falls, Wis. (16-mile drive)
Phone: (800) 315-2621
Web site: hiexpress.com
- River Valley Inn and Suites, Osceola, Wis. (8-mile drive)
Phone: (888) 791-0022
Web: osceolarivervalleyinn.com
- Super 8, New Richmond, Wis. (16-mile drive)
Phone: 715-246-7829
Web site: super8.com
- AmericInn, New Richmond, Wis. (16-mile drive)
Phone: (800) 634-3444
Web site: americinn.com

AFLC memorials: March

AFLBS

Elsie Madson, Ruth Claus, Randy Strand, Helen Zipp, Jim Nielsen, Jan Norr, Donald Pederson

Eileen Iverson (4), Eileen Finstrom, Pastor Randall Hess

Verona Jacobson, Eleanor Fjeld

Ambassador Institute

Verona Jacobson

Home Missions

Bruce Hackey, Daniel Oien

AFLTS

Margery Bischoff, Eleanor Fjeld,

Evangelism

Eileen Iverson, Jan Norr, Pastor Chuck Herr, Daniel Oien,

World Missions

Linda Patterson, Bruce Hackey

People and Places

The author for the Home Missions column in the April issue was misidentified. Her name is **Chris Swan**. We regret the error.

Senior seminarian **Luke Emerson** has accepted a call to serve Newark Lutheran Church, Newark, Ill. He is completing his internship at St. John's Lutheran Church, Newark, Ohio, and will be ordained at the closing service of the annual conference on June 14.

Alumni and friends day

The Association Free Lutheran Bible School is planning an Alumni and Friends Day of events. Scheduled for July 27, the day of events includes both the annual AFLBS Golf Scramble and a family barbecue for alumni and friends.

The Golf Scramble, an annual fund-raising event for AFLBS scholarships, will be held at Baker National Golf Course, Medina, Minn., with a 1 p.m. shotgun start. The cost is \$100 per individual registration, which covers green fees, cart, a practice area and the barbecue dinner.

For those who are not golfing during the afternoon, nearby Baker Park Reserve on Lake Independence offers options for family activities including camping, picnicking, swimming, biking and fishing. More information is available at threeriversparks.org.

The barbecue for alumni and friends will be held from 5 to 8 p.m. at Heritage Hall on the AFLBS campus in Plymouth. Donations of any amount will be accepted for the event, which will also include a silent auction. Reservations are required by July 15. For more information and to register, visit aflbs.org/bbq.

AFLC BENEVOLENCES Jan. 1-March 31, 2013

FUND	REC'D IN MARCH	TOTAL REC'D TO DATE	PRIOR YEAR-TO-DATE
General Fund	\$27,942	\$88,916	\$69,086
Evangelism	11,261	37,345	40,689
Youth Ministries	4,694	30,398	22,565
Parish Education	8,212	27,879	24,269
Seminary	22,544	62,202	58,458
Bible School	27,108	93,282	77,867
Home Missions	26,574	104,227	140,999
World Missions	27,097	108,528	100,486
Personal Support	35,135	113,910	133,304
TOTALS	\$190,565	\$666,687	\$667,723

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

A dirty word?

Let's get it straight right from the beginning: Doctrine is not a dirty word. It is spiritually dangerous, in fact, and plainly foolish to declare that Jesus unites but doctrine divides. Friend, if you've said or thought something like this, have you read the New Testament lately? For to say what you believe about Jesus is to proclaim doctrine.

First, this is a clear matter of translation. The word "doctrine" simply means "teaching" or "what is taught," as some of our Bible versions reveal. (For example, we read in John 7:16-17 that the NASV says

"teaching," while the KJV says "doctrine.") For anyone to declare that he or she is opposed to doctrine means that he or she is opposed to what the Bible teaches, for the terms are identical. In other



Pastor Robert Lee

words, whenever the Word of God is preached or taught correctly to us, we are hearing doctrine. Period.

Second, it is important to consider what the Bible says about doctrine or teaching. Jesus proclaimed doctrine. Several times it is recorded that the crowds were astonished at His doctrine (Matthew 7:28, 22:33, Mark 1:22, 11:18, Luke 4:32). The early church proclaimed doctrine. The first characteristic listed in the Book of Acts to describe the congregation of Jerusalem is that the believers "continually devoted themselves to the apostles' doctrine" (Acts 2:42), and soon they were accused of filling Jerusalem with their doctrine (Acts 5:28).

The apostle Paul valued doctrine. "But thanks be to God," he wrote to the Romans, "that though you were slaves of sin, you became obedient from the heart to that form of doctrine [teaching] to which you were committed" (6:17), warning them

later in his letter to watch out for those who "cause dissensions and hindrances contrary to the doctrine [teaching] which you learned, and turn away from them" (16:17).

Perhaps the most pointed words on doctrine were written by Paul in his pastoral letters. "Pay close attention to yourself and to your doctrine [teaching]; persevere in these things; for as you do this you will insure salvation both for yourself and for those who hear you" (I Timothy 4:16). Please note: Salvation is at stake! Another special admonition to pastors is found in Paul's letter to Titus: "He should cling to the Word, which he can depend on, just as he was taught, so that by sound teaching [doctrine] he can encourage people and correct those who oppose him" (1:9, Beck translation).

Paul also warns against those who "advocate a different doctrine" and do not agree with "sound words, those of our Lord Jesus Christ, and with the doctrine conforming to godliness" (I Timothy 6:3). The Christian life is at stake. And it may be that our understanding of Holy Scripture is at stake, as well, for the verses in Paul's second letter to Timothy, most frequently cited as central to our understanding of the Bible as the Word of God, list doctrine first and foremost as that for which the inspired Word is profitable (3:16).

Is the word "doctrine" ever used in the Bible in a negative context? Yes, indeed. Jesus quoted the prophet Isaiah when He accused the Pharisees and scribes of teaching men's rules as doctrine (Matthew 15:9, Mark 7:7). The writer of Hebrews cautions the believers to not be "carried away by varied and strange teachings [doctrines]

..." (13:9). Also, there will be those who fall away from the faith, paying attention to deceitful spirits and "doctrines of demons" (I Timothy 4:1).

Perhaps it is the spirit with which some profess their beliefs that causes others to see doctrine as a negative word. For instance, a friend spoke of someone who shoved a Bible in his face and said, "Show me one verse that teaches ..." I still recall

Perhaps it is the spirit with which some profess their beliefs that causes others to see doctrine as a negative word.

a young pastor with whom I visited a half century ago who confessed his convictions with unblushing arrogance, accusing any who disagreed with him on any point of "interpreting" the Bible, not recognizing that this was exactly what he was doing himself. There are good words for us all in I Peter 4 where we are admonished to be "humble in spirit" (v. 8) and to be ready to give an account for the hope that is within us "with gentleness and reverence" (v. 15).

Yet the fact remains that the spirit of our day is opposed to anything resembling doctrine and is seemingly convinced that scriptural convictions mean intolerance. In the face of this spirit, in the world where God has placed us, we are called to stand fast in the faith (doctrinal truths) once for all delivered to the saints. May He strengthen and uphold us in the struggle to be faithful witnesses to our generation.

building the base

Patience and preparation

BY CHRIS KUMPULA

Tulips are the surest sign of spring. Housed in a self-contained bulb, they endure the harshness of winter before their explosive growth and colorful flowering. While the tulip bulbs wait in their cool dormancy for the touch of spring, they are not inactive. Instead, they establish their roots, beginning almost immediately after the fall planting. The bulbs prepare quietly, rooting themselves further into the earth and fortifying their interiors. When the time is just right, they burst forth in rapid growth to announce the arrival of spring.

Waiting is one of the most difficult activities for the Christian, but the Bible is clear that waiting is an important part of our walk with Jesus. James 5:7-8 says, "Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand."

Like the tulip bulb, the Christian who is waiting should understand our times of waiting as precious opportunities for preparation. Noah waited. Joseph waited. Paul waited. And all of their ministries were better for it. What is important is that we prepare the way for the Lord's work waiting patiently for His timing.

D. L. Moody is remembered for his moving sermons to the masses of Chicago. What is less remembered is the time he spent alone in prayer. He did not know that this preparation would be followed by the harvest of thousands into God's Kingdom. Christian

evangelist and author Leonard Ravenhill emphasized the importance of modeling this prayer life. He is quoted as saying, "No man is greater than his prayer life. The pastor who is not praying is playing; the people who are not praying are straying. The pulpit can be a shop window to display one's talents; the prayer closet allows no showing off."

Think about it: Many churches grumble for their lack of growth. But do you think they will grumble less if they grow too soon? Pray for healthy dormancy! Many churches sought to force the flowers of spring without doing the foundational work for healthy roots. Unhealthy relationships, the spirit of faction, jealousy, and general hypocrisy are common ailments in today's church. To force growth, without the preparation to support it, invites failure and death.

Have you prayed for God to show you opportunities in your own life and in the life of your church for preparation? Establish your heart to prepare for God's timing. Whether it is deepening your devotional life, building new relationships, or repairing old ones, God wants us to build our church on the inside so we can grow and flower explosively. Our own comfortable status quo simply will not do. Remember the tulip, and seize opportunities for preparation. No matter what stage of growth you are in, God wants to be at work cultivating His church.

Kumpula is a member of Grace Free Lutheran, Maple Grove, Minn.