



Courtesy of U.S. Air Force Academy

*Ablaze!*  
Igniting the World with Christ's Love **Moments**

## Sightseeing Becomes Faith Sharing

By *Ida Mall with Marilyn Eglund*

Recently, my friend Marilyn and her husband visited us in Colorado on their way from Arizona to Iowa. Because their stay would be short, we decided to visit just two of the most popular tourist spots in Colorado Springs: the Garden of the Gods Park and the United States Air Force Academy.

After touring the visitors' center at the Air Force Academy, we followed the path to the beautiful Cadet Chapel whose spires dominate the campus. We began by visiting the Protestant worship area; its large cross immediately drew our eyes to the altar. A magnificent organ graced the space, and the light streaming through the multi-colored stained-glass windows was breathtaking. As we left the chapel, we thought what a blessing it was to have been in this place.

To finish our tour of the Cadet Chapel, we visited the Catholic, Buddhist, and Jewish worship areas. It was at the entrance to the Jewish worship area that the Lord placed an opportunity before us.

The entrance was roped so that we could not enter, but we could look inside. On each of the two doors was a small card — the size of one of our Mustard Seed devotions — with words printed in English on one door and in Hebrew on the other. A young man approached us and, after seeing the Hebrew characters on the door where he had been standing, asked if

we were Jewish and whether we knew what the words said on the card. We looked at the English version and read aloud: “May the Lord God Almighty bless you.” He thanked us for the translation and told us that he was studying to join the Jewish faith.

After exchanging banalities, we turned to leave.

Almost immediately, Marilyn and I turned back and re-engaged the young man in conversation. I told him that we belonged to the Lutheran Church and asked him if he knew anything about what Lutherans believe. He replied that he thought it was the church that believed the wine turned into blood and the bread turned into flesh. Marilyn gave him a more accurate explanation of what Lutherans believe about the Sacrament of the Altar.

We did not continue the conversation about Lutheran beliefs specifically, but we asked what he thought of Jesus. He said that he loved Jesus as his Savior and would always have Him first in his life. When we asked him about his faith-life, he said that he was a non-denominational Christian but that he wanted to join the Jewish faith because of its poetic beauty and inspiration.

Because he had told us that he was studying to become Jewish but would keep Jesus first in his life, I asked him if he knew about Messianic Jews. He was surprised that I knew the term. I explained that some of the people in our church body are Messianic Jews.

As we finished the conversation and turned to leave, I said to him, “Please be sure to read the book of Romans.” We hadn’t discussed this Scripture before in our conversation, so I believe the Holy Spirit led me to speak these words to this young man; and that’s no surprise — Romans is about the power of the Gospel to save sinful human beings.

We almost blew our chance to talk about Jesus with this man.

*Ablaze!* is all about taking the opportunities the Lord provides and sharing our faith in Jesus with others. *Ablaze!* is not a program that requires hours of study. The Holy Spirit is the teacher and helps us every step of the way.

Little did we realize when we began our tour of the chapel the blessings the Lord God Almighty would bestow upon the young man and us. It is our prayer that this young man will read Romans and continue to believe that Jesus is his Savior.

*Past LWML President Ida Mall and Marilyn Eglund (former Vice President of Mission Education) served together from 1991–1995. Contributed by the Synod's Board for Communication Services and LCMS World Mission.*