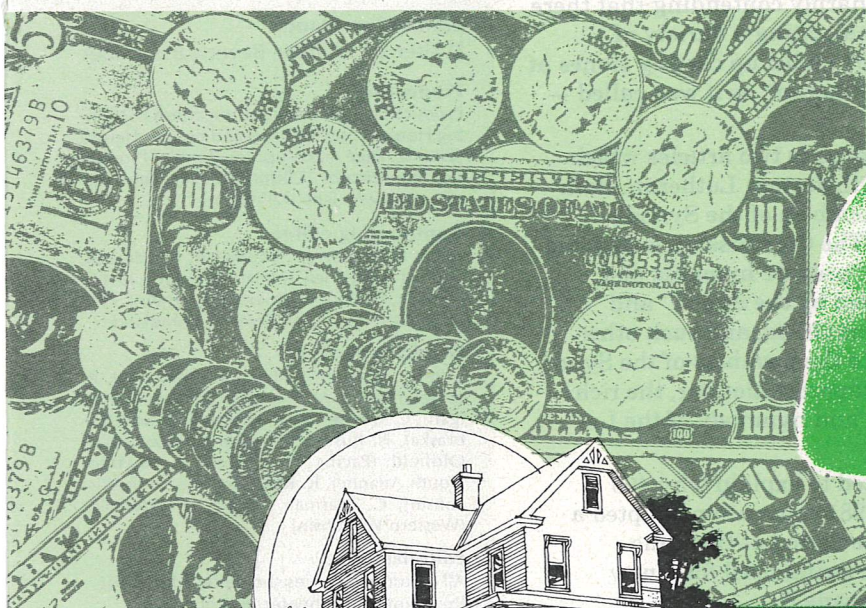


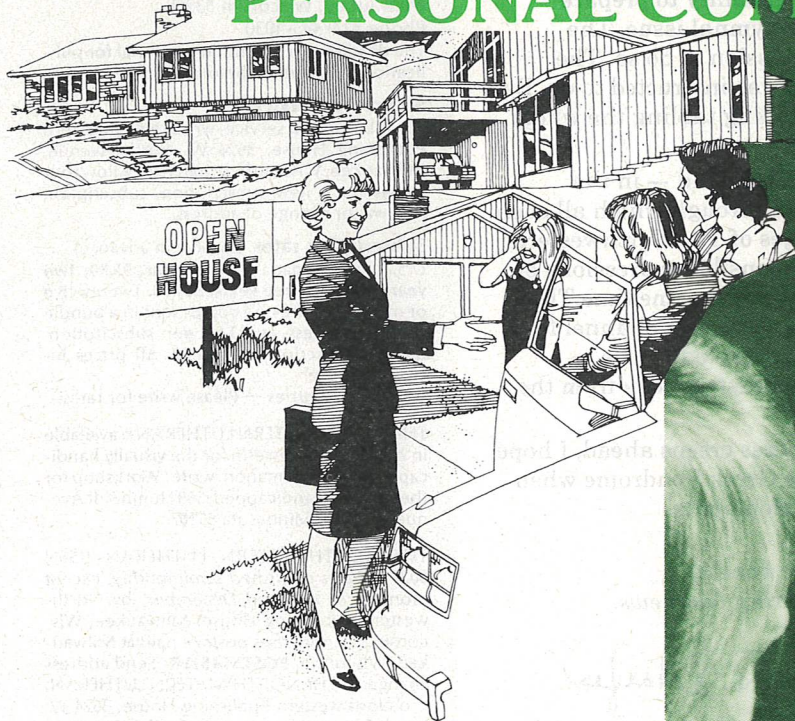
The
**Northwestern
Lutheran**

APRIL 15, 1983



PERSONAL COMMITMENTS

PAGE 128



from this corner



"Nobody likes the man who brings bad news," wrote Sophocles in *Antigone*. From Grecian lore around the same time comes the story of the messenger who brought news of a bitter defeat to the Greeks. For his trouble he was slain.

Shakespeare knew the peril of carrying bad news:
*The first bringer of unwelcome news
hath but a losing office.*

I have reflected on this wisdom over the last few months. A number of letters have come to The Northwestern Lutheran sharply contending that there is no need for a new hymnal, citing a variety of reasons. A few of the letters ended up casting stones at the "new Northwestern Lutheran" as it was called — for bearing the bad news.

The letters were in response to two articles which have appeared in The Northwestern Lutheran. Both articles were written by members of the Synod's Commission on Worship. The Commission is directed by the Synod's Bylaws to "prepare hymnals and liturgical books as requested by the Synod" and "make available tracts, pamphlets, and such other materials as may impart to the members of the Synod an understanding of, and appreciation for, the rich heritage of music, liturgy, and hymnody of the Lutheran Church."

The first article attempted to explain why 400 delegates to the Synod's 1981 convention adopted a resolution asking that "the Synod at this time recognize that there is a growing need for a new hymnal within the next decade."

The second article reported the efforts of the commission to fulfill its responsibility to prepare materials for the study of the hymnal issue. The convention directed the commission to do so. The commission has done what it was instructed to do. But all options are still open, including tabling the whole matter.

Until the Synod has spoken its mind — in the democratic convention process through which all such decisions are made — the pages of The Northwestern Lutheran will welcome all responsible expressions of opinion from all quarters. But at the same time The Northwestern Lutheran must serve as a channel for the reports and news stories generated by the Commission on Worship under instructions from the convention.

As the decision-making process creeps ahead, I hope the readers are mindful of the Greek Syndrome when this magazine reports on developments.

Some more Shakespeare?

*Though it be honest,
it is never good to bring bad news.*

James P. Schaefer

*May the Lord our God be with us
as he was with our fathers;
may he never leave
or forsake us. 1 Kings 8:57*

The Northwestern Lutheran

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You don't have to be afraid

Jesus himself stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you," They were startled and frightened, thinking they saw a ghost. He said to them, "Why are you troubled, and why do doubts rise in your minds? Look at my hands and my feet. It is I myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have" (Luke 24:36-39).

"You don't have to be afraid," mother said to the child sobbing in her arms, "I'll take care of it." And the tears slowed down.

"You don't have to be afraid," the risen Lord says to his followers, "I'll take care of it." But so often the tears don't seem to slow down. Could it be that we need to look more closely at the living Lord and hear him tell us again *you don't have to be afraid.*

"It is I myself"

Talk about fear! It was so real behind those locked doors that first Easter weekend in Jerusalem that you could almost smell it. Just when they were convinced that Jesus was the Son of God, the bottom had dropped out. They had walked with him and witnessed his words and works. Twice they had even heard the Father call him "his Son" and seemed to have their answer as to who he was. But then the stone had been rolled before the tomb shutting in his lifeless clay and another stone, one of fear, had rolled before their heart shutting out their trust that he was the Son of God.

Until that first Easter Sunday evening! There is stood right before them. First came his question, "Why are you troubled?" And then his answer, "It is I myself." Gone were the doubts and fears. He was alive and standing as the living Son of God before them.

We believe that Jesus is true God from all eternity, don't we? Then why are we so often fearful? Why do we so often act as if Jesus were still

lifeless in the tomb and powerless to help in life? Why do we so often weary under burdens and wipe at tears as if we had no living Son of God to help in time of need?

"It is I myself," the risen Jesus reminds us gently again. No, that doesn't mean that we don't have to work hard at solving problems with our family or finances, that we don't have to plan solidly for the future or show proper concern about where our world is heading. But it does mean that we never fail to see him at our side, walking and working with us. Then his words, "You don't have to be afraid," will be filled with more meaning for us.

Why do we so often weary under burdens . . . as if we had no living Son of God . . .

"Peace be with you"

More lay behind their troubled fear that Easter. How they had sinned against their Lord, littering the past days with broken promises and boastful pride, dirty cowardice and dismal lack of love. Who would pull sin's burning arrows out of their souls? Who would patch sin's seeping wounds in their heart? Hope of forgiveness seemed as dead as their Master.

Until that Easter Sunday evening! There he stood right before them. His first words were not "shame on you" or "how could you?" but "peace be with you." Then came the sight of nail-pierced hands and feet, vivid reminders of the cost of forgiveness and yet solid assurance that forgiveness was real. For those wounds were found not on a dead, but a living Lord. Sins were gone as surely as that risen Lord stood before them.

God knows what the ledger would look like and how long the library shelf would be if all our sins were recorded. Just a brief flipping of

those pages would fill our souls with mortal dread and the bitter prospect of eternity in hell. Such a thought ought to alarm us and when it does, the living Redeemer's words will take on added meaning for us. "You don't have to be afraid," he reminds us gently, "there's peace and pardon in my name."

"Look at my hands and feet"

Wasn't death also behind their troubled fear that first Easter? For them as for all men, the question wasn't whether, but when they would die. Then had come a glimmer of hope. One came among them who claimed, "He who believe in me will live, even though he dies." But he, too, had died and his grave seemed a dread preview of what awaited them. Until that Easter Sunday evening when he stood in their midst and used his living hands and feet as the guarantee behind his promise.

Do we wrestle with physical difficulties? Do we weary under life's relentless march and the ravages of pain? "Look at my hands and my feet," our glorified Lord says, giving us a preview of what awaits us and also strength for the journey along the way.

Have we left a loved one behind in the cemetery? Is that mound of dirt a stark reminder of death's reality and inevitability? "Look at my hands and my feet," he says, assuring us that those who have fallen asleep in him will also rise.

Do we dread that day when our heart will stop and our breath cease? Thoughts like this we like to push to the back seat of the bus in life, but the day will come. Think then what it would be like to not have Jesus saying, "Look at my hands and my feet." Think then how horrible it would be not to hear him say, "You don't have to be afraid." □

Pastor Lauersdorf is at St. John's Lutheran Church, Jefferson, Wisconsin.

The best defense

Historically, the greatest force in shaping the attitudes, beliefs, and practices of people has been the predominant religion in a given place at a given time. Thus, the religion of Rome controlled the thinking of much of civilized Europe in the Middle Ages. Islam was the influential force in much of Asia and civilized Africa following the flight of Mohammed from Mecca to Medina in the seventh century, and it still exerts a potent influence on the people on those two continents. Protestantism became the dominant influence on society in the New World after the arrival in North America of colonists from Protestant England in the early seventeenth century. Religion has always been a dominant force in the lives of people in all ages of the past and in all geographical areas of the world. It has exerted a tremendous influence upon what they believe and how they conduct themselves.

Things have changed.

In the last fifty years or so a new force has entered the field of competition for the hearts and minds of the people in this world. This is especially true in the United States, but the influence of this new force is by no means confined to this country. That force is television.

Television writers, producers, and executives have emerged as the gurus of a growing segment of the population. They exert an influence comparable to that of Rome, Luther, Calvin, Mohammed, and the pagan gods in times past.

A prominent television producer, Sheldon Leonard, said, "I think there should be no mistake about the sense of responsibility we carry . . . and this has led us to believe that we can, within a framework of good showmanship, advance valid social comments, valid ethical concepts, valid generalizations about the human condition which have meaning for the audience."

He is not alone in his assessment of television's power and potential to mold the human mind and spirit. A recent news report by United Press International bore the caption, "Producers Believe They Shape Society." The report cites a study by Linda S. Lichter, S. Robert Lichter, and Stanley Rothman, who concluded, "The results are clear and consistent. The television elites believe they have a role to play in reforming American society." They based their conclusion on interviews with 104 writers, producers, and executives.

How well equipped are these people to function in this role? Forty-four percent of them listed their religion as "none." Only seven percent professed to be regular churchgoers. Fifty-nine percent were raised in a non-Christian religion. Their responses to the survey reflected this.

The overwhelming majority felt that a woman has a right to decide on abortion. Only a minority agreed that homosexuality is wrong. A substantial majority disagreed with the statement that adultery is wrong.

There is no question about the influence of television. The question in the minds of Christians is how to combat this influence.

The same issue of the newspaper in which this article was printed also reported on an NBA basketball game played the night before. One of the losing players explained why his team lost after holding a substantial lead through most of the game. He said, "Too conservative, man. We get the lead, but then we freeze. We stop playing to win, and then it's like we start playing not to lose. Can't do that."

We can't confine ourselves to defense either. It is futile to try to eliminate all the sources of anti-Christian influence. We need to unleash the offense, and we have one — the best there is: the truth. We need to steep ourselves in it, indoctrinate our children in it, proclaim it aggressively. The old saying applies here as it does in sports: "The best defense is a good offense."

Immanuel G. Frey



Pastor Frey is at Zion, Phoenix, and is president of the Arizona-California District.

letters

Fund executive secretary

The trumpet call to "Get busy with evangelism" was sounded in a letter (October 15, p. 293) in which the writer clearly stated, "The church's purpose is to win souls for Christ. It is time for all of us Christians to awaken, and put forth an all-out effort for Jesus' sake."

This brings to mind an assessment by an essayist at the WELS 1971 convention. "To say that a majority of members and congregations of the Wisconsin Synod would profit by giving serious thought to their evangelism efforts can be hardly contradicted. A study of the past points to some glaring and disappointing deficiencies in this vital work." Although there is rising evangelism consciousness in our Synod, this assessment still remains valid.

This presents a challenge to each of us as individual Christians, as a congregation, as a district and as a Synod. Especially to the leaders!

To help us deal with that challenge our last WELS convention approved the creation of the position of executive secretary for evangelism and authorized a call to fill that position subject to funding. It is my hope that this approval will soon be implemented, at long last giving priority and the needed full-time leadership evangelism surely deserves.

Robert L. Donaty
Largo, Florida

Central city churches hurting

The recent closing of Parkside Lutheran Church in Milwaukee was reported (January 1, p. 13) in a positive manner, which is entirely appropriate for a church news magazine. Yet the basic reason for this closing is that the neighborhood could not support this church. And that is a tragedy for all who are concerned with the preaching of the gospel. The people living in that neighborhood have lost this opportunity to hear God's Word.

Nor is this an isolated instance which is not likely to recur. Six other

Wisconsin Synod congregations in the Milwaukee area are no longer functioning at their original locations for precisely the same reason. And there are six more congregations who face an uncertain future because they may not be able to survive in their neighborhoods. If all of these came demanding equal attention from The Northwestern Lutheran, the editor might have a hard time finding space enough for all.

The General Board for Home Missions is aware of the situation and working for the survival of inner-city congregations. The readers of The Northwestern Lutheran should also know that this is going on.

Rolfe F. Westendorf
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

NWL in every home

It was with much interest, and I am sure a bit of embarrassment to some, to read the fine comments by Barbara Fairbairn in the March 1 issue (p. 64).

The NWL has been in my home ever since it came into being and I look forward to every copy. I read it from cover to cover, not just once but often two or three times so as to completely digest it. It has been my experience through the years that while relating some interesting article to a fellow church member to have them say, "How do you know about that?"

This periodical of our Wisconsin Synod should be in the home of every member. It is sad that a non-Lutheran had to tell us so. What better way to be completely informed about all the workings of our Synod and the tremendous blessings the Lord has showered upon it. With more members reading about it there will be more interest and support, and the goal of our present Reaching Out program would be assured.

Thank you, Barbara! I hope your fine comments have aroused the interest and concern of many so that they will want to become subscribers to the NWL.

Frieda Behnken
Lake Mills, Wisconsin

Tunes set too high

One of the complaints often heard about The Lutheran Hymnal is that its tunes are set too high.

The readers of The Northwestern Lutheran should know that this objection has been well taken care of in a publication which has been in print since 1970.

The title is: *Lowered Hymn Settings*, with subtitle: *For 335 Hymns (155 Tunes in All) in The Lutheran Hymnal*. The editor is Louis Nuechterlein and the music copywriter is Jean Kovach. It can be ordered from Lowered Hymn Settings, Box 157, Cheshire, Connecticut 06410. The cost is \$6.75 postpaid. The editor has only a limited number of copies available.

Gaya Mittelstadt
Fox Lake, Wisconsin

Name omitted

News around the world (March 1, p. 75) included *Lutheran Perspective's* listing of the ten most influential Lutherans in 1982. A proper modesty prevented the editor of The Northwestern Lutheran from mentioning that *Lutheran Perspective* also noted, "A year as eventful as 1982 will have more than the usual number of influential individuals." Included in the second ten was "James P. Schaefer . . . whose reshaping of The Northwestern Lutheran, while not wavering on the Synod's traditional position, signified a new upbeat spirit in the Wisconsin Synod." Mr. Editor, you richly deserve that bouquet.

Joel C. Gerlach
San Jose, California

Letters between 100 and 250 words are preferred. Letters are subject to editing. Open letters, letters written to persons and letters written to another publication will not be printed. Letters should be in response to an article in The Northwestern Lutheran. Full name, address and phone number should accompany each letter. Names will be withheld only under unusual circumstances. Address your letters to LETTERS, The Northwestern Lutheran, 3512 W. North Ave., Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53208.

The seven seals and six pictures

chapters six and seven

Today we begin a new section in our book (chapters 6-14), made up of three subsections, each of which gives us an overall picture of the world from the time of creation to its final destruction, all emphasizing the basic division of the world into believers and unbelievers. And the three subsections are all joined together into an overall unity in an unusual way.

A STUDY IN THE BOOK OF REVELATION

by Julian G. Anderson

The seven seals give us *six* pictures of the world up to the time of the Judgment (six being the *incomplete* number), and the seventh seal introduces the next series of the seven trumpets, which give another six pictures, with the seventh trumpet introducing the third series of the seven mystic figures, which gives us a complete series of *seven* pictures, of which the seventh is a picture of the final Judgment. So now we go to

The first series

Slide 1 (6:1-2). In this series the *opening* of each seal gives us a picture *revealing* something about the world, and the first four are a group in which each gives a brief picture of some characteristic of the world as a whole. In this first picture the *voice* we hear speaking is that of one of the four agents of God's providence (see 4:6), directing our attention to a *white* horse, carrying a rider with a *bow*, indicating that he has come to *fight*. White being the color of holiness suggests that this is a picture of *God's Word* in the world (see Isaiah 55:11), and the *crown* indicates that it will be victorious.

Slide 2 (vv. 3-4). Here the second agent of God's providence shows us a *red* horse, and verse 4 identifies this rider as *war*, red being the symbol of bloodshed, an ever-present feature of this world (Matthew 24:6-7a).

Slide 3 (vv. 5-6). Now the third agent of God's providence shows us a *black* horse; and the *scale* in the rider's hand and verse 6 identify this rider as *famine*, black being the color of evil and death (Matthew 24:7b).

Slide 4 (vv. 7-8). Next the fourth agent of God's providence shows us a *pale* horse, and his rider is identified as *death*, with Hades, the traditional home of the dead, following to gather in the dead bodies. The authority over a *fourth part* of the earth simply signifies that at any particular moment a considerable number of the earth's inhabitants are dying.

Taken together these four slides picture the world as filled with wars, famine and death by the power of the

devil, while God has sent his Word into the world to fight against these evil powers.

The martyrs

Slide 5 (vv. 9-11) shows us all the *martyrs* who have been killed because of their Christian faith and their testimony to God's grace in Christ. We see them under God's altar, a place of safety, and clothed in the white robes of Christ's perfect righteousness. And they are anxiously waiting for Christ's return, which will bring this world to an end and usher in the final judgment.

Slide 6 (vv. 14-17) gives us a graphic picture of the *end* of the world, as Jesus described it in Matthew 24:29. Note how vividly the total disintegration of our universe is described in verse 14, and how realistically it describes the awful fear and terror of all the unbelievers at this dramatic moment (vv. 15-17).

Slide 7 (7:1-8) continues with a strikingly beautiful picture of the *Church* here on earth, made up of all the believers of all time! The *four corners* (4 being the number of the earth), signify the *whole* earth, and verses 2-4 picture the *sealing* of all God's people.

In the ancient world the *seal* was the mark of ownership, and the king had a special seal-ring, on which had been carved his name, picture, or special mark. When this seal was pressed hard on any article, animal or person, it left the king's seal, marking that person or thing as the king's property. Paul tells us that the seal of God's ownership is the *Holy Spirit*, which God gives to every believer when he is brought to faith (Ephesians 1:13 and 4:30. See also Matthew 3:16-17).

The Church Triumphant

Here the numbers are all symbolic, *12* being the number of the Church (4:4) and *10* the *whole* number. And *multiplying them* (12x12x10x10x10) emphasizes the perfect *wholeness* of the Old Testament and New Testament churches gathered into *one body*!

Slide 8 (7:9-17) then pictures the *Church Triumphant* after the Judgment, all gathered around God's throne before the Lamb, clothed in their *white* robes, with palms, symbols of *joy* in their hands (Leviticus 23:40), accompanied by all the angels (v. 11), and singing their praises to God the Father and Jesus the Lamb, and closing with a thrilling description of the wonderful new life that awaits all believers in the new heavens and new earth (vv. 16-17)!□

Julian G. Anderson is a retired pastor and seminary professor living in Naples, Florida.

I would like to know

BY PAUL E. KELM

"I've heard a number of conflicting explanations concerning the prophecy of Satan's thousand-year bondage in Revelation. What does our church say about this?"

Revelation 20:3 explains the binding of Satan when it says, "to keep him from deceiving the nations." While the "prince of this world" blinded all but Israel to the truth for centuries, Christ's victory over Satan and his commission to preach the gospel throughout the world have made the New Testament era the period of Satan's binding. Revelation nowhere suggests that Satan is totally incapacitated. Rather, like a lion on a leash, he's had his sphere of damning deception limited by the ascended Lord. (See Matthew 12:29, Luke 10:18, John 12:31-32, and Revelation 11-13 where Christ's church is witnessing and protected under his rule and Satan must operate through the two "beasts.")

The thousand years is this perfect (10 x 10 x 10 in apocalyptic symbolism) length of time between Christ's first coming and a brief flurry of satanic deception that brings Christ's second coming.

This is Lutheran teaching because it is consistent with everything that Jesus and the apostles taught. There is but one reappearance of Christ and we are to expect it suddenly. That appearance of Christ marks the end of the world, for it is the day of judgment. There is no room for a "millennium" between the New Testament era and judgment day anywhere in Scripture.

This is Lutheran teaching also because it understands Revelation on its own terms. When the book introduces itself as a series of visions in symbolic language, it would be inappropriate to find interpretations that not only contradict the rest of Scripture but ignore the style and context of the book. Revelation deserves to be read in its entirety. Then its thematic development of our New Testament era will instruct us about our conflict with Satan's agents and comfort us with the bliss Christ won for us and the judgment of all Christ's enemies.

A recent Reader's Digest article entitled "Do You Know Where Your Church Offerings Go?" raised a question. Is our Synod involved in any way with the National Council of Churches?"

The Wisconsin Synod has neither confessional nor charitable ties with the National Council of Churches. Offerings designated for our synod's budget are used by the Synod for ministry to its members and mission outreach, as approved in synodical conventions. Non-budgetary gifts for the Synod's Committee on Relief are distributed for disaster relief around the world. To help alleviate human suffering this synodically authorized committee purchases, if it is impossible to do so directly, supplies and services through existing agencies such as CARE, Direct Relief International, and Lutheran World Relief. This committee does not distribute funds for political or religious programs.

What about "fundraising" projects for the church? People with whom I've spoken endorse such projects as long as they aren't done at the church.

Such projects are usually not illegal. However, Christians will carefully observe governmental regulations in licensing, inspection, and sales tax. Such projects are probably not unethical. But, Christians will carefully avoid any impression of coercing customers because "it's for the church." Such projects are usually not advisable. Asking people outside the church to support the Lord's work may well confirm the cynic's suspicion that the church is only after money. It may even confirm the self-righteous in the damning notion that they've earned God's favor by supporting the church. Christians will carefully avoid anything that might hinder the Church's mission or denigrate the Savior who gives eternal life. Asking people within the church to support the Lord's work through purchase rather than offerings may undermine the principles of Christian giving: willingly, generously, cheerfully, proportionately. The money-changers Jesus drove out of the temple were providing a service for "members" that had become a distraction from the purpose of the church. That danger is equally real today. Whether fundraising projects occur on or away from the church's property, when they are done in the church's name they may risk some injury to the church. It would be more appropriate for people to raise funds in their own name with the skills and energy God gives, and then offer the profits to their God. The love that seeks to raise money for the Lord's work should be appreciated, but sometimes redirected. Promoting his word and will is more productive than promoting products. What the Lord wills his church to accomplish he will move his people to support.

What is the origin of our common table prayer? (The Northwestern Lutheran, February 15, p.59).

Pastor Arno Wolfgramm of First German Ev. Lutheran Church in Manitowoc, Wisconsin has answered our appeal for information on the origin of the common table prayer. Tracking the prayer through several volumes of German prayers, Pastor Wolfgramm discovered an index which attributed our table prayer to Martin Luther. "At any rate," Pastor Wolfgramm writes, "our ancestors were using this Tisch-Gebet before 1850." The prayer in German reads: "Komm Herr Jesu, sei unser Gast und segne, was du uns bescheret hast. Amen."

Danke schoen! □



Send your questions to *QUESTIONS*, *The Northwestern Lutheran*, 3512 W. North Avenue, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 53208. Questions of general interest are preferred. Sorry, questions will not be answered by correspondence.

Professor Kelm is dean of students at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The Reader's Digest Condensed

In March 1978, the Reader's Digest began work on a condensed version of the Revised Standard Version of the Bible. Announcement of the project touched off a storm of protest by fundamentalists.

In September 1982, the *Reader's Digest Condensed Bible* (Random House, 799 pages, \$16.95) appeared on bookstore bookshelves. The storm of protest has grown to hurricane proportions. And with some warrant.

When Reader's Digest announced the project four years ago, project director Jack Walsh explained why the Digest decided to undertake the task. "Because many people want to read the Bible but never have because of its length and complexity." Walsh responded to early critics of the project with the explanation that "true condensation never interferes with the essential substance of a text." Digest executive John Allen added, "Our Bible is meant to supplement the family Bible, not take its place."

The finished product has reduced the text of the Revised Standard Version by 40% — the Old Testament by half, the New Testament by one quarter.

At first glance the condensation does not look like a Bible. It contains neither chapter nor verse numbers. That makes it difficult if not impossible to use it for reference purposes. That may be a plus factor if it induces novice readers to abandon the condensation in favor of the real thing.

Why the storms of protest? Reasons range from matters of form to matters of substance, from the superficial to the absurd.

The Bookshelf editor of the Wall Street Journal, Edmund Fuller, says in his review of the RDCB, "It not only alters text, it alters texture in characteristic flattening of style." He adds, "Bluntly, I would not want it."

Other critics have offered more cogent reasons for their misgivings about the RDCB. The Psalms, for example, have been reduced in number from 150 to 79. That's not condensation. That's elimination. Psalm 106 was reduced from 48 verses to one paragraph.

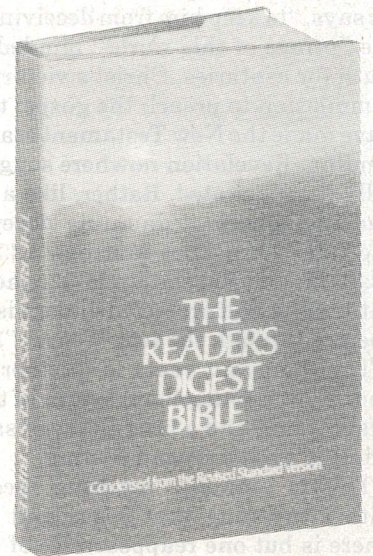
Problems arise for a reader who wishes to refer to Old Testament citations quoted in the New Testament. An attempt to find Jesus' reference to "the abomination that causes desolation" (Mark 13:14) in Daniel chapter 9 is futile. That chapter has been dropped from the book of Daniel along with chapters 8, 10, 11 and 12.

A real concern about the RDCB arises as much from what the editors have added as from what they have eliminated. An isagogical introduction accompanies each of the 66 books. The introductory material is rampant with the unscriptural assumptions of modern scholarship. Moses is not credited with the authorship of the first five books of the Bible though Jesus himself attests that Moses was the author (John 5:46-47). The editor suggests that the book of Daniel was compiled in the

The introductory material is rampant with the unscriptural assumptions of modern scholarship.

2nd century B.C. though Daniel, the author, lived in the 6th century B.C. Peter didn't write 1 and 2 Peter though Peter himself says that he did. That kind of unscholarly scholarship does not commend the RDCB to anyone who has a healthy respect for the Word of God.

Unfortunately some RDCB opponents have lost their credentials as credible critics with claims that are unwarranted and misleading. One group has accused the Digest of



"censoring God." If that objection were valid, then Bible history textbooks and Sunday-school leaflets which condense the Scriptures for classroom use would be open to the same censorship charge.

More disconcerting is the attempt to enlist Revelation 22:18-19 as a Scriptural indictment of the condensation. Dr. Carl McIntire, president of the fundamentalist International Council of Christian Churches, argues, "The Reader's Digest Bible carries its own condemnation from the lips of Christ, had they left it, in Revelation 22:18-19" which McIntire then quotes. "If any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life." Condensation is hardly what the Lord had in mind when he inspired John to pen those words.

McIntire's charge exposes an improper understanding on his part of the term "the Word of God." In fact he unequivocally asserts that "it is impossible to call it (the RDCB) the Word of God though the Reader's Digest claims that for their book."

Bible — Is it the Word of God?

by Joel C. Gerlach

earthly things and you do not desire heavenly things? No one has ascended into heaven, the Son of man. And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.”

For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. God sent the Son into the world, not to condemn, but that the world might be saved through him. He who believes in him is not condemned; he who does not believe is condemned already. The light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, for every one who does evil hates the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. But he who does what is true comes to the light, that it may be seen that his deeds have been wrought in God.

John 3:16 in the RDCB.

The current flap over the RDCB provides us with a welcome opportunity to recall what the term Word of God really means. We are in the habit of saying, “The Bible is the Word of God.” And that of course is true. But then without thinking things through, some are inclined to turn it around and say, “The Word of God is the Bible.” And that is not true. If it were, Jesus could not have said,

Essentially the Word of God is the divine truth God conveys to us in the form of human speech.

“Heaven and earth will pass away, but my word will not pass away.” Before Moses wrote the first words of Genesis, no Bibles existed. But the Word of God did.

Essentially the Word of God is the divine truth God conveys to us in the form of human speech. God’s truth in turn is contained in his Word. He caused his truth to be recorded for us in Holy Scriptures in the original languages of the Old and New Testaments. It should be obvious that

the Word is not Greek and Hebrew sounds and syllables, but rather the thoughts communicated by the sounds and syllables. If we limit the concept of the Word of God to the original sounds and syllables which God inspired the holy writers to write, then we would all have to learn Hebrew and Greek to know what God wants to say to us. We all agree that God’s thoughts can be communicated in any language.

Now back to the RDCB. Is it “impossible to call it the Word of God?” Not if one properly defines the Word of God. To make such a claim causes confusion in the church. People are confused enough already by unwarranted claims about Bible translations. If a Sunday-school leaflet which communicates the thoughts of God to children can be said to contain the Word of God, so can a condensed translation of the Bible. We don’t equate a Sunday-school leaflet with the Word of God, neither do we equate a condensed version with the Word of God. But that does not give us warrant for denying that in a restricted sense it is the Word of God.

I have read only snatches of the RDCB and have no urge to read more. But I have read enough to know that God’s thoughts are expressed there. Sin and grace, law and gospel are there. Even with all of the condensation’s gross shortcomings, the Holy Spirit is not powerless to convict a RDCB reader of his sin and to convince him of his need for Jesus as Savior.

We have no bouquets to offer to the editors of the RDCB, and we would not encourage anyone to buy a RDCB when there are other reliable versions on the market. But at the same time, neither would we say that a sinner could not come to know his Savior by reading it. And if one sinner comes to repentance by reading, God’s angels will rejoice in heaven over the fact. □



Pastor Gerlach of San Jose, California, is mission counselor for the California mission board.



NEWS around the world

The American Lutheran Church's South Pacific District has postponed for one year any disciplinary action against Trinity Lutheran Church of Anaheim, California. The congregation is being served by a pastor, Pomroy J. Moore, who is not on the clergy roster of the ALC. Moore is a graduate of Faith Lutheran Seminary, Tacoma, Washington, a seminary under the auspices of Lutherans Alert-National, a group which maintains there is doctrinal laxity in the ALC, especially in the doctrine of inspiration. Moore was an early member of the Trinity congregation and an electrical engineer before undertaking his pastoral studies at Faith Seminary. He was installed last June as pastor of Trinity. According to Moore, behind his call to the congregation is the issue of Biblical inerrancy. "We believe that what the Bible has to say about history is true, what the Bible says about geography is true, and what the Bible says about science is true," Moore said. He believes that Biblical inerrancy is not "held, practiced, or taught" at the ALC's seminaries. Disciplinary action was postponed, according to Dr. Gaylerd Falde, bishop of the district, to exhaust "every opportunity for dialogue with the entire congregation." But it takes two to dialogue, and the congregation has little interest in such conversations, according to Moore. "The congregation has expressed itself as a body on the issues that divide us," Moore said. "To expect the congregation to change its opinion would be naive." Only two congregations have been removed from the ALC roster since the ALC was organized in 1960. The first one was in 1963 when a congregation in Wisconsin called a pastor of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod to serve it. The second one was four years ago when the ALC suspended Central Lutheran Church of Tacoma, Washington, prime backer of Faith Lutheran Seminary, served by Pastor Reuben H. Redal, president of Lutherans Alert.

Americans United for Separation of Church and State have taken vigorous exception to the decision of the U.S. Postal Service to issue a stamp commemorating the 500th anniversary of the birth of Martin Luther. In a letter to the *Christian Century* W. Melvin Adams, executive director of Americans United, defends the position of the organization. The organization, he said, does not "want to remove religion from life. Nothing could be further from the truth! As an ordained minister, I am intensely concerned about protecting religious freedom in this country. One essential facet of that protection is ensuring that the government remains neutral in matters of

religion. By issuing a stamp in connection with the Lutheran denominations' celebration of the birth of Martin Luther, the U.S. Postal Service strays from the path of neutrality. The agency is effectively giving its 'stamp of approval' to a religious event. This is improper. It is clear that the government cannot and will not issue a commemorative stamp for the religious events of all the approximately 2,000 religious faiths and denominations. Therefore, the government should abstain from promoting any of them."

According to a recent study, top Hollywood producers of television fare are predominantly secular in outlook, politically liberal, and shun religion. Their views on religion and on moral issues differ sharply from attitudes of the general public. "This value orientation is fundamentally different from that of the general public," said the report, published in *Public Opinion*, a magazine of the American Enterprise Institute for Public Policy Research in Washington. Ninety-three percent of Hollywood professionals turning out the main TV entertainment seldom or never attend religious services, the findings indicated, compared with 41 percent of Americans who attend weekly or more often. Among the TV entertainment makers, 80 percent said they do not regard homosexual relations as wrong, and 50 percent do not regard adultery as wrong. Ninety-seven percent said they believe a woman has a right to decide for herself about having an abortion, 91 percent holding that view "strongly." Among the TV entertainment makers, 75 percent called themselves political liberals, compared with 27 percent of the general public. For more on this study see "Editorial Comment," page 116.

Lyle Schaller, parish consultant for Yokefellow Institute, Richmond, Indiana, takes a look at the future of religion in America. Here are some of the significant trends spotted by Schaller. 1. The availability of cable television. It now appears that big audiences for religious telecasting will be via the local cable franchise rather than over the network stations. 2. Christian day schools. The need to establish these schools will be necessary as public schools become less sympathetic with Christianity and its traditions, while at the same time more tolerant of values and a world view that goes counter to the Bible. 3. Lack of denominational loyalty. Schaller says that in the average Protestant church only 8 of 20 new adult members come from a sister church. "Less emphasis is being given to denominational labels and more is devoted to the personality, program and distinctive role of the particular congregation," says Schaller. 4. People are picking churches for different reasons today than during the 50s and 60s. Now people look for a church that ministers to its own age group which means that churches must strengthen their adult ministries. 5. Bible studies are moving out of the Sunday school to weekdays. 6. Worship services are beginning earlier, says Schaller. For various reasons, people are beginning to appreciate earlier services. If a church wants to reach people in its community with the gospel it may mean adding an earlier service. □

THE SPOTLIGHT

New Luther drama

"You will now find three dramas about Luther listed in the card catalog of the Milwaukee Public Library," said Pastor John A. Trapp, an associate editor of the Northwestern Publishing House. "Besides the Osborne and Strindberg plays, the library has added *Martin Luther* by Grace Hagedorn."

The play, published by Northwestern Publishing House, was commissioned by the Synod's Luther Anniversary Committee which is in charge of the Synod's observance of the 500th anniversary of Luther's birth to be celebrated this year.

The play is called a "musical drama for children." Musical drama comes naturally to Hagedorn, a gifted musician. Hagedorn is assistant principal cellist with the Milwaukee Civic Orchestra besides giving violin lessons and directing two grade-school orchestras at Christ the Lord Lutheran School in Brookfield, Wisconsin where she is a member of the faculty.

The eight-act play had its premier performance at Christ the Lord last April with five of the eight acts performed. The first full performance using the eight acts was given at the Wisconsin Lutheran State Teachers' Conference last October in Milwaukee. In an unusual display of approval the audience gave the play a standing ovation. It is scheduled to be performed at this year's Synod convention meeting at Dr. Martin Luther College in August.

In the preface to the play Trapp describes *Martin Luther* as an "ingenious blending of history and doctrine, humor and high drama." It is a play, he writes, "for children. It asks their questions, speaks their language, vibrates with their energy, laughs at their jokes, sings their songs, and expresses their faith."



Hagedorn



Scene with Luther talking to his daughter Magdalene.

The play includes two original songs by Janine Vasold Swain, a former parochial schoolteacher living in Milwaukee. Swain has composed over 200 songs for children. The other songs and hymns in the play were scored by James Albrecht, a talented and well-known musician living in the Milwaukee area.

The play can be adapted to any size school. A single classroom, for

example, could use just acts four, six, and eight. For a larger production, a single classroom could add acts one and two. A large school could add acts three, five and seven, assigning one act to each grade level.

David and Eileen, a book of children's stories also by Hagedorn, is in the process of publication by Northwestern Publishing House.

Contemporary music exposition

Forty-two composers and church musicians interested in contemporary music gathered recently at Wisconsin Lutheran



Jill Schulz of Milwaukee, composer of Christian folk music, plays one of her songs at the contemporary music exposition held at Wisconsin Lutheran College.

College of Milwaukee to practice their art at a contemporary music exposition.

James E. Engel, professor of music at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota, told the composers and church musicians that their task "is to communicate the most important facts of life, death, God and man. . . . No other art has the special Biblical sanction to carry the truth of God. Next to theology, only music has the power to sway the heart of man."

On the weekend two identical concerts of contemporary music written by WELS composers were offered in the newly renovated college chapel. A wide range of contemporary writing styles was represented.

Kenneth J. Kremer, principal of Gethsemane Lutheran School, Milwaukee, served as coordinator of the exposition. □

from the WELS

New Synod film in production

The Commission on Evangelism recently signed a contract with American Film Productions to produce a 16mm motion picture and a 35mm filmstrip. Production costs will be around \$70,000.

The film and filmstrip will tell the story of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod — past, present, and future.

Pastor Reuel Schulz of Milwaukee, co-chairman of the commission, predicts the film will be an "excellent tool to inform and edify members and member

prospects about the ministry of the Wisconsin Synod."

The fund to cover the cost of the film and filmstrip has reached \$57,000 in donations from congregations and congregational auxiliaries. "Every congregation that sends in financial support," said Schulz, "will receive a copy of the filmstrip."

If the tentative production schedule can be followed, said Schulz, "the premiere showing will be held at the Synod convention in New Ulm in August."

Reaching Out exceeds \$10 million

As this issue of The Northwestern Lutheran goes to press, Rev. Daniel W. Malchow, synodical director of the Reaching Out offering, has announced that the offering has surpassed the \$10 million minimum goal established by the 1981 convention of the Synod.

In his letter to the Reaching Out leadership Director Malchow quotes Malachi 3: "See if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it." This word of God, notes Malchow, "rings in our ears as we behold the blessings which

he continues to pour out upon our Reaching Out offering."

The \$10 million goal was reached with incomplete reports from 492 congregations, with 7,100 commitments, an average gift of over \$1400. "With only 42 percent of our congregations reporting," said Malchow, "we could have an extraordinary blessing from God."

According to the schedule, the gathering of offerings should be concluded by the end of April. "But there will be some gathering after that date," said Malchow. "With over 1150 congregations it is impossible for each one to move at the same time."

Japan offering tops \$130,000

Rev. Theodore A. Sauer, executive secretary of the Board for World Missions, reports that the 25th anniversary thankoffering of the Japan mission has reached more than \$130,000.

The 25th anniversary of the Lutheran Evangelical Christian Church of Japan was observed Synodwide on September 12, 1982. An offering was also gathered on that Sunday for the ailing church

extension fund of the Japan church.

At this date \$75,000 has been designated for the relocation of the chapel-parsonage in Shimodate because the city is planning a road where the building is located. Another \$32,000 has been assigned to Ashikaga for expanding the chapel there. The remainder of the funds, according to Sauer, will be allocated later.

Program for mentally retarded

A new program is now available for mentally retarded of all ages in the Synod. The program was run as a pilot project for several years by the Special Ministries Board.

The program is simple, but according to the participating parents "meaningful." It consists of personal letters, spiritual materials geared for the mentally retarded at church year festivals, a personal birthday card and mementos.

The reaction in the pilot stage of parents was "enthusiastic," according to Alfons L. Woldt, executive secretary of the board. "It was so enthusiastic that we had to offer it throughout Synod for the mentally retarded," he said, "whether they are at home or in an institution."

The program is operated entirely by volunteers, and generous gifts make the program a nonbudgetary item.

Names should be given to pastors who will forward them to the district special ministries board where they will be processed and sent to the board office in Milwaukee.

WELS film rental library planned

The Synod's Audiovisual Aids Committee has received a grant of \$10,000 from the Siebert Lutheran Foundation to establish a film rental library, according to its chairman, Pastor Rolfe F. Westendorf of Milwaukee.

The film rental library will contain quality films and video tapes which congregations previously had difficulty in obtaining. The film rental library, according to Walter Zimmermann, office staff of the committee, will become operational around July 1.

There will be no change in the present lending library system which is open to congregations with the payment of an annual fee, based on congregational membership.

Elijah has his horse and saddle

Within hours after the March 15 issue of *The Northwestern Lutheran* "hit the streets," Elijah had his horse. "In fact," Prof. Wendland reported, "he could have had three of them — and the saddles."

Professor Ernst H. Wendland of the Seminary had written an article for the March 15 issue reporting the need of Elijah Koffi, an evangelist of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon, for a horse. Elijah is a circuit rider for 17 congregations in the rugged Bamenda region of the Cameroon, and most of the circuit was being made on foot.

MISSIONARY William Hartmann, his wife Elizabeth, and five children recently moved into their new home in Blantyre, Malawi, Africa. Hartmann arrived in Malawi last August and has been busy with language study since then. He is beginning to work in several congregations in the Zomba area 50 miles away. He joins two other missionaries in the Blantyre area in serving 35 congregations with a baptized membership of 6000. Malawi is a growing mission field, and a 20-percent increase in membership is again projected for this year.



The check for the horse — and the saddle — has been mailed to President Bruno Njume of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Cameroon and acknowledged by him. Perhaps by the time you read these lines Evangelist Koffi will have his horse.

"I can't tell you how grateful I am," said Prof. Wendland, "for all the help that was offered. It will be so helpful to the kingdom work that Elijah is doing." But there is one more prayer, he said, that God would "send us an Elisha to take Elijah's place when Elijah can carry on no longer." □

church was dedicated. In 1956 a new school was dedicated and the old school was razed to make room for a playground.

During its 100 years seven pastors have served Trinity. The church has 896 baptized members and is served by Pastor Frederick T. Mueller. There are 130 enrolled in the Christian day school with six teachers on the faculty. Daniel E. Southard is the principal.

Sommer retires

On January 2 Immanuel of Oshkosh held a farewell service for its pastor, Orvin A. Sommer, who had announced his retirement.

Sommer, a native of Fond du Lac, was a 1939 graduate of the seminary. He served parishes at Cataract, Kingston-Salemville, Town Clayton and Town Greenville, and since 1971 Immanuel, all in Wisconsin.

During his ministry in the Appleton area he taught part time at Fox Valley Lutheran High, served as a visiting elder, and also served on the General Board for Home Missions.

Centennial at Van Dyne

Last fall Zion of Van Dyne celebrated its centennial with a month of special services. Speaker at the anniversary Sunday services was President Carl W. Voss of the Northern Wisconsin District.

Zion was one of three congregations founded because of a doctrinal controversy in the 1880s. Twenty men signed the constitution of the newly organized church on September 25, 1882. The church affiliated with the Wisconsin Synod.

Two acres of land were purchased in Van Dyne, and a new church was dedicated in 1883.

During its 100-year history eight pastors have served the congregation. Two of the pastors, J. Schulz and W. Weissgerber, served the church for a total of 80 years.

Zion has 235 baptized members and is served by Pastor Karl F. Molkentin. □

Michigan

Mrs. Emma Metzger dies

Emma M. Metzger, 96, widow of the late Pastor David M. Metzger, died on January 22, 1983 at Lansing, Michigan.

Mrs. Metzger was born in Zumbrota, Minnesota. A member of Christ Lutheran Church, she married Pastor Metzger while he served that congregation.

Mrs. Metzger is survived by sons, Walter and Waldemar; daughter, Ruth; one sister; six grandchildren; and seven great-grandchildren.

The funeral services were held at Zion Lutheran Church, Lansing.

Wisconsin

Centennial year at Marinette

Throughout 1983 five special services will observe the centennial of Trinity of Marinette.

Trinity was begun in 1882 when Pastor Henry Hillemann, a circuit rider in northern Wisconsin and upper Michigan, agreed to hold services in Marinette every other Sunday. In January 1883 there were 32 men present at the organizational meeting.

The first church was purchased from the Methodists and moved to the present site of the congregation. In 1902 the present

With the Lord

Carl J. Siegler 1946-1983

Pastor Carl J. Siegler was born July 18, 1946 at Madison, Wisconsin. He died on January 7, 1983 at La Crosse, Wisconsin.

A 1972 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, he was assigned to Redeemer, Tomahawk, which he served until his death. He served as secretary of the Rhinelander Conference, pastoral advisor for the LWMS Northwoods Circuit and in 1981 as German instructor at Northland Lutheran High School.

In 1971 he married Susan Horstman. He is survived by his wife; four children: Joanna, Jonathan, Rebekah and Sarah; parents: Rev. and Mrs. Reginald Siegler; one sister, Dorthea (Joel) Buege; and one brother, Richard.

The funeral services were held January 10 at Zion, Rhinelander and January 11 at St. Paul, Bangor, Wisconsin.



Siegler



Schabow

Alvin A. Schabow 1915-1982

Pastor Alvin A. Schabow was born November 25, 1915 at Appleton, Wisconsin. He died on November 1, 1982 at Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin.

A 1941 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, he served congregations in Hyde, Michigan, and Algoma and Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin.

In 1941 he married Enid Horn. He is survived by his wife, one son, one daughter, a foster daughter, two brothers, five sisters and 12 grandchildren.

The funeral services were held November 3 at Salem, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin. □

SYNOD CONVENTION

The forty-seventh biennial convention of the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod will meet from August 1-6, 1983 at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota. Details will be announced later.

David Worgull, WELS Secretary

APPOINTMENT

Pastor Roy H. Rose, Green Bay, has been appointed by the Northern Wisconsin District praesidium as circuit pastor for the Central Circuit of the Fox River Valley Conference, filling the unexpired term of Pastor Thomas A. Liesener who has accepted the call to Anchorage, Alaska.

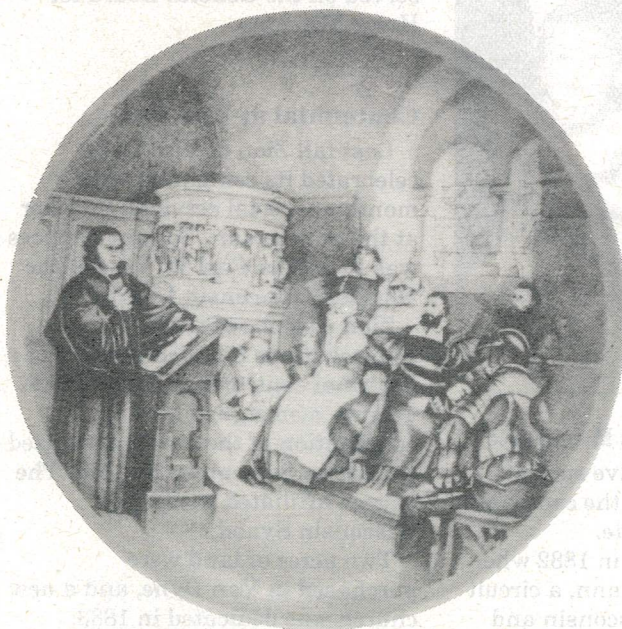
President Carl W. Voss
Northern Wisconsin District

BUSINESS MANAGER

Martin Luther Preparatory School located at Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin is seeking applications for the position of business manager. Members of our WELS congregations interested in this position are requested to forward a resume including educational background, previous experience, salary need, and references to President Theodore Olsen, Martin Luther Preparatory School, Prairie du Chien, WI 53821. Applications should be dated no later than May 10, 1983.

MARTIN LUTHER PREPARATORY SCHOOL PRAIRIE DU CHIEN, WISCONSIN Organ Recital

On Sunday, May 1, at 3:30 p.m. Prof. Kermit Moldenhauer of the MLPS music faculty will present an organ recital on the 38-rank Cassavant organ in the Campus Chapel. You are cordially invited to attend.



The Luther Plate

Made in the lustrous blue-and-white ceramic process for which Bing & Grondahl is world-famous, the LUTHER PLATE is seven inches in diameter. It is pierced for hanging and will fit the standard frames used by collectors of the famous series of Bing & Grondahl Christmas plates and Mother's Day plates.

On its face the plate shows Martin Luther preaching in the picturesque chapel of the Wartburg Castle. His listeners, in fascinating and authentic 16th century dress, include a cross-section of his contemporaries. The design is based on an old engraving.

The reverse side of the plate includes the artist's signature and the Bing & Grondahl logotype, with this commemorative inscription:

1983

500th anniversary of the birth of MARTIN LUTHER, Teacher of the Church (1483-1546)

"We should fear, love and trust in God above all things."

This familiar line from Luther's Small Catechism was chosen by the churches of Luther's homeland as the theme for the 500th anniversary.

This fine art plate comes in a presentation box, and makes a gracious gift or collector's item. Stock number 23-8357.

HANDLING & TRANSPORTATION

CHARGE ORDER Actual transportation charges will be billed.

CASH ORDERS Please add \$3.00 for handling and transportation.

We reserve the right to charge actual transportation charges when the actual exceeds the \$3.00.

Insurance on parcel post will be charged to the customer.

We are not responsible for merchandise lost or damaged in transit.

- Check or money order is enclosed.
 C.O.D. Charge Account — Net 30 days

\$42.50 each

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Please send me _____ **Luther Plates**
(23-8357) at \$42.50 each. \$ _____

Handling & Transportation* _____

Sub Total _____

5% Sales Tax — Wisconsin Residents _____

Note: 5% on Sub Total is required by Wisconsin law

Total Amount Enclosed \$ _____

EXPLORATORY SERVICES

are being held in the following places to determine the potential for establishing a WELS mission in the area. Services are held on Sundays unless otherwise noted.

RED DEER, ALBERTA — Fairview United Church, corner Taylor Dr. and Kerrywood Dr., Red Deer. 3:00 p.m.; Bible class/SS 4:00 p.m. Pastor John J. Sullivan, 5514 55th St., Wetaskiwin, Alberta, Canada T9A 1A7; phone 403/352-5726. In Red Deer contact Robert Thrun; phone 403/342-0442.

CINCINNATI (NORTHEAST), OHIO — Kinder-Care Learning Center, 10695 Loveland-Madeira Road, Loveland, Ohio. 9:30 a.m.; Bible class/SS 10:45 a.m. Pastor David A. Grundmeier, 10940 Barrington Court, Cincinnati, Ohio 45242; phone 513/489-5466.

ARLINGTON, TEXAS — Our Savior, 1506 Pioneer Parkway, Arlington. 8:30 a.m.; SS 9:45 a.m. Pastor Stanford R. Espedal, 1500 Cherry Lane #215, Arlington, Texas, 76013; phone 817/274-8919.

AUSTIN (SOUTH), TEXAS — TraveLodge Motel, San Antonio room, E. St. Elmo and I. H. 35, 8:30 a.m.; SS 9:40 a.m. Serving areas of Austin, San Marcos, Oak Hill, Buchanan Dam, Burnet and Llano. Pastor James L. Radloff, 10601 Bluff Bend Drive, Austin, Texas 78753; phone 512/836-4264.

CHANGE OF TIME OR PLACE OF WORSHIP

has occurred in the following exploratory areas or mission congregations.

KEARNEY, NEBRASKA — Good Shepherd, Banquet Room of Chef's Oven Restaurant, Tel-Star Motor Inn, 1010 Third Ave., Kearney. 7:30 p.m.; Bible class/SS 6:30 p.m. Pastor Jerome L. Enderle, 1300 N. Grand Island Ave., Grand Island, Nebraska 68801; phone 308/382-1988

FORT WORTH (SOUTHWEST), TEXAS — Abiding Faith, Seventh Day Adventist facilities (north wing), 7051 S. Mc Cart. 10:00 a.m.; Bible class/SS 9:00 a.m. Pastor Ed Lehmann, 5008 Lincoln Oaks Drive N. #501, Fort Worth, Texas 76132; phone 817/294-9303.

PLANO/ALLEN, TEXAS — Atonement, National Child Center, 913 Lexington, Plano. 11:00 a.m.; SS 9:30 a.m. Pastor Thomas Valleskey, 1826 Santa Fe, Lewisville, Texas, 75067; phone 214/436-3835.

NAMES WANTED

Survey work preliminary to conducting exploratory services is being done in the following places. If you know of people in these areas interested in WELS services, contact pastors noted.

RICHMOND, VIRGINIA — Pastor Paul Ziemer, 4013 Greenville, Dr., Haymarket, Virginia 22069; phone 703/754-2935.

ROANOKE, VIRGINIA — Pastor Joel T. Luetke, 3229 Sandra Lane, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23464; phone 804/424-3547 or 804/420-9652.

INSTALLATIONS

(Authorized by District President)

Pastors:

Garbow, Daniel, as pastor of St. John's, Saginaw, Michigan on February 20, 1983, by L. Schroeder (MI).
Palenske, Carlton, as pastor of First, Minnesota City, Minnesota on January 16, 1983, by J. Nolte (WW).
Rath, James, as pastor of Zion, Osceola, Wisconsin on March 6, 1983, by W. Staab (MN).

Commissioned:

Espedal, Stanford R. Jr., as missionary to Arlington, Texas area on February 13, 1983, by V. Glaeske (AC).

ADDRESSES

(Authorized through the District President)

Pastors:

Espedal, Stanford R. Jr., 1508 Cherry #210, Arlington, TX 76013.
Garbow, Daniel, 4724 Henry, Saginaw, MI 48603.
Palenske, Carlton, 100 E. 7th st., Winona, MN 55987, 507/452-3956.
Rath, James, Rt. 1, Box 138, Osceola, WI 54020.
Slienke, Richard C. em., 3941 N. 80th St., Milwaukee, WI 53222.

CALENDAR OF CONFERENCES

Northern Wisconsin District, Rhinelander Conference, April 18 at St. John, Phelps. Agenda: Mark 4:1ff; Justification.

South Atlantic District, South Central, April 18-20 at Prince of Peace, Martinez (Augusta), Georgia. Agenda: Gambling — What does the Bible Say?; Old Testament sermon study; Sermon criticism; Formula of Concord, Article VIII; Applying the Prayer Fellowship Principle in our Ministry.

Western Wisconsin District, Chippewa River Valley-Wisconsin River Valley Conferences, April 26 at St. Paul, Wisconsin Rapids. Agenda: Hebrews 8; New LC-MS Hymnal Evaluation; Justification

Western Wisconsin District, Teachers Conference, April 28-29 at St. Peter, Schofield. Agenda: Satan at Work Among us Today; How to Promote Synod Schools to Prospective Students; Reading Comprehension; Computers in the Classroom.

NEW WELS CHURCHES

Names Requested

In recent months the Wisconsin Synod began work in the states and cities listed below. Please send all names of members who moved into the general area of these cities, as well as names of people who may be interested in a Wisconsin Synod mission, to:

WELS MEMBERSHIP CONSERVATION
 3512 W. North Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53208

Names as well as pertinent information regarding members referred will be forwarded to the nearest pastor and/or mission board chairman.

Alaska	Kenai	South Anchorage*
Arizona	Apache Junction*	Russellville*
Arkansas	Poway*	Rancho Cucamonga
California	N. E. Denver*	S. Denver*
Colorado	Coral Springs	Daytona Beach*
Florida	S. Orlando*	Lehigh Acres
Georgia	N Atlanta*	Warner/Robbins/Perry
Idaho	Boise*	Baton Rouge*
Louisiana	Portland*	Novi
Maine	Traverse City*	Columbus*
Michigan	St. Charles County*	Springfield*
Mississippi	Kearney*	Poughkeepsie*
Missouri	Rochester	Springville
Nebraska	Charlotte	Dublin/Worthington*
New York	S. E. Cincinnati*	Medford
North Carolina	Medford	Milbank*
Ohio	Allen/Plano*	Arlington*
Oregon	Killeen	Lewisville
South Dakota	S. W. Ft. Worth*	Sugarland/Stafford/
Texas	Missouri City*	Tyler*
Vermont	Barre	Manassas
Virginia	Moses Lake*	Antigo*
Washington	Chippewa Falls	Merrill
Wisconsin	New Richmond*	Casper
Wyoming	Gillette	Calgary
Alberta	Red Deer*	Toronto
Ontario	Toronto	

*Denotes exploratory services.

WELS HISTORICAL INSTITUTE MEETING

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary at Mequon, Wisconsin, will host the spring meeting of the WELS Historical Institute — Wednesday, April 20, 7 p.m. Prof. Edward Fredrich of the Seminary will speak on "The Parting of Prof. Koehler and the Seminary." Mr. Bill Kramer will give a multimedia presentation, "A Century with Christ — Our Heritage to Share," depicting how one WELS congregation celebrated its centennial. The meeting is open to all who are interested.

FAMILY CAMPING IN WESTERN MICHIGAN

Camp Lor-Ray has 30 fully-developed campsites nestled among the pines on a private lake. It is owned and operated by an association of WELS and ELS churches. It is easily found and available for overnight or weeklong stays from Memorial Day through Labor Day. The rates are reasonable. Follow Hwy 31 to the Russel Road exit (3 1/2 mi. N. of Muskegon); continue north on Russel (1 1/2 mi.) to Camp Lor-Ray's sign. Contact Milt Karnitz 616/766-3152 or 616/755-2004 for further information.

ALTAR PARAMENTS

Free to any mission congregation willing to pay mailing cost; green and white paraments for altar, pulpit and lectern. Contact Mrs. David Meyer, St. John's Lutheran Church, Box 156 Wood Lake, MN 56297.

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PERSONAL COMMITMENTS

The money nerve . . . and the pledging nerve

by Victor H. Prange

A recent book on stewardship starts with a chapter titled: "The Money Nerve." We all have to confess to having that nerve: we are likely to feel some kind of keen sensation when the subject of money and giving money is raised. Not a few nerves have been touched in the *Reaching Out offering*.

There is another nerve which lies close to the money nerve. It's the pledging nerve. People are likely to have some rather strong opinions when the subject of pledging comes up. Touching the pledging nerve may provoke a very negative reaction.

Why? People aren't particularly upset when they are asked to "pledge" a certain amount per month when buying a home, farm or automobile. But they react negatively when even the suggestion comes up that they make a pledge for the work of the church.

Why? No doubt some people have heard about insensitive use of the pledge: churches which treat the pledge as such a binding financial contract that people are abused spiritually when unable to meet their commitment. Or the type of bill-like reminders which might be sent to people who have fallen behind in their pledges. Church leaders must treat members who fall behind in their pledges with love and understanding lest they be the cause of negative feelings about pledging.

Yet even when the matter of pledging is handled in a very evangelical way, there still is resistance to the idea. Why? I suspect there is much truth to the answer given by a farmer who refused to fulfill his \$550 pledge for the church building fund. "When I made that pledge," he said, "I was too religious to look after my own interests."

Pledging calls for a commitment. It calls for a commitment just as mar-

riage calls for a commitment. Some people don't like to make such binding commitments. Yet we would be in a very rough situation if we decided that all commitments were out. Human life and society are based on a multitude of commitments. Above all, our faith depends upon the pledges God has made to us. Each time we come to Holy Communion we have a pledge and token of his love and forgiveness, his promise of eternal life.

When we make a pledge to the Lord, we are making a commitment to set aside a portion of our income regularly for the work of his kingdom. When we make a pledge to him, we are following the example of him who has made pledges to us. When the pledging nerve is touched, let's make sure that it is not the old Adam who is doing the screaming. □



Pastor Prange is at Peace, Janesville, Wisconsin. He is also chairman of the Stewardship Board of the Western Wisconsin District.

*A man needs three conversions,
first of the heart, then of the head, then, lastly of the purse.*

Luther