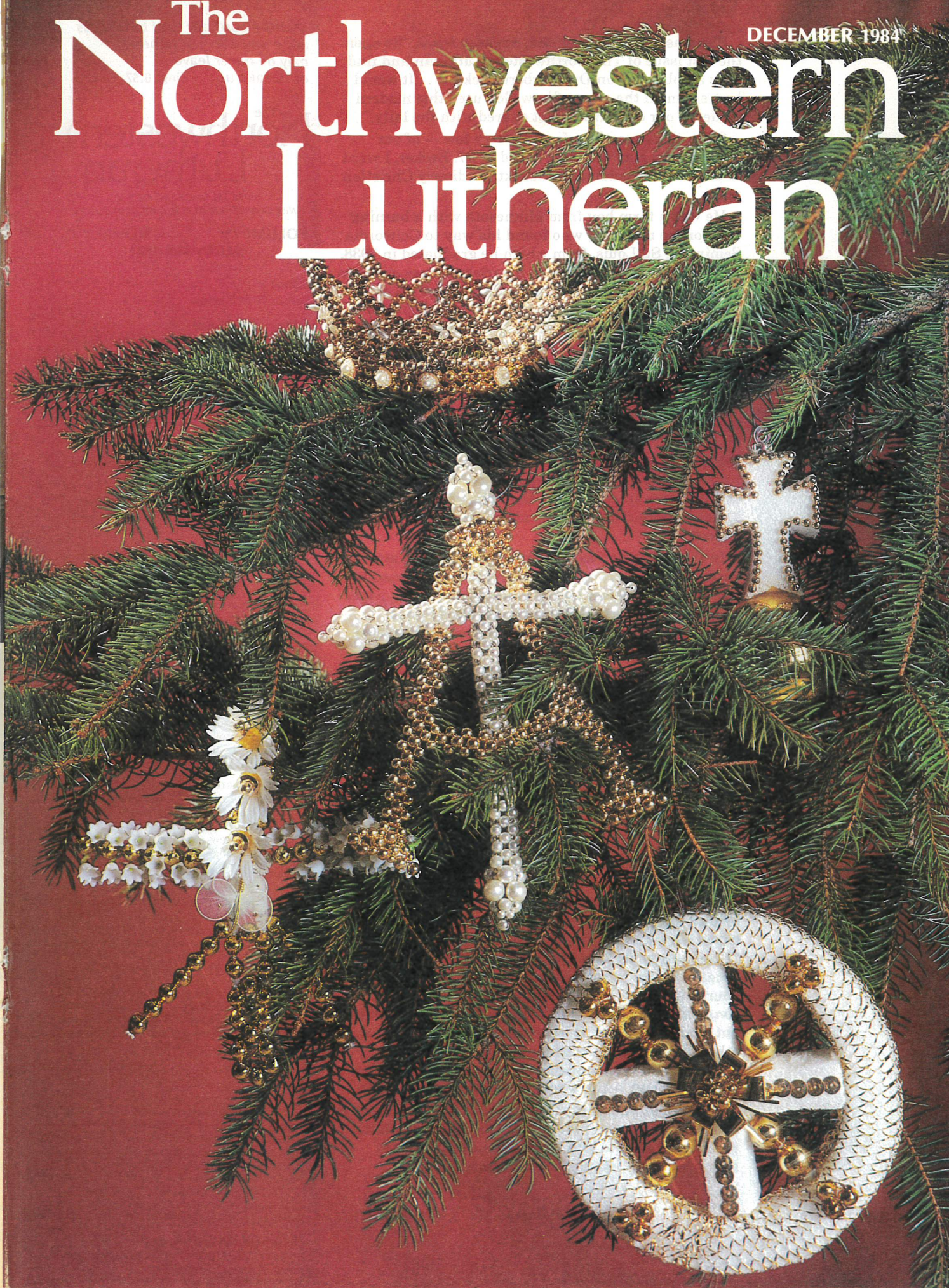
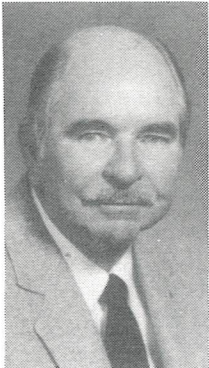


The
Northwestern
Lutheran

DECEMBER 1984



from this corner



She was very disappointed, a reader wrote, "to open the last issue of The Northwestern Lutheran and find only an obituary on Dr. Siegbert Becker. . . . It would be a shame if the story of how God used this modern leader of our church was not shared with the laity."

Since there may be a few — a very few — of our readers who may not have heard of Dr. Becker, I want to dedicate my column to this extraordinary Christian man.

He was a farm boy from Minnesota with a burning zeal for the ministry, who found his way to Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, from which he graduated in 1938. After nine-years of service in a parish, he was called in 1947 to teach religion at Concordia College, River Forest, Illinois where he taught until he accepted a call in 1963 to teach religion at Milwaukee Lutheran Teachers College and joined the Wisconsin Synod. In 1969 he accepted a call to Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. He retired in June 1984.

His ministry was that of the scholar and teacher of teachers and pastors. Yet, he was a popular lecturer at lay forums. His Bible classes were models of what a Bible class ought to be. His association with the Lutheran Confessional Church of Sweden brought him before many circuits of the Lutheran Women's Missionary Society to speak about this fledgling church.

In the pulpit he was a dynamic speaker and among our best. It was always with regret that you heard him say "amen." His last legacy to the Synod was a paper on Christian liberty delivered to the 1983 Synod convention. Never was he more eloquent or his sense of humor sharper.

Dr. Becker was deeply committed to the principles of the Reformation. When he found the academic climate at the University of Chicago at odds with his Reformation principles, he discontinued and transferred his doctoral studies to Northern Baptist Theological Seminary.

But his outstanding quality to my mind was his rugged, strong, unyielding faith. His battles within the Missouri Synod were not over abstract doctrines and detached propositions. They involved the deepest recesses of his faith. He always lived his life — all of it — in the presence of God.

In 1963, leaving the Missouri Synod controversies behind him, he joined the Wisconsin Synod. When asked why, he wrote in The Northwestern Lutheran, "I can only reply that I joined the Wisconsin Synod because it was important to me to be a member of a church in which *my own faith was not assailed constantly* by men who outwardly passed as brethren but who, by denying the inerrancy of Scripture and other fundamental doctrines of the church, were tearing down the foundations on which all Christian faith must rest — the words and promises of God."

His brilliant academic life was that life which rested upon the words and promises of God. It was a matter of life and death to him. From his new Christmas home, he would like to be remembered for that!

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

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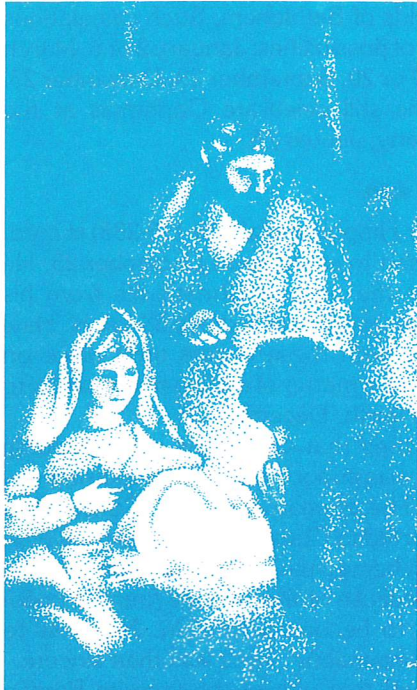
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Do what with Christmas?



*Give up
Christmas?
No thank you!
It's there to
share and to
give away
to everyone.*

... I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people (Luke 2:10b).

It happens every year. In an ecclesiastical version of "man bites dog" a righteously indignant cleric will break into newsprint that "Christ be taken out of Christmas" — or at least out of December 25th!

At first blush the sensitive Christian has a strong inclination to agree with the startling proposal. After all, as long as the hucksters and hustlers of commercialism have muscled into the festival anyway, perhaps the Christian Church should quietly fold up its tent and sneak off to Epiphany, January 6, the traditional date of the coming of the Wise Men to Bethlehem and let December 25 drown itself in aluminum trees, barking dogs woofing out *Jingle Bells* in stereo, and phony Santas dropping in on shopping centers by helicopters.

The easy way out

However, that's the easy way out and the Christian Church must never acquire the habit of "copping out," abandoning the world to either its sins or its excesses. Playing shell games with the day and date of Christmas is not in keeping with our responsibility of sharing the meaning of the "good news of great joy for all people."

The age-old never-ending task of the Christian Church is to persistently and insistently repeat the angelic announcement to humble shepherds, "Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you!"

As anachronistic as it looks and sounds, the "still quiet voice" of God's good news to all people has the amazing quality of being able to cut through the cacophony of greedy commercialization.

Though the ears and eyes of people are assaulted on every side during these holy days by the jangling of slamming cash drawers, the heart catches the sweet sound of God's redeeming love in the Christchild, the One born to die on Calvary's cross for all sins, even those committed around the anniversary celebration

of his birthday. The sword of the Spirit is more than able to slash its way through the world's trashing of this blessed festival and lay before the wondering eye the One whose name is *Wonderful*.

For all people

One more thought. The Christian Church does not and should not always condemn everything it sees in the world. After all, it was and is to a world of people that our God gives his good and perfect gifts and it is "for all people" in the world for whom this good news of God's greatest gift is intended. To present people the opportunity to shop for gifts of love for those held near and dear is certainly not wrong in or of itself. Not all merchants go money-mad, nor do all ride roughshod over the religious sensibilities of the people they are trying to serve by vulgar and raucous displays of Christmas tastelessness.

The Christian Church must ever and simply point to the real meaning of Christmas, "God-made-man" so that we might be made children of God through faith in that One born in a cattleshed. The Christian Church must use the symbols of love, gifts of the season, to point to the blessed Gift which truly never stops giving!

Move Christmas? Pout at Christmas time? Give up Christmas? No, thank you! It's there to share and to give away to everyone. □



Pastor Koeplin is at Atonement, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

350 years without Christmas

What is the most important church festival? No doubt without thinking twice most churchgoers would answer, "Christmas, of course!" But it wasn't always that way. As a matter of fact, for almost 350 years after Christ's birth the churches didn't even celebrate it. And it was almost 400 years until the holiday was widely recognized.

During those centuries without Christmas many pious Christians lived and died without ever giving much, if any, thought to celebrating the Lord's birth. To them the major holiday was Easter. And each new Sunday was the Lord's Day, a fresh reminder of Jesus' resurrection on the first day of the week. Those who did give some thought to Christmas were afraid that by honoring Christ's birth people might come to think of him as just another one of the many earthly rulers whose birthdays we celebrate.

Instead of being concerned with Christmas, the ancient church was much more interested in January 6, the Festival of Epiphany. This holiday was second only to Easter and directed people's attention to the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry: his baptism and first miracle. Today, of course, Epiphany lies in the shadow of Christmas and has even taken on a Christmas theme. We now use Epiphany to relate the final chapter of the Christmas story, the coming of the Wise Men.

A new emphasis

It was during the fourth century that the spotlight began to shift from Epiphany to Christmas. One reason for this was a growing emphasis on the miraculous, yet human, birth of the Savior. The early Christians had to contend with a group of cults called Gnostics ("Knowers"). These heretics often down-played Jesus' humanity. To them it was unthinkable that the eternal Son of God should come into the world as a little baby. They taught that Jesus first became divine at the time of his baptism. Gnosticism posed a serious threat to the early churches, much like cults who are pulling thousands away from Christian churches today.

It was only natural that discussions about Christ's humanity would center on his birth. The only problem was, nobody knew when the Savior was born. The Bible gives no specific date. And if the first generation of Christians knew it, either they didn't write it down or it wasn't preserved.

Putting together what scant information they had, theologians sought to arrive at the date. Some attempted to set the day when Zechariah (the father of John the Baptist) served in the temple; they then combined it with

the annunciation to Mary which took place "in the sixth month" following (Luke 1:26). Others tried to determine at what time of the year the shepherds might or might not have been in the fields of Bethlehem. Such calculations have led to a variety of possibilities: January 2 or 6, March 28 or 29, April 18, 19 or 20, September 29, December 25. Armenian Christians still celebrate Christmas at the same time as Epiphany, January 6.

The birth of the sun

The church father Hippolytus (about 170-235) is credited as the first person to settle upon December 25. He had concluded that the time of Christ's life from his conception to his crucifixion was exactly 33 years. Having determined that both these events took place on March 25, it was simply a matter of adding nine months to get the day of Jesus' birth, December 25.

About the same time that Christians were deciding that Jesus' birthday was important, another momentous event took place. The Roman Emperor Constantine (280-337) was converted to Christianity. Suddenly Christianity changed from being a persecuted religion to being the state religion. Because of this, people found it politically advantageous to become Christian. Needless to say, many of the "conversions" were less than sincere.

It just so happened that one of the favorite Roman holidays was the Saturnalia (December 17-24), which culminated in the celebration of the shortest day of the year and the birth of the "new sun" on December 25. These days were marked by processions, lighting candles and giving presents. This was also a time of merrymaking and overindulgence. Since the Romans were not inclined to give up their holiday, it seemed natural to replace the birth of the sun with the birth of "the Sun of Righteousness" (Malachi 4:2).

And ever since the first known celebration of Christmas in 336, preachers have been trying their best to put Christ "back" into Christmas.

A pagan holiday?

Perhaps you've heard Jehovah's Witnesses and others allude to this history and accuse Christians of sinning by celebrating Christmas on a pagan holiday. For example, Herbert W. Armstrong asserts, "[God] will not accept that kind of worship, even though intended in his honor . . . it is taking what is *abominable* to him, and therefore it honors, not him, but false pagan gods" (from "The Plain Truth About Christmas"). This type of accusation stems from a legalistic mindset which would try to limit when we may or may not worship.

Christians enjoy the God-given liberty to worship when they choose. "Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day" (Colossians 2:16).

If our celebration centers around nothing but parties and gifts, then, indeed, it is an abomination. Rather, we will want to concentrate on the awesome mystery of Christmas. The almighty Son of God is born a lowly child. As Luther commented, "There in a stable . . . lay the Creator of all the world." In love he came to rescue us from sin and damnation. Like Mary, the mother of God, we should take these truths and treasure them in our heart.

It is sobering to think that the church blossomed, grew and flourished for 350 years without Christmas. How? The early Christians lived each new day in the wonder of God's glorious grace.

We are not advocating doing away with Christmas. But this year let's take a moment to consider what really matters. Quite frankly, if we had to we could get along without Christmas . . . even for 350 years. But neither the church nor the individual Christian can do without Christ. He is the only Savior. □



Pastor Ehlke is an associate editor at Northwestern Publishing House.



"Lo,
how
a rose
e'er
blooming"

There is Joy in Christmas

Christmas is supposed to be a season of joy. The standard greeting, the Christmas cards, the eye-catching seasonal signs all say it: "Merry Christmas!" It seems almost subversive to be lacking in "Christmas spirit." But the truth is that a lot of people are glad when it's over; and after it's over, they experience a distinct sense of relief.

It isn't that it's overlooked like Pentecost. It isn't that too little preparation goes into it. Reminders of its approach begin to show up already in September. It's other things that keep it from being that great season of joy we have come to expect of it.

It's the near-frenzy which precedes it. It's the fear of buying the wrong present or omitting someone's name from the Christmas card list. It's the uneasy feeling that we have become dupes of clever schemes to make money. It's disappointment in learning that the day after Christmas has become the biggest day of the year for shopping (or non-shopping) as enormous crowds throng the stores to return or exchange Christmas gifts. It's dismay over the debts or the depleted bank account. It's the startling disclosure that while the happy make merry, more than the usual number of troubled persons take their own lives in fits of depression and loneliness at Christmastime.

Even among Christians, who value Christmas for what it really signifies, there is an uncomfortable feeling that much of the treasured Christ-centered music which wafts through the air during the season is just part of the hype to push merchandise and that even many religious Christmas programs have become vehicles to showcase the cuteness of little children.

Maybe old Scrooge had a point when he dismissed it all as humbug.

Much annoying clutter has obviously come to compete with the ancient message: "Unto you is born this day in the the city of David a Savior." Another thing: Hasn't that message itself developed into just another of those overused and overworked sayings known as cliches?

It may seem that way. But even cliches generally emphasize a truth. We are, for example, expressing incontrovertible truths in such cliches as "the ravages of time" . . . "Nothing lasts" . . . "We're all going to die" . . . "Everyone is going to meet his Maker."

These sayings may be old and shopworn, but they are true just the same. And so is the message, "Unto you is born . . . a Savior." Nothing has occurred in all history to change the fact that we need a Savior. Nothing can alter the truth that in Jesus Christ God has provided one.

With that in mind we can, like the shepherds, return to routine life after Christmas glorifying and praising God for all the things we have heard and seen — without a bitter aftertaste.

Immanuel G. Frey



Pastor Frey
is at Zion,
Phoenix, Arizona.

letters

Not for the repentant

I agree with the writer (Pro-life and pro-forgiveness, October 15) that the article "My diary" is not for the repentant mother who has had an abortion. She needs to hear the same sweet assurance of God's forgiveness that each of us needs to hear when our sins loom before us.

There is, however, use for an article like "My diary." It might be useful when dealing with the abortion "fence-rider" who is unaware of God's miraculous development of the unborn child or when a confused mother is considering abortion and needs to identify with her child. "My diary" clearly views matters from the child's perspective. It might open doors of discussion and provide more opportunity to witness to God's will.

There is even a use for those films picturing the horrors of abortion. The use is not intended to reach Christians who are already grieved by the millions of lives lost. Such graphic film is for those who deny that abortion is violent, for the uninformed, for the misinformed, for those taken in by the calloused abortionist who whitewashes abortion as being "a simple procedure that eliminates the product of conception." People are bombarded today with mixed messages about abortion, and its takes strong measures to tear down the smoke screens that abortion advocates use.

Let us thank God for the effective tool of his Word. It not only tears down evil smoke screens but it has power to change hearts and redirect lives under Christ.

*Vi Schrupp
Gaylord, Minnesota*

Waking a passive citizenry

Regarding the life and forgiveness letter (October 15). . . .

Few who have been involved with abortion counseling in any facet would disagree with his position of compassion and forgiveness being of utmost importance in post abortion counseling.

The "Caring" slides which our pregnancy counseling centers use are very good at reflecting the importance of individual life and the need for com-

passion and care through a personal dilemma.

There are many phases an individual may grow through in learning about abortion: denial (of the true facts about what the deadly process involves); apathy (I-don't-want-to-get-involved-in-such-a-controversy attitude); recognition (what is going on at the expense of 1,500,000 pre-born babies per year); horror and disgust (over such a degeneration of a nation); education (of one's self as to what to do); involvement (supporting alternative options and legislation for life); and, yes, compassion.

The "shocking films" used by pro-life groups are not aimed to further devastate a problem-pregnancy situation, but rather to wake our passive citizenry out of its comfortable apathy of the exploitative pro-choice mentality.

Those "little people" formed in secret by God's plan have become our modern-day martyrs. Defenseless — they need a voice. There is need for all of these: films, forgiveness, and compassion — each in its place.

*Carol Lemke
Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin*

Making sure of priorities

I too read Mr. Kosanke's letter (August 1) and would like to comment on it.

I am a lay person, married and mother of four who has in the past few years struggled often with the question of whether or not I should re-enter the work force.

Whether putting one's name on a call list or in the personnel file of a large corporation, a Christian mother's question remains the same: Father, is this using my talents at this time as you would have me do?

Lay person or Christian day school teacher, thoughts of the extras a job outside the home could provide sometime cloud the answers we have prayed for and make it hard to submit to God's will.

I didn't get the impression that Mr. Kosanke was questioning the validity of a married woman's call — only asking her to make sure her priorities are in order before she seeks to get one.

*Edith Priebe
Kimberly, Wisconsin*

Measuring spiritual gifts

A few observations on Pastor Franzmann's article, The Christian uses spiritual gifts (October 1).

Perhaps it is not so much that the spiritual gifts of Christians are not being used, but that like the world the church seems only to recognize those gifts which are obvious and seen by people.

Recently our pastor's sermon referred to the fact that 20% of the members of a church do 100% of the work. If the only spiritual gifts acknowledged by the church are outward ones, such as cleaning the church, preparing the altar, teaching Sunday school, increasing financial contributions, etc., then probably this statistic is correct.

However, what of the spiritual gifts that are used but seen only by God? Counseling a fellow Christian; encouraging growth in faith; praying for the sick and emotionally distressed; or reading the Bible to someone who cannot read or is no longer able to. Surely all of these are as important to the growth of the Holy Christian Church as any other spiritual gift. This is not to say that there is never room for improvement. We should be struggling day by day, hour by hour: Teach me, Lord, show me your ways.

It would appear as though the Wisconsin Synod becomes more like the Pharisee every day. Look at me, Lord. Look what I do. Can we truly measure the work and worth of our churches by earthly standards? Shouldn't our measurement be based more on a growth in faith, our spiritual gifts seen and unseen, rather than on a statistic?

*Lynll D. Allen
Alpine, California*

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I would like to know BY PAUL E. KELM

Dancing is mentioned many times in the Bible. In many instances it was God-pleasing. Why then do some in our church label dancing as sinful? My pastor says that it can be sinful for some people, or by the way they do it; but couldn't this be said about swimming, roller-skating and just about anything?

The dancing mentioned in the Bible is either folk dancing or an expression of praise in a setting of worship, presumably “partnerless” dance. Sensual dancing contributed to God’s judgment at Sinai and the murder of John the Baptist. While we haven’t adopted liturgical dance, confessional Lutherans don’t condemn all dancing either.

The issue isn’t really dancing. It’s Christian witness. The place and its reputation, the message of the music, the suggestion in dress and movement, all color those who participate. “Color me Christian” is the witness we want to make, for the sake of the Lord, his people and lost people.

The issue is also Christian self-control. When “let’s get physical” is the mood, the lust in our human nature is easily stimulated. Add alcohol to subtract virtuous inhibitions, and lust on the dance floor becomes a prelude. St. Paul urges “that each of you should learn to control his own body in a way that is holy and honorable, not in passionate lust” (1 Thessalonians 4:4).

Finally, the issue is responsible love. Christians are responsible for the response in others to their dancing. The fact is that men are more easily aroused sensually, and not everyone views dancing recreationally. Jesus warned against offense — leading others to sin, if only in their mind. St. Paul expanded on that theme, asking us to forego our Christian liberty if sensitive souls might be led to doubt by our actions (Romans 14). Such a “weak brother” who feels all dancing is wrong should be built up by spiritual growth, not crushed by flaunting our right to right dancing.

Of course, the sword of offense cuts two ways. David’s dance, leading the ark of covenant to Jerusalem, “offended” his wife Michal. The offense, however, lay in Michal and her judgmental heart. Love doesn’t accede to legalism or judgmentalism.

Rather than simply seeking to justify what might not be wrong, Christians ought to begin by considering how best to glorify God in Christian witness, virtue, and love. That is as true of dancing as any other issue. Rather than attempt to buttress God’s holy will with sweeping prohibitions, Christians ought to address an issue at the points where God’s will meets life today — Scripture, then application, not vice versa. As I’ve suggested, the real issue isn’t dancing. Rather than assuming that religious rules translate into personal values, Christians ought to assist each other toward responsible decision-making based on biblical truth and gospel-motivated love. I hope I’ve done that.

Many Christian youth organizations outside our fellowship feature “Christian rock” music. Could Christian rock bands be beneficial and edifying for our own young people’s organization?

That all depends . . .

There are good hymns and bad hymns, strong and weak hymns, in any musical idiom. The message, not the medium, is the primary determinant. I’ve heard good Christian rock. The bad stuff is usually identifiable for one of the following flaws: contentless emotion, charismatic subjectivism, millennial delusions, ecumenical sentiment, or a fuzzy theology of Christ and salvation. In fact, some such music is rank moralizing. *Truth* is beneficial and edifying.

The medium *is* of significance, without any bias of taste or opinion. Christian folk and “soft” rock music typically accentuate the message in the lyrics. “Hard” Christian rock may only verify the familiar disclaimer of youth: “We don’t listen to the words.” There can be praise in instrumental music done to the glory of God, on the organ or the electric guitar. But if the medium becomes the message, the hard rock medium has a cultural message that will resist sanitizing in most minds, young or old. Terms like “Christian punk” or “Christian heavy metal” seem a contradiction in terms. I wouldn’t call a Mozart concerto spiritually beneficial and edifying, though, either.

That raises the question of motive. Beneficial and edifying Christian rock is sung or heard to praise God, witness truth, or pray needs. There may be value in promoting good Christian rock as an entertainment alternative to satanic, sex-crazed, or vulgar rock; but “beneficial and edifying” suggest something more than mere entertainment. And young people will probably resent patronizing attempts by their elders to fuse Christianity and rock into “sanctioned” entertainment.

Before you promote any rock band, know who, what and why. Best of all, involve your youth group in evaluative study of Christian rock — and secular rock. Help them discover Christian principles by which to make personal judgments of music, both in worship and in entertainment. Christian rock bands could be beneficial and edifying for your youth organization, if for no other reason, as a focus of study. □



Send your questions to *Questions, The Northwestern Lutheran*, 2929 N. Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 53222. Questions of general interest are preferred. Sorry, questions will not be answered by correspondence.

Pastor Kelm is executive secretary for the Synod’s Commission on Evangelism.

There is a great deal of frustration about Christmas — Christmas, at least, as America knows it. One radio announcer said it best; he called it “The Christmas Thing.” America goes wild with “The Christmas Thing,” and we ought to see that a lot of it is the devil’s foolishness. The devil drums us all full of those sloppy, sentimental thoughts on “what the true meaning of Christmas is.” One woman said she found the true Christmas spirit a couple years ago when she stopped to pick up a black Labrador that had been hit by a car, and took it to the humane society. She said, “Those people showed the Christmas spirit by helping to save a pitifully injured dog.” Hand in hand with such nonsense, the devil drives us to sheer exhaustion with Christmas busy-ness: cookies, cleaning, Christmas trees, tinsel, lights, ornaments, wreaths, bells, candles, gifts, cards, letters, flowers, eggnog, kuchen, stollen, choirs, organs, rehearsals, concerts, parties, and just about whatever else the magazines promise will insure a Merry Christmas. . . .

The foregoing tirade against the evils of the season to be jolly continued for some time, all of it blistering and well-documented, a lot of it may be even true.

Who was this who was so mad at Christmas?

I shudder now to recall. It was I.

What was it about Christmas that managed to make at least this preacher so insufferably grumpy? Why is it that we feel at times we must be the lonely voices in the wilderness, decrying the commercialism and the secularism and all the other six-syllable sins of Christmas? Why is it that the holidays become the worst of days — most especially for us?

I believe we preachers and we listeners can learn something from the first Christmas Day sermon ever



I BRING YOU GOOD NEWS

by Mark Braun

preached. Remember that sermon? “I bring you *good news* of great joy. . . .” What kind of world was it that that first sermon was preached to? A sinful world? A hostile world? A secular world? A commercialized world? All of the above. In that world household slaves were sometimes beaten, occasionally killed. In that world good citizens regularly complained about graft in banking and business. In Rome, prostitution was legalized and regulated. A lesser-known Roman named Quintus Vespillo said, “Seldom do marriages last without divorce.” A better-known Roman named Juvenal observed, “Poor women endure the perils of childbirth. . . , but how often does a gilded bed harbor a pregnant woman? So great is the skill, so powerful the drugs, of the abortionist!” And the stories we’ve heard about condemned criminals being tossed to the lions? They’re true.

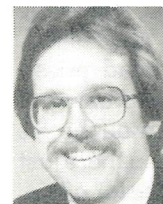
It was a world worth scolding about, and in its time and place early Christians preached God’s judgment. But the Christmas angel did not adorn the midnight sky over Bethlehem to moan, “Look what the world has come to!” — a message which too often, I fear, passes for the gospel. The angel came to proclaim, “Look what has come to the world?” That is the Gospel.

One of our preaching teachers at the Seminary made the convincing point that on the three great festivals

of the New Testament church year — Christmas, Easter and Pentecost — what ought to be sounded from our pulpit is good news, pure, joyful, unrestrained *good news*. Is there commercialism out there? It runs rampant. Are people caught up in Christmas busy-ness? Undoubtedly. Is there some confusion as to “the true meaning of Christmas”? Absolutely. Let’s set the record straight. The true meaning of Christmas is good news — the Christ has come! And we come to celebrate.

I’ve heard about another Christmas sermon, a sermon I was not privileged to hear in person, only hear about. The preacher began by listing the familiar Yuletide transgressions — spending too much and partying too much and drinking too much and all the rest. It had the makings of a catalog of bad news. But then, in near mid-sentence, the preacher stopped, and he said, “What a marvelous God we must have! He sent his Son into the world, and even the unbelieving world can’t help being caught in the celebrating.”

“I bring you *good news*,” the angel said. I hope you bring — and hear — the same. □



Pastor Braun is at St. John’s, Sparta, Wisconsin.

Better worship in a better temple

Read 9:1-10. . . . Apollos now gives us a brief picture of the tent which was built at Mt. Sinai to serve as the Israelites' place of worship (see Exodus 36:8 — 38:20), and also Solomon's Temple (see 1 Kings 6), with their two rooms (vv. 1-4). Then in verse 7 he describes briefly the service on the Day of Atonement, their greatest annual festival (see Leviticus 16). And in verse 8 he

LETTER TO THE HEBREWS

by Julian G. Anderson

talks about the symbolism of having the *inner room* (most holy place) walled off by a curtain, showing that the way into the real most holy place (heaven) wasn't yet opened up. Thus it was clear that the whole old covenant worship system was only temporary and symbolic. For their sacrifices, just things to eat and drink, couldn't make their consciences clean from *sin*, and their washings could only point to the time when everything would be made clean.

Jesus' better sacrifice in the better temple

Read 9:11-22. . . . This section is really the climax of the letter, setting forth God's plan of salvation simply and clearly, and noting that Jesus' work had to do with the future, not the past. Here we see him as the *real* head priest of whom all the others were symbols or pictures. And Jesus' ascension is pictured as "going through that greater and more perfect tent, which wasn't made by hands, into *the* most holy place" (heaven) as the great head priest. "But he didn't bring in the blood of goats and calves. He brought *his own blood*. And he went in there just *once* to make *one sacrifice* for *all sin*,

since he has found a way to set us *all free for all eternity*" (vv. 11,12). That is the Good News, the heart of the Christian faith, told in the simplest, most dramatic way. Jesus is not only the great head priest, but also the perfect sacrifice, whose blood has won forgiveness, life and salvation for all human beings.

Then Apollos compares Jesus' sacrifice with the blood of goats and calves in the old covenant. At best those could only make the body clean, while Christ's perfect sacrifice makes our consciences clean, so that we can serve the living God (vv. 13,14). Therefore Jesus is the middleman of a *new covenant*, which brings to us who are living under it "all the things God has set aside to give to his children for all eternity!" (v. 15). So both covenants were like wills, which couldn't go into effect until a *death* occurred — that of a sacrifice. And this involves God's principle, that "unless some blood is poured out, there is no forgiveness" (v. 22). For as Paul says, "The wages of sin is death!"

Read 9:23-28. . . . This section sums up what we have just discussed — that everything about the old covenant are merely copies or pictures of the real things of the new covenant, where the temple is heaven itself, and Jesus is now standing in God's presence as our great head priest. And the sacrifice he brought was himself, and was made just *once* to do away with sin completely. So now that he has died, as all men must die, and risen again, "He will appear a second time to *save* those who are patiently waiting for him" (v. 28).

Read 10:1-18. . . . Here the summary ends by pointing out that the animal sacrifices of the old covenant couldn't make the people perfect

(clean). Their only real purpose was to remind the people of their sins each year, "because there's no way that the blood of bulls and goats can take away sins" (v. 3). And as Psalm 40:6-8 says, God didn't really want those sacrifices as such. He wanted the *one* sacrifice his Son could bring (v. 5), which has put an end to all the old sacrifices. And God's *new* covenant was not written on tablets of stone, but in the hearts and minds of God's people. And God's part of this new covenant is no longer his law, but his gracious promise of *forgiveness*. "And we are now holy and clean, because Jesus Christ did what God wanted by bringing his own body as the *one* sacrifice for *all sin*" (vv. 9,10). And now that he has made God's people perfectly holy *forever*, Jesus is seated at God's right hand, waiting for the time of his return. Therefore since our sins have been forgiven (removed completely), "there is no longer any need to bring an offering for sin (a sacrifice)" (vv. 11-18).

That last thought, of course, was addressed to Apollos' Jewish readers, who were being pressured by their friends and relatives to keep on bringing their sacrifices and following the old covenant way of worship. But strangely enough that last verse is still being ignored today by all the Catholic churches, who teach their people that in their daily masses, Christ is being sacrificed over and over again for their sins. □



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

If only every day were Christmas

I remember wishing that as a child. I'm sure you do too. There's much about Christmas to suggest such a wish. The joy, the peace, the harmony, the all-around goodwill of the season — if only it would continue. If only every day were Christmas!

Really, it is! At least, it can be. If we don't forget what Christmas is all about. And no one ever described it with more beautiful simplicity than John, "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son." To save us from our sin. That through faith in him we might live forever in heaven. For that he came above all.



But only for that? Are we to assume that his coming into the flesh does nothing for us this side of heaven? By no means. It's true, eternal life is just that. It's forever. But it doesn't first begin in eternity. By faith in the Christchild it's ours here and now. That makes every day Christmas.

It makes every day Christmas in our homes. Our Savior lived as a member of the human family, tempted like we are, though without sin. He can put himself in our place. And he is still as near as his Word. He is eager to forgive us, to give us a forgiving heart, to give us strength to pick up the broken pieces of our lives, to help us curb our nagging and bickering, to rise

above the vexing irritations a day can bring.

And why shouldn't every day be Christmas at the workplace as well? The first news of the Savior's birth came to shepherds. Later he was called the carpenter's son. He freely moved among people from every walk of life, fishermen, tax collectors, government officials, rich and poor, learned and unlearned. He knows the difficulties involved in making both ends meet. He knows how exhausting, how discouraging, how frustrating our daily routine can become. To open the door of heaven for us, for that he came above all. But meanwhile his aid is available to help us correct our mistakes, to face the problems and challenges of our vocation, to guide us in making our decisions, to aid us in overcoming our inadequacies.

And why shouldn't every day be Christmas in our total lives? "That I should be his own . . . and serve him." It's no longer a matter of making the best of a bad situation, but each new day of grace is another opportunity I eagerly seize to show forth his praises in everything I do and say. The love of Christ constrains me.

That makes every day Christmas.

Carl H. Muschke

With the Lord

Agnes Elizabeth Hohenstein 1892 — 1984

Agnes Elizabeth Hohenstein (nee Haar) was born November 27, 1892 in Lake City, Minn. She died June 18, 1984 in Watertown, Wis.

Following graduation from Dr. Martin Luther College, she taught school in Lake City, Minn.

In 1913 she married Carl J. Hohenstein. He preceded her in death. She is survived by sisters, Phoebe Schaar, Erna Kuehl and Dolores Mowinkel; and brothers, Pastors William and Theophil.

Funeral services were held June 21 at Trinity, Watertown, Wis.

Looking back from The Northwestern Lutheran

50 years ago . . .

A Lutheran publication furnishes its readers each month with an array of epigrams. We offer our own readers a few of the latest: "It's a wise man who knows he isn't." "A bold front often indicates a weak back." "The man who has the stuff never attempts to bluff." "The passage, 'Hold fast to that which thou hast,' does not refer to our bad habits." "Great virtues do not excuse small vices." "Gossips have a keen sense of rumor." "Pushing, not kicking, makes for progress." "Many climb to considerable heights by remaining on the level." "Some people think they have an inferiority complex, when as a matter of fact they're just inferior."

25 years ago . . .

Immanuel of Farmington, Wisconsin recently commemorated the 100th anniversary of its organization. The organization was founded in 1859 with a small nucleus of immigrant Christians in the area. In 1865 Immanuel became a member of the Wisconsin Synod. During these 100 years it was served by 13 pastors.

Confessional church celebrates tenth anniversary

It was a moving moment at the tenth anniversary celebration of the Lutheran Confessional Church (Sweden, Norway, and Finland)- (LCC), held at Uppsala, Sweden, September 7-9, when Pastor Edgar Hoenecke reminded the 200 Scandinavian Lutherans of the debt of gratitude they owed the late Dr. Siegbert W. Becker of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

In the news

The LCC's first contact with Dr. Becker came through his doctrinal articles, some of which were translated into Swedish. In 1972 Dr. Becker spent August in Sweden lecturing and counseling with the men who would later organize the LCC in 1974.

For Dr. Becker the 1972 contact was the first of many trips to the Scandinavian countries carrying with him his staunch confessionalism, enthusiasm and wise counsel. His task the more welcome to the LCC because he had learned the Swedish language, the better to share his faith with them.

Dr. Becker was to have spent the entire 1984-85 school year in Sweden working on a commentary and assisting in a new Swedish translation of the Bible. Stricken suddenly with cancer, Dr. Becker was not able to carry out his assignment.

In honor of the important role played by Dr. Becker in the formation of the LCC, Pastor Hoenecke asked all at the anniversary celebration to rise and "bow their heads in recognition and thanksgiving."

President George Orvick of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod also spoke of the crucial part Dr. Becker played in the launching of the LCC. In Swedish he sang the hymn *Children of the Heavenly Father* which he had sung at Dr. Becker's funeral four days before in Milwaukee.

In addition to the anniversary services, a number of lectures were



A moment of silence in memory of Dr. Becker.

delivered during the weekend. Dr. Ingemar Fuerberg of Gothenburg spoke on the eternal election of grace. Dr. Seth Erlandsson of *Biblicum*, center of the LCC, spoke on the view of Scripture and scriptural faith. Prof. Carl Lawrenz, representing the WELS Commission on Inter-Church Relations, spoke on the doctrine of confessional fellowship.

The anniversary weekend was followed by a "free conference" on Monday at which participants in the anniversary met with

representatives of the Independent Ev. Lutheran Church of Germany (SELK). Present also was President Markku Sarela of the Lutheran Free Church of Finland. At the one-day conference Scripture and fellowship were discussed along with a regulation of SELK relative to ecumenical marriages.

Representing the Wisconsin Synod at the anniversary celebration and the free conference were President Carl Mischke, Pastor Martin Janke, Pastor Edgar Hoenecke and Prof. Carl Lawrenz.

Missionaries commissioned for Africa

Two missionaries were recently commissioned for the Lutheran Church of Central Africa: John P. Hartwig, a 1983 seminary graduate, and Karl E. Kuenzel, a 1974 seminary graduate.

Hartwig was commissioned at Zion, South Milwaukee, and is presently serving in Lilongwe, Malawi.

Hartwig has already spent two years overseas, studying in Europe. His wife, the former Helen Steele of Redondo Beach, Calif., was born in Arabia where her father worked for an oil company and spent a dozen years there. She is a DMLC graduate and has a master's degree from Michigan State. Hartwig also has a master's degree from the University of Wisconsin — Madison.

Kuenzel served congregations in



Hartwig



Kuenzel

Abrams and Maribel, Wis. before accepting the call to the LCCA. Kuenzel and his wife, the former Karen Black of Bath, Mich., left for Africa in early fall and are now stationed in the Zomba and Machinga districts of Malawi.

Both missionaries were commissioned by Pastor David E. Kock of Rhinelander, Wis., chairman of the executive committee for the Lutheran Church of Central Africa.

World Mission executive installed

In a special service at Trinity, Waukesha, on October 10 Pastor Duane K. Tomhave was installed as executive secretary of the Board for World Missions. The installation service was scheduled to coincide with the fall meeting of the board.

Present were the two former executive secretaries of the board, Pastor Theodore A. Sauer, who was the guest speaker for the service, and Pastor Edgar H. Hoenecke, who assisted at the installation. Sauer, Hoenecke's successor, retired last June.

"The temptation will be there," Sauer told his successor, "to think that when you have developed some neatly outlined program . . . or far-reaching policy statement then you are really moving forward."

Michigan

Dedication at Perry

On July 15 Our Savior of Perry dedicated its initial chapel unit.

Our Savior had its beginnings in 1978 as a result of survey work done by the Flint Circuit Mission Committee. In late 1979 exploratory services were begun and in 1980 a congregation was chartered around a nucleus of 70 baptized members. In the same year the newly organized congregation called their first and present resident pastor, Curt L. Grube, who serves the 135 baptized members.

The chapel contains seating for 200, a pastor's office, meeting room, and Sunday school space for 60.

Reported by Edward Schaeve

South Dakota

Anniversary noted

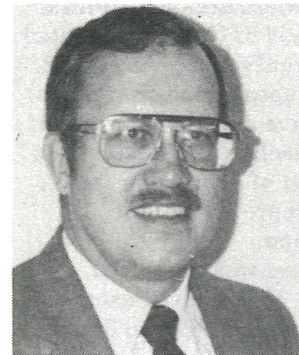
Mrs. Lila Klatt, organist at Emmanuel of Grover, was honored by the congregation with a surprise dinner on May 6. A short program followed at which gifts were presented to the jubilarian. Mrs. Klatt has served the congregation since 1959, and she will continue to serve in that capacity.

Reported by R. Kanzenbach

"The bottom line is the manner and extent to which the Word is preached. . . . Your primary interest must be in getting the Word on a one-to-one basis to the person living in some remote village or barrio."

Installing Tomhave was Pastor William A. Meier of Phoenix, Ariz., chairman of the world mission board. Assisting were the chairmen of the board's executive committees. Following the service a reception was held for the new executive secretary.

Tomhave, 48, was born in Montevideo, Minn. After graduation from Martin Luther Academy and Northwestern College, he entered Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and graduated in 1961. He served congregations in Phoenix, Ariz., Saginaw, Mich.,



Tomhave

and Genesee Depot, Wis., before accepting the call as executive secretary.

He was a member of the Executive Committee for Central Africa since 1981 and served as secretary of the world board.

Tomhave is married to Janice Hanson of Morrissetown, S. Dak. There are three children, Sandra Kay, Bonni Lyn, and Vicki Sue who is still at home.



MEMBERS of the travel/canvass/witness outreach teams of 1984-1985 are pictured together with Pastors Paul Kelm and Larry Zwiig who conducted their orientation training sessions. The eight teachers and two pastoral members began their work July 11 and will be traveling the United States doing canvass and witness work for the entire coming year. They are (standing left to right): Jeffrey Schwede, Cheryl Tabbert, Pastor Steven Sauer, Tina Mohr, Timothy Pieper, Kevin Kutz, Bonnie Maliszko and Pastor Robert Smith. Seated (left to right): Pastors Kelm and Zwiig, Chris Bobholz and Craig Radue.

Bethlehem centennial

Seventeen states were represented when the nearly 250 present and former members and area friends of Bethlehem, Raymond, celebrated its 100th anniversary in June. Pastor Robert J. Zink of Hales Corners, Wis., who served the congregation from 1959 to 1964, was the guest speaker.

Pastor Ronald W. Mehlberg of Jackson, Wis., spoke at the afternoon service. He is a former member of the Raymond congregation and is related to many of the church pioneers.

Bethlehem was organized in 1884 by Missionary Franz Johl of the then Minnesota Synod. The first worship services were held at times in the local school and at the home of Reinhard Nommensen, who ran the hardware store in Raymond. During the past 100 years 23 pastors and one vicar have served the congregation which has been part of a dual parish with Peace Lutheran of Clark since 1952. The congregation numbers 160 baptized members and is presently served by Pastor Wayne L. Rouse.

Reported by Wayne Rouse

Grover celebrates centennial

Emmanuel of Grover celebrated its 100th anniversary August 12. The guest speakers at the festival services were synodical president Carl H. Mischke and Pastor Lyle A. Hallauer of Ann Arbor (Scio), Mich. Both are sons of the congregation.

Emmanuel was organized August 10, 1884 under Pastor Johann Johl. In 1900 the first permanent church was dedicated and in 1914 the first resident pastor was called. The original church building, after several remodelings, is still used today.

Emmanuel has been closely associated with the history of the Dakota-Montana District. The first convention of the district was held at Emmanuel in 1920. Pastor Karl J. Sievert, a name almost synonymous with Northwestern Lutheran Academy of Mobridge, served the congregation for three years before being called to the academy in 1928, the year it opened. From 1959-1969 Emmanuel was served by Pastor Arthur P. C. Kell, longtime president (1966-1980) of the Dakota-Montana District.

Pastor Elroy V. Conradt resides in Henry and serves St. Paul of Henry together with Emmanuel of Grover.

Reported by R. Kanzenbach

Minnesota

The Jesus school opens

"Do you know what is so special about our new school?" one of our first-graders asked his friend. "It's the Jesus school!" What a first-grader called a "Jesus School" we grownups call a Christian day school.

From the founding of St. Mark of Bemidji ten years ago the congregation felt the pressing need for its own Christian day school. In recent years Sunday school enrollment approached 50, and 25 more were on the cradle roll. The children were there and ready in abundance. But the question remained: Can a congregation with only about 100 communicant members hope to have its own Christian day school?

Approval to begin the school

with kindergarten through grade four was obtained early this year from both the district and general home mission boards. An addition to the church was essential. When the voters were approached enough money was pledged so that the congregation was able to erect a two-classroom addition. The addition was completed in time for the opening of school this fall.

On August 19 the first school faculty was installed with Georgina Peterson as kindergarten teacher and Jan Barckholtz and Catie Belleveau sharing responsibilities for grades one through four. Pastor Mark S. Grubbs serves as the principal.

And now, under God, the children of St. Mark Church have their Jesus school at last.

Reported by Mark S. Grubbs

Wisconsin

40th anniversary celebrated

Peace Lutheran of Sun Prairie celebrated the 40th anniversary of its pastor, Ardin D. Laper, in the ministry on August 12. Prof. Gerhardt Franzmann of Northwestern College, a classmate, was the guest speaker and Pastor Dwight Vilhauer, a son-in-law, served as liturgist.

A 1944 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Laper was assigned to exploratory work in the greater Omaha, Neb. area. The exploratory work resulted in two missions: Good Shepherd and Good Hope, both in Omaha. For eight years he served Peace of Wautoma, Wis., before accepting a call to Peace, Sun Prairie which he has served for the past 25 years.

For 18 years he served on the Western Wisconsin District Mission Board, the last 12 of which he was chairman.

The 40th anniversary of Laper's marriage to Lily Odin of Milwaukee was also observed. The marriage in 1944 was performed at Atonement, Milwaukee, by Pastor William J. Schaefer, editor of The Northwestern Lutheran. Organist at the wedding was Kurt J. Eggert, the present director of the new hymnal project, who at that time was about to enter the seminary.

Reported by David Kipfmiller

NOTICES

The deadline for submitting items for publication is five weeks before the date of issue

CHANGES IN MINISTRY

PASTORS:

Dorn, Wilbur F., from inactive to Trinity, Hendricks, Minn.
Hein, David L., from Grace, Crivitz, Wis., to St. John, Rock Springs/Faith, Reedsburg, Wis.
Kuehl, James P., from Shepherd of the Valley, Westminster, Colo., to mission, Colombia, S. Amer.
Lopahs, Martin J., from St. John, Hancock, Minn., to Redeemer, Florissant, Mo.
Mueller, Wayne D., from Trinity, Waukesha, Wis., to Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis.
Schroeder, Allen K., from Gloria Dei, Sierra Madre, Calif., to Pilgrim, Mesa, Ariz.
Valerio, Arthur J., from Redeemer, Yakima, Wash., to exploratory, Juneau, Alaska.
Weir, Russell G., from Grace, Wausau, Wis., to St. John, Whitewater, Wis.
Wietzke, Bruce V., from Grace, Hot Springs, S. Dak., to Salem, Lowell, Wis.

ADDRESSES

PASTORS:

Brunner, Mark F., 2435 Old Collinsville Rd., Belleville, IL 62221; 618/234-0413.
Festerling, Howard H., 5713 Huntington Creek Rd., Toledo, OH 43615; 419/535-5526.
Frost, Richard L., 1390 Brezewood Lane, Neenah, WI 54956; 414/722-5550.
Goeglein, Mark A., 10236 Maxwood, El Paso, TX 77925; 915/593-7684.
Hayes, Dennis L., 1705 S. Wacouta St., Prairie du Chien, WI 53821; 608/326-6241.
Kassulke, Peter R., 2160 N. 60th St., Milwaukee, WI 53208; 414/476-5725.
Kesting, Herbert H., R. 1, 222 Riverwood Dr., Mishicot, WI 54228; 414/755-4315.
Knueppel, Frederick C., 2499 S. Lakeshore Dr., Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235.
Krause, James H., Flat B-4, 9F Phoenix Court, 32 Broadcast Dr., Kowloon-tong, Kowloon, Hong Kong.
Krause, Mark S., P.O. Box 113, Colome, SD 57528; 605/842-1523.
Kuenzel, Karl E., P.O. Box 748, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa.
Nuckolls, Terry B., 3030 Valley St., Carlsbad, CA 92008; 619/434-4646.
Olsen, Theodore B., 1711 S. Wacouta St., Prairie du Chien, WI 53821; 608/326-6801.
Schallert, Jeffrey, 11340 Seymour Rd., Montrose, MI 48457; 313/639-7015.
Schmitz, Reuben W. Jr., N3188 Lemke Dr., Medford, WI 54451; 715/748-4552.
Tomhave, Duane K., 3725 N. 169th St., Brookfield, WI 53005; 414/781-6449.

TEACHERS:

Barthels, Carl, 1008 Green St., Onalaska, WI 54650.
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Dusseau, Ray L., 7705 S. Manitowoc, Oak Creek, WI 53134.
Elgin, Anita, 4131 Florina #24, Anchorage, AK 99508.
Hains, Christina, 380 E. 2nd St. #14, Tustin, CA 92680; 714/730-7156.
Helwig, Donald W., 9098 Woodruff Rd., Woodruff, WI 54568; 715/356-7753.
Lemke, Werner E., 10106-110th St. Ct. S.W., Tacoma, WA 98498; 206/584-4730.
Mischke, Joel P., 4728 W. Purdue, Glendale, AZ 85304.
Muenst, Jason, 1024 S. 17th St., Apt. #25, Prairie du Chien, WI 53821.
Nehls, Richard C., 1209 S. 7th Ave., Yakima, WA 98902.
Salzwedel, Mitchell, 232 W. Southern, Sp. 77, Mesa, AZ 85202; 602/833-2096.
Schaefer, Stephen F., 4521 N. 41st St., Milwaukee, WI 53209.
Schmidt, Brent A., 722 E. 2nd St., Tucson, AZ 85719.
Schoeneck, Jonathan R., 7799 Holly Tree Pl. N.W., Bremerton, WA 98312.
Schumacher, Paul W., 1341 Ramona Dr., Racine, WI 53406.
Sebald, Nathan L., P.O. Box 318, DuPont, WA 98327.
Siewert, Karen, 1212½ S. 20th Ave., Yakima, WA 98902.
Thiel, Daniel F., 625 North St., Tawas City, MI 48764.

INDEX

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**REQUEST FOR NOMINATIONS
WORLD MISSION WORKER
TRAINING COUNSELOR**

The Board for World Missions had been granted approval to begin the process of calling for the above-named position authorized by the 1983 Synod convention. Implementing the calling procedure at the board's April 17, 1985, meeting is contingent upon final funding approval by the Coordinating Council after it has reviewed the 1985 congregational commitments.

Members of the Synod are invited to place before the board names of pastors who have the following special qualifications: 1. To plan, implement and conduct worker-training seminars in which the placement of resident missionaries is not feasible or possible. (e.g. India, Nigeria, Cameroon) 2. To serve as resource for the staffs in our other world mission fields, particularly as they initiate and develop their national worker training programs. 3. To develop and conduct more adequate orientation programs for missionaries and their families as they prepare to serve in our world mission fields.

The man called must be free to travel and will have his office at 2929 North Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. He will work closely with the executive secretary of the Board for World Missions. Pertinent information should be in the hands of the undersigned by March 1, 1985.

Daniel H. Koelpin, Secretary
11984 Wincanton Drive
Cincinnati, Ohio 45231

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS
NORTHWESTERN PREPARATORY SCHOOL
Professor of English**

The voting members of the Synod are requested to nominate men who are qualified to serve in the English department of Northwestern Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis. This vacant position on the NPS faculty was formerly filled by Prof. Arlyn Boll who accepted a call into the parish teaching ministry. Duties include teaching English on the high-school level and the sharing of responsibility for advising students in the extracurricular activities of school publications, dramatics and forensics.

Nominations, with pertinent information, should be in the hands of the undersigned no later than January 12, 1985.

Myron Kell, Secretary
Northwestern Preparatory School
Board of Control
233 N. Maple
Watertown, Wisconsin 53094

**MISSION SEMINAR
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminar**

The 1985 mission seminar is scheduled for January 30-31 with two morning and one evening session on the 30th and two morning sessions on the 31st. The emphasis on world missions carries the theme: "Send men whose eyes have seen the King." Topics include: Sweden; Cameroon, Nigeria, and Mexico; Reaching the unchurched; The media; and Brazil.

Jonathan J. Rockhoff
Seminar Secretary

CERTIFICATION COURSES

Dr. Martin Luther College will offer an extension course, Rel. 50 *Christian Doctrine II* at Fox Valley Lutheran High School, Appleton, Wis., beginning January 14 and meeting Monday 6:30 p.m. to 9:15 p.m. except April 8, ending May 6. Pastor Fred Toppe, Kimberly, Wis., will teach the course. Teachers in the Synodical Certification Program are encouraged to enroll. Others may enroll for audit or credit. Contact Prof. George Heckmann, Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, MN 56073; 507/354-8221, Ext. 231.

MUSIC THERAPIST

A full-time position is available January 1, 1985 for someone with a degree in music therapy interested in working with the elderly. Full range of benefits available. Call or write Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service, 6800 North 76th St., Milwaukee, WI 53223; 414/353-5000.

SYNOD NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Synod Nominating Committee will meet at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday, January 24, 1985 at the Synod Administration Building, 2929 N. Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, Wis. The nominating committee is to propose a slate of three candidates for the following 16 offices:

Executive Committees of the Board for World Missions — Apache (pastor); Central Africa (layman); Japan (pastor); Latin America (layman); Southeast Asia (layman)

Northwestern Publishing House Board (one seminary professor and two laymen)
Special Ministries Board (one pastor, one teacher, one layman)

Coordinating Council (one layman)
Chairman of the Board for Home Missions (pastor)

Chairman of the Board for World Missions (pastor)

Chairman of the Board of Trustees (pastor)
Chairman of the Commission on Higher Education (pastor)

The list of candidates nominated will be published twice in The Northwestern Lutheran prior to the Synod convention. The Synod will elect one of the candidates on each slate at its convention in Saginaw, Mich. August 5-9, 1985.

Any board, committee or member of the Synod is invited to suggest nominations for these offices. Kindly send names with appropriate information to the secretary of the Synod, Pastor David Worgull, 1201 W. Tulsa St., Chandler, AZ 85224 by January 17, 1985.

David Worgull, WELS Secretary

COUNSELING POSITIONS

If you have an MSW (or masters degree in a related mental health field) and if you are interested in the possibility of counseling your fellow Christians at a church-related agency, Wisconsin Lutheran Child & Family Services would like to know about you. We would like to establish a list of qualified people for possible future staff counselor positions. If you are interested, please send your resumé to: Joanne Halter, Director of Social Services, WLCFS, 6800 N. 76th Street, P.O. 23221, Milwaukee, WI 53223.

EXPLORATORY SERVICES

to determine the potential for establishing a WELS mission in the area. Services are held on Sundays.

COTTONWOOD, ARIZONA — Cottonwood Junior High School (Band Room), Mingus Avenue at 6th St. For information call Pastor William J. Schaefer, 602/282-4423.

NEWPORT NEWS, VIRGINIA — Asbury Wesleyan Church, 605 Harpersville Rd., Newport News. For information call Pastor Joel Luetke, 804/424-3547.

**CHANGE OF TIME
OR PLACE OF WORSHIP**

in the following exploratory areas or mission congregations.

KEARNEY, NEBRASKA — Good Shepherd, 2901 Ave. I (Calvary Baptist Church), Kearney. 4:00 p.m.; SS/Bible class 3:00 p.m. Pastor Jerome L. Enderle, 1010 — 3rd Ave., Kearney, NE 68847; 308/382-1988.

SUCCASUNNA, NEW JERSEY — Immanuel, Roxbury Fire Station #1, 122 Main St., Succasunna. 10:30 a.m.; Bible class/SS 9:00 a.m. Pastor Donald Tollefson, 9-161 Ashland Ct., Stanhope, NJ 07874; 201/347-9358.

NAMES WANTED

Survey work preliminary to conducting exploratory services. People interested in WELS services, contact pastor noted.

DeLAND, DELTONA, ORANGE CITY and DeBARY, FLORIDA — Pastor Mark Johnston, 1623 Lakeside Dr., DeLand, FL 32720; 904/738-1953.

TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA — Pastor Thomas Kneser, 75 S. Manhattan Ave., Indianapolis, IN 46241; 317/244-8244 or Mr. Tom Thompson, 7725 Carlisle Rd., Terre Haute, IN 47802; 812/299-5820.

KALISPELL, WHITEFISH, COLUMBIA FALLS, MONTANA — Pastor Robert Koester, 345 Strand Ave., Missoula, MT 59801; 406/542-0233.

FREDERICK, MARYLAND and CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA — Pastor Paul Ziemer, 7782 Beadfield Ct., Manassas, VA 22110; 703/791-3482.

**NOTICE FOR
CONGREGATION TREASURERS**

The cutoff date for the PBS receipts in the Synod's postoffice lock box is the last business day of each month. *December 1984* lock box offerings will be credited as 1984 receipts through *January 11, 1985* as long as they are received in the lock box on or before that date and are clearly labeled as *December* offerings on the Form 220.

Norbert M. Manthe
Chief Accounting Officer

TRAINING PROGRAM

Ten thousand young men and women from our armed forces will be in Alaska during January and February participating in "exercise brimfrost," a cold-weather training program for our military. If you need help or assistance, please contact Pastor David Zietlow in the Anchorage area (907/563-3250) or Pastor Roy Beyer in the Fairbanks area (907/479-4324).

**SEMINARY CHRISTMAS CONCERTS
Sunday, December 16**

3:00 and 7:30

Calvary Ev. Lutheran Church
Thiensville, Wis.

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Memories of Christmas

by Mary Beck

Some of the most vivid memories I have of Christmas past come from many years ago. I was a little girl then, about five years old, with blonde hair and a round little face. I lived with my two brothers, two sisters and my parents in a big parsonage on Milwaukee's south side. My daddy was a Lutheran minister, just like his dad, and like my mother's father, Opa.

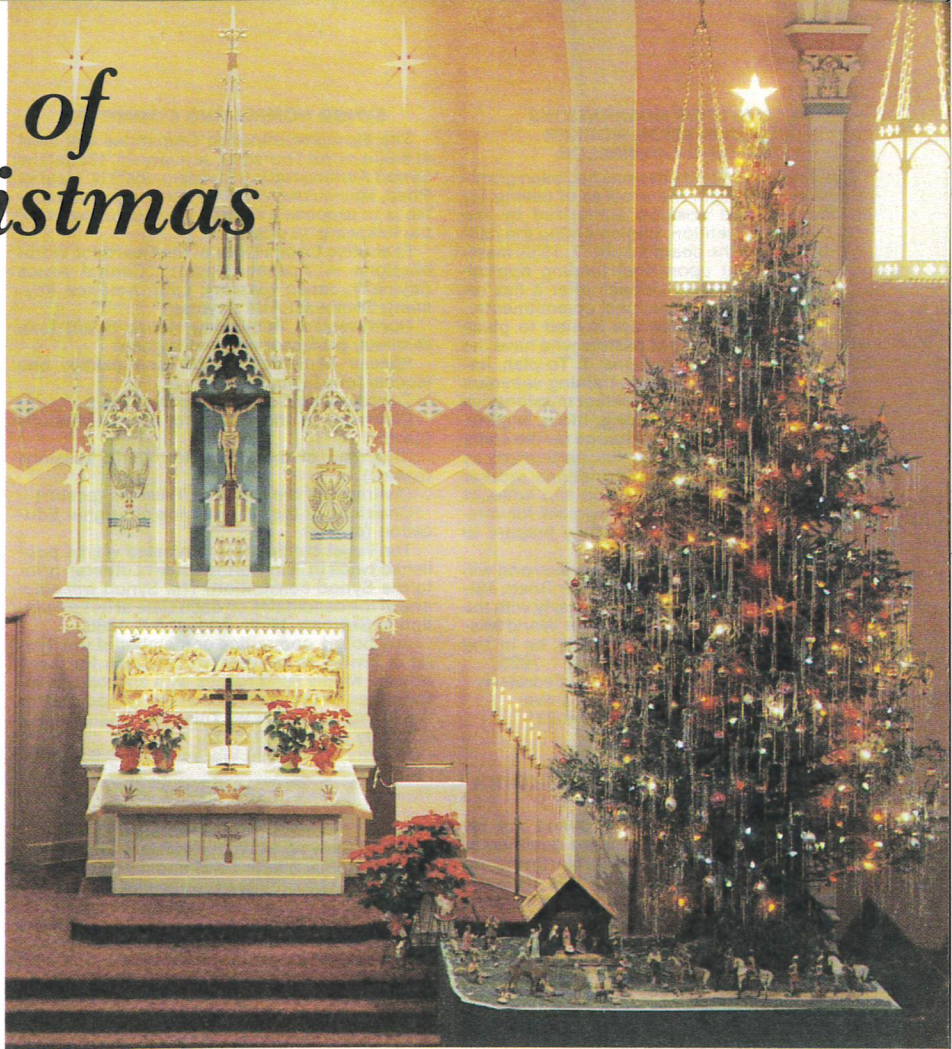
Opa and Oma (German for Grandpa and Grandma, what we called these grandparents) also lived on the south side of Milwaukee. My Opa was the pastor of St. Peter's Lutheran Church, a large congregation of mostly German and Polish people.

Although we loved to visit Oma and Opa any time during the year, Christmas time brought a special treat. Several weeks before Christmas we would press our noses against the windowpanes of Oma's house and watch the men unload from a truck what looked to us like the world's biggest Christmas tree.

We would wait in anxious anticipation while the men set the huge tree in its stand in the church. First, long strings of lights with bulbs as big as my little hand would be placed on the tree. The men would have to stand in the balcony to put the lights way up near the top. Next they would attach large glass balls of all colors to catch and reflect the light. We used to watch them put the ornaments near the top of the tree with a long hooked stick. A beautiful, shiny star was fastened to the top.

Finally the men would bring out the packages of tinsel — the old-fashioned lead kind. We always managed to pick up a few stray pieces and bite them into little nickels which we then saved in our pockets.

When the tree was decorated and in its place, the best part came. Elmer, the church custodian, would gently drape the base of the tree with a green velvet cloth to prepare it for



the Nativity scene which he would set up beneath the tree.

My sisters and brothers and I would stand wide-eyed, holding onto the edge of the tree stand, which was as tall as our chins. Elmer would unwrap each figure and gently put it in its place under the tree. The figures were old, and large, almost a foot high, and painted bright colors. As he unwrapped the figures from their tissue paper we would guess which one would be next. Would it be the bearded wise man? The shepherd with the lamb under his arm? Mary, in her pink and white gown? The camel with its wise and knowing expression?

Each piece was placed with care. Finally, from the corner of the nearly empty box Elmer would reach in and pick out the last tissue-wrapped bundle, and we would whisper, "Baby Jesus!" as he placed it in the straw between Mary and Joseph. I always remember looking up to the altar just then, and seeing the crucifix with

that same person dying on the cross for our sins, and knowing that was why we were so happy.

Elmer would round us up then and bundle us into our coats, hats and mittens to walk back to Oma and Opa's house. We would be hustled in from the cold and Oma would have Christmas cookies and milk for us. Opa would be in his study listening to the old German Christmas hymns on the record player: *Alle Jahre Wieder*, *Von Himmel Hoch*, and *Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht!* At that moment I couldn't have asked for anything more.

My thoughts travel back to those magical Christmases past as a little girl, secure in the love of my family and of the newborn Christchild. □



Mary Beck lives in a parsonage in Winneconne, Wisconsin.