



The
**Northwestern
Lutheran**

FEBRUARY 15, 1986

**Aging
gracefully**

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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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Lent, the purpose of it all

(Our Savior Jesus Christ) gave himself for us to redeem us from all wickedness and to purify for himself a people that are his very own, eager to do what is good (Titus 2:14).

Lent is a very special six-week period in late winter and early spring. Traditionally this is a time for mid-week Lenten services with emphasis on the passion history, the accounts of Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

Here in the second chapter of his letter to Titus, the Apostle Paul, leading to the words of our devotion, reminds his coworker what is to be taught to various age groups. The older men are to be "temperate, worthy of respect, self-controlled, and sound in faith, in love and in endurance." The older women are to be "reverent . . . train the younger women to love their husbands and children." The same type of encouragement is given to the young. Paul tells Titus, "You must teach what is in accord with sound doctrine." This is the way it is to be among Christian people "while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ."

This brings us to the words of our devotion as with the same attitude we consider: *Lent, the purpose of it all.*

To redeem us

We may become confused about Lent and its purpose. What we need is to think it through on the basis of sound Bible doctrine. The disciples of Jesus had the problem. When Jesus announced to them that he must go to Jerusalem to suffer and to die, Peter interrupted and said, "Not so, Lord." The disciples had great difficulty seeing and understanding the purpose. On the way to Calvary as the women followed crying and weeping, Jesus said, "Don't weep for me." That is all some still see, poor, innocent Jesus, crucified for what?

"To redeem us." To redeem me. The word that the apostle uses means to ransom, to liberate a slave. My

natural spiritual condition is that of a slave to sin. The word ransom brings to mind the word kidnap. This is another fitting description of my natural, my inherited spiritual condition. Ever since the fall into sin it is true of all. Now I am delivered from this condition by means of payment, redeemed, bought back. The payment, the price? "Jesus Christ gave himself for me." That is the payment God's justice demands to redeem me.

This ransom price of "his holy, precious blood and innocent sufferings and death," redeems me "from all wickedness." This wickedness includes everything that is against the word of God, the sound teachings of the Bible. Such wickedness is sin, missing the perfection that God demands. Jesus Christ redeems me from all my sins, setting me free from the curse of sin, eternal damnation. I will not experience the eternal separation of body and soul from God. He redeems me from death. I do not die as a punishment for sin, but I follow my Savior in death and resurrection to life. He redeems me, setting me free from the power of the devil. Jesus' victory over the devil is, by faith, my victory. I am physically alive and spiritually alive. My Savior lives in me. Lent, this is the purpose of it all.

Eager to do what is good

The purpose of Lent is also for today. I am, by God's unbelievable grace, a new person in Christ. I am purified, made clean, washed in the blood of Jesus. In 1 Corinthians 6:19 the Apostle Paul writes, "Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore honor God with your body." That means "Eager to do what is good . . . people that are his very own." This too is the purpose of it all, that I should be his very own and serve Jesus Christ today in his kingdom of grace and forever in his kingdom of glory.

Eager, devoted to Christ and his

cause. Lent is for me. Lent is for the whole world. Lent means people of every age group eager, not to be served, but to serve, doing what is good according to sound Bible doctrine, "while we wait for the blessed hope — the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ."

I admit, that's not easy. Each day my new person born out of faith struggles and fights with my natural, sinful self. So often my new person loses. I become angry with myself for such weakness of faith and trust in my Savior. I become depressed and ashamed that I fail so miserably. Also, life is filled with uncertainties, sharp left and right turns, unexpected roadblocks. Lord, I pray, keep me your very own, eager, devoted to do your will according to sound doctrine.

And that brings us back again to Lent and the purpose of it all. We know the Bible stories well. Count the years you have heard the passion history. Why go over it again? Faith comes by hearing the message, the message of the good news of Lent. Each year I recall a widow who is now forever with the Lord. For many years she had said to me, "Pastor, I love Lent." This woman had numerous sorrows, struggles and tragedies in her life. Each year I would ask her, "Why? Why do you love Lent?" Her answer was precious and to the point. "I need it," she would say.

Lent, I need it and the purpose of it all is "to redeem us . . . a people who are his very own, eager to do what is good." We need the strengthening of faith that the passion history of our Savior brings. Lent is a good custom, an excellent tradition, a very special time. □



Pastor Lindloff serves at Calvary, Thiensville, Wisconsin.

The pope's still in charge

Back in late November a special synod of Roman Catholic bishops was held in Rome. One hundred and sixty-two Catholic dignitaries, representing 105 nations, gathered for two weeks to review the results of the Vatican II Council (1962-1965). More realistically, these princes of the church came together to deal with problems in the Catholic Church, especially the growing independence of many Catholics who are not listening to the Holy Father or to their church. Rome is much concerned, for example, about the liberal attitudes of its parishioners in the U.S. and about the liberation theology in Latin America.

A synod of such proportions, with so many dignitaries participating, with such large issues before it, should yield large results. It did not. Liberal-minded U.S. Catholics must have been disappointed when the final report of the synod failed to address such divisive questions as barring divorced Catholics from the Lord's Supper ("no movement on this issue"); birth control ("hardly mentioned"); the celibacy of priests (not much talk about it); and women's ordination ("not a word on this"). The major decisions appeared to be to prepare a churchwide catechism (to "clear up confusion about the beliefs of Catholicism"), and to meet again.

Why weren't such troublesome issues dealt with more directly and conclusively? A *New York Times* reporter puts it this way: "Few Catholics expected the synod to take action on any of these questions, and for a simple reason. Pope John Paul II has effectively ruled out change on any of them."

It appears that this Vatican synod was concerned with a broader question: Where does authority in the Catholic Church really lie? Where is the power in the Catholic Church?

The Vatican II Council in the 1960s held out the prospect and the promise of more power in the hands of the bishops. There was to be more sharing of authority within the church between the pope and his bishops ("collegiality").

The recent synod in Rome has sent out the message that Pope John Paul II is in charge. Synods of bishops have "no real power on their own"; they are only advisory bodies to the pope. The final report on the synod states: ". . . the college [of bishops] together with its head and *never without its head* is the subject of the supreme and full power in the universal church." The "supreme pontiff" remains the "supreme pontiff" of the Roman church.

Even liberal Catholic bishops did not challenge this headship of the papacy. Those who hoped for a more democratic or parliamentary government in the Catholic Church did not risk foundering on this rock: "The Catholic Church is not prepared to permit the slightest change in dogma that has survived the centuries" (*The German Tribune*). That includes the primacy of "the successor of St. Peter." And 2 Thessalonians 2:8 reminds us that he will remain until Christ returns.

Those U.S. Lutherans who are negotiating with Catholic bishops to effect a Lutheran-Catholic reunion should have been in Rome in November. If they still hope to reunite with the Catholic Church, they must know who will be in charge.

Carleton Toppe



Professor Toppe is president of Northwestern College, Watertown, Wisconsin.

Faith assaulted

It was a difficult time to be a Christian. Society, while tolerant of them, was not about to be influenced by them. Public opinion was not on their side. They were surrounded by immorality. The challenge for their young people to resist sin was great. They were looked down upon by the "intellectuals." Their conservatism was considered rigid and narrow-minded. Their fundamental doctrines were being refuted by religious sects. Most were not recent converts but second and third generation Christians who had known no other faith but Christianity. The uniqueness was gone, their enthusiasm waning.

In the midst of all this was a concerned pastor. He felt a close attachment to them but had grave concerns for their spiritual welfare. He had gone through the agony of watching once faithful members, some in positions of leadership within the church, leave for beliefs he knew were wrong. What was he to say to those who remained? How would he encourage them to continue their faithfulness? What could he advise that would make their Christianity, their fellowship with God and with each other something certain, something meaningful, something real, something lasting?

An age of tolerance

This description could perhaps be the situation for many individual Christians, or Christian congregations today. In actuality, it describes the situation for specific Christians and congregations in the area of Asia Minor, in particular Ephesus, at the end of the first century A.D.

It was an age of tolerance. Persecution from without was nonexistent. Public opinion, however, was still for the most part anti-Christian. Unlike the world views of our modern days which exclude a god from consideration (e.g. humanism), those of the classical Greek world very much included him. At the end of the first century one such long-accepted worldview was "dualism" — the belief that two supreme opposed powers of gods, one good and one evil, controlled the world. This view was considered common knowledge. Such powerful philosophers as Pythagoras and Plato had confirmed it so that no "intelligent" human being denied it. Naturally, Christianity was affected.

If a name had to be given to this prevailing thought as it applied to the religious realm it would probably be "Gnosticism." Gnosticism accepted the basic premise of dualism with the added popular thought that the "good" included all that was spiritual, the "evil" all that was material. Furthermore, it claimed that a special secret and higher knowledge was necessary in order to enjoy true fellowship with God.

Gnosticism

The effect on Christianity was devastating. First, it minimized the importance of traditional doctrines and faith, and put the emphasis on some mystical knowledge. Jesus no longer occupied the central position. The crucifixion was insignificant. Conservatism was out, old doctrines needed to be updated. Gnosticism would be the savior of Christianity by making it intellectually respectable. Secondly, it minimized sin. The gnostic with his esoteric knowledge was above sin. He had reached spiritual perfection. For the sake of deeper knowledge there was almost an obligation to sin, to explore all avenues of human endeavor. Morality was made shipwreck. Charity was especially ignored. Thirdly, it destroyed Christian fellowship. "Obviously," not every one was capable of grasping and understanding the mysteries of gnostic thought. It divided men into two classes — those capable of real spiritual life and those not. "We've got it, you haven't."

Questioning the person of Christ

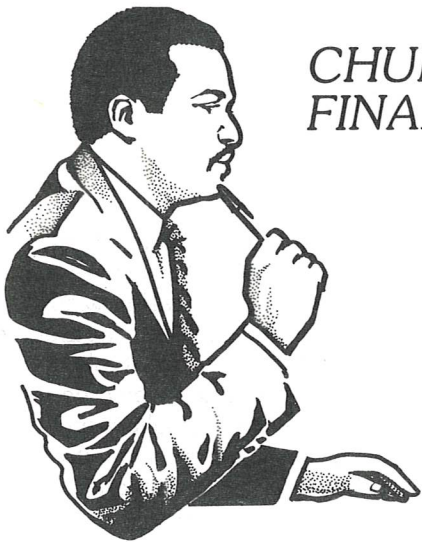
Finally, it ridiculed the two natures of Christ Jesus. God would never associate himself with evil matter. Since the human body was matter, God would never become a man. Knowledgeable men could never be expected to believe in the absurd thought of an incarnation. At first these false prophets continued their membership in the church, some in positions of influence. When this became intolerable they left the church but still tried to disseminate their teaching within the church and to seduce its members from the true faith.

It was in this situation that an old and respected apostle of Christ Jesus himself, the one who personally shepherded these same Christians and congregations in years past, writes them a letter of encouragement and real "gnosis" (knowledge). The letter was short. It was divinely inspired. It is in your Bible under the heading, "The First Epistle of John." □

In the issues to follow we will explore this timely word and reap the same blessings enjoyed by those early Christians in difficult times. Next: *Walking with God means walking in light.*



Pastor Piepenbrink serves at Atonement, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



CHURCH FINANCIAL OFFICERS

“What does the pastor do with it all?” The question came from David, the youngest in the family.

“With all of what, son?”

“The money. The offering. When the ushers gather the offering, they always take it up to the pastor. He smiles — and says a nice prayer. What does he do with all that money?”

Jim Robertson was about to give a brief answer, but thought better of it. This was obviously one of those times when he might be able to instill a memorable lesson in his young son’s mind.

“David,” replied Jim, “after church next Sunday we’ll let the rest of the family go home. You and I will stay for a while and I’ll show you what happens to the money from the offering.”

During the service the following Sunday David was more attentive than usual. He saw the money being placed on the altar. When almost all the people had been ushered out, he noticed one usher picking up the offering and carrying it through the almost-invisible doors on one side of the chancel.

David’s father had once held the office of financial secretary. He took David to the room behind that door. He showed him a safe in one of the closets and a big table with about ten chairs. He told David about Monday morning each week when the count-

ing committee met. He showed him the statements on which each member’s offerings were recorded. He let him look at a bank deposit form. He pointed out the report the financial secretary gave to the church council once a month. “See, David,” he said, “the pastor never touches the offering again after he receives it from the ushers.”

David thought of the hundreds of people in church every Sunday. “Does the financial secretary have to make out forms for every member of our church?”

“Almost every one, yup. It’s a big job. Our church is blessed to have a financial secretary and helpers who are willing to do the work every week.”

“Where does the money go after it gets put in the bank?”

“David, it’s similar to our own finances at home. You have been with us when your mother and I deposit our paychecks at our bank. We showed you the checkbook we use to draw money on our account. We spend it according to our budget.” David knew the word “budget.” The “budget” would never allow for the things he wanted the family to buy.

“The church is much like that,” his father continued, “only there is more money involved. Here, let me show you a copy of our church’s budget. Leaders of our church prepare a budget each year to guide our spending. The church officer who does the spending is the treasurer. He writes checks as this budget directs him to do — dozens of checks every month. In our congregation he spends more than \$300,000 in one year.”

“Boy, I wish I could spend that much money.”

“Remember, I said he spends it as the budget directs him. He can’t spend the money on the things he

thinks are important; he spends it as the congregation instructs him through the budget, or, in a few cases, through special directions from the congregation.”

David had seen his parents scratching their heads to make their checkbook balance. He remembered columns of figures and little stacks of cancelled checks. He began to appreciate what a difficult job the church treasurer had.

“Keep in mind, David,” his father was saying, “these officers in the church work behind the scenes. Hardly anyone notices them. But their work is very important. People bring their offerings as a sign of their love for Jesus. They expect — and rightly so — that their gifts will be treated with care.”

“And think what the money does! It pays our pastor’s salary so that he can preach God’s word to us, visit us when we are sick, counsel us when we are troubled, teach us God’s word in various classes. It pays the salaries of your teachers. The money you see on the altar each Sunday pays for the church where we worship and the school you attend. It pays for electricity and fuel oil, for telephones and printing equipment. Some of the money we send to our Wisconsin Synod so that we can send missionaries to far-off lands, start new congregations here in the United States, and train future pastors and teachers for our congregations.

“It is sometimes hard to get people who are willing to serve as financial officers in our churches. May we be more conscious of the willing workers we have, learn to appreciate their work behind the scenes, encourage them in their work — and remember they are not yet perfected saints of God.” □



Pastor Franzmann serves at St. Mark, Citrus Heights, California.

Hispanic outreach U.S.A.

by Paul E. Kelm

The fields aren't just "white unto harvest." They're brown. By the year 2000 Hispanics will be the largest ethnic group in this country, outnumbering Americans of Germanic descent and occupying a place in the social fabric of North as well as South. Last fall representatives of the various divisions of our synod met with missionaries to Hispanic fields in a two-day "Consultation on Hispanic Work in the U.S.A." to explore effective outreach to this burgeoning mission field.

The field is ripe. Hispanic respect for the Bible and close family ties make evangelism easier among this segment of the population than others. Though Hispanics may be nominally Roman Catholic, 60 percent are actually unchurched. Stable and upwardly mobile Hispanic neighborhoods can be reached without huge cultural leaps. One major conclusion of the consultation was that established congregations of the WELS, not merely new missions, are in a position to harvest souls for the Lord in Hispanic neighborhoods.

What is being done

Roger Sprain, whose ministry has been spent in Hispanic missions, emphasized the need for synodical awareness and commitment to this field. Tomas Gomez, a Mexican American working with Pastor Sprain in Madison, Wisconsin, offered a crash course on Hispanic culture. His obvious intelligence and puckish humor dispelled any negative stereotypes of Hispanics.

Strategy and tools for effective ministry to a Hispanic community were presented by Pastor Carl Leyrer of Corpus Christi, Texas. His audiovisual evangelism and instructional programs allow for bilingual witness and lay participation in the essential phases of outreach. Pastor Leyrer serves a "blended" community, in which English is the primary language and a stable, upwardly mobile Hispanic population enabled his congregation to achieve self-support. Like others he noted, however, that familiarity with the Spanish language and culture were essential.

Considerable attention to the skills and personality of a mission pastor, especially among Hispanics, made the participation of Pastor Robert Voss and Dr. John Lawrence from our Worker Training Division important. The recent synod convention resolved that Spanish language and culture be added to the curriculum of schools preparing future seminarians and teachers.

Expertise and materials from our synod's Latin American missions were offered by the Board for World Missions. Mark Goeglein, media coordinator for Latin American fields, reported that more Spanish and bilingual tools would be needed, however, as will better coordination and communication of what is being done. Pastor David Haeuser, an Evangelical Lutheran Synod missionary to

Groundbreaking at Corpus Christi, Texas: left to right, Dale Mueller, George Manuel Vega and Pastor Carl Leyrer.



Hispanics in East Los Angeles, volunteered materials developed by our sister synod's "Christo Rey" project.

Where do we go from here?

The Board for Home Missions budgets more than \$100,000 for outreach in transient and low-income Hispanic communities such as Miami, Florida. Until more funds become available to the Multi-Cultural Mission Committee of the board, home mission Hispanic strategy must concentrate on areas where the potential for a self-supporting congregation exists. Pastor Howard Kaiser, who chairs the Multi-Cultural Mission Committee, served as chairman of the consultation.

Brain-storming sessions identified criteria for Hispanic outreach in different mission modes, as well as obstacles and solutions to the critical need for broader awareness of the mission opportunity which challenges our church. Creative alternatives to full-time missionaries were explored. Participants recommended the development of "model ministries" which may parallel the situations confronting many of our existing churches. As a first step toward such awareness and assistance, Pastor Norman Berg offered to make a detailed summary of the consultation available through the Board for Home Missions of fice.

The opening devotion by Pastor Thomas Behnke of Miami established the tenor of the consultation. Not cultural differences, but spiritual similarity is the basis for our mission among Hispanics. A common Savior has met common spiritual needs with his death and resurrection and with his word. He wills that we become one in him. □



Pastor Kelm is the synod's executive secretary of evangelism.

James Micah

“Because of your faith”

by Cindi Sampe



He wouldn't look at us when our social worker made the initial introduction. Though the temperature outside was cool, the beads of perspiration had dampened his shirt and his hair was plastered to his forehead. He was trembling and spoke in a hoarse whisper, as he looked at the floor. He was nine years old, but physically he was only six. We were shocked at his appearance.

I walked over to him and put my arm around his shoulder. He stiffened. Nervously I attempted to make conversation. "I'd like to see your toys, James," I said, trying to establish a rapport. He darted for a bedroom and I slowly followed. When I looked into the room, he was sitting on his bed with He-Man, Battle Cat and three-headed evil monsters. Already he was engrossed in his fantasy play, escaping into a world he

found more safe and secure.

James Micah had lived in over twenty foster homes. His label read, "severely emotionally disturbed, hyperactive, enuretic and on chronic drug therapy." What we saw that day was a depressed, lonely, frightened, unloved child who no longer could reach out for human compassion because of the numerous rejections he had suffered. What we didn't know, however, was the child we thought



The Sampe children ready to plant the garden.

we were getting was not the child we were receiving.

James' behavior at home could only be considered odd. At night he would keep the entire family awake with his loud reciting of math facts from his bed. We chose not to unpack his He-Man toys because of his abnormal obsession with them. Instead we substituted bat, ball, glove, books, etc. Emotionally James crumbled as we had removed his "safety net." Daily he made a ritual of asking for his He-Man toys. When told no, he would begin chanting, "He-Man, He-Man," louder and louder. When we took him to the zoo or the museum, he would find the big cats, then go into a trance-like state, growling, "By the power of Greyskull I command you!" thrusting an imaginary sword high into the air.

One day I asked the school psychologist to observe James because I felt he just didn't act like a typical emotionally disturbed kid. She agreed and a short time later phoned. "Cindi, you're right. I suspect some type of brain abnormality. You should

seek immediate medical assistance."

We did and the doctors confirmed our fears that James indeed had neurological problems. While we waited for the test results to return, I became angry and felt trapped into parenting a child I thought I didn't even like. My greatest fear was the condition would be degenerative and I'd have to care for him for the rest of his life.

I wanted to stop this adoption from proceeding any further. Susan, our social worker, was visiting that day and I had made up my mind to tell her I didn't want to parent James. I very logically explained my position to her and told her that I hoped it wouldn't go on James' record that the placement failed because of anything he had done. We just didn't have the facts and would have never agreed to taking a child that might have such great physical needs.

Susan calmly sat and listened to me vent my frustrations and concerns. Then, when I had exhausted my case, she said, "Cindi, I'll support whatever you and Pete decide to do. The situation is really no one's fault.

However, I know how difficult it will be for you and Pete because of your faith to disrupt with James."

Well, it was as if I had been hit by a bolt of lightning. "Faith! What faith?" I then recalled, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God" (Philippians 4:6). We had always believed that each child we received was a gift from God. Why was James any different? Why hadn't I turned this situation over to the Lord? There were no answers. I had shown James little mercy. After talking to the Lord, I reaffirmed my commitment to James and felt a sense of peace knowing who was really in control.

The final diagnosis was minimal brain damage that was not degenerative. It did not affect his intellect. He also had Chorea (involuntary muscle contractions), but the medication he had been taking for five years exaggerated the symptoms. Once the drug was stopped, so were the jerking motions that made him look so strange.

Today, six months later, James is attending a regular fourth-grade class at St. Paul. He reads and does math at sixth-grade level. He loves school and his teacher, Miss Eiteneier, and we all love him.

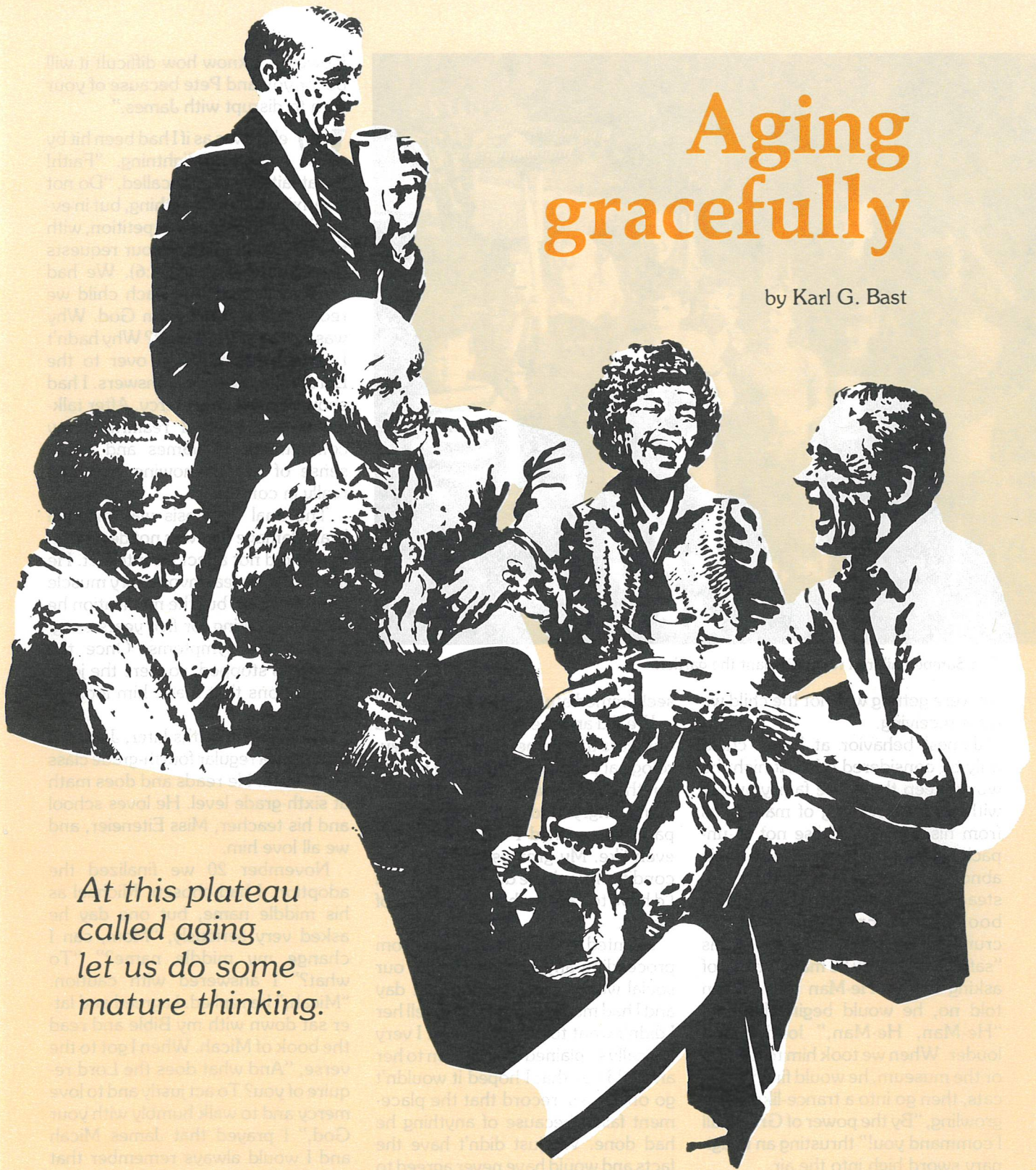
November 20 we finalized the adoption. I had chosen Michael as his middle name, but one day he asked very seriously, "Mom, can I change my middle name?" "To what?" I answered with caution. "Micah," he replied. I agreed and later sat down with my Bible and read the book of Micah. When I got to the verse, "And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God," I prayed that James Micah and I would always remember that truth. □



Cindi, Pete and family are members at St. Paul, Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin.

Aging gracefully

by Karl G. Bast



At this plateau called aging let us do some mature thinking.

The fall season had just begun as I set about to finalize my thoughts on aging gracefully. God had begun to paint his world of nature in those beautiful hues of yellow, gold, red and brown, while some trees were still arrayed in their working green. I wondered (almost out loud with surprise) whether the Lord was trying to teach us something about aging in this display. For a moment before its rest, the world of nature is given a unique opportunity to

display the power and wisdom of the Creator.

Just like people, after the prime time of work and before death, there is a special time to reflect the glory of the Lord. But how can wrinkles and sagging muscles reflect the glory of the Lord in competition with the world of nature? There is no competition but a greater opportunity. Let the word of God show us the greater glory which the "chief of God's creation" alone can reflect.

When Moses boldly asked God, "Show me thy glory" (Exodus 33:12-34, 8), God did not refer him back to the events at Sinai or the Red Sea but to the covenant made with the fathers. The chief ingredient of that covenant is *grace*. That is a love so deep and wonderful that it even reaches out to that selfishly defiant "chief of creation" to forgive "iniquity, transgression and sin."

The new life

God in his grace not only paid the debt of our sin, but then reached out and touched our hearts to love him and live to him. Paul calls this the "new" life and it is truly new when compared to the proud, selfish, defiant life that ends in death. Of all God's creation only the child of God can reflect the real glory of the Maker as he or she lives the grace-filled — graceful — life.

Life is made up of various plateaus. At each one the child of God has reason to pause and gather his thoughts and faith and answer the question, "How can I best reflect the glory of my gracious God?" Paul says, "When I was a child, I spoke as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things" (1 Corinthians 13:11). At this plateau called aging let us do some mature thinking. Three simple questions and answers from God's word will stimulate edifying thoughts.

Who am I?

The first question is "Who am I?" With all the advertising pressure around us preying on our selfish nature with slogans like "I'm worth it!"; with all the emphasis on the physical, fun and fitness, one can appreciate how easily an aging person can slip into the frame of mind, "I'm no longer worth it." "I am becoming a nobody." Come now, "Who am I?" I am a lost and condemned creature who has been redeemed by the blood of the Son of God. With John we exclaim, "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God" (1 John 3:1).

People may forget, another generation may not remember, even the saints in glory are not aware of us, but God is our Father. There is a quiet strength, peace, humility and dignity in the one confessing, "By grace, through faith in Jesus I am a child of God and one day will be his heir" (Romans 8:12-18).

Our society tends to value life for its productivity. It is not surprising that one hears the aging complain, "I am no longer able to produce or contribute, why am I here?" That's our second question.

Why am I here?

Immediately the grace which moves us to look and live to him who died for us prompts us also to set a goal with Paul, "So we make it our goal to please him" (2 Corinthians 5:9). Now we must be sure to ask our Lord what pleases him, and as we do so we will be pleasantly surprised to find many reasons for living uniquely suited for the aging.

Aging often affords that extra bit of time to meditate on

God's word against the backdrop of experience in the world with resulting rich contrition. The youngster wears a T-shirt with the message, "Don't be angry with me, God isn't finished with me yet."

Aging is that time to look more closely at God's training program for us and follow it with hearty appreciation. In Galatians 5 Paul lists the things that the Spirit of God would work in his people. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control." In Ephesians 4 Paul exhorts, "Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you." The Greek has "gracing each other as God graced you." What an assignment for each day!

The peaceful, happy contentment of the child of God is a most powerful sermon that can be preached daily. Why am I here? There is so much fruit to produce for God. This is a department of God's work where the aging can really excel.

Where am I going?

And what shall we say of the aging who lament, "There is only death ahead — color me black." That brings up the third question, "Where am I going?" To which a gracious God gives us exciting answers. It's true, death lies ahead but faith confesses, "I know that my Redeemer lives and that in the end he will stand upon the earth. . . . In my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him." Death is the end of only a part of our life, the resurrection will mark the beginning of a glorious phase of our living.

There are so many glimpses of eternal life which our Lord has given to his children. One passage that really excites us is Philippians 3:20,21 with the promise that God will "transform our lowly bodies that they will be like his glorious body." In the time of aging the physical part declines, by grace the spiritual part grows stronger, the "likeness of God" increases to come to full glory in his presence. Now God will have his creature with him and in his image as he had planned.

A favorite scene of mine is found in Revelations 7:9-17. Where am I going? To be with my Creator, Redeemer and Sanctifier and with all those of every nation and age who have "washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the lamb."

There will be trying times as you age but as they come, listen to the warm invitation of your Lord, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28). Hand in hand you can walk with Jesus through any valley, even the shadow of death — his grace will become your strength. With our Lord, where grace began, we can age gracefully. □



Pastor Bast is retired and living in Madison, Wis. This article is a condensation of an address at the Bible Institute held at Northwestern College, Fall 1985.



Mr. Udoh and the seminary kitchen facilities.

Maxwell, our African Elisha

by Ernst H. Wendland

On one of these trips into the heart of the Nigerian bush the American visitors were invited to the home of one of the church members for a meal. Acceptance of the invitation was perhaps somewhat less than enthusiastic. Imagine their surprise when treated to a delicious dinner of roast chicken and rice with all the trimmings! A desert of sliced pineapple, bananas, papayas and oranges topped off a meal fit for a king.

You guessed it; the cook was Maxwell, brought into service by members of Christ the King Lutheran Church to help solve a problem which the American visitors were obviously having. Needless to add, Maxwell has been engaged to serve as cook for all subsequent visiting delegations from America. A handful of the right ingredient has been thrown into the pot, and the dietary situation of the visitors has taken a decided turn for the better ever since.

Maxwell Bassey Udoh was born over 40 years ago in the village area where Christ the King Lutheran Synod has most of its congregations. Like so many energetic Nigerians he sought employment in the big cities where money could be earned, and eventually found work as a cook for an offshore oil company working out of Port Harcourt.

When the bottom dropped out of the world oil market, Maxwell returned to his home village farm plot in order to be able to support his wife and eight children. This relocation of an experienced cook to a remote village area has been all to the good of our synod's seminar teams visiting there.

Maxwell takes great pride in serving what foreigners can eat with relish and in safety. His work is carried out with all the care of a solicitous parent whose greatest satisfaction lies in clean plates at the end of a meal. Best of all is his Christian spirit, reflected in the winning smile etched onto the rugged contours of his face.

He serves as president of his congregation and as such is also a member of the Synodical Council of Christ the King Lutheran Synod. His greatest joy on a recent visit was to receive a Bible and a catechism. When observing him poring over these treasures at night, obviously struggling with sentences word for word to get their proper meaning, one can't help wondering how many of our own people in America would spend the same time and effort furthering their knowledge of God's word. □

During the time of Elisha, the Old Testament prophet, a company of his followers was having trouble with its pot of stew. Food was in short supply. The gourds and vines gathered to fill the pot must have contained some type of poison. "There is death in the pot!" the prophets cried out. Elisha took a handful of flour, threw it into the pot, and the problem was solved (2 Kings 4:38-41).

Christ the King Lutheran Church has a sort of modern Elisha in its midst. Except that his name happens to be Maxwell. When we first heard that Maxwell once had served as a cook for an American offshore oil company working out of Calabar, Nigeria, we suspected that his name might have been derived out of a Jack Benny skit. Maxwell was quick to set the score straight. "My name means 'strong man,' " he declared. "My father gave me that name." A "strong man" Maxwell certainly is. But for our purposes the name "Elisha" would suit him even better.

Mission teams making visits into Nigeria's hinterlands look upon Maxwell as a man who performs feats of magic with ordinary stew. Trips into these regions can be a risky business for Americans unaccustomed to its dietary hazards. Residents are no doubt reasonably happy living on a diet of yams, cassava, palm wine and goat meat. But what about visitors who not only have trouble getting used to local fare, but also manage to develop severe stomach disorders in the process?

Members of several of our synod's mission teams going into the interior of Cross River State, Nigeria were tempted to cry out more than once, "There is death in the pot!" A hotel in the nearby town of Abak advertising "European Food" failed to help matters. Its cook's preparations of beef and chicken were about as tender as rawhide, and his ideas of seasoning caused one to yearn for pitchers of pure water which weren't available.



Professor Wendland teaches homiletics and Old Testament at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin.

LETTERS

Select best texts

I am writing in response to the letter suggesting "it is time for our synod to investigate these textbooks closely for possible use in our schools" (January 1).

I have examined newly published texts for use in our WELS school for the past ten years. I try to select the best texts for our pupils whether the texts are "secular" or "Christian." All of our schools have access to the Christian texts if they choose to use them. I know of several of our schools in my area that use Christian texts in science and literature.

I have found it much more efficient to add God's word where it is absent (in secular texts) than to untangle it from error once it is placed in a text by Christian publishers. I do not believe my pupils are "being taken captive" by the secular texts I and my faculty select.

I would like to thank the writer for reminding me of my responsibility of ensuring that my pupils are taught all things in the light of God's word whether I use secular or Christian texts.

*Daryl B. Hanneman
Johnson, Minnesota*

Examples not parallel

In Pastor Paul Kelm's answer to the lady whose husband works in a clinic which performs abortions he compares the man's work with that of people paying taxes (January 1). The two situations are not the same. One voluntarily chooses where one works, one does not volunteer to pay taxes or not to pay taxes.

Pastor Kelm cites the words of 2 Kings 5:17-19 as the basis for telling the concerned wife, "Send your husband back to work in peace." Again, I fail to see where the two situations are the same. Naaman was a new convert and though Elisha has reservations about Naaman's conditional covenant, Elisha has hopes that he will improve. Thus Elisha tells him to go in peace. Matthew Henry tells us that when we make a covenant with God and we make a reservation for any known sin which we will continue to indulge ourselves

in, that reservation is a defeasance of the covenant.

Wouldn't the answer to the lady be better served by 2 Corinthians 6:17 which reads: "Therefore come out from them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing and I will receive you." To stay would only mean her husband would be yoked together with unbelievers and 2 Corinthians 6:14 tells us, "For what do righteousness and wickedness have in common? Or what fellowship can light have with darkness?"

*Frank Snyder
San Marcos, California*

Pastor Ehlke responds

In the February 1 issue Mr. Luetke takes issue with my calling the husband the "head of the house" and with my statement "the welfare of the household is his responsibility."

According to God's word, all Christians are to "submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (Ephesians 5:21). In love we seek to serve one another. At the same time, Scripture bestows on husbands a special headship within the home. This is clear from Ephesians 5:22-24, "Wives, submit to your husbands. . . the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church. . . ." St. Paul underscores this principle in Colossians 3:18, "Wives, submit to your husband as is fitting in the Lord." And St. Peter says, "Wives, . . . be submissive to your husbands" (1 Peter 3:1). In Ephesians 6:4, fathers are told to bring up their children "in the training and instruction of the Lord."

Such passages clearly confer an authority and responsibility on Christian husbands. For men to follow through on these directives is not a "seizure of authority," but a recognition of what God expects of them.

Yes, both husband and wife are responsible and have authority over their children. But the final human authority and responsibility in the home rests with the man of the house. Rather than abusing their position, husbands are to deal with their families in Christlike love and service.

*Roland Cap Ehlke
Elm Grove, Wisconsin*

Not overemphasis

Prof. John Braun's letter (January 1) rightly says that "overemphasis in one direction or the other will result in distortions of God's revealed truth." That is why I believe he should not reject Peggy White's comments. She said, "Please do not tell us as lay people that we call a pastor to visit the sick, comfort the bereaved, etc., for us." If she is guilty of overemphasis on one direction, this only balances centuries of overemphasis in the other.

However, I would not accuse either Braun or White of overemphasis, because Braun is talking about doctrine and White is talking about practice, and both emphases are needed.

Braun is correct about the doctrine of the public ministry; White is correct about the practice of the priesthood of all believers.

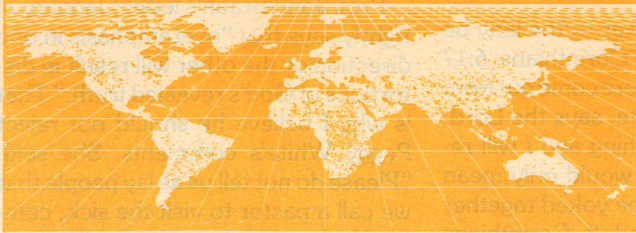
Luther taught the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers, but the practice of that doctrine has been sadly neglected until modern times. Until the latter half of the 20th century, the average Lutheran layman could sum up his religious duties as "Pray, pay and obey." Anything else, he "paid the pastor to do for him."

This attitude is dying. Lay people are recognizing that the chief difference between their call and the pastor's is that he is a public representative of others, for instance at ceremonies and when special expertise is needed. But we have to get away from the traditional but unscriptural notion that members of a congregation can pay somebody to love people for them. It is not to pastors that the words of Jesus about visiting those who are sick and in prison are directed.

*Roger Kovaciny
Columbus, Ohio*

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. Full name, address and phone number should accompany each letter. Names will be withheld only under unusual circumstances. Letters cannot be acknowledged, nor can all letters be used. Address your letters to *LETTERS, The Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N. Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53222.*

NEWS around the world



Luther's descendants discovered . . . February 18 is the 440th anniversary of Luther's death at the village of his birth, Eisleben, Germany. This year's observance is marked by the announcement that overseas genealogical research has revealed male descendants of Luther, bearing the family surname, to be yet living today. Until recently, it was believed that the last male descendant using the Luther surname died in 1759 with the passing of Martin Gottlob Luther of Dresden, Germany. Two discoveries have corrected this oversight. Guenther Luther of West Berlin has lately learned that the Reformer's oldest son, Johannes Luther (1526-1575), did have sons and that male descendants ensued from them. The other find is by Karl Heinrich Friedrich Lutter of Probsthagen village in the Schaumburg-Lippe region of West Germany. He is a direct male descendant of Luther's grandson, Johann Ernst Luther (1560-1637), although the surname spelling has been altered somewhat over the centuries. Earlier it had not been known that Johann Ernst Luther had first been married to Ilseke Bartermann, and that a son, Hans Gercke Luther, was born to this union. Descendants of this son have continued in an unbroken line to the present generation of which K. H. Friedrich Lutter is the latest. He resides in the house which has been occupied by his ancestors since the 1581 marriage of Luther's grandson. This information has been gathered by Pastor Dennis A. Kastens, a Luther genealogical expert, from Collinsville, Ill.

Converts to Catholicism . . . The Roman Catholic press in England continues to report a steady conversion of European Anglican and Lutheran clergy to the Roman Catholic Church. One of the main reasons is said to be the rise of women in the respective churches' priesthoods. The *Catholic Herald*, a national weekly, says that as Anglican priests convert to Rome a "considerable number of Lutheran ministers in Sweden have also been converting to Catholicism." It reports that some 30 high-church Lutheran clergymen have joined the Catholic Church in Sweden over the past five to ten years. Meanwhile a new development in the Catholic diocese of Leeds, England, has highlighted such conversions and the movement for married clergy in the Catholic Church. Three married former Church of England clergy are now known to be seeking ordination in the diocese.

News items appearing in *News around the world* represent current events of general interest to the readers of *The Northwestern Lutheran* and should not be interpreted as representing the views of the editors.

Members contribute record offering . . . Members of First Baptist Church in Dallas, Texas recently contributed a record \$1.85 million in cash for upkeep and maintenance on the church's large downtown facility. While single collections for building funds have produced \$1 million or more in cash and pledges, the Sunday contributions are believed to be the largest one-day cash offering ever taken by a church. The offering was over and above the congregation's giving toward the church's \$11.2-million budget for 1986. After checks and cash were placed in the collection plates during the morning worship services, the church's financial officers were closeted in an office where they spent the next six hours counting the \$1.8 million. The remainder was received at the evening service. The church's pastor, Dr. W. A. Criswell, was elated. Reminding the congregation of the enormous expenses of operating and maintaining the church complex, he said, "We have to pay the light bill and the janitorial bill, and the upkeep of all properties and the salaries of all workers if we have any hope to have a church at all. Our hearts are in heaven, but our feet are still on earth."

Lutheran worldwide membership declines slightly . . . The continuing decline in membership reported by European Lutheran churches resulted in a decrease of Lutherans worldwide from the 1984 level of 68,493,170 to 67,470,295 for 1985, according to statistics compiled by the Lutheran World Federation's information bureau. The 1.6-million-member decline reported by European Lutheran churches was only partially offset by gains in Africa, Asian-Pacific and Latin American Lutheran churches. North America reported a slight membership loss of 8,500 members. Asian Lutheran churches report the largest increase, from 3.4 million to 3.8 million members. The Protestant Christian Batak Church in Indonesia has grown by 300,000 members to 1.9 million over the last three years. Lutherans in Papua New Guinea increased from 582,000 to 645,000. In Africa churches grew at a slower pace, increasing one percent in 1985 to 3.9 million. In 1984 African churches reported an annual increase of 3.1 percent.

Money top cause of family stress . . . Dolores Curran, a lecturer and author on family issues, interviewed 600 families and family life professionals for her latest book "Stress and the Healthy Family." She came up with a list of the top ten family stresses. Struggles for money head the list, followed by children's behavior, insufficient couple time, lack of shared responsibility in the family, communicating with children, not enough "me" time, guilt for not accomplishing more, the relationship between spouses, a shortage of family playtime, and an overscheduled family calendar. Insufficient money was named as the most severe cause of stress by most families — regardless of the family's income level. The fact that money is a problem whether a family has a lot or a little of it indicates, says Curran, that "the real stress stems from how money is viewed and spent rather than the amount available."

Mission executive takes office

Harold J. Hagedorn, pastor of St. Peter, Fort Collins, Colo., has accepted the call as associate executive secretary of the Board for Home Missions. He began his duties the first of the year.

Hagedorn, 41, was born in Neillsville, Wis., and attended public elementary school. After graduating from Martin Luther Academy, New Ulm, Minn., and Northwestern College, Watertown, Wis., he attended Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, graduating in 1970.

His first call was to a dual parish in Arizona: St. Paul, Douglas, and Grace, Warren. In 1976 he accepted a call to St. Peter, Fort Collins. While in Colorado he served as

chairman of the Colorado Mission Board.

As home mission board associate executive secretary he will have primary responsibility for home mission promotion and publicity, budget preparation and outreach programs.

Hagedorn is replacing Pastor Larry G. Zwieg, who has accepted a call to a mission parish in a north-east Houston suburb.

Hagedorn is married to Kathie Kuehl of Watertown. There are three children, David, 14, Christine, 13, and Kathryn, 11.

Installation is planned for the next plenary meeting of the Board for Home Missions in April.



Hagedorn

California District

On May 19 **Mt. Olive of Las Vegas, Nev.**, dedicated its new parish hall. Pastor Richard Kugler of Yorba Linda, Calif., spoke at the dedication service. Steady growth since its organization in 1971 has led to larger Sunday school and Bible classes as well as other organizations which need added space for their activities. The addition was built at a cost of under \$80,000 and was funded partially through the synod's uniload program. Mt. Olive numbers 260 baptized members and has been served since 1973 by Pastor David Kiecker. . . . **King of Kings of Garden Grove**, celebrated its 25th anniversary on October 20. Pastor Marcus Nitz, who has served King of Kings since 1971, preached in the morning services. An afternoon festival service was led by sons of the congregation, Pastors Scott Stone and Mark Brunner. Pastor Armin Keibel, one of the missionaries who served the small nucleus from 1960 to 1963, preached. A dinner and program followed with Pastor Joel Gerlach, pastor of the congregation from 1963 to 1970, serving as master of ceremonies. Over these 25 years King of Kings has been richly blessed and presently numbers 675 baptized members with a Christian day school of 91. . . . November 17 was a day of thanksgiving as **Ascension of Escondido** dedicated its new school building. The dedicatory service included a sermon by Hugo Warnke, former pastor of the congregation; several anthems by

College buys former WELS campus

The Central Indian Bible College of Mobridge, S. Dak., recently purchased the former Northwestern Lutheran Academy campus, a college preparatory school closed by the Wisconsin Synod at the end of the 1978-79 school year.

In July 1981 the campus and the professors' residences were sold to Mobridge Oahe Enterprises for \$375,000. The campus — minus the residences — was sold to the Bible college for \$230,000.

The campus consists of a gymnasium, dining hall, dormitories and administration building. According

to the Bible college's president, Rev. Phil Joseph, some major renovations will have to be done before occupancy.

Joseph said it would probably be the fall of 1987 before the college is in full operation at the academy campus. It is estimated there will be about 300 students in three years.

Joseph said that although the college is interdenominational, it has received "full endorsement" status from the Assemblies of God Church and is eligible for annual donations from that church body.

Food distributed to less fortunate

On the Saturday before Christmas a group of volunteers distributed 24 baskets of food to less fortunate fellow members, according to the news letter of Siloah Lutheran Church, a Milwaukee central city WELS church.

"Their efforts," the news letter explained, "were a part of a city-wide effort organized by the Aid Association for Lutherans. The combined efforts of the 114 AAL branches produced \$252,246 in

food and cash.

"To this was added \$50,000 from AAL and \$5,000 from Kohl's and Sentry food stores, a combined total of \$307,264.

"In addition to the food distributed at Christmas, the central city congregations have received food certificates for use throughout the year. It is really a pleasure to see how God has blessed this work done in his name."

IN THE NEWS

the Ascension school children and senior choir; and selections by the California Lutheran High School Tour Choir. The new building has two classrooms, restrooms, office, work and storage space. Due to an outpouring of time and talent by Ascension members, the project was completed for a reasonable cost of \$72,000, a tribute to what God can do with the abilities of his people. Ascension is served by Pastor Hermann John, Principal Keith Bowe and Teacher Kellie Headrick Watson.

— Philip Heyer

Dakota-Montana District

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of the Redeemer of Mandan, N. Dak., concluded its year-long 50th anniversary celebration with special services on November 24. Guest speakers were Prof. Robert Krueger of Prairie du Chien, Wis., former pastor of the congregation, and Pastor Edward Werner, president of the Dakota-Montana District. The congregation was organized in 1935 as a mission effort of the district and in 1948 became self-supporting. In 1960 it assisted in forming a daughter congregation in Bismarck, N. Dak. The congregation has been served by eight pastors. It numbers 284 communicants and is currently served by Pastor Paul Zittlow. . . . On October 27, Trinity of Hendricks, Minn., celebrated the 50th anniversary in the ministry of its pastor, **Wilbur F. Dorn**. Guest speaker at the special service was Pastor Paul Hoenecke of Kewaskum, Wis., son-in-law of Pastor Dorn. Before accepting the call to Trinity, Pastor Dorn served congregations in Cleveland, Windsor, Millarton, Buchanan and Valley City, N. Dak.; Goodwin and Havana Township, S. Dak.; Renville, Winfield Township, Brooklyn Park and Rochester, Minn.; Irving Tex.; and Owensville, Mo. In his semi-retirement, Pastor Dorn continues to serve Trinity and its 80 communicants. . . . **Valley**

View of Helena, Mont., dedicated its new parsonage and W/E/F unit on November 17. Guest speaker for the service was President Edward Werner. Parsonage, chapel and land costs totaled nearly \$300,000, most of which became available through the Reaching Out offering. The 42-communicant-member mission is served by Pastor Jim Huff. . . . **St. Paul of Calgary, Alberta, Canada**, dedicated its new parsonage and W/E/F unit in a special service on September 8. Guest speaker was Pastor Elroy Conradt, chairman of the district mission board. The Reaching Out offering also helped in making available \$385,000 to the mission for land, chapel and parsonage. The congregation, begun in 1982, has 20 communicants and is served by Pastor Phil Hoyer. . . . **Grace of Hot Springs, S. Dak.**, dedicated its worship facility on October 6. Guest speaker was President Carl H. Mischke. The new facility seats 120 and has a full basement with classrooms. The 41 communicants are served by Pastor John Schuetze.

— Richard Kanzenbach



Dorn



Holtz

Michigan District

St. Matthew of Freeland held a special service on November 3 commemorating the 45th anniversary of the ordination into the ministry of its pastor, **Robert W. Holtz**. Guest speaker was Prof. Harris Kaesmeyer of Michigan Lutheran Seminary. Following the service a luncheon was held at which gift presentations were made. Before accepting the call to St. Matthew in 1975, Pastor Holtz

served congregations in Flint, Mich. and Toledo, Ohio and served on the faculty of Michigan Lutheran Seminary. . . . **Pastor William Natsis** has accepted a call as associate pastor at Trinity, Saline. He was installed February 2. . . . **Pastor Winfred Koelpin** of St. Paul, Livonia, has retired from the active ministry as of December 31. . . . **Pastor Lynn Wiedmann** of Prince of Peace, Howell, has accepted a call out of the Michigan District.

— Edward Schaeewe

NOTICES

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

CHANGES IN MINISTRY

PASTORS:

Grummert, Donald W., from St. John, Minneapolis, Minn., to retirement from full-time ministry.
Kobleske, Roger W., from Ocean Drive, Pompano Beach, Fla., to Shoreland Lutheran High School, Somers, Wis.
Kujath, Timothy M., from Emanuel, St. Paul, Minn., to St. Paul, East Troy, Wis.
Luchterhand, Lyle L., from Riverview, Appleton, Wis., to Bethany, Manitowoc, Wis.
Meyer, Timm O., from Zion, Zeeland, N. Dak., to Peace, Milbank, S. Dak.
Paustian, John H., from Triune God, Ramsey N.J., to Good Shepherd, West Bend, Wis.
Schulz, Thomas A., from Trinity, Sierra Vista, Ariz., to Shepherd, Albuquerque, N. Mex.
Schwertfeger, Harold W., from St. Peter, Darwin, Minn., to Our Savior, Hendersonville, N.C.

TEACHERS:

Anderson, Susan, from inactive to Redemption, Milwaukee, Wis.
Balge, Lois, from inactive to Redemption, Milwaukee, Wis.
Lauber, Judith, from inactive to St. Paul, Mt. Calvary, Wis.
Rick, Helen, from inactive to St. Paul, Wonewoc, Wis.
Schibbelhut, Lydia, from inactive to Faith, Fond du Lac, Wis.

ADDRESSES

PASTORS:

Reede, Paul N., Rt. 3, Neillsville, WI 54456; 715/743-2480.
Sutton, Donald R., 221 N. Concord Ave., Watertown, WI 53094; 414/261-6438.
Werner, Paul J., 99 Wisconsin Ave., P.O. Box 12, Cochran, WI 54622; 608/248-2970.

NAMES WANTED

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

ELK RIVER, MINNESOTA — Pastor Dan Schoeffel, 15413 NE 95th St., Elk River, MN 55330; 612/441-5250.
SHERMAN/DENISON, TEXAS AREA — Pastor Jonathan C. Voss, 2814 Windsor Dr., Sherman, TX 75090; 214/892-0462.

EXPLORATORY SERVICES

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

PORTAGE, WISCONSIN — Cross of Christ, lower level of My Place Restaurant, W. Wisconsin St. at Silver Lake Dr., Portage. 9:00 a.m.; SS/Bible class 10:15 a.m. Pastor Paul E. Pankow, 301 Crestview Ct., Portage, WI 53901; 608/742-5609.

PARAMENTS

A partial set of chancel paraments is available to an interested congregation. Contact Pastor Steven M. Mischke, 833 Fairfield Ave., Battle Creek, MI 49015; 616/962-3884.

CHANGE OF TIME OR PLACE OF WORSHIP

in the following exploratory areas or mission congregations.

WASILLA, ALASKA — King of Kings, Mile 1.5 Lucille St., 10:00 a.m.; SS/Bible class, 9:00 a.m. Pastor Rick Johnson, P.O. Box 872767, Wasilla, AK 99687; 907/376-7771.

COTTONWOOD, ARIZONA — Peace, 1 N. Willard St., Cottonwood, 8:45 a.m. Pastor Gerhardt Haag, 295 View Dr., Sedona, AZ 86336; 602/282-4423.

SEDONA, ARIZONA — Trinity, Harmony Hills Recreation Center, Harmony Ln. and Melody Ln. Sedona, 10:45 a.m. Pastor Gerhardt Haag, 295 View Dr., Sedona, AZ 86336; 602/282-4423.

MARIETTA, GEORGIA — Beautiful Savior, Allatoona Academy, 3690 Canton Rd. (Hwy. 5, 1 mile south of Shallowford Rd.), 10:30 a.m.; SS/Bible class, 9:15 a.m. Pastor John Guse, 404/928-7919; Vicar Rick Miller, 404/928-6719.

TRAVERSE CITY, MICHIGAN — Prince of Peace, 1776 High Lake Rd., Traverse City, 10:00 a.m.; SS 9:00 a.m. Pastor Robert Kujawski, 212 Griffin, Traverse City, MI 49684; 616/941-4975.

FISHKILL, NEW YORK — Trinity, All Sport Racquet Club, 17 Old Main St. (½ mile north of I-84 on Hwy. 9), Fishkill, 9:30 a.m. Pastor Thomas R. Gumm, 20 Tamarack Circle, Fishkill, NY 12524; 914/896-4644.

AMARILLO, TEXAS — Holy Cross, Puckett Elementary School, 6700 Oakhurst; Amarillo, 10:30 a.m.; SS/Bible class, 9:30 a.m. Pastor Jeffrey Weber, 5329 W. 42nd, Amarillo, Tx 79109; 806/352-0523.

WELS FILM/VIDEO RENTAL

MARTIN LUTHER HERETIC

1985 64 min. color ½" VHS JSCA

This story of Luther's life has two advantages over the older Martin Luther movie. It's shorter and it's in color. In this version Luther is the narrator. He tends to describe his emotions, rather than acting them out. Thus this version lacks some of the drama of the older movie. But on the other hand this video makes good use of morality plays to describe the conditions of the time. The *Martin Luther Heretic* video-cassette rents for \$15.00.

FOCUS ON THE FAMILY by Dobson

A series of nine video-cassettes featuring the well-known Dr. James Dobson is now available from our rental library. Dr. Dobson is not a Lutheran Christian and occasionally he reveals brief glimpses of his Reformed theology. But his ideas on family living will make good sense to most WELS Lutherans.

The series is offered with at least a twinge of regret. As Dr. Dobson himself points out, these sensible approaches to family living were common knowledge to other generations, when families were closer and shared more of their wisdom with their offspring. But today's young families need more of this kind of help, and Dr. Dobson offers it in a wise and entertaining fashion.

Any presentation of these materials should include a substantial amount of time for discussion. The good ideas that Dr. Dobson presents are not right for every family, and those views should be discussed after showing. Each video-cassette (except as marked) comes with a leader's guide and a discussion manual, which can aid in stimulating discussion. However, these materials cannot be reproduced privately without breaking copyright laws. Please contact our office if more copies of the discussion manual are desired. The Dobson video-cassettes rent for \$15.00 each.

How To Raise The Strong-Willed Child

1985 64 min. color ½" VHS

Shaping The Will Without Breaking The Spirit

1985 60 min. color ½" VHS

What Dads Need To Know About Fathering

1985 61 min. color ½" VHS

How To Prepare For Adolescence:

The Origins Of Self-Doubt

1985 50 min. color ½" VHS

How To Prepare For Adolescence:

Peer Pressure And Sexuality

1985 48 min. color ½" VHS

What Wives Wish Their Husbands

Knew About Women

1985 83 min. color ½" VHS

Questions Parents Ask*

Session 1 — The World of Children

Session 2 — Coping With Toddlerhood

Session 3 — Self-esteem in Children

1985 60 min. color ½" VHS

To Be a Woman*

Session 1 — The World of Women

Session 2 — Depression in Women

Session 3 — Questions for a Gynecologist

1985 60 min. color ½" VHS

Straight Talk to Families*

Session 1 — The Meaning of Authority

Session 2 — Materialism in the Home

Session 3 — Tradition in the Family

1985 60 min. color ½" VHS

*There is no study guide with this video-cassette.

THE FAMILY LIFE SERIES —

Communication in the Family

The Lutheran Family Challenge, Inc. has produced a series of video-cassettes aimed at improving communication in the family. Each presentation in the series begins with a scene of family strife, which is then discussed with an actual family and two counselors. The scene is then reenacted in a way that avoids the strife. The practical suggestions that are offered may not work in every family, but they offer material for the discussion that should follow the viewing of these tapes. Each video-cassette rents for \$15.00.

Listening: The Key To Caring Communication (26 min.)

Speaking To Be Heard (20 min.)

Rules In The Family (16 min.)

All three discussions are on the same video-cassette.

1985 62 min. color ½" VHS

Problems In The Family (30 min.)

Values (20 min.)

These two discussions are on the same video-cassette.

1985 50 min. color ½" VHS

Send your order for renting this video to WELS FILM/VIDEO RENTAL SERVICE, Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 North 113th Street, P.O. Box 26975, Milwaukee, WI 53226-0975. Phone 414/475-6600.

AUDIVISUAL AIDS

THE WELL-TEMPERED BACH (VHS-14-WTB)

1985 120 min. ½" VHS color JSCA

"The Well-Tempered Bach", which was aired on public television in March of '85, is now available in VHS format from our Audiovisual Aids Library, thanks to the members of the Aid Association for Lutherans. Peter Ustinov narrates the history of Bach's life in between performances of Bach's works by artists from Germany. For Bach lovers, the entire video is totally entertaining. On the other hand, a two-hour concert of Bach music is probably more than the average group can endure. Nevertheless, with some editing, various sections of this video can be used for entertainment and music appreciation in the classroom. You'll never have a better chance to see boy sopranos in action.

MY HOME — A HAVEN OF HOPE (S-21-HHH)

1985 22 min. C&M color SCA

The Lutheran Home of Belle Plaine, Minnesota, has long been a refuge for the elderly who need special care in a Christian facility. More recently the Home has also provided a haven for the mentally retarded whose parents have become too weak to care for them. These slides show the work of The Lutheran Home, and especially the part that pertains to the mentally retarded.

With annual subscription, or rental, order from AUDIOVISUAL AIDS, Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 North 113th Street, P.O. Box 26975, Milwaukee, WI 53226-0975. Phone 414/475-6600.

ITEMS REQUESTED

A new mission congregation is in need of used altar paraments, communion ware, altar ware (candle holders, missal stand, etc.). Contact Mrs. Frank Greves, 4590 James Ave., Castro Valley, CA 94546; 415/538-7024.

ITEMS NEEDED

An exploratory mission in Elk River, Minn. is in need of hymnals, candle holders, communion ware and tract rack. If you can help, please contact Pastor Dan Schoeffel, 15413 NE 95th St., Elk River, MN 55330; 612/441-5250.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE Archivist and Historian

Prof. Morton A. Schroeder has been appointed archivist and continuing historian of DMLC, New Ulm, Minn. He will organize and arrange all materials to be preserved in the DMLC archives. He will be pleased to receive and file historical information regarding the college. Alumni and friends of the college are encouraged to submit information, materials, pictures and articles to Prof. Morton Schroeder, Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, MN 56073.

1986 WELS YEARBOOK

The official directory of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 6 x 9 inches, 148 pages with a handy spiral binding. The *1986 Yearbook* contains a complete listing of the name, location, and time of service of all WELS churches; a listing of all WELS Christian Day Schools, area high schools, and synodical institutions of learning; the name, address and phone number of WELS pastors, professors, missionaries and teachers; and a listing of all WELS organizations, officers, boards, commissions and committees. Especially interesting this year because of the listing of the boards and committees of the new synodical structure adopted at the 1985 WELS convention.

PLEASE SEND ME _____ COPY(s) of the *1986 Yearbook* (29N1424). Enclosed is a check or money order for \$4.95 plus 10% of the total dollar amount — \$1.50 minimum — for transportation and handling. (Wisconsin residents add 5% state sales tax).

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ANNIVERSARIES

Bay City, Mich., Trinity (100th), March 2, April 27, June 15, September 14, October 26, November 23 and January 25 (1987) at 8:30 and 10:45 a.m. Noon meal will follow each celebration. Contact Trinity, 1010 - 33rd St., Bay City, MI 48708; 517/892-5435.

Watertown, S. Dak., St. Martin (100th), May 18, July 20, September 21. Pastor Elwood C. Habermann, 1100 N. Maple St., Watertown, SD 57201.

Woodville, Wis., Immanuel (100th), June 22, 10:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Noon dinner. Contact Mr. Jerry Strobush, Rt. 1, Woodville, WI 54028; 715/698-2761 or Mrs. Shirley Reinhardt, 106 S. Division, Woodville, WI 54028; 715/698-2776.

West Newton, Pa., Faith (10th anniversary of dedication), March 9, 11:00 a.m. (catered dinner with program following). For dinner reservations contact Pastor Thomas Hilliard before March 3 at Route 2, Box 117D, West Newton, PA 15089; 412/872-9710.

RECRUITMENT RETREAT

Northwestern College will host two "Focus on Ministry" recruitment retreats March 14-16 and March 21-23 for high school students to learn more about the pastoral ministry. Each retreat will begin Friday at 9:30 a.m. and end at 1:30 p.m. Sunday.

Participants will meet pastors and learn about the ministry from them; mingle with students presently studying for the ministry at Northwestern and learn about their preparation so far; visit Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary and synod offices to learn how our ministries are coordinated; take mini-courses in selected subjects; talk with professors; and sample campus life while staying in the dormitory.

There is no cost for the retreat, but a \$25.00 registration deposit is required which will be refunded upon completion of the retreat. For further information or reservations contact Prof. Gary Baumler, Northwestern College, 1300 Western Ave., Watertown, WI 53094; 414/261-4352.

YOUTH RALLY

The 1986 WELS International Youth Rally will be held July 28-31 at Northwestern College, Roseville, Minn. Cost is \$90. More information will be provided soon but reserve the date!

DR. MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE CHOIR SPRING ITINERARY

February 23	8:00 a.m.	St. John, Sleepy Eye, MN
	10:30 a.m.	
February 26	7:30 p.m.	Trinity, Crete, IL
February 27	7:00 p.m.	Rock of Ages, Madison, TN
February 28	7:30 p.m.	Sola Fide, Lawrenceville, GA
March 1	7:00 p.m.	Peace, Holiday, FL
March 2	8:30 a.m.	Christ the Lord, Clearwater, FL
	10:30 a.m.	Faith, St. Petersburg, FL
	4:00 p.m.	Bay Pines, Seminole, FL
	7:30 p.m.	Peace, Bradenton, FL
March 3	7:30 p.m.	Bethany, North Fort Myers, FL
March 4	7:30 p.m.	Ocean Drive, Pompano Beach, FL
March 5	7:30 p.m.	King of Kings, Maitland, FL
March 6	7:30 p.m.	Good Shepherd, Jacksonville, FL
March 8	8:00 p.m.	Trinity, Jenera, OH
March 9	11:00 a.m.	Peace, Granger, IN
	3:00 p.m.	Saint Andrews, Chicago, IL
	8:00 p.m.	St. Paul, Hales Corners, WI
March 16	8:30 a.m.	Trinity, Nicollet, MN
	9:45 a.m.	
	7:30 p.m.	St. Paul, New Ulm, MN (Homecoming Concert)
March 21	8:00 p.m.	Good Shepherd, Burnsville, MN
March 22	3:30 p.m.	St. Peter, Weyauwega, WI
	7:30 p.m.	Trinity, Brillion, WI
March 23	8:00 a.m.	Grace, Oshkosh, WI
	10:30 a.m.	
	4:00 p.m.	St. John, Neillsville, WI

Financial Report Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod

PREBUDGET SUBSCRIPTION PERFORMANCE

Twelve months ended 31 December 1985

	Subscription Amount for 1985	Twelve Months Offerings	Percent of Subscription
Arizona-California	\$ 812,996	\$ 782,513	96.2
Dakota-Montana	386,717	384,303	99.3
Michigan	1,856,375	1,829,021	98.5
Minnesota	2,191,719	2,182,868	99.5
Nebraska	480,692	476,347	99.0
North Atlantic	218,460	224,250	102.6
Northern Wisconsin	2,213,827	2,164,338	97.7
Pacific Northwest	249,610	246,748	98.8
South Atlantic	296,287	290,601	98.0
South Central	221,530	222,568	100.4
Southeastern Wisconsin	2,880,589	2,787,060	96.7
Western Wisconsin	2,532,368	2,510,229	99.1
Total — 1985	\$14,341,170	\$14,100,846	98.3
Total — 1984	\$13,990,544	\$13,814,052	98.7

N.B. Offerings for 1985 received through January 10, 1986 are included in PBS 1985 offerings total.

CURRENT BUDGETARY FUND

Statement of Receipts and Disbursements

Twelve months ended 31 December 1985 with last year comparisons

	Twelve months ended 31 December		Increase or (Decrease)	
	1985	1984	Amount	Percent
Receipts:				
Prebudget Subscriptions	\$ 13,905,809	\$ 13,530,433	\$ 375,376	2.8
Gifts and Memorials	268,861	275,996	(7,135)	(2.6)
Bequests	145,378	224,231	(78,853)	(35.2)
Other Income	158,089	135,263	22,826	16.9
Transfers from Other Funds	819,985	878,580	(58,595)	(6.7)
Total Receipts	\$ 15,298,122	\$ 15,044,503	\$ 253,619	1.7
Disbursements:				
Worker-Training	\$ 5,851,845	\$ 5,824,101	\$ 27,744	0.5
Home Missions	3,818,734	3,390,698	428,036	12.6
World Missions	2,791,483	2,479,554	311,929	12.6
Benevolences	825,884	916,432	(90,548)	(9.9)
Administration and Services	1,677,347	1,490,901	186,446	12.5
Sub-total	\$ 14,965,293	\$ 14,101,686	\$ 863,607	6.1
CEF — Interest Subsidy	756,758	623,367	133,391	21.4
Transfers to Building Funds	227,000	225,000	2,000	0.9
Total Disbursements	\$ 15,949,051	\$ 14,950,053	\$ 998,998	6.7
Twelve Months Increase/(Decrease)	\$ (650,929)	\$ 94,450		
Fund Balance — Beg. of Period	\$ 109,791	\$ 15,341		
Fund Balance — End of Period	\$ (541,138)	\$ 109,791		

Norbert M. Manthe
Chief Accounting Officer

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FROM THIS CORNER

In the January 17 issue of *Christianity Today* there was a special 31-page insert with the title "Into the Next Century: Trends Facing the Church." The trends are reminiscent of those cited by John Naisbitt in his best-seller some years ago. Like Naisbitt's megatrends, there are ten of them. A panel of distinguished church scholars was assigned to comment on the ecclesiastical megatrends.

The first megatrend ushering us into the twenty-first century is, "More 'religion,' less impact." I want to say a few words about that one. (The others are: rising expectations among the world's poor; the graying of America; the coloring of America — the non-white mission; the end of female passivity; secular humanism *within* the church; growing me-ism and materialism; shifting denominational power — decentralization; pluralism gone to seed — polarization; and a tilt toward the relational — Naisbitt's "high touch".)

Haddon Rinson, president of Denver Conservative Baptist Seminary, was the commentator on the first megatrend, "more 'religion,' less impact." The upside of this trend, he points out, is the growth of the evangelical movement in America — a return to the fundamentals: the inerrancy of the Bible, the divinity of Christ, his atoning death and creationism, to name a few. To document this growth the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association, a fundamentalist organization, points to the 37 million buyers of Christian books making up one of America's largest book-buying segments. Sales of Bibles and religious books totaled more than a billion dollars in 1984.

But there is a downside. "In spite of the prevalence of evangelicals," Robinson complained, "American society seems as unaffected by Christian values as the National Football League is by Sunday church services." Robinson is not alone in his lament. George Gallup Jr. noted in *Religion in America 1984*, "America in 1984 appears to be confronted with a giant paradox; Religion is growing in importance among Americans but morality is losing ground." And there aren't many in our society who will argue with that. It's at the heart of megatrend seven: growing me-ism and materialism ("today's self-centered churchgoer pictures God as the dispenser — and withholder — of life's prizes: a television gameshow host.")

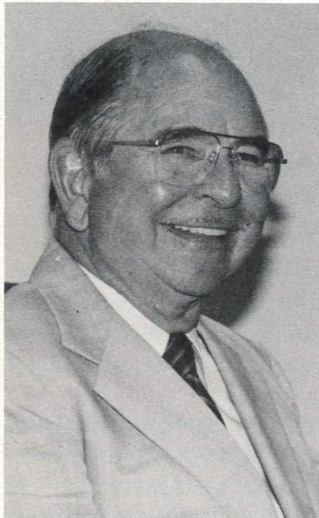
But this is not finger-pointing time. Nothing nourishes and stiffens our pride as much as a good finger-pointing session. Some keen observer has remarked that when the finger is pointed (and if it is done right), there are at least three fingers pointed at the pointer. As it should be. Reformation starts at home, not next door, by at least three to one.

And what better time to take personal inventory than in Lent. During these six weeks the church will bury itself deeply in the unfathomable mystery of God's love to his world. In these six weeks the worship services will bring into sharp focus the message, the life, the sufferings and the death of Jesus Christ — as in no other period of the church year.

There is where the Christian life in all its fullness begins, in the atoning suffering and death of the Savior. From that flows the abundant life, the life that will face death rather than deny that Savior in life.

It is difficult when the cross looms so large, to pass it "breathing no repentant vow." True, our Old Adam is to be "drowned by *daily* contrition and repentance." But there are times in our life when we stand nearer to that cross. Lent is one of those times.

James P. Schaefer



Mrs. Beech changes things

by Mildred O. Meyer

We walked as a family — mother, father and children. This weekly trek to church was a pleasant occasion. Each wore his best attire: father his dress suit, mother a huge hat whose ostrich plume wound around and finally rested on her shoulder; the boys slightly uncomfortable in starched white shirts; the girls giddy with self-admiration in rainbow-hued dresses.

But when we arrived at church, family unity dissolved. Father joined the group of men who lingered outside discussing weather, crops and the state of the economy. Mother herded her brood into the building where we took our accustomed seats on the left side. The bell tolled. The men and older boys filed in. The male constituent occupied the pews to the right. Nothing strange about that to a seven-year-old. It was the custom. Mother might at times murmur the whole business of admonishing fell on her shoulders, but that was as far as that went.

We hadn't heard of the atomic bomb in those faraway days. In fact, any adult with the least bit of schooling knew the atom couldn't be split. But the bomb did fall on our church one sunny morning in May. Mrs. Beech, a newcomer to the community, walked into church and sat on the *right* side next to her husband. Didn't she know any better? There was a general commotion with quite a bit of whispering and nudging. Mother's face telegraphed "faces front or else."

Didn't Mrs. Beech really know any better? She must be awfully stupid if she didn't catch on. Well, if no one enlightened her, Pastor Koehler surely would. He was really strict as we children found out on the few occasions when our teachers were absent and pastor took charge of our one-room school.

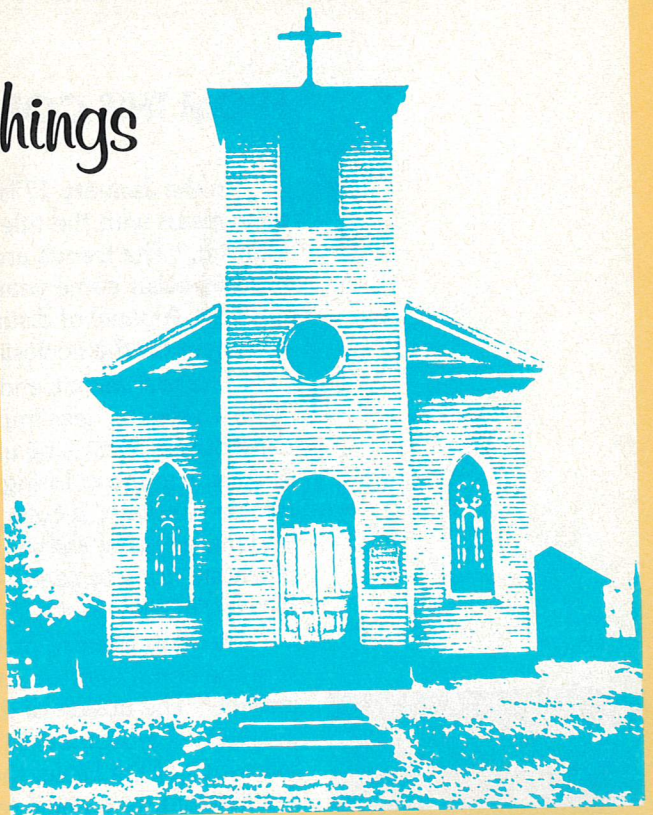
I was disappointed. Pastor Koehler [of Trinity, Long Prairie, Minn.] stood up before the altar singing in his beautiful baritone, "Der Herr sei mit euch." Apparently he noticed nothing amiss. The congregation responded with a shaky "Und mit seinem Geiste." All but mother. She always changed the *seinem* to *deinem*. She had been reared in a parsonage and had to be a bit different than other folks.

Perhaps pastor wasn't aware of Mrs. Beech's breach of etiquette. Maybe he hadn't seen her. But once he got into that tall pulpit to deliver the sermon, he could see everyone, and then he would set Mrs. Beech right.

Well, if Pastor Koehler was aware that something extraordinary had occurred, he certainly didn't show it. He went about delivering the sermon just as always.

Seven-year-olds have big ears. Nothing was said at the dinner table about Mrs. Beech's unprecedented behavior. Later I did gather bits of what was supposed to have been a private conversation.

"If we can worship as a family during our home devotions, why can't we in church?"



Father didn't have much to say to that. "You could help quiet the children." Father had even less to say.

Summer rolled by. A few brave souls joined their husbands in worship on the right side of the church. Finally it got to be so common that the whispering and nudging ceased. There were some, however, who never could give up the old custom.

Then one Sunday father entered the church building with us. He propelled mother to her accustomed pew, stood aside as we all filed in and then sat down with us on the *left* side of the church. As Pastor Koehler entered the pulpit that Sunday his eyes met mine, those kind, amused-looking eyes. If I read his message aright, he was saying, "It's all right, little girl. Families should worship together."

Many changes have taken place in the church since I was seven. There have been new hymnals, changes in the liturgy, new translations of the Bible, greater mission outreach. All changes are accompanied with some protest. One change we will never tolerate. The *word* must never be changed. It must be taught and preached in its purity as Pastor Koehler preached it, as my present pastor teaches it. The unchanging, beautiful gospel of God's love for sinful man will always remain the heritage of our Lutheran church. No change there. □



Mildred Meyer is a member of St. John, Jefferson, Wisconsin.