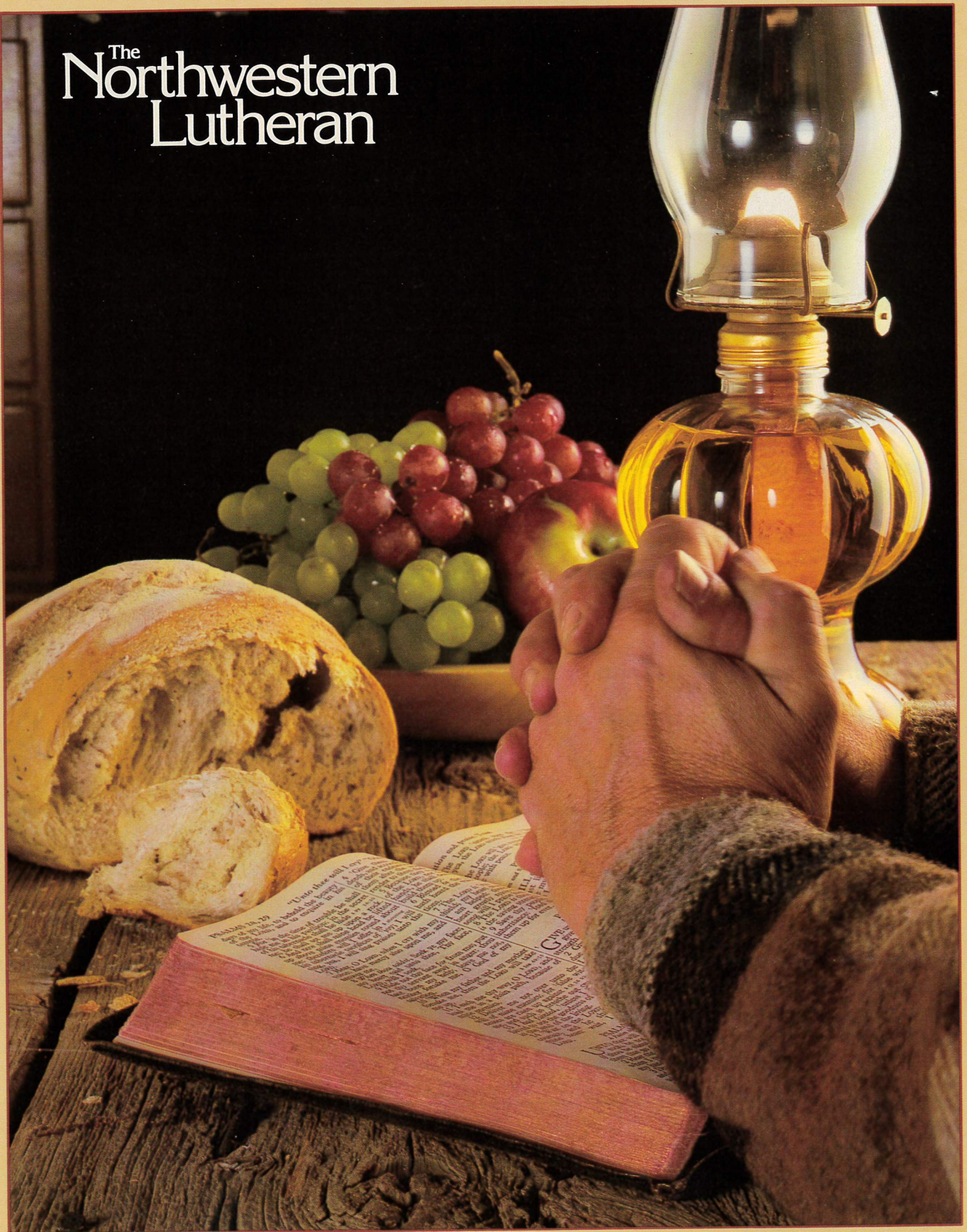
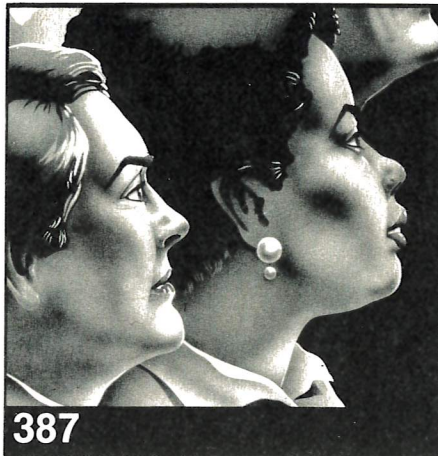


NOVEMBER 15, 1987

The Northwestern Lutheran





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

The Northwestern Lutheran

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE
WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD

NOVEMBER 1, 1987/VOL. 74, NO. 19

Editorial office

Rev. James P. Schaefer, Editor
The Northwestern Lutheran
2929 N. Mayfair Road
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53222
Phone 414/771-9357

Beverly Brushaber, Editorial assistant

Contributing editors

J. G. Anderson, R. D. Balge, T. B. Franzmann, I. G. Frey, J. C. Gerlach, R. H. Hochmuth, P. E. Kelm, R. E. Lauersdorf, V. H. Prange, C. Toppe.

District reporters

K. Pasch (Arizona), R. Kanzenbach (Dakota-Montana), E. Schaeve (Michigan), R. Edwards (Minnesota), T. Bauer (Nebraska), D. Kehl (North Atlantic), J. Eggert (Northern Wisconsin), J. Oldfield (Pacific Northwest), D. Nottling (South Atlantic), C. Learman (South Central), J. Huebner (Southeastern Wisconsin), D. Kipfmiller (Western Wisconsin).

Production

Production services of Northwestern Publishing House: Production coordinator, Clifford Koeller; Design and page make-up, Matthew Schaser, Duane Weaver; Subscription manager, Judy Olson.

Subscriber service

For subscription service, write: Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N. 113th St., P.O. Box 26975, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53226-0975. Phone 414/475-6600. Allow **four weeks** for a new subscription, subscription renewal or change of address.

Subscription rates (payable in advance)

U.S.A. and Canada — **One year, \$7.00; two years, \$13.00; three years, \$18.00.** Twenty-five or more unaddressed copies sent in a bundle to one address at \$4.00 per subscription. Every home mailing plan at \$4.50 per subscription. All prices include postage.

All other countries — Please write for rates.

The Northwestern Lutheran is available on **cassette** for the visually handicapped. For information, write: Workshop for the Visually Handicapped, 559 Humboldt Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota 55107.

THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN (ISSN 0029-3512) is published *semimonthly, except monthly in July, August and December*, by Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Second class postage paid at Milwaukee, Wisconsin and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *The Northwestern Lutheran*, c/o Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N. 113th St., P.O. Box 26975, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53226-0975. ©1987 by *The Northwestern Lutheran*, magazine of the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod.

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Adjusting our thanksgiving attitude

by Richard E. Lauersdorf

"I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant. I had only my staff when I crossed this Jordan, but now I have become two groups" (Genesis 32:10).

Attitudes count! People who feel life's problems are too complex find few solutions. Athletic teams which think a foe is too tough seldom win. Couples who are too unwilling to work at it have a rough time making marriage go. Yes, it's the attitude that counts.

So also with the giving of thanks. For most of us an attitude adjustment is in order when it comes to thanksgiving. Such an adjustment

Starts with our unworthiness

"What do you mean 'unworthy'?" some would object. "Whatever I have I've earned. I've worked hard for it." For such people Thanksgiving Day is little more than an excuse to stuff themselves and watch some football. It can happen to us! Somewhat self-contentedly we may look over all we have and nod in smug satisfaction at the intelligent, diligent work of our hands.

Listen to Jacob of old. Twenty years earlier he had fled the murderous wrath of his brother Esau with no more than the clothes on his back and the shepherd's staff in his hand. Now he returns with flocks and goods almost beyond numbering. Twenty years earlier he couldn't trust God to act, but had to help along by tricking his father Isaac into giving him the blessing of the first born. Now he returns with a faith which held God to his promises and even trusted God's care in the coming confrontation with Esau. Looking at all that God had done for him, Jacob could only say, "I am unworthy."

Get the point? I don't deserve anything from God other than the death on earth and eternal death in hell which I have earned and compounded by every sin I have ever committed. I don't deserve a house door to open, a slice of bread to butter, a stitch of clothing to put on, a breath of fresh air to swallow, a single loved one to enjoy, a body to use, a car to drive, a church to worship in. All this and so much more I have "only because he is my good and merciful Father in heaven."

"Lord, I am so unworthy," we need to begin and then we'll be on the road to a proper thanksgiving.

Continues with God's kindness

To Jacob God gave the blessing of having the Savior come from his seed. To us has come the blessing of being brothers and sisters of that Savior, believers in him and joint heirs with him. To Jacob God gave some rich promises. To us has come his word in all its fullness, a word which we still have. Every Sunday I can hear it sounded forth in all its purity and clarity in my church. My children can learn it so that when they are old they will not depart from it.

There's more. There's a spouse at my side, with those touches of love, that support, comfort and just plain feeling of oneness we have in each other. There are the children who have come as the fruit of our love — challenges and yet joys, burdens and yet blessings, bodies and souls — all ours to hold and shape and carry with us into eternity.

There's our country where the average worker labors just 12 hours a week to pay for his groceries and where the average citizen consumes 35 pounds of potato chips a year. There are the freedoms I often take for granted. I can work where and when I want to. I can worship how, where and when I desire. I can speak my mind freely and travel at will. Perhaps for some it's different this Thanksgiving. Perhaps a loved one is no longer at my side, a child has turned ungrateful, a part of the body no longer functions, a bank account isn't too flush. How often, though, don't painful blessings turn out to be the richest, just as Jacob had learned when forced to flee his homeland 20 years earlier?

A proper thanksgiving attitude? It starts with a sense of unworthiness and continues with a review of all God's kindness. But it doesn't end there.

Let our thank-yous not be the kind some clerks speak when they hand us our change or the kind we speak on the phone when we want to end a conversation. Such thank-yous are just a substitute for "good-by." When we know that we deserve nothing from God and how much he gives us anyway, our Thanksgiving will not just be a polite "thank-you" and "good-by" till the fourth Thursday of next November. Instead it will be the kickoff day for another year of daily thanksgiving for him.

It's the attitude that counts, also when it comes to Thanksgiving. □

Richard Lauersdorf is pastor of St. John, Jefferson, Wisconsin and the synod's first vice-president.

Thanksgiving Day dinner

Dad and mom and the kids sitting around a table laden with the rich fruits of God's earth — that will be the scene in many homes come Thanksgiving Day. All of us who have been privileged to share that experience treasure the memory.

Unfortunately the Thanksgiving Day dinner, where it still happens, is hardly characteristic of the way most Americans get their meals. The worthy and ancient ritual of the family dinner is rapidly becoming a thing of the past.

A psychologist with the Institute for Juvenile Research in Chicago says about the family dinners: "It's all but gone. People have gotten busier and busier. Meals in a lot of families are just everyone for himself.

"People more and more eat meals away from home and on the run. And even if they stay home to eat, food can be individually prepared quickly in a microwave to suit each family member's preference. And when mother does put a meal on the table for her family, her efforts just might be greeted with a chorus of complaints."

"People not having dinner together is a bad sign," observes a father whose family still struggles to maintain the practice. "When the family starts to fall apart, the whole country starts to fall apart." A family therapist agrees: "The breakdown of dinner is a symptom of the general disintegration of traditional family systems."

It's all part of what has been called the "uncoupling" of the family. There was a time when spouses would not think of going their own separate ways to eat. Now married people are going all sorts of places alone.

In a growing number of families there is no father to take his seat at the table with wife and children. And even mother may be replaced by a young babysitter as she goes off to work. One-parent children are frequently poor students, sick more often, twice as likely to drop out of school short of graduation and apt to end up unemployed.

What's to be done? Talking and writing about the situation may seem to do little good. Nonetheless, people who see what is happening and who care about the welfare of others need to keep beating the drums of concern. We need also in our own lives to work against the divisive selfishness which uncouples spouses and families.

As Christians we will appreciate anew the units which God has created for our good: family and church. Of husband and wife Jesus said: "They are no longer two, but *one*." And of the church Paul writes: "We, though many, are *one* body in Christ, and individually members one of another."

Eating and drinking at the Lord's altar celebrates the oneness we have in Christ. Eating and drinking at the dinner table, whether on Thanksgiving Day or any other day, celebrates the blessed community of the family.

Victor H. Prange



*Victor Prange
is pastor of Peace,
Janesville, Wisconsin.*

“Witness”

by Fredric E. Piepenbrink

At the time of this writing Milwaukee WELS congregations are heavily involved in an evangelism thrust called “Gospel Outreach ‘87.” The program calls for a general canvass of each church’s neighborhood for the purpose of locating the unchurched, followed by a number of follow-up visits, one of which is called the “witness visit.” The “witness visit” does just that, it witnesses to the unchurched the saving gospel of Christ Jesus.

While mission congregations of our synod regularly involve themselves in such activity (it is second nature for them and sometimes vital for their survival), for many of our larger and older congregations in Milwaukee this was a new experience. For the first time in a long time, a significant number of the membership was trained for and participated in an active witness effort. Such a program, whose blessings undoubtedly will continue long after “Gospel Outreach ‘87,” has revived a witness mind-set in many of the congregations who participated.

Evangelistic mind-set in John’s Gospel

The Apostle John had such a mind-set, for it is demonstrated in his Gospel. John was sensitive to the outreach efforts of those who became convinced of who Christ was, and who in turn took it upon themselves to convince others. Already in the prologue (1:1-18) John introduces John the Baptist (1:6), “the voice of one calling in the desert,” and indicates the content and purpose of his testimony: “He came as a witness to testify concerning that Light [Christ Jesus], so that through him all men might believe” (1:7). This brief introduction then opened the door for more witnesses to step forward in the Gospel.

The noun “witness” or “testimony” is used 14 times in John’s Gospel, while Matthew does not use it at all, Mark three times and Luke once. The verb “to testify” is found 33 times in John, once in Matthew, once in Luke and not at all in Mark. Obviously John by inspiration elevated the concept of witness and testimony concerning Christ to a prominent position. It is for this reason that Joh. Ylvisaker calls John’s Gospel the “Book of Testimony.”

“To testify,” of course, means to give competent information concerning that which one has himself seen, or heard or experienced. The role of the witness carried much weight in Jesus’ day, and in matters

involving life and death more than one was necessary. John presents a long list of contemporaries of Jesus who offer their testimonies about him, and as if that were not enough, John relates how Jesus himself appealed to the witnesses of still others. They included the Scriptures, “These are the Scriptures that testify about me” (5:39), in particular Moses, “If you believed Moses, you would believe me, for he wrote about me” (5:46), and the two greatest witnesses of all, Jesus himself and his Father, “I am one who testifies for myself; my other witness is the one who sent me — the Father” (8:18).

May their testimony carry much weight in convincing us too, and may we all be compelled by our experience of faith to do what John’s Gospel encourages — to witness concerning the Savior from death to life, Christ Jesus.

Alive in the word

Follow the “witness” theme in John’s Gospel by reading the following passages.

1:19-34 John the Baptist witnessed to the Jews and his own disciples concerning the Christ.

1:35-51 Andrew and Philip shared the Christ in their “family webs.”

3:22-36 John the Baptist witnessed concerning his relationship to the Christ, and Christ’s relationship to the Father.

4:27-42 Even the recently converted Samaritan woman was successful in convincing many townspeople.

12:12-19 The people of Jerusalem gave a witness that had been prophesied long ago.

20:19-29 Thomas, after convincing evidence, gave his moving testimony.

20:30-31 Of course, the Apostle John himself was a witness in writing the Gospel.

21:24-25 We even have some unknown witnesses, perhaps contemporaries of John, whose testimony was added at the very end of the Gospel. □

Next time: “Children of God”



Fredric Piepenbrink is pastor of Atonement, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

A woman's world as MS. views it

by Joel C. Gerlach

The magazine *MS.* observed its 15th birthday last summer. *MS.* is the popular voice of the feminist movement. The author of the feature article in the anniversary issue was Madeleine L'Engle. Ms. L'Engle is a prolific writer. She is the author of three dozen books and numerous articles.

"Shake the Universe" is the title of her anniversary piece for *MS.* In it she describes her dream world of the future and woman's role in that world. "My job," says L'Engle, "is to live fully as a woman." "Shake the Universe" is her attempt to define what that means.

L'Engle begins by recounting her interest in an archeological dig in Xian, China. Research at Xian revealed that 5000 years ago the village had a matriarchal society. It was agrarian and peaceful, a society concerned with music and art and with the maintenance of good order.

A millennium later Xian society was transformed to a society dominated by men. L'Engle observes that "when women guide the way of life society is peaceable, and there is time for music and beauty and things of the spirit; and that when men are in charge there is war, and the tribal dances become war dances rather than patterns of beauty in appreciation of the loveliness of nature." She adds, "That is the basic pattern throughout history." What she says has an element of truth in it. But it also represents a simplistic view of history.

As we move out of the 20th century into the 21st, women will be responsible for leading a revival of spirituality, L'Engle suggests. What kind of spirituality does she have in mind? She writes, "It is no coincidence that the root word for heal, health, whole and holy is hale, as in 'hale and hearty.' If we are healed we are healthy; if we are healthy we are whole; if we are whole we are holy — that is all being holy means." She then asks, "How do we become, much less remain, whole and holy in a world that tears and fragments?"

That is an easy question for a Christian to answer. "We have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all" (Hebrews 10:10). When the Holy Spirit sanctifies us, we are made both whole and holy. "In him [Christ] dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in him" (Colossians 2:9,10). We remain both whole and holy by remaining "in him."

Christians find wholeness and holiness by looking

to resources outside of themselves. L'Engle directs her readers to look for those resources within themselves. A strong flavor of mysticism pervades what she says. Her answer reveals an obvious affinity for the New Age philosophy that is attracting so much attention in the public forum today.

"Unless we listen to our planet, unless we listen to our bodies, unless we listen to our spirits, society may plunge back to that world once again — autonomous, independent, destructive and basically subhuman," L'Engle insists. That's exactly what the gurus of the self-realization cults are telling us. Shirley (Out On A Limb) MacLaine or the Maharishi Mahesh Yogi couldn't have said it any better.

The necessary catalyst to bring on L'Engle's dream world of the future is what she calls "feminine spirituality." What is that? "To live in an open and undetermined universe with courage and grace seems to me to epitomize feminine spirituality." She adds, "It is the way we are going to have to go if we are to survive as a human race."

"An undetermined universe?" That's what Eve wanted for herself, yes, and Adam too. That's the kind of universe that rebellious mankind has always wanted for itself — one in which "man is the measure of all things."

What does God think of all this? "The one enthroned in heaven laughs" (Psalm 2:4). He displayed his disdain for that kind of humanistic nonsense when he put a stop to the building of a similar "future dream world" at Babel.

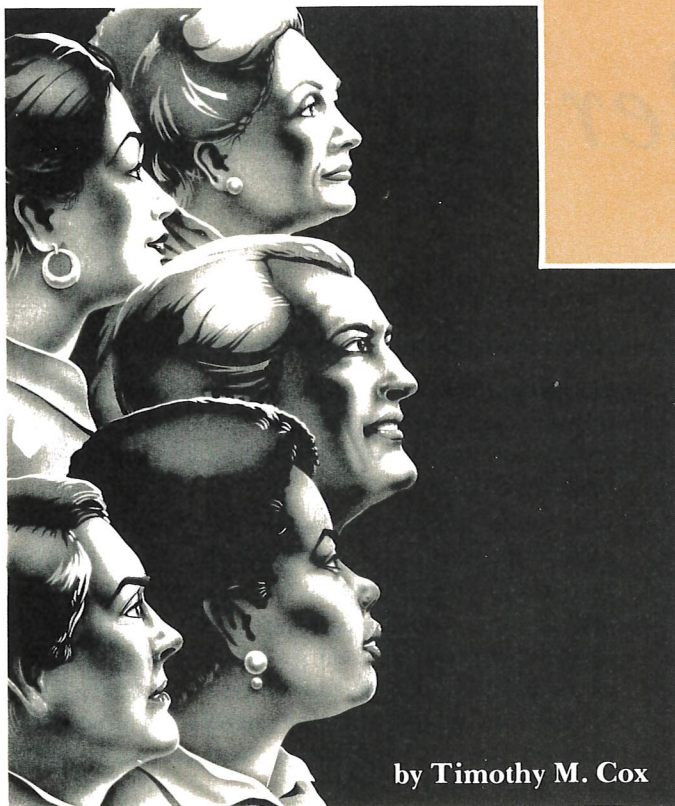
St. Paul suggests a different view of feminine spirituality. He counsels women to adorn themselves "with good deeds, appropriate for women who profess to worship God" (1 Timothy 2:10). That kind of conduct may not "shake the universe," but it will evoke the approval of the one who rules the universe.

As Christians, women are not so much interested in a woman's world as they are in God's world. And they understand that God-given femininity helps to make God's world the kind of world he wants it to be. □



Joel Gerlach is pastor of
Our Redeemer, Santa Barbara, California.

Remember your mission



by Timothy M. Cox

In the middle of a heated battle, General “Stonewall” Jackson found his staff arguing among themselves about a petty issue. Infuriated, Jackson bellowed words that the men probably never forgot: “Gentlemen, the enemy is *over there!*” Caught up in the trivial, these men were neglecting the essential. They had forgotten their mission.

That happens sometimes. Football teams, choked by discord and strife, fail to cooperate and lose the game. Businesses, managed by the sons of the founders, go under because they were milked instead of fed. The mission and so the vision to accomplish it was lost. Government agencies, staffed by disinterested bureaucrats, can become models of inefficiency and ineffectiveness because they lack the sense of mission for which they were established.

But perhaps no group is more susceptible to losing sight of its mission than churches. While they have been given the greatest mission of all, they are all too easily sidetracked by lesser issues and paralyzed by indifference. The important work is neglected and the minor matters become “important.” As a result the church becomes increasingly ineffective — inside and out. It coasts. And drifts . . . backward. It loses members. It loses interest. It loses time. And even if it never closes, and most do not, it simply stands as a shell, a facade, an illusion with no substance, a body with no life.

Until it remembers its mission. You see, God has a mission for his church and he established it for some

very particular reasons. He designed his church to be a light that would go out into the world of darkness and beckon sinners to Christ. He wants it to begin in families, then reach out into neighborhoods and communities and finally cover the earth with his good news. His church isn't supposed to sit back and watch people go to hell. No, God's church exists to win souls to Christ. *That is its mission.*

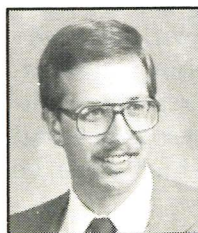
God established his church to be a place of strength, help, comfort and encouragement for his people. A place to be built up, not torn apart. A place to be nourished, not famished. A place of collective, unified worship of God in a world that constantly contends for devotion. His church was to be a place to grow in love, work with diligence and strive for godliness. *That is its mission.*

God's church is to “seek first his kingdom and his righteousness.” God's church is to “always give itself fully to the work of the Lord.” God's church is to be “rich in good deeds, and be generous and willing to share.” God's church is to “declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.” *That is its mission.*

Now, is that *our* mission? Really. Is that what *we* are about? Would our church meetings demonstrate a people devoted to carrying out God's mission? Would a visitor to our church service detect it? Does our community know? Is God's mission our mission?

Remember God's mission for his church. Get into his word and learn it even more. Discuss it with fellow members to remind and encourage them. Evaluate the meetings we spend time in, the projects we put effort into and the items we spend money on to make sure that through them we are doing God's work. Our mission must be to carry out God's mission.

I don't know what happened to Jackson's staff. Maybe it needed to be reminded again. People are like that. Periodically their perspective must be focused and their attitudes must be adjusted to view things as they really are in the kingdom of God. □



Tim Cox is principal of St. Matthew, Iron Ridge, Wisconsin.

The *Sampler* survey —

by Alfred Bloedel

As had been planned, the Commission on Worship provided a survey form last spring to all congregations participating in the six-month trial use of the *Sampler*. The *Sampler* had made it possible for congregations to experiment with the use of a revision of the page 5/15 (TLH) service orders and 21 representative hymns planned for inclusion in the WELS new/revised hymnal under preparation. Congregations were asked to reproduce the survey form as needed, obtain the responses of interested members, tally and summarize the individual responses and submit the summary on a report form provided.

It was felt desirable to develop a survey instrument which would be as brief as possible so that it could be completed in no more than 5-10 minutes. The decision was made, therefore, to limit the survey to a focus on a limited number of features incorporated into the *Sampler* liturgy and hymns which represent changes from our present hymnal. While it appeared clear that this approach would probably not please everyone, it nevertheless seemed likely that a large amount of useful information could be obtained from interested members throughout the synod. Participants who felt they had reactions not covered by the survey instrument were invited to send their comments separately to the Commission on Worship.

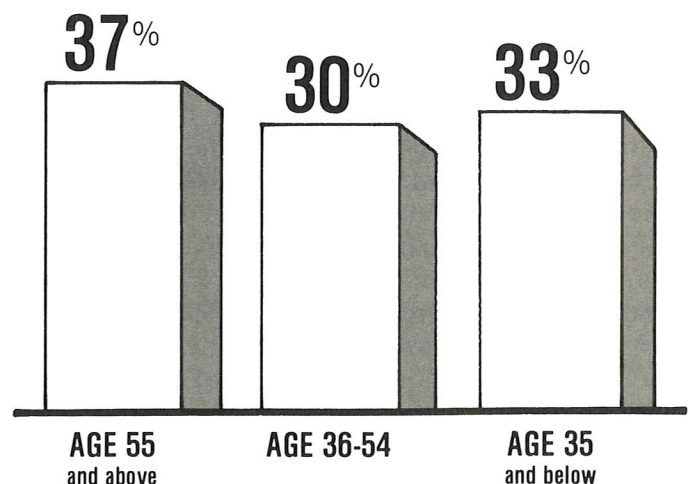
The survey was carried out in 770 congregations. Approximately 70,000 members participated, comprising about 30 percent of the total communicant membership in the participating congregations and about 22 percent of the total WELS communicant membership. Of the total group of participants, 37 percent were age 55 and above, 30 percent were in the 36-54 age group, and 33 percent were below age 36.

The survey represents an earnest attempt to obtain information which would be useful to the Hymnal Committee. This is the group carrying out the difficult task of preparing a hymnal which will adequately meet the diverse worship needs of our congregations. While carefully examining the reports resulting from the survey, the committee recognizes that there are a number of limitations which must be

considered in utilizing the results. Included are these:

- 1) Congregations were free to use the *Sampler* in any manner and to any extent they chose. The resulting variety of use influences survey reactions to an unknown degree.
- 2) No control could be exercised over the manner in which the survey was conducted. This variable also has an unknown effect on the responses obtained.
- 3) The accuracy of results by age groups within each district and for the total group is of necessity dependent on the care with which each congregation tallied and aggregated the responses entered on each of its completed forms. Again, no control of this factor was possible.
- 4) Both the *Sampler* and the follow-up survey were made available on a voluntary basis in order to make wide use and participation possible throughout the synod. While this approach was entirely appropriate and desirable, it does affect to an unknown degree the make-up of the group responding to the survey.

Respondents to the *Sampler* survey broken down into age groups



a report

Despite such limiting considerations, the survey results provide a body of data useful for committee study and analysis and for sharing with our membership at large. Both the hymn committee and the liturgy committee are utilizing the detailed reports of results in their work. The statements which follow are a summary of these reported data as information for all interested members of our church body. It should be clear that the data cited in each summary statement are always based on the number of individuals responding to the survey item being considered.

- 1) Three out of every four members responding felt that the new Confession of Sins is satisfactory.
- 2) About eight of every ten members favored having the sung Kyrie as a part of the Confession of Sins.
- 3) More than eight of every ten members believed the service should make regular use of the Psalms and should include an Old Testament reading.
- 4) Updating the language so that it conforms more closely to today's English was favored by a three to two margin of respondents.
- 5) Better than six out of ten respondents generally enjoyed learning to sing the melodies of the *Sampler* hymns.
- 6) Seven out of ten individuals felt that the inclusion of most of the *Sampler* hymns in the new hymnal is desirable and that the pitch levels used in the hymns and liturgy are comfortable.
- 7) A four to one margin of respondents indicated a preference for having the "Amen" printed at the close of hymns.
- 8) *Sampler* hymns identified as being especially liked are the following, in rank order:
 - 713, Amazing Grace
 - 715, Lift High the Cross
 - 721, Let All Things Now Living
 - 702, Once in Royal David's City
 - 707, This Joyful Eastertide
 - 708, Alleluia! Sing to Jesus
 - 711, Thy Strong Word

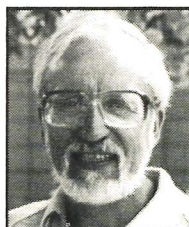
Committee members are working with considerable detail in the survey data analyses provided them. These include percents responding at each point in

the four-point scale used in the survey. In addition to the percents reported for the total synod-wide group surveyed, reports have been prepared which display the data for each of the four age groups identified and for each of the 12 synodical districts.

In general, results are not greatly divergent from district to district, indicating considerable similarity in worship viewpoints relative to the *Sampler*. However, synod-wide data separated out for the three age groups show that proportions favoring various aspects of the *Sampler* liturgy and hymns surveyed are generally somewhat smaller for participants age 55 and above and are generally larger for the 21-35 age group. The differences between these two groups range up to 18 percent points. For example, on the question of updated language, the older group favored this by a mere 5 percent over a 50/50 split, whereas the younger group showed a solid two to one majority backing the use of present-day English. Similarly, the 55+ age group reacted favorably to the acceptance of the 21 *Sampler* hymns and the liturgy/hymn pitch levels by a three to two margin, while the 21-35 age group registered positive responses to these two matters with a four to one edge.

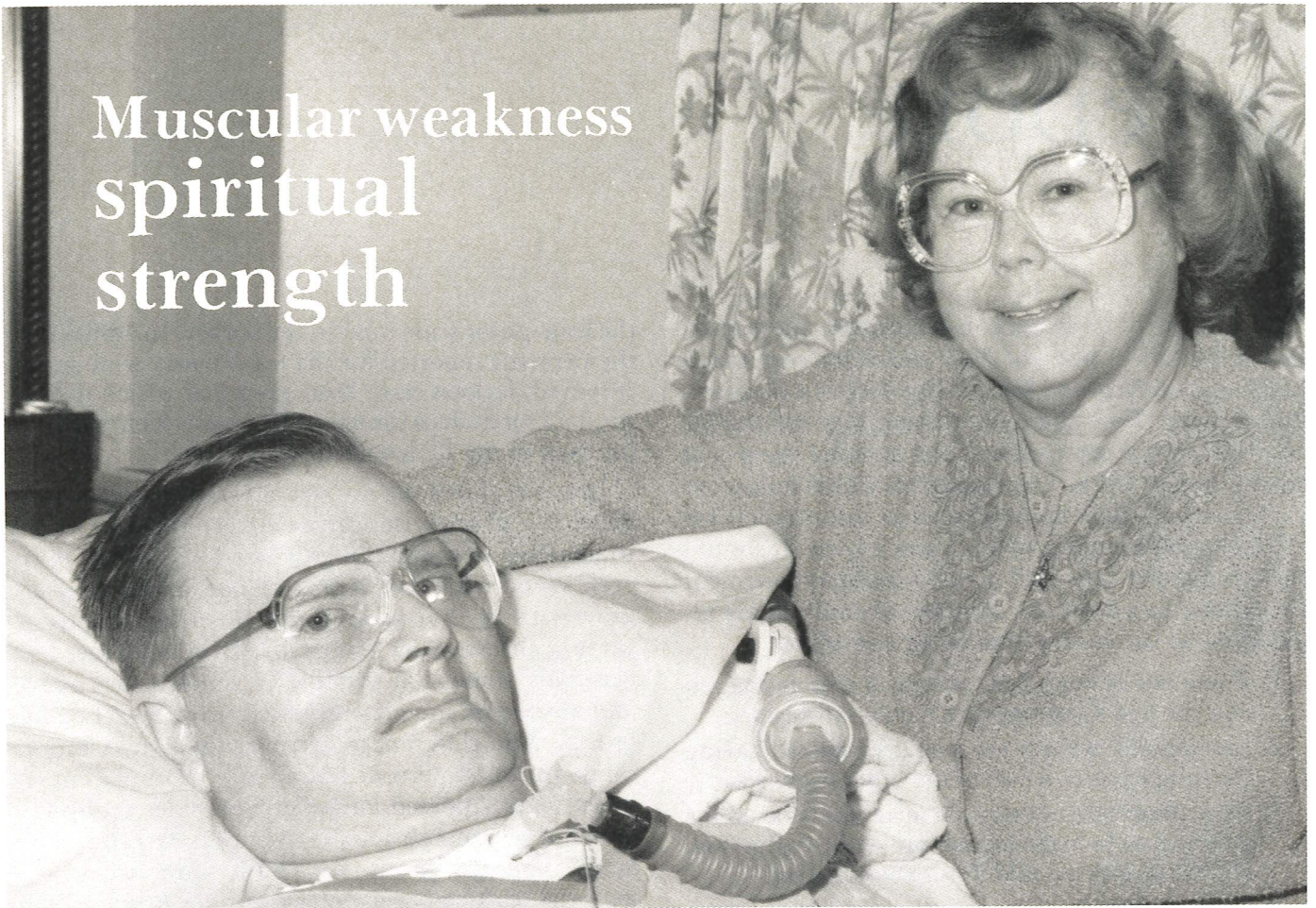
The examples cited must suffice to give an impression of the helpful information made available by means of the *Sampler* survey to the hymn committee and the liturgy committee as these groups continue work on their assignments. Separate comments and suggestions received are also being carefully considered. The committees are thus enabled to re-evaluate the directions in which they are moving and make adjustments as further study stemming from the information received may show this to be desirable.

A hearty synod-wide "thank you!" is due all those WELS members who participated in the survey and/or assisted in the tabulation and summarization of congregational responses. This helpful activity is greatly appreciated. □



Elfred Bloedel recently retired as test director for the Milwaukee Public Schools. He is a member of the Commission on Worship and music director at Grace, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Muscular weakness spiritual strength



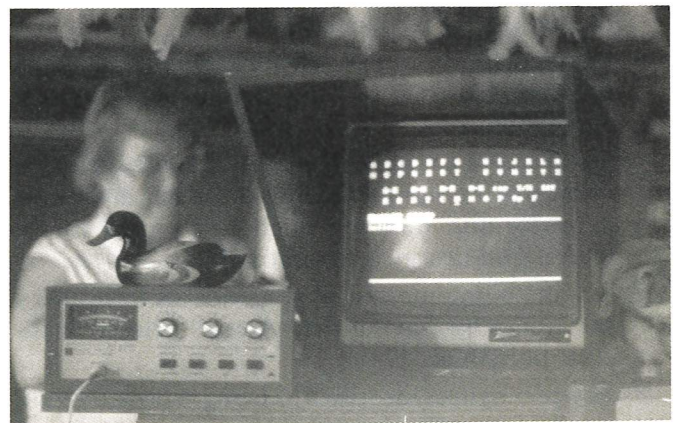
Larry and Doris Carlson

by Gregory L. Jackson

Two members of our congregation, a man and a little girl, got together recently. They had a great time, smiled a lot, but never said a word. Both of them suffer from neurological degenerative disease. Larry Carlson, 55, has amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, ALS, often called Lou Gehrig's disease. My daughter, Erin Joy Jackson, 7, has a condition which confounds the experts and defies diagnosis. Her sister, Bethany, died of the same disease in 1981.

Larry was diagnosed in 1978, after complaining of weakness in his left thumb and forefinger. The doctor said, "Make out your will and get your life in order." Larry and his wife Doris resolved to live with ALS instead of giving in to fatalism. Through God's providence, they were able to purchase a property which Larry remodeled to suit his future needs.

In 1980 Larry began to have trouble swallowing. In 1981 he had to begin using an artificial respirator. ALS leaves the muscles limp, although feeling remains. The next hurdle for the Carlson family was communication. In 1983 Chuck Studebaker brought over the Medcom computer system, developed because Studebaker's father died from ALS, unable to



The computer used by Larry Carlson

express any thoughts before dying.

Erin, like her sister, was born apparently normal. Both developed normally for the first few months, then began to grow weaker. Erin lost her ability to sit up, to roll over, to use her arms and legs purposefully. Swallowing became difficult with the onset of the disorder. Like Larry, she has had many brushes with death. Her special problems made it necessary to find a nursing home. Erin is now at Northland Terrace, only eight miles from our parsonage.



Erin with her father

Larry and Erin have a lot in common. They cannot talk, but they communicate with their smiles. Both of them are known for cheering up those who come to visit them. Larry has never had an unhappy day since coming down with ALS, despite many near catastrophes. Erin's physician called her a "life-giving force" in her unit at Midland Hospital.

Through Larry's illness many people have been blessed by the insights shared by the Carlson family. As St. Paul wrote, "Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day. For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all" (2 Corinthians 4:16-17). He spends 12 hours a day on his Medcom computer, helping families cope with ALS. He sends a "Dear Friend" letter right away to anyone who needs to know about ALS. Then he writes a personal letter, picking out each letter on the computer screen with his eyes and entering it by lifting his eyebrows, using a special headband. He has written an ALS care booklet, appeared on the TV show "20/20" and participated in ALS support group activities.



Erin with her mother

Erin has blessed many people through her special personality, warmth and raucous humor. Always around elderly, dying patients, she has invariably welcomed the visits of those patients' relatives, who feel drawn by her silent friendliness. Although Erin cries when others are unhappy or in pain, she also laughs loudly at pratfalls, spills and outbreaks of tension. When a boy visited her with his grandmother, his antics left Erin helpless with laughter, the adults exhausted from the hour of hilarity. Erin knows what it means to rejoice in the Lord always.

Larry and Erin are examples for us when we try to understand what it means to "take up our cross and follow Christ." We do not get to choose our cross, which is an affliction or hardship allowed by God to further our Christian growth. The cross is not a punishment from God for our sins, but an opportunity to be refined and tested. St. Paul knew about bearing the cross of Christ. He suffered from an affliction which he begged God three times to take away. God answered his prayer, as recorded in 2 Corinthians 12:9: "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness."

Larry and Doris Carlson are eager to help any family with ALS. They may be contacted at: 8194 Olen-tangy River Road, Delaware, Ohio 43015. Shepherd of Peace and Lamb of God are working with Larry and Erin to provide essential equipment for patients with neurological degenerative disorders. For more information, write to: Shepherd of Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church, 1950 Hard Road, Worthington, Ohio 43085. □



Gregory Jackson is pastor of Shepherd of Peace, Worthington, Ohio.

by Paul E. Kelm

I recently read an article describing the branches of Christianity involved in television ministry as: *Evangelicals, Fundamentalists, Pentecostals and Charismatics*. Where does our synod fit in such a classification?

Pigeon-holing people, theology and churches has never been an exact science. The four categories you mention, together with such labels as "liberal," "mainline" and the catch-all "Protestant" reflect contemporary blurring of historic differences among denominations. These labels describe loose groupings based on a combination of doctrinal convictions and emphases and historical, ecclesiastical and even political agendas. Ironically such groupings outline an innate concept of church fellowship without any clear biblical theology of fellowship. The Wisconsin Synod doesn't fit into any of the categories mentioned.

We can appreciate the Fundamentalists' insistence on a verbally inspired and inerrant Bible. But their literalism fosters millennial heresy and legalism. Their history explains their denial of the sacraments and a conditioning of God's grace. And their politics offend our sensitivity to Scripture's differentiation of church and state roles. The very label refers to the somewhat arbitrary distinction between "fundamental" doctrines and those in which disagreement is no barrier to fellowship.

We can appreciate the Evangelicals' emphasis on salvation alone in Jesus Christ, their aggressive sense of mission and spirit of joy and love in discipleship. We were an *Evangelical* Lutheran Church before the label became popular. But a false theology of conversion, reflecting an inadequate understanding of justification, coupled with an indistinct position on Scripture's inspiration and a Protestant indifference to the sacraments prevent us from identifying with the so-called "Evangelicals."

We may thank God that the "Charismatic Movement" has restored a sense of sin and grace to some within liberal Protestant denominations and has emphasized Bible study for some Roman Catholics. But excessive subjectivism in their emphasis on supernatural "gifts" and their acceptance of widely divergent beliefs keep us from any affinity for "Charismatics."

Because Pentecostals combine the errors of the Fundamentalists with the excesses of the Charismatics, there is little common ground for Evangelical Lutherans and this rapidly growing group of churches.

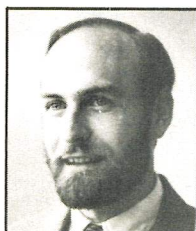
What is the Christian view of vasectomy?

Like so many ethical issues in this age of technological advance, vasectomy is not addressed directly by Scripture. Christians must carefully apply biblical principles, with a sensitivity to the extremes of legalism and relativism.

Several principles which guide Christians in the consideration of (non-abortifacient) birth control apply to vasectomy. It is morally wrong when intended to safeguard the pleasure of sex without the responsibility of marriage. It is wrong when, without clear evidence that pregnancy would be life-threatening, a couple seeks to thwart God's purpose and blessing of children for their marriage entirely. It is wrong when the decision to arbitrarily limit God's gift of children is based on a selfish, faithless, materialistic denial of his will and Lordship.

God's procreative command/blessing in Genesis 1:28 is not a moral obligation to reproduce as many children as biologically possible. Christian couples reach decisions on family size with prayer and sanctified judgment. Physical and emotional health, as well as Christian stewardship of time, gifts and resources, must be weighed together with the promises of God and his will to bless marriage and his world with children. Possible effects of the means of birth control, physical and psychological, must be considered.

What makes vasectomy different is that it is a permanent decision (however medically reversible). To make such a decision in uncertainty (e.g. the lifespan of one's wife and children or the duration of medical, psychological and financial circumstances) may be tempting God or playing God. On the other hand, a couple that has raised a family and been advised medically against further pregnancy may decide in faith that vasectomy is the preferable among options. Medical ramifications beyond my competence and complex situations beyond any anticipation reinforce Lutheran reluctance to suggest any "case-book" catalog of further exceptions to a general warning against vasectomy as a simple means of birth control. The issue calls for sensitive Christian counsel more than editorial pontification. □



Send your questions to Questions, The Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N. Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53222. Questions of general interest are preferred. Questions will be answered, however, only through this column.

Pastor Paul Kelm is the synod's administrator for evangelism.

"Baby dear"

I was pleased to see your cover article on "Baby dear" (September 1). Too often are we shown through the media situations where parents "lovingly" choose to end their baby's life with non-treatment.

Rita Fleisner beautifully told of using man's inventions while putting her faith and trust in God to save her daughter's life.

How fortunate for Carie that she had truly loving parents to seek every available treatment for this precious child of God.

Brad Mattes
Citrus Heights, California

Editorial comment

I agree with the major premise of Carleton Toppe's editorial comment (September 15), namely, that the tenuous underpinnings of evolutionism are ignored by some because a denial of this theory of self-improvement would be damaging to their ego.

However, basing our view on the subject even partly on "creation science" is equally tenuous. What if one of "our" scientific arguments should be proven fallacious? More to the point, why debate a scientific issue on grounds of our opponents' choosing?

Our argument should be based solely on Scripture, which is invulnerable. The argument of the evolutionists will dissolve with time, as science progresses (see, for example, the rejection of the steady state universe for the Big Bang theory, in our own lifetimes). I have yet to meet a first-class, unbiased scientist who scorns this approach.

Eric Rachut, M.D.
Austin, Minnesota

(For more on this subject see "Speaking my mind" in this issue)

ONE ISSUE

There will be one issue of the Northwestern Lutheran in December with a publication date of December 15.

I refer to Rev. Carleton Toppe's comments, "Reason won't settle the issue" (September 15).

Evolution? Creation? With all the evidence around us — including the examples used by Pastor Toppe in his opening paragraphs — we wonder how any thinking person can accept the theory of evolution.

God must have wondered, too, because he used the pen of the psalmist to tell us: "The fool hath said . . . there is no God." Only fools say that creation was happenstance. God will judge the fools.

Thanks, Pastor Toppe, for an excellent editorial!

Philip A. Luetke
Toledo, Ohio

The pope's visit

During the month of September the Roman pontiff, John Paul II, traveled extensively in the United States. Incident to this journey, the pope confronted serious issues which recently have divided and disturbed Roman Catholics in this country.

In many of these confrontations the pope restated and reasserted Bible-based positions, for which orthodox evangelical Christians would generally commend and agree with him. Yet the pope continually appealed to the human, i.e., papal, rather than the scriptural authentication of his words.

But besides these eternal verities the orthodox Lutheran could detect age-old errors of Rome. The pope, for example, reasserted the presumptuous claim of papal infallibility, claiming absolute authority in defining questions of faith and morals.

It is true that recently the church of Rome has modified some of its more offensive heretical teachings. But the fundamental offenses and rejection of God's word, the emphasis on works of righteousness, continue to be a threat.

An eminent contemporary Roman Catholic theologian — Hans Kung — recently examined meticulously the church's claim to papal infallibility. His conclusion: *nemo infallibilis nisi Deus ipse* (no one is infallible except

God himself). Orthodox Lutherans confess with grateful confidence the faith of Holy Scriptures, acknowledging that we are saved "by faith alone, by grace alone, by Scripture alone."

Edward J. Schuster
Dubuque, Iowa

A warm welcome

I know of no other way, except via The Northwestern Lutheran, to express our thanks to the many people in our WELS who have taught our children and ministered to our family for over twenty-five years.

This was especially brought home to us when our youngest child graduated from college and started that first job thousands of miles from home. He didn't know anyone and I worried that the phone bill would equal our house payment the first few days.

When he verbalized some of his frustrations I advised him to seek comfort in his faith and to make finding his new church home a major priority.

None of us will ever forget the welcome he got! Not only were the pastor and ushers warm and personable, but Tom found a whole family from our parish there visiting their son. At last he knew another face. That along with the gospel and familiar hymns helped us all feel he had a home after all.

I would encourage all to remember just how important the smile and welcome can be to the new person or visitor to your parish.

Our sincere thanks to those warm and welcoming Christians in San Jose, California.

Suzanne and Joseph Banhalzer
Chatfield, Minnesota

Letters between 100 and 250 words are preferred. In the interest of conciseness, letters are subject to editing. 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.

Brazil: mission force of the future . . . "I am impressed by the fact that the Brazilian church could easily be on the verge of becoming a significant force in the future of world missions," said Luis Bush, international president of the Christian Nationals Evangelism Commission. Bush cites a number of reasons. First, Brazil's Protestant church may be the third largest church in the world today, whose communicant membership is currently around 11 million with a soul membership of 20-25 million. He also cites national leadership. "Though there are over 2800 foreign missionaries in Brazil, more than in any other country in the world, they represent only a small percentage of the national leadership of 27,100 ordained Brazilian pastors. The Assemblies of God alone claim they have 56,500 evangelists." Finally he cites an article in the British "Economist" which describes Brazil as "the first big third world country knocking at the door of the club of developed democracies, and a potential United States in the next century." The report was carried by News Service 2000.

The "unspeakable sin" . . . Speaking to the Colorado Governor's Prayer Breakfast in Denver in June, U. S. District Court Judge John L. Kane blasted efforts to undermine the wall of separation between church and state as an "unspeakable sin." He cited the long history of religious persecution around the world and the efforts of America's founding fathers to see that it did not continue here. "Religious oppression," he said, "is older than the pyramids of Egypt and as current as the butchering of members of the Bahai faith in Iran today. One of the dominant themes of human history, religious intolerance, unhappily continues with the ferocity and relentlessness of all that is evil in the human spirit." Judge Kane, a Roman Catholic, is a Carter administration appointee to the federal bench.

No trace of church in Albania . . . Retired Conservative Baptist missionaries, Edwin and Dorothy Jacques, have revealed in a telephone interview with Open Door News Service that they were unable to find any trace of church activity during their recent visit to Albania. The Jacques were forced to leave Albania in 1940 but maintained contact with believers in that country through letters. After 40 years of petitioning the Albanian government for permission to return, visas were finally granted earlier this year. Edwin Jacques said he notified believers in Albania of their impending arrival but was unable to establish contact once inside the country. Although impressed by Albania's industrial development, Edwin Jacques noted that with it came "the absolute eradication of religion — any religion."

Bishops criticize biblical fundamentalism. . . The Roman Catholic bishops in a pastoral statement on the Bible have called for new efforts to "counteract the simplicities of biblical fundamentalism." The statement voiced fear that Catholics "may be attracted to biblical fundamentalism without realizing its serious weaknesses." It said fundamentalism's emphasis on the Bible as the sole source of religious truth is at odds with Catholicism. The statement described biblical fundamentalists as those who "present the Bible, God's inspired word, as the only necessary source for teaching about Christ and Christian living." Such a view, the bishops said, excludes the need for universal church teachings, Eucharistic celebrations, veneration of the saints and other liturgical and devotional traditions. "The basic characteristic of biblical fundamentalism is that it eliminates from Christianity the church as the Lord Jesus founded it," the statement charges.

Clergy malpractice suit can go to trial. . . A \$1 million lawsuit in which a California couple is blaming incompetent counseling by church pastors for the suicide of their 24-year-old son is valid and may be brought to trial. The suit brought by Walter and Maria Nally against Grace Community Church of Sun Valley, California went to trial in 1985. It was dismissed by Superior Court when the judge ruled that the parents had failed to establish a valid case. On appeal, the California Court of Appeals overturned that ruling and stated that "established principles of California law impose a duty of due care on those who undertake a counseling relationship with suicidal individuals." Commenting on the decision, Nally's lawyer, Edward Barker, said that "the real significance is that clergymen who counsel are being held accountable and don't have blanket immunity, which until now has been assumed."

Lack of pastors faces Church of Norway. . . "Church of Norway News" reports that a "serious lack of pastors and other church workers appears to threaten the Lutheran Church of Norway during the coming decade." Frank Grimstad, an official of the Church of Norway, says that "drastic measures" will be needed, including a cutback of theological studies from five to three years, access to pastoral ministry for "persons of other backgrounds, openness for local solutions and more awareness of vocation and visions in church education." □

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.

Seminary auxiliary meets

The fifteenth annual meeting of the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Auxiliary was held October 3. There were 412 in attendance.

A new logo developed this year was displayed on the speaker's table, the meeting folders and the auxiliary letterhead. The meeting was also videotaped for production of a new audiovisual presentation to be made available to ladies' organizations and congregations throughout the synod.

The auxiliary provides an op-



WISCONSIN LUTHERAN SEMINARY AUXILIARY

portunity for fellowship and service and supports projects not covered by the seminary's synodical budget. During the past year, selected projects amounted to over \$9000. Projects chosen for the coming year include a Paymaster

checksigner for the office, fair linens and blue paraments as well as a 15-foot decorated Christmas tree for the chapel, a 100-cup coffee-maker and warmers for the cafeteria and draperies for one unit of the dormitory, totaling nearly \$6000.

Newly elected officers are: Betty Sebald, second vice president; Ann Ganyo, treasurer; Gertrude Bendlin, corresponding secretary; and Jacqueline Arndt and Diane Qualmann, representatives at large. Gladys Stoelzel handed the president's gavel over to Helen Timmerman.

Special recognition was given to 45 ladies who have attended the annual meeting regularly over the past 10 to 15 years.

— Dorothy Druecke

Making distinctively Christian schools

A two-day workshop on the theme "Making Our Schools Distinctively Christian" was held September 25 and 26 at the Yahara Center, Madison, Wisconsin.

The purpose of the workshop was to focus on the many factors that contribute toward making our schools distinctively Christian. Scriptural references and positions of some educational leaders were used as points of reference for consideration and discussion. Participants brought samples of their schools' statements of philosophy, handbooks and other school publications for reflection. Time was devoted to working on the development and refinement of some of these materials as they relate to the distinctively Christian nature of our schools.

The workshop, sponsored by the Wisconsin Lutheran Principals' Conference, was coordinated by Richard C. Scharf, elementary school coordinator for the Wiscon-

sin Lutheran High School Conference. Principals from the Central Lutheran Principals' Conference also attended the workshop.

Sessions focused on how the school philosophy (statement of purpose), the instructional program, co-curricular activities, publications and school appearance all contribute toward making our schools distinctively Christian, and the principal's role in projecting this to others.

Leaders of the workshop were Rev. Wayne Borgwardt, administrator for the synod's Board for

Worker Training and Dr. Daniel Schmeling, principal of Wisconsin Lutheran High School. Devotional leaders were Stephen Schafer, principal of Atonement Lutheran School, Milwaukee; David George, principal of Centennial Lutheran School, Milwaukee; Daniel Gartner, principal of St. Marcus Lutheran School, Milwaukee; and Gerald Kastens, principal of St. Paul's Lutheran School, Lake Mills.

Total attendance at the workshop numbered 35 persons.

— Mary Gaub

Videotape to be produced

Northwestern College will step up its recruitment efforts by producing a videotape to be used for recruiting purposes.

The video will be shown in all area Lutheran high schools during the 1988-89 school year, as well as in congregations of the synod.

According to Prof. Gary Baumler, recruitment director at

the college, "Northwestern College has an ongoing need to present its program and school to prospective students, parents, pastors and members of the synod. The video will provide an up-to-date and effective way to fill this need."

The \$15,000 cost of the video is made possible by a grant from AAL of Appleton, Wisconsin.

Secondary education program approved

The Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction conducted an audit of Wisconsin Lutheran College's secondary education program and pronounced approval this fall.

What that means is that anyone graduating from Wisconsin Lutheran College's secondary education program will be licensed to teach middle school and high school in sixth through 12th grades.

In the last three years the Wisconsin Legislature had attempted to upgrade state certification requirements for future teachers. A new code was written. It was right at that time that WLC started toward state certification of its

graduates to teach in public schools.

All 32 public and private colleges and universities are being audited under the new code. WLC was the first to be audited.

Approval was granted for five majors: math, history, music, English and chemistry; and two minors: speech and psychology. WLC will be seeking to add Spanish to the minors approval list in the future.

Prof. Joyce Natzke, who leads the secondary education program, points out that although state requirements are 34 and 21 credits for a major and minor, the 14-year-old college demands more. "We want them to have 36 and 24," she said.

In addition to the credit requirements, there must be at least 100 hours of observing "exceptional teachers" in the classroom. In fact, Natzke said, at Wisconsin Lutheran College it turns out to be around 130 hours. "We want our students to have every opportunity to work with professionals," she said.

Reaction from one high school principal has already been very positive. New Berlin Eisenhower's Ted Oertel, who had three students — Jackie Schepp of Windsor, Chris Grzanna of Caledonia and Chris Poetter of Milwaukee — in its system, said, "This is the first time we've had students come into our school before they started student teaching. They were mature, prompt and even got involved in assisting students. Tell Joyce Natzke to send us more students."

South Central District

May 17 was a busy day for two young congregations in Texas. **Prince of Peace**, located on the northwest side of Houston broke ground for its first worship facility. More than 50 members and friends of the congregation were present for the service. Within days of the groundbreaking, work began on the mission chapel located

on two acres of land in a choice residential area. The work is being directed by a WELS member from the district and members from area congregations and members of Prince of Peace are giving their time and talent in the project. Cost of the facility is estimated at \$134,000. Pastor Michael Albrecht serves the congregation of 53 communicants and 97 souls. . . . Down the road a little (little by Texas standards) at Fredricksburg,

275 miles from Houston, in a beautiful central hill country, members of **Shepherd of the Hills** broke ground for their new chapel. Work began on the project almost immediately. Pastor Floyd Mattek, who serves the congregation, reports that the chapel will be nearly equally divided between worship and fellowship area. The 44 communicants and 54 souls have financed the project on their own and are also doing a considerable amount of the work. The \$125,000 project should be completed by late fall.

— Charles Learman

Western Wisconsin District

On August 2, **St. Matthew and St. Luke** (Millston) of Warrens, Wis., celebrated the 25th anniversary of Pastor Henry H. Klug's ordination into the public ministry. Preacher for the special morning service was Pastor Reginald Siegler. A potluck dinner and anniversary program followed.



Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, installed four new staff members in a special service on September 13 at St. Paul's. The four new members are (left to right) Prof. Lawrence Retberg, Tutor Ann Klatt, Prof. Marcus Bode and Prof. Marcus Manthey.

THE BIBLE IN 365 READINGS

Continuing our program of reading through the complete Bible in one year, we list the seventh month of readings beginning December 16 and ending January 15.

December 16	Zechariah 12 — 14:21/Luke 1:1 — 1:38
17	Lk 1:39 — 2:52
18	Lk 3 — 4:44
19	Lk 5 — 6:49
20	Lk 7 — 8:39
21	Lk 8:40 — 10:16
22	Lk 10:17 — 11:54
23	Lk 12 — 13:35
24	Lk 14 — 16:18
25	Lk 16:19 — 18:34
26	Lk 18:35 — 20:26
27	Lk 20:27 — 22:23
28	Lk 22:24 — 23:31
29	Lk 23:32 — 24:53
30	Acts 1 — 2:47
31	Ac 3 — 5:16
January	1 Ac 5:17 — 7:60
2	Ac 8 — 9:43
3	Ac 10 — 11:30
4	Ac 12 — 14:7
5	Ac 14:8 — 16:15
6	Ac 16:16 — 18:28
7	Ac 19 — 20:38
8	Ac 21 — 23:11
9	Ac 23:12 — 25:27
10	Ac 26 — 28:15
11	Ac 28:16/Psalm 74/ Titus
12	1 Thessalonians
13	2 Thessalonians/ Philemon
14	Colossians
15	Revelation 1 — 5:14

DISTRICT NEWS SCHEDULE

November 15: South Central, Southeastern Wisconsin, Western Wisconsin

December 15: Arizona-California, Dakota-Montana, Michigan

January 1: Minnesota, Nebraska, North Atlantic

January 15: Northern Wisconsin, Pacific Northwest, South Atlantic

If your district does not appear, it is because no news items were reported by your district reporter.

NOTICES

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

ANNIVERSARIES

St. Louis, Missouri — Martin Luther (20th), November 22, 8:00, 10:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Dinner to follow. Contact Pastor James Witt, 10151 Sappington Rd., St. Louis, MO 63128; 314/843-4513.

CONFERENCES

Minnesota District, Mankato Conference, December 1 at St. John, Glencoe. Agenda: Isogogical Study of the Book of Solomon (Neumann); Workshop: The Christian Family (Haedike).

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Wisconsin Lutheran College will hold its annual Christmas concert on Sunday, December 13 at 7:00 p.m. in the college chapel. Prof. Richard Lehmann, director of the three musical groups on campus, will have a German theme to the music this year. The college choir, touring chorus and handbell choir will all participate. It is asked that anyone interested in attending the concert reserve tickets in advance. Write: Christmas Concert Tickets, Wisconsin Lutheran College, 8830 W. Blue-mound, Milwaukee, WI 53226. No reservations will be taken by phone.

CHORALE CONCERT

The Lutheran Chorale, directed by Pastor Kurt Eggert, will present a sacred concert of traditional and contemporary Advent and Christmas music on Sunday, November 29, 3:30 and 7:30 p.m. at Atonement, 4500 N. Sherman Blvd., Milwaukee. Assisted by organ and strings, the cantata "Every Word and Thought" by Dietrich Buxtehude will be featured to commemorate the 350th anniversary of his birth. Free will donation.

FINANCIAL REPORT Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod

PREBUDGET SUBSCRIPTION PERFORMANCE

Nine months ended 30 September 1987

	Subscription Amount for 1987	9/12 of Annual Subscription	Nine Months Offerings	Percent of Subscription
Arizona-California	\$ 876,149	\$ 657,112	\$ 577,926	87.9
Dakota-Montana	404,949	303,712	210,751	69.4
Michigan	2,052,291	1,539,218	1,238,624	80.5
Minnesota	2,340,511	1,755,383	1,457,981	83.1
Nebraska	517,224	387,918	309,199	79.7
North Atlantic	279,467	209,600	192,988	92.1
Northern Wisconsin	2,345,445	1,759,084	1,418,291	80.6
Pacific Northwest	267,359	200,519	171,842	85.7
South Atlantic	355,894	266,920	243,240	91.1
South Central	232,591	174,443	142,476	81.7
Southeastern Wisconsin	3,099,833	2,324,875	1,788,240	76.9
Western Wisconsin	2,690,926	2,018,195	1,598,368	79.2
Total — 1987	\$15,462,639	\$11,596,979	\$ 9,349,926	80.6
Total — 1986	\$14,914,765	\$11,186,074	\$ 8,890,149	79.4

BUDGETARY FUND

Statement of Receipts and Disbursements
Fiscal Year To Date

Three months ended 30 September

	1987 Actual	1986 Actual	1987 Budget
Receipts:			
Prebudget Subscriptions	\$ 3,140,846	\$ 3,058,442	\$ 3,888,000
Gifts and Memorials	75,694	46,123	106,000
Bequest Income	104,112	13,000	75,000
Other Income	25,034	17,061	28,000
Transfers from Other Funds	141,567	196,792	185,000
Total Receipts	\$ 3,487,253	\$ 3,331,418	\$ 4,282,000
Disbursements:			
Administration Division	\$ 260,873	\$ 272,874	\$ 338,000
Home Missions Division	836,262	1,023,705	849,000
HM — Interest Subsidy Program	231,001	245,138	268,000
World Missions Division	898,737	875,991	847,000
Worker Training Division	1,345,722	1,196,475	1,614,000
Parish Services Division	147,038	159,641	174,000
Fiscal Services Division	338,569	389,663	324,000
Total Disbursements	\$ 4,058,202	\$ 4,163,487	\$ 4,414,000
Net Increase/(Decrease)	\$ (570,949)	\$ (832,069)	
Fund Balance — Beginning of Year	\$ 535,868	\$ (451,264)	
Fund Balance — End of Period	\$ (35,081)	\$ (1,283,333)	

Norbert M. Manthe
Chief Accounting Officer

CHRISTMAS GIFT IDEA



subscription to The Northwestern Lutheran

The GIFT that keeps GIVING

1987 Christmas Gift Subscription Order Form

Send THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN and a gift card in my name to the persons I've listed below. (Additional gifts may be listed on a separate sheet of paper.)

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ADDRESSES

PASTORS:

Cutter, Randall L., 10286 Harbor Inn Ct., Coral Springs, FL 33071; 305/753-7687.
Haar, Thomas W., 148 Hill Croft Dr., Markham, Ont., CAN L3S 1E9; 416/470-0968.
Heins, Ronald K., 601 N. 119th St., Wauwatosa, WI 53226; 414/771-4631.
Kelly, John A., 3055 N. Oakland Ave. #109, Milwaukee, WI 53211; 414/332-7915.
Lindloff, Mark A., 410 Main, Box 83, Melstone, MT 59054; 406/358-2480.
Lange, Douglas F., 4222 E. Darrel Rd., Phoenix AZ 85040; 602/437-8443.
Mammel, Mark T., 2600 Ralston Ave., Belmont, CA 94002; 415/593-3361.
Nepsund, Randall P., 3352 W. Las Palmaritas, Phoenix, AZ 85021; 602/841-9711.
Paustian, Richard C., 14001 E Ray Rd., Gilbert, AZ 85234.
Pitt, Philip K., 1 Hickory Hollow Lane, Russellville, AR 72801; 501/967-7288.
Schmeling, Steven J., Rt. 1, Box 119, Belview, MN 56214; 507/644-3113.
Schroeder, Mark G., 1101 N. Wymore Rd., Maitland, FL 32751; 305/628-5230.
Vogt, James L., Walden Hills Apt. 204, 1235 S. Maple Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48103.

TEACHERS:

Bases, Paul A., 1729 S. 36th St., Milwaukee, WI 53215; 414/643-9342.
Birkholz, Gregg, 111 Hospital Dr. #2, Watertown, WI 53094; 414/262-0685.
Greschner, Allen W., 4039 W. Clinton, Milwaukee, WI 53209; 414/228-8458.
Habeck, David L., 3730 W. Evans, Phoenix, AZ 85023; 602/978-2943.
Schlavensky, John, 8226 N. 34th Dr., Phoenix AZ 85021; 602/841-4368.
Spiaser, Jeffrey F., 306 W. 6th St., York, NE 68467; 402/362-2335.
Tatge, Gilbert W., 4348 N. Glenway St., Wauwatosa, WI 53222; 414/466-5448.
Thiel, Daniel F., 7301 W. Rose Lane, Glendale, AZ 85303; 602/934-4533.
Walz, Dale K., 146 Milton St., Lake Mills, WI 53551; 414/648-8977.
Zahn, Philip M., 439 Stewart Ave., Columbus, OH 43206; 614/444-2250.

NEW WELS CHURCHES

Names Requested

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

WELS MEMBERSHIP CONSERVATION
2929 N. Mayfair Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53222

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

Arizona	.....	Gilbert*
		Prescott Valley*
California	.....	Bakersfield*
		Pleasanton
Colorado	.....	Colorado Springs (East)*
Florida	.....	Jupiter
		Miami (Hispanic)*
		Panama City*
Georgia	.....	Alpharetta
Illinois	.....	Buffalo Grove/Cherry Valley*
		Lindenhurst/Gurnee*
		Streamwood*
Indiana	.....	LaFayette
Michigan	.....	Cadillac
		Houghton/Hancock*
Minnesota	.....	Elk River*
		Shoreview*
Nebraska	.....	Omaha (Southwest)
New Mexico	.....	Roswell
New York	.....	Manhattan*
Ohio	.....	Toledo (Northwest)
Oklahoma	.....	Owasso
Pennsylvania	.....	Bucks County*
South Dakota	.....	Custer*
Texas	.....	Abilene*
		Atascocita*
		Universal City
Virginia	.....	Loudon County*
Washington	.....	Everett*
		Spokane Valley*
		Woodinville/Bothell*
Wisconsin	.....	Green Bay (Southwest)*
		Madison (Hispanic)*
		Waukegan*
Ontario, Canada	.....	New Market*

*Denotes exploratory services.

JESUS CARES

Jesus Cares, a program for the developmentally disabled sponsored by the Southeastern Wisconsin Special Ministries Board, will present a special Christmas service on December 20, 2:30 p.m. at Fairview Lutheran, 137 N. 66th St., Milwaukee, Wis.

DISHES

Available to any mission for cost of shipping: 100 place settings of dishes. Contact Pastor Wilbert T. Krueger, 20801 Forest View Dr., Lannon, WI 53046; 414/251-2910.

OFFICE EQUIPMENT

Available for cost of shipping: AB Dick 980 photocopier, AB Dick 310 offset mimeo and scriptomatic model 34 addressograph. Contact Pastor Jame Witt, 10151 Sappington Rd., St. Louis, MO 63128; 314/843-4513.

MIMEO AVAILABLE

Available for cost of shipping: Gestetner Model 366 mimeograph. Includes extra cartridge for two-color printing and cabinet. Contact Pastor Gordon J. Snyder, 1661 S. 57th St., West Allis, WI 53214; 414/321-0774 or 545-6925.

NAMES WANTED

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

Kalispell-Whitefish-Columbia Falls-Polson-Ronan, Montana — Pastor Robert Koester, 345 Strand Ave., Missoula, MT 59801.



In these fall months our congregations are prayerfully wrestling with their 1988 program and budget. And if there is one common complaint, it is the lack of offerings to fund the work program. Many churches are deeply in the red at this time of year which casts a dark shadow over the 1988 budget. Increases in the budget are not lightly voted under those conditions.

This problem, worsening each year, bodes ill for kingdom work. Inflation gives the appearance that churches' resources are increasing. In terms of constant dollars, however, they are losing ground. In terms of available resources, the churches' resources are less today than in the late 1950s.

As the budgeteers face this gloomy prospect, I am reminded of the debate on the resolution calling for "spiritual renewal" at the synod's August convention. Speakers repeatedly warned against including any mention of money in this spiritual renewal program lest it be interpreted as "just another money-raising program."

Now it is true that neglect of the means of grace — the gospel in word and sacrament — is a destructive way for a Christian to live. And our congregations — just like so many others — have "delinquent" members. Of course such must be warned by the law and wooed by the gospel.

But what about those who cannot be singled out by their absence from church? What about those who attend Bible class faithfully? Are there not sins to which they are prone or in which they may be deeply enmeshed? Of course there are. I mention but one: ignorance of what Christian giving means. In any pursuit of spiritual renewal that pet sin must be addressed also, and vigorously.

Vigorously? Yes, vigorously. Luther, who lived in poorer times than we do, in his Large Catechism called money "the most popular idol on earth." And in the same year in an exposition of Deuteronomy denounced it as "the greatest god on earth."

Along with the neglect of the means of grace, renewal will also have to confront this beguiling sin. This way to renewal is the way of Prophet Nathan with David's adultery: Thou art the man!

By us American Christians, much blessed by God's good gifts, the word must be heard: "From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded." So said our Lord.

And we should hear from St. Paul. In 2 Corinthians, Chapters 8 and 9, he took on the formidable task of persuading the Corinthians to take part in a special offering. One of the problems, besides inertia, was "the most popular idol on earth." Amidst two chapters of pleas, exhortations, warnings and examples comes the warm, persuasive promise: "You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion." Put that old idol away and trust God, St. Paul urges.

The words of those who sought to distance Christian giving from the renewal effort did not prevail. One of the six fruits of faith sought in the renewal effort "under God's hand of blessing" is "substantially increased financial support for all aspects of kingdom work that are carried on among us."

It is not too soon to begin now. As we seek to fund the congregational and synodical work program for 1988, let us encourage one another to generosity, the mark of the Christian "on every occasion." Such encouragement too is a vital part of an active lay ministry sought in a spiritual renewal.

James P. Schaefer

Reflections

on creation science

by Vernon Gerlach

The purpose of science is to ask questions for which there is no known answer and to use methods accepted by scientists to produce tentative answers. This process results in *discovered* knowledge. All scientific knowledge is discovered.

Furthermore, all scientific knowledge is *tentative*. It is never more than the most reasonable answer discovered to date. Every scientific finding, all discovered knowledge, is subject to correction or disproof.

If the assumption that science deals only with discovered and tentative knowledge is valid, then creation science seems to be a contradiction in terms. First, divine creation is a fact. There is a known and indisputable answer to the question of the origin of all things. *That answer is revealed, not discovered*. Consequently, since we have been brought to an acceptance of that revelation, the origin of the universe is not an acceptable subject for scientific inquiry. *Revealed* knowledge, by definition, is not *discovered*. Neither does the knowledge revealed in the Bible need confirmation by discovery.

Second, science deals exclusively with uncertainty. The problems or questions of science are always phrased as falsifiable hypotheses. If I want to study the origin of the universe scientifically, I must assume that the answers I find are subject to later correction or disproof. If I cannot make that assumption, I must use some method other than the method of discovery (i.e., science) for finding the answer.

The origin of the universe is a question that is answered unequivocally and finally. The answer is not subject to future correction or disproof. Creation science, if it is indeed a science, is inappropriate to the question because a Christian never uses science to "prove" Genesis. Why not? Because science assumes doubt, a willingness to change one's mind, but Genesis assumes faith, an indisputable knowledge that its answer is unchanging and unchangeable.

In my opinion, much of the reason for conflicting opinions on the subject of creation science stems from a lack of agreement on *how* God uses the heavens and the firmament to reveal his glory and handiwork. It doesn't seem to me that God was thinking of science of any kind whatsoever when he inspired the holy

writer to pen that passage. This, however, does not preclude the possibility that God could use error (such as creation science) to lead someone to truth (revelation), but such a possibility hardly constitutes an endorse-

ment of science as a means of discovering the truth.

The faith that enables us to understand that the universe was created by God's word (Hebrews 11:3) ought to be our starting point; it should not be the goal that we reach as a result of the use of one's reason and strength in scientific inquiry.

A few additional reflections:

I, therefore, concur with the decision of the majority of the Supreme Court. Creation science is not science; it is religion. Evolution, as an answer to the question of the origin of the universe, is science because the answer is both discovered and tentative. But don't the creation scientists have a right to equal time? Not if we agree with this precept, which is held by every respectable scientific body: Good science is whatever a majority of scientists say it is at any given time. Based upon that criterion, creation science has no place in the public school curriculum.

We have a right and a responsibility to intervene when the curriculum deals with moral law, as in sexual conduct or abortion. But we do not have that right and that responsibility (i.e., not to the same degree and not of the same kind) when the curriculum deals with such matters as evolution.

It should be noted that the Supreme Court was careful in defining science. The court recognized that scientists and laymen have very different ideas about what science is and how it operates. The critical difference is that the layman thinks of science as a collection of facts leading to practical ends, whereas the scientist thinks of science as a set of methods and conceptual schemas leading to ever clearer understanding (but never reaching final-

ity). The Supreme Court dealt with the latter concept of science, in my opinion rightly so. □



Dr. Vernon Gerlach teaches in the school of education at Arizona State University, Tempe and is a member of Emmanuel, Tempe.