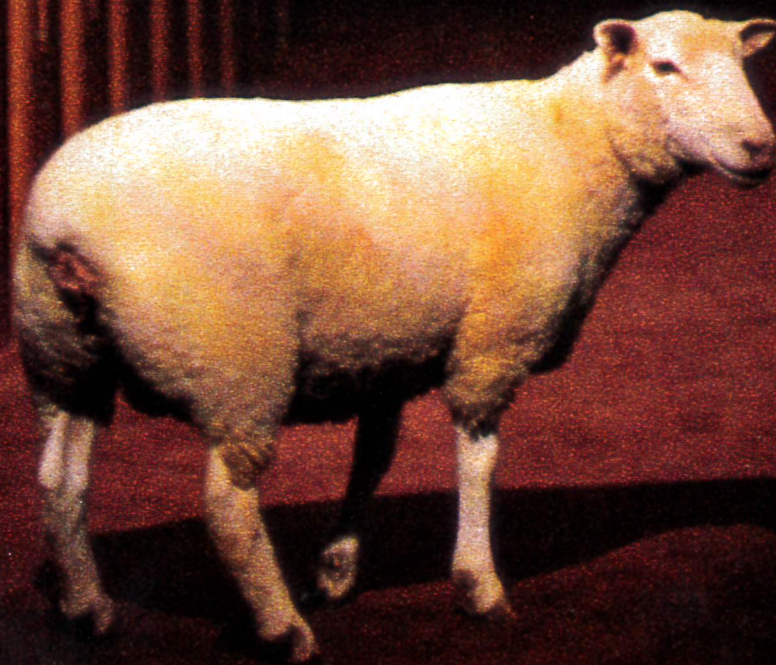
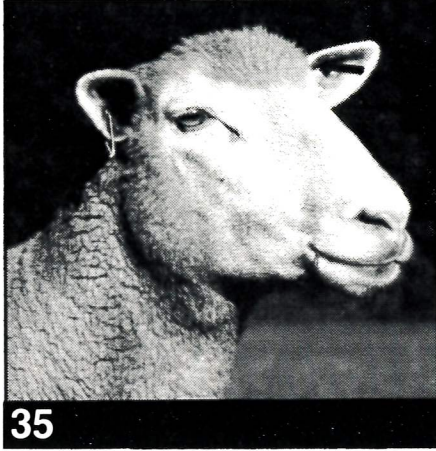


January 15, 1988

the
Northwestern
Lutheran



“Other
Sheep”



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

the Northwestern Lutheran

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Be an Andrew: everybody can!

by Richard E. Lauersdorf

Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, was one of the two who heard what John had said and who had followed Jesus. The first thing Andrew did was to find his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah (that is, the Christ)" (John 1:40,41).

“What will the baby be?” new parents wonder gazing through the nursery window. “An engineer or computer expert? A teacher or a star?”

“What will I be?” teenagers wonder too. “A pro basketball star scoring in double figures or a semi-driver pulling a rig across the U.S.? A celebrated musician or famous novelist?”

Goals and dreams may vary widely. Final results may turn out far differently. Yet in one area every believer surely would want to be the same. Every believer would want to be an Andrew.

With a faith that grows

“Andrew,” we ask, “tell us something about yourself.” He might, in answer, talk about something we often take for granted, about the day he met Jesus. “I’ll never forget that day,” he might say, “when our teacher John pointed the finger right at the Lamb of God. We just simply had to follow Jesus. What a feeling it was when he spoke to us and invited us in. I can still remember the time. For you 20th century people with digital watches it was about 4:00 p.m. when we sat down with him. Even more, I’ll never forget what he talked about that day.”

Want to be an Andrew? No, the question is not whether we can pinpoint the day and hour when we first met Jesus. Watch out for those who want to stress the time of conversion and who go on and on about being born again. So often such a stress indicates unhealthy shifting from the Christ whom we believe to the *me* who believes. Andrew would be the first to put the emphasis where it belongs, on Christ and his word and on God’s grace in bringing people to the Savior.

“You don’t want to stop just with knowing Jesus,” Andrew might continue. “The more you hear him speak through his word, the more you will get to

know him and love him and benefit from him. And then you’ll be doing just what my brother told you to do in his second epistle. You’ll ‘grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ’ ” (2 Peter 3:18)

With a faith that shows

“I thought of my brother right away,” Andrew might go on. “I just had to tell him. I just couldn’t think of him not sharing the joy I had in Jesus.” If we were to jog his memory, Andrew might remember others to whom he spoke, like those Greeks in John 12. But his concern was not to run up a tally or show off his success. It was to bring people to Jesus.

For what might your pastor ask if given a wish? Would it be, “Lord, give me a church full of Andrews. Give me parents whose foremost concern is not dental appointments and designer jeans or the right clothes and right careers, but leading their children to Jesus?”

“Give me families who tackle the task of telling a spouse or relative about the Savior and his church, about heaven and hell.

“Also Lord, give me members who realize with a shudder of concern that the unreached millions in the world are going to hell, that mission work is not a hobby at which to play, but a driving concern in the lifeblood of their faith

“Can I have Andrews on our church boards,” he might continue, “men who calmly and unassumingly will serve you with everything they have?”

“And Lord, just on more thing. Please give me more Andrews among our young people. Lord, I know they’re out there. I can point to some of them, but I ask that you also point to them, that you touch their hearts and kindle in them a desire to serve you as pastors and teachers. Touch also the hearts of their parents and grandparents so that they offer encouragement and help. Show us all the joy that Andrew found in leading others to you.” □



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

Are weddings too elaborate?

The middle of January hardly seems the time to ask questions about weddings. June is the favored month for lively wedding celebrations, not the dead of winter.

However, what finally comes to pass in June may well be on the drawing board in January or earlier. Now is as good a time as any to ask whether or not weddings, including receptions, are becoming too elaborate.

One does this with a degree of trepidation for fear of offending some reader. Couples may have a large number of friends and relatives whom they desire to invite to the celebration. Family traditions and customs often shape what is done at weddings and receptions. Feelings can be easily hurt.

There are those who will say that little expense should be spared in celebrating this significant and important day in a person's life. The danger is that too much thought and money is spent on the wedding, which lasts a day, and not enough planning goes into the marriage, which should last a lifetime. Some couples seem to believe that if they can "pull off" the wedding, they can "pull off" the marriage.

A good place to start in wedding planning is to focus primary attention on the marriage service rather than the reception. It sometimes happens that couples will first rent a facility for the reception and then see if the church and pastor are available for the chosen day. This is putting the cart before the horse. By the way, the hope is to include a Service of Christian Marriage in the new hymnal.

The concerns of the bride and groom to keep things simple are sometimes overwhelmed by their families' need to plan a memorable occasion. Couples may find themselves mired in constant haggling over the expanding dimensions of their wedding. The day itself, one which should be filled with joy and goodwill, becomes something to get over with.

Too often couples or their parents will spend more than they can really afford for the wedding and reception. This may be motivated in part by a desire "to keep up with the Joneses." Christian stewardship dictates that we live within our means and wisely manage the money God puts into our hands. Money spent for elaborate weddings might be better used in other ways.

One woman in looking back on her big day commented: "I will always treasure the memory of our wedding day, but not because of the money that was spent on the celebration; rather for the celebration of my husband's and my love and commitment to each other. If we had it to do over, our marriage celebration would be much simpler, more personal and less costly." Here is a person who likely feels that weddings generally are too elaborate. Do you agree?

Victor H. Prange



Victor Prange is pastor of Peace, Janesville, Wisconsin; chairman of the synod's Commission on Worship; and a member of the new/revised hymnal committee.

Philemon: *From person to person*

by Julian G. Anderson

This new series will cover the four letters the Apostle Paul wrote during his first imprisonment in Rome, A.D. 60-62. For background information read Acts 28:14-31, especially verses 30-31.

Notice that Paul was not confined in a prison but was allowed to live in his rented house, since he was not being accused of any crimes against the state. And from these four letters we learn that there were at least six of Paul's friends and assistants living there with him and that he was busily carrying on his work during this time, receiving visitors and dealing (by correspondence) with problems that arose in some of his congregations.

The letters to Philemon and the Colossians and the Ephesians were all written at the same time and carried by the same messenger, Tychicus (Colossians 4:7, Ephesians 6:21). The letter to the Philippians was written later, toward the end of his imprisonment. This time we'll study Philemon, the shortest of Paul's letters and a real personal letter.

Who was Philemon?

First read verses 1 and 2, where we learn that Philemon had a large house in which the congregation in Colossae (Asia Minor) gathered to worship. It also had a guest room (v. 22), and rooms for slaves, one of whom had run away (vv. 15-16). Thus Philemon was a rather wealthy man who had helped and done favors for some of the other, poorer members of the group (vv. 5 and 7). In verse 2 Apphia was no doubt Philemon's wife and Archippus may have been his son or one of the other members.

And Onesimus?

Paul wrote this letter because of Onesimus (v. 10) and the letter becomes clear as you read verses 8-21. Onesimus was one of Philemon's slaves (v. 16), who had run away (vv. 12 and 16), and made his way to Rome, where he searched for and found Paul, whom he had heard of at Philemon's house. Paul took him into his house and fed him and supplied his other needs and also talked to him about his sins, and Jesus, who had died to pay the penalty for those sins. The Holy Spirit brought Onesimus to faith in Jesus as his Savior. That's what Paul meant when he wrote that "I became his father while I was here in prison" (v. 10),

meaning his *spiritual* father, who had given him new life.

Then Paul explained that he had to send Onesimus back to Philemon, his rightful owner; and Onesimus, as a new Christian, must go back and confess his sin and take his punishment and then serve Philemon faithfully.

But what would Philemon do?

That was Paul's problem now. And he wanted to be sure that when Onesimus returned, Philemon would act as the true Christian Paul thought he was. And Onesimus' name suggested the answer. In Greek it meant "*useful*." So Paul wrote in verses 8-21, "I could tell you what your Christian duty is and order you to do it. But instead, I'm writing . . . asking you to do something *because of your Christian love*. . . . There was a time when he was of *no use* to you but *now he's useful*, both to you and to me. I have sent him back to you but it was like sending my own heart.

"I really wanted to keep him here with me so that he could take your place and take care of me while I'm here in prison. . . . But I didn't want to do anything without knowing that it would be all right with you. . . . I don't want you to be doing me this favor because you're being forced to do it, but of your own free will.

"You see, it just might be that Onesimus was separated from you for this short while so that you could have him back forever, but not as a slave any longer. Now he's more than a slave. He's a dear brother, especially to me.

"Since you think of me as your partner, therefore, you must welcome him back as you would welcome me. And since he has done you some wrong and owes you something, charge it to my account. . . . I have written this with my own hand — I Paul will pay you back! And I'm not going to tell you that you also owe me something — yourself! . . . I have written this letter feeling absolutely sure that you will do what I'm asking . . ."

suggesting, of course, that Philemon would set Onesimus free and send him back to Rome to take care of Paul's needs. □



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

Life and death

i s s u e s

by Wayne D. Mueller

May a Christian couple consider *in vitro* fertilization a God-pleasing way to relieve their childlessness? Is it ever ethical to pull the plug on respiratory equipment attached to a lifetime faithful spouse? To what lengths must we go to preserve the last days of a life which is being lived out in agony? The challenge presented to our faith by life and death issues may be even more heart-wrenching and complicated than the situations described. And when it happens to you, it will be real. It will be a real test of your faith in God.

Before we check the rule book for easy answers to these tough questions, our Christian ethic directs us to look to the God who is posing the questions. Whether it is our own life or the life of a loved one we are considering, God is forcing us by the challenge to faith to think about our own mortality. He wants us to ponder the meaning of the life he has given us. Before we decide what action to take, God is saying, think about me and your relationship to me.

The response of faith

With these tough challenges to our faith God is inviting our humility and a stronger trust and dependence upon him. The psalmist formulated the response God wants from us: "My times are in your hands" (31:15). Through faith we see our life as an undeserved gift from God — a time of grace in which we are to seek God (Acts 17:26,27), share our knowledge of Jesus the Savior with others (1 Peter 3:15) and live lives which give glory to God (Romans 13:11-14). With such faith we come to medical problems with a spiritual view of life. We see every life as a body *and* a soul — not just as a body to be medicated, treated and released. So for our answers we look to the God who is the creator of body and soul and the Savior of both.

God's life and death principle

The Bible provides guidance for those who want to know how to say thanks to God for the gift of life. In

life and death issues we usually think of the Fifth Commandment first. From catechism instruction we remember, "You shall not murder" (Exodus 20:13). Luther's explanation immediately comes to mind: ". . . Do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and be a friend to him in every bodily need."

Yet behind the Fifth Commandment stands an even greater principle of life. By faith we accept God's control, not just over the end of life, but also over its beginning. God began human life in a special creation (Genesis 1:27). Only God can preserve this life (1 Samuel 2:6). And along with his claim to begin and preserve life, he alone retains the right to decide when it ends. So the great principle behind life and death issues is that God begins it, God alone can be trusted to preserve it and God himself retains the right to decide when it ends. "See now that I myself am he! There is no god besides me. I put to death and I bring to life" (Deuteronomy 32:39).

Application to beginning of life issues

Ethicists and the courts of the land have long argued over "when" a human life begins. The world seeks its own opinions as to whether the moment of conception, the first or second trimester of pregnancy or only birth itself produces a human life. Legalized abortion is the horrible result of asking the wrong question of the wrong people.

We look to God for our answer to the beginning of human life. God settles the issue by telling us "how" he begins life. Since he first created man and woman, he has propagated human life by conception. That is the way Adam and Eve brought their first child into the world (Genesis 4:1). That is the way Hannah brought life to Samuel (1 Samuel 1:20; 2:6). That is the way in which the Son of God took on human life (Matthew 1:20-23). The answer to the question of *how* God creates human life settles for us the question of *when* it begins. Since it begins with conception, human life begins at conception.

This means that abortion in almost every circumstance is sinful. It is murder. It is the act of taking into our hands an authority over human life which God has reserved to himself. Only when one human life is balanced against another, such as when a mother's life is threatened by her pregnancy, is there a decision to be made by the Christian.

Some so-called birth control methods are really abortions because they destroy an egg that has already been fertilized inside the mother. *In vitro* fertilization procedures are not in themselves wrong. Yet the majority of these still involve the destruction of some fertilized cells that are not implanted in the mother.



When motivation flows from faith and a knowledge of God's will, Christian couples may seek medical help for the prevention of conception and for assistance in receiving the blessing of children. But it is always important for husbands and wives fully to understand the medical procedures they are contemplating. Thoughtful discussion of God's ways will come before taking any action.

Application to end of life issues

Although God tells us exactly how he begins a human life, he does not tell us how or when he will end a life. We know that when we die, our soul leaves our body (Ecclesiastes 12:7), but we may not always be able to tell when that instant is. Traditional measurements such as the cessation of breath or pulse have long ago been shown to be inadequate.

For one human to end his own life or the life of another because of suffering is a faithless attempt to tell God he has not brought on death soon enough. Only faith understands the justice of God when he allows suffering (Romans 8:18). As terrible as it sometimes may be, suffering accomplishes the purposes of God both in the sufferer and in those who must minister to him (Romans 5:3-5). No matter how long it lasts, our suffering will always be much shorter than the eternity for which it prepares us.

At the same time, what is often coldly referred to as "pulling the plug" may be an act of faith. It is not necessary to prolong the outward signs of life when it is clear by available human judgment that God has already taken the soul from the body.

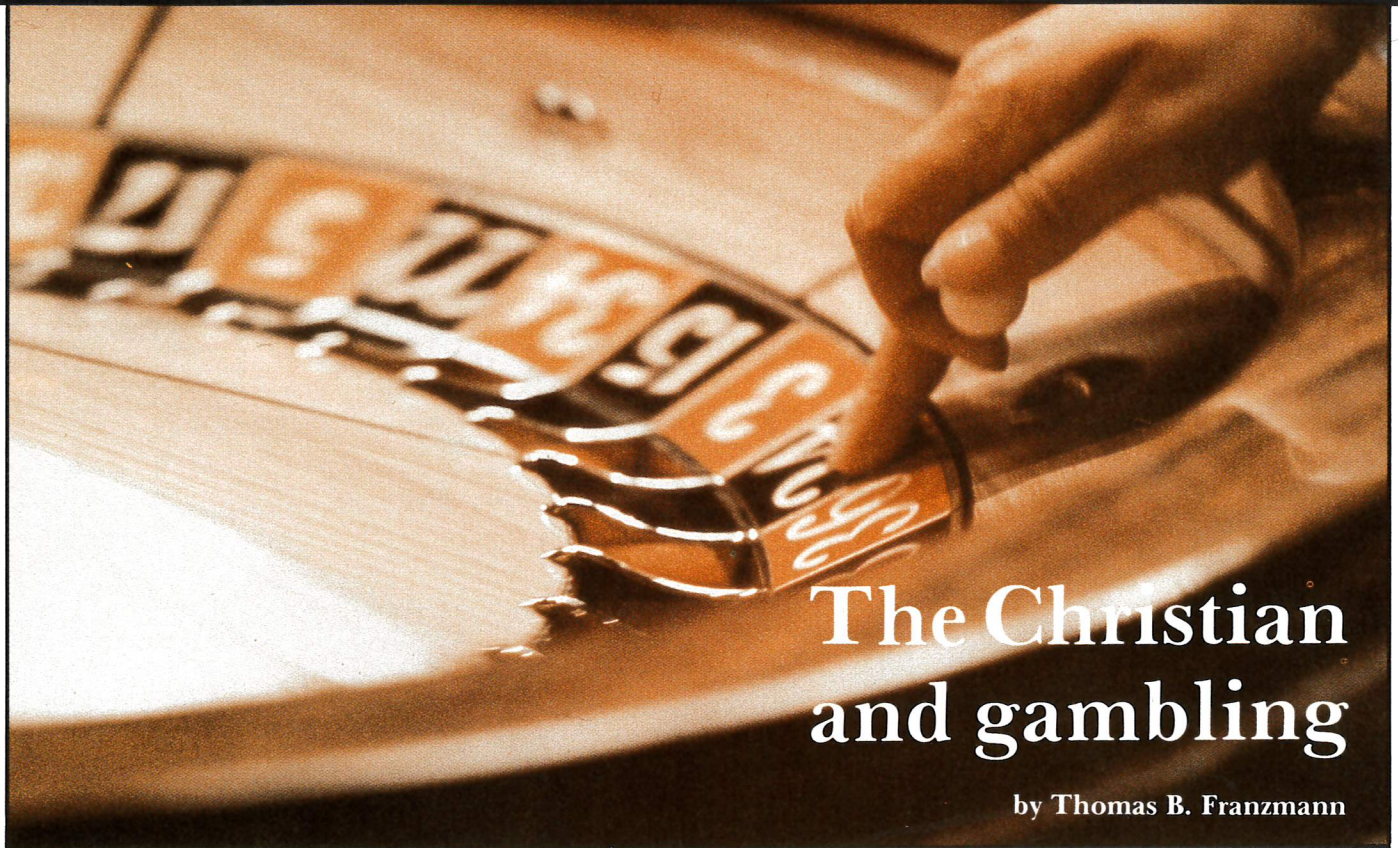
The most important factor in a decision

Death, no matter how it comes, is always a reminder to those who stand watch that life is short. The time to forgive a spouse, speak of Christ to a friend, comfort a troubled relative, correct a child is now. The time to live for the glory of God is now. When all of life is lived in confident trust that we are in God's hands, then death — even a painful and prolonged death filled with medical conundrums — is the way to living forever with the author of life. Faith in Jesus Christ is always the most important factor in a decision. Thank God his power and grace have brought us to the Savior! □

Next time: *Exploring our Christian ethic in the matters of organ transplants, medical finances, honesty with patients and cremation.*



Professor Mueller teaches theology and New Testament at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin.



The Christian and gambling

by Thomas B. Franzmann

How should Christians view gambling? More than forty years ago Dr. Walter A. Maier, the famed Lutheran Hour preacher, wrote in the *Walther League Messenger*, a periodical aimed at the church's youth: "Gambling is a voice that kills ambition, inspires crime, ruins souls and stands in direct opposition to the ideals of Christian stewardship. . . . All lottery is criminal; but a public game of chance involving millions of dollars and sanctioned by public officials is particularly pernicious and destructive. . . . Every form of gambling is unsound and detrimental because it is contrary to the plain code of Christian ethics."

You don't hear voices like that any more. More often you hear defenses of gambling. Some people say, "Gambling is nothing more than a diversion, an innocent way to use discretionary funds, like going to dinner and a show." Other people say, "All of life is a gamble. Why lay a few forms of gambling on the conscience of people but not other forms? Still others say, "People are going to gamble anyway; we might as well regulate it, keep unsavory characters out of it and gain needed revenue for the state."

People who venture to offer guidance to Christians on the subject of gambling in our time usually take a middle-of-the-road position. They realize that no passage of the Scriptures directly forbids gambling. Yet they see in our culture signs of trouble where gam-

bling is concerned. They see evidences that, where gambling is present, not one, but numerous Christian principles seem to suffer.

In this series we want to examine this subject.

Just how big an issue is it? How deeply is gambling ingrained in our culture? These questions are difficult to answer, since statistics are hard to gather. Even where gambling is under the control of government the figures are not totally reliable. And in the arena of illegal gambling, we are even more at a loss for concrete numbers. But it's important, we think, to try to get a handle on it.

Sports Illustrated said in a March 10, 1986 article, "No one knows how big [sports gambling] is. All one can say for sure is that this kind of gambling — wagering on the spectator sports of football, basketball or baseball — has taken a grip on American life that is more powerful and more pervasive than ever before. It has, by every reliable indication, become a gigantic industry. . . . What is particularly noteworthy about this is that while other forms of gambling have become more widely legalized in the US, sports gambling has continued to be illegal everywhere except for Nevada.

"The Federal Drug Administration estimates sport wagers at \$70 billion in 1984. Even that number may be conservative. In 1981 the National Football League made its own estimate that pro football alone was

attracting \$50 billion a season. . . . It is not being overly dramatic to say that gambling poisons the atmosphere of any game it comes near. It is certainly one of the reasons that so many fans are so quick to think the worst about athletes and the games they play. Gambling accounts for much of the cynicism that hangs over sports."

The California lottery now just two years old, has become the biggest state lottery in the country. It grosses almost \$2 billion per year. That's about \$90 for every resident of the state — for the lottery alone. More and more states are voting to include the lottery, with its come-on advertising and tickets-in-every-shop convenience. *USA Today* said in July 1987 that gambling in the USA — legal and illegal combined — reached a record \$218.77 billion in 1986, up from \$190.8 billion in 1985.

What do these figures mean? Use a comparison that ought to be close to readers of *The Northwestern Lutheran*. Our WELS congregations in 1986 reported receiving offerings totalling \$115.5 million. That averaged \$277 for every man, woman and child on our record books. By comparison, sports gambling alone, conservatively estimated, brings in \$290 for every man, woman and child in the country. And gambling in all forms comes to \$912, more than three times the annual giving for teaching and sharing the gospel. Perhaps the figure is not quite that high among our members, yet the figures are eye-openers.

Gambling is with us on a big scale. And it's growing. Experts consider gambling in its many forms to be the fastest growing industry in our country. It is already the largest industry in America. On this score alone, we ought to be talking about the role gambling plays in the lives of our Christian people.

What should be our stance? The answers are not easy. As we said, no Bible passages stand ready to be quoted as quick proofs that gambling is sinful for the Christian. But that does not mean the Bible has no guidance for us on the subject. There are a number of issues of that type which are of serious concern to Christians. To instruct church members how to apply vital Christian principles to these issues is a time consuming project. A casual mention in a sermon here and there falls short of the need, sometimes even isolating the Christian who is not familiar with other important facets of the matter at issue.

For church members to learn the concerns of the church regarding the evils that pervade most forms of

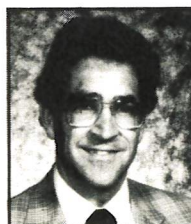
gambling takes effort and some dedication. But few busy Christians seem ready to make the commitment to do so. Yet, attempts to warn against gambling, without the chance to lay a solid groundwork, tend to come off as the viewpoints of a radical. For fear of being branded "old fashioned" or "legalistic," many are hesitant to say anything.

A pastor or Christian day school teacher may warn against gambling in connection with a Bible lesson or confirmation class. Soon he is confronted by an angry parent who gambles regularly. The parent demands to know why his child is being "turned against his own father." "That's not why I'm bringing my kids here," he says. He doesn't want to take more than five minutes to hear the reasons, perhaps doesn't really want to hear them at all. His main purpose in speaking up was to register his displeasure. Will that pastor or teacher include the warning at that place in the curriculum next time?

Another parent agrees with the church's warning against gambling and attempts to reinforce it at home. But the young person laughs at the "pickiness" of the church and says: "Why do you worry about little things like sports, pools and lotteries? Why don't you speak out against things that are really important, like the oppression of the poor?" The young person starts to stay away from church. Will that parent warn against gambling the next time?

Yet, is it safe for us to say little or nothing? Is gambling as harmless to the soul and society as many would have us believe? Is our Lord pleased to see his people wagering hard-earned income, whether legal or illegal? Is it right to support practices which dig the poor deeper into the hole of poverty? Does our God want us to raise children and youth in an atmosphere where the church's witness is a mild "Look out," if that much, while the example of many parents says, "Gambling is OK?" Was Dr. Maier wrong forty years ago? Or did the church of his day have a courage and commitment which we lack today?

In the next article of this series we plan to look at compulsive gambling, what it is, how it is a growing concern among us and what our Christian response should be. After that we plan to discuss several of the moral principles which the Christian faces when he or she confronts gambling. □



Thomas Franzmann is pastor of St. Mark, Citrus Heights, California.

The limits of change in the church

by Curtis A. Peterson

Probably no issue is hotter or more likely to start an argument in a typical church than the question of how much and what kind of change is acceptable. Many difficulties and differences in our congregations may be traced to a confusion over the limits of change in the church.

In dealing with change, two extremes emerge:

1. Liberalism asserts that everything is relative and subject to change, making no distinction between doctrine and practice. But God has delivered his truth to the church "once for all" (Jude 3) in his inerrant word (1 Timothy 6:3-4; 2 Timothy 1:13; Titus 2:1).
2. The opposite error is to equate any change with liberalism and therefore to resist change. Legalistic traditionalism stands under the condemnation of our Savior, who warned, "In vain they do worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men" (Matthew 15:9).

Sadly, both the restless (and sometimes rebellious) desire for change, and resistance to threatening changes which are new to us or imply more work may spring from the flesh, rather than from God.

Confusion on this matter is really unnecessary, however, for God provides guidelines in the Bible on what may or may not be changed as we carry out his purposes. In matters either commanded or forbidden by God, change constitutes disobedience to his divine will. Scriptural teachings are never matters of Christian liberty or open questions.

On the other hand, we cannot bind consciences on matters the Bible leaves open no matter how old or hallowed our traditions are. By setting aside the will of God by our traditions (Matthew 15:6), we violate the biblical doctrine of Christian liberty (see Galatians, Romans 14 and 15 and 1 Corinthians 8-10). "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery" (Galatians 5:1).

The chart accompanying this article is an attempt to illustrate the limits of change in doctrine and practice in the church. Those matters (Message and Purpose) which stand above the heavy line are determined by the Bible and are absolute. At this level we ask only, "Does it agree with God's word?"

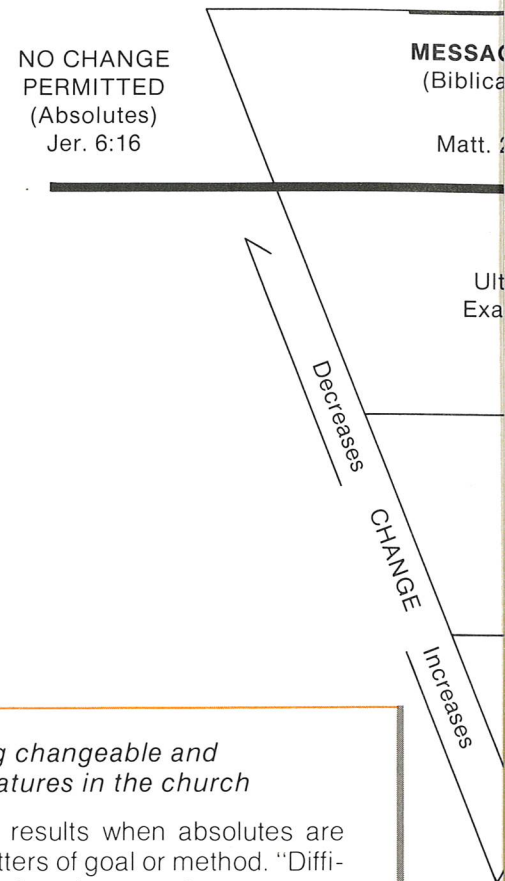


Diagram showing changeable and unchangeable features in the church

1) Confusion results when absolutes are confused with matters of goal or method. "Difficulties in ministry arise when attachments proper to doctrine are transferred uncritical to methods of work."

2) On this chart each level passes judgment on the level below. Thus goals must reflect the objectives of the church or institution and methods and strategies must agree with our goals as we proclaim our Lord's message and carry out his purposes.

Conversely, God gives us a great range of liberty in how we proclaim his message and how we carry out the Great Commission. Wisconsin Synod Lutherans, of all people, should understand this, for we assert on the basis of Scripture that God has determined the *function* of the church and its ministry but not their *form*.

Paul sets the pattern for us in 1 Corinthians 9:16-23, where he writes, "I have become all things to all men so that *by all possible means* I might save some." Our goal, therefore, is to win all men. Any method, technique or approach consistent with the word of God may be used if it helps win the lost and strengthen believers. The question to be asked at this level is, "Does it effectively carry out the mission of the church?"

Doctrine of the Church: Law and Gospel
 Doctrine, Jude 3, 1 Thess. 2:13)
PURPOSE of the Church.
 1 Cor. 9:18-20; Acts 1:8; Acts 26:16-18

BIBLE
 DETERMINES
 (The "What"
 and "Why")

OBJECTIVES
 Immediate, long range and results.
 Example: To reach our community
 with the Gospel.

SITUATION
 DETERMINES
 as God's Word is
 applied to human need.

GOALS
 Short range aims:
 - Specific
 - Attainable
 - Measurable

1 Cor. 9:16-23
 "I am . . . all things to all
 men that I might by
 all means save some."

**METHODS AND
 STRATEGIES**
 The "How"

What strategies and tactics
 shall we adopt to meet
 the long range objectives
 and to fulfill the purpose
 of our church?

Formula of Concord
 Article X
 Adapted by permission
 from Olan Hendryx,
 "Management Skills Seminars"
 Study Guide, 1975. p. 66.

In short, for those matters above the heavy line on the chart we ask only, "Is it true?" For those levels below the heavy line (Objectives, Goals, Methods and Strategies) we ask, "Does it work?" The message and mission of God are much more important than our traditions and prejudices.

Christians need not be afraid of change as long as the Scriptures are not contradicted and the gospel is not subverted. Love of course will dictate that changes are not introduced in a way that is offensive to those for whom Christ died or that give the impression that we agree with false teachers or legalists. (Study 1 Corinthians 8 and 9, Galatians 2 and Article X of the Formula of Concord on these points.)

The Bible repeatedly demands changes. What else is a call to repent and to believe but a call to change? To be a Christian, one must be converted and become a "new creation" (2 Corinthians 5:17). For such people "the old has gone, the new has come." When we arise on the last day we shall be changed (Philippians 3:21 and 1 Corinthians 15:51) and God will complete the transformation he requires of us now (Romans 12:2) when we hear him say, "Behold, I make all things new" (Revelation 21:5).

We dare not change those things which God has made unchangeable or refuse to change when our Lord's mission requires it. The first error subverts the gospel by watering down or adding to the word of God. The second error undercuts the mission of the church by hindering the most effective proclamation of the gospel.

We have been rightly concerned about changes in our doctrinal stance on Scripture, creation, the doctrine of church fellowship as well as the role of women in the church. But we dare not transfer these concerns to matters of methods, worship forms or other areas which we have called "adiaphora" (things indifferent). A great missionary wrote, "Difficulties in ministry arise when attachments proper to doctrine are transferred uncritically to methods of work."

Article X of the Formula of Concord on "Church Usages" contains a sound and thoroughly biblical discussion of this question. Our fathers said, "We believe, teach and confess that the community of God in every locality and every age has the authority to change such ceremonies according to circumstances, as it may be most profitable and edifying to the community of God."

Later they declared, "We believe, teach and confess that no church should condemn another because it has fewer or more external ceremonies not commanded by God, as long as there is mutual agreement in doctrine and all its articles as well as in the right use of the holy sacraments, according to the familiar axiom, 'Disagreement in fasting does not destroy agreement in faith.' "

And there you have it: Ceremonies may vary as long as they are not commanded by God and as long as there is agreement in doctrine. □



Curtis Peterson is pastor of Resurrection, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

by Paul E. Kelm

What is the biblical viewpoint on transsexuals?

Transsexuals feel that the psychological and physical dimensions of their sexuality are at odds and may want to alter their sexual anatomy to conform with their sexual "orientation." One would hardly expect the Bible to mention directly what is a recent term, if not a recent phenomenon.

A desire to be something other than what one is physically blasphemes the Creator. Passages such as Isaiah 45:9 and 64:8, Romans 9:20-21 and Job 40:2 condemn the presumption of telling God that he made a mistake. The imagery of pot and potter is a vivid warning to *all* who would complain about how and for what they were created.

Deuteronomy 23:1 is a commentary from the old covenant on this principle of God's creation, specifically as it applies to emasculation.

Transsexuals must be made aware also of Scripture's forcible condemnation of homosexuality (Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9), for the subjects are logically related. Lust for people of the same physical gender is a sin which cannot be eradicated by surgery, let alone by an appeal to "biological error."

I won't presume to explain how one's sexual orientation comes to be at variance with his or her physical sexuality. I will point out the relationship between one's spiritual life and psychological or emotional state. God can alter a person's misdirected sexual orientation rather than his anatomy. God will provide spiritual strength to understand the "flesh and spirit" struggle and to overcome temptation. God inspires trust to accept his will.

Biblical truth and Christian love compel us to witness God's will to transsexuals, both law and gospel. For the power of God's word works repentance and *real* transformation.

It's been said that we Lutherans emphasize objective justification to the point that the individual's response of faith is ignored. How do we draw a line between the two?

Dogmatic "lines" are drawn only to isolate biblical truths for thorough study, to promote deeper understanding of what God has revealed and to recognize error and misuse of Scripture. Theology, like Scripture, relates doctrines to each other appropriately. Objective justification and subjective justification are

like two sides of a coin, inseparable though subject to study individually.

Objective justification is the truth that God has declared all people "not guilty" because Jesus has atoned for the sins of all (1 John 2:2), that God has reconciled the world to himself by attributing sin to Christ and Christ's righteousness to sinners (2 Corinthians 5:19-21). Subjective justification is the truth that this righteousness-for-sin exchange becomes personal salvation alone by faith in Jesus Christ, that Christ's redemptive work is personally appropriated and God's justifying decree personally received by faith (John 3:16; Mark 16:16; Romans 1:17; Hebrews 4:2). St. Paul demonstrated the bonding of these twin truths in Romans 3, where he says both that we are justified by grace (objective, v. 24) and that we are justified by faith (subjective, v. 28).

Lutherans emphasize objective justification because God's grace is the basis and focus of our salvation, from Christ's work of redemption to the Holy Spirit's work of conversion. Both God's glory and our assurance are jeopardized by an emphasis on the "decision" and "experience" of faith in contemporary religion. Further, faith is only as good as the object of its trust. In a generation that has blurred the content of Christian faith and fostered a kind of "belief in believing," the objective reality of our justification must be emphasized.

Of course there are dangers in minimizing the role and importance of faith in our salvation. Universalism is the heresy that everyone will be saved, with or without faith in Jesus. Unless there is clear, emphatic teaching about faith, the church risks intellectualizing salvation, undermining Christian sanctification and devaluing the means of grace — word and sacrament.

Objective and subjective justification cannot be understood apart from each other. Emphasis is only the appropriate sequencing of these twin truths and a response to errors which, of late, have primarily threatened objective justification. □



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.

"Reflections on creation science"

For my faith, please give me Simon Peter rather than Dr. Vernon Gerlach (Nov. 15). Dr. Gerlach praises the evolutionists and calls them good scientists whose answers are discovered. Peter calls them scoffers who "deliberately forget that long ago by God's word the heavens existed and the earth was formed out of water and with water" (2 Peter 3:3-5).

*George Enderle
Slinger, Wisconsin*

(Dr. Gerlach did not praise the evolutionists and called them "good scientists" only in the sense that they fulfilled the criteria in the definition of science in his opening paragraphs.)

I find Gerlach's article to be based on several false premises. His first and major one is his very limited definition of science: "to ask questions for which there is no known answer." I have always considered one function of science to be the systematic accumulation of known facts in order to arrive at a logical conclusion.

His second false premise is his belief that certain creation science deals with origins and that it attempts to "prove Genesis." We have consistently pointed out that no theory concerning origins, whether that of evolutionists or that of creationists, can be scientific, since these are neither testable or falsifiable.

His third and serious false premise is his belief that creation scientists assume doubt about the Genesis account.

Dr. Gerlach should understand that we call ourselves creation scientists because we unequivocally accept the biblical account of creation. No proof is needed. What we need to do, so that our Christian teachers can pass the information on to their students, is to dig out these latent and still undiscovered facts for the world to see. And by the way, these kinds of facts are definitely subject to "correction of disproof."

As to whether creation science should have equal time in our taxpaid

public schools where evolution is taught, I am very much inclined to agree with Justice Scallia, who indicated that the other justices had not sufficiently done their homework. On the other hand, until our public school teachers become better informed about creation science, I would hesitate to have them teach the subject.

*Hilbert R. Siegler
Bangor, Wisconsin*

Dr. Vernon Gerlach makes a good point that God's word settles the creation-evolution issue for Bible-believing Christians. But I disagree with his assertion that creation is religion and evolution is science which is discovered and tentative. They are both religion. The beginning of the universe and of plant, animal and human life is not repeatable and was not observed by humans.

Instead of criticizing creation-scientists, we would do well to read their materials, provide financial support, pray for them and encourage them. Many of them have put their careers on the line for the sake of truth and the next generation's faith and confidence in the Bible and Jesus Christ.

*Herman Harstad
West Allis, Wisconsin*

Gerlach states that science is "tentative" but he misses the point that the science being taught states that evolution is not a theory but a scientific fact.

Thank the Lord for the creation scientists within our synod for they are true missionaries in America and in the world today. We have a right to intervene when the curriculum of our public schools teaches irreligious views that reflect the tenets of evolutionary atheism. The First Amendment protects our children from this type of religious indoctrination.

*Glenn Mittelstadt
Landrum, South Carolina*

Congratulations to Dr. Vernon Gerlach for his "Reflections on creation science." I find it one of the best summaries of the topic I have seen.

I agree with Dr. Gerlach: the Bible

does not teach creation science — it teaches divine creation. Under the guise of being scriptural, creation science has ceased to be good science, and under the guise of science, it has ceased to be good theology. Unfortunately many Christians and Christian groups have bought into creation science as it seemed to provide an alternative to the mechanistic alternative. But in doing so they have forfeited much good science and good religion.

*David Troutman
Austin, Texas*

To put down the creation science movement from the viewpoint that the origin of the universe as presented in Genesis must be accepted by faith begs the question.

That's fine for anyone who has a warm familiarity with the Bible. But what about the atheist, the agnostic, the non-Bible believing scientist? How do we approach them? Certainly the efforts of those who research and publish the details of creation science have as their purpose making inroads upon these people. Why is it that we think we have to debunk methodologies that do not follow exactly our own narrow views and background?

*Edward Krafft
Greeley, Colorado*

Thank you for publishing Dr. Vernon Gerlach's article. He is absolutely right. But, of course, we do not want our children to be taught that the various evolutionary theories are fact.

In a similar vein, we do not want our children to be taught life's values and solutions in the areas of sexuality and family by humanists.

The solution is obvious — more Wisconsin Lutheran elementary and high schools.

*Edw. J. Lettermann
Roseville, 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.

Lutheran churches diverging . . . Dr. J. A. O. Preus, former president of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, said his church and the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are on increasingly divergent courses. In a Minneapolis interview recently Preus said that the Missouri Synod has a lot of work ahead in discussing the issues that divide the church, such as who is allowed to partake of Holy Communion with whom. "Fellowship is in shambles. . . . Every man is a law unto himself," he said. "There is a great deal of debate going on right now on the doctrine of fellowship, with many, many different positions and practices. It is quite a serious problem." Referring to the differences within synod, he laughed and said, "To those out there who have differing opinions: You're completely at home in the Missouri Synod. Welcome to the club."

Divorce statistic in error . . . The widely held opinion that half of American marriages will end in divorce is completely wrong, according to a Harris poll. Calling the expected doom of half of American marriages "one of the most specious pieces of statistical nonsense ever perpetrated in modern times," pollster Harris asserted that actually only one of eight marriages will break up, according to government statistics, and in any single year only about two percent of all existing marriages will end in divorce. The misconception comes because of a report in 1981 by the U.S. National Center for Health Statistics that there had been 2.4 million marriages and 1.2 million divorces during the year. Using those statistics in isolation fails to account for the 54 million marriages that "just keep flowing along like Old Man River," said Harris. "Ever since then, an indelible message has been chorused in church pulpits, academic broadsides and political prophecies that the American family is doomed." Harris said that recent Census Bureau statistics show that the divorce rate peaked in 1981 and has declined since then.

ALC president accepts ecumenical post . . . Dr. David W. Preus, head of the American Lutheran Church, who faces unemployment when the ALC merges into the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America January 1 has been named executive director of the Global Mission Institute at Luther Northwestern Seminary in St. Paul, Minn. At that position he hopes "to enhance the [seminary's] global mission as well as its local mission." His appointment to that position and as distinguished visiting professor at the seminary was funded by the ALC.

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.

One of the best-run charities. . . The Salvation Army has been named as one of America's 15 best-run charities in a recent article in Fortune magazine. The article focuses on the extent to which prominent U.S. philanthropies spend money on overhead and administration instead of programs. The army was named as one of four charitable organizations that actually exceeded the standards created by the Fortune article. George McCullough, a former Exxon executive, said, "For helping the down and out, there is no one like the Salvation Army people." Of each dollar the organization receives, 86 cents goes to the needy, says the Fortune article.

Critics charged with false witness . . . Dr. Lowell G. Almen, secretary of the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, has accused critics of lying about the new denomination's commitment to the Bible as the source and norm of faith. In a recent report to the ELCA Church Council, Almen said that critics "have come to think that the Biblical prohibition against bearing false witness has been repealed." Critics have suggested that ELCA's interpretation of the Scriptures will be too liberal, and have even taken out newspaper advertisements urging congregations to leave the new church. Almen called the criticism "pernicious propaganda" and told of meeting a woman who had been told that "this new church would take her Bible away from her."

Church launches 150th jubilee . . . The Lutheran Church of Australia officially launched its 150-year jubilee at an October general synod meeting. The celebrations will extend throughout the year and will culminate in a Festival of Faith and Jubilee Thanksgiving Service in November 1988. In launching the jubilee year, the church also committed itself to renewed mission outreach throughout Australia and New Zealand. The general synod elected the Rev. Lance G. Steicke as its president.

High court approves shunning . . . The Supreme Court has let stand rulings of two lower courts that a former Jehovah's Witness shunned by other church members for leaving the sect may not sue the church for damages. Janice Paul, a Washington state woman who left the sect in 1975, challenged a church policy instituted six years later requiring Jehovah's Witnesses to shun any member who resigned. The practice, she asserted, "necessarily carried with it implication that such persons were grossly immoral." But attorneys for the church argued in written briefs submitted to the high court that the church's religious liberty would be "unreasonably burdened" if it could be sued "for carrying out its essential teachings and practices." □

New evangelism video: "Other Sheep"

"Lord, thank you for a restful night and another beautiful day of grace. Father, I need you to guide me through this day and . . ." So the opening sequence of a new video from the synod's evangelism/mass media office leads off.

This uniquely-designed, 26-minute production titled "Other Sheep" is intended to sharpen evangelism awareness and commitment. Along with Bible study materials, a self-study and com-



munity study tools it is meant for use in congregational outreach workshops.

Conceived and written by Paul Kelm, administrator for evangelism, the video was produced and directed by John Barber, director of the synod's mass media ministry.

"From the start," Barber said in

a recent interview, "the production presented a unique challenge. No one would believe that we wanted to produce a video featuring a live sheep."

Before Barber and his associate producers Steve Boettcher and Mike Trinklein rolled the cameras, they had to convince dozens of people that they were serious about the sheep.

"For example, it took some doing," Barber said, "to convince Merlin and Becky Westphal in rural Jefferson that it was possible to star a sheep — one of their sheep."

The Westphals were even more doubtful, Barber went on, "when they learned that the sheep was expected to guide the audience on a tour of real-life experiences with false prophets, moral corruption,

perience for the audience.

In addition to "Lady" — "the sheep selected from auditions held at Westphal's Jefferson farm," according to Barber — actors were cast from the ranks of laity and clergy in the greater Milwaukee area. Performances are uniformly good. An original musical score by Barber, arranged and conducted by John Tanner, is a real plus.

This unofficial reviewer recommends that you put the "Other Sheep" video on your "must see" list as part of our ongoing effort to "make disciples of all nations."

Videotape copies of "Other Sheep," together with a discussion guide, will be given to congregations participating in the "Gearing Up For Evangelism" workshops to be conducted in every district.

Partial funding for this project was provided by a grant from AAL with a lot of time volunteered by the cast and crew.

— James P. Schaefer

A triple anniversary celebration

Anniversaries of three seminary professors were celebrated October 18 in the seminary auditorium.

Prof. David J. Valleskey, who came to the seminary in 1984, celebrated his 25th; Prof. Wilbert R. Gawrisch, who came to the school in 1965, celebrated his 40th; and Prof. Martin Albrecht, who came to the school in 1962 and retired in 1985, celebrated his 50th.

Guest speaker was Prof. William G. Zell, president of Northwestern Preparatory School and the worship leader was Rev. Duane Tomhave, administrator for World Missions.

Participating were three choirs: Calvary Church Choir, Thiensville, which Albrecht directs, the Seminary Chorus and the Lutheran Chorale.

self-indulgence and cults and all leading to a 'sacrificial scene' and ending with the sheep walking — literally walking — in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus."

But believe it. "Lady" is a star. It's all there on the screen. This and more combine to make this professional production a taut, dramatic, thought-provoking ex-

Seminary anniversary planned



Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis., has announced that in 1988 it will observe its 125th anniversary with a year-long celebration.

The celebration will reach its climax over the weekend of April 24. An anniversary convocation and luncheon will be held Friday morning, April 22 in the auditorium with the presentation of three essays under the theme: *The Seminary's Unchanging Foundation in a Changing World: Sola Gratia, Sola Scriptura, Sola Fide*. The three essayists will be Pastor em. Harold Wicke, Sun Prairie; Prof.

Paul E. Eickmann of Northwestern College; and Prof. John M. Brenner of Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw.

Guest speakers at the luncheon following are Joel C. Gerlach, pastor of Our Redeemer, Santa Barbara, Calif., and President Carl H. Mischke who will bring greetings from the synod to the seminary.

On Sunday, April 24, an anniversary service will be held at 3:00 p.m. in the auditorium. The service will be led by Wayne M. Borgwardt, administrator for worker training. The synod's first vice-president, Richard E. Lauersdorf, will be the guest speaker. The combined male choruses of the seminary and Northwestern College as well as a festival mixed choir will participate in the service.

A new pipe organ for the chapel has been selected as the anniversary project, replacing a deteriorated older organ. "The new organ," the anniversary committee points out, "will not only serve as a

memorial to this anniversary but will assist our future pastors in their daily devotional life and heighten their awareness of the importance of worship in the life of a Christian congregation."

Through envelopes, members of congregations will be given an opportunity to contribute to the anniversary offering.

Besides the April events, the seminary's *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, the fall Pastors' Institute, its student body lecture series and its Easter chorus tour will join the celebration by focusing on the anniversary and its festivities.

The seminary was begun in 1863 in Watertown, Wis. Enrollment the first year was two, but — as a synod history points out — "one of the two students soon had to be dismissed for disciplinary reasons." There was one professor, Dr. E. Moldehnke. In the succeeding 124 years there have been 47 professors. Current enrollment at the seminary is 217 including the vicars.

MLPS breaks ground for music hall

On November 4 the campus family of Martin Luther Preparatory School, Prairie du Chien, Wis., assembled to break ground for its new music hall.

After a service in the chapel the congregation proceeded to the groundbreaking site. Taking part in the actual groundbreaking were Pastor Theo. Olsen, president of MLPS; Pastor Oscar Siegler, president emeritus of MLPS; Pastor Edmund Schulz, chairman of the Board of Control and of the Building Committee; Pastor Wayne Borgwardt, administrator for the synod's Board for Worker Training; Prof. Harold Kaiser, chairman of the MLPS Planning Committee; Prof. Eldon Hirsch, chairman of the MLPS Music Department; Mr. Gary Bode, president of the

MLPS Student Council; and Mr. Thomas Kraemer, Plain, Wis., general contractor.

Music is a part of the Lutheran heritage and at MLPS it is given high priority. Music classes each week, school chorus, school choir, plus the band, pep band, musical play each year, ensembles, weekly piano or organ lessons with required practice periods, together with four full-time and three part-time music faculty members, not only show the importance of music in the curriculum but also help to indicate the need for adequate facilities for such a program.

The synod also recognized the need and a portion of the special Reaching Out offering received a few years ago was earmarked for the music facility on the campus.

The project was again reaffirmed by vote of the synod at its August convention.

The single-story building is 74 feet by 133 feet. Actual construction began a few days after the groundbreaking. Completion is scheduled for this spring. The building will provide 18 practice rooms, five piano studios, three all-purpose rooms (organ/instrumental), storage, music library and staff room. There will also be a choir room and band room with offices. The \$550,000 structure is part of the long-range building program which anticipates additional structures such as the addition of an auditorium and a student union in the 1990s, dependent upon enrollment.

— Jerome H. Braun

Administrator installed

Rev. Wayne M. Borgwardt was installed on October 11 at Trinity, Waukesha, as administrator for Worker Training, succeeding Rev. Robert J. Voss, now president of Northwestern College.

The rite of installation was read by Pastor Douglas Engelbrecht of Neenah, chairman of the Board for Worker Training. Assisting were the presidents of the six ministerial schools maintained by the synod. The guest speaker was former President Conrad Frey of Dr. Martin Luther College.

Borgwardt is a native of Alma, Wisconsin and a 1961 seminary graduate. After serving a parish in Frankenmuth, Mich. for three years, he accepted a call to Dr. Martin Luther College. In 1972 he accepted a call to Fox Valley Lutheran High, Appleton, first as guidance director and then as principal. In 1978 he was called as superintendent of Wisconsin Lutheran High School.

For the past ten years Borgwardt has been the representative of the area Lutheran high schools on the Board for Worker Training.



Virginia Stolper, after 37 years of service in the synod, retired December 31. She began in 1950 working for the Spiritual Welfare Commission (now Special Ministries) and later served as office manager. Retirement will permit volunteer work especially in the field of illiteracy, and time to visit two sons, William in Illinois and Robert in California.



Ruth Stern, secretary to President Carl H. Mischke since 1979, retired December 31 after 13 years of service to two synod presidents. She came to Milwaukee in 1974 as President Naumann's secretary from Two Rivers, Wis., where she had served as receptionist for a number of years after the death of her husband, Pastor Theodore Stern. Retirement will find her reading and visiting her "ministerial" family — two daughters married to pastors and one son, John, a pastor. A third daughter, Miriam, is employed in Milwaukee.

Northern Wisconsin District

The **Second Annual Summer Workshop** sponsored by the greater Manitowoc Area Principal's Conference was held August 20 at Manitowoc Lutheran High School. Featured speakers were Prof. James Tiefel from the seminary, who dealt with why and how we should teach music, and Prof. Edward Meyer from DMLC who spoke on developing plans for our synod schools in the area of music. A curriculum booklet for music was developed as a result of this workshop. . . . **Salem of Sturgeon Bay** celebrated its 100th anniversary on August 29-30. Pastor Ronald Ash, a son of the congregation, was the guest speaker. Pastor Jonathan Rossman presently serves there. . . . **Pastor Elmer H. Sememske** of Mt. Zion in Ripon celebrated 40 years in the ministry

on July 19. He has served at Mt. Zion since 1965. . . . **St. Paul of Sheboygan Falls** celebrated its 125th anniversary on August 16. Guest preachers, Pastors Mark and Robert Bitter, are sons of the congregation, which is presently served by Pastor Henry Juroff. . . . **Zion of Greenleaf** celebrated its 125th anniversary on August 30, September 20, October 18 and November 1. The current pastor is Waldemar Loescher.

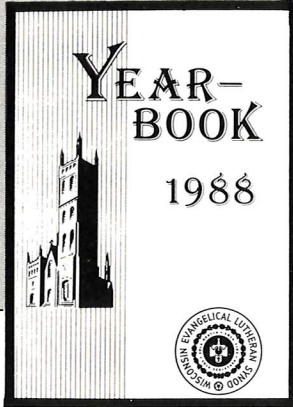
— Jan Eggert

South Atlantic District

Crown of Life, Baton Rouge, La., dedicated its worship/education/fellowship building on September 20. District mission counselor Marvin Radtke preached for the special service. The 83 people in attendance represented the four WELS churches in Louisiana and one in Alabama. . . . **King of Kings of Maitland, Fla.**, celebrated its 20th anniversary with a special service on October 11. President Mischke was the guest speaker. Members and guests reviewed the congregation's history through a video presentation, slide presentation and a photo display. Pastor Mark Schroeder serves King of Kings and David Jacobs is principal of the school. . . . On October 25 groundbreaking was held for a chapel for **Beautiful Savior of Marietta, Ga.** District president John Guse serves the four-year-old mission congregation. . . . **Shepherd of the Hills, Knoxville, Tenn.**, celebrated its tenth anniversary on November 8. Former district president Ray Wiechmann was guest speaker in the morning service and Pastor Scott Stone, the congregation's first pastor, preached for a special afternoon service. Timothy Henning is the current pastor.

— David Nottling

1988 WELS YEARBOOK



The official directory of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 6 x 9 inches, 152 pages with handy spiral binding. The 1988 Yearbook contains a complete listing of the name, location, and time of service of 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.

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NOTICES

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

CONFERENCES

Metropolitan Milwaukee Lutheran Teachers' Conference, March 3-4 at Jordan, 8420 W. Beloit Rd., West Allis.

Michigan District, Southeastern Pastor-Teacher Conference, January 25-26 at St. Paul, Livonia. Agenda: Formula of Concord, Article X (Buske); Presentation/Discussion on What is Biblical and What is Traditional in our WELS Churches (Fink-Miller); Exegesis of 1 Corinthians 11:27-32 (Porinsky).

Minnesota District, Crow River Conference, February 9 at St. Paul, Litchfield. Agenda: Exegesis of John 3 (1-21) (Newmann); Practicum on Bulletins (Hellmann)

Minnesota District, Mankato Conference, February 2 at St. John, Alma City. Agenda: Isagogical Study of the Book of Solomon (Neumann); Pre-Marital Co-Habitation — What Does the Bible say About it? (Lindloff)

Nebraska District, Rosebud Pastor-Teacher-Delegate Conference, February 8-9 at Zion, Mission, S. Dak. Agenda: A Brief History of the Nebraska District (Layman); A Study of the Smaller Lutheran Church Bodies and Why we are not in Fellowship With Them (Allwardt).

ADDRESSES

PASTORS:

Bater, Michael C., 1020 Maple Hill, Lansing, MI 48910; 517/882-1004.

Mattek, Floyd W. em., 30 Northwood Hills, Fredericksburg, TX 78624.

Nommensen, Timothy L., 6105 Hospital Rd., Freeland, MI 48623; 517/695-9758.

Sawall, Robert L., Jalan H. Saidi 1/26, Cipete, Jakarta Selatan, 12410, Indonesia; 021-715-680.

Winkel, Timothy J., 1922 S. 50th Ave., Omaha, NE 68106; 402/553-4299.

ANNIVERSARIES

Falls Church, Virginia — Grace (25), April, 1988. Anyone with pictures, memorabilia or other items of interest please send to Grace, 3233 Annandale Rd., Falls Church, VA 22042.

Milton, Wisconsin — St. John (100), February 14, 9:00 a.m.; noon dinner. For further information call 608/868-7501 or Larry Speinke at 608/868-2146.

Milwaukee, Wisconsin — Jerusalem (100), 3012 N. Holton St., February 7 and 21, 9:30 a.m. Social hour and refreshments to follow services.

CAMPUS RALLY '88

The Campus Rally '88 will be held in Madison, Wis., April 15-17 for college-age adults 18-25 years or to anyone interested in campus ministries. The theme of the rally is "Who Cares?" and the cost is \$45.00 which includes lodging, workshops, speakers, student forum, banquet, live entertainment and Christian fellowship. For further information contact Karen Luedtke, 415 Barnard Hall, Madison, WI 53706; 608/264-0482.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Fredericksburg, Texas — Shepherd of the Hills, 219 Crabapple (corner of Crabapple and Northwood Hills), Fredericksburg, TX 78624. 10:00 a.m.; SS/Bible class 11:00 a.m. Pastor Floyd Mattek; 512/997-2677.

MIMEOGRAPH

Available for cost of shipping: Rex Rotary D 490 mimeo with ink, pads and stencils. Contact Pastor J. S. Hering, St. John Lutheran, 524 Olive Ave., P.O. Box 81, Florence, WI 54121; 715/528-3337

CHANCEL FURNISHINGS

Available to any mission for cost of shipping: Altar, pulpit, lectern (converts to baptismal font), brass candlesticks (with tube candles), brass cross (32"), missal stand, 4 complete sets of hand embroidered paraments. Furniture is handmade, oak veneers and solid oak trim in excellent condition. Contact Pastor John Huebner, 800 McIntosh Rd., Sarasota, FL 33582; 813/371-2978.

FAMILY THERAPIST NEEDED Immediate opening

In order to serve the needs of increasing numbers of our people who wish to make use of counseling services offered through Wisconsin Lutheran Child & Family Service's Appleton office, we are seeking an additional qualified therapist. Qualifications: WELS (or ELS) member; master's degree in counseling or related field; and experience in family therapy. Contact or send resume to Joanne A. Halter, director of social services, Wisconsin Lutheran Child & Family Service, 6800 N. 76th St., P.O. Box 23980, Milwaukee, WI 53223; 414/353-5000.

ATTENTION Business, community and church leaders

Wisconsin Lutheran College wants to provide you with outstanding young people for your organization. They will be graduates with B.A. or B.S. degrees in liberal arts or with professional degrees in both business administration and secondary education.

Organizations looking for responsible decision-makers, self-starters, good communicators and individuals with an understanding of the importance of interpersonal relationships should contact WLC graduates for employment this spring. If interested contact: Ready to Serve, Office of Career Development, Wisconsin Lutheran College, 8830 W. Bluemound Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53226.

CELEBRATE CHRISTIAN RECOVERY!

The fifth annual Alcoholism Awareness Retreat sponsored by Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service will be held April 29 through May 1, 1988 at a retreat center in Milwaukee, Wis. Various speakers and workshops will offer Christian insight and challenge for growth to individuals or families recovering from alcoholism. Topics for children may be presented if numbers warrant. A special banquet meal and entertainment are being planned to help celebrate the fifth anniversary of the retreat.

For further details or reservations contact Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service, 6800 N. 76th St., P.O. Box 23980, Milwaukee, WI 53223. Or phone 414/353-5000. Ask for John Cook or Susie Zimmermann.

OWLS TOUR

The OWLS (Organization of WELS Lutheran Seniors) is sponsoring a tour "The Carolinas and Williamsburg" April 15-26 (from \$469). Pickups beginning at Minneapolis/St. Paul, Milwaukee and Champaign, Ill. For more information and reservations contact: Fisher Tour Service. Call collect 612/644-4455 by February 1.

YOUTH ART MONTH

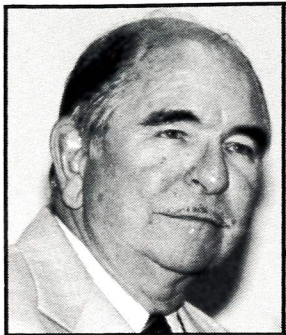
Wisconsin Lutheran College is sponsoring its second annual "Youth Art Month." Students in grades K-12 are eligible to submit entries. Entries must be original works of art (kits not allowed), and must be delivered to the college by February 26 or mailed to: WLC, Youth Art Exhibit, 8830 W. Bluemound Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53226. A poster contest will also be held on the theme, "The Tools of Art." Black marker, pen or crayon may be used on paper. Mail to the college by January 25.

CHANGE OF TIME OR PLACE OF WORSHIP

in the following exploratory areas or mission congregations.

PANAMA CITY, FLORIDA — Panama City Lutheran, Wilson Funeral Home Chapel, 214 Airport Rd., Panama City, 9:00 a.m.; SS/Bible class, 10:30. Pastor Richard H. Warnecke, 2914 Jenks Ave., Panama City, FL 32405; 904/769-9616.

NORMAL, ILLINOIS — St. Mark, 10:15 a.m.; SS/Bible class 9:00 a.m. Pastor David Ehlers, 1710 W. College Ave., Normal, IL 61761; 309/454-4314.



One cannot watch television for any length of time without developing an uncomfortable feeling of varying intensity. This monster box is shaping our lives. It is dictating our value system. It is setting the national agenda. It raises up and it crushes.

Does it mirror public opinion, or does it create it? Does it reflect the moral standards of the nation, or does it shape them? Is there a national crisis before the 5:30 p.m. (CST) network news announces it, or do the networks manufacture it? The audience may not know the answer to these questions, but the audience must be aware of them.

In a month more than 30 publications cross my desk. Recently *The Noel News* joined the parade. It is the publication of the National Organization of Episcopalians for Life, and a sprightly, attractive instrument for good it is. The current issue was particularly attractive.

Last May, as graduating seniors in universities and colleges were subjected to banalities and thigh-slapping quips by commencement speakers, Duke University, Durham, North Carolina, had the good fortune to capture Ted Koppel, who presides over ABC's news program *Nightline*, as its commencement speaker. I want to share with you some of his remarks to the graduates at Duke.

Koppel is concerned about the power of television. (He calls it the "Vanna Factor" — "Vanna [White] says nothing.") "We now communicate with everyone," he said, "and say absolutely nothing. We have reconstructed the Tower of Babel, and it is a television antenna."

There is no room on television, he argues, for complexity. Keep it simple, stupid, has arrived from Madison Avenue. We have actually convinced ourselves, he said, "that slogans will save us. Shoot up, if you must, but use a clean needle. Enjoy sex whenever and with whomever you wish, but wear a condom. 'No.' The answer is 'No.' Not because it isn't cool or smart or because you might end up in jail or dying in an AIDS ward, but 'no' because it's wrong."

He singles out the Ten Commandments as an ethical beacon in a world gone wrong. "What Moses brought down from Mt. Sinai were not the Ten Suggestions. They are commandments. Are, not were. . . . They codify in a handful of words acceptable human behavior, not just for then or now, but for all time."

Koppel closes with a warning. "There have always been imperfect role models, false gods of material success, and shallow fame. But now their influence is magnified by television. I caution you, as one who performs daily on that flickering altar, to set your sights beyond what you can see. . . . There is harmony and inner peace to be found in following a moral compass that points in the same direction regardless of fashion or trend."

I really appreciate what you said, Ted, but I fear that your words only confirm those who already share your view and falls on other ears sealed shut by sights and sounds to the contrary.

Where does one learn of this alternative to TV morality? Certainly not on TV. But in homes that still believe, still trust, still not only attend church but live each day with him who is The Truth.

James P. Schaefer



Catch the Spirit!

by Philip J. Hoyer

“**C**atch the Olympic spirit!” This is the rally cry ringing in the ears of Calgarians. This enthusiasm stems from the fact that for 16 days, beginning February 13, 1988, Calgary, Alberta, Canada will be the center of world attention as it plays host to the XV Olympic Winter Games.

An estimated two billion people will be viewing the 2600 athletes from 51 countries. Close to two million spectators will watch the billion dollar extravaganza. Some of you will be here. Others will get a look for the first time at the city of Calgary nestled at the foot of the majestic Canadian Rockies. You can be sure the media will leave no stone unturned to feed the hungry eyes and ears of television worshipers. People will get caught up in the “spirit” of athletic competition with its “thrill of victory and agony of defeat.”

But during the week the Olympics begin in Calgary, another time-honored tradition will start. February 17 is Ash Wednesday. That day signals the beginning of another Lenten season. For 40 days a faithful band of believers in Calgary will walk the pathway of Jesus’ suffering and death. Through the proclamation of the word their hearts will be focused on the agony of Christ’s seeming defeat on Calvary’s wood.

From Calvary to Calgary the fire of the Holy Spirit will burn brightly to convict its hearers of their inability to qualify for God’s golden crown of glory. These souls will wonder at the amazing fact that Jesus, God’s one and only Son, would stoop down to this misdirected race and take up the challenge of keeping God’s holy and perfect will as our substitute. They will count the cost for their salvation as they gather at the foot of the cross.

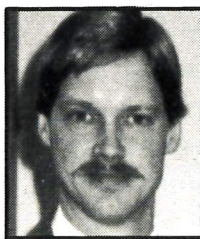
As the Lenten season culminates with Holy Week and Easter Sunday, these faithful will catch the Spirit

as their hearts seize on the thrill of Christ’s victory. The resurrection of Jesus Christ guarantees the justification — the declaration of not guilty — for every human being. It assures the believer of his resurrection on the last day and an eternity in the glory halls of heaven. If only the billions watching the Olympics could tune into the single greatest world event that has ever taken place in the history of mankind! If only they could catch the real Spirit of God’s love in Christ proclaimed through the gospel!

For some of the people of St. Paul Lutheran Church of Calgary it will be the first time they attend Lenten services, being new to the faith. That “first” was made possible through the gifts of WELS members throughout the world. For this greatest treasure of all we thank the Lord. We thank you, the members of WELS, for sharing the Spirit of salvation through the preaching of Christ crucified.

While you are watching the world worship the heroes of the ’88 Winter Olympics with all its pomp and ceremony, remember to catch the *real Spirit* of God’s hero, Jesus Christ, at your local worship home. Remember, Jesus Christ won the gold for us. Through faith in Jesus all believers can look forward to receiving the golden crown when Jesus crowns his faithful heroes on that last day.

If you will be attending the ’88 Winter Olympics in Calgary, come and catch the Spirit of Christ with us at St. Paul, your WELS-Canada congregation. You may also worship with your fellow WELS members in Wetaskiwin and St. Albert, Canada. □



Philip Hoyer is pastor of St. Paul, Calgary, Alberta, Canada.