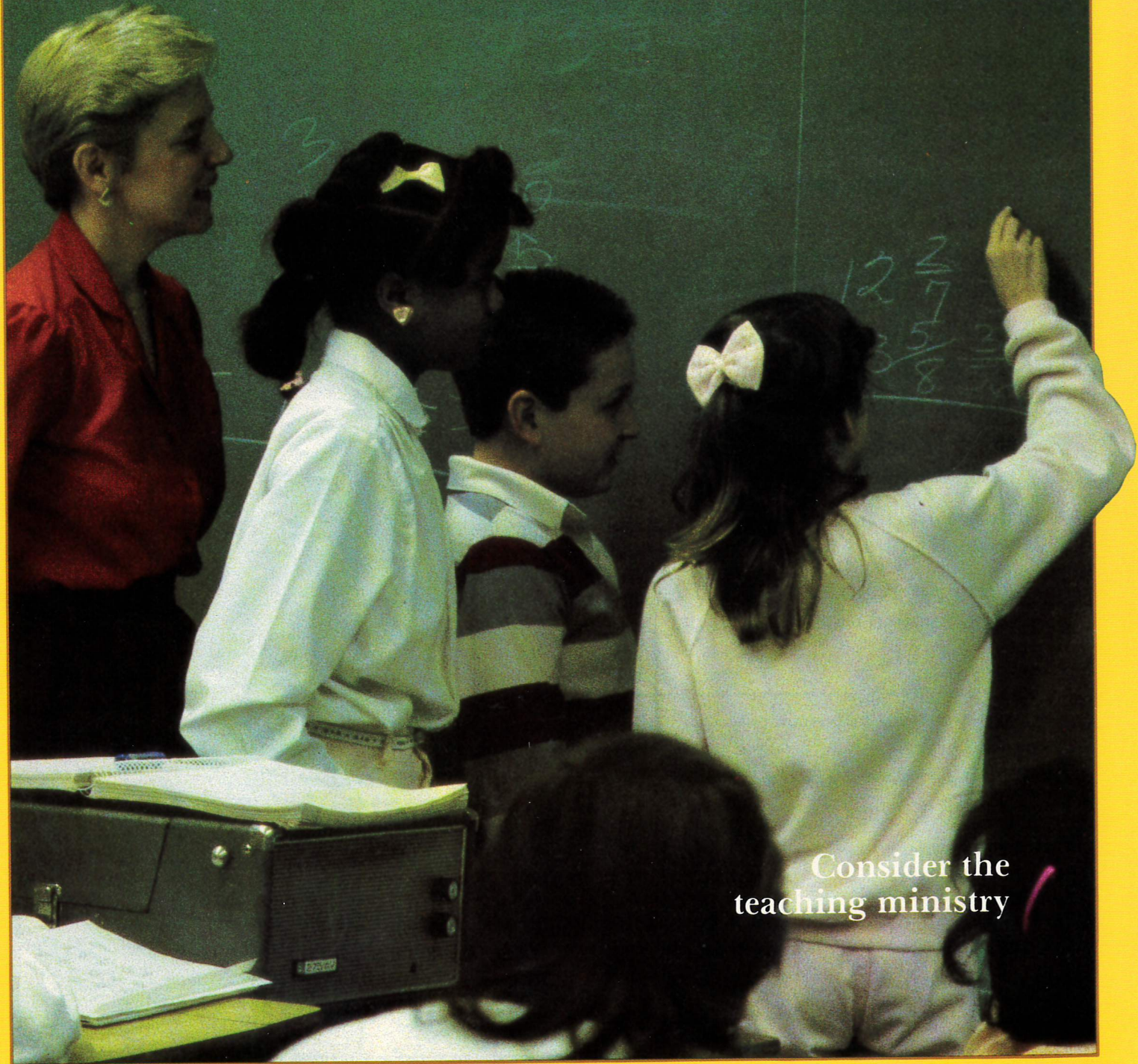
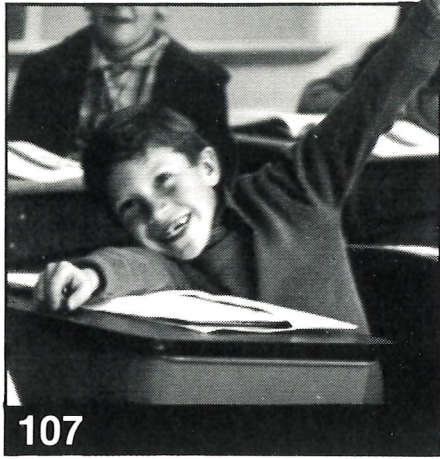


March 15, 1988

the Northwestern Lutheran



Consider the
teaching ministry



107



110

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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FEATURES

- The word for today** by Robert H. Hochmuth 103
The cross and the unsolvable
- Paul's letters from prison** by Julian G. Anderson 105
Ephesians 1:1-14
- Cross-cultural evangelism** by Thomas A. Heyn 106
The Christian in conflict with his culture
- Consider the teaching ministry** by Arlyn W. Boll 107
Potter's clay
- Self-esteem — of the third kind** 108
by Rolfe F. Westendorf
Clarifying some definitions
- Gambling in America today** by Thomas B. Franzmann 110
It is a complex issue
- The vicar program** by Richard D. Balge 120
Every congregation benefits

COLUMNS

- Editorial comment** by Immanuel G. Frey 104
Reacting to AIDS
- I would like to know** by Paul E. Kelm 112
- Letters** 113
- From this corner** by the editor 119

NEWS

- Around the world** 114
- Preserving the past** 115
- The shrinking dollar in world missions** 115

The cross and the unsolvable

by Robert H. Hochmuth

Christ crucified . . . the wisdom of God (1 Corinthians 1:24).

A striking association of ideas: Wisdom ascribed to the one whom many regarded as a failure; apparently without the desire or discernment to avoid injustice, he had suffered an ignoble death.

More than that, he had been out of step with widely endorsed religious convictions. He had declared that "good" people's merits could not set them right with God; outcasts and prodigals might find a welcome in the family of God before religious experts.

Nonsense, at best

Heralding the crucified, Paul came upon the scene offering a blood-bought full pardon for guilty mortals. To sophisticated Greeks, self-satisfied in their system of virtue, the preaching of the cross was nonsense at best, and all the more repulsive because it introduced the element of accountability to a personal God along with a future judgment. A "demented superstition" is what one of them termed Christianity.

Intellectual diversion

They would entertain new reflections on ancient questions: Why are we here? Where are we going? If no call for repentance were involved, they might have paid heed to a voice that offered a novel key for unlocking secrets regarding our place in the universe. A prophet might have claimed their attention with an intriguing formula for avoiding suffering in our lives or for overcoming deterioration in society. But a crucified Jesus offered little to satisfy any need which they acknowledged. Sad to say the Greek emphasis on philosophy and ethics dealt to a great extent with symptoms of our human predicament and diverted most of them from facing the real issue: How can an offending creature ever gain a right standing under the offended Creator's holy justice?

Look to Jesus

When Paul designates Jesus as the wisdom of God, he is affirming more than that Jesus possessed God's omniscience. Our Savior did repeatedly demonstrate that by masterfully outwitting his opponents. "Lord, you know all things," Peter had once confessed.

That's important too; it confirms the truth that he is God the Son who came to be our brother. But the apostle's point here is not: Jesus *has* the wisdom of God, but rather: the Crucified Christ *is* the wisdom of God.

Jesus is more than a divine teacher who has answers. Paul asserts something more significant: Jesus himself is the answer.

The dilemma

God's holiness is unquenchable, a "consuming fire" says the Scripture. Our status because of our offenses is as combustible as sawdust. God cannot dilute his holy nature; we cannot remedy what we are by nature. We are on a collision course with God's unswerving justice. In this impasse human minds spawn inadequate notions for evading that prospect. One is to propose that God will have to be satisfied with us the way we are. Another is to fabricate a theory of reincarnation, bypassing eternal judgment. A last resort is to question the existence of a personal God.

But men's notions do not abolish God or his unalterable righteous demands. All of the world's great minds have not come up with a way to resolve our alienation from our Creator.

Exceptional solution

God had a way. He had a way to make it possible for him in his blazing holiness to embrace us detestable violators without destroying us. Without growing lenient toward evil, he exercised his righteousness in full measure — and yet he averted our doom.

His way was to have his holy and innocent Son become our brother and trade places with us. Our guilt was charged to him, and he paid in shame, suffering and death. The curse is removed. We are restored to God's family because Christ hung on a cross. He is God's answer to the unsolvable situation.

Christ crucified is the secret. He is the wisdom of God for all time. □



Robert Hochmuth is pastor of St. Andrew, Sacramento, California.

Reacting to AIDS

Only a few years back, a previously unheard-of venereal disease suddenly took on epidemic proportions in the wake of the sexual revolution. It became a major topic of discussion by the media, and it provided the basis for the feature article of at least one prestigious weekly newsmagazine. The name of the disease was herpes.

Its prominence as a focus of attention and a topic of discussion has receded almost as quickly as it arose. This is not because it is less dreadful than it was when it first captured the attention of the public. It is not because it is less prevalent now than it was when it dominated as a topic of discussion. It is not because there was no cure for it then, taking into account the fact that there is no cure for it now either. There is a different reason why it has receded into the background. The reason is that herpes has been superseded by an even more dreadful disease likewise attributed largely to an increase in illicit sexual activity. This disease is called AIDS.

AIDS, according to a report early in January 1988 by the World Health Organization in Geneva, increased worldwide in 1987 by 56 percent. This group said that 73,670 cases had been reported in 1987 but that unreported cases probably increased the total to about 125,000. The United States had the most reported cases last year: 48,139. As of December 31, 2,544 persons are reported to have died of the disease in San Francisco alone. Experts foresee a continuing rapid increase in the incidence of AIDS.

The public accordingly sees AIDS as infinitely worse than herpes. It sees it not only as a form of physical discomfort, not only as a social stigma, not only as an incurable affliction like herpes. It sees it as a death sentence.

What, aside from dismay and chagrin, has been the reaction of the general populace to the horrible onslaught of this dreadful disease? Sudden emphasis on the practice of "safe sex." A boom in the popularity of condoms as a means of accomplishing this illusory purpose. Most of all, loud demands and frantic efforts to "find a cure."

A thoughtful comment on this general reaction appeared a few weeks ago in an editorial in the secular press. It reads, in part: "To be sure, a cure may be discovered. In the meantime, however, it will be interesting to learn if the people continue to satisfy sexual instincts in accordance with liberal mores or revert to the old disciplines ordered by the Commandments."

We already know what God-fearing people will do, regardless of what others may do and regardless of whether or not a cure is found.

Immanuel G. Frey



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is pastor of Zion,
Phoenix, Arizona.*

Ephesians 1:1-14

by Julian G. Anderson

To better understand this letter a little general information is necessary. And we must begin with *the title of the letter*.

It is true that this letter was intended for the Christians in Ephesus. But it was really intended for a much wider readership. Our earliest manuscripts tell us it was a circular letter, intended for all the congregations around Ephesus, just as John's second and third chapters in Revelation were. Read Revelation 1:11, looking at a map of Asia Minor, and then add Colossae, the eighth congregation in that circle. Then read again Colossians 4:16, especially 16b (last article), which speaks about the letter coming from Laodicea. That was this letter we call "Ephesians." It would start in Ephesus and end in Colossae. But in all our earliest manuscripts the words "in Ephesus" are not found. There is a blank space where they would be, so that the reader of this letter in each city could insert the name of his city as he read verse one.

We also know that Colossians and Ephesians were written at the same time, because they were both carried by the same messenger, Tychicus (Colossians 4:7, Ephesians 6:21), who also carried the private letter to Philemon. And that they all were written at the same time is proven by the fact that 41 percent of Colossians appears, sometimes word for word, in Ephesians. Thus we learn that the gnostic error had spread to all the churches around Ephesus. And what Paul had said to the Colossians he expanded in his letter to all the other churches (Ephesians). So now we shall begin our study of this letter with the section on

The blessings Christ has brought us (1:3-14)

Believe it or not, this whole section is just one sentence in the Greek text — certainly the longest, most involved sentence in the Bible. The main thought is that we must praise God for all his blessings that come to us through Christ. In fact, Paul begins by saying that God "has given us every spiritual blessing in the heavenly world." Then he enumerates them. First, "God chose us before the world was created to live with him as people who are holy and spotlessly clean." And he chose us "because he had already decided in eternity to adopt us as his children through the work of Christ" (and it all happened just as God had decided).

And he did all this "so that we would sing the praises of his glorious, undeserved love which he had

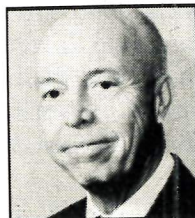
given us so freely as the result of what his dear Son did for us. For that Son bought us back (from the devil), and set us free (from eternal death), and took away our sins with his own blood. And all this happened because of the fullness (a gnostic word) of God's undeserved love, which he has poured into our lives in such an overflowing way.

"But even before Christ did all this, God used all his wisdom (gnostic word) and understanding to tell us about the secret plan (a gnostic feature) he was going to follow, since he had decided that he wanted Christ to do this. And when the right time comes, that plan will be completed, when Christ brings everything in outer space (where the gnostic powers lived), and everything on earth together into one kingdom, with himself as the head.

"But it's because of what Christ did for us that we (Jews) were chosen to be God's own special people. And since God is the one who runs the whole universe and keeps it all going, our choosing was also a part of God's plan, which he decided to follow. And when he chose us, he planned that we who were the first to place our trust in our Messiah (coming Savior) should live in such a way that we bring praise and honor to God.

"But now you people (non-Jews) have also heard the message which brings people the truth, the good news about how you have been saved, and you have also come to believe in Christ. And when you came to faith, Jesus put his special brandmark on you, showing that you belong to him, by giving you his Holy Spirit. And the Spirit is also our guarantee that we shall receive everything God has set aside to give to his children. And this means that we shall be completely free, so that all praise and honor will be given to our glorious Savior."

How's that for one sentence? And see how Paul continually focused his readers' attention on God the Father, and Jesus Christ, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, our helper, as the objects of our praise, thoughts and devotion. And notice also how Paul used gnostic terms to focus his readers' attention on these great truths. □



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

The Christian in conflict with his culture

by Thomas A. Heyn

If someone asked you to describe American culture, what would you say? Is it Mom, apple pie and the flag? Is it the American success story and watching football games and having lots of friends? Is it being a Republican or a Democrat or living in the Midwest or in New York City or belonging to a labor union?

Culture is one of those things that everyone knows about but finds hard to define or describe. It consists of the values, customs, traditions and acceptable behavior that a group of people live by. Their culture helps them to make order out of a world filled with millions of variables.

Cultures are continually changing. Some change slowly. The people still hunt, fish and live in the same way their ancestors did centuries ago. Other cultures change rapidly, the culture of the Western world being one of the best examples.

Some changes in our culture are of little importance for the Christian. It matters little if people begin eating less meat or wear their hair longer or wear purple socks with green slacks.

Other changes have a tremendous significance. The size of the typical family in North America is noticeably smaller than it was 50 years ago. It reflects changing values toward marriage, toward the age at which people first marry, changing attitudes toward the importance of children in a marriage, as compared to the importance of material goods and career advancement.

Drug and alcohol abuse has become more acceptable. A nominee for the Supreme Court admitted to having used marijuana. Thirty percent of lawyers polled said they have done the same. Forty years ago, who would have heard of such a thing?

The respect for authority is decreasing. With scandals in recent times ranging from Watergate to Iran-gate to the PTL/Bakker scandal, it is not surprising that people distrust those in positions of authority. Even among churchgoers the Bible is no longer the authority it used to be.

Homosexuality, pornography and abortion, re-

garded as taboos in the past, have become acceptable today.

Evolutionary and humanistic thinking are widespread. There is no God; man is the only one who can solve his problems. We find ourselves living increasingly in a dog-eat-dog world, each person living for himself. Live the comfortable life, amass the luxuries you've got coming to you! After all, they are *not* luxuries, they are necessary for survival (although somehow our grandparents and those living in the poorer classes have survived without them).

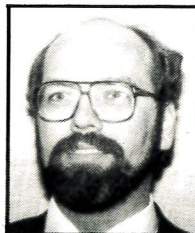
The values of our culture are changing, but usually not for the better. Nonetheless, the world's ways, its values, its culture, are what the Christian's Old Adam wants to be part of.

Jesus tells us that you can't love the world without being an enemy of God. We are *in* the world, but not to be *of* it. Often our problem is that we want to be *of* it.

In the Wisconsin Synod there are people who are homosexuals, who have had abortions, who think nothing of divorce, who have little room for children in their lives, who pursue their careers with 110 percent of their efforts, who covet the good life and the dollar, who do not respect the word of God nor the pastor who preaches it, who believe that man can solve most of his own problems because of the technological advances of the 20th century. Whether they be few in number or many, the question is, "Have you been caught up in these changing values?"

If so, look to the cross of Jesus. There you see deliverance for those captured by the sinful values of their culture.

Christians are sometimes children of their culture. Jesus redeemed us to be children of God, living in *his* culture, sharing *his* values, ordering our lives *his* way. □



Thomas Heyn is pastor of the Spanish Mission in Madison, Wisconsin.

Potter's clay

by Arlyn W. Boll

Yet, O Lord, you are our Father. We are the clay, you are the potter; we are all the work of your hand (Isaiah 64:8).

Some years ago one of my students at Northwestern Prep asked, "How did you get to be a professor anyway?"

"I was born with a briefcase in my hand, and headed for the nearest Lutheran school as soon as I could walk," was my joking reply.

Matters in this student's life were not going too well at the time. I had just come down rather hard on him for some less-than-satisfactory work, so his response was, "I thought so; you were never really a kid like us. You just don't understand."

I understood all right. I knew very well what he meant because I had been there myself. Then I proceeded to share with this young man a few insights into the making of a teacher.

The right word is "making" because no one is born into the teaching ministry. And it is very doubtful that many young children start school with the intention of becoming teachers some day. Sure, we all played school when we were young, but we played at dozens of other occupations too.

Somewhere along the road of growing up, however, the Lord has a way of taking human raw material and turning it into someone in his service. None of this is our doing; we are just the "clay" used by our heavenly "potter" as he shapes us into the work of his hand.

As I look back, I can see many influences at work which brought me into the teaching ministry. Some were subtle and hardly noticed at the time. Others were very obvious, the conscious comments of a teacher, parent, or pastor to influence the direction of my life.

If the Lord ever took some crude clay and shaped it into a special work, I was it. Sandbox sand in a girl's hair in first grade earned my first trip into the hall. But standing out there was such a waste, so I just walked home. With no phone at our house in those days, you can well imagine the teacher's panic, an-

guish, and anger. So it went through my nine years of Lutheran school.

I always managed to get into trouble with every teacher I had, usually over something small, but still serious. I was careful enough to stay within the system by doing my schoolwork well enough first, and then I fooled around. That often meant A's on the report card in my subjects, and an F in conduct!

Through it all the Lord taught me a love and respect for my teachers; I learned to appreciate their patience and their concern for the welfare of my soul. By the time seventh grade arrived, people were asking me the inevitable, "What do you want to be when you grow up?"

As much to their surprise as mine, I said, "I want to be a Lutheran teacher." Though I was scolded often and reprimanded frequently, the Lord had led me to want to be like my teachers. Through all the challenges of daily classroom routine, they never lost sight of the word they shared. I liked that. I liked learning from men and women whose work had special purpose.

This purpose went far beyond just earning a living. This was dedication to a cause, the cause of kingdom ministry. Though I was only in junior high, the path ahead was clear: I was going to Dr. Martin Luther College, 150 miles due west, to become a teacher.

And so it was that the Lord took some rough material and molded it for his purpose. There would still be a long road ahead, there would still be many potential diversions, but I would get there. I would enter the teaching ministry.

With the hindsight that nearly 31 years in the ministry have given, I can see clearly the guiding hand of a patient, loving Lord. I can only scratch my head in wonder at these years, and marvel at what the Lord chose me to do. Maybe the pottery isn't all that beautiful, but it certainly has been functional. □



Arlyn Boll is principal at St. John, Watertown, Wisconsin.

Self-esteem — of the third kind

The basic source of this self-esteem
is the parent-child relationship

by Rolfe F. Westendorf

In recent months concerned Christians have offered some conflicting opinions about “self-esteem.” I think there is a logical explanation for the contradiction. We are not all talking about the same thing.

Perhaps if we had different words for different kinds of “self-esteem,” a lot of our confusion could be eliminated. But since we must use the same word for different concepts, let’s at least recognize that “self-esteem” can mean different things to different people. I’m going to take it one step further and try to define the different kinds of self-esteem that I know about.

I. Self-esteem is sinful pride

The first kind of self-esteem is inherited. It is a part of the sinful nature that has infected every person since Adam’s fall. Adam got it when he sinned and he passed it on to every one of his descendants.

It showed up already in the Garden, and that same pride appears today. There are a thousand ways of expressing it, but it all comes down to this: “I don’t need God. I can do it myself!”

This stubborn spirit can be beneficial at times. It can provide a sense of determination that brings success in athletics and business. If it can be aroused in a depressed person, it can help him get back on his feet again. The evil can accomplish some temporary good, but those who promote sinful pride for therapeutic purposes are playing with fire.

The pride that pulled a person out of a fit of depression can make him an intolerable companion. Pride that is based on exaggerated abilities can lead to disastrous failure. Sinful pride is ultimately an evil which can only lead people on the path to hell, just as it brought the devil there in the first place. It should also be recognized that this pride is universal. It exists in all of Adam’s descendants, even though some show it less than others. Here another genetic trait is involved. It appears that some persons are born more passive than others, and sinful pride may be a recessive

trait in a passive person. The same pride tends to cause more trouble for the aggressive person and his neighbors. But this negative form of self-esteem exists in all of us, Christian and unbeliever alike.

II. Self-esteem is grace received

The second type of self-esteem is not inherited. It is imputed. It begins with the fact that God loved us so much that, while we were still sinners, he sent his Son to die for us. And it becomes complete in the confidence that nothing shall ever separate us from God’s love. When the Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are God’s children, we possess a self-esteem that guilt and failure can never destroy. How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!

This form of self-esteem is the panacea for every emotional and spiritual ill. If I believe that God loved me enough to make me his child, I cannot believe that I am worthless. I may think it. I may feel it. But I know it cannot be true since God, who knows much better than I do, has declared me worthy to be his child.

The first form of self-esteem cannot peacefully co-exist with grace received. Sinful pride finds its feeble strength in self, while imputed self-esteem finds its strength in God. And when our worthiness is assured in the fact of God’s love, there is no need to turn to personal strengths to find a sense of self-worth. In fact, this man-made worthiness is so shabby by comparison that it is despised rather than treasured. Imputed self-esteem is a pearl of great price, which makes every other form of self-esteem look like a cheap imitation.

Unfortunately, the effect of this imputed self-esteem is limited by the strength of faith. The value that God places on us does not waver. But our perception of that value grows stronger or weaker as faith grows stronger or weaker. When faith is strong, nothing can disturb my conviction that I am a

Perhaps ninety percent of a child's world consists of two persons, Mom and Dad.

worthwhile person. But if faith is weak, I can lose my hold on this imputed self-esteem or turn to sinful pride in a desperate attempt to maintain my personal dignity. Regular contact with the word and sacraments is vital to maintaining the healthy self-esteem that I enjoy as an honored member of the family of God.

III. Self-esteem is nurture received

The third kind of self-esteem is neither inherited nor imputed. It is experienced. It is the sense of self-worth that is based on the amount of attention that I can attract from others.

The basic source of this self-esteem is the parent-child relationship. The natural love that parents have for their offspring produces the nurturing care which proves to a child that he is a worthwhile person. The most important people in his life respond to his needs in spite of other duties. Because of love, they delight in his childish antics. And, yes, they care enough about him to discipline him when he needs to know that he is doing wrong. Perhaps ninety percent of a child's world consists of two persons, Mom and Dad. And when a child enjoys their constant and nurturing care, he knows from experience that he is a worthwhile person.

Relatives, especially grandparents, and friends also contribute to this kind of self-esteem, as do teachers and coaches and neighbors and all the other significant persons in a child's life. And the child who is blessed with such nurturing and caring persons receives a sense of self-esteem that will serve him well for the rest of his life.

This sense of self-esteem does not produce the egotistic bore who never gets tired of exalting his accomplishments. Just the contrary. This healthy self-esteem diminishes the need to attract attention through boastful or disruptive behavior. When a person has learned his worth from the caring people in his life, he does not need to scratch and scramble for something to satisfy this genuine need. Rather he is secure enough to share that security through honest concern for others.

It is this third kind of self-esteem, or rather the lack

of it, that is demanding the attention of educators and psychologists today. Too many parents have lost track of their obligation to provide sufficient nurture for their children. As more and more parental energy has been diverted into the work force, less and less of that energy has gone into providing self-esteem for children. And the loss is making itself apparent in a variety of anti-social behaviors which cannot be ignored.

It is a problem that dare not be ignored by Christian parents, teachers and pastors. In the first place, the anti-social behavior produced by low self-esteem is even now disrupting our families and classrooms and congregations. But more than that, the failure to provide such nurturing care is in conflict with the will of our God. We may not be able to counteract all of the negative influences that our society has dumped upon self-esteem. But God's word has given us powerful tools to attack the problem. And we need to be using these tools with all possible diligence.

IV. Self-esteem of the fourth kind?

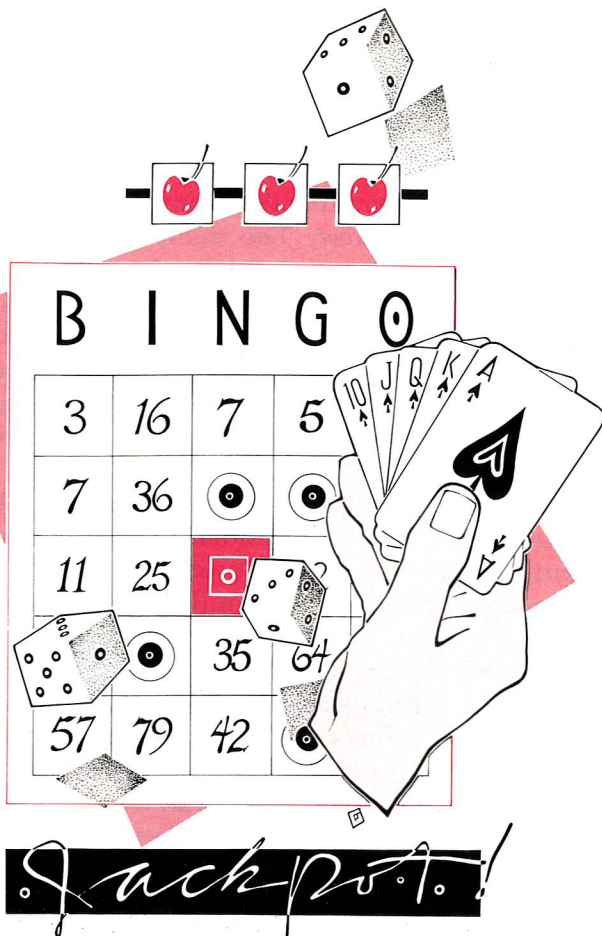
I have attempted to describe three different kinds of self-esteem. I do not really want to suggest a fourth. But distinctions that appear on paper do not appear in the person. In each of us there is sense of self-esteem that is in part inherited, in part imputed and in part experienced. And that mixture can vary from day to day.

The Christian quality of that self-esteem depends upon our ability to suppress the first, to elevate the second and to support it with the third. And that ability is a gift of God the Holy Spirit. Therefore it is appropriate to conclude with the prayer that God would bless Christian parents and teachers and pastors with success in their efforts to show children that they are valuable, to their families, to their community and, above all, to their God. □



Rolfe Westendorf is pastor of Siloah, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

It is a complex issue



A Christian may be able to establish that he or she is not sinning by gambling but the question still remains: Is it wise to do so?

who see gambling as an adiaphoron. This view holds that gambling is neither commanded nor forbidden by God's word. Therefore the individual Christian may make his or her own decision regarding it, depending upon the circumstances.

What is an "adiaphoron"? The word has its roots in the Greek. It signifies "indifferent." Readers with a German heritage may be more comfortable with the term "Mitteldinge," "middle things," things lying between the commands and the prohibitions of God's word. The Formula of Concord speaks of "church rites which are neither commanded nor forbidden in God's word."

Controversies regarding adiaphora have always caused the church consternation. In the first century, in Jerusalem, the church wrestled with the question: should Gentile converts to Christianity be required to adopt the Jewish ceremonies regarding circumcision, forbidden foods and the like? Could Jewish Christians fellowship with Gentile Christians who did not observe the laws of clean and unclean?

Following Luther's death the "Adiaphoristic Controversy" broke out. In territories where the governing prince was demanding that his subjects follow the Catholic form of worship, Lutherans who had abandoned certain ceremonies of Catholicism could avoid punishment and personal loss if they would accept them again. They wondered: would it be right to do so? Or would it be a breach of conscience to give up their new-found freedom?

Time and again the church and her people have been wracked by debate over matters not commanded in Scripture. The language in which she worshiped, the translation of the Bible she studied, the vestments her clergy wore, the form in which the bread and wine of Holy Communion were served, whether or not her women could come to church without a hat or wear-

by Thomas B. Franzmann

In the first article in this series we noted that we rarely hear firm teachings about gambling that we used to hear in the confessional Lutheran church. One reason is that gambling is a complex issue, more so than many of the issues that trouble us. Such issues are hard to treat briefly.

What makes gambling a difficult issue? Of course, one cause is the widespread acceptance of gambling in our culture. But that should not stop Christians from expressing their conviction. Another cause, probably more significant, is that we do not agree on the type of issue we are discussing. Some think the Bible does not speak about gambling at all; therefore the church should not attempt to teach right and wrong regarding it. Others think that gambling is almost always a sin against the seventh commandment, a form of stealing; therefore it should be soundly condemned. In between are the majority, we think,

ing slacks, whether buying insurance or smoking tobacco or drinking alcoholic beverages was permissible for her members — these and many other issues have come under the scrutiny of the church. All had to be dealt with in the light of the doctrine of adiaphora.

We do not want to give the impression that adiaphora are so complex that only theologians dare render opinions regarding them, that “mere church members” cannot arrive at responsible decisions in middle things. There are two basic questions which need to be answered regarding each such issue the Christian faces.

The first: “is it an adiaphoron?” That question ought to lead the Christian to find out on the basis of God’s word whether or not a question is treated clearly in God’s word. If Scripture commands or forbids the practice, it is not adiaphoron. That settles the matter. The Christian is obligated by love for Christ and his word to live in accordance with that word. His or her conscience is bound by the word of God.

But if the matter is adiaphoron, if Scripture does not clearly say how the Christian should respond, then the second question comes into play. In this writer’s opinion, this is the step that Christians often omit. Once they have cleared the first hurdle, too many simply assume, “now it is all right for me to engage in the practice, and no one dare deny me my right.” But a proper application of our Lutheran doctrine of adiaphoron requires that we ask the second question.

That question is, “once I have determined that a practice is adiaphoron, is it wise for me to engage in it?” St. Paul said (1 Corinthians 10:23,24): “Everything is permissible — but not everything is beneficial. Everything is permissible — but not everything is constructive. Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.” Then he proceeded to show that while a Christian may engage in a certain practice without sinning, this exercise of his or her freedom may result in leading a weaker Christian to sin. Where that probability existed, Paul’s response was to refrain, in love, from what was his right. He limited his own rights for the sake of others.

Two errors are common regarding adiaphora. One is to impose limits on the freedom of a Christian by dictating what his or her response to an adiaphoron must be. The implication is that a different response is sinful. The other is to exercise one’s freedom without regard for the consequences of one’s actions. The result is that one member of the body of Christ acts without thought for other members of the same body.

Let’s pinpoint our thoughts with an example. Evidence is mounting that smoking is harmful to the

health. It seems so clear to many Christians that this is contrary to the spirit of the fifth commandment. Yet, since Scripture itself has not forbidden this practice, the non-smoking Christian cannot accuse the smoking Christian of sin. To do so would abuse the doctrine regarding adiaphora. Scriptural evidence, not medical evidence, binds the conscience.

On the other hand, Christians in a congregation may decide by majority vote they do not want smoking in church buildings. This is their right. Many things in the operation of a church have to be decided by the majority. But then, if a member of the church, saying: “smoking is my right, and no one can restrict my freedom to do so,” smokes there anyway, he too abuses the doctrine of adiaphoron. Yes, he has the right to smoke, but he should not exercise that right where others have the right to expect it will not happen.

Or suppose a Christian who has been a heavy smoker receives doctor’s orders to quit. To quit smoking is an extremely hard thing to do. It requires the support of friends and loved ones. If another smoker knows the circumstances, but continues to smoke in the patient’s presence, even teases and cajoles him to start again, that abuses the doctrine of adiaphora.

The situation is similar with gambling. More often than not Christians must follow the guidance of the doctrine of adiaphora to arrive at a God-pleasing response. That will often mean, perhaps almost always, that the Christian will willingly refrain from gambling. The Christian will recognize that impressionable children do not understand the complexities of the issue; they simply see what adults are doing, and establish their values as a result.

The Christian will be aware that many people are, or have the potential to be, compulsive gamblers, for whom there is little freedom of choice. The Christian will be conscious of the web that gambling weaves in the lives of the poor. The Christian will not blind himself to the fact that the places where gambling is the common practice are often frequented by people who are not a healthy influence for him.

In some situations, gambling is sinful. But when a Christian may be able to establish that he or she is not sinning by gambling, the question still remains: is it wise to do so? Is it constructive? In many circumstances it will not be. □



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

by Paul E. Kelm

How do Lutherans explain predestination from Scripture, especially the predestination theory of "once saved — always saved?"

When the Bible speaks of predestination, it does so to *Christians* in order to confirm God's grace as the sole basis for salvation and to comfort believers with the assurance that God has accomplished their salvation at every step, from his choosing in eternity through their presence with him for all eternity. Predestination in Scripture is inseparably linked with the other truths of salvation: Christ's atonement for sin, God's justifying decree of "not guilty" for the sake of Christ and the Holy Spirit's work of conversion to faith and new life (cf. Romans 8:28-30, Ephesians 1:3-6, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14, Acts 13:48, et al).

The Bible does *not* speak of predestination to or about the non-Christian. In fact, it repeatedly attributes condemnation to people's own willful rejection of God's grace in Christ (Matthew 23:37, Acts 7:51 and 13:46). The Bible insists that Jesus died for everyone (1 John 2:2, 2 Peter 2:1) and that God wants everyone to be saved (1 Timothy 2:4, 2 Peter 3:9). The Great Commission with which Jesus chartered his church is premised on this will of God.

It does not take a professor of Western logic to recognize a seeming conflict in the biblical truths that those who are saved are so, alone by God's grace and choosing, while those who are damned are so, alone because of their rejection of God's grace. Some Protestant churches have organized their theology around the principle of God's "sovereignty" (absolute determination) and seek to resolve the apparent conflict with logic. The result is a "dual predestination," an absolute pre-determination of everyone's eternal destiny to either heaven or hell. This obviously contradicts the biblical truths in paragraph two above, however. Lutheran theology is organized around the *grace* of God, because God's grace in the incarnation and work of his Son is the focus of his entire biblical revelation. Lutherans are content to leave apparent logical conflicts unresolved when all logical resolutions conflict with clear Scripture. God and his truth are, after all, beyond reduction to mere categories of a logical system devised by Western man.

Those churches which have taken predestination out of its biblical context, that of reaffirming God's grace to assure Christians, quite logically arrive at what is called "eternal security" or "once saved — always saved."

That theory, however, conflicts with clear Scripture warning believers that saving faith can be lost.

Jesus' parable of the sower and the seed suggests as much (Matthew 13:19-22). St. Paul recognized that people can forsake the Savior (1 Corinthians 9:27 and 10:12, Galatians 1:6, 1 Timothy 1:19). The epistle to the Hebrews even warns that people once saved can so blasphemously reject that salvation with hardened hearts that they are beyond restoration to faith (Hebrews 6:4-6 and 10:23-27). These are warnings against a false security that ignores word and sacrament and trusts in oneself or the intellectual notion that salvation is some "birthright" retained apart from a faith-relationship with the Savior.

Real eternal security is in the grace of a God who has promised to preserve us from all that would threaten our faith and salvation (John 10:28-30). He is never unfaithful. Trust rests in him. And that brings us full circle, to the reason God revealed the truth of predestination in Scripture — so that Christians could rest assured in his grace alone.

My friend says that the only biblical injunction against polygamy is the Titus passage about an elder having but one wife. Is he correct?

No. St. Paul says the same things of overseers in 1 Timothy, in both cases because monogamy is the will of God from the institution of marriage. The pastoral epistles establish no moral qualifications for called "ministers" that are not already God's moral will for everyone.

Jesus (Matthew 19:5-6) and Paul (Ephesians 5:31) quote and interpret God's institution of marriage as *two* becoming one. For this reason the apostle calls the woman who takes a second husband an adulteress (Romans 7:2-3).

That God did not prevent or punish people in the Old Testament who adopted the polygamous practice of pagan culture (except in the consequences of such moral folly which Scripture reports) is no condoning of polygamy. The answer Jesus gave the Pharisees concerning divorce under the government of Moses in Matthew 19 may help us understand God's patience with the polygamous perversion of his will for marriage as well. □



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.

New research project

I read with interest the article on the new research project to determine reasons for membership losses and means of retaining members. This is a project that is long overdue. Our synod has placed great emphasis on reaching the unchurched but has neglected to make a concerted effort to keep those already in our churches from leaving. This task has been left to the individual congregations, many of which are very lax in this area.

One focus of study not mentioned but hopefully will be given top priority is the loss of members because of pastors. When lay people have legitimate concerns about their congregations, when pastors refuse to meet in a congenial atmosphere where concerns can be discussed, how long do you think people will put up with this before leaving?

Churches that I have had close connections with have lost members (including some of my family and friends) because of their pastors, who will brook no criticism.

Name withheld

"Dinks"

Prof. Toppe in his editorial (January 1) paints a limited, negative picture of DINKs. Few readers need assistance in identifying the sinful side of the phenomenon, but let's also consider the possibility that there may be faithful and God-pleasing aspects of DINKhood:

- they marry young, avoiding the temptations of sexual freedom outside of marriage. They enjoy the blessings of love, companionship and mutual support during years of education and little money;
- they watch as many friends' marriages dissolve with the stresses of bearing and rearing children. They

grow stable and mature in each other's embrace;

- they prosper in careers which make use of God-given talents and allow their Christianity to shine as a beacon to other young professionals in their work environments;
- they can provide significant financial support to insure the growth of congregations which, in some cases, might not be able to survive at all on the relatively smaller offerings of one-income, four-children families.

These, then, are the "good things . . . they have laid by": a stable home, a truth-teaching church and the secure knowledge of the source of this life's blessings. Not a bad environment into which to bring a child.

God puts no early deadline on parenthood, nor does he stipulate the sequence in which we are to accept and cherish his blessings.

And DINKs, like all sinful human beings, need wise counsel and encouragement from the leaders of their church.

*Christine Hoffman
New York, New York*

Prof. Toppe says, "We have it all, arranged not to have children, have a luxury sedan, glamorous vacations, designer clothes, etc." We would like to invite him to our home so he could point out where all these luxuries are.

We have been devoted WELS members all our lives. We have cheerfully given our time and money to both church and school. My wife has been an elementary teacher for eighteen years and in addition has devoted a good many evenings and summers to help give children a good Christian education. As DINKs we have been actively involved in all church activities from Bible study to church meetings to council member, etc. There are times when we have wondered where some family members are who need to be a part of the decision-making pro-

cesses involving their children — (perhaps working?).

We always thought we are all God's children. We're mortified that The Northwestern Lutheran would publish this belief that self-gratification and materialism are our life goals.

*Timothy and Susan Rau
Franklin, Wisconsin*

"Are you there, Dad?"

James R. Woodfin's article (January 1) succeeded in conveying a simple yet sublime aspect of faith in describing his son's reaching out for fatherly comfort during a thunderstorm.

Woodfin, however, interpreted "are you there?" as a childlike declaration of confident trust when in fact the question mark reveals doubt — doubt that every believer is burdened with as long as we carry with us the flesh of the old Adam. To fail to recognize doubt as a very real part of "simple" faith is to risk creating a model life of "mature" faith based on fantasy rather than reality.

*Mark A. Scharfenaker
Denver, Colorado*

Medical ethics

Relative to Prof. Mueller's article on medical ethics (February 1), I would say artificial insemination is okay for cattle. The farmer might have better beef and also not take the chance of being gored by the bull.

But for human beings it would be very repulsive and revolting.

*Blanche Hudrle
Rice Lake, Wisconsin*

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.

Over fifty churches decline merger . . . At least 54 congregations of the American Lutheran Church withdrew from the denomination before the end of 1987, according to Kathryn W. Baerwald, general secretary of the ALC. By leaving the ALC, the congregations avoided joining the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America which officially came into being January 1, with the merger of the ALC and two other Lutheran bodies. Leaders of factions in the ALC opposed to the merger had long contended that the new church would be too liberal, especially in its views on the authority of Scripture. They also complained that the ELCA's founding documents did not give congregations sufficient autonomy. There were no reported departures of congregations from the other two merging church bodies — the Lutheran Church in America and the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches. The ELCA comprises more than 11,000 congregations.

Case goes to state Supreme Court . . . The California Supreme Court will be the next legal arena for the nation's first clergy malpractice suit. The court unanimously agreed January 21 to hear a challenge brought by Grace Community Church of Sun Valley to a state appeals court ruling allowing the family of the late Kenneth Nally to proceed with a \$1 million lawsuit against the church. Walter and Maria Nally sued the church after their son committed suicide in 1979 while a member of Grace Church. He was receiving pastoral counseling from church ministers at the time.

Euthanasia in Holland . . . It has been estimated that as many as 20,000 of Holland's 120,000 deaths each year result from physician-administered euthanasia. The legality of euthanasia became an issue in Holland in the early 1970s when a doctor killed her terminally ill mother with a lethal injection. She was convicted, but received a suspended sentence. Since then, Dutch courts have steadily expanded the circumstances in which a doctor may avoid prosecution if he or she kills. Euthanasia practitioners claim that euthanasia is always voluntary in Holland, but advocates concede that, in reality, it is often done without the consent of the patient. Cases of non-voluntary euthanasia are seldom investigated and in the rare cases which are taken to court the sentence is often suspended or the charges dropped.

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.

The ten largest church bodies in the US . . .

Membership statistics on the top ten denominations in the United States have been released. 1 — Roman Catholic Church, 52 million members; 2 — Southern Baptist Convention, 14.6 million; 3 — United Methodist Church, 9.1 million; 4 — National Baptist Convention U.S.A. Inc., 5.5 million; 5 — Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 5.3 million; 6 — Church of God in Christ, 3.7 million; 7 — Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), 3.1 million; 8 — Episcopal Church, 2.7 million; 9 — National Baptist Convention of America, 2.66 million; and 10 — Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, 2.6 million. Numbers 4, 6 and 9 are predominantly black denominations. Two other religious groups rank comparably in size: the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons), 3.86 million, and Jews, 5.8 million.

World Lutheran population increases . . . The world Lutheran population increased by a little over one million last year, according to figures issued by the Lutheran World Federation in Geneva, Switzerland. The total rose from 58,577,604 to 59,745,877. The increase included a 7.2 percent gain in the Church of Sweden, which remains the largest Lutheran church in the world with 7.7 million members. West Germany has the largest concentration of Lutherans, totaling 12.2 million.

Bibles will be free . . . In the world news roundup of February 1, The Northwestern Lutheran reported that, because of the cost of the Bibles, Baptists in Russia "have little expectation that new Bible imports will be available and affordable to the membership at large." Dr. John D. Erickson of the American Bible Society has announced that the Bibles will be distributed free and can be picked up by Soviet Baptists at their local churches. The cost of the Bibles has already been paid for by the United Bible Societies and the Baptist World Alliance.

Reduce time for abortions . . . A proposal that would reduce the time in which abortions could be legally obtained in England passed a crucial test January 22 when it was approved in principle by a vote in the House of Commons. If given final approval, the new law would reduce from 28 weeks to 18 weeks of pregnancy the period during which abortions could be procured. It also would mark the first step back from increasing liberalization of abortion laws in a number of Western countries in the past two decades.

Preserving the past

Archives? Who needs them? After nearly 140 years of history the Wisconsin Synod has decided, we need them.

On January 4 remodeling began on the old gymnasium at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. The construction work is making the gym into three classrooms and archives. Two of the classrooms will seat between 30 and 35 students each.

The other classroom will serve as an audiovisual facility with a seating capacity of almost 50. These rooms, like the archives, will have inside access to the seminary library and other classrooms.

Present archival material will fill only about one-fourth to one-third of the available space in the new archives, which covers 2000 square feet. Key features in the ar-

chives are the temperature and humidity controls. Such controls will insure long-term storage for frail, valuable old documents.

Professor Martin Westerhaus of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary serves as both synod archivist and historian. According to Westerhaus, documents will be kept in acid-free containers, another feature designed to insure longevity. The new synod archives will be "open to anyone with legitimate reason for research," says Westerhaus. The archives' proximity to the seminary library will facilitate study.

Seminary President Armin Paning sees the archives as a valuable tool to "get people (especially future pastors) hooked on church history." Unfortunately, much his-

tory from our synod and its congregations has been lost.

The scheduled completion date for the archives/classrooms project is March 31. Westerhaus plans on using student help to move archival materials from temporary storage at Salem Lutheran Landmark Church to the seminary this spring. Then will begin the process of classifying and storing the documents.

Westerhaus urges people to submit archival materials: anniversary and dedication booklets from churches, schools and other church-related agencies; personal records; photographs and slides with appropriate identification. Send these materials to Prof. Martin Westerhaus, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Library, 6633 W. Wartburg Circle, Mequon, WI 53092.

Cost of construction of the archives and classrooms is \$209,832, which is to be divided between the seminary and the WELS Historical Institute. The archives portion comes to \$109,113 and the historical institute still needs to raise about \$30,000 of this. It is appealing to members of the synod to cover this amount. If you wish to contribute, please send your check to the WELS Historical Institute, 2929 N. Mayfair Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53222.

The shrinking dollar in world missions

The devalued dollar is no welcome visitor in the world mission fields.

Manufacturers welcome the new markets for less costly U. S. products. But the devalued dollar puts a strain on citizens living abroad. Missionary families are no exception, especially in Japan and Taiwan.

Hong Kong currency is linked to the American dollar so that mission expenses in that area are not seriously impacted. The income of our other mission families is protected by a complicated formula which compares cost of living in the host and home countries, factoring in the money exchange rates.

Our computerized payroll adjusts regularly to cushion the bumps of living where expenses can be as much as 200 percent more than counterparts back home. In Japan, for example, an ironing board sells for \$225 and a

cantaloup was recently priced at \$45. Missionary wives become very good shoppers and families get by with essentials.

In addition to salary adjustments, WELS incurs extra costs in providing homes, furnishings, cars and petrol. Our world mission expenses, especially in the Pacific rim, "have increased substantially in recent years," according to Rev. Duane Tomhave, administrator for world missions. "Already one Japan missionary has not been replaced."

Tomhave pointed out that the world mission budget amounts to only 20 percent of the synod's budget which averaged 92¢ per week per communicant in 1987. "Think of what the Lord did with this mite: a world mission outreach with over 70 missionary families at work in 10 countries in 17 languages for less than 20¢ per week. What a bargain!"

DISTRICT NEWS SCHEDULE

March 15: Northern Wisconsin, Pacific Northwest, South Atlantic

April 1: South Central, Southeastern Wisconsin, Western Wisconsin

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

March 1: Minnesota, Nebraska, North Atlantic

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



Good Shepherd of Deltona, Florida broke ground on January 31 for its first chapel, seating about 120 people. Participating in the groundbreaking ceremony were (left to right) Keith Hartmann, president; Jim Hartmann, chairman of buildings and grounds; Pastor Mark Johnston; and Jim DePaolo, secretary. Johnston is the first resident pastor of the congregation, organized in 1985.

WITH THE LORD

Raymond E. Behmer 1904 — 1988

Raymond E. Behmer was born February 26, 1904 in Hoskins, Nebr. He died January 1, 1988 in Kenosha, Wis.

A graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, he taught school in Tawas City, Mich., Crete, Ill., Bangor, Milwaukee, Manitowoc, Reedsville and Kenosha, Wis.

In 1935 he married Emma Kirchhoff. He is survived by his wife; sons, Raymond, James and David; sisters, Ruth Follette and Loretta Swan; eight grandchildren and two great-grandsons.

Funeral services were held January 5, 1988 at Friedens, Kenosha, Wis..

Martin Frick 1904 — 1988

Pastor Martin Frick was born March 8, 1904 in River Grove, Ill. He died January 3, 1988 in Tinley Park, Ill.

A 1927 graduate of Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Mo., he served congregations in Clay Center, Kans., Pontiac, Tinley Park and Chicago, Ill.

In 1928 he married Selda Brauer. He is survived by his wife; daughters, Lois (Robert) Hering and Eunice (Ken) Behnken; sons, Martin, David (Beverly) and Paul (Patricia); sisters, Adella Frank, Irene Beyer and Esther Fiedler; 14 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held January 6, 1988 at St. Andrew, Chicago.

Doctor, I want help

The young mother stepped into a doctor's office carrying a little boy about a year old. She sat down across the desk from the physician and said, "Doctor, I want you to help me out of a problem. My little boy is only one year old and I am pregnant again, and I do not want to have two children so close together."

The doctor thought for a moment and then said, "Well, what do you want me to do?" The mother said, "Why, I'd like to have an abortion, of course." The doctor sat silently thinking, then said, "I think I can suggest a better method for you. If you object to having two children so close together, let me just kill the child sitting on your lap, and let the other one live.

"You see, it is so much easier to get at the one already born, and it makes no difference to me which one I kill. Besides, it would be dangerous for you if I undertake to kill the younger one."

Needless to say, the young mother jumped up, clutched her little boy to her and began to scream, calling the doctor a murderer.

A few words from the doctor soon calmed the woman and convinced her that his offer to commit murder was no worse than her request for the destruction of her unborn child. The only difference would be in the age of the victim. Think about it!

"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart" (Jeremiah 1:5a).

— *Pulpit Helps*

NOTICES

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

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS DR. MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE Dean of students

Since Prof. Thomas Zarling, who served the college as dean of students, has accepted a call to serve as missionary in Loudon County, Va., the board of control of Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., with the concurrence of the board for worker training, herewith petitions the voting constituency of the synod to nominate candidates qualified to fill the important office of dean of students.

The basic function of the dean of students is to serve as a spiritual advisor of the student body and to coordinate student supervision and all student services. Nominees must be men who have had significant experience in the pastoral ministry, who have a clear understanding of law and gospel, who are evangelical in their pastoral function, who have an understanding of young people and can relate to them, who project an image in character and dress which contributes to respect for the office and for service in the church and who have some ability and interest in administrative affairs.

Letters of nomination should contain as much pertinent information as possible and must be in the hands of the secretary no later than April 4, 1988.

Darrell Knippel, Secretary
DMLC Board of Control
4818 Garfield Ave. S.
Minneapolis MN 55409

CHANGES IN MINISTRY

PASTORS:

Bauer, H. Paul., from Manitowoc Lutheran High School, Manitowoc, Wis., to retirement (5/31).
Eggert, Rupert A., from San Pablo, Tucson, Ariz., to Abiding Savior, Weslaco, Tex.
Krueger, Silas R., from Holy Word, Austin Tex., to Beautiful Savior, Carlsbad, Calif.
Schlewe, Richard B., from Immanuel, Hadar, Nebr., to Grace, Geneva/Trinity, Grafton, Nebr.
Semenske, Elmer H., from Mt. Zion, Ripon, Wis., to retirement (6/1).
Zarling, Thomas F., from Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., to Exploratory, Loudon Co., Va.

TEACHERS:

Jackson, Patricia J., from Trinity, Caledonia, Wis., to Good Shepherd, West Allis, Wis.
Westphal, Riley W., from California Lutheran High School, Tustin, Calif., to St. Peter, Weyauwega, Wis.

ADDRESSES

PASTORS:

Hallemeier, Delmer, E. em., 12 Brian Ct., Watertown, WI 53094.
Valleau, Dennis J., 409 Lakewood Ave., Lake City, MN 55041; 612/345-4651.
Zak, Stuart A., 1308 S. Oak St., Lake City, MN 55041; 612/345-2440.

NEEDED: SUMMER MISSIONARY HOUSING

Our expanded missionary force and furlough policy changes have made the two "stateside homes" with their combined six apartments in Milwaukee inadequate for the demand. If you are able to make a home or cottage available for a few weeks or months during the summer, please contact the furlough house manager, Pastor Curtis A. Peterson, 203 E. Howard, Milwaukee, WI 53207; 414/481-5710 or 744-8839, or the Board for World Missions at the WELS headquarters. Your kindness would be greatly appreciated by our missionary families when they return for rest, study and speaking engagements and you help delay the time when an extra missionary furlough residence will have to be built.

ADMISSIONS COUNSELOR

Applications are invited for the position of admissions counselor at Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Minn. Responsibilities: To assist the director in the recruitment of students. Special responsibilities include visiting high schools, attending college fairs, phoning prospective students, organizing campus visits, counseling students in making a college choice and assist in writing and developing literature for the promotion of Bethany.

Candidates should have at least a bachelor's degree. Some experience working with young adults is preferred. Commitment to Lutheran liberal arts education is understood. Salary commensurate with qualifications and experience. This 12-month position begins July 1 1988. Send letter of application and resumé before April 15 to: Mr. Steven C. Jaeger, Director of Admissions, Bethany Lutheran College, 734 Marsh Street, Mankato, MN 56001.

WISCONSIN LUTHERAN COLLEGE Request for candidates

WLC is seeking qualified candidates for faculty positions in the following areas: psychology, computer information systems, music and chemistry. Candidates must satisfy the following criteria: be a member in good standing of a WELS or ELS congregation; hold an earned doctorate in his or her discipline (master's level preparation is considered if candidate is willing to pursue the doctorate); has or is willing to obtain synod certification; and has a strong commitment to Christian education at the post-secondary level and to lay ministry.

Names of candidates should be sent to Dr. John E. Bauer, Academic Dean, Wisconsin Lutheran College, 8830 W. Bluemound Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53226. This search is being conducted under the auspices of the district president of the Southeastern Wisconsin District of the WELS.

WISCONSIN LUTHERAN SEMINARY Choir anniversary tour

March 23	7:00 p.m.	Grace, Milwaukee, WI
March 30	7:00 p.m.	St. Paul, Algoma, WI
March 31	7:00 p.m.	Prince of Peace, Traverse City, MI
April 1	7:30 p.m.	St. John, Pigeon, MI
April 2	10:30 a.m.	Martin Luther Memorial Home, South Lyon, MI
April 3	7:00 p.m.	Salem, Ann Arbor, MI
April 3	9:20 a.m.	St. Peter, Plymouth, MI
April 4	7:30 p.m.	Hope, Cuyahoga Falls, OH
April 4	7:30 p.m.	Our Savior, Ashland, OH
April 5	7:30 p.m.	Holy Scripture, Fort Wayne, IN
April 6	7:00 p.m.	St. Matthew, Benton Harbor, MI
April 7	7:00 p.m.	St. John, Dowagiac, MI
April 8	7:30 p.m.	St. John, Bay City, MI
April 9	7:30 p.m.	St. Luke, Vassar, MI
April 10	7:30-10:00	Salem, Owosso, MI
April 10	7:00 p.m.	St. Paul, Saginaw, MI
April 11	9:25 a.m.	Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, MI

MARTIN LUTHER PREPARATORY SCHOOL SPRING CHOIR TOUR

March 25	7:00 p.m.	Good Shepherd, Sioux Falls, SD
March 26	7:00 p.m.	St. Martin, Watertown, SD
March 27	9:00 a.m.	Trinity, Aberdeen, SD
March 27	7:00 p.m.	Zion, Moberidge, SD
March 28	7:30 p.m.	Trinity, Winner, SD
March 29	7:00 p.m.	St. Paul, Rapid City, SD
March 30	7:00 p.m.	St. Peter, Fort Collins, CO
March 31	7:00 p.m.	Shepherd of the Valley, Westminster, CO
April 1	7:00 p.m.	St. Paul, Grand Junction, CO
April 2	7:00 p.m.	Our Savior, Longmont, CO
April 3	6:00 a.m.	Zion, Denver, CO
	10:00 a.m.	Christ Our Redeemer, Aurora, CO
	7:00 p.m.	Salem, Colorado Springs, CO

MIMEO

Available to any congregation for cost of shipping: AB Dick electric mimeo. Contact Jean Bublitz, 9610 N. Cedarburg Rd., Mequon, WI 53092; 414/242-6909.

WELS HANDBELL FESTIVAL

Between 200-300 WELS ringers from several midwest states will assemble at Wisconsin Lutheran High School April 9-10 for the ninth annual handbell festival. Two concerts will be offered: on Saturday, 2:00 p.m. the nationally known "Martin Ringers" from Rockford, Ill. (Richard Litterst, director) will ring English-made bells in the English style (upwards). For non-festival ringers admission is \$2.00 per adult and \$1.00 for youth 12 and under. Sunday at 2:00 p.m. several hundred WELS ringers will present a sacred concert that spans the church year, highlighting many possibilities for bells in our worship. A free-will offering will be taken to help defray festival expenses.

WLHS is located at 84th St. (Glenview Ave.) and Bluemound Rd., one mile north of I-94 at 84th St. exit. Any questions, contact Prof. Richard Lehmann at Wisconsin Lutheran College, 414/774-8620 or Mrs. Lina Schaal in Burlington, 414/763-8022.

WELS SINGLES 1988

Attention all WELS singles age 18 to 98 (including those once married and now single): A one-day seminar will be held May 7 at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, emphasizing "completeness" as Christians and as singles. Choose from a number of topics of interest to single adults to be presented during the day and then join for an evening of fellowship.

For registration information write to WELS Singles 1988, c/o Jeff Scheibe, P.O. Box 26963, Wauwatosa, WI 53226. If you have questions about the seminar, contact Lisa Adamski at WLC Monday through Friday, 8:00 to 4:00; 414/774-0311.

VIDEO PRESENTATION

The WELS Art Guild will host a special meeting at Wisconsin Lutheran College on March 21 at 7:30 p.m. Special guest is Steve Boettcher who will speak on video making, with helps and hints for those interested in home videos. Visitors are welcome to attend this special meeting. For further information contact Joanie Hohenstein, 414/963-2153.

BELL WANTED

A mission congregation is in need of a bell for the church. If you have one available, please contact Pastor John Schuetze, 2313 Jennings Ave., Hot Springs, SD 57747; 605/745-3340.

HYMNALS NEEDED

A mission congregation is in need of 18 hymnals. If you can help, please contact Divine Word Lutheran, 10730 S.E. 15th St., Midwest City, OK 73130.

BIBLE HISTORY AVAILABLE

Available for cost of shipping: 31 copies of Bible History for Christians (1969-pink). Contact Principal Elroy Schroeder, St. Peter, 35 E. Second St., Fond du Lac, WI 54935; 414/922-1160.

ANNIVERSARIES

New Ulm, Minnesota — St. John (40th), April 16, 7:00 p.m. and April 17, 8:30 - 10:30 a.m. Noon dinner; song service at 2:00 p.m. Anyone having pictures or other items of interest may send same and registration for meal to Prof. Howard Wessel, 231 S. Highland, New Ulm, MN 56073.

Falls Church, Virginia — Grace (25th), April 24, 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. April 23: Organ dedication, 5:00 (dinner to follow). Contact Pastor Walter F. Beckmann, 3233 Annandale Rd., Falls Church, VA 22042.

Onalaska, Wisconsin — St. Paul (100th), Services 7:30, 9:00 and 10:30 on February 21, March 20, April 17, October 16. Centennial weekend June 18 (6:00 p.m. German); June 19, 10:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. For information on activities contact St. Paul Lutheran, 1201 Main St., Onalaska, WI 54650; 608/783-2552.

West Bend, Wisconsin — Good Shepherd School (25th), May 1, 8:00 and 10:30 a.m.; noon dinner. For information and reservations call Mr. L. Schultz at 414/334-7881 or Mr. L. Bailey at 414/338-2675.

NEW!

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Mighty Servants
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By Richard E. Warnke

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To place your order simply complete this order form and mail in your order. Please add 10% of the total dollar amount of the order (\$1.50 minimum — \$3.00 maximum) for handling and transportation costs. Wisconsin residents also add 5% state sales tax to total dollar amount including transportation and handling charges.

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NL

DISTRICT CONVENTIONS

Arizona-California	June 13-14	ALA, Phoenix, AZ
Dakota-Montana	June 21-23	St. Martin, Watertown, SD
Michigan	June 14-16	MLS, Saginaw, MI
Minnesota	June 21-23	DMLC, New Ulm, MN
Nebraska	June 13-15	Nebraska LHS, Waco, NE
North Atlantic	June 13-15	New Windsor Center, New Windsor, MD
Northern Wisconsin	June 20-22	WLA, Fond du Lac, WI
Pacific Northwest	June 16-17	Evergreen LHS, Du Pont, WA
South Atlantic	June 13-15	Methodist Life Enrichment Center, Leesburg, FL
South Central	June 13-14	St. Mark, Duncanville, TX
Southeastern Wisconsin	June 7-8	Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee, WI
Western Wisconsin	June 6-8	MLPS, Prairie du Chien, WI

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 53222-9357

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* Bakersfield*
California	.....	Colorado Springs (East)* Miami (Hispanic)*
Colorado	.....	Cherry Valley*
Florida	.....	Lindenhurst/Gurnee* Streamwood*
Illinois	.....	LaFayette* Houghton/Hancock*
Indiana	.....	Shoreview* Roswell*
Michigan	.....	Manhattan* Owasso*
Minnesota	.....	Bucks County* Abilene*
New Mexico	.....	Atascocita* Loudon County*
New York	.....	Everett* Spokane Valley*
Oklahoma	.....	Woodinville/Bothell* Green Bay (Southwest)*
Pennsylvania	.....	Madison (Hispanic)* Waunakee*
Texas	.....	Markham*
Virginia	.....
Washington	.....
Wisconsin	.....
Ontario, Canada	.....

*Denotes exploratory services.

CONFERENCE PAPERS

The following new conference papers are available: No. 71: Devils and Demons: Their Powers and Limitations (Smith), \$0.60; No. 72: Contemporary Humanism and the Moral Life (Borgwardt), \$0.90; No. 73: How to Make Sound Doctrine Sound Good to Mission Prospects (Kelm), \$0.54; No. 74: An Isagogical Survey of Micah 1 and 2 (Lange), \$0.84. The following previously listed conference papers are still available in limited quantities: No. 52: Proselytizing (Fischer), \$0.36; No. 53: Martin Luther and Catechetical Instruction at Wittenberg (Bartling), \$0.72; No. 54: The Moral and Scriptural Principles Concerning Test-Tube Babies (Gawrisch), \$0.90; No. 55: What about fasting? (Schroeder), \$0.48; No. 56: Textual Criticism: An Introductory Survey (Naumann), \$0.30; No. 57: The Menace of Islam: Its Theology and Practice (Schmelting), \$0.72; No. 58: Integrating the New Member (Huebner), \$0.60; No. 59: The Preacher and Personal Finances (Braun), \$0.48; No. 60: The Reformed View of the Gospel (Huebner), \$0.78; No. 61: The Use and Non-Use of Life Support Systems and/or Treatment Termination — When? Ever? Under what Circumstances? (Bushaw), \$0.36; No. 67: Law and Gospel in the Church Growth Movement (Koester), \$1.00; No. 68: Clergy Stress and Burnout or All Stressed Up and No Place to Blow (Schleicher), \$0.66; No. 69: Focus on Dr. James Dobson (Hilliard), \$0.48; No. 70: Christian Stewardship: our Part in God's Plan (Maulkey), \$1.32.

Anyone desiring may be placed on the permanent mailing list to receive each paper as it is printed. Those on the permanent mailing list are asked to submit their new address promptly.
Martin Luther Women's Circle
10151 Sappington Road
St. Louis, MO 63128

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The glue
which holds
the union
together
is its
confession
of faith.

Recently a copy of the third edition — the first edition appeared in 1961 — of the synod's bylaws was sent to all members of the synod: pastors, male teachers and congregations. Our women teachers also received a copy.

Littered with legal language, it does not make reading material for the bedside nightstand. The suspicion among some of us is that the bylaws remain virtually unread by the vast majority of those into whose hands a copy falls. In this issue I would like to pause to take a look at this third edition of the terms under which the members of the synod maintain their membership in the organization.

First of all, it is clearly stated that the synod is a union of autonomous congregations. The synod does not own the congregations. Each congregation is free to organize itself as it sees fit and proper within the synod's confessional framework and under the laws of the state in which the congregation is situated. The district constitution states that "in intracongregational matters the district [i.e. synod] shall have purely advisory authority and shall offer counsel and assistance in adjusting controversies, in filling vacancies and in such other matters as may involve the interests of the synod."

The glue which holds the union together is its confession of faith. In an opening article, directly after the name of the synod, is the union's confessional statement. Without fudging, those in the union accept the Bible as the "divinely inspired and inerrant word of God" and "the only infallible authority in all matters of doctrine, faith and life." The same article also accepts the Lutheran confessions without reservation as a "correct . . . exposition of the . . . word of God." The position of this article signifies the importance of the statement of faith.

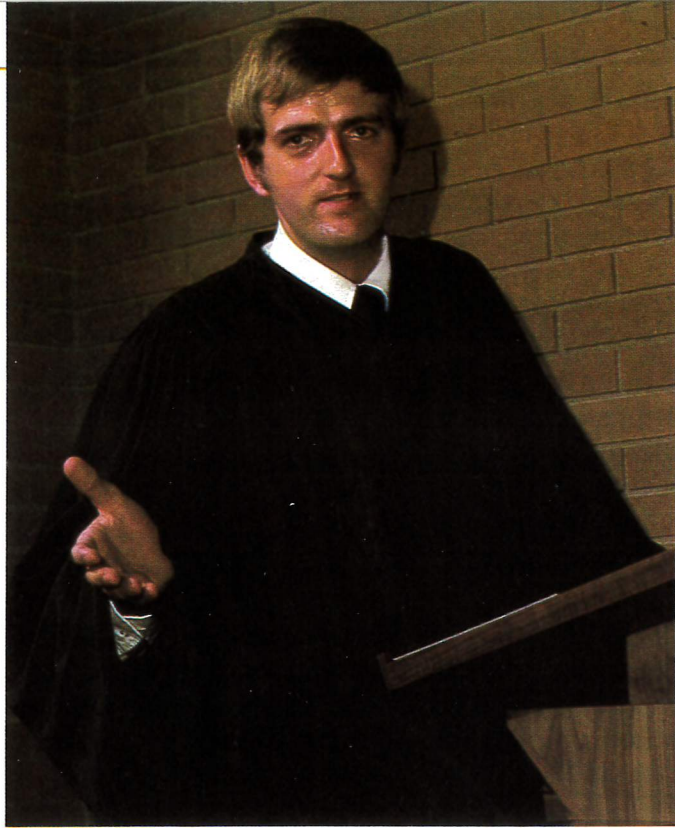
The next article names the synod's purpose: to counsel and assist its members; to maintain schools for the education of its ministry; to establish and maintain home and world missions; and to publish Christian literature for its homes and educational agencies.

To carry out those purposes there are approximately 325 elective offices specified in the bylaws and district constitution. They range from the president of the synod to 111 circuit pastors. The latter are elected by congregational circuits (of about 10 to 12 congregations) to supervise doctrine and practice within the circuit. The remainder of the 325 elective offices is made up of members of various boards and commissions.

The most amount of space is allocated to the procedures to be followed in cases of discipline of pastors, teachers or congregations. Six bylaws are devoted to assignment of jurisdiction and appellate channels. Since humans may err, an orderly appeal procedure is established, intended to safeguard the rights of the disciplined person.

These are the rules by which we have covenanted to live together under the commandment of love. The entire package — 6 x 9 inches, spiral bound — runs to 64 pages. If you wish to peruse the document, you might look for it in your church's library. Or ask your pastor for the church's copy. You might be assured that democracy is very much alive — if not flourishing — in the synod.

James P. Schaefer



The vicar program

Every congregation benefits

by Richard D. Balge

“Are you ready to accept assignment as a vicar?” During the month of March every second-year student at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary will answer that question. If this class is like most classes, every man will answer in the affirmative. He will thereby commit himself to a solid year of learning and service under the supervision of an experienced pastor.

The year of vicarship is part of the seminary's curriculum, required of every student. On May 16, using information provided by the seminary faculty, the synod's 12 district presidents will try to pair each student with the pastor best suited to train him. The pastor who supervises a vicar is really functioning as a member of the seminary staff. By instruction and example he will impart a great deal of “how to” knowledge to a future pastor.

The vicar is to become acquainted with every aspect of the parish ministry. He takes a regular turn in the pulpit. He shares the weekly round of sick and shut-in calls. He teaches an instruction class and assists with the youth work. He follows up on mission prospects and makes evangelism calls. In areas of work which are not his direct responsibility he observes his supervisor.

At the end of the year the supervising pastor files a report with the seminary president. This report evaluates the vicar's abilities, attitudes, devotion to the ministry, growth and work as these were observed during the vicar year.

The reports include such observations as:

“Had some initial difficulty . . . but he improved.”

“He improved markedly in his ability to meet people during the course of the year.”

“Needed suggestions on ‘how to.’ The help was readily received and put into practice.”

“At first was somewhat hesitant, but grew.”

“We saw a tremendous growth in his devotion to the ministry during the year.”

“His preaching has improved.”

Every congregation which that man will ever serve is going to benefit because of the hands-on experience he gained under the patient coaching of a seasoned pastor.

Because students cannot work at part time and summer jobs during the vicar year, the synod provides each vicar (married or single) with a monthly grant in aid of \$735. It also distributes a quarterly grant equal to the health insurance premium for a single person in the synod's health plan. The vicar is responsible for his own housing. The local congregation pays a mileage allowance.

As might be expected, the congregations which have vicars make regular contributions to the grant-in-aid fund. However, they are not the only congregations which benefit from the training and experience which the vicar program affords. Any congregation which calls a young pastor fresh out of seminary benefits because that person is more capable and experienced than he would have been without the vicar training.

Since all congregations benefit, either directly or indirectly, from this program, perhaps all congregations could consider making a contribution to support this program. Congregations, organizations or individuals who would like to do so may send a gift to: Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod, Vicar Grant-in-Aid Fund, 2929 N. Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, WI 53222. □



Professor Balge is dean of students and teaches church history and homiletics at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin.