

# the Northwestern Lutheran



John & Lyane

"... and they will call him  
Immanuel" - which means,  
"God with us." Matthew 1:23

Our hearts now sing; our lips now tell  
The Peace of God, Immanuel.  
No more of sin a hopeless slave  
Are we. Our Lord has come to save!  
R.D. Stys

Dear John & Lyane:  
Jerry & I would be  
most pleased to have you  
join us for Christmas Eve  
worship at Faith Lutheran.  
Warmest Regards,  
Diane



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**Celebrating Seventy-Five Years**

*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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# The first Christmas gospel

by Richard D. Balge

*And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head and you will strike his heel (Genesis 3:15).*

**W**ith these words God called Adam and Eve back from the eternal death which they had brought on themselves and their descendants. He spoke these words to the serpent but he spoke them for the human race. He saw them in their disobedience, their unbelief, their hopelessness. Now he began to reestablish their faith in him, to give them hope, to make them spiritually alive again. The words constitute the first gospel.

## There will be a struggle

God promised to establish enmity between the serpent and the woman. That old dragon whom the New Testament identifies as "the devil and Satan" was already the enemy of the human race. He was a lying murderer who promised life and delivered death.

Eve had obeyed the devil's lie, trusting him instead of God, putting herself in his service. But God would not leave the human race to the devil. He promised that Eve and her spiritual children would learn to hate the devil and all his works and all his ways.

The enmity between the woman's offspring and the serpent's began to show itself in the first generation. Abel was a man of faith. The father of murderers got Cain to do him in. Throughout Old Testament history we see that wherever there was faith in the Lord and his promises there Satan was at his busiest, doing his worst. Even among the descendants of faithful Abraham the devil had his offspring. There were those who rejected God and worshiped idols, who were ready to kill his prophets. John the Baptist had to call some of the people who came out to hear him "the serpent's offspring."

God, however, had not forgotten his promise. The prophecy in Eden finally reached its perfect fulfillment in Jesus Christ. He was *the* offspring of the woman, come to crush the serpent's head.

Because of him we too are involved in a life-and-death struggle with Satan. We are involved because the name of the woman's offspring was placed on us in our baptism. When we were baptized, God put enmity between us and the devil.

That means that the life of a child of God is a

constant warfare. The devil can concentrate on believers because unbelievers are already in his family. His best trick is still the one he used in the garden: to cast doubt on God's word, to call God's promises lies. He is a clever devil, more clever than any other creature. We cannot overcome him with our cleverness. We can only overcome him by faith in the woman's offspring.

## There will be a victory

The first gospel said that there would be a victory over Satan: "He will crush your head and you will strike his heel." A victory was won when Satan tempted Jesus in the desert. The temptations were much like those in the garden had been: something to eat, the promise of advancement, the urging to disobey the Father's will, the twisting of God's word. But what had worked in Eden with the first Adam did not succeed in the desert with the second Adam. The woman's offspring overcame. He overcame with the word of God: "It is written."

The victory was clinched and the serpent's head was crushed at Golgotha, on the cross. The devil's final strategy was to kill God's Son. That strategy paid off in his own defeat. Just by entering the heart of Judas, by controlling those who condemned Jesus, the devil lost his claim on the human race. Through his death Jesus destroyed him who had the power of death. Satan struck Christ's heel, but his own head was crushed. The woman's offspring rose again on the third day in glorious victory.

Even in his death-throes the snake keeps striking. He still tries to get us to oppose our will to God's will and give our rebellion a fancy name such as "enlightened outlook." We can send him away, as Jesus did, by relying on the word of God.

The devil said, "You will not surely die," and he was lying. The woman's offspring says: "Because I live, you also will live." He has been victorious in the struggle, and in him we have eternal life. □



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

## What Christmas is all about

The news out of Hutzel Hospital in Detroit was grim. Tests showed that 42.7 percent of its newborn babies were exposed to drugs while in their mothers' wombs. Doctors had guessed that the figure was nearer 20 percent. The director of the Michigan Department of Public Health commented: "We are not talking about a medical problem. We are talking about a societal problem. We already know that children who get off to a bad start tend to have problems later in life. These babies have lost the battle before they were even born."

Here in microcosm one sees the devastating effect of human sin, one more piece of evidence that our world is a mess. Recently I attended a meeting of church leaders where we were asked to list contemporary issues that make ministry difficult. We ended up with a list far too long to recite here. I'm sure you readers could construct your own lists of what is wrong in our world.

Someone who described vividly the ugliness of human character was Flannery O'Connor. At her farm home in central Georgia she wrote short stories and a couple of novels from the perspective of her Roman Catholic faith. Her first collection of short stories was titled: *A Good Man Is Hard To Find*. She called her book "nine stories about original sin." And grim tales they are.

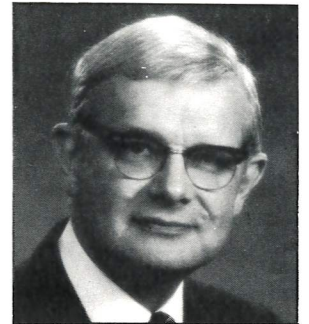
In all this the temptation for the church is to imagine that it is our mission to clean up the mess in our world. Early in this century some church leaders promoted a "social gospel" movement whose goal was to right the wrongs of our society. It hasn't worked.

Flannery O'Connor had a clearer vision: "I see everything as beginning with original sin, taking in the redemption, and reckoning on a final judgment." She had no illusions that this world could be fixed by any amount of human effort. She saw her role as a Catholic novelist in the South as helping people to know that "evil is not simply a problem to be solved, but a mystery to be endured."

Though she suffered greatly from a debilitating disease which took her life at age thirty-nine, she was not without hope and good humor. She knew the mess and the misery. But she knew also "the central Christian mystery: that (human life) has, for all its horror, been found by God to be worth dying for."

That's what Christmas is all about. It's about Jesus who was born into this mess of human life. It's about the Son of God who lived among sinners and died for us sinners. It's about God's way of righting the wrongs of this world. It's about faith which trusts God's word of pardon and peace and hope. It's our mission as the church to celebrate this good news in our worship and share it with the world. That's what Christmas is all about.

Victor H. Prange



Victor Prange  
is pastor of Peace,  
Janesville, Wisconsin.

# Jesus' second coming

2 Peter 3:1-18

by Julian G. Anderson

**W**hat a pleasant surprise it is to find the longest discussion of Jesus' second coming in this second letter from Peter, which is one of the shortest books in the Bible.

It begins on a friendly note. "My dear friends, I'm now writing you this second letter. And in both of them I'm trying to keep your pure new minds wide awake by telling you to remember the things the holy prophets said a long time ago, and the command our Lord and Savior gave you through your apostles (Matthew 24:42 and 25:13).

"First of all, you must keep in mind that in the last days there will be many people whose lives will be controlled by their own sinful desires, and they will make fun of you with their insulting talk. They will be saying, 'What about this promise that Jesus will come back again? Where is he? After all, ever since our forefathers fell asleep, everything has been going along just the same as it always has since the world was created.'

"You see, these people purposely forget that a long time ago God's word created the heavens and brought the earth up out of the water, and used the water to put it together into its present shape. They also forget that God also used his word and the water to flood that first world and destroy it.

"That same word of God is saving our present heavens and earth to be burned up, since God is keeping them as they are until the Day of Judgment, when all the ungodly people will be destroyed.

"But you mustn't forget this one thing, dear friends, that with the Lord one day is the same as a thousand years, and a thousand years are the same as one day. The Lord isn't slow about keeping his promises in the way some people understand the word 'slow.' The truth is that he's being patient with you, since he doesn't want any one to be lost. Instead, he wants all people to come to the point where they will change their minds and their way of living."

## That day of judgment will come.

"But the Lord's day will come like a thief (Matthew 24:42-44). On that day the heavens will disappear with the roar of a terrible windstorm and the stars and planets will be burned up and destroyed, and the earth and everything on it will be torn apart and destroyed." That's the best picture we have of the second coming.

"Since everything is going to be destroyed like this, you can see what kind of people you must be. Your lives must be holy and God-like, and you must be the kind of people who are waiting for God's day to get here, and doing everything you can to make it come soon." We can make it come sooner by stepping up our efforts to bring the good news to every nation, as Jesus commanded us to do. "For on that day the heavens will be set on fire and destroyed, and all the stars and planets will be burned up and melt away." What a vivid picture! But then according to God's promise, we're waiting for "a new heaven and a new earth, in which everything will be perfectly holy."

"And so, my dear friends, while you're waiting for all this to happen, you must do everything you can, so that God will find you to be spotless and perfect, having nothing to be afraid of or worry about. You must think of our Lord's patience as something which makes it possible for more people to be saved, just as our dear brother Paul wrote and told you, using the wisdom that God gave him (see Romans 2:4). He says the same things in all his letters when he writes about these things. In his letters there are some things that are hard to understand, and people who aren't educated and firm in their faith twist these things to make them say something else, just as they do with the rest of the Bible. By doing this they're destroying themselves.

"But you, my dear friends, already know all this. So you must be on your guard, so that you won't be led away with the others by the wrong ideas of these lawless men and fall away from your own firm and solid position. Instead, you must keep on growing in Christian love, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The glory and honor belong to him both now and forever. That's the truth."

The letter ends right there, very abruptly, and with no closing greetings or prayers. Again, it is quite possible that the last column or two in the roll got broken off with the many rollings and unrollings. □



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

# Materialism

by Wayne D. Mueller

"The patient has contracted a terrible disease and is near death."

**I** am the patient. The disease is materialism. Some may piously pretend that the drug abuse, crime, abortion, and homosexuality "out there" is not their problem. But no one can duck this diagnosis. Although not all manifest the outward symptoms, materialism is a sickness in every human heart. There is no question that we all have the disease. It's only a matter in each of our cases how far the virus has progressed.

## Everybody does it

Our copycat mentality drags us into the sin of materialism. "But Father," we childishly excuse to God, "it can't be so bad; everybody's doing it." New-lyweds want to move into a house with all the amenities it took their parents decades to accumulate. We want a car comparable to those of other commuters. We want a stereo system like the one down the hall.

To make excuses, we play both sides of the fence. We point to some person who spends more than we do to make our wasteful spending look good by comparison. Then again, to justify our expenditures, we may use the same person as an example of how a "good Christian" spends his money.

We allow the things others have to define our needs for us. Do we ever stop to think that everybody else is also selfishly competing with us? While we use others as our excuse to spend more, others are taking solace in our poor example.

## An infectious sin

The Bible calls materialism covetousness. The last two commandments condemn this sin by name. Yet greed and discontent are first of all sins against the first commandment. St. Paul says greed is the same as idolatry (Colossians 3:5) and a greedy person is an idolater (Ephesians 5:5).

Love of things, whether clothes, cars, cabins, bank accounts, boats, businesses, homes, or home entertainment systems, blocks out the love of God from our hearts. While we burn ourselves out trying to attain and then maintain these things, we tell ourselves we really do love God more. But the Lord says,



"You cannot serve both God and Money" (Matthew 6:24).

It's a cop-out to think you have to be rich to be materialistic. Winning the lottery is not sinful. But the greedy desire to get rich we may have in our heart when we buy the ticket is (1 Timothy 6:9). It's the love of money (v. 10), not money itself, that is sinful. And we all love money. Love of money destroyed Achan, Saul, Judas, Annanias and Sapphira. It brought down Jimmy Bakker. Unrepented, unchecked, it will destroy us too.

Greed is not a desire which, once satisfied, goes away. Greed feeds on itself. It is a concupiscent urge which continually drives us toward getting more. It is not a peccadillo, a harmless diversion from more serious sins. When tolerated and nurtured, materialism actually leads us to more serious sins (1 Timothy 6:9,10). It makes us confuse what we want with what we need.

## Buyable self-image

Too long we have been sold the American lie that you can buy a good self-image. Credit cards promise instant power and pleasure. When we start the engine, our personalities change to match the cars we drive. Clothes make the man. Commercials no longer tout the value of their products but the good feeling they give you about yourself.

Money conveys a false sense of personal power, a power which alienates us from our fellowman. The

## *Unrepented, unchecked, greed will destroy us too.*

desire for financial independence has led to many a divorce. Materialism also drives us from our dependence on God. Why agonize in prayer over our needs if the bank card machine is only blocks away?

Many have abandoned divine guidance for victorious Christian living in favor of help in picking the winning lotto number. Society's children favor euthanasia so they can keep their inheritance from being spent on health care. Meanwhile their parents display bumper stickers boasting of spending their children's inheritance. That's the image society is buying for itself.

Love of money takes us far from the Bible's concept of good self-image. Greed tells us that the lack of money is at the root of our bad feelings about ourselves. If that were true, all the rich and only the rich would be happy. But the Lord Jesus said, "A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Luke 12:15).

Not the lack of money, but moral failure and the trouble it causes destroy God's and our own perception of ourselves. Jesus said material things will be taken care of by God if we are concerned first of all with the restoration of moral righteousness: "But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things [food, clothes, long life] will be given to you as well" (Matthew 6:33).

God's way of restoring our self-image is by recreating the perfect image of his Son in us through faith (Ephesians 4:22-24; Colossians 2:9,10). No amount of money can do that (Psalm 49:7). Self-image is buyable, all right, but only one price was sufficient (1 Peter 1:18,19). "For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich" (2 Corinthians 8:9). Only "the unsearchable riches of Christ" (Ephesians 3:8) can give us an image that pleases God and ourselves.

### **Fight the good fight**

In his explanation of the fifth petition of the Lord's Prayer Luther wrote, "For we are worthy of none of these things for which we ask, neither have we deserved them." Luther understood that the fight against materialism begins with a confession of sin and a prayer for forgiveness.

When we become too much a part of the world (1 John 2:15-17), we may have trouble diagnosing the

disease of covetousness in ourselves (Romans 7:7). Then Jesus may have to take the same approach to us as he did to the Laodiceans: "You say, 'I am rich; I have acquired wealth and do not need a thing.' But you do not realize that you are wretched, pitiful, poor, blind and naked. . . . Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest, and repent" (Revelation 3:17,19).

We will always have the sinful urge to have more and spend more. Becoming a believer in Jesus doesn't eliminate the urge. But the faith in our hearts will show itself by our resistance to the urge and our victory against it. Our victory over materialism is one Christ has already won for us (Matthew 4:8-11; Philippians 2:5,6).

Our personal victory over materialism begins with trust in God, trust that our salvation is more valuable than earthly riches, trust that if he has given us the more valuable gift of forgiveness and life eternal, our material needs will be supplied (Romans 8:32). That kind of trust in Jesus is what Paul calls "godliness with contentment" (1 Timothy 6:6).

How we spend our money is as much a moral issue as how we acquire it. We may steal from God by how we don't spend it (Malachi 3:8-12). Every check we write praises God or offends him. Major and minor purchases have to be weighed against our commitment to overall Christian stewardship. Paul told Timothy, "Command those who are rich in this present world . . . to put their hope in God. . . . Command them . . . to be rich in good deeds and to be generous" (1 Timothy 6:17,18).

The materialistic spirit of this age will not be defeated with another half-hearted wail about the commercialism of Christmas. The sin doesn't start out there somewhere. It starts in here, in my heart. And that's where the first battle must be fought and the enemy defeated. We can go to war against materialism with the optimism that Jesus provides. He said that it was not impossible for God to lead even rich people like us into heaven (Matthew 19:23-26). □



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

# A Christmas long ago



by Evelyn R. Wilson

**T**he *Light of the World* by A. C. Mueller . . . a children's Christmas service published in 1941 and found in my attic recently. It immediately evoked warm memories of a Christmas long ago, when I was a seventh grader in the Christmas Eve service at Trinity, Neenah, Wisconsin.

We school children proclaimed once again the story, in word and song, of Jesus' birth. As I page through the little booklet, its blue cover adorned with a beautiful picture of Mary and the Christ Child, I marvel that it has survived six moves and forty-eight years.

The spoken words of the Christmas story are more important than the paper on which they are printed. Still, I smile at my hand-drawn efforts to beautify the pages of this little booklet that has traveled through life with me. Was it a class project or my idea? I can't recall.

I see a poinsettia (not too well drawn), candles resting in beds of holly, a bright yellow star beaming light upon the printed page, an angel and a snow-laden house, smoke rising gently from its red brick chimney, and the words:

There comes to the home a holy Guest,  
Who opens the door will by him be blest.

Red and blue bells decorate the close of the service, their clappers ringing out the message I've printed below:

Bells ring out the great news,  
"Christ the Savior is born!"

We children told that story of Christ, the Savior, and I recall how we practiced so long and hard with our teachers. When Christmas Eve arrived, we assembled for the last-minute instructions. With two lines formed, we proceeded in orderly fashion to our seats at the front of church, joining the congregation in the processional, "Come hither ye children." I can still hear the singing. . . .

I can also hear the recitations and I see by my penciled notes in the program that it was Miss Witte's third and fourth graders who told of the human race's plight in darkness because of sin and how the promises of the Son shone like a guiding star in the night.

As I read these words, I remember how we children sat quietly, listening as the younger children began the story of the miracle of Christmas. We waited with anticipation for our place in the service. Reading further, I note that it was Mr. Stoeckli's fifth and sixth graders whose recitation told of John the Baptist.

Now finally, I've found the spot in the service where my classmates and I—Mr. Hellerman's seventh and eighth graders—told of Simeon in the temple and how he called Jesus "A Light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of thy people Israel." And that we, the children of the Light, now cleansed from sin, are to live holy and righteous lives as we let our light shine.

When all lines had been said and hymns sung, we children filed past the Christmas tree to receive our Christmas bag. It was filled with a generous supply of nuts, hard candy, an apple, and an orange, as well as a gift from our teacher.

Ah, yes, Christmas Eve . . . it has been good to pause and remember.

Carefully I replace "The Light of the World" service in its special place in the attic, knowing I'll keep it with other memories the rest of my life. It represents the days spent with dedicated teachers who taught us faithfully. Nor would I forget the beautiful hymns they taught us; hymns remembered over the years—and this is a favorite:

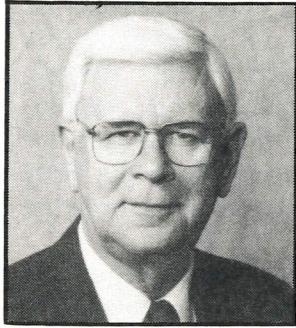
Ah, dearest Jesus, holy Child,  
Make thee a bed, soft, undefiled,  
Within my heart, that it may be  
A quiet chamber kept for thee. □



Evelyn Wilson is a member of Mt. Lebanon, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.



## *Lift high the cross*



*The cross  
is an  
inseparable  
part of  
Christmas*

**P**robably not the kind of title we'd expect to see in a Christmas issue! Christmas is a happy time. In all of its humble simplicity it still paints a pretty picture. A child, wrapped in cloths, lying in a manger. But that's only the beginning of the story.

Christmas has been called the world's greatest love story. It surely is that. There's never been another one like it. There never will be. But with all due respect for Mary and Joseph who served humbly and faithfully in the role into which God cast them, they're not playing the lead role in the Christmas drama. It's not Mary and Joseph that make Christmas the greatest love story. The world's greatest love story is described by John when he writes, "God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son." And that involves a great deal more than a baby lying in a manger.

A novelist describes the rest of the story in these words:

Mary and Joseph are spending their last night in the stable. Early the next morning they're going to leave for Egypt to escape the jealous rage of King Herod. A wagon tongue propped against the wall casts a dark shadow across the face of the child Jesus. And Mary says to Joseph, "Both of us know what surely must come to him. The prophets have already spoken of his fate. He will be no earthly king. He will be a man of sorrows whom the world will despise. He will bear the sin and guilt of the whole world on his shoulders. He will be led up onto a hill to be crucified. He will die for the sins of all."

The above conversation is fictional. But there's one that isn't. Aged Simeon in the temple, ready to leave this world in peace because he's seen the Savior with his own eyes, telling Mary, "This child is destined to cause the falling and rising of many in Israel and to be a sign that will be spoken against, so that the thoughts of many hearts will be revealed. And a sword will pierce your own soul too." How those words must have thundered in Mary's ears as she knelt beneath the cross of her Son!

Paul's central theme was not, "We preach Christ born in Bethlehem" (though he well knew the importance of Bethlehem in God's plan of salvation). His central theme was, "We preach Christ crucified." The cross followed the cradle, Calvary followed Bethlehem and let's not forget the empty tomb in Joseph's garden in order to get the full story.

What began in the heart of God in eternity began on earth in Bethlehem. There the eternal God became a man so that he might die in order that we might live.

How fitting that our churches often convert their Christmas trees into crosses for Lent! How fitting that we should select *Lift high the cross* as the theme for our special mission offering! It's the symbol of our salvation and it's our reason for living, to lift high the cross for people to see and believe and be saved through the message of Christ crucified. The cross is an inseparable part of Christmas. It's the climax of the world's greatest love story.

*Carl H. Muschke*

by Paul E. Kelm

*I've been told that the differences between the King James Version and the New International Version of the Bible are explained by the discovery of older Greek manuscripts since the sixteenth century. How does older mean more correct? Why some omissions in the NIV of what we learned in the KJV? And how do we explain verbal inspiration in the face of these differences?*

Based on Scripture's own claims and Jesus' verification (e.g. 2 Timothy 3:16, 1 Corinthians 2:13, John 10:35) we ascribe verbal inspiration and inerrancy to the *original manuscripts* of the books of the Bible. That none of these pages from the hands of the prophets and apostles themselves is known to exist is an expected consequence of 1900-plus years. God saw to it, however, that his word was copied and translated repeatedly. The Hebrew and Greek text from which any English version is translated is a synthesis or compilation of available ancient manuscripts.

During the "dark ages," little interest in the study of biblical manuscripts left the Latin translation known as the Vulgate (ca. 400 A.D. originally) as the Roman Catholic Bible. The revival of scholarly interest that coincided with the Reformation and the invention of mechanized printing produced the *Textus Receptus*, from which the KJV New Testament was translated. This "textus" was a compilation of a few, relatively late Greek manuscripts, sometimes edited in the light of Latin translations. Since that mid-sixteenth century compilation, some 5000 earlier manuscripts of all or part of the New Testament have been uncovered. The Greek text from which the NIV is translated is a critical compilation of these manuscripts, some of which apparently date to the early second century.

While older doesn't necessarily mean more correct, the closer in time a manuscript is to the original letter of an apostle, the less likely are errors in hand-copying and "copy by dictation." The greater the number of available manuscripts, the easier it normally is to determine the original wording.

What is remarkable is how *few* differences among the old manuscripts there are. No doctrine of Christianity is in question as a result of these textual variants. The providence of God and the reverence of his people for his word saw to the careful transmission of the Bible.

Those variants that aren't simply explained by the faulty hearing or sight of copyists are probably the result of their misguided effort to interpret, amplify, or harmonize the text they were copying. For example, the shorter version of the Lord's Prayer in

Luke 11 was easily expanded from a copyist's memory to harmonize with the way Jesus gave that prayer on another occasion in Matthew 6. The apparent addition to 1 John 5:7-8, which the KJV includes, may be a copyist's insertion of a marginal note into the actual text, as late as 800 A.D. The John 8 verses about the woman caught in adultery, which the KJV records, were probably a copyist's addition based on commonly accepted oral history. At least the textual evidence suggests it was not in the narrative which the Holy Spirit determined John should relate to us, however factual the event.

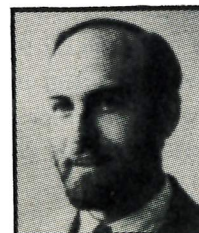
Scholars may argue a few such questions regarding the original text. Sincere Christians may argue their preference for the majestic English of the KJV or the contemporary readability of the NIV. But no one can legitimately claim that the inspiration or content of God's word to us has been compromised by these arguments.

*Is it a denial of confessional principles to leave the word "Lutheran" out of a church's name because that term may be a barrier to the unchurched?*

It may well be that in parts of our country, as in other countries, the name Lutheran is a superficial barrier to mission outreach. Anti-denominational sentiment today is one explanation. "Just like the Catholics" is how people in the deep South sometimes understand our name. In some areas the theology and reputation of "Lutherans" may be an issue with which we don't want to be broadly identified.

There is a difference between disguising our confessional identity and simply not advertising what doesn't communicate or miscommunicates. We have no biblical command to broadcast a denominational identity. But deception (2 Corinthians 4:2) and compromise (Matthew 10:32-33) are clearly wrong.

That the sign in front of our church or the ad we place in the newspaper doesn't include the name Lutheran is not of itself a denial of confessional principles. But "truth in packaging" is a timeless concern with contemporary sensitivity. Those who *visit* our church deserve an honest identification of our confessional affiliation and our historical theology. □



Send your questions to QUESTIONS, The Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N. Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53222-4398. Questions of general interest are preferred. Questions will be answered, however, only through this column.

Pastor Paul Kelm is director of the synod's spiritual renewal program.

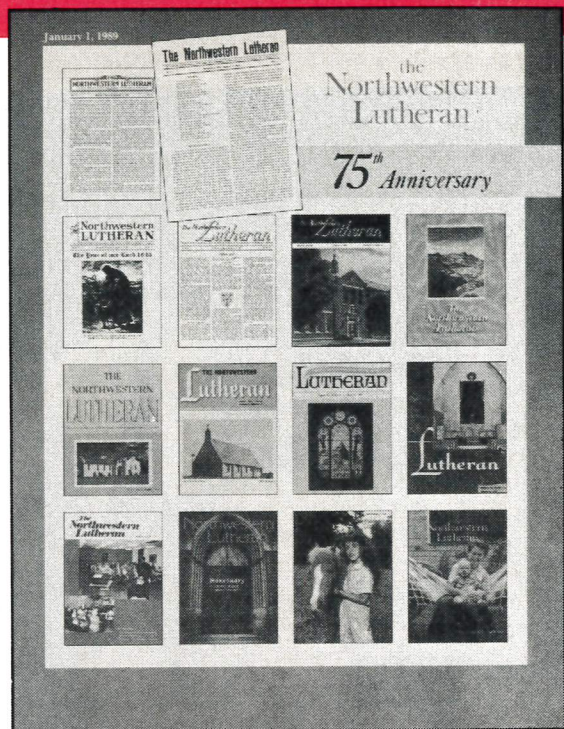
## “Truth dressed in fitting attire”

by Morton A. Schroeder

Shortly after the July 1983 issue of the *Northwestern Lutheran* appeared, its editor, the Rev. James P. Schaefer, received a letter from an enthusiast. The letter said, “Thank you for bringing *The Northwestern Lutheran* into the twentieth century.” The letter writer was responding emotionally to the modernistic rendition of the patriotic theme emblazoned on the front cover. He was also responding intellectually to the complete magazine: its careful, readable presentation of God’s truths; its unprecedented use of color; its fresh, inviting, and wide-open pages — in short, *truth dressed in fitting attire*. Finally, the letter writer was responding to the stewardship of the editor of the synod’s official magazine. And what the letter writer saw, the letter writer liked!

Not everyone agrees with the letter writer’s assessment. Several months ago, in a conversation triggered by the 75th anniversary year of the *Northwestern Lutheran*, an acquaintance said during a lull in a meeting, “Some hold this opinion of *The Northwestern Lutheran*: ‘a lot of fluff and not much substance.’ ”

I pressed my acquaintance to define “fluff.” He said, “I didn’t say I think it’s ‘fluff.’ ” I’ve been thinking about his remark ever since, and I’ve come to this conclusion: If “some,” whoever and how many they may be, think Dr. Gerlach’s “Highway signs” or Mr. Woodfin’s “Grandma’s wisdom” or Mrs. Meyer’s “Happy New Year” or Prof. Balge’s “He only stole the presents” is fluff, then they don’t understand the purpose of the *Northwestern Lutheran*. These articles were not, I grant you, fashioned in traditional minds.



But they do carry out in appealing manner the purpose of the magazine. In 1914 Pastor John Jenny said, “*The Northwestern Lutheran* endeavors to bring to the Christian *home* (italics mine) articles both instructive and edifying. . . .”

Editors of the *Northwestern Lutheran* were helped or hindered by issues which dominated the times during which they lived, by the financial conditions under which they labored, by the theological attitudes prevailing in the synod, and by the technical apparatus available to them. Each of them tried to improve the magazine by introducing new columns and by inventing eye-catching devices such as innovative graphics and bolder and more legible type. Some of the editors were limited, or so they thought, by a lack of editorial training. Their perceptions of self made them at times uncomfortable, unsure, shrill. Others were daring, imaginative, confident.

The Reverend James P. Schaefer, who has been editor for eight years, belongs to the “daring, imaginative, confident” group. A magazine that is read by more members of the synod than ever before is the result: around 130,000.

News that the Rev. Harold E. Wicke was retiring as editor of the *Northwestern Lutheran* was announced on May 24 and again on June 7, 1981. Over the signature of Prof. H. J. Vogel, secretary of the Conference of Presidents of the Wisconsin Synod, a notice said Wicke would retire “. . . at the end of the current volume, November 30, 1981” (sic). Nominations were solicited, and the list was published on July 19 and August 2. Three professors and 18 pastors who were



Seated, Dorothy Sonntag, assistant editor, and James Schaefer, editor. Standing, (from left) Erik Pless, intern; Diana Watkins, typesetter; Duane Weaver, design and page make-up artist; Diane Cook, typesetter; Suzanne Giese, subscription manager; Roland W. Ehlke, proofreader; and Clifford Koeller,

production coordinator. With the exception of Erik, all the persons standing are employees of Northwestern Publishing House whose services are purchased by the Northwestern Lutheran.

serving in either the teaching or the preaching ministry were, as the idiom has it, "on the list."

I made no effort to read the minutes of the Conference of Presidents in writing this brief history. Consequently, I cannot say whether Schaefer, who was one of the nominees, was elected on the first ballot or the 41st. I can say, with some degree of certainty, that his election came as no large surprise to the synodical constituency. This, even though the list was high powered, consisting of very able persons, some of whom were and remain regular contributors to the Northwestern Lutheran.

Schaefer was well known throughout the Wisconsin Synod, and he had, as the synod's public relations director, even earned some notoriety beyond its borders. He served on the local level as pastor of a large Milwaukee congregation. On the synodical level, he was the first stewardship counselor, a position he held for more than a dozen years. He was also executive director of the 1966-68 Missio Dei offering, the much-

publicized and highly-touted effort to collect funds for capital improvements. This position took him to the far reaches of the synod when thrilling and optimistic news such as the dedication of buildings made possible by Missio Dei was being made.

The fact that Schaefer's father, Pastor William J. Schaefer, had been the editor of the Northwestern Lutheran may not have favored the younger man, even though the elder Schaefer had been the captain of a crew that had produced a magazine that reached out. The Wisconsin Synod is not noted for bestowing upon the sons the positions of the fathers. A few exceptions do come to mind: Justus and Oscar Naumann, father and son elected to the presidency of the Minnesota District; Richard and Martin Albrecht called to the faculty of Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota; and Emil D. and Bruce Backer called to the directorship of the principal choir at Dr. Martin Luther College.

The news that Schaefer was called appeared in the

Northwestern Lutheran on January 1, 1982. In his "Comments" Wicke said, "*The Northwestern Lutheran* welcomes Pastor James P. Schaefer as its new editor. . . ." This casual greeting was formalized, more or less, two weeks later. A notice which primarily requested names for the office of stewardship counselor added this: "The Reverend James P. Schaefer has accepted the call to the editorship of *The Northwestern Lutheran*."

Schaefer's first words as editor tied present and past together. They aligned the novice with both the outgoing veteran and his own father. Said Schaefer in the February 1, 1982 issue: "For this first editor's column I had hoped to write something impressive and fadeless." Conceding that the possibilities for so doing were improbable, he repeated the pledge Wicke had made when he had become editor: "And I also want to assure you, *nothing* will change, that is nothing that *really* counts will change."

Then he went back to his roots. Schaefer's association with his father was warm, and he never neglected the opportunity to let his readers in on his lineage. In reciting the gradual development of the editorship of the *Northwestern Lutheran*, he said, "I knew this first editor (Pastor William J. Schaefer) rather well since I served as associate pastor with him at Atonement (Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, Wisconsin) for 20 years. He was — not so incidentally — my father."

Ninety-three months have passed since Schaefer began his work as editor of the *Northwestern Lutheran*. The magazine we read today is radically different from the magazine of that seemingly distant long-ago. Schaefer is — and has been — the first to acknowledge that all improvements are the results of the devoted efforts of many, many people. Here are the component parts of the editorial team which he either inherited from his predecessors or which he gathered: assistant editor, intern, ten contributing editors, thirteen district reporters, and numerous, in his words, "free lancers" who are asked to do a job, do it and then disappear. Schaefer also has a production coordinator, a person who provides artistry in design and page make-up, and a subscription manager. I can't help but think, "What would Jenny and Graeber have given for a machine like this?"

All of the improvements Schaefer made open the

doors for richer and more provocative dialog. They give the magazine a life of its own, one that vibrates with a unique intensity and vitality. With the exception of Miss Anna Hoppe and others like her — genteel ladies who wrote poems and hymns during the early years of this century — what was once almost without exception the province of theological seminary graduates has become a sounding board for all kinds of people. Women, university professors, businessmen, Lutheran school teachers, and even reporters who write for the secular press have found the *Northwestern Lutheran* open to them, assuming, of course, that they have something to say which will edify God's people and that they say it in readable English. They can share their experiences and insights and voice their faith in the Lord who binds and bonds them together as members of the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod. "Letters," which is not universally regarded as a great idea, gives the rank and file of the synod opportunity to express their heartfelt thoughts and opinions.

The Schaefer editorship remains an open book. Future writers who pick up where this history ends will fill in chapters which lack of space prevented me from touching. The most notable one is that of Bev Brushaber. In a rare tribute, Schaefer said this of her in December 1988: "And finally, Bev Brushaber, the assistant editor, who for 25 years has picked up after me and creatively kept shop beside me — anonymously until January 1 of this year when she became assistant editor of this magazine, a position she earned the old fashioned way — she worked for it." Future writers will assess Schaefer's editorial skills, his impact on other synodical magazines, his consummate way of dealing with the public, his wit and humor and, above all, his love for the *Northwestern Lutheran*. In the meantime, the magazine will continue to vibrate with its unique vitality and intensity, a force for good within the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod. □



Morton Schroeder teaches English at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota.

### "Premarital relationships"

I found "Premarital relationships" (August) to be a well written article addressing a controversial issue in today's society. I commend Prof. Mueller for commenting on human sexuality from a scriptural viewpoint. This entire question needs to be discussed from our pulpits and studied in our Bible classes.

Unfortunately, promiscuity spans all age groups and even touches the lives of some of our fellow parishioners. This article should serve as a cornerstone for discussion with people who may be party to a situation that appears to be accepted by society but is a sin against God.

*Charles O. Schranz  
Waupun, Wisconsin*

### Subliminal tapes

I am writing in response to the letter "Not all tapes are harmful," (Sept. 15).

Why should we subject ourselves to the possible dangers of subliminal tapes, when we can flee to the sure word of God, which poses no danger and holds out the promise of life and hope? The message of Christ is not here hidden subliminally by soothing music, but is proclaimed boldly and in certain truth. It is a "lamp to our feet."

*Phyllis Whitten  
Sylvan Lake, Alberta*

### Operation Rescue

I have never participated in an "Operation Rescue" rally. Perhaps it is because some Christians have told me that such activity is fanatical. Now a writer says much the same thing in "An abortion dilemma" (Sept. 15).

I wonder if a knife wielding attacker were about to stab a victim, would the writer first suggest to the murderer that he enter a counseling center? Would he consider himself a fanatic if he should scream at the attacker to stop? Would it be a case of harassment should he attempt to stop the attack?

I sometimes wonder if I am only

giving lip service to my opposition to abortion. Sometimes I wonder if I have joined the "pro-choice" crowd because of my lack of action. After all, we are called to be Christ-like. At times that called for emotional, rude, shrill, and tough reactions (John 2:12-16). I still wonder why I have not joined "Operation Rescue."

*Dave Luetke  
Onalaska, Wisconsin*

### Intolerance

A special "thank-you" to Professor Toppe for his astute editorial about intolerance (Oct. 1). Very few non-Christians clearly comprehend the difference between being intolerant of sin and still showing love and compassion toward the sinner. Appreciating this difference is another of the many blessings that we have as children of God and students of his word. Just as we must always be intolerant of sin, so must we never be guilty of showing lack of concern for other human beings.

*Dana Rabenberg  
Aurora, Colorado*

### Hooray for Volunteers

I would like to add a hearty "amen" to Jan Mosher's article on volunteers (Oct. 15). Volunteers are sorely needed to do work from the most menial to the highly professional.

In our society, too many people equate work with a paycheck. But hearing Jesus say, "You have done it unto me," is far better than any monetary reward.

From a practical viewpoint, our consumer goods and services would cost much more (including taxes) if it were not for all the work done by volunteers.

Whenever I hear someone say, "I was so bored when I retired, (or when the children left home, etc.) that I had to get a job," they get an earful from me.

How about you? When was the last time you volunteered?

*Lois Krantz  
Brown Deer, Wisconsin*

### Franks = French?

I just finished reading Prof. Kiecker's fascinating mission stories, (Oct. 15) and hope we get many more. I do question the statement, "the Franks, ancestors of the French."

According to the Encyclopedia Americana the Franks were a German tribe and their descendants still inhabit the Rhine Valley in Germany.

The French whom Clovis defeated were Romanized Celts belonging to the Roman Empire. Their name French comes from the word Frank.

*Alexander Weber  
Gaines, Michigan*

### The Hymnal Commission

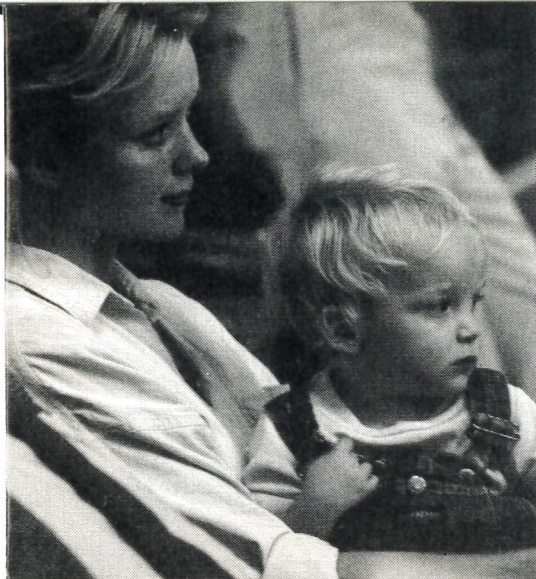
I have read with interest the proposed list of hymns to be included in the new WELS book of worship. I don't like every hymn that was chosen, but it is not the Hymnal Commission's job to please everyone. That would be not only impossible but unwise. Some congregations prefer an order of service similar to or simpler than our present liturgy. Others need an exciting challenge to enrich their worship. Our new hymnal must serve all congregations.

The new book of worship will probably be serving us for the next forty to fifty years. We must be willing to accept some hymns, liturgies, and harmonizations that sound new and even foreign. With use they will become familiar to us.

The members of our hymnal commission are well qualified. They are trained in doctrine, worship, poetry, and music. They know the likes and abilities of the people in the pew. They need our support and prayers.

*Gary Steffenhagen  
Schofield, 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 53222-4398.



Sara Buelow with son Titus of Port Huron, Michigan, attended the WELS Lutherans for Life convention.

## WELS Lutherans for Life holds convention

On October 14, 235 people gathered on the campus of Concordia College in Ann Arbor, Michigan, to attend the annual national convention of WELS Lutherans for Life, hosted by the Michigan chapter.

Mr. James Bopp, Jr., general counsel to the National Right to

Life Committee, delivered the keynote address. He focused his presentation on the difficult end-of-life questions arising in hospitals and courtrooms. He supported the long standing principle that life is to be protected regardless of its varying or diminished quality. His stories of patients being starved and dehydrated to death with court sanction were alarming. Nevertheless, he was encouraging as he described the faithful efforts of people to protect all life.

Participants at the convention had the opportunity to sit in on three of eight workshops which addressed various life issues. The keynote address and these workshops were videotaped for the benefit of those who could not attend the convention, and can be secured from the National Office.

A highlight of the convention

## Multi-pastorate conference held

Over 160 pastors attended a conference on October 4 and 5 at Madison, Wisconsin, devoted to the multi-pastorate ministry, the first conference of this kind to be held by the synod. Participants from more than 80 congregations discussed the joys, problems, and challenges of a team ministry. Theme for the conference was "We're in This Together."

Pastor Ronald Freier of St. Joseph, Michigan, led off the agenda with a presentation on "Pastor to Pastor — Our Ministry," emphasizing the ingredients that are important in a multi-pastorate ministry.

Following an exercise at uncovering, understanding, and appreciating different leadership styles by synod administrator Pastor Daniel Malchow, Prof. Wayne

Mueller of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary addressed the group on the theme "Effective/Efficient Pastors," directing the participants to the word of God. "God alone effects ministry," he said, "and he effects it alone through his word."

The final two presentations centered on relations between pastors and people. Facilitators were Pastor James Fricke of Watertown, Wisconsin, and administrator Pastor Paul Kelm. A group exercise helped participants address the question of when additional staff should be studied and the types of staff positions which should be considered.

Morning and evening devotions were led by Pastor Fred Piepenbrink of Milwaukee. Cost of the conference was covered by registration fees.

was the student address given by Amy Nell, a student at Winnebago Lutheran Academy and a member of Redeemer in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Her well-written essay and strong delivery were well received by the audience.

The 1990 national convention will be held in West St. Paul, Minnesota, at St. Croix Lutheran High School on September 29.

— Robert R. Fleischmann

## Puerto Rico celebrates 25 years

With 140 members and friends present, The Lutheran Christian Confessional Church of Puerto Rico, a WELS mission undertaking, commemorated the 25th anniversary of its founding on October 29.

Pastor Roger Sprain, who together with Pastor Rupert Eggert began the WELS mission in Guayama in 1964, spoke of the blessings the people had received in the years past.

The members, who came from the cities of San Juan and Humacao as well as Guayama, also heard WELS President Carl Mischke bring them words of thanks to God and encouragement to continue the preaching and sharing of the gospel in the sure promises of his grace.

The people began gathering before nine in the morning for Bible study, followed by breakfast, the worship service, dinner, a discussion of the role of pastor and missionary, and finally a hymn sing. A choir of over 20 beautified the day with singing. By 5 p.m. people were reluctantly heading home.

Noteworthy is the fact that the 200 baptized members of the church are made up of families. The men — young, middle-aged, and older — take an active part in leading the church.

## Arizona-California District

Hope, Penryn, Calif., dedicated a new church building on September 17. The pastor, Jim Behringer, served as liturgist. Guest preacher was David Rosenbaum from New York. The congregation began as a mission effort of St. Mark, Citrus Heights, in October 1976. Membership today stands at 137 communicants. . . . Beautiful Savior, Carlsbad, Calif., observed the 25th anniversary in the ministry of its pastor, **Silas Krueger**, on September 24. He has served Beautiful Savior since April 1988. Previously he served congregations in Scottville and Custer, Mich., Tucson, Ariz., and Austin, Texas. . . . **Green Valley, Henderson, Nevada**, held its first church service October 29 in a shopping center. Pastor Donald Pieper has been exploring this area east of Las Vegas for about a year. He welcomed 114 people to the initial service of the new mission. . . . On the weekend of October 6 approximately 200 women enjoyed a retreat in the San Bernardino Mountains. The theme for the retreat, sponsored by the **Golden West Circuit** of the Lutheran Women's Missionary Society, was "I lift up my eyes to the hills."

— Hermann K. John

## Dakota-Montana District

On September 9 the **Dakota-Montana Lutheran High School Association** voted to purchase 40 acres of land on the northeast side of Watertown, South Dakota, for the purpose of building a high school in the future. Mr. Terry Krause is coordinating pledges and offerings for the association. . . . Faith, Huron, South Dakota, honored **Pastor Curtiss Seefeldt** with a surprise celebration on his tenth anniversary in the ministry. Pastor



Hope, Penryn, California

Reginald Pope was the guest speaker at the evening service, which was followed by a meal and program.

— Ronald L. Kruse

## Michigan District

On June 11 **Trinity of Jenera, Ohio**, celebrated the 40th anniversary of its school and also noted the 20 years of service by Principal Philip Kuske. Pastor Jonathan Rossman, a graduate of the school,

preached for the anniversary service. . . . **Cross of Glory, Washington**, celebrated its 15th anniversary on September 10. . . . Professor Edward Fredrich preached for the 50th anniversary of **Paul the Apostle, Detroit**, on September 24. After the service a catered dinner was served. The current pastor is William Schuerman. . . . Peace, Livonia, observed the 25th anniversary in the ministry of **Pastor Karl Vertz** on October 1. . . . On October 8 **St. Paul, Belleville**, celebrated its 50th anniversary. . . . **Pastor William Hein** retired from the pastorate of Grace, Muskegon, and now serves as housefather at Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, as chaplain at the Martin Luther Memorial Home in Saginaw, and does institutional ministry in the area. . . . **Huron Valley Lutheran High School, Westland**, celebrated its 15th anniversary on October 15. . . . **Immanuel, Findley, Ohio**, observed its 50th anniversary on October 22. The church has purchased a five acre parcel of land for building a new church. . . . Our Savior, Westland, observed the 25th anniversary in the ministry of **Pastor Myron Sordahl** on October 22. . . . Eight students from the Trifels Gymnasium in Annweiler, West Germany, spent October at **Michigan Lutheran Seminary** in Saginaw. This is the eighth year such a student exchange has taken place between the two schools.

— James L. Langebartels

### MLS gets new bleachers

The quick thinking of a layman recently saved Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, thousands of dollars. Outdoor portable bleachers from 1953 were in need of replacement, but the \$35,000 cost was prohibitive. The layman noticed that a nearby recently reorganized public school system had extra bleachers. The Michigan Lutheran Seminary Booster Club purchased six sections of these bleachers, accommodating 900 people, for \$1500. The boosters moved, repaired, repainted, and installed the new bleachers for another \$1500 and a lot of volunteer labor. The Michigan Lutheran Seminary campus now has a fine set of sturdy bleachers at a minimal cost.



## WITH THE LORD

### Martin P. Busse 1907-1989

Martin P. Busse was born April 29, 1907, near Appleton, Minnesota. He died on October 30, 1989 in Two Rivers, Wisconsin.

A 1930 graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, he spent the entire 50 years of his teaching ministry at St. John, Two Rivers. There he also served as organist, choir director, and Sunday school superintendent. He served for several years on the Manitowoc Lutheran High School Board of Control.

He is survived by his wife, Wilma, nee Zinn; daughters Joan (Pastor Nathan) Retzlaff and Karen (Pastor Martin) Schulz; seven grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; two step-grandchildren; and a sister, Martha Bonitz.

Funeral services were held at St. John, Two Rivers.

### Dietrich H. Kuehl 1917-1989

Pastor Dietrich H. Kuehl was born in Germany on September 28, 1917. He died in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, on October 30, 1989.

A graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, he served congregations in Clear Lake and Altamont, South Dakota; and in McMillan, March Rapids, Lake Mills, Slades Corners, and Hartford, Wisconsin.

In the Western Wisconsin District he served on the mission board and as circuit pastor of the central conference. He served the Southeastern Wisconsin District as second vice-president, as circuit pastor of the Dodge-Washington Conference, and as a member of the district mission board. He also served on the Board of Directors of Northwestern Publishing House.

He was preceded in death by his first wife, Hulda, and by sons Den-



The junior choir of Peace, Bradenton, Florida, recently sang at a Gospel Singout at Cypress Gardens. The only group from that part of Florida and the only children's choir, the children sang for about 2000 people. "Our choir did a fantastic job," said director Jane Schlenvogt, "representing the Lord and our church and school."

nis and Paul. He is survived by his wife, Pauline; children Thomas (Adrienne), Carol (Pastor Verlyn) Dobberstein, Rachel (Steven) Asher, and Daniel (Tammy); stepchildren Jane Berndt, Jean (Randy) Riemann, and Joan Berndt; nine grandchildren; two step-grandchildren; sisters and brothers Elsie (Melvin) Kunz, Dorothy (Norman) Kolasch, Otto (Doreen), Adela (Pastor Milton) Burk, Esther (John) Schlichting, Shirley (Keith) Sincox, and Dean (Jan).

Services were held at Peace, Hartford.

### Walter J. Oelhafen 1907-1989

Pastor Walter J. Oelhafen was born in rural Slinger, Wisconsin, on November 1, 1907. He died at Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, on September 30, 1989.

He graduated from Concordia Seminary in Springfield, Illinois, and served parishes at Herrick and Winner, South Dakota; Fairburn, Red Granite, and Montello, Wisconsin; and Winthrop and Darwin, Minnesota. He retired in 1981 and moved to Beaver Dam, where he continued to be active in ministry until a week before his death. He also served the church as a member of the district mission board, the

Winnebago Lutheran Academy board, the Minnesota Board of Support, and as a circuit pastor.

He is survived by two daughters, Julia (Prof. Robert) Averbeck, Lois (Kurt) Bence; one son, Pastor Walter (Gretchen) Oelhafen, Jr.; eight grandchildren; five great-grandchildren; four brothers; and one sister. His wife Gertrude preceded him in death.

Services were held at St. Stephen, Beaver Dam, with burial at Slinger.

### Gale L. Peterson 1934-1989

Gale L. Peterson was born in Caledonia, Minnesota, on September 9, 1934. He died in La Crosse, Wisconsin, on October 3, 1989.

A 1956 graduate of Northwestern College in Watertown, Wisconsin, he attended Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, for two years. He taught at Northwestern Preparatory School, Watertown, and at Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minnesota. For the past 25 years he taught at Luther High School, Onalaska, Wisconsin.

He is survived by his mother; a brother, Donald; a niece and two nephews.

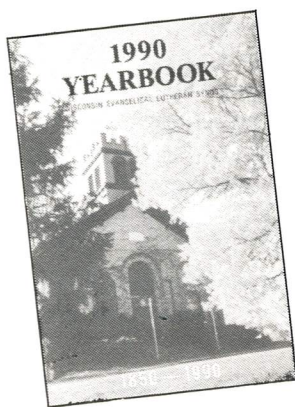
Funeral services were held at Immanuel, La Crosse, with burial in Caledonia, Minnesota.

# 1990 WELS YEARBOOK

The official directory of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 6 x 9 inches, 152 pages with handy spiral binding. The 1990 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

### BOARD FOR PARISH SERVICES Nominations for Administrator

The following names have been submitted for consideration by the Synod's Board for Parish Services as it calls the administrator authorized by the 1989 synod convention.

Rev. Richard A. Agenten	Urbana, IL
Rev. William F. Bernhardt	Milwaukee, WI
Rev. Forrest L. Bivens	Saginaw, MI
Rev. Mark J. Cares	Nampa, ID
Rev. Ronald F. Freier	St. Joseph, MI
Rev. Kenneth A. Gast	Tomah, WI
Rev. Karl R. Gurgel	Lake Mills, WI
Rev. Ronald K. Heins	Wauwatosa, WI
Rev. James R. Huebner	Saginaw, MI
Dr. John C. Lawrenz	Mequon, WI
Prof. Wayne D. Mueller	Manitowoc, WI
Dr. LeDell D. Plath	Eau Claire, WI
Rev. Herbert H. Prah	Elgin, IL
Rev. Peter B. Prange	Hales Corners, WI
Rev. Ronald D. Roth	Downers Grove, IL
Rev. David N. Rutschow	Milwaukee, WI
Dr. Daniel M. Schmelgel	Mequon, WI
Prof. David J. Valleskey	Lansing, MI
Rev. John F. Vogt	Westerville, OH
Rev. Roger R. Zehms	

Correspondence concerning any of these nominees should be sent to the undersigned no later than January 11.

Rev. Allen A. Zahn, Secretary  
7315 East 75th Street  
Indianapolis, IN 46256

### NOTICE FOR CONGREGATION TREASURERS

The cutoff date for prebudget subscription receipts in the synod's post office lockbox is the last business day of each month. December 1989 lockbox offerings will be credited as 1989 receipts through January 9, 1990, as long as they are received in the lockbox on or before that date and are clearly labeled as December offerings on Form 220.

### CHOIR ROBES AVAILABLE

For the cost of shipping, we will send you our used choir robes. They are in various sizes and conditions. Write to Zion Lutheran Church, PO Box 386, Eitzen, MN 55931.

### COMMUNION RAIL AVAILABLE

Communion rail available for cost of shipping. Contact Grace Lutheran Church, 1209 N. Broadway, Milwaukee, WI 53202; 414/271-3006.

### ORGAN AVAILABLE

Available for cost of shipping: Conn church organ, two manual, full pedal. Contact Doug Hirsch, 906 Avey Lane, Englewood, OH 45322; 513/836-8310.

### STOLES AVAILABLE

To give away: 30 choir stoles, red and white reversible. Contact Zion Lutheran Church, Rhineland, Wis.; 715/369-4831.

### ITEMS WANTED

ELS mission congregation needs an altar cross, candlesticks, candle lighter, offering plates. Please contact Pastor Michael Smith, PO Box 96, Riviera, AZ 86442; 602/768-3438.

### NAMES WANTED

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

**MOUNTAIN HOME, ARKANSAS** (Twin Lakes area) — Pastor David A. Kapler, Rt. 9 Box 370, Mountain Home, AR 72653.

**ATLANTA, GEORGIA** — Pastor Eric Steinbrenner, 230 Whitney Way, Fayetteville, GA 30214; 404/460-6450.

**AMARILLO, TEXAS** — Pastor Daniel Drews, 5812 73rd St., Lubbock, TX 79424; 806/794-4203.

### MISSION SEMINAR 1990 WISCONSIN LUTHERAN SEMINARY

**Dates:** January 31, 7:30 a.m. & 12:30 p.m. Sessions I and II  
January 31, 7:30 p.m. Session III  
February 1, 7:30 a.m. & 12:30 p.m. Sessions IV and V  
**Theme:** "Enlarge the Tent!"  
I. Canada  
II. Mexico  
III. Peru  
IV. Brazil  
V. Apacheland

The student body invites everyone to attend any or all sessions. To reserve a seat, please inform the undersigned which sessions you will attend.

Seminar booklets may be ordered for \$3.00 each (if picked up at the seminar) or \$3.75 (if mailed). Send payment before January 15 to Ken Fischer, Mission Seminar secretary, 6717 W. Wartburg Circle 117N, Mequon, WI 53092.

### HANDBELL FESTIVAL

The eleventh annual WELS Handbell Festival will be held on April 21-22 at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn. The festival concludes with a public concert on April 22 at 1:30 p.m. Information can be obtained by writing to WELS Handbell Festival, c/o Wayne L. Wagner, Dr. Martin Luther College, 1884 College Heights, New Ulm, MN 56073.

## CHANGES IN MINISTRY

### PASTORS:

**Bolda, James L.**, from Christ Our Redeemer, Gillette, Wyo., to St. Paul, Sioux Falls, So. Dak.  
**Kruse, Ronald L.**, from Peace, Clark, S. Dak., to Shining Mountain, Bozeman, Mont.  
**Meler, Timothy A.**, from Zion, Peshtigo, Wis., to missionary to Taiwan.  
**Schroeder, John A.**, from Redeemer, Big Rapids, Mich. to Zion, Olivia, Minn.  
**Semro, Ronald A.**, from St. Timothy, Maumee, Ohio, to St. Luke, Saginaw, Mich.  
**Zahn, Larry A.**, from Sola Fide, Lawrenceville, Ga., to King of Kings, Maitland, Fla.  
**Zehms, Roger R.**, to WELS Lutherans for Life, director of advancement

## ADDRESSES

### PASTORS:

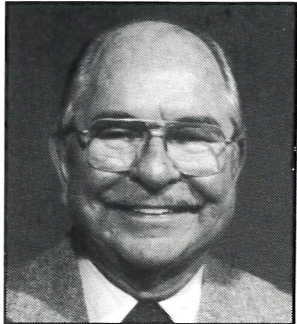
**Balge, Daniel N.**, Am Jungstruck 17, 6500 Mainz 43, Federal Republic of Germany  
**Dorn, Wilbur F.**, Unit D-2, Bridge View Condominiums, 77 Santa Isabel, Laguna Vista, TX 78578  
**Fischer, Wayne L.**, 833 S. 56 St., West Allis, WI 53214  
**Free, Douglas L.**, 802 Elk St., Rapid City, SD 57701; 605/342-2124  
**Fricke, Thomas J.**, 420 S. Park Ln., Le Sueur, MN 56058  
**Kapler, David A.**, Rt. 9 Box 370, Mountain Home, AR 72653; 501/492-4013  
**Klubb, Gary A.**, 738 Lakeside Dr., Duncanville, TX 75116; 214/298-9036  
**Kriewall, Earl R.**, 5410 Bama Ln., Arlington, TX 76017; 817/478-1277  
**Liebenow, John A.**, 3313 Newkirk Dr., Plano, TX 75075; 214/964-1257  
**Mattek, Floyd W.**, 219 Crabapple Rd., Fredericksburg, TX 78624  
**Schroeder, Mark G.**, 509 Tower Rd., Watertown, WI 53094; 414/261-2189  
**Sawall, Robert L.**, 3809 N. Magnolia Ct., Flower Mound, TX 75028; 214/539-7459

### TEACHERS:

**Czer, Lawrence J.**, 501 Shadyside Circle, Hopkins, MN 55343  
**Meyer, Jonathan P.**, 404 Church St., Edna, TX 77957; 512/782-5539  
**Wade, James A.**, 421 Meadow Ridge, Lake Mills, WI, 53551; 414/648-5271

## ANNIVERSARIES

**Willoughby, Ohio** — King of Kings (25th); June 23, 1990 picnic; June 24, service. Please send addresses of former members to Harvey Rogge, 2815 Lost Nation Road, Willoughby, OH 44094.



**S**halom aleichem—peace be with you—is a frequent greeting and farewell in my Jewish neighborhood. A shorter greeting—shalom—is exchanged with the rabbi as he enters the temple just across from our home. Although the Jewish population in the neighborhood is thinning following the flow of Milwaukee’s demographics, there are still three of six temples formerly within a six-block radius. As I toil at yardwork on Saturday, the temple’s congregants pass on their way to worship. This 20-year resident of the neighborhood exchanges the shalom greeting with people whose faces have grown familiar through the years.

For the Jewish people shalom has always had a special meaning. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word *shalom* occurs (according to my concordance) about 200 times. There is hardly another word, fraught with so much meaning, that appears more often in the Old Testament.

In the Palestine of ages ago—like Palestine today—shalom is a one-word prayer for peace. There was little peace in that land. Palestine was the land bridge between the two great centers of civilization in the ancient world—the Tigris-Euphrates valley and the land of the Nile. The bridge of Palestine was regularly exposed to marauding armies, bloody raids, and pitched battles between contending political giants.

But there is another meaning to shalom. It is found with greatest clarity in the prophecy of Isaiah, chapter 53: the song of the Servant of the Lord. The Servant, pierced and crushed for our sins, brought us peace, shalom. Back in Genesis, as Jacob blessed his sons, the Servant had been called Shiloh, giver of rest (NIV, footnote). Shalom meaning the fleeting times of peace between nations has receded into the background. Now peace is viewed as the end of hostilities between a rebellious humanity and the righteous God. The end of rebellion and disobedience, of scorn and contempt for God by the mortals of earth.

It was this meaning of peace that the company of angels announced over the fields of Bethlehem. “Peace on earth,” their ranks sang. “God and man,” we sing, “are reconciled.” “God was in Christ,” writes St. Paul, “reconciling the world to himself.”

That’s the great peace that all of us here at the Northwestern Lutheran wish you, our faithful readers, in this season of celebration. There’s a sign-off, used by our pastors at the end of their sermons and familiar to most of our readers. Written by St. Paul, it captures the blessings of the season. We pass it on to you in Moffatt’s translation:

God’s peace, that surpasses all your dreams,  
Keep guard over your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

*James P. Schaefer*

# Tonight was Christmas Eve

by Elizabeth Hastings  
with Susan Degner

The year was 1943. The waves of World War II had ravaged my city. Rubble and broken glass were everywhere. People walked the streets looking sad and dirty. Some would pull little wagons with their belongings.

I lived in an apartment house. Bombs had blown the tile off the roof exposing wooden rafters and the wooden attic floor. Nearby the apartment was a hill where a freight train sat. The freight train had been bombed. Smoldering fires burned inside it.

We who lived in the apartment house noticed from time to time sparks and debris from the smoldering train would blow to our apartment roof. We knew the wooden floor and rafters could easily start on fire so we decided to take turns keeping watch.

Tonight was Christmas Eve. I was given the ten o'clock to midnight shift. I climbed up to the attic and began my vigil. It was cold and lonely up there. I sat with a broomhandle with a potato sack nailed to it. Buckets of water and boxes of sand surrounded me. As I sat, I started thinking of Christmas Eves past. The tears started pouring down my face. I felt very sorry for myself. There was no festive room, no Christmas tree or carols, and how I missed the people I had lost.

A falling star streaked across the sky and caught my attention. I had not been aware of the clear night sky but now I could see stars blinking everywhere. As I looked up I recognized the Big Dipper and other constellations just as I had seen them as a child with my father's guidance.

Gazing at the stars made me think of those shepherds on the dark hills of Bethlehem. They were poor and cold and lonely too, yet God came to them. God told them their Savior had come. Suddenly I didn't feel nearly as lonely or sad. My Savior had come too. . . .

As I sat there, I didn't have a Christmas tree with glowing candles and shiny ornaments, a warm living room, nice gifts for everyone, Christmas music, and the smell of delicious foods all around. All these material treasures—I had learned—can be destroyed so quickly. Here on the attic roof I realized anew only God's love in the Christchild remains forever. □

*Elizabeth Hastings, a member of Redeemer, Tucson, Arizona, told her story to Susan Degner, a member of Star of Bethlehem, Santa Maria, California.*