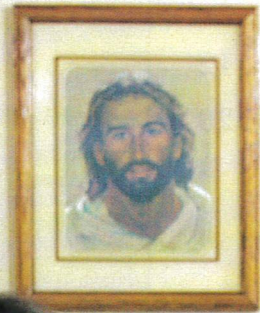


March 15, 1991

the Northwestern Lutheran



What is
therapy?

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FORWARD

- Dramatic changes in the USSR in the past year have meant new opportunities to spread the gospel. A three-man exploratory team recently visited the Soviet Union to evaluate the possibilities for mission work there. "The door is open now," says Harold Essmann. "It wasn't yesterday, and it may not be tomorrow." Read about the "window of opportunity" on page 106.
- Most of you are familiar with *Meditations*, the devotional magazine produced by Northwestern Publishing House since 1957. A reader who felt the most appreciated devotions were those that offered

comfort in times of trial urged editors at NPH to publish the best of the "comfort meditations" in book form. On page 110 Lyle Albrecht tells the story behind *For Such a Time as This*.

- We welcome a new district correspondent, Jonathan C. Voss, for the South Atlantic District. The reporters count on you to provide them with news. Their names are listed in the masthead, and their addresses are listed in the WELS *Yearbook*. Please help them, and us, by sending them information about your congregation and its organizations, your school, or about members of the WELS.

DJS

*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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Outlasting death

by Robert H. Hochmuth

You will not let your Holy One see decay (Psalm 16,10).

In competition with medical science, death still holds an undefeated record. But in Psalm 16 David, facing death, expresses confidence in a triumph over hell and grave.

Anticipated

He's not just whistling past the cemetery, though his defiance of death is bolder than an ordinary person like himself has any right to assert on his own. For any sinful person to defy death is hollow deception, because death is the consequence for the creature who desecrates the Creator's design for life on his planet. And it's not an end; it is the beginning of an eternal separation.

David's confidence in a triumph over death and hell was not self-assurance; he recognized that, just as for other mortals, decay after death awaited his body. His was confidence in the promised Savior. David was anticipating the victory to be achieved by the One whose body would never undergo decay in a grave.

Achieved

He identified him as God's Holy One. This is the one who became our brother, just like us, born of woman, but sinless. Every moment of his life he was carrying out the Father's desires. In all he said and did he remained in perfect harmony with what God's demands require of members of our race. He had come to trade places with us, obeying in our stead, and giving himself, the innocent One, to atone for the guilty. He died a real death. But he did not suffer the last earthly consequence of sin: decay in a grave.

It was impossible for death to keep a hold on Jesus. In particular he was to be immune to decay, because the Father intended to raise him from the grave to testify to the world that his Son had paid the complete and final price of forgiveness for restoring sinners to the family of God.

In short, Jesus outlived death, and because he lives all will live. He was the one who shattered the curse of death for all. With confidence in him, David

could look forward to deliverance from death and to his own resurrection, too.

Enjoyed

And so can we. We will outlast our death. After all, we were crucified with Christ; the penalty for sin has been endured. And as with mumps or chicken pox, we don't have to endure it again. Now we are exempt from another attack of guilty death. Furthermore, through baptism we have been buried with Christ, and we also share in his resurrection triumph. Jesus' resurrection guarantees our soul is not condemned and our body will be raised to be like his. What promises he confers on us when we come to the end of our sojourn on this earth!

His victory also gives us day by day the lift we need for living above the fear of death in our distressed and crumbling world. In every circumstance we can claim for ourselves the assurance expressed in another psalm: "I will not die but live."

"And will proclaim what the Lord has done," is the way that expression of assurance continues. Enjoying a guaranteed victory over death and looking forward to a resurrection triumph with our living Lord is no private affair.

Our ambitions can demonstrate to the next generation that the prospect of outlasting death as partners with Christ is supreme in what rates as a successful life. Let's give youth a pattern for investing time and energies in the interest of knowing him more intimately and walking with him more devotedly.

Let's encourage the aging with the expectation of facing, not just the sunset of life, but a sunrise, when Jesus will come to raise us and confer his glory on our resurrected bodies.

A world around us, having no valid hope beyond this life, needs our witness that the triumph of Jesus is a historical event. He is alive. Joined to him by faith, we too will rise from the grave to participate in outlasting death.



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



“Honey, I just talked with Debbie. She started seeing a counselor. Would you believe? Our daughter! Seeing a therapist! Where did we go wrong?”

“Now just hold on. Going to a therapist isn’t the end of the world. Maybe she’s got some special problem and just wants to get some help.”

“Oh yeah? I bet she’s blaming her parents for all her problems. Who

What is

by Joanne Halter

knows what she’s dumping on us? That therapist is probably dissecting her childhood and analyzing every little thing we did wrong.”

“Why are you so upset about this? You know, I’ve thought about going to a therapist myself. Sometimes it seems like it would be a good idea to have someone to help me sort things out—you know, to help me when things get so overwhelming and confusing. I know that at times I’m no picnic to live with either. There’s got to be a better way to deal with all the stress! Maybe we could go together to see someone.”

“Oh, so now you’re calling me crazy too!”

“No, I’m not calling anybody crazy. But it seems we have some very different ideas of what therapy is all about.”

Like most things in life, it’s hard to know exactly what therapy is all about unless you have experienced it first hand. Perhaps your only knowledge of therapy is based on chuckling at the characters in group therapy on the old Bob Newhart show. Maybe it’s that feeling of fright when hearing about foreign or unknown techniques such as “primal scream therapy.” In reality, however, most therapists engage in a style of practice which is neither so humorous nor so exotic.

I think the best answer to the question, “What can I expect in therapy?” is simply, “Therapy is about growth and change.” Therapy is a process which teaches you how to look at yourself and thereby understand, at least partially, why your life works the way it does. But just as education does not make you intelligent, therapy by itself does not make you happy or “cure” you.

Some people expect therapy to be magical. They try therapy as a last resort, bringing with them impossible hopes. Wouldn’t it be wonderful if a lifetime’s worth of problems would disappear after one fifty minute session! This is a fantasy expectation that even the best therapist cannot deliver. Therapy is work, not magic.

Work for both to do

Both therapist and client have jobs to do. The therapist’s is to listen, to clarify, to educate, and to encourage. The therapist’s job is not to make decisions, pro-

therapy?

vide ready-made solutions, take sides in a blame situation, or be a "paid friend."

The client's job is to dig, think, reflect, to struggle to change faulty patterns of thought and behavior. This may be a slow and painful process. An ultimate goal in therapy is to enable the client to become more independent of the therapist.

Someone once compared therapy to a course in auto mechanics. Your car may still break down, but with the knowledge you have gained, you'll be able to tell how serious the problem is, when to get something fixed and when to ignore it, and often you'll be able to fix it yourself. Stress and crises will continue to be part of life, but therapy can help you recover more quickly and to a greater degree from difficult experiences.

At Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service we provide therapy in the framework of Christian faith. Each new client is given a brochure which says in part, "It is our prayer that your relationship with your Christian counselor will help you and/or your family members to gain a better insight into your Christian daily living and help you to develop a more healthy Christian life. This certainly requires effort on your part and effort on the part of your Christian counselor. Change does not happen by itself; we would fail most miserably by ourselves. But the strength of a gracious God can assist us. To live a Christian life can be both a joy and a challenge to all of us."

The counseling process

Christian counselors help people examine their options and sort out what they can do from what God must do. Part of looking inward involves discovering things that can't be changed as well as things that we don't want to change or let go of. People are by nature resistant to change, even when the change is clearly for the better.

Christian counselors also try to help people understand that although there aren't "fix-it" solutions to every problem, acceptance and peace may be achieved by seeing things from a new perspective. This new perspective is called reframing. Reframing asks one to

look at a bucket which is half empty and move on to the appreciation that the bucket is half full. A growing knowledge of God's presence and love may make it easier to accept the continuing pain and fears in life.

Predicting success for people in therapy can be tied into a number of key factors, including an openness of self to the process; a willingness to work, realizing that it may be difficult and even painful; and an acceptance that perfection is unattainable this side of heaven.

Following Christ's own example, Christian counselors strive to meet individual needs. At times Christ was gentle and at times he was stern. He knew there were times to confront and times to encourage, times to speak and times to listen. He helped some gain insight through parables and helped others with a more directive style. He was able to focus on the spiritual without neglecting the physical and emotional. He knew when to focus on the present without excluding the past or neglecting to keep the future in view.

Opening ourselves to possibilities

Debbie's parents greeted the news of her therapy announcement with differing reactions. Her father was upset, defensive, and scared; her mother expressed a more positive, accepting attitude. Both of these reactions may be fairly typical, reflecting the variety of responses people have to something about which they're not familiar. Debbie herself may feel very comfortable seeking counseling to help her through the rough times in her life. Probably several of her friends have been helped by professional counseling.

Therapy is not frightening, mysterious, or awful. If you feel you might need it, try it. The results may bring new blessings in your life.



Joanne Halter is director of social services at Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service, Milwaukee.

Standing on Red Square in the shadow of St. Basil's Cathedral and the towers of the Kremlin, the mission exploratory team remarked how recent events and changes in the Soviet Union made such a visit possible.

The members of this mission team, Ronald Freier, Duane Tomhave, and Harold Essmann, were charged with determining if and how our synod might carry on mission activities in the Soviet Union.

Standing near the Kremlin, we were reminded of the long history of the Russian people. Already in 1156, on the banks of the Moscow River, the first kremlin or fortress was built. In succeeding years larger and sturdier fortresses found their place on the same site, until at the end of the 15th century the present walls were completed.

Today within those walls the wheels of government grind out the regulations that affect the lives of the 290 million citizens of the Soviet Union. These laws and regulations also have an effect on the religious lives of the Russian people.

When we view the religious condition of the Soviet nation, we might be surprised. Surprised that 70 percent of the people profess to be atheists, while another 18 percent indicate they are members of the Russian Orthodox Church. That church, however, keeps no record of baptisms or membership. Nine percent of the population, especially in the central Asian republics, are Muslims, while only three percent belong to the Jewish, Roman Catholic, or Protestant religions.

While Christianity was brought to the USSR over a thousand years ago, it was violently suppressed in



Missionary exploratory team, Freier and Tomhave (back, left to right), and Essmann (front, right) with Pastor Peter Konovalchik of the Baptist Church in Leningrad.

A window of

the early years of the Bolshevik revolution beginning in 1917.

Michael Binyon in his book *Life in Russia* states, "Today the Russian Orthodox Church is sadly diminished from its former glory. In Tsarist days there were 57,000 priests and 94,000 monks and nuns in 54,000 churches and 1025 monasteries. Today there are a few thousand priests serving about 7,500 churches. There are only three seminaries, 15 convents, and three monasteries."

This decline is the result of the repression by the state, especially in the first 20 years after the 1917 revolution and hastened by Nikita Krushchev.

Our visit to the Soviet Union revealed that religious belief is more demanding and more committed than in the western world, where acceptance and affluence have dulled religion's cutting edge. A person who belongs to a church can never have a place in the huge bureaucracy that rules the nation.

Today there is greater freedom of religion than has been known in 70 years. President Gorbachev, in one of his ten objectives of reform, states that his purpose is "to change the culture of the Soviet Union in such a manner that in exchange for more personal freedom, individual citizens will be encouraged to assume more risk and responsibilities for their personal lives." To achieve this objective, he promises increased freedom of expression in speech, the press, literature, art, drama, and religion.

The result has been a resurgence of religious activity in the Soviet Union. We observed people of all ages, young and old, worshipping. We attended the first-ever meeting of religious publishers, primarily Baptists, held in the Soviet Union. This meeting, held in Moscow, drew editors from Latvia, Russia, the Ukraine, Kazhis, and other areas. Its purpose was to promote the cause of spreading the gospel through the printed word.

In Leningrad we consulted with a Baptist pastor, Peter Konovalchik, who shepherds a congregation of

HAROLD ESSMANN

opportunity in the USSR

by Harold A. Essmann

3,000 souls and superintends ten congregations in the Leningrad area. We asked him how we might enter the country, and how we could conduct a mass media ministry in the Soviet Union. "I would use radio but most of all television," he said. "A well prepared program will reach many people."

In Moscow we met with the officials of the Union of Evangelical Christians—Baptist. They assured us that we could gain entrance into the Soviet Union now.

There is a need for our presence in the Soviet Union. Most people there have no knowledge of Christ their Savior. The Muslims are growing rapidly. Perestroika makes it possible to enter now, and we don't know how long that condition will last.

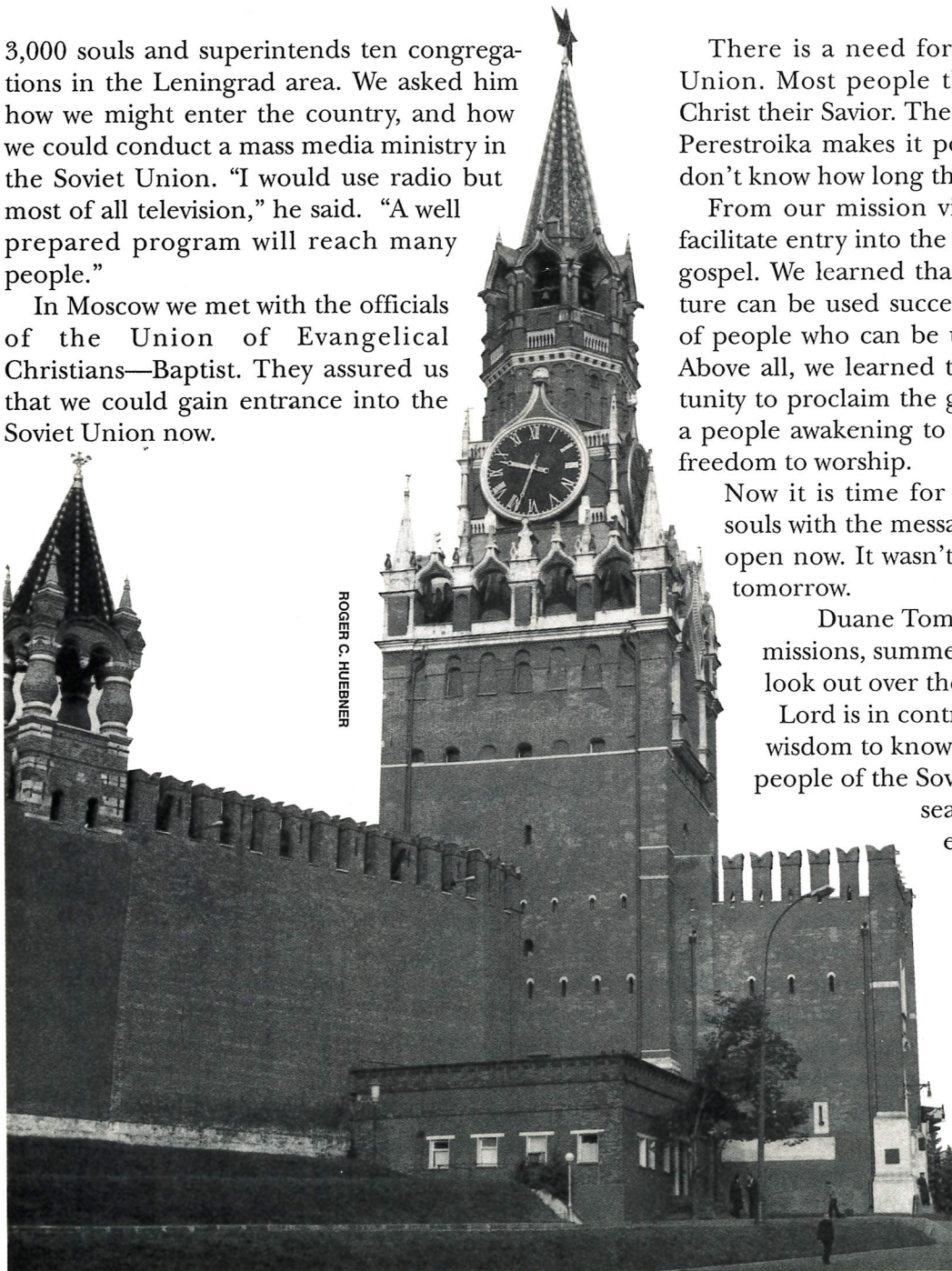
From our mission visit we gained knowledge to facilitate entry into the Soviet Union to proclaim the gospel. We learned that radio, television, and literature can be used successfully. We gained the names of people who can be useful contacts in the future. Above all, we learned there is a tremendous opportunity to proclaim the gospel in the Soviet Union to a people awakening to new freedoms, especially the freedom to worship.

Now it is time for us to supply these thirsting souls with the message of God's love. The door is open now. It wasn't yesterday, and it may not be tomorrow.

Duane Tomhave, administrator for world missions, summed up our mission visit. "As we look out over the Soviet Union, we realize the Lord is in control. We ask that he give us the wisdom to know how to reach the 290 million people of the Soviet Union, some of whom are searching for spiritual truth and eternal meaning to life. In the

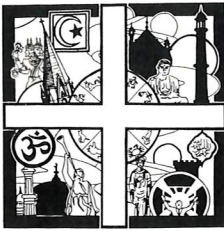
Union of Soviet Socialistic Republics, a window of opportunity is open now. We don't know for how long."

The Board for World Missions has established a USSR—Eastern Europe Fund. Gifts may be sent to 2929 N. Mayfair Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53222.



Kremlin wall and entrance tower in Moscow. The tower is one of five entrances to the Kremlin.

Harold Essmann is secretary of the Board for World Missions Committee for Mission Expansion.



Astrology

by Roland Cap Ehlke

According to *Webster's New World Dictionary* astrology is "1) originally, primitive astronomy 2) a pseudoscience claiming to foretell the future by studying the supposed influence of the relative positions of the moon, sun and stars on human affairs."

A modern astrologer defines it this way: "Astrology . . . is shown to have been essentially, from the very dawn of human civilization, *the result of man's attempt to understand the apparent confusion and chaos of his life-experiences by referring them to the ordered patterns of cyclic activity which he discovers in the sky*" (Italics are the author's. Dane Rudhyar, *The Practice of Astrology*).

Astrology then and now

Astrology has been traced back to the ancient Chaldeans and Babylonians of about 3000 B.C. At first astrology was concerned with observing and recording data about the heavenly bodies. (Today this is the purpose of *astronomy*.) Gradually the stars and planets came to be regarded as supernatural beings, gods whose movements were equated with divine actions. The ancients worshiped the heavenly bodies and looked to them for guidance.

Modern astrology's connection with the ancient gods is not always apparent. But the heavenly bodies are still thought to influence and foretell events on earth in a godlike, supernatural manner. In the East astrology is an integral part of daily life. For example, in India more than 60 percent of the population regularly consult astrologers.

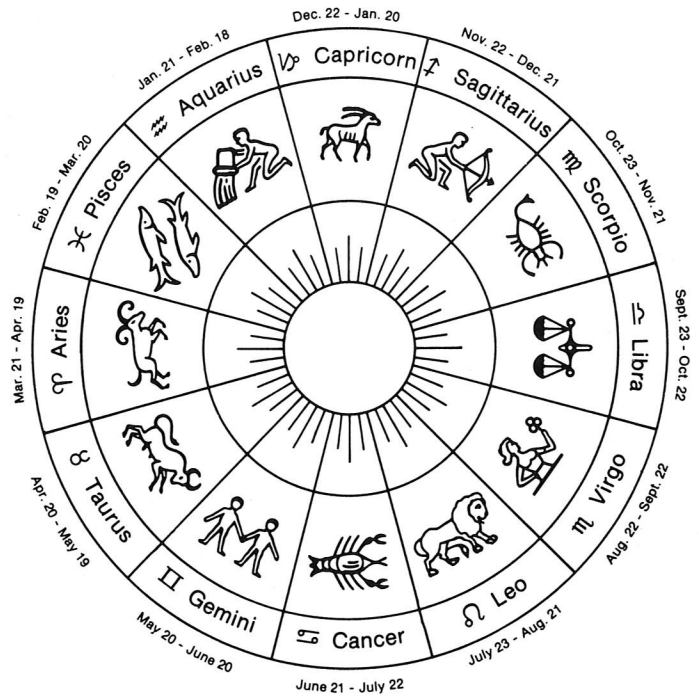
In the Western world it has become big business. As many as 50 million Americans, mostly women, look at the alignment of stars for guidance. Some are casual seekers; others are in earnest. A "conservative" 1983 estimate asserted that 175,000 part-time and 10,000 full-time astrologers practice in the United States. These numbers may well be much higher today. Horoscopes (daily astrological forecasts based on a person's birth date) appear in more than 2000 U.S. newspapers.

Someone has remarked, "History has shown that astrology thrives best in times of religious decline and of social unrest." The troubled times in which we live account for many people, including many churchgoers, looking to the stars for answers to the future.

Signs of the zodiac

"What's your sign?" has become a common conversation piece. Some 80 percent of Americans are able to answer that query. For the few who are still among the uninformed, the "sign" is one of the 12 divisions of the zodiac, each represented by a symbol.

The zodiac is an imaginary belt in the heavens along which the sun appears to travel. If your birthday is between July 23 and August 22 your "sign" is Leo, the lion. This means you are likely to have certain lion-like characteristics, such as a bold personality. Your daily horoscope or an astrologer will tell you what to expect or how to behave on any given day.



Signs of the Zodiac

Astrology, then, is the attempt to find life's meaning in the sky. It is based on the assumption that what happens in the sky affects what happens here on earth. Understanding astrology supposedly helps people to know how their lives have been influenced in the past and how they will be affected in the future by the heavenly bodies.

Astrology faces numerous scientific, practical, philosophical, and common-sense difficulties. Some of them are:

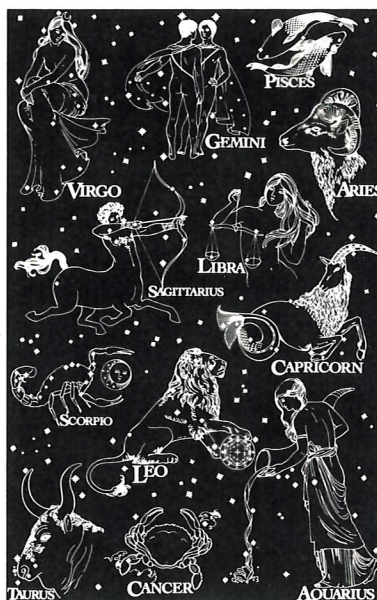
- Astrology is built on an ancient faulty view of the universe. It has an earth-centered view of the heavens, and new planets have been discovered since the birth of astrology.
- Because of shifts in the heavens, a person's birth-sign today is not what it would have been 2000-2500 years ago on the same date; yet astrology does not make this adjustment.
- Twins often have different futures, although according to astrology they should have similar fates.
- Astrology does not account for mass tragedies—such as the Jews and Christians killed under Hitler.
- Its predictions are often very vague. A *Time* magazine article some years ago noted: "Break a leg when your astrologer told you the signs were good, and he can congratulate you on escaping what might have happened had the sign been bad. Conversely, if you go against the signs and nothing happens, the astrologer can insist that you were subconsciously careful because you were forewarned."
- Often astrological predictions fail to come true. For example, one study of more than 3000 public predictions by astrologers showed that only 11 percent were accurate.

Astrology in the Bible

In Old Testament times, pagan worship was often connected with astrology. The calf worship which crops up from time to time in Bible history involved the zodiacal sign Taurus, the bull. The well-known god Baal was the Phoenician sun-god, and the "Asherah pole" represented the worship of either Venus or the moon. She was the goddess of love, fertility, and good luck. Astrological worship involved such terrible practices as the sacrifice of children. (See 2 Kings 17:16-23.)

Through his prophets God warned: "Do not learn the ways of the nations or be terrified by signs in the sky, though the nations are terrified by them" (Jeremiah 10:2).

Nevertheless, throughout the years people have tried to reconcile astrology, at least in its milder forms,



with the Bible. Luther's co-worker Philip Melanchthon advocated and practiced astrology, as do some Christians today who fail to see it for what it is.

In defense of this it's argued that the wise men who paid homage to the Christchild were astrologers and that God originally created the heavenly bodies as "signs." But the star of Bethlehem was a one-time supernatural phenomenon. God used it to lead the wise men to the newborn King, whom they properly worshiped. And in Genesis 1:14-19 we learn what kind of "signs" the heavenly bodies are. They "serve as signs to mark seasons and days and years." Our sense of time comes

from these signs, but not our direction in life.

That comes from God. Though he doesn't tell us everything about the future, the Lord tells us what we need to know: "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him" (Romans 8:28). And so Jesus says, "Do not worry about tomorrow" (Matthew 6:34).

The brightest Star

In addition to being contrary to God's word, a danger of consulting the daily horoscope "for fun" lies in getting hooked on it. You may not take it seriously, but then one day the prediction for your sign comes true. You begin to wonder if . . . And although the daily horoscopes offer practical advice, there are many places to go for that. The best place, of course, is God's word. The book of Proverbs is full of advice for day-to-day living.

If we know people who are dabbling in astrology or deeply involved in it, we can point them in a better direction. We can point to Christ.

God loved us enough to give his only Son for our salvation; therefore, "how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" (Romans 8:32). Rather than entrusting our lives to the stars, then, we can entrust them to Jesus, "the bright Morning Star" (Revelation 22:16).

Further reading: *Wizards That Peep* by Siegbert Becker; *Horoscopes and the Christian* by Robert Morey.

Next: Satanism.

Roland Cap Ehlke is an editor at Northwestern Publishing House.

For such a time as this

by Lyle E. Albrecht

Practically every book on a library shelf, if it could speak, would have its own story to tell—perhaps about its author, its content, or the idea that led to its publication. Each story would be different. This is the story behind one such book, or more accurately, series of books, entitled *For Such a Time as This*.

Its origin can be traced back to 1957. That is the year Northwestern Publishing House's devotional magazine *Meditations* had its first limited press run. Since then millions of copies of *Meditations* have been read by people throughout the world. Most readers have used it for their personal or family devotions. Some have used it as an evangelism tool. Still others have left copies with shut-ins or patients in hospitals or nursing homes. Today 90,000 copies of *Meditations* are printed and distributed each quarter of the year.

Feedback from readers to the editors of *Meditations* has indicated that among the most appreciated devotions were those that brought comfort from God's word, messages that spoke to the specific trials and problems to which even God's people are no strangers. Pastors reported that they found many of the meditations useful as they ministered to the ill and the shut-ins.

One pastor in particular suggested that the editors read through the past issues of *Meditations* and select the best of these "comfort meditations" and publish them in book form. That suggestion, echoing the thoughts expressed previously by others, gave birth to *For Such a Time as This*.

At the publishing house the project started out with the working title *The Bedside Reader*. The goal then was to select 100 meditations, each based on texts from the Gospels, the Epistles, and the Old Testament, and to publish a book of devotions, not just for the bed-ridden, but for any Christian to read at the bedside nightly.

Pastor Henry Paustian of Watertown, Wisconsin, was asked to undertake the challenging task of reading all the meditations from 1957 to the present, selecting the best of those that expressed the idea of comfort. Pastor Paustian read some 12,045 individu-

al meditations. This time-consuming project he characterized as a "rewarding experience." Initially he found that approximately ten percent of the devotions broadly related to the general theme of comfort. Further reading and refinement narrowed the selection to 400, which he then submitted to NPH for editing.

It soon became evident to the editors, as it had to Pastor Paustian, that while the devotions did indeed include material that would be helpful to the sick and the shut-ins, they spoke to a far larger audience. Here were devotions that dealt with the trials and troubles that challenge all of us, the guilt that plagues our consciences, the personal problems that sometimes put us on the verge of despair, the doubts and uncertainties that overwhelm us, the fiery trials that scorch our faith, and the moments in life that seem difficult and discouraging.

At this point, as the series took shape, it seemed to take on a life of its own. A new title *For Such a Time as This* surfaced almost of itself. The title comes from a thought that Mordecai brought to Queen Esther's attention during a time of trial and tribulation for the Old Testament people of God. "For such a time as this," Mordecai suggested, God had placed Esther in a position of honor and influence so that she could bring God's promised help to God's people. *For Such a Time as This* covers the thrust of these devotions that speak to us in times such as these.

The choice of a cover design literally came off the wall. One of the decorations on my office wall at NPH is a press proof of a 1972 Lenten bulletin series entitled "Into Thy Hands." One of the bulletin covers portrays the hands of God reaching down and the caption "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit." That picture, that artwork, and the symbolism of God's hands reaching down to protect us, to enfold us, and to uplift us seemed most appropriate for a series of devotions that comfort us by reminding us that no matter what our situation in life may be, we are always safe in God's hands.

The title *For Such a Time as This* was superimposed over the artwork and reversed out so that most of the lettering appears in white. There is one important

exception. The letters "h-i-s" in the word **this** are printed in a separate color. This was done to remind all of us that no matter in what situation we find ourselves, this is still **his**, God's time, that our lives and the events in our lives happen not by chance, but under the providential direction of our Father in heaven.

As for the devotions themselves, they are essentially the best of the comfort meditations from the past 33 years. Minor changes have been made in some of the original devotions to bring them into line with current procedures. For example, *Meditations* switched from the King James Version to the New International Version of the Bible in 1981. To be consistent all Scripture quotations and citations in *For Such a Time as This* are from the NIV. Capitalization and punctuation principles also reflect current style. Titles of some devotions were changed to reflect more accurately the content of that individual devotion. Individual devotions were then put into categories.

Divine Counsel for Troubled Lives, Comfort through Prayer, Lessons for Life, The Road from Grace to Glory, Faith Looks to the Future, Tests of Faith, A Matter of Death and Life, and Through Suffering to Glory are examples of these categories.

In times such as these, *For Such a Time as This* is a most appropriate set of books.

Lyle Albrecht is an editor at Northwestern Publishing House.



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Looking inward

by Curtis A. Peterson

Christ gave his supper to bless his people: a means of conveying the forgiveness of sins he won for us on the cross. Yet, for the unworthy, communion brings God's judgment. This is why we examine ourselves before communing.

Scripture warns: "Therefore, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself" (1 Corinthians 11:27-29).

Our Lord's word makes simple bread and wine convey his true body and blood. The very words, "This is my body; this is my blood," which make the sacrament gospel bring judgment on the unbeliever, for they must be received in faith.

Faith believes the words, but faith does not make them true. The Lutheran doctrine of the "real presence" means that the communicants receive the body and blood of Christ in the bread and wine whether they believe or not.

For the weak in faith, the objective (that is, whether we believe or not) nature of the presence of the Savior is a wonderful comfort, for in the bread and wine are our Lord's life-giving body and blood not on account of our faith, but because he says so. His word guarantees it: "A bruised reed he will not break and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out" (Isaiah 42:3).

However, the same word which comforts the repentant sinner judges those who approach the table of the Lord in unbelief. The flippant or unre-



CLIF KOELLER

pentant eat and drink judgment on themselves. So do communicants who do not recognize the body of the Lord (that is, believe we receive his body and blood). They indeed receive the true body and blood of Christ, but in judgment, not for the forgiveness of sins. The sacrament taken in unbelief is received "in an unworthy manner." Such communicants sin against the body and blood of the Lord.

This is why we practice "close" communion. Those unable to examine themselves, those uninstructed or wrongly instructed should not commune until they understand the gospel and this sacrament.

The inward look of self-examination means asking ourselves whether we harbor unconfessed sins, whether we believe Jesus died for us, and whether we believe we receive the forgiveness of sins through the true body and blood of Christ given in the Lord's Supper.

But whenever we look inward, we shall find no good in us. Even the the great apostle Paul confessed, "I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature." When God sees our inmost sins, attitudes, and thoughts, we stand condemned. Self-examination only shows our need for God's mercy.

The psalmist prays: "If you, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?" The same psalm (130) gives the basis for our hope: "But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared." The Lord's Supper is a sacrament of forgiveness—it is gospel.



Curtis Peterson is pastor of Resurrection, Milwaukee.

Blessings and problems

In a recent report to the synod's pastors and church officers, Pastor Daniel W. Malchow, administrator for Communication and Financial Support, reported mission offerings from congregations in 1990 of slightly more than \$15.6 million. "For these gifts of love," he said, "we are extremely grateful."

But the synod also faces some "serious financial problems," he said. The increase in offerings over 1989 was only 0.5 percent. "This compares to a 1990 inflationary rate of about 6 percent," he pointed out.

He predicted that the "1991 synod convention will probably have to study and debate severe budgetary cutbacks or possibly even program eliminations. It is a simple economic principle that spending can be increased only to the degree that income is increased."

In addition to these mission offerings, the current budget (ending June 30) anticipates \$475,000 from gifts and memorials, \$350,000 from bequests, \$3.5 million from the WELS Gift Trust Fund, \$214,000 from endowment earnings, and another million dollars from other sources.

"These other sources of income raise a question of a concern," said Malchow. "What are we losing if mission offerings continue to fund less and less of the synod's budget? We are losing much. . . . A vital reason for every congregation's existence is to spread the saving message of the gospel in local areas and throughout the world."

The 1991 mission offering subscriptions are still being gathered, and will be reported at a later date.

Apache Marine first Arizonan to die in Persian Gulf War

"The Apache tribe laid a fallen warrior to rest Saturday," reported the Arizona Republic on Sunday, February 3.

"The body of Noline, the first Arizonan and the first Native American casualty of the Persian Gulf War, was gently lowered into the dusty soil of the San Carlos Indian Reservation."

Officiating at the funeral of Pfc. Michael A. Noline of the US Marine Corps were his pastor, Larry B. Pontel of the WELS congregation at Peridot and Pastor Arthur Guenther, the circuit pastor from Whiteriver.

"The service," said Guenther, "was a Lutheran service for a young Lutheran Christian soldier who had been killed in a tragic accident on the way back from the Kuwaiti front, traveling in convoy with the lights out in a strange country a long way from the valley of the Gila and San Carlos Rivers."

The 20-year-old scout for the 3rd Light Armored Infantry Battalion died in a collision of two armored vehicles after a raid near the Kuwaiti border.

Surviving are his father, William, an agent for the Bureau of Indian Affairs; his mother, Gloria; his widow, Arvella; a 2-year-old son and a 6-month-old daughter. He is also survived by three sisters, April, Jolene, and Billie.

According to Hutch Noline, a cousin of Mike, Mike was close to the front lines when he died. Mike spent most of his time at night watching for Iraqi infiltra-

tors. During the day, his battalion roamed the desert in eight-wheel light-armored vehicles. Their outposts were miles forward of most American troops as the first line of warning.

"His family is very religious," said Hutch. "They are Lutheran. They know he's with God." The family, reported Pastor Guenther, "wanted a simple service. Certainly the media were there en masse: TV cameras, still cameras, the governor, military and political figures, representatives from other tribes. Newspaper men and women. Radio hookups — all the usual. But the funeral, although held in a gym, was conducted in a very quiet, well-organized, and dignified way."

Pastor Guenther had a few words for the readers of the Northwestern Lutheran: "I feel that the members of our synod throughout the entire 50 states who support us missionaries and the Apache people with their prayers and treasures can take comfort out of this tragedy. To a great degree they are responsible for this young man being a Christian and passing from life to Life."



Noline

“Kid’s Topics” is the newest LWMS project

“Where is mission work?” is the theme of a projected annual publication of the Lutheran Women’s Missionary Society to be called “Kid’s Topics.” The society already produces an annual booklet “Topics” for mission society meetings. According to Mrs. D’Anne Thompson of the society’s Spiritual Growth Committee, “it will be a publication by kids, for kids, address-

ing the idea that mission work is everywhere, even next door.”

All children from kindergarten to eighth grade in WELS congregations are being asked to submit drawings and articles illustrating the theme “where is mission work?” Thompson said that the LWMS wants “the children to be a part of our evangelism outreach to all parts of the world both

home and abroad.”

The deadline for submitting articles and drawings is April 15. A letter from the LWMS has been sent to each congregation addressed to the pastors, principals, and Sunday school teachers with complete instructions. Interested parents and children are asked to contact their pastor, principal, or Sunday school teacher for further information.

THE BIBLE IN 365 READINGS

Continuing our program of reading through the complete Bible in one year, we list the fourth month of readings beginning April 1 and ending April 30.

April	1	Numbers 25—26
	2	Nm 27—29
	3	Nm 30—31
	4	Numbers 32—33:49
	5	Nm 33:50—36:13
	6	Deuteronomy 1—2
	7	Dt 3—4
	8	Dt 5—7
	9	Dt 8—11:12; Psalm 128
	10	Dt 11:13—14:21
	11	Dt 14:22—17; Ps 112
	12	Dt 18—21
	13	Dt 22—25:16
	14	Dt 25:17—28:14; Ps 135
	15	Dt 28:15—29
	16	Dt 30—32:44
	17	Dt 32:45—34:12; Ps 90,91
	18	Ps 136; Ps 50; Ps 14; Jude
	19	Joshua 1—4
	20	Jos 5—8:23
	21	Ps 28; Jos 8:24—10:43
	22	Jos 11—13:23; Ps 9
	23	Jos 13:24—15; Ps 133
	24	Jos 16—18:10; Ps 65; Ps 113; Ps 114; Ps 115
	25	Jos 18 :11—20; Ps 46
	26	Jos 21—22; Ps 125
	27	Jos 23—24; Ps 148; Ps 116; Ps 117
	28	Judges 1—3
	29	Ps 44; Ju 4—5
	30	Ju 6—8:28

Michigan District news

Pastor **Jon Bendewald** has been appointed as chairman of the District Youth Commission; Teacher **Kurt Mueller** has been appointed as a member of the same commission. Mr. **Howard Hill** of Trinity, Saline, has been appointed to the District Commission on Communication and Financial Support. . . . Pastor **Edwin Frey** will retire from Mt. Olive, Detroit on April 30th. . . . **Michigan LHS**, St. Joseph, observed the twentieth anniversary of the school on February 3. The three alumni of the school who have gone into the preaching ministry (Mark Freier, Mike Biedenbender, Tom Johnston) conducted the anniversary service. Special recognition was also given to those alumni who have gone into the teaching ministry. The school was able to replace its school bus after waiting many years.

—James L. Langebartels

Southeastern Wisconsin District news

Shoreland LHS, Somers, will celebrate its 20th anniversary with a special service on April 28. The school began with two teachers and 26 students. It now has a faculty of 17 and a student enrollment of 196. . . . Faith, Sussex, celebrated the 25th anniversary of its pastor, **Martin Scheele**, on Nov. 11. . . . Two Shoreland students and two faculty members presented a **slide presentation** of the high school at St. John in Antigua, West Indies. They plan to return prepared to talk about the work of the Lord on the islands of Puerto Rico and Antigua. . . . On Jan. 13 **Faith, Sussex**, held its mortgage burning celebration. . . . **Grace, Indianapolis**, celebrated 25 years of worship in their present sanctuary. Some of the events included purchase of a new church organ and a dedicatory concert performed by Peter Press, a WELS member who is pursuing a graduate degree in organ performance. . . . All 90 middle school students at **Wisconsin Lutheran School**, a joint effort of Faith and Epiphany congregations in Racine, “adopted” a serviceman from Racine County deployed in the Gulf War. The students shared their thoughts, support, and news from their hometown, pledging to pray for their pen pal each day.

—Robert A. Sievert

Religion in Amos' day

by James A. Aderman

The partition of the Holy Land into two separate countries not only destroyed the governmental unity of God's people, it destroyed their religious unity.

Israel's religious roots

When Israel rallied behind Jeroboam I and seceded from Judah, the new king established a new religion. He knew that if the religion of the land remained founded on the Old Testament and if the people in Israel followed the worship laws demanding annual pilgrimages to the temple in Jerusalem, the separateness of the two countries would soon erode. So he "made two golden calves. He said to the people, 'It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem.' One he set up in Bethel, and the other in Dan. . . . Jeroboam built shrines on high places and appointed priests from all sorts of people, even though they were not Levites." In addition, he instituted religious holidays in Israel at the same times that the Lord's laws demanded his people worship him in Jerusalem. Give some thought to how our society has set up activities which crowd out worship of God.

Israel's worship practices

A dozen kings and nearly two centuries later, in Amos' day, false religion abounded. Bethel, about 10 miles north of Jerusalem, continued as a key worship center. Amos only mentions in passing a worship center in Dan. However, he does add Gilgal, near the Jordan River and Jericho, and Beersheba, about 40 miles south of Jerusalem, as primary places of worship for the people of Israel.

Some facets of the Israelite's false worship mimicked their Godfearing cousins to the south. They presented sacrifices of grain and livestock, brought offerings, sang hymns, and celebrated feasts. Unfortunately, because they were not right with the true God, their attempts to worship him were rebuffed. "I hate, I despise your religious feasts," the Lord spat out. "Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Away with the noise of your songs!"

Israel's false security

In spite of the fact that Israel had drifted so far

from the teachings of the Old Testament, it felt secure in its relationship with God. Israel even mistakenly "longed for the day of the Lord," believing that Yahweh would soon free them forever from any heathen harm. That false belief gave the citizens in Israel the confidence that God would not allow them to be defeated in battle. But God says, "I abhor the pride of Jacob and detest his fortresses. I will deliver up the city. . ." (6:8).

The Lord's response

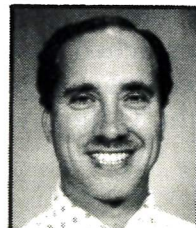
Amos' main audience was mixing the true religion with false. Worse than that, their worship had become a meaningless ritual; in fact, it became an opportunity to show off. God sneers, "Go to Bethel and sin; go to Gilgal and sin yet more. Burn leavened bread as a thank offering and brag about your freewill offerings—boast about them, you Israelites, for this is what you love to do." Those strong words should cause us to evaluate our approach to worship.

In chapter seven Amos is confronted by Amaziah, the priest of Bethel, who demands that Amos quit prophesying and go back to Judah. The Lord leveled a tragic curse on Amaziah and his family. Amaziah's attitude toward God's word was shared throughout the land. Note how the predictions of exile, destruction, and death which God pronounced over the rest of Israel are very similar to what the Lord said would befall Amaziah.

A faith relationship with the God who had promised the Messiah was absent in Amos' Israel. It was replaced with false gods, self-interest, and pride. Lives filled with gratitude for grace were replaced with lives reveling in injustice, prejudice, and suppression of the underclasses.

There are obvious similarities in our society. List several. Now think harder. Are those same attitudes apparent—to some degree—in your relationship with God? Is there a lack of willingness to be taught by him? Are there sins you'd rather not give up?

Listen: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins." Believe: "The blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from every sin." Now worship him!



James Aderman is pastor of Fairview, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Change and decay

Rich Taylor, high school guidance counselor in south suburban Chicago, knows the meaning of the words “change and decay.” It’s a whole different ballgame today from what it was in 1966 when Taylor started. The biggest change he’s seen is in the family structure.

Listen to Taylor: “Single parents, two working parents. We have kids who eat their breakfast and lunch here and then go home and make themselves dinner. The parents are just too busy. . . . The problems today are so much more intense than they ever were. Twenty years ago, only a few kids smoked a little pot and drank beer on Friday nights. What goes on today, it’s unreal.”

Sometimes people are overwhelmed by the change and decay which is all around. They feel like crying out: “Stop the world; I want to get off.” Or when confronted by tragedy, they cry out in anger: “Why?”

Why does it happen that a mother of five is killed at 1:00 a.m. while asleep on her living room couch when a jeep—going an estimated 70 mph—runs off the road, smashes into the house and crushes her? Marian Wlodarski did her best to keep the roads safe from drunken drivers. She volunteered for a Safe Ride hotline, which local teenagers called if they needed a lift from a sober driver. And she helped host alcohol-free parties on graduation night. The driver of the death vehicle was arrested on a charge of drunken driving. He had been arrested more than once before on the same charge.

Yes, we do live in a world of change and decay. But so did the hymn-writer Henry Lyte nearly a century and a half ago. He penned the familiar words: “Change and decay in all around I see.”

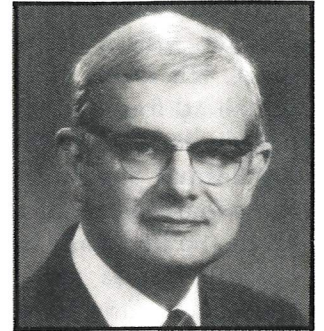
The Old Testament prophet Amos, a full seven centuries before Christ, witnessed decay in Israel and warned of God’s impending judgment. And in the days of Noah “the Lord saw how great man’s wickedness on the earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the time” (Genesis 6:5).

It has been said that the more things change, the more they stay the same. That’s certainly true when it comes to the decay of this world. But it is also true about God’s abiding grace and mercy.

The good news is about one who does not change in his love for us, one in whom there is no decay. The accumulated decay of this world was heaped on the perfect Lamb of God. To him who does not change we can cry out: “Lord, have mercy!”

The story goes that Henry Lyte gave a copy of his hymn “Abide with Me” to a relative shortly after he had preached his last sermon. Within three months the poet was dead. He had seen the change and decay of this world. But he had also learned to pray in faith: “O thou, who changest not, abide with me!”

Victor H. Prange



Victor Prange is pastor of Peace, Janesville, Wisconsin.

Boarding schools

Closing prep schools or making them common purpose schools would seriously damage our worker-training system and lead to an even greater shortage of church workers. In the last decade, no secondary school has sent as many graduates to Dr. Martin Luther College and Northwestern College as Martin Luther Prep School. Since 1980 our three prep schools have supplied almost 60 percent of our future pastors. The purpose and goal of a prep school is to prepare and encourage all students for fulltime ministry.

Peer pressure has great impact on teenagers. At prep schools students experience positive peer pressure that encourages them to consider DMLC or NWC. Many students have entered a prep school with little intention of becoming a pastor or teacher, yet God uses their friends to lead them into fulltime service in his church.

By diluting the purpose of prep schools, we'd lose these advantages and lose future church workers. Let's not kill the prep school system that so successfully serves our Lord. As we face a severe shortage of pastors, it remains the most effective way of providing God's flock with shepherds. That makes it worth the price tag.

*David Wenzel
St. James, Minnesota*

I agree that "parochial education is no substitute for Christian, caring, involved parents" (Letters, Jan.1). We support our schools because we are such parents. Our children went to MLPS because we love them.

Proximity does not equal family closeness. You can be in the same room with a teenager and be a thousand miles apart. Or you can be a thousand miles apart and be extremely close in heart and mind and love.

With the need for pastors, teachers, and lay leaders, Christian education (at home, at Christian elementary schools, at Christian high schools) is not counter-productive, but essential.

What good is a decent organ or a paved parking lot if we have an empty pulpit or organ bench? Soon we would have an empty parking lot and empty pews.

*Debera Fellers
Fort Collins, Colorado*

I differ with the letter writer regarding sending children to a boarding school as being counter-productive. Perhaps he hasn't experienced what today's public school system teaches our impressionable youth.

The Wisconsin Synod can be considered blessed by God that they follow his command to bring the children to him when they offer Christian education. Thanks be to God that some parents put their dollars where God commands we put our hearts.

*Debra Ross
Shelton, Connecticut*

My husband and I are Christian, caring, involved parents. Our son is in his first year, far from home, at MLPS. It was with much praying and soul-searching that the decision to allow him to attend was made. We were unsure about sending him so far away. Both our faith and family have grown stronger from our experiences with other families and the staff associated with this school. God indeed guided us in our decision.

This may not be best for every family, but isn't it wonderful that these alternatives in Christian education exist? We as a church need all our young people, whether as pastors, teachers, active laypeople, or witnesses for God. MLPS and others are filling this need.

*Ruth Anderson
Belle Plaine, Minnesota*

Lay ministry coordinator

The board of directors of the Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Ministries wishes to comment on the article "New head of lay ministry" (Sept. 15).

The phrase "leadership responsibilities" does not accurately describe Mrs. Krueger's role in the lay ministry. She is the coordinator of the lay ministry program, not its leader. She functions under the authority of the board of directors.

It is unfortunate that the letter by Bill Bonow, as it was submitted to the NL, was not screened by any member of the board of directors nor by any of the three staff pastors before publication.

*Thomas W. Horton
Chairman, WLIM*

Home schooling

I am concerned about the comments in the home schooling article (December). Dr. Dusseau states, "Giving up the social interaction of high school is not the best for everyone." The need for social interaction was determined by John Dewey, a humanist and founder of modern education. When did socialization become education? I agree with Dr. Dusseau's statement, "Different kids have different social needs," but aren't children required to be socially alike to fit into a classroom?

Mr. Baumgart states, "If you don't have the problems at home, you don't learn how to handle them." Do I have to be an alcoholic or drug user for my children to understand how to handle these problems?

Since the Board for Parish Education doesn't have any statistics on home schooled children, shouldn't this indicate a need to survey congregations for both numbers and ways to help home school families?

*W.C. Spenn
San Antonio, Texas*

WELS logo

I enjoy your magazine. I'm wondering if you could have pins made with the WELS logo. How attractive that would be!

*Agnes Jennings
Swartz Creek, Michigan*

"A very interesting suggestion," says John Barber, director of the Mass Media Ministry. "We will look into the possibility."

Letters between 100 and 200 words are preferred. In the interest of conciseness, letters are subject to editing. Full name, address and daytime 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.

NOTICES

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

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Administrative Assistant for Adult Discipleship

Rev. William Fischer has retired as administrative assistant for part-time education. The Board for Parish Education has been authorized to call a replacement. The BPE has revised the position description and changed the title. The responsibilities now include: work with the administrator of the BPE in promoting adult Christian education; assist with the budgeting process; analyze parish educational needs; initiate new areas of work; and coordinate the production of Christian education publications and materials for adult education.

Nominees should have experience in and knowledge of parish adult education programs (e.g., Bible class, adult instruction, family ministry, etc.), should have sound theological judgment, empathetic relational skills, and ability in planning, leadership, administration, and communication.

All nominations and pertinent information should be submitted by March 20 to Kenneth Kolander, Secretary, WELS BPE, 940 E. Florida Ave., Appleton, WI 54911.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

Administrative Assistant for Youth Discipleship

Mr. Richard Grunze has announced his retirement as administrative assistant for publications. The Board for Parish Education has been authorized to call a replacement. The BPE has revised the position description and changed the title. The responsibilities now include: work with the administrator of the BPE in promoting Christian education in the part-time agencies (birth—grade 12); assist with the budgeting process; analyze parish educational needs; initiate new areas of work; coordinate the publication of Christian education publications and materials for the youth in WELS part-time agencies.

Nominees should have experience in and knowledge of a congregation's part-time agencies, (e.g., Sunday school, VBS, youth ministry, etc.), should have sound theological judgment, empathetic relational skills, and abilities in planning, leadership, administration, and communication.

All nominations and pertinent information should be submitted by March 20 to Kenneth Kolander, Secretary, WELS BPE, 940 E. Florida Ave., Appleton, WI 54911.

RESULT OF COLLOQUY

In a colloquy conducted Nov. 19, 1990, Thomas Frei, formerly a missionary in the Evangelical Free Church of America, was found to be in confessional agreement with the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod. Mr. Frei is enrolled at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis., and will be eligible for a call into the ministry of the Wisconsin Synod upon completion of at least three quarters of studies there.

First Vice President Richard E. Lauersdorf
Professor Richard D. Balge
District President Karl R. Gurgel

CHRISTIAN COUNSELING POSITIONS

Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service has positions available for qualified Christian therapists. Basic requirements include a masters degree in the field, direct counseling experience, and the ability to apply Biblical truth in individual, family, and group therapy programs.

If you are interested and trained to counsel your fellow Christians in a church-related agency, please send your resume to Joanne Halter, Director of Social Services, P.O. Box 23980, Milwaukee, WI 53223; phone 414/353-5000.

TEACHER NEEDED

To instruct six American missionaries' children, grades 1-8, in Czechoslovakia. Position to begin summer 1991. Experience preferred. Salary commensurate with education and experience. One year commitment. Contact Pastor Matthew Luttmann, c/o Thoughts of Faith, P.O. Box 37, Stoughton, WI 53589. Thoughts of Faith is a church-related organization of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

CONFERENCE ON THE HEARING IMPAIRED

"How Shall the Deaf Understand," a national conference by the Committee for the Hearing Impaired, will be held at the Grand Milwaukee Hotel, Milwaukee, Wis., July 26-28. Information and registration forms are available from the Committee for Hearing Impaired (CHI), 8955 W. Palmetto Ct., Milwaukee, WI 53225; or phone Gene Seidel at 414/536-1651 Voice or TDD.

Ephphatha, a quarterly newspaper, is available free of charge. Mail or phone your request with name and address to the WELS CHI at the address or phone number listed above.

ATTENTION—ALL SINGLES

(Including those once married and now single)
(W)Holy Single IV, an enriching day for all singles, will be held on May 11. Sponsored by Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service, the day-long seminar will feature a key-note address and a choice of many break-out topics under the theme: "This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it." An evening social will cap the event.

Registration forms will be sent to everyone already on our mailing list. If you are interested but not on the list, please write to WINGS, c/o WLCFS, P.O. Box 23980, Milwaukee, WI 53223 or call Joanne Halter at 414/353-5000.

NORTHWESTERN COLLEGE 1991 CHORUS TOUR

March 20	8:00 p.m.	St. John, Caledonia, Minn.
March 21	7:30 p.m.	Twin Cities Metropolitan Area Concert Hopkins Eisenhower Community Center, Hopkins, Minn.
March 22	8:00 p.m.	St. John, Lake City, Minn.
March 23	7:00 p.m.	Trinity, Belle Plaine, Minn.
March 24	10:00 a.m.	Immanuel, Hutchinson, Minn.
	2:00 p.m.	Grace, Hutchinson, Minn.
	7:30 p.m.	St. John, Redwood Falls, Minn.
March 25	7:30 p.m.	Trinity, Winner, S.D.
March 26	7:30 p.m.	St. Paul, Batesland, S.D.
March 27	7:30 p.m.	Zion, Valentine, Neb.
March 28	7:30 p.m.	St. Paul, Broken Bow, Neb.
March 29	2:00 p.m.	Christ, Grand Island, Neb.
	7:30 p.m.	Zion, Clatonia, Neb.
March 31	6:30 a.m.	St. Mark, Lincoln, Neb.
	10:00 a.m.	Mt. Olive, Lincoln, Neb.
	7:30 p.m.	Lincoln Heights, Des Moines, Iowa
April 7	9:00 a.m.	St. Mark, Watertown, Wis.

WELS INTERNATIONAL YOUTH RALLY Los Angeles, July 12-15

Join us in a journey to the land of the stars, the sun, the surf, and Mickey Mouse. Meet WELS youth from all over the US and Canada. Participate in large and small groups. Celebrate being Christian. Cost \$175 per person. Call 916/725-0649.

CIVILIAN CHAPLAINS IN EUROPE

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For time and place of services, call the chaplains or WELS Special Ministries Board, 414/771-9357.

ANNIVERSARIES

CLATONIA, NEBRASKA—Zion School (40th), April 21, 3:00 p.m. Guest speaker, DMLC President Lloyd Huebner. Contact Randy Hoffmann, St. John School, Rt. 1, Box 40, Clatonia, NE 68328.

LAKE BENTON, MINN.—St. John (100th), June 23, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. Guest speakers, Gerhard Birkholz and Russell Schmidt. Dinner at noon; \$5.00 per person. Pastor Donald Windsperger, Box 246, Lake Benton, MN 56149; 507/368-4655.

ITEMS AVAILABLE

The following are available for the cost of shipping.

COPIER—Sharp SF 7100 desk top copier, about five years old. Abiding Shepherd Lutheran Church, P.O. Box 1676, Sherman, TX 75091; 903/892-0462.

ITEMS NEEDED

COMMUNION RAILING—Else Frese, 2407 Oak Ave., Bellevue, NE 68005; 402/731-3546.

NAMES WANTED

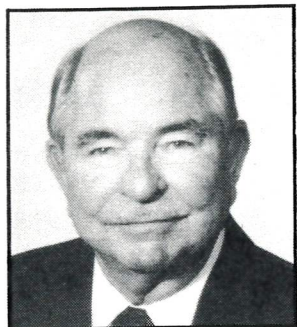
Survey work preliminary to conducting exploratory services. People interested in WELS services, contact pastor noted.

EVANSVILLE, INDIANA/HENDERSON, OWENSBORO, KENTUCKY—Pastor Steven Mischke, 10415 Scarlet Oaks Ct., Louisville, KY 40241; 502/425-1101.



DR. MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE 1991 CHOIR TOUR

March 24	7:00 p.m.	Bloomington Lutheran, Bloomington, Minn.
March 25	7:30 p.m.	St. Lucas, Milwaukee, Wis.
March 26	7:00 p.m.	Trinity, Bay City, Mich.
March 27	7:30 p.m.	St. Stephen, Adrian, Mich.
March 28	7:00 p.m.	Grace, St. Joseph, Mich.
March 29	1:00 p.m.	St. Luke, Kenosha, Wis.
	7:00 p.m.	St. Matthew, Janesville, Wis.
March 30	1:30 p.m.	St. John, Manitowoc, Wis.
	7:00 p.m.	Riverview, Appleton, Wis.
March 31	9:30 a.m.	Faith, Fond du Lac, Wis.
	2:30 p.m.	St. John, Jefferson, Wis.
	7:30 p.m.	Grace, Milwaukee, Wis.
April 1	7:30 p.m.	First, La Crosse, Wis.



I have a few miscellaneous matters to share with you this issue. Please read on.

◆ First of all, an announcement. We recommended to the January meeting of the Conference of Presidents, to whom we are responsible, that the Northwestern Lutheran drop notices announcing conferences of pastors and teachers. The presidents concurred. Since the start of the magazine in 1914, such notices have been appearing in the Northwestern Lutheran. Today fewer and fewer conferences are making use of this service, relying instead on written notices sent to the members by mail.

Doing this will permit us to have one page of notices per month. The one page will appear in the first issue of the month; there will be no notices in the second issue. This will give us at least one or two pages more of news and features each month. Most of our lay readers pay little heed to the notices. It is true — as has oft been noted—that many clerics start reading the magazine with the notices. We will still bring current information—changes of address and in ministry, for example—but other information will come in a much abbreviated form.

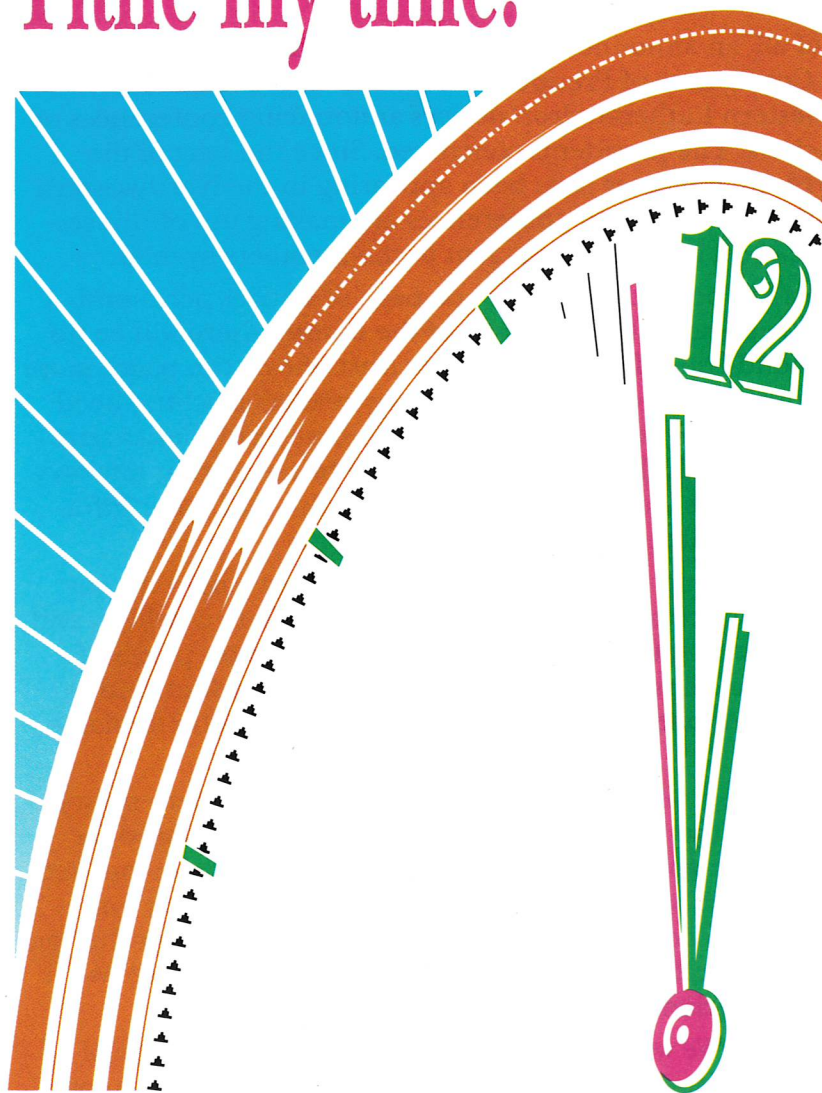
◆ There is a second matter. We would like to start a light humor department to appear occasionally. There is a lighter side to our lives, and we want to let it show. The field is wide open: bloopers, typos, pearls of wisdom from children, slips of the tongue, a humorous incident, and so on. We might call it “A touch of humor.” Perhaps you have a better name for it.

But we can't do it without you. On any given Sunday there must be a few of these items in the 1200 different church bulletins prepared for our congregations. The goings on in our 180,000 homes must be touched by laughter occasionally. Some of our 100,000 kids must be saying something funny. We want to hear about it. Send your contributions to Humor, Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N. Mayfair Rd., Milwaukee WI 53222. We'll start up as soon as sufficient material is on hand.

◆ A final item. We would like to share with our readers some of the good things that happen in the homes of the synod. We do this more frequently with our called workers than our lay readers. We would also like to give some space to our 118,000 lay readers. The only reason we don't is because we don't get the news. We would like to encourage you to share with us some of the good things that happen in our synodical homes. St. Paul urges us to “Rejoice with those who rejoice.” Besides our district correspondents, we have no other news-gathering system. Help us out!

James P. Schaffer

Tithe my time?



“Give one hour in ten to the Lord? You’ve got to be kidding! I’m running around like crazy already, trying to get everything done. How in the world could I spare an extra 90 minutes every day?”

But that’s exactly the way people react when confronted with the idea of tithing their money, and God says it doesn’t work that way, the way you’d think it would. You aren’t a dime poorer when you give it to the Lord. The more you give, the more you seem to have left over, either because you become more content with what you have or because God blesses you in other ways. For instance, he may keep things from wearing out, the way he preserved the clothing and shoes of Israel during their years in the wilderness.

by Ruth H. Kovaciny

And time-tithing works the same way. As Luther put it, “I was so busy today that if I hadn’t spent three hours in prayer I never would have gotten it all done.” And what that man accomplished in his life astounds us all. What couldn’t we accomplish if we spent that much time in prayer, too!

But praying for three hours kind of boggles the mind. Ten minutes is about all most of us can manage before we run out of things to say. Even keeping a prayer list helps us add only a few extra minutes. But that one hour in ten doesn’t all have to be spent in prayer and going to church. “Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.”

Writing a letter or making a visit to someone who’s lonely, making a casserole for somebody who’s sick, babysitting for a harried young mother, transporting the elderly, anything that gets us out of ourselves, would count.

And time can be doubled up, too. While you’re commuting or washing dishes or shaving, you can listen to tapes of the Bible, or other inspirational tapes. When you go to a baseball game, take along a fatherless boy. Or say a little prayer while waiting in line.

The important thing is not that you spend exactly one hour in ten for God and others. The important thing is that you set aside some time and don’t just give God a few left-over minutes, if there are any. God expects the first-fruits of your income and the same thing goes for time. Don’t join that club if it means you wouldn’t have time to sing in the choir. Don’t take that promotion if it means you’re too busy to be an elder. Review your schedule every now and then to make sure you’ve got your priorities in order.

Still aghast at the idea? Remember, God had the Israelites set aside an even larger percentage for him—one day out of seven. And if something is recommended by God, you can be sure it’s worth giving it a try.

Ruth Kovaciny is a member of Lamb of God, Columbus, Ohio.