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# The man with the book

by Richard E. Lauersdorf

*Your word is truth* (John 17:17).

Seldom do artists show Martin Luther without the book. From Schadow's monument in the marketplace at Wittenberg to Cranach's famous portrait done in oils, Luther is shown with the Bible in his hands.

How about those who bear his name? "I ask that men make no reference to my name and call themselves not Lutherans, but Christians," our forefather said. "Christ alone is our Master. He teaches me and all believers one and the same doctrine." Such words remind us what we ought to be holding in our hands.

## On the word

Remember that day at Worms. April 18, 1521. Filling the hall were the politically powerful of church and state, and one humble monk from Wittenberg. Asked if he would take back anything of what he had written, the monk bravely replied, "Unless I can be instructed and convinced with evidence from the holy Scriptures or with open, clear, and distinct grounds and reasoning — and my conscience is captive to the word of God — then I cannot and will not recant." Then came that famous line, "Here I stand. I can do no other. God help me. Amen!"

Luther stood on the word. All of it, nothing more and nothing less. What the word said, he said. What the word taught, he taught. What the word opposed, he opposed. "Sola Scriptura" was his theme — Scripture and Scripture only.

What about those who would bear his name today?

It is no secret that in some Lutheran circles schools which should be citadels of the word have instead become centers for questioning. Lecture halls where "Thus saith the Lord" should ring out clearly, echo instead the challenge, "Yea, hath God said?" The book which should be revered as God's inspired, inerrant word is instead poked at by man's little mind and shredded by man's critical methods.

Thank God, for it is only his doing, that such is not the case in our schools. But the question remains, "What about me?" Am I standing on the book? Am I willing to abide by what it says whether it always meets my fancy? Do I accept what it clearly

reveals about salvation, creation, the role of man and woman, the practice of church fellowship, the sanctity of human life?

## In the word

Studying and searching, learning and lecturing, professing and preaching, Luther lived in the word. On his deathbed a scrap of paper was found in his pocket with this little note, "No one can think that he has tasted the holy Scriptures thoroughly until he has ruled over the churches with the prophets for a hundred years."

Then followed the sentence, "This is true, we are all beggars." The man with the book knew how much more he needed to learn from that book.

What about us? Is hearing the word the highlight of our week? Is searching the word the main moment of each day? Is the word at the heart and center of our being or viewed as something we once learned all about in our confirmation days?

## With the word

Often Luther is accused of not being too concerned about reaching out with the word. Because his mission field was narrower than ours does not mean that he had no concern for missions. It was no small feat for our forefather to reach out with the word to the burghers of Saxony and the citizens of Germany. And he did it with an enthusiasm and energy that make ours look anemic. In his sermon on Matthew 23:15, delivered on September 25, 1538, Luther tells us what he thinks of mission work. He preached, "The very best of all works is that the heathen have been led from idolatry to the knowledge of God."

What about us? Do we read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest the word for ourselves and ignore the multitudes who also need it? How can we rest till we have done our best to help "each remotest nation learn Messiah's name."

"Lutherans," we are called. Luther didn't want it, but so it is. Now let's show we know what the name means. Like our forefather, let's be people with the book.



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

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## FORWARD

■ How can we resist sin? How can we make ourselves worthy of Christ? In the early 16th century, two men who struggled with the same spiritual questions reached far different conclusions. One was Ignatius Loyola, founder of the Jesuits. The other was Martin Luther, father of the Reformation. James Kiecker describes the spiritual struggles of Loyola and Luther in "A test of wills," beginning on the next page.

For more on the Reformation, see Richard Lauersdorf's "The man with the book" on page 366 and Joel Gerlach's "Undoing the Reformation" on page 380.

■ This issue brings the final article in the series on the parables. We thank writer Mark Braun and look forward to his future contributions to our pages.

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

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LUCAS CRANACH



Martin Luther

# A test of wills

What part does the human will play in resisting sin? Loyola and Luther both struggled with the same question, but they came to far different conclusions.



Ignatius Loyola

by James G. Kiecker

**B**y his own account, he was “a man given to the vanities of the world,” finding joy in warfare and yearning for glory. Barely five feet tall with flowing red hair, he was a bit on the wild side, enjoying noisy comrades, always ready for a brawl, with an eye for the girls. Seriously in trouble with the law, he tried to gain sympathy by impersonating a priest. His name still stands in the court records: Ignatius of Loyola.

Born in 1491 in the Basque country of northeastern Spain, Ignatius felt attracted early on to court life. He loved playing the young knight, the plumes and shining armor, the drills with sword and horse, the courtly love. His reading was tales of chivalry and conquest.

Loyola's first military engagement was also his last. Sent with Spanish troops to defend Pamplona against French invaders, a cannonball shattered his right leg. Doctors set his leg, but it healed badly. The handsome *caballero* would hereafter walk with a limp.

## Spiritual battles

It was now the summer of 1521 as he lay on his back, his military glory fading. To pass the time Loyola asked for books of adventure. But all that was handy were a fictionalized *Life of Christ* and a legendary *Lives of the Saints*. He read reluctantly at first, then became entranced: “Dominic did this, Francis did that. Should I not also do the same?” A new vision began to form. His battles would not be temporal, but spiritual.

But first he must make himself worthy to fight for

Christ. To show God how sorry he was for his sins, he would make a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.

In the spring of 1522, Loyola set out for Barcelona to board ship. The road led through the town of Manresa. Though intending to stay only a few days, he wound up spending almost a year.

At Manresa Loyola's greatest spiritual struggles took place. He did menial tasks for his room, begged in the streets for his bed, and spent days on end in a cave, praying.

A shocked visitor came upon instruments of torture: a girdle of iron, heavy chains, a board with nails in the form of a cross, a shirt interwoven with iron barbs.

Townsppeople began referring to him as “the sacred man.” Others, noting his clothes, called him “the sack man.”

## Spiritual exercises

Here too, at Manresa, a book began to take shape which Loyola later enlarged into his greatest work, the *Spiritual Exercises*. It was arranged in four “weeks,” actually four time periods. In the first week one focused on sin, in the second the life of Christ. The passion story was pondered in the third week, and the fourth was devoted to the resurrection and ascension. Periodically, the serious Christian would repeat these lessons.

The *Spiritual Exercises* allow us to look into Loyola's mind, to sample what is often considered the finest form of Catholic spirituality. Sin is taken very seriously, though the radical helplessness of the sinner is

not fully acknowledged. The person is advised to ponder sin's results, "to imagine the great fires and the souls enveloped . . . to hear the wailing, the screaming . . . to smell the smoke . . . to taste bitter things . . . to feel how flames burn souls."

Christ's payment for sin is also there, though to the extent that human helplessness isn't acknowledged, the saving work of Christ can't be fully appreciated either. Prominent throughout is the attitude: How can I make myself worthy of Christ? What can I do to gain Christ's help?

But the overriding element in the *Exercises* is Loyola's confidence in the power of the human will. Here's where the soldier in him shone forth. The Christian, like a good soldier, would courageously face his sin, then somehow, from the depths of his being, summon up the will to resist sin, to choose Christ as his leader, to fight along with Christ toward the victory of salvation.

When Loyola tested the human will, he found it weak, but able to be strengthened by self-discipline, then able to cooperate with God's saving grace. By a sheer act of will, man would overcome sin and make himself worthy of Christ.

### Spiritual struggles

While Loyola was undergoing these spiritual struggles and coming to his conclusions, a German monk had recently concluded his own spiritual struggles and had come to a far different conclusion.

Acutely aware of his sins, Martin Luther starved and beat himself hoping to show his sorrow for sin. When told that God forgives sins for Jesus' sake, what should have been the sweetest gospel only drove him to deeper despair. What could he do to make himself worthy of such a blessing?

Like Loyola, Luther tested the human will but found it dreadfully wanting. The will was totally fallen. It couldn't resist sin, nor choose Christ, nor cooperate with God's grace, nor make a person worthy of salvation. Luther learned what the word "lost" really meant.

What God finally had Luther realize is often called his "evangelical breakthrough." Though he couldn't rouse his fallen will to save or even help save himself, God would do it for him. By faith. Working through word and sacrament, the Holy Spirit would cause him to trust in Christ, by whose power he would defeat sin and by whose righteousness he would be accounted worthy of eternal life. This has remained the core of Lutheran spirituality to the present.

### The Society of Jesus

Loyola eventually visited the Holy Land. Returning to Spain, he realized he needed a formal education. So between 1524 and 1534 he set his will to learn Latin and philosophy.

During these years he also began to attract followers. Each one was led by Loyola through the *Exercises* to master his impulses, hopefully strengthening his will to overcome sin and choose Christ.

Even some Catholics questioned such an extreme emphasis on human willpower, but Loyola beat charges of heresy. In 1534 Loyola and six others started calling themselves the "Society of Jesus," shortened soon to "Jesuits."

The immediate goal of the group was to go back to the Holy Land and fight the Turks who controlled it. But when they sought the pope's blessing, he told them there was "a real Jerusalem in Italy." The pope was thinking of church corruption and the inroads of Protestantism. He would need a strong army to combat both.

So when the pope officially recognized the new order in 1540, he gave it the assignment "to oppose Luther and other heretics." The Jesuits surrendered their will to the pope. Their special vow of obedience to him was summed up by Loyola: "I will believe that white is black if the church so defines it."

In good military terms Loyola became the first general of the Jesuits, and guided them until his death in 1556. Superbly educated, they taught in the universities of Europe and became advisors to kings. Behind the scenes they turned many Protestants back to Roman Catholicism. The order also sent missionaries everywhere from China to the New World. For his efforts, Loyola was declared a saint in 1622.

Today people still test their wills. Some with the best of intentions try to muster up the will to curb sin, choose Christ, and be worthy of salvation. "Making a decision for Christ" or "Taking Jesus into my life" seems the height of piety. But if that were possible (which it isn't), we would be helping to save ourselves. The power of sin would be diminished and the work of Christ trivialized.

What's really needed is an "evangelical breakthrough," the simple recognition that God comes lovingly to us and does what we can't. In fact, that's his gracious good will.



James Kiecker teaches history at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee.

# Redeveloping our Christian fellowship

by Paul E. Kelm



MRS. KEVIN SCHEIBEL

“This is just like the good old days,” Grandpa reminisced over pumpkin pie, “the whole family together for a meal after church.” It was Thanksgiving, and the first time in years that three generations of the Klein family were together. Jim smiled at his father’s predictable essay on the importance of family.

“It’s a different world,” he told himself; but a part of him wished it were possible to turn back the clock. It was more than miles that separated him from his family. It was life’s pace, almost as if some outside force controlled his calendar. And it was change. His sister had married into wealth and outside the faith. Christmas cards were the last, tenuous tie to family. And why didn’t he call his brother more often? It

wasn’t even long distance. Everybody just seemed to get lost in his own little world. Now it was happening to his kids. Jeremy was all but moved away in his third year of college. Jessica still called home twice a week, but this was her first semester away from home. And Joel had already talked about the Air Force.

“Dad’s right,” he thought, “we need the unhurried

family conversations over dinner, after church, that I remember as a kid."

Jessica was the sensitive one. She understood that Grandpa needed to continue the nostalgic advice a patriarch feels is his responsibility. "What was it like when you and Grandma were our age?" she asked. Grandpa had to think about that.

"It was simpler, I guess," he began. "Much harder life, of course, without all the conveniences you kids take for granted. And I suppose we were poor by today's standards."

"I still can't get used to a whole closet full of clothes," Grandma chimed in. "But I tell you, we ate better in those days than people do today."

"People mattered a whole lot more than things back then," Grandpa continued. "Why, we still have friends we see every week that go back forty years. Gives you a sense of stability, knowing there are folks you can count on."

"Jim, you remember Mrs. Torrington, across the street, who used to pop in for coffee a couple times each week?" Grandma interrupted. "She's in a nursing home now. Pastor visits her regularly, and some of us older ladies get up there every few weeks. But I don't think those kids of hers even bother to phone. That's what's wrong today, no sense of family."

Jessica could sense her father tensing a little. Grandma just might apply this sermon closer to home. So she asked quickly, "How did you and Grandpa meet, Grandma?" That brought a smile that Jessica remembered her grandmother for.

"We didn't exactly meet," Grandma explained. "We grew up together. But it was in the youth group at church where we noticed each other."

"Your grandmother was on a ladder trimming the Christmas tree at church," Grandpa went on, "when I said to myself, 'I'm going to marry that girl.' I still remember that."

"I don't understand why the church doesn't have a youth group like that anymore," Grandma interjected. "Seems like kids today are running around where they shouldn't."

"It's not just the youth group, Kate," Grandpa offered. "The choir is half the size it once was, mostly the same people; only their voices aren't what they used to be."

"And the Ladies Guild," Grandma added. "What happened to all the younger women in the church? We can't even schedule a decent potluck after

church anymore. Nobody seems to want to get together." The litany of regret had a familiar ring. The senior pastor had made similar observations last Sunday back in Newport.

### People to people in ministry

"It is not good for the man to be alone," was God's rationale for creating the family. Broken hearts and homes today testify to God's wisdom. The lonely are

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*The New Testament is filled with "one another" messages. God has designed his church for people-to-people ministry.*

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vulnerable — economically, emotionally, and spiritually. Psalm 68 describes God as "a father to the fatherless, a defender of widows. . . . He sets the solitary in families." God is for his people what no human being can be, but God brings people together to be for each other what every human needs.

"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their work. If one falls down, his friend can help him up. But pity the man who falls and has no one to help him up! Also, if two lie down together, they will keep warm. But how can one keep warm alone? Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves."

Ecclesiastes (4:9-12) is sanctified common sense . . . not so common in a generation characterized by "privatization." People keep to themselves, close themselves off and bottle themselves up inside, seemingly untrusting and uncaring.

As Solomon warned, they cannot keep warm psychologically, they do not recover easily when they've fallen, and they are hard-pressed to defend themselves against Satan's assaults on mind and heart.

The New Testament is filled with "one another" messages. "Encourage one another and build each other up," St. Paul wrote to the Thessalonians. "Carry each other's burdens," he told the Galatians. "Let the Word of Christ dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God." (Colossians 3:16). God has designed us and his church for mutual renewal, people-to-people ministry.

When a series of discouragements has brought you to the verge of depression, who is God's arm

around your shoulder and God's voice in your ear? When sin has captivated your heart, who loves you enough to confront you with God's law and remind you of your forgiving Father? When you've a blessing to shout about, who shares your joy? When you're wrestling with a problem, who offers God's advice and reminds you of the Savior's invitation to pray? Who is your spiritual confidant, sounding board, counselor, friend?

### Redeveloping Christian fellowship in the home

We may not be able to bring three generations of family together more often than an occasional Thanksgiving. Distance is a fact of life. We *can* bring the nuclear family — however many people that is — together for regular thanksgiving. All we need is a reason and the will.

The reason is right in front of you: a loved one drifting away and you don't know why . . . things you wanted to say, but the time was never right . . . an argument unresolved weighing like lead on your heart . . . worry that stalks every unoccupied moment . . . arms that need to hug someone, but no one stands still or comes near. Family is indispensable. No matter the history of hurts and regrets. Whoever is left if someone has gone. However much distance must be bridged. Family is where God wants you to find fellowship.

The will comes from God. His love restores yours. His promises rekindle hope. His strength keeps you from quitting. His forgiveness frees you from the guilt shackles that kept you from trying and from the bitterness that disabled caring. His word gives you the confidence to make family relationships work, no matter how long it takes.

And his word is the best way to break the communication log-jam. One reason Grandpa remembers Sunday dinners as great family times is that joint worship opened members of the family to each other. Hurts and resentments were left at the altar as spirits were restored by Christ's body and blood. Scripture led individual family members through introspection to the grand understanding of our restored relationship with God in Christ — the model for relating in love to one another. Praise focused us away from the problems and limitations of our situation toward the power and possibilities of our God, and we lost some needless inhibitions to sing how we felt about our God. And prayer allowed us to admit that we have needs, that we don't want to go on guardedly disguising those needs and fearfully avoiding the needs of

others in our home. Family devotions free family communication so that any meal can recreate Grandpa's Sunday dinner experience.

Your spouse *can* be your best friend, the one who loves you patiently and reminds you of truths you temporarily forgot. Your parent *can* be your confidant, someone to hear you out and pray with you, someone who delivers hard messages with a hug. Your child *can* be an intimate, bold enough to tell you what adults only hint at and open enough to share Jesus without embarrassment. Because God intended it that way, you know he will help you shape family that way.

### Christian friends — support and accountability

Some Christians are "between families" and away from home. Some have chosen to remain single. Others have been left alone by death or divorce. All of us need Christian friends.

Perhaps similar personality traits made you friends. With such a friend-in-Christ you can appreciate the way God made you instead of apologizing for being different. Such a friend-in-Christ knows how you feel and what you need to hear. But you wouldn't want only friends who were just like you.

God designed us also to complement each other. Common work projects, often at church, bring us together with people so different from ourselves that they help us grow. We become less critical and self-centered, more open and aware of the beautiful diversity in God's world. We learn to understand ourselves in broader perspective and see our role in life with sharper contrast.

God may bring friends into our life specifically because of common situations. Empathy means knowing what your friend is going through. Encouragement means sharing how Jesus will get you through. Coping is always easier with a close, Christian friend.

God's design for friendship begins at the cross. A common salvation overrides any other basis for a relationship. Shared values reinforce one another and enable Christian friends to take a stand. Mutual convictions allow friends to pray together, unburdening beleaguered hearts. The same mission in life means Christians help each other grow and love and witness, holding each other accountable for faithfully following Jesus, and applying forgiveness for failures along that way.

Find such a friend if that void exists in your life right now. Deepen the friendship if there is someone



who could be much more a *Christian* friend to you. Thank God for that person who encourages and corrects you if his or her name has been on your lips in this description.

### Redeveloping Christian fellowship in our church

Grandpa and Grandma remember large groups of Christians gathering at church for food and fun, work and study. It seemed like the thing to do in smaller communities, where people grew up and stayed, before television and traffic and stress, when people mattered and no psychologists were necessary. You can add your own explanations for the good old days when the church had a place at the center of people's lives.

It may be more difficult, it's certainly more important, for the church to redevelop Christian fellowship. In this generation that may mean several things.

Family ministry is marriage renewal and classes on parenting. It's networking people who share similar situations. It's helping people understand their male or female identity and roles. It's teaching families how to conduct devotions. It may be Christian day care for toddlers or the elderly, or just a "Mother's Day Out" program of inter-generational baby-sitting. It's whatever your congregation can do to restore the Christian home as God's resource for meeting human needs in Christ.

Events at the church won't attract everybody today, so we probably have to schedule more activities. Events away from church allow Christians to find friends of similar recreational interests. Food and fun, work and study are still the issues around which people gather. It's just that today's crowd shows up on *their* agenda and stays only as long as it's meaningful for them. Focused agendas that appreciate the value of time and the diversity of people will best be organized by the very people we hope to involve. Events and activities are valuable for allowing Christians to find each other and form friendships, for the sense of well-being and enjoyment there is in a group that can assume bonds of truth and love.

Groups at the church today won't likely be as large as Grandma remembers. Diverse schedules, interests and situations mean that the Ladies Aid of 1950 is today four or more different women's groups. The men's club of yesteryear that addressed every male of

the congregation has been replaced by the men's Bible breakfast of eight business men, the softball team, a men's bowling league, six men who get together periodically to assist the elderly of the congregation and a card club that's never on the church calendar. The choir dwindled to twelve members: but a contemporary Christian choir has attracted ten new people, and at Christmas and Easter fifteen more people rehearse with the choir for seasonal services.

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*We can't bring back the good old days  
of extended families gathering frequently,  
but we can design new models of Christian togetherness.*

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Small groups can develop around common situations, such as grieving or coping issues. They may come together for common interests (e.g. crafts, mutual babysitting, skiing) or joint service projects (e.g. banners, visitation ministry, evangelism reinforcement). They may be organized for spiritual growth, sharing Scripture and prayer. Small groups frequently develop in a climate of permission, rather than by the leadership's design. They reflect North America's pluralism — differences and choices. They also reflect North America's transience, for many groups exist only a year or two.

Worship is still the highest expression of our Christian fellowship, the large gathering that confesses our unity amid diversity. We can work at the little things which make both worship and the time surrounding it an experience of warm acceptance, mutual caring, and spiritual oneness.

We can't bring back the good old days of extended families gathering frequently for leisurely meals or church activities that draw overflow crowds, at least in most of our communities we can't. We *can* apply the biblical principles of family and fellowship to present reality and design new models of Christian togetherness. We can redevelop our Christian fellowship.

Thanks, Grandpa and Grandma, for reminding us how important that is!



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

*Scott (not his real name) is a lifelong member of a WELS church who is recovering from chemical dependency. Scott agreed to be interviewed to glorify the Savior who is rescuing him from his addiction, and to reach out to readers of the Northwestern Lutheran who are presently caught in Satan's trap of addiction and denial.*

## A recovering addict tells his story

by Philip W. Merten

**W**hat made you admit you were an addict? I knew it a long time before I took any steps to correct the problem. I knew the things I was doing weren't pleasing to God. My best friend was an alcoholic and went into recovery. When I saw the change in his life, as I talked to him and prayed, I finally realized it was time for me to grow up.

And I started noticing how my using was affecting my three-year-old. When he'd see beer he'd say, "Daddy's beer." He'd put a toy in his mouth and say, "Joshua's smoking." That woke me up. It made me think God was trying to tell me something.

### *Looking back, what led you into chemical dependence?*

My parents owned a bar, and social drinking was the norm. You have a party, people would get drunk, and that was acceptable. Both my parents

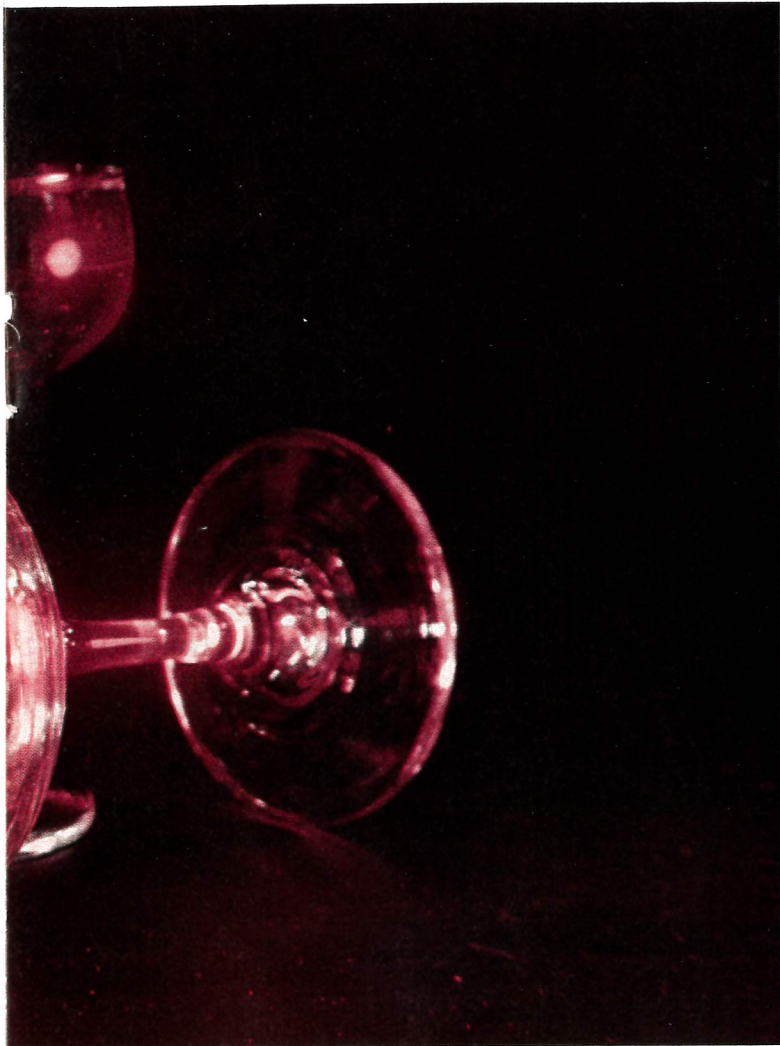


were alcoholics, though they'd never admit it. They figured they drank just beer, so they weren't alcoholics. At an early age — 14, 15 — I'd sneak beer and wine out of the tavern and sit around with friends and get drunk.

In high school people would come around with pot or acid and I found I liked it. I did a lot of acid trips, and a couple of them totally blew my mind. I swore I'd never do it again and then a couple of days later I'd end up doing it.

### *Did you try to cut back or quit using drugs on your own?*

I tried two or three times for a week or two. At the time that seemed pretty good. I cleaned out my system — so I could start pouring the poison back in. I was trying to prove to myself that I didn't have a problem and could quit any time I wanted. I could hold off during the work week, or if I had something I had to concentrate on. But as soon as



ROBERT A. SEVERT

I could, I was back to drinking and getting stoned.

**What got you on the path to recovery?**

A lot of prayer. And I went to Alcoholics Anonymous. I had my last drink on a Sunday, and the next day I was in an AA meeting. That's what's helped me stay sober.

**How has knowing the gospel affected your recovery?**

A lot of people coming into AA say the "higher power" you rely on for recovery could be the AA group or anything you want it to be. Knowing that Jesus is *the* higher power is what helped me. I wasn't searching for a higher power to rely on: I knew who the higher power is.

In my church we have an Alcoholism Awareness group. We talk about the same things as AA, but when we talk about a higher power we talk about Jesus.

I think it's really hard for someone who doesn't

know Jesus to try to find something to be his higher power. That's why I'm really grateful for my upbringing. I was brought up and confirmed in the Lutheran church, and that really helped.

**Does knowing the gospel help you to let go of the past and accept yourself?**

Definitely. It lets me know I'm forgiven.

I used to feel real guilty when I'd go past church when I was "boozin' and usin'." Even though I knew I could be forgiven, I had a hard time believing it: "Here I am, using cocaine, getting drunk all the time — how can God forgive me for what I've let happen?"

I didn't think about what the gospel says, that God loves you no matter what.

**Do you feel you have to put up a front that says "Everything's okay" when you enter the church?**

I think so. I think people with problems can get to thinking, "I must not be a good Christian or I wouldn't have these problems." People don't want to admit their problems because they figure a "good Christian" would be able to just pray those problems away.

But it doesn't work that way. It's important that you talk honestly and openly with people who understand, and that you get their support.

**Do you feel our churches are doing all they can to understand and reach out to the addicted person?**

No, actually, I don't. I think the church is like the rest of the world: they'd just as soon ignore the problem. I think there are a lot of people like me in the church, and that's the first place they should go to get help; but they're afraid they'll be rejected.

Our synod has some programs to support people trying to recover, and that's good, but they're too few and far between. I enjoy my recovery group at church, but I know more are needed.



Philip Merten is a chaplain with Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Ministry in Milwaukee County.

## Lift High the Cross goal raised

Among the resolutions that delegates to the synod convention passed regarding Lift High the Cross are "that we increase the planning goal for Lift High the Cross to \$20 million" and "that we express our joy over this blessing of God by gathering together enthusiastically to pray and strive for . . . a stretch goal of more than \$20 million." Here are five reasons for doing so:

1. **The original \$16 million goal was not sacred.** In fact, the 1989 convention established that as a minimum goal.

2. **Lift High the Cross is providing needed funding for the operating budget of the synod.** In 1990 inflation severely lowered our budget's purchasing power, and 40 percent of Lift High the Cross offerings are for the ongoing work of the synod.

3. **The willingness to support Lift High the Cross is being demonstrated.** Gifts and commitments from individuals already exceed \$8 million. Over 95 percent of WELS congregations are expected to participate in the congregational commitment phase.

4. **The higher goal is an aid to responsible planning.** The Coordinating Council plans on the basis of income projections, and it is important that plans are in place to use gifts promptly for kingdom

work.

5. **The higher goal is an encouragement to all of us.** It emphasizes that there are more opportunities to do the Lord's work. It repeats the important truth that all our gifts are vital and that none of us should rely upon others to do what the Lord has enabled each of us to do.

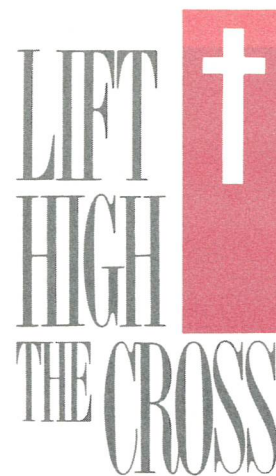
### How will the funds be used?

Sixty percent of Lift High the Cross offerings are designated for mission expansion and 40 percent for the ongoing work of the synod. Nothing is in the 1991-92 budget for any home mission openings. Through Lift High the Cross offerings, at least eight new missions are planned for this year.

The Board for World Missions is ready to begin work among Mozambique refugees in Malawi today. Other fields and increased staffing of existing fields are waiting.

Last year and this year approximately \$420,000 from Lift High the Cross has been budgeted for our ministerial schools. The convention decision to maintain the present school system for the next two years will also require substantial dollars.

Recruitment of pastors and teachers is essential. An additional full-time recruitment officer for Northwestern College has been authorized, to be funded by Lift



High the Cross.

Necessary increases in salaries and health care for missionaries, professors, and administrators depend on Lift High the Cross. Additional issues coming out of the 1991 convention, based on available funds, are staff ministries, secondary teacher education, IRS mileage rate reimbursement, and the maintenance backlog at our worker training schools.

Opportunities to do the Lord's work exceed \$20 million. The financial capability God has given our WELS members exceeds that also.

Please pray often for Lift High the Cross. Please work diligently in your congregation to bring the message and opportunity to all of your members. It is important that all of us do all we can to carry on the vital work of making disciples.

— Ronald D. Roth, Director  
*Lift High the Cross offering*

## Congregations in eight conferences launch GO '91

WELS congregations in eight conferences have launched media-assisted Gospel Outreach (GO '91) campaigns with the theme "What would it mean to live free?"

Gospel Outreach includes the use of billboards, television, radio, and newspapers, as well as personal contact by WELS members target-

ing a Sunday on which all are invited to join in worship. Lay visits to prospects follow.

Launching GO '91 campaigns this fall are congregations in Mankato, Minn., and Chippewa Falls, Wis.; North and South Dakota; Seattle-Tacoma, Wash.; the Flint-Saginaw-Bay City, Mich., area;

Orlando, Fla.; Kalamazoo, Grand Rapids, and St. Joseph, Mich.; and South Bend, Ind.

"This is a continuation of the Gospel Outreach campaign begun in 1989 in northern and southeastern Wisconsin involving 162 WELS congregations," said John Barber, director of Mass Media Ministry.

## Kastens is new youth discipleship administrator

Gerald F. Kastens has assumed his position as the synod's administrator for youth discipleship. His duties focus on developing and providing materials and resources from birth to high school for all part-time agencies, such as youth materials, Bible school, and Sunday school.

A 1970 graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., Kastens did graduate work at Winona State and completed the supervision of instruction program at DMLC.



His service in the ministry has included teaching at Trinity, Goodview, and St. Matthew, Winona, Minn., and St. Paul, Lake Mills, Wis.

Kastens, 44, and his wife Sandy (nee Hunter) and their children, Heather, 16, and Aaron, 14, reside in Lake Mills.

## VBS — glorified baby-sitting?

Weary mothers looking for relief from child tending. Children tired of trying to find ways to spend summer's freedom. The answer to their problems — vacation Bible school. For a few hours the church takes over the baby-sitting, and maybe, just maybe, someone will show up on Sunday in appreciation for services rendered.

That is not the perception of WELS congregations in Milwaukee's central city. The weary mothers are often working, trying to keep a roof over their heads. And the children are in the streets, where education is taking place at an alarming rate.

What if those children could spend that time learning about the kingdom of God? That was the challenge faced by the central city congregations and some 50 volunteers who came to help under the leadership of coordinator Daron Lindemann.

The volunteers who assisted with this program were recruited through a joint effort of the

Multicultural Mission Committee and the Inner City Pastors' Council. Forty-three were students from the synod's seminary, colleges, prep schools, high schools, and the WELS campus ministry. Over 500 children attended programs at six locations.

The Lord blessed their efforts, especially at Siloah, where 369 children were enrolled.

"The Lord Jesus said he wants little children to come to him. We took his words seriously," said Pastor Keith Tullberg of Siloah. "We knocked on doors, we mailed reminders, and we canvassed by phone. Eighty-three adults gave it their all."

The program culminated the following Sunday when 125 of the children returned to praise their Savior in the worship service. Siloah's evangelism team is following up on about 120 families. Six children have already been baptized.

Glorified baby-sitting, indeed!

— Rolf F. Westendorf

## Hoeneckes celebrate anniversary

Edgar and Meta Hoenecke, well known for their mission efforts in Africa, celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary and Pastor Hoenecke's 65th anniversary in the ministry on July 7.

A 1926 seminary graduate, Hoenecke served St. Matthew, Marathon, Wis., from 1926 to 1929, and St. Peter, Plymouth, Mich., from 1929 to 1960. In 1955 he became executive secretary of the



Board for World Missions, a position which became full time in 1959. He retired in 1978.

In 1949 Hoenecke, with Pastor

Arthur Wacker, made a five-month African exploration for a mission field. As a result, missions were begun in Zambia and Malawi.

Through the efforts of Meta Hoenecke, the African medical mission work was begun with the founding of the dispensary in Mwembeshi, Zambia. Mrs. Hoenecke made two tours of duty to Africa in 1960 and 1961.

Hoenecke also was instrumental in opening missions in southern California at Alpine, Escondido, La Mesa, Carlsbad, Fallbrook, San Diego, and Whittier. The Hoeneckes now reside in San Diego.

In his retirement Hoenecke, who still serves as an advisory member of the mission board, has assisted congregations during pastoral vacancies and has kept busy writing, painting, gardening, and wood-working.

— Lowell K. Smith

## Grant assists church workers

Lutheran Brotherhood recently granted \$50,000 to the synod, most of which is for funding a seminar in "Helping Church Workers." This seminar will provide assistance in counseling pastors, teachers, and their dependents in coping with problems arising from an increasingly complex society.

A portion of the grant is reserved for the initial planning of a program in parish ministry enrichment for first-year pastors, scheduled for the summer of 1992.

## Arizona-California District news

Contralto **Victoria Ranck**, of St. Paul First, North Hollywood, was selected to sing the national anthem for Lutheran Family Night at Dodger Stadium on July 29. Victoria, a native of Spain, sings professionally throughout the Los Angeles area. Her programs feature English and Spanish popular songs. . . .

**Heritage Lutheran, Gilbert, Ariz.**, dedicated a new church on Jan. 20. The 50-member congregation began in 1986. . . .

**Arizona Lutheran Academy** hosted the national WELS band festival in April. Eighteen high schools participated. . . . On April 14, the Grand Canyon Circuit of the LWMS marked the 25th anniversary of its organization. . . . Pastor William Bein reports that **Resurrection, Phoenix**, celebrated its 50th anniversary April 14. This was the third congregation organized in the Phoenix area. Since then, 13 additional congregations have been established. . . .

**Immanuel, Springerville, Ariz.**, dedicated its new church May 20.

— *Hermann K. John and Kenneth H. Pasch*

## Dakota-Montana District news

**St. John, Wetaskiwin, Alberta, Canada**, dedicated a new digital computerized organ Aug. 18. Professor Bruce Backer of Dr. Martin Luther College was the guest speaker for the German and English services and presented a concert on Aug. 19. . . . **Our Savior, Brookings, S. Dak.**, dedicated its remodeled sanctuary and new fel-

lowship wing on June 2. Pastor John Parlow, former pastor of Our Savior, was the guest speaker. The service was followed by luncheon. . . . **First, Gary, S. Dak.**, held a groundbreaking service April 7 at the site of its new worship facility. Dedication service plans have been set for November.

— *Ronald L. Kruse*

## Michigan District news

**Michigan Lutheran Seminary**, Saginaw, started its school year with 280 students and welcomed 89 freshmen to its campus. This year's student body includes 13 students whose home addresses are in nine countries other than the United States. October marked a decade of annual exchanges with Michigan Lutheran Seminary's linked school in Germany, *Triefels Gymnasium* of Annweiler. Each fall eight *Triefels* students and a teacher spend three weeks at MLS; each June MLS

sends a similar number to Annweiler. . . . The **MLS Guild**, a women's group that supports school projects and programs, reorganized this fall and held its annual meeting Oct. 6. Previously the guild met regularly throughout the school year. . . . **Michigan Lutheran High School** in St. Joseph welcomed a larger than expected freshman class this fall. . . . **St. Luke, Vassar**, dedicated a new elementary school building on Aug. 25.

— *James L. Langebartels*

## Obituaries

### Geraldine M. Gosdeck 1945 - 1991

Geraldine M. Gosdeck, teacher at St. Stephen Lutheran School in Adrian, Michigan, died August 26, 1991, at home.

Born May 11, 1945, in Marinette, Wisconsin, she received her elementary education at Trinity Lutheran School in Marinette. She prepared for the teaching ministry at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota, graduating in 1967. She taught at St. Paul, Columbus, Ohio, and at St. Stephen in Adrian.

She is survived by her husband, Donald; three daughters, Michelle, Pam, and Stacy; three brothers and three sisters. Services were conducted at St. Stephen, Adrian.

### Arthur J. Sprengeler 1908 - 1991

Arthur J. Sprengeler was born Sept. 30, 1908, in Gibbon, Minn. He died Sept. 12, 1991, in Fort Atkinson, Wis.

Following graduation in 1930 from Dr. Martin Luther College, he taught at Trinity, St. Paul, Minn., St. Lucas, Milwaukee, Wis., and First, LaCrosse, Wis. He retired in 1976.

He is survived by a daughter, Marilyn (Donald) Bitter; a son, Ronald (Clarice); 12 grandchildren, and 20 great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Sept. 16 in Watertown, Wis.

Dean Inge: "There are two fools. One who says, 'This is old, and therefore it is good.' The other who claims, 'This is new; therefore it is better.'"

## The owner of a house

*Matthew 13:51,52*

by Mark E. Braun

**"H**ave you understood all these things?" Jesus asked. What things? Things about the kingdom.

The kingdom is built on Jesus, God's Son, the Savior. The kingdom comes through preaching the seed of the word. Hardened pathways and stony soil, choking thorns and entangled weeds threaten the kingdom, yet it will come. We do not make it come. The seed grows all by itself, because God's power is in it.

Yet Jesus sends us to sow the seed, and it will grow — on the outside, like mustard seed; inside hearts, like yeast penetrating dough. The soul who recognizes the kingdom as his greatest treasure will give up all he has to get it and never consider it a sacrifice.

Though the kingdom grows automatically, one does not automatically enter the kingdom. This good news can be rejected, and those who reject it will be rejected by the King. Wheat will be separated from weeds. Good fish will be saved, bad fish thrown away.

"Have you understood all these things?" "Yes," the disciples answered. The Holy Spirit used these simple stories to reveal further his sacred secrets for those with ears to hear.

Our Lord's last parable in this series is not so much about the kingdom itself as it is about the workers in that kingdom: "Therefore every teacher of the law who has been instructed about the kingdom of heaven is like the owner of a house who brings out of his storeroom new treasures as well as old."

The picture is of a wealthy man who owns a collection of precious things — silver bowls and cups, perhaps. Some are ancient, others recently made. The owner will eagerly display both old and new.

In some ways, Jesus' disciples were similar to the Jewish rabbis, who digested and then dispensed the treasures of the past. But the disciples possessed the present as well, not only prophecy but also its fulfillment. The foundation is old, but the fulfillment is a great, new treasure.

God's people need a balanced spiritual menu. A diet of all things old and nothing new keeps people chained to the past, limited to early, easily-learned truths. A diet of all things new and nothing old leaves people without roots, drifting from one novelty to the next. These are two extremes, each to be avoided.

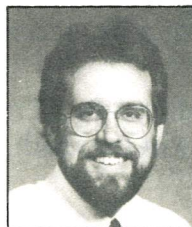
Beware the view that says, "We want only the old things." New translations are regarded with skepticism, new liturgies with loathing, new techniques with disapproval. Come weal or come woe, their status is quo.

Even one's scriptural nourishment, in this view, is to be confined to the simple, oft-repeated parts of the Bible. "Don't get too deep, Pastor. Stay with the easy stuff we already know." The writer to the Hebrews admonished his generation: "Let us leave the elementary teachings about Christ and go on to maturity" (Hebrews 6:1).

But beware the opposite view that says, "We'll only listen if it's something we never heard before." Every plan must be fresh and fashionable; the old is quickly scrapped. Impatience is voiced with those "too dull to catch on" or "too scared to change."

Truth tested and approved, however, is never to be dismissed lightly. One of our sturdy Reformation hymns laments the "haughty spirits" who "always set forth something new, devised to change thy doctrine true." Humanity's predicament is still sin; that's as old as the garden. The solution is still Jesus; that's as old as the cross.

Dean Inge told his generation: "There are two fools. One who says, 'This is old, and therefore it is good.' The other who claims, 'This is new; therefore it is better.'" Better to be like the owner of a house, who brings out both old and new, each in measured amounts, each at its proper time.



Mark Braun is director of spiritual programming and instructor of theology at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee.

## Undoing the Reformation

**C**hristian unity involving full communion with other churches is now the goal of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). In a "Declaration of Ecumenical Commitment" adopted in convention in Orlando in August, the ELCA determined "to work toward a common faith, sharing the Lord's Supper and providing for exchange of members and ministers with other Protestants, Roman Catholics and Eastern Orthodox."

Among the church leaders who commended the ELCA for its declaration was Roman Catholic Archbishop Rembert Weakland of Milwaukee. Weakland told the convention delegates, "We need each other. We Roman Catholics need you. For us, ecumenism is just beginning."

The ELCA's goal is a laudable one. It's the same goal the formulators of the Lutheran Confessions had in mind when they drafted our ecumenical confessions of faith.

But that's where the similarity ends. The reformers sought union on the basis of agreement on the articles of faith. Today's ecumenical Lutherans are satisfied with a union that allows basic differences to remain unresolved.

The basic unresolved issue, now as then, is the Bible's teaching of justification. Is it forensic (God declares us righteous for Jesus' sake)? Or is it sanative (we gradually become righteous as God's grace heals us)? Is it an accomplished fact? Or is it an ongoing process? Is it extrinsic (a foreign righteousness, as Luther called it)? Or is it intrinsic (something that becomes a part of our nature)?

The confessions of the Lutheran church give clear-cut, unequivocal answers to those questions. Justification is forensic. Righteousness is extrinsic. Our righteousness is an accomplished fact, not an ongoing process. We are completely and totally righteous for Jesus' sake. We don't become more righteous as we grow in faith.

ELCA Lutherans subscribe to the 1983 document, *Justification by Faith*, produced by a Lutheran/Roman Catholic dialogue team. The *Material Convergences* section of that confession says, "To be saved one must be judged (i.e. declared) righteous and be righteous. . . . By justification we are both declared righteous and made righteous. . . . God, in justifying, effects what he promises; he forgives and makes us truly righteous."

That's another way of saying Luther and Rome were both right. If that's the unified faith the ELCA is now determined to pursue, we are compelled to say "no thanks." Paul has stronger words for tinkering with the gospel. "Even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned" (Galatians 1:8).

Pursue the goal of full communion? By all means, but only for the sake of the truth, never at the expense of the truth.

Joel C. Gerlach



*Joel Gerlach  
is pastor of St. John,  
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.*



### Evangelicals and fundamentalists

Pastor Kelm (I would like to know, June 15) writes disapprovingly of evangelicals and fundamentalists. According to my dictionary, an evangelical, like a fundamentalist, believes in the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of the Bible. Although my Lutheran interpretation of the word of God differs from Baptist or Reformed teachings, generally my opinions on faith and ethical questions have more in common with evangelical Baptists or Presbyterians than with liberal Lutherans.

I am happy to attend the services of a church rightly named Wisconsin *Evangelical* Lutheran Synod.

Ulrich Motte  
Munich, Germany

### Fallen-away Christians

In response to the editorial, "When Christians judge sin," (August), I, too, have watched with sadness as television audiences have ridiculed people who stand up for Christian morals. Facing the fact that the Bible has become an object of scorn by such a vast number of Americans could lead any God-fearing Christian to begin wavering on those principles, especially when family or friends are involved.

Let's continue to pray for our pastors and elders who reach out to fallen-away members. And let's use the Bible classes offered at our churches as opportunities to be strengthened by God's word, especially in these times when it seems so many are turning away.

Wendy Lutzke  
Manitowoc, Wisconsin

### Flags in church

The appearance of an article regarding the proper placement of the flag in churches (August) prompts me to submit the following extract from *Architecture for Worship* by church architect E. A. Sovik:

"However much we love our country . . . the liturgical event is not the appropriate place to make a display of patriotic loyalty. In a country where church and state are separate,

it makes no more sense to have the flag in a church than to have the cross in a courtroom. Indeed, the implication that the church exists under the aegis of the nation is false, as is the reverse. And the custom of pairing the papal or so-called Christian flag with the national ensign . . . implies a parallel which just doesn't exist. . . . When we worship we must set our minds on the kingdom of God and on our membership in a human community that extends far beyond nationality and geography."

Perhaps this is the time to consider what reason, if any, there may be for having flags in our churches in the first place.

John A. Panning  
Lake City, Iowa

### "Positive" women

Sometimes a Northwestern Lutheran item so defies sanctified common sense it's like an unexpected gut punch. All you can do is suck in your breath and go "Whew." There was one such item in the August letters section.

Apparently the media glut of "positive" women's role models (women as policemen, women in combat fatigues, women in space shuttles) isn't enough for one reader. She longs for "positive" images of women in the Northwestern Lutheran. Women leading troubled men to the word. And she makes it clear these women had better not be their mommies! For good measure she throws in a sneer for what she sees as the "stereotypical roles of women in our synod."

The problem with this "positive" woman the reader wants modelled for us is she is not Christ's new creation (1 Peter 3:1-6) but a Miss Frankenstein stitched together of the world's hand-me-downs. Where does Scripture endorse women scrabbling for leadership over confused men? There's plenty such sulfur in our decadent culture without making the Northwestern Lutheran reek.

James B. Romnes  
Renton, Washington

### A wise investment: Christian education

I have been teaching in a Lutheran elementary school off and on for the past 13 years. In the last few years I have noticed a trend that Christian day schools are no longer high on the priority list. Giving one's child the most comprehensive Christian training possible is being prioritized farther down the line, somewhere below finances, social outlets, extracurricular activities, parental convenience, educational methods, and juvenile pressure.

It is the parents' responsibility to teach their children God's word. But in today's fast-paced world is there enough time in the day for parents to give their children all the Christian education they need? One hour a week in Sunday school, an hour or two a week for confirmation instruction, and an adult-based church service. Realistically, how much time do most parents spend in the Christian education of their children?

When a WELS school is available, it seems parents would want that for their children more than any other earthly blessing. If we can mortgage the house for college tuition, if we can invest time, money, and effort into activities that have only earthly benefits, shouldn't we be putting the same effort into the spiritual well-being of our children?

If this generation does not receive a strong training in God's word, who will teach it to the next generation? Congregations, pastors, and parents need to join in the effort. Support our Christian day schools. They play a vital role in the spiritual welfare of our children today and tomorrow.

Terri Baur  
Edmonds, Washington

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

Notices are printed in the first issue each month.  
The deadline for submitting items is  
five weeks before the date of issue.

### SYNODICAL CERTIFICATION TEACHER COURSE

Dr. Martin Luther College offers the following course: Edu 1052 Teaching Religion; 3 credits. Instructor: Gerald Kastens. Mondays, 6 p.m. - 9 p.m., Jan. 6 - May 4 at **Fox Valley LHS, Appleton, Wis.**, \$200.00. The course will apply toward preschool, kindergarten, and elementary certification.

Those wishing to take the course for certification credit must have been accepted into the certification program before registration and must be now teaching in a WELS school. Contact Dr. John Isch, DMLC, 1884 College Heights, New Ulm MN 56073; 507/354-8221.

### NAMES AND GIFTS NEEDED — USSR

Missionary Kirby Spevacek has begun work in eastern Europe and is seeking the names, addresses, and phone numbers of people in eastern Europe or the republics of the former Soviet Union. Please send this information to Pastor Ronald Freier, 404 East Glenlord Road, St. Joseph MI 49085.

Since a food shortage is predicted in eastern Europe, your gifts will be appreciated. Please send donations to the WELS Committee on Relief, 2929 N. Mayfair Road, Milwaukee WI 53222. They may be designated for food for eastern Europe and the Soviet Union.

Another need is for Bibles for eastern Germany and the Soviet republics. Gifts for this purpose should be designated for Bibles and sent to Bibles for eastern Europe at the Mayfair Road address.

### CAMP DIRECTOR WANTED

Camp Phillip, a ministry of the Milwaukee Federation of WELS Churches, Inc., is calling a full-time program director. The position involves program development and improvement, staff recruitment and training, program equipment care and upkeep, and public relations. Please submit names to Pastor Tom Klusmeyer, Camp Phillip, Rt 3 Box 190-4, Wautoma WI 54982; 414-787-3202.

### HANDBELL FESTIVAL

The WELS National Handbell Festival will be held March 28 and 29 on the Martin Luther Preparatory School campus in Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin. For further information please contact Diane Karrow, MLPS, Prairie du Chien WI 53821; 608/326-8480.

### YOUTH LEADERS

A video, "On your own, but not alone," interviews WELS and ELS high school and college students who talk about the spiritual challenges Christians face on college campuses. A discussion guide accompanies the 18-minute video, which is available from the Board for Home Missions, CMC Project Fund, 2929 N. Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222. A \$10 donation per video, or whatever you can afford, is requested. Please make checks payable to WELS Campus Ministry Project Fund — BHM.

### ALUMNI BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

The fifth annual Seminary/Alumni Basketball Tournament will be held Nov. 8 at 3 p.m. Refreshments will be available following the tournament. If interested in participating, contact Pastor Thomas Rothe, 616 11th Ave., Menominee MI 49858; 906/863-3095.

### VACATIONERS TO FLORIDA

New Life Lutheran, Sebring, an ELS mission, is holding Sunday services at 10 a.m.; Sunday school and Bible class at 9 a.m. We meet at Hallo Hall, 3 blocks west of Hwy 27 on New Life Way. Pastor Joel Willitz, 813/385-2293.

### ITEMS AVAILABLE

The following are available for the cost of shipping

**VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL MATERIALS** from various years. Available for cost of shipping. Contact Martin Luther Church, 436 S Lake St, Neenah WI 54956; 414/725-1330

### ITEMS NEEDED

**STICKERS AND BUTTONS** reading "Lutheran Church of Central Africa." To be used by congregations in Malawi and Zambia. Contact Pastor Jeff Gunn, PO Box 310195, 15301 Chelston, Lusaka, Zambia, Africa.

## ANNIVERSARIES

**DAVENPORT, IOWA** — Gethsemane (25th). Gathering November 9, 5:30-8:00 p.m. Services November 10, 10:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Snacks after 10:30 service, dinner after 4:00 p.m. service. Contact Anniversary Committee, 2410 E. 32 St., Davenport IA 52807.

**NEENAH, WISCONSIN** — Martin Luther Church (50th) November 17. Services at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. Banquet at 12:00 noon at Valley Inn, 105 Walnut Street, Neenah. Contact church office at 414/725-1330 or Mel Salle 414/725-9190.

**WATERTOWN, WISCONSIN** — Trinity (75th) Nov. 10. Services at 8 and 10:30 a.m. Catered dinner at noon at Trinity-St. Luke school.

**SAN ANTONIO, TEXAS** — Our Savior (25th). Dec. 8, 4:30 p.m. Dinner and program, 6 p.m.

## NAMES WANTED

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

**DEFORREST/WINDSOR/TOKEN CREEK, WISCONSIN** — Lord of Life Lutheran Ministries, PO Box 414, DeForest WI 53532; 608/846-9036

**OGDEN, UTAH** — Pastor Peter Unnasch, 3134 Eccles Ave., Ogden UT 84403; 801/392-2265.

## EXPLORATORY SERVICES

to determine the potential for establishing a WELS mission in the area. Services are held on Sundays.

**SPOONER, WISCONSIN** — Beautiful Savior, 300 block of Elm St., worship 9 a.m.; Sunday school and Bible class, 10:15. Pastor Stephen Luchterhand; 715/635-7125.

## CHANGES IN MINISTRY

### Pastors:

**Bendewald, Jon D.**, from Faith, Monroe, Mich., to Good Shepherd, Benton Harbor, Mich.

**Berg, Norman W.**, to Grace, Scroggins, Tex.

**Hennig, Richard F.**, to Good Shepherd, Jacksonville, Fla.

**Hilgendorf, Wayne C.**, from St. Paul, Gresham, Neb., to Immanuel, Woodville/First, Hersey, Wis.

**Kimbrough, Raymond R. K.**, from Garden of Gethsemane, Omaha, Neb., to St. Philip, Milwaukee, Wis.

**Reich, Terry W.**, from St. Philip, Milwaukee, Wis., to St. John, St. Paul, Minn.

### Teachers:

**Cohoon, Wade**, to St. James, Milwaukee, Wis.

**Kock, Beth**, to Redemption, Milwaukee, Wis.

**Lernke, Steven**, to Manitowoc LHS, Manitowoc, Wis.

**Oldfield, Elizabeth**, to Emanuel, W. St. Paul, Minn.

**Schmill, Renee**, to King of Kings, Maitland, Fla.

**Sonntag, Catherine**, to St. Matthew, Janesville, Wis.

**Sorum, Lisa**, to Garden Homes, Milwaukee, Wis.

**Zink, Joel**, to Good Shepherd, Downers Grove, Ill.

## ADDRESSES

### PASTORS:

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# Out of time

Our hectic schedules make it increasingly hard to find time to do things as a family.

How about planning fewer meetings and more family events at church?

by Dorothy J. Sonntag

**H**ave you heard of Old and Kohn's Law? It says the efficiency of a committee meeting is inversely proportioned to the number of participants; the more people there are, the less the work that gets done. I recently attended a committee meeting which proved the law's validity. A lot of us accomplished very little. It set me to wondering whether I was spending my time wisely by being on that committee.

It wasn't just that the meeting didn't produce results. It was also that I'd rushed home from work, had a hasty meal, and raced out the door again. There was no time to spend with my family, no time to hear how their day had gone.

On the other hand, they didn't have time to tell me. My husband came home late from work and hurried off to a meeting at church. My daughter was

home long enough to change clothes and go out again. The only one home long enough to listen to any of us was the dog.

Sharing activities is important for building strong family ties, say the experts. But it seems to be increasingly hard to do things as a family. Job responsibilities extend to weekends and evenings. Schools offer events after hours and on weekends. Volunteer activities, classes, hobbies, church and community organizations all demand our time. They may be worthwhile and important, but many of these activities separate families.

The church, the strongest supporter of families, sometimes adds to the problem. We have separate organizations for men, for women, for young adults, for seniors, for teens, for children. Our Bible classes and choirs and meetings separate children from parents, husbands from wives. A family can be at a church function every night of the week and never spend time with each other.

Doing away with these activities isn't the answer. The topics that teens want to talk about in Bible class don't interest me. Men can't sing soprano in a ladies' choir. And sometimes women just want to get away from husbands and kids and spend time with each other (I suppose husbands and kids feel the same way, too).

But the church can make sure there are plenty of activities for the entire family. The women's organization could ask the whole congregation to its anniversary dinner. The teen league could have activities to which parents are invited. The men's club could join the women's group in sponsoring the Easter breakfast. We could schedule fewer meetings and more family events.

I'm trying to make time for my family. Perhaps I should resign from some of those committees, no matter how important they seem, or stop volunteering for just one more project. It's not easy, though, to decide which activities to drop. They're all worthwhile.

Besides, I don't have time to think about it now. I'm late for a meeting.



*Dorothy Sonntag is assistant editor of the Northwestern Lutheran*

by James R. Woodfin

**I**t was a gray, depressing day as we settled into the cockpit of the old Navy TBM. Officially the "TB" stood for "torpedo bomber;" unofficially, it meant "turkey bird."

The latter designation seemed the more appropriate for the ungainly aircraft that was to be my world for the next several hours. As I considered the prospect of being aloft in something that looked unsafe on the ground, I began to question the wisdom of the flight.

Then a seed of hope began to sprout. "There's no way this old hulk is going to crank up, much less get off the ground. So, no problem. We'll have to swap for something that really flies."

No good. The pilot was already doing all those switch-clicking, button-poking things pilots do. And the high-pitched whine from the front end told me they were the right things. The turkey was coming to life!

The propeller slowly started to turn, and suddenly with a snort and a belch of black smoke the engine caught. It immediately went into an unnerving spasm of sputtering, barking, and coughing that strongly suggested respiratory disfunction. This, added to the propeller's inability to find a satisfactory speed, gave new meaning to the word "apprehensive."

Then the wings began to bounce up and down. Maybe they weren't all that well attached. In the unlikely event that this pile of rattling, belching, smoking scrap metal ever gets off the ground, the wings were going to fall off.

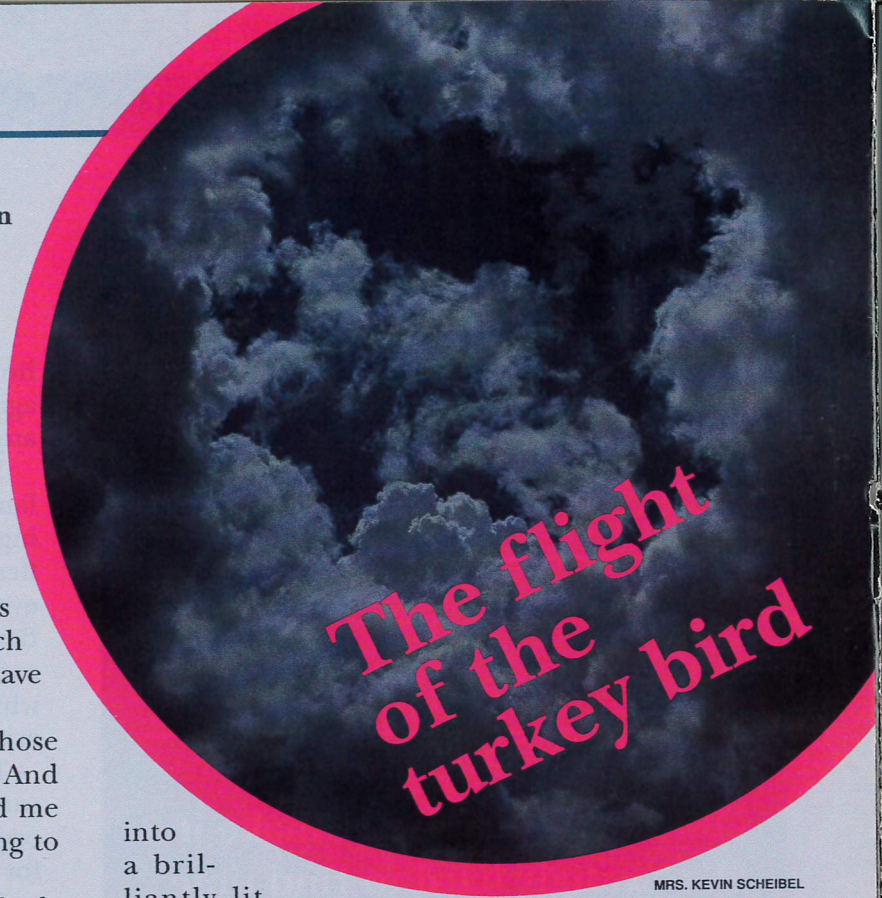
I patted my parachute, taking some comfort in the fact that it was there, and no small amount of discomfort in the prospect of having to use it.

We nosed out onto the runway. The snorting and barking gave way to a roar that shook the foundations of the earth. This heap was not only not going to get off the ground, it was going to explode in the attempt.

Suddenly we were shrieking along the runway. In moments we were over the tree tops. Where a presumptive turkey had been, an eagle soared.

The ground disappeared as we were engulfed in wet, gray flannel. I clutched the navigational charts on my lap. What good were they when I couldn't see past the wings which incidentally — if incredibly — were firmly in place.

We soared upward through the swirling grayness. Suddenly we punched through the top and emerged



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into a brilliantly lit fantasy world.

Rolling fields of cottony clouds stretched to infinity. Red, purple, and gold-tinged plumes and pillars rose to spectacular heights. It seemed as if we could settle down into the billowing softness or jump out and bounce on a giant feather bed.

My apprehension, doubts, and fears melted away and were replaced by a euphoric serenity. It was as though former things had been but a dream.

Finally we were obliged to tilt back down into the soggy gloom and return to reality. But somehow the gray now seemed to have a golden glow behind it. The bright side of gloom had worked its magic.

From then on I would remember that the sun is always there. Not seeing it doesn't alter the fact.

**I**t's a beautiful, comforting thought. No matter how gray and depressing the circumstance, the sunshine is always on top. No matter how deep the gloom, the sunshine — or perhaps Son-shine is a better word — of God's love is ever above it. Jesus shines through and brings a measure of the light and joy and tranquillity of the heavenly realm. It's a wonderful and glorious thing to know and well worth the nerve-wracking flight of the turkey bird to find out.



James Woodfin is a member of Redeemer, Huntsville, Alabama.