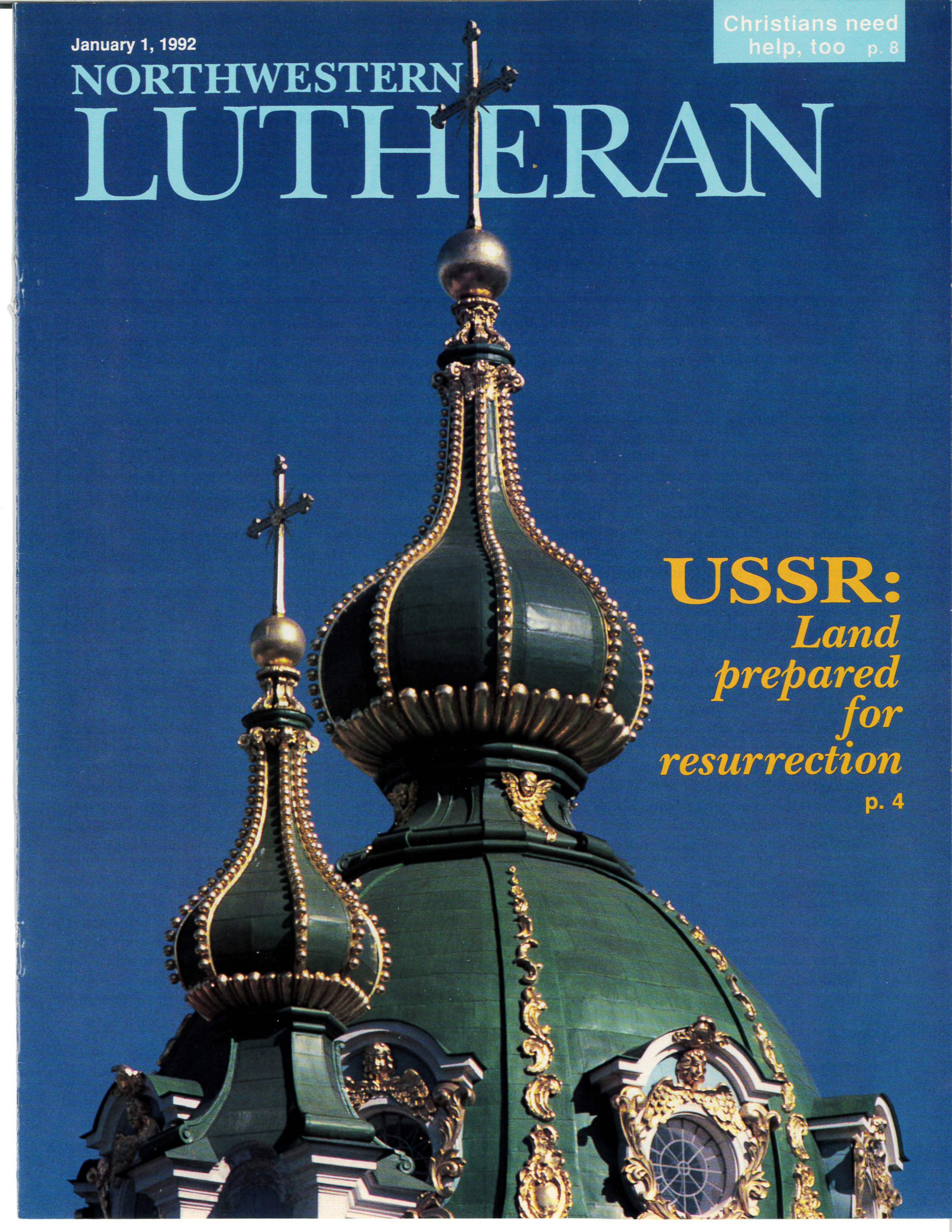


January 1, 1992

Christians need  
help, too p. 8

# NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN



**USSR:**  
*Land  
prepared  
for  
resurrection*

p. 4



## Louder whistling past the cemetery is still just whistling

## All our days

by Robert H. Hochmuth

*Teach us to number our days aright (Psalm 90:12).*

All our days in the new year will be logged in one of two columns: Either good days or bad days. For mortals one heartbeat from eternity there are no so-so days.

**Days under God's wrath**

As Moses reflects on the status of sinners indicted under the blazing light of God's holy presence and alienated from his favor, he can tally only days under God's wrath. His psalm is a litany of moaning and trouble, a chronicle of impermanence and futility. All of it is symptomatic of mankind's most abiding need: To be set right with our eternal Creator.

Without that, even the best of human accomplishments amount only to a prelude to death and dust. Succeeding generations raise new wisps of hope, only to see them disappear in the reality that death passes upon all, for all have sinned.

The fact is that each day is a liability for people resisting or ignoring God; it's one day less to live and one day more to give account for. With the tooth of time gnawing at everything, even temporal prosperity can offer no lasting satisfaction.

From the perspective of eternity, worldlings will be able to lament that they spent years filling their lives with things which served only to make this passing world a more pleasant place from which to step into eternal condemnation.

Under such circumstances, even a prosperous new year will consist of only bad days, even though they offer prospect of gratification here and now. Enjoying this life is no substitute for enjoying real life as partners with our Creator.

Relief is not to be sought in denial or in humanistic halfway measures. Multiplying support groups and publicizing the latest techniques for grieving only maintain our fallen condition at pre-terminal status. Louder whistling past the cemetery is still just whistling.

**Days of gladness**

Moses inspires a more beneficial song for us.

Aching for deliverance from the consequences of human offenses, he turns to the very one we have offended, the one who intended us to reflect his glory for time and eternity. Moses implores God's compassion for failing people and fervently pleads for the return of a satisfying and joyous lifetime for presently disheartened wanderers.

He can come before God's throne with so thoroughgoing a request because he is not relying on some imagined merit of his own, but is casting himself on the unfailing love of the Savior-God. He is banking on the faithfulness of the one who stepped into history and established a solemn covenant to restore undeserving people.

That covenant brought God's eternal Son to earth as our brother to redeem and deliver us from sin and death.

Relying on that love generates confidence and furnishes the incentive for bringing more than small petitions. Assured of our redeemed status and yet conscious of our mortality, we draw near to the eternal one with sweeping requests — requests to transform all our days and activities into significant ones under the cheering truth that we belong to him.

This joy is more than merely academic. It carries over into our attitude toward job and career. We go to work not just to bring home a check, but to serve our God with cheerful and conscientious efforts. It takes form in a positive outlook on life. It seeks expression in grateful song. Being heavenly-minded makes us people who have the most to contribute to others passing through this temporary world.

With our destiny with our Lord made certain by his promise and his resurrection, even days with afflictions and reverses do not have to be charted under bad days. All our days are still under his favor.

Every page of our new calendar can blazon: This is the day the Lord has made; we will rejoice and be glad in it.



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



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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## Editorial office

Rev. James P. Schaefer, Editor  
Dorothy J. Sonntag, Assistant Editor  
*Northwestern Lutheran*  
2929 N. Mayfair Road  
Milwaukee, WI 53222-4398  
Phone 414/771-9357 FAX 414/771-3708

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Prof. Richard D. Balge, Mr. John Barber, Prof.  
John A. Braun, Mr. Mark C. Brunner, Rev. Victor  
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## FEATURES

- USSR: Land prepared for resurrection** by *Dennis A. Kastens* .....4
- God's "pearl" from Pearl Harbor** by *John R. Hering* .....7
- TRIUMPH OVER ADDICTION  
**Christians need help, too** .....8
- A TALE OF THREE TREES  
**The tree of life** by *Curtis A. Peterson* .....10

## NEWS

- Conference of District Presidents clarifies statement on women
- International federation of Lutheran churches planned
  - Lift High the Cross offering passes \$10 million
  - Mozambique refugee ministry begins
  - Three new missionaries in Africa
  - Seminary Auxiliary meets
  - Northwestern Preps take title
  - Also in the news
  - The passing of a star volunteer
  - Southeastern Wisconsin and Western Wisconsin Districts news .....11

## DEPARTMENTS

- THOUGHT FOR TODAY  
**All our days** by *Robert H. Hochmuth* .....2
- STUDIES IN COLOSSIANS  
**Christ Jesus: Our all-sufficient reconciler** by *Fredric E. Piepenbrink* ....15
- EDITORIAL COMMENT  
**Darwin cross-examined posthumously** by *Joel C. Gerlach* .....16
- LETTERS .....17
- FROM THIS CORNER by *the editor* .....19
- SPEAKING MY MIND  
**Shame on you, Clarence Thomas!** by *Rolfe F. Westendorf* .....20

## FORWARD

■ A spiritual reawakening is underway in the former Soviet republics, says Dennis Kastens (p. 4). "Actions and words are now expressed," he says, "which would have brought imprisonment or death only months or weeks before." Some of the more striking advances have taken place in the traditionally Lutheran Baltic

republics. Kastens makes a striking comment: Communism swept away "lukewarm Christianity from the USSR," making possible "what is happening today — Christianity, purified and revitalized, is spreading throughout the Soviet republics."

DJS



# USSR: *Land prepared for resurrection*

by Dennis A. Kastens

“**O**ur country is Golgotha. Christ is crucified. On his left and on his right — thieves. One of them is wise and has believed in Christ. Many who found themselves on Golgotha have believed and have asked Christ to remember them in his kingdom. The wise thief stands for all of them. The other thief is still mocking Christ. But who knows? He, too, may yet ask Christ to remember him in his heavenly kingdom. . . . Golgotha isn't just sufferings, but sufferings that lead to resurrection, enlightening people.”

This quote from Dmitri Dudko, a Russian Orthodox clergyman, describes the spiritual condition prevailing today in much of the USSR.

Not long ago Dudko baptized a number of adults. “What brought you here?” he asked. “What did you read?”

“Nothing in particular,” was their reply.

“The Gospels?” Dudko asked.

“How could we have done that, since they've been impossible to obtain?”

He continued with his questions. “But you understand that you must believe that Christ is risen from the dead, that we too shall rise, that there is life beyond the grave — something many people consider a fable. Do you believe all this?”

Their answer: “We don't doubt any of this. It's all we can believe in. Otherwise life would be meaningless.”

For 290 million citizens residing in 15 former Soviet Republics, the foregoing reflects a soul-searching presently underway in hearts and lives. It commenced in early 1989, shortly after the onset of Glasnost, and it took on heightened expression in 1990, following the collapse of Marxism in the seven East European nations.

In an empire where 50,000 churches were closed, where 60,000 clergy were disenfranchised or martyred, and where most of the church's charitable and educational ministry was confiscated during the 1917 Bolshevik revolution and subsequent purges,

such a development comes as a startling surprise.

Not since the Edict of Toleration in AD 313, ending Roman persecution of the early Christians, has there been such rapid political and religious transformation within a society or nation. Actions and words are now expressed which would have brought imprisonment or death only months or weeks before.

## Events following Glasnost

In the past two years, many changes have been amply reported: 5,000 Russian Orthodox churches have been opened or reopened; young and old flock to services; enrollments at seminaries have soared. The former Marxist Pravda press has plans to begin printing Bibles; the 65,000 public school districts will show the movie “Jesus,” which is an authentic scriptural portrayal of the Savior. A single Moscow parish baptizes 200 people a week; pilot government schools have been incorporating the Judeo-Christian ethic (including the Ten Commandments) with a thought toward eventual mandatory participation in those republics that have a formerly Christian heritage.

In 1985 the registered churches reported 637,081 baptisms, representing over 16 percent of newborn babies, according to the weekly magazine *Argumenty I Fakty*. By 1989 there were 1,639,285 infant baptisms, or over 46 percent of live births. For 1991 it is estimated that nearly 70 percent of newborns are being





"Preaching brothers" attend a two-week training session in Riga, Latvia. They serve as lay ministers to the 500 Lutheran house churches in the USSR. The woman in the front row teaches the

students German. To her right is Pastor Harald Kalnins, who conducts the sessions, and to her left is Dr. George Kretzman, who oversees the curriculum.

baptized. Of the entire Soviet population, it is now reckoned that 41 percent have been baptized. (*Argumenty I Fakty* is the source for the baptismal statistics.) Such a figure is astounding when one reflects upon the severity of persecution which prevailed for three generations.

Religious programming on Soviet television, with Russian language dubbing of Christian films and Sunday School Bible history videos, could become a reality soon, barring unforeseen developments. At Christmas 1990 considerable religious televising occurred. Since then, Easter festivities, funerals, and various spiritual programs have been shown. Some government stations began running religious series prior to the August coup.

#### Response to media

"I know who made the world," a little Soviet boy said to his grandfather.

"Who?" the grandfather asked.

The boy answered boldly, "God. I know because I saw it on TV."

Furious, the militant grandfather (then a member

of the Communist party) stomped into the Volgograd television studio, insisting that the Christian program be taken off the air.

The station employees responded as one person. "It's the best program we've ever had. It has more viewers than any other program." To the grandfather's disgust, they won.

Of course, all victories will not be that easy. The journey to religious faith and spiritual freedom will take time and sacrifice. However, much that is affirmative and encouraging has already taken place.

#### Lutherans set pace

Some of the more striking advances have taken place in the Baltic republics, especially Estonia and Latvia, where the Lutheran church is predominant among religious groups. Church buildings are being returned to congregations.

The seminary in Riga opened in September 1990 with more Latvian seminarians (120) than pastors (90) in the republic. These pastors serve 240 congregations with 130,000 members.

In Estonia the response has been even more dramatic. The 146 Lutheran congregations there recorded 18,608 baptisms and 11,691 confirmations in 1990. That is an average of 125 baptisms and 80 confirmations per parish.

To achieve these figures, immensely large baptismal and confirmation services are held. At St. John Lutheran Church, Tallinn, Estonia, the Palm Sunday 1990 confirmation class had 300 students, with 200 baptized on the Saturday night preceding. A month later another 140 were confirmed.

At this service one girl fainted. However, she immediately scrambled up and went to the altar rail. "There was no way she was not going to be confirmed," commented the pastor, "even though she may have been groggy."

#### Beyond the Caucasus

Elsewhere in the Soviet Union there are concen-

## Bibles for Russia

Recently the WELS received a gift of \$250,000 to be used for Bibles and related biblical literature for the Soviet Republics. The donor wishes to remain anonymous.

The gift will assist Pastor Kirby Spevacek in his two-year assignment to explore the feasibility of beginning a gospel outreach ministry to the USSR. Spevacek has settled in Plzen, Czechoslovakia, with his family. He will soon be joined by Gary Miller and his wife, Barbara. Miller, who was commissioned at St. Lucas, Milwaukee, Dec. 8, is a specialist in the Russian language and culture.



trations of Lutherans in the republics of Kazakhstan, Kirghizia, Tadzhikstan, and Russia. Of the 4.5 million ethnic Germans in the USSR, an estimated 70 percent claim Lutheran heritage. Today 500 house churches, served by unordained traveling preachers, minister to these believers. None of the congregations meet in sanctuaries presently. However, with 1,000 yet-standing Lutheran churches (used as libraries, film studios, gymnasiums, planetariums, museums, and even swimming pools) some congregations intend to regain their previous worship facilities.

A Latvian Lutheran pastor, Harald Kalnins, has been working covertly nearly 25 years with these house churches. He lately launched a practical seminary in his native Riga, to which USSR lay preachers may come for training. They will be needed to continue to serve the house churches until ordained pastors can be educated and installed in the future.

### The future

Communism, with the suffering it brought to believers, swept away corrupt and lukewarm Christianity from the USSR. It created a vacuum in millions of people which can only be filled with vital Christianity. That is what is happening today — Christianity, purified and revitalized, is spreading throughout the Soviet republics.

Seventy years of militant atheism did not incinerate the legacy of the 1000 years in which the gospel was proclaimed in the former land of the czars. The words of Jesus, "I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it," hold especially true in the USSR. Out of the ashes of atheism, a phoenix of religious renewal arises. It is a land prepared for resurrection.



*Dennis Kastens is pastor of Good Shepherd, Collinsville, Illinois.*



The Lutheran congregation in Tsellnograd, Kazakhstan, USSR, worships in two houses combined into one meeting area. Men and women are seated separately.

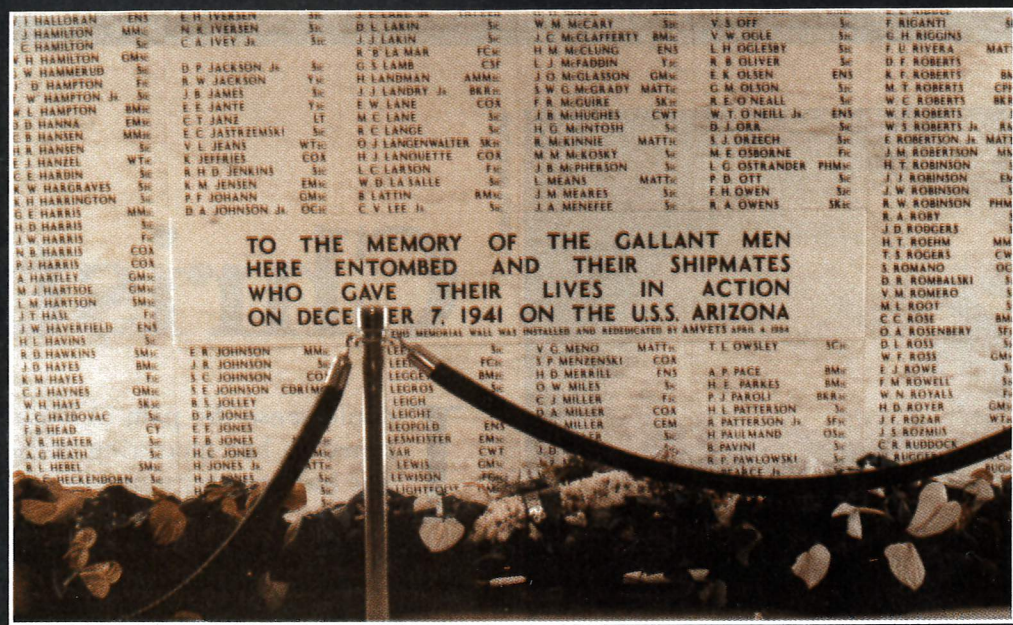


Worship conditions are crowded in this house church in Kirghizia. The accordion is frequently used for Christian worship in the Soviet Union.



These public school children from a Moscow suburb, shown with their teacher, recently received Bibles. Bible history is permitted as a daily subject.





# God's "pearl" from Pearl Harbor

by John R. Hering

When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor 50 years ago, little did they know they were actually opening their ports to the gospel. That day led to direct conflict with the United States. The Lord saw to it that the Christian world would influence Japan from the end of World War II to the present day.

Missionary Richard Poetter and his wife Iku recently retired from influencing Japan for 33 years with the good news of Jesus' love. By the Lord's blessing the Lutheran Evangelical Christian Church in Japan has grown the past years to be a confessional Lutheran church body in fellowship with the WELS.

Two years ago, special funding made it possible for me, just graduated from the seminary, and my wife, June, to begin language training in order to continue to bring the Japanese God's word. We now live in Mito City, north of Tokyo, and share Jesus through Bible classes, worship services, and evangelism outreach. I am the first to admit I have a long way to go before it will not take days to prepare lesson plans and sermons.

The Lord's WELS mission in Japan is growing. Jesus' powerful love is moving Shinto and Buddhist hearts. Plans are being formulated to



Iku and Richard Poetter



John and June Hering with their children

use nation-wide cable radio, information centers, the "Communicating Christ" video, and personal training of members to witness their faith. Already bearing fruits are radio broadcasts, regular tract distribution, many one-on-one Bible classes, dial-a-prayer, and evangelism rallies. A recent rally in a new area, Oyama, was attended by 66 people, 12 of whom heard a sermon for the first time.

The missionaries must take painstaking hours to faithfully prepare sermons, seminary classes, and Bible lessons in Japanese. The desire to expand is burning in the hearts of five missionaries. We need workers to help influence what is perhaps the ripest harvest field in the world.

*John Hering is a missionary in Mito City, Japan.*



MRS. KEVIN SCHEIBEL

# Christians

I could sense the pain in Connie's heart as I listened to her quavering voice over the phone. She had seen my name listed in the church bulletin as a "peer listener." She had avoided discussing her problem with anyone for years, but now, as she approached her 30th birthday, the pain of the past and the knowledge of the present were too difficult to bear alone.

"I need to talk," she began hesitantly. "Do you think we could meet somewhere?" Thus began my first contact as a peer listener. I had been trained to listen, to reflect back, and help to recognize problems and feelings of those who are affected by alcohol and other drug abuse, and then to refer them to the proper facility for professional help. However, all the hours of prayer and training hadn't prepared me for the intensity of the hurt, fear, and distrust I was to observe in those who sought my counsel.

The well-kept secret of drug and alcohol abuse affects the lives of one in every four of us, according to statistical studies. This means that on a given Sunday morning 25 percent of the pastor's audience may not be able to function effectively in the body of Christ due to their own addiction or that of a loved one. Connie was one. There may be others sitting next to you on a Sunday morning, and still others who are no longer sitting next to you because they are too ashamed to attend church.

Through classes offered by an area hospital, help from professionals, and above all God's grace, Connie began to change. She learned to trust me and others. She recognized that some of her feelings and fears were valid and that others had to be dismissed.

Memories began to surface for Connie, as they so often do for adult children of alcoholics. Connie remembered the terror of hearing her parents fighting about her father's drunken behavior when they assumed she was sleeping.

She remembered the feeling of rejection when her mother's co-dependency kept her from loving Connie.

And she still faces the unspeakable memories of

Addiction affects  
one in four,  
including those  
we see on  
Sunday  
morning



# need help, too

her father's night time visits to her bedroom in a drunken fog to seek "comfort" from her young body.

Connie needed help in confronting her fear that her father may have hurt other young girls. She needed help in dealing with her guilt feelings because she hadn't tried to stop his behavior. And she needed help in turning the knowledge of God's grace that she'd acquired from her Christian day school and Lutheran high school training into actual trust in God. She needed help believing that anyone bearing the title Father could really love her the way the Bible taught.

Those are problems for any victim of sexual abuse and alcoholism, but they were more intense in Connie's case. You see, Connie is the daughter of a professional church worker.

Eventually Connie was able to apply some tough love to her father. She and others who were close to him confronted him with the impact of his drinking on their lives. Her father is now free from the physical affects of the drug called alcohol.

**I**wish I could say the same for the emotional scars that remain in Connie and others I have worked with over the years. It has become apparent to me that this job is the responsibility of the entire body of Christ. All of us Christians have been called to bear one another's burdens. Here are some things that have helped me to be a helper:

- **Pray.** Ask God to open your eyes to the pain and hurt of those around you, and for the courage and love that you don't dismiss it as "not your problem."
- **Listen.** Listen to the pain. Try to repeat back to the person what you think he is saying.
- **Identify feelings.** Try to help the person name the feelings that go with the words. This is very difficult since he has learned not to feel. In the past, emotions were too painful, so there is a lot of buried hurt, anger, fear, and guilt.
- **Be patient.** It takes months of reflective listening to get to the base of the pain. Children of alco-

holics, as well as addicts themselves, have been living in a world of denial and delusion for so long that truth is hard to see and accept. The process of recovery works slowly. Little by little trust is built, love is accepted, painful memories are uncovered, and sin is confessed.

- **Don't be judgmental.** When a person leaves his denial behind, there is often a period of intense anger toward God and others. It's uncomfortable to hear that anger, and it's hard not to give a quick Bible verse to answer all those feelings. We need to understand that the hurting person may well have heard words of the Bible used to control behavior and to work guilt when comfort was needed instead.
- **Be honest.** Don't tell the person you understand how he feels unless you really do understand.
- **Encourage Bible reading and prayer.** It is the Spirit of God alone who can work healing in his child. Help the person to talk to God, to admit the anger and hurt, to ask for healing, and to give the memories and pain up to the Great Physician.
- **Encourage seeking further help.** Maybe it's time to go to a professional. There may be a Christian support group available. Present the person with these options and encourage him or her to make some choices about the future.

As the hurting person reaches out for help, others in the family may also seek help for themselves — or the family may alienate the person because he or she is revealing a family secret. Then your support will be greatly needed.

Connie is recovering now, after years of hurting. Many others in our churches are still hurting. By giving our time, our hearts, and our love, we will teach them the valuable lesson of the love of God.

*Connie's name is fictitious. Due to the sensitive facts of the story, the author, a member of a WELS congregation, has asked to remain anonymous.*



# The tree of life

by Curtis A. Peterson

**The Bible ends where  
it began, in paradise,  
in a garden, where grows  
the tree of life**

**I**n Revelation 2 the Savior gave the church at Ephesus a wonderful promise: "To him who overcomes, I will give the right to eat from the tree of life which is in the paradise of God." In the new paradise, God opens the way to the tree of life.

In the Bible's last chapter, Revelation 22, this promise is fulfilled. The redeemed, whose sins have been washed away by the blood of the Lamb of God, will eat of the fruit of this tree forever. What a wonderful prospect for all who believe in Jesus as our Savior!

We have come full circle. The Bible ends where it began, in paradise, in a garden, where flows the water of the river of life and where grows the tree of life, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. Since "paradise" is a Persian word for park or garden, the expression is intended.

But notice also: this promise is only for those who

confess their own personal involvement in the temptation and fall at the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and who find their forgiveness and salvation in the tree on which our Lord was nailed. For the damned, death means the end of hope and the beginning of an eternal suffering.

The damned are forever excluded from the tree of life. But God's mercy crowns our life in heaven for Jesus' sake. Trees are not merely blessings of God's creation now, which we enjoy through the various and changing seasons of the year, but they will be part of our enjoyment of heaven.

Central to the joy of heaven, second only to the presence of our Savior Jesus Christ, pictured in the wonderful symbolic language of Revelation, is the river of life flowing through the middle of the City of God, and by whose streams of living water is planted the tree of life. The wood which marked our being accursed by God has now become the symbol of our victory in Christ.

Note that the book of Revelation speaks of the tree of life on both sides of the river, so we have a veritable forest of life before us in this scene of paradise. Paradise lost has become paradise regained. What a wonderful future we have.

There will no longer be any curse. That curse was taken away for us by our Lord Jesus, the Lamb of God who bore it completely for us. Although we must continue in this vale of tears with the pains and disappointments of earth, joy fills our hearts. As we serve God in his beautiful world, we wait for a flawless and much more beautiful paradise which God will provide for his children in heaven "and they shall see his face" (v. 4).

This is the privilege won for us by the cross of Calvary — that we shall behold him who died for us.

The curse which began in Genesis is now ended. What a beautiful and refreshing sight awaits us. What a balm of healing for tired and burdened souls!



*Curtis Peterson is pastor of Resurrection, Milwaukee.*



## Conference of District Presidents clarifies statement on women

In his November 27 newsletter to the synod's circuit pastors President Carl Mischke on behalf of the Conference of District Presidents (COP), responsible for the supervision of doctrine and practice of the WELS included several paragraphs clarifying the synod's position on the role of women. He writes:

Comments have been made that the statement [Scriptural Principles of Man and Woman Role] which the convention adopted in August teaches that "all women are always subject to all men." The COP wishes to point out that such comments are in contradiction to Antithesis 13 which states, "We reject the opinion that the principles of role relationships mean that all women are always subject to all men. Since other biblical principles may also govern relationships, we consider this opinion an exaggeration of the biblical role principle. One of these other principles is, 'We must obey God rather than men' (Acts 5:29)."

Comments have also been made that some people in attempting to clarify this position have explained it to mean that in society all women

who are in a position of authority over men are sinning and if they persist in this sin they must be admonished and eventually removed from our Christian fellowship.

Here the COP wishes to point out that such comments are in contradiction to Thesis 22 which states: "Scripture leaves a great deal to our conscientious Christian judgment in applying the role relationship principle in the world. Christian love will restrain us from unduly judging brothers and sisters as they apply this principle to their lives in the world."

Every effort is being made to have the study materials authorized by the convention available soon after the first of the year.

There are 117 circuit pastors in the synod, located throughout the United States. The official district constitution states that "the district shall exercise supervision over its members in matters of doctrine and practice through circuit pastors elected by the circuits of the district for two-year terms." This is the only assignment given to the circuit pastors.

## International federation of Lutheran churches planned

The constituting convention of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC) will be held April 27-29, 1993, in Oberwesel, Germany, according to an announcement by the planning committee for the conference. The

CELC will be an international federation of confessional Lutheran churches. It is being formed to replace the now defunct Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America, which for nearly a century served as a bulwark of orthodox Lutheranism.

Approximately ten church bodies from around the world are expected to become charter members of the CELC. Besides the WELS, church bodies expected to be represented are Christ the King Lutheran Synod of Nigeria, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Germany, the Lutheran Church of Central Africa, the Lutheran Church of Cameroon, the Lutheran Confessional Church of

Sweden and Norway, the Lutheran Evangelical Christian Church of Japan, the Southeast Asia Lutheran Evangelical Mission. Latin American churches may also be in attendance.

Representing the WELS on the planning committee are President Carl H. Mischke; Professors Armin Panning and Lyle Lange; Duane Tomhave, administrator for the Board for World Missions; and Wilbert R. Gawrisch, chairman of the Commission on Inter-Church Relations.

ELS members of the committee are President George Orvick, Professors Wilhelm Peterson and Juul Madson of Bethany Lutheran Theological Seminary, and Pastor Gaylin Schmeling, chairman of the doctrine committee.



**Mission  
of the  
WELS**

**A**s men, women, and children united in faith and worship by the word of God, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod exists to make disciples throughout the world for time and for eternity, using the gospel to win the lost for Christ and to nurture believers for lives of Christian service, all to the glory of God.



## Lift High the Cross offering passes \$10 million

On November 22 Lift High the Cross surpassed the \$10 million mark. In November, congregations began to send in the commitments and gifts of their members, and the early responses are encouraging.

"\$20 million is a very challenging goal," stated Pastor Ronald Roth, the national director. "It is essential that we have the cooperation and active participation of all our congregations in order to achieve it."

All congregations have been given sample materials with which to carry out the offering either this fall or in spring. The latest project to be funded by the offering is the calling of a seventh missionary to Malawi, Africa, so that our gospel outreach can be extended to the million plus refugees from Mozambique who are seeking refuge in Malawi.

## Seminary auxiliary meets

The nineteenth annual meeting of the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Auxiliary was held on the seminary campus at Mequon, Wis., Oct. 5. Elected to offices were Jan Fleming, second vice-president; Joanne Hemker, corresponding secretary; Carol Egelseer and Karen Altergott, representatives-at-large. Doris Eggers will assume the office of president.

The annual meetings provide opportunities to learn more about the seminary, to enjoy Christian fellowship, and to support projects for the seminary.

— *Kathryn Weihing*

## Mozambique refugee ministry begins

"The Spirit compels us to go to Malawi." So spoke Dr. William Scheppe in 1962 as missionaries in Zambia considered an opportunity to spread mission activity to neighboring Malawi. Today more than 16,000 Malawians are part of the Lutheran Church of Central Africa (LCCA).

"Today the Lord is presenting us with an even greater opportunity to do mission work among the Mozambican refugees in Malawi." So spoke missionary Raymond Cox when comparing what he saw on the first survey team in 1962 to what is before his eyes today.

Since the mid-sixties, civil war raging in Mozambique has made mission work difficult. Few people under 25 have heard about Jesus. In the past five years a million Mozambicans have fled to Malawi.

These people have seen and felt suffering and violence. They are, humanly speaking, ready to listen to the good news of a Savior. The

LCCA has called Pastor D. Boloweza to join WELS Missionary Timothy Soukup to continue on a full-time basis the work already started among these refugees.

Lift High the Cross offerings are providing \$263,000 to fund Soukup's replacement in Malawi for four years. First year costs for the replacement missionary include shipping furnishings and a car and family travel. Funds will also be needed for language study, to develop materials, and to build small chapels.

Political and social conditions may eventually improve in Mozambique, and the refugees return. This large African coastal country, with a population greater than Zambia and Malawi combined, may become ripe for gospel harvest. Perhaps in a few years we will hear, "The Spirit compels us to go to Mozambique."

— *Duane K. Tomhave*



Howard and Leslie Mohlke



Eugene and Linda Roecker

## Three new missionaries in Africa

Three new missionaries have recently arrived in Central Africa to replace those who have left to serve elsewhere. Howard Mohlke, a May graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, was sent to Lusaka, Zambia. Eugene Roecker was called from the dual parish of Hokah and LaCrescent, Minn., to



Mark and Louise Wendland

serve in Lilongwe, Malawi. Mark Wendland left a dual parish in Clare and Harrison, Mich., for Mzuzu, Malawi.



## Northwestern Preps take title

With Aaron Robinson, who was named outstanding player of the game, rushing for 120 yards and three touchdowns in the second half the Northwestern Preps, Watertown, defeated Manitowoc Roncalli, 34-18, to capture Wisconsin's private schools Division 2 football title on November 10.

The preps (10-1) won their third straight title after winning the title in 1989 and 1990.

Coach Ron Hahm, commenting on the decisive victory, said that "a lot of people didn't think they were



**Over 475 children attended** vacation Bible school at Apostles, San Jose, California, last summer. "Of this number," says Pastor Kerry Kronebusch, "over 250 were non-members, many of them unchurched. Ten thousand flyers were handed out in the surrounding neighborhoods inviting the children to come."

good enough to win anything on their own. So that was a motivating factor."

Hahm, who teaches German and Latin at the school, said the Preps were a "finesse team, although they

were a better running team this season."

Northwestern Prep, one of three ministerial preparatory schools maintained by the synod, has a current enrollment of 189.

## Also in the news

**Marilyn Toepel** was one of three representatives at Washington D.C. from Horace Mann Middle School, Sheboygan, Wis., where the Department of Education honored the school as one of 222 schools chosen as 1991 Blue Ribbon Schools. Mrs. Toepel, the school's librarian, is a member of St Paul, Howards Grove, where she plays the organ and sings in the choir. . . . A sixth planned giving counselor, **John Coleman**, has been appointed by the Commission on Communication and Financial Support. Coleman, of Phoenix, will serve the Arizona-California and South Central Districts. . . . Other **appointments** reported by President Mischke are Dr. Ray Dusseau to the Board for Worker Training; Pastor Kieth Kuschel as chairman of the Commission on Adult Discipleship; Teacher Arnold Nommensen to the Board of Control of Dr. Martin Luther College; and Pastor Mark Zarling to the Board of Control of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. . . . The 100th anniversary of the **Walther League** will be held in Chicago, May 21-24, 1993. For more information write Wheat Ridge, 104 S. Michigan, Rm 610, Chicago IL 60603. . . . **Harold and Valeria Schultz** from Alexandria, Minnesota, are the first volunteer lay couple to Apacheland. Funded by Kingdom Workers, they will serve during this school year as maintenance engineer and secretary at East Fork Lutheran High School. . . . At the **national intercollegiate dairy cattle judging contest**, held

recently in Madison, Wisconsin, two of the top collegiate judges were WELS members: Shelly Joos of Hancock, Minn., and Kristi Brown of Hastings, Minn., both members of the University of Minnesota team. . . . Members of several WELS congregations in eastern Wisconsin hosted a booth at the state's annual **Farm Progress Days** held last July. During the three days of activity over 3000 religious surveys were taken, identifying 542 unchurched families from six mid-western states. The names of the families have been sent to the closest WELS churches for follow-up. . . . **Nurses** with bachelor degrees are urgently needed in Central Africa to work in our clinics in Zambia and Malawi. Contact: Dr. J. Brooks, 414/554-6038, or Linda Golembiewski, 414/383-1131. . . . Pastor Donald Meier, retired WELS planned giving counselor, was recently installed as development director of **Southern Lutheran Academy of Florida**. The organization asked him to study the feasibility of a Florida Lutheran high school. . . . **Jerry Davis** of Hartland, one of the movers behind the formation of the WELS Kingdom Workers and a charter member of the organization and its treasurer, died recently. Jim Haag, a board member of Kingdom Workers and also the WELS Board for World Missions, said of Jerry, "Without Jerry, Kingdom Workers wouldn't be where it is."



## Southeastern Wisconsin District news

The Illinois/Indiana chapter of WELS Lutherans for Life celebrated the tenth anniversary of the founding of its pregnancy counseling center at Palatine, Illinois. . . . **Shoreland LHS** is in its 21st year of secondary education. The 62 students of the freshman class increased the enrollment 10 more than last year to 203. . . . On October 27 **St. John, Oak Creek**, dedicated an addition. The unit includes a lower level fellowship area, which can be converted into four classrooms, four permanent classrooms on the upper level, a new entry, church offices, and central air conditioning. On September 29 Alfred Bloedel, director of music at Grace, Milwaukee, played a recital on the new organ which was part of the project. . . . After 37 years, the last 13 at St. John, Newberg, **Pastor Edwin F. Biebert** retired from the ministry on August 11. . . . At his home congregation, Emanuel, Town Herman, **Eugene Roecker** was commissioned as missionary to Malawi, Africa, on October 13. . . . **St. John, Forest Home, Milwaukee**, dedicated a school addition on September 15 consisting of four classrooms, administrative offices, and locker rooms. . . . **Kettle Moraine LHS** has a record enrollment of 263, with its freshman class of 87 students the largest in its history. The school is conducting a self-study, with a detailed survey mailed to over 250 persons. . . . **Mt. Calvary, Waukesha**, celebrated its 50th anniversary September 29. . . . **Bethlehem, Carmel, Indiana**, the third WELS congregation in the metro-Indianapolis area, began weekly services on December 8 at Carmel Clay Public Library. The congregation conducted a telephone survey of over 12,000 homes in preparation for this first service.

— Robert A. Sievert

## The passing of a star volunteer

Phyllis E. Enstad died in July, leaving behind a long record of volunteering.

She served first as a volunteer and later as manager of the WELS Workshop for the Visually Handicapped in West St. Paul, Minn., for many years. She served on the board and later as president of the Dr. Martin Luther College Ladies Auxiliary. She was active on the auxiliary board of the Lutheran Home, Belle Plaine, Minn., and was office coordinator for the "Message of the Master," a Twin Cities radio broadcast. Outside of the WELS

## Western Wisconsin District news

**Trinity of Goodview, Minn.**, has remodeled and expanded its church facility with a new entrance, handicapped access, a new meeting and conference room, and restrooms. . . . **St. John, Lewiston Minn.**, celebrated its 125th anniversary on September 22. The anniversary services included sermons by three sons of the congregation — Pastors Harold Essmann, Mark Bartsch, and Ray Beckmann. Another son of the congregation, Charles Bonow, served as organist. . . . **Gethsemane of Davenport, Iowa**, celebrated its 25th anniversary on November 10. . . . **St. Peter of Helenville** celebrated the 140th anniversary of its school on November 17. The school currently has an enrollment of 79 students and four teachers. . . . A **joint Reformation service** hosted by St. Paul, Wonewoc, included several choirs, three speakers (who presented minisermons and object lessons on the themes of "sola gratia, sola fide, sola scriptura") and a Reformation fair, with congregations setting up Reformation displays and parish histories including pictures, books, and artifacts.

— Elton C. Stroh

she worked with the mentally ill at the state hospital in Rochester and at St. John's Hospital in St. Paul.

"We will all miss this friend of special ministries, missions, and Christian education," says her son-in-law, Missionary Glen Hieb of Tsuchiura, Japan.

## Obituaries

### Priscilla Kurth Boehm

1947-1991

Priscilla Linda Boehm, nee Kurth, was born Aug. 21, 1947, in Hastings, Minn. She died Nov. 9, 1991, in Bay City, Mich.

A graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, she had taught at Pilgrim, Minneapolis.

She is survived by her husband, Daniel; children Lucas, Rinda, Aaron, and Anna; her mother, Gretchen Kurth; her brothers, John, David, Charles, and Tim; and her sister, Elizabeth.

Services were held at St. John, Bay City, Mich.

### Earl O. Rolloff

1920-1991

Earl O. Rolloff died July 21, 1991. He was born July 4, 1920, in Kenosha, Wisconsin.

He graduated from Winnebago Lutheran Academy, Fond du Lac, Wis., and from Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., in 1941. He taught in Winona, Minn., Reedsville, Milwaukee, and Fond du Lac, Wis.

Survivors include his wife, Lorraine; daughter, Judy (Ted) Gantner; two grandchildren; one brother; and three sisters.

Services were held at St. Peter, Fond du Lac.



# Christ Jesus: Our all-sufficient reconciler

*Colossians 1:15-23*

by Fredric E. Piepenbrink

**F**rom time to time we come across verses in Scripture that strike an especially melodious cord. They are so lofty in thought and so compact with meaning that no amount of study or exposition would begin to exhaust their content or beauty. Paul's letter to the Colossians contains one such note. In Colossians 1:15-23 we are vividly reminded the entire Scripture is the revelation of God, and we would do well to take off our sandals, for the place where we are standing is holy ground.

## The deity of Christ

Someone has described this section of Colossians as the most exhaustive assertion of our Lord's Godhead to be found in Paul's writings. The Colossian church had been exposed to a heresy that degraded Christ to the rank of an inferior being somewhere between man and God. But Paul would have none of it. He attacks the heresy on three fronts.

The first is Christ's relation to the Father. Jesus is the image of God; he is the exact likeness of the Father in all things except being the Father. That this is the proper understanding is later confirmed when Paul says, "For God was pleased to have all his fullness dwell in him."

The second is Christ's relation to the universe. Jesus is the "firstborn" over all creation; our Lord antedates all creation and reigns supreme over it. Again, this interpretation is confirmed later with the words, "by him all things were created." Christ Jesus could not be created himself if no creative process is external to and independent of him.

The third is Christ's relation to the church. Jesus is the head of the church. As the body cannot live without the head, so Christ Jesus is the source of all blessings that believers enjoy, including even the resurrection of the dead to glory.

## Reconciliation

But Paul's motives for such an eloquent triad on the deity of Christ were higher than simply a love for the truth. At stake was the very heart of the gospel Paul was preaching and which he once defined as the message of reconciliation. To reconcile means to

bring two warring factors together.

The conflict we find today between the Jews and Arabs in the Middle East is a mere charade compared to the hostilities Paul is talking about, the complete alienation between God and mankind. Adam initiated the conflict when he broke the law, and the result was a world of sinners whose minds are enemies with God.

Who could possibly mend such a breach? Who could appease the eternal and holy God? A mere man? Absurd! Mankind is part of the problem, not the solution. Would God create some half-God, half-man to assume the task of mediator? No! What right would any creature have to tell the Creator what to do? Rather, the appeaser had to be God himself. Paul's message of reconciliation was between God and mankind through his own Son Christ Jesus.

## The Christian's gain

Christ Jesus is the all-sufficient reconciler because he is totally God. God alone can appease God. Jesus took on human flesh that he might make peace through his blood shed on the cross. The three words Paul uses to describe the Christian's gain through that completed reconciliation are "holy," "without blemish," and "free from accusation."

A young girl was very near death in the hospital. A friend asked, "Have you any doubts?"

"No, none, why should I? I hold on to Jesus' hand."

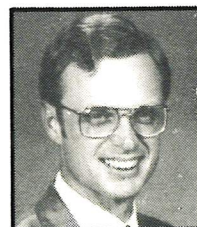
"But don't you have some fear about your sins?"

"No, they are all forgiven. I trust the Savior's precious blood."

"And do you think you will be as brave as this when the time comes for you to actually die?"

"Not if Jesus leaves me, but he will never leave me, for he has said, 'I will never leave you nor forsake you.'"

You cannot discourage Christians who have come to know Christ Jesus as their all-sufficient reconciler.



*Fredric Piepenbrink is pastor of Atonement, Milwaukee.*



## Darwin cross-examined posthumously

Phillip Johnson, a respected professor of criminal law at the University of California in Berkeley has put Charles Darwin on trial in absentia. Johnson is the author of a new book, *Darwin on Trial*. The book is a lawyer's analysis of the evidence evolutionists offer in support of evolutionary theory.

Johnson's conclusion is that the evidence does not support the theory. He contends that Darwinism "is an imaginative story about who we are and where we came from, which is to say it is a creation myth."

Johnson's interest in the subject stems from a research project in which he was engaged during a sabbatical four years ago in London. He was intrigued by the "rhetorical strategy" evolutionists employ in defense of their theory. His research convinced him that "the discussion was structured so that only one outcome was possible."

Johnson adds fuel to the fire by suggesting that scientists know that Darwinism is false, and that their allegiance to the theory is motivated by self-interest.

That allegation is not likely to be well received in the halls of academia. Although evolutionary biologists generally acknowledge that the theory of natural selection, the mainspring of Darwin's theory, is untenable, they cling tenaciously to an amended theory they call neo-Darwinism. Johnson insists that the contemporary version of the theory "is essentially the same theory" because it is dependent on "random genetic changes."

What makes Johnson's findings of special interest to us is the fact that he is not offering his book to the public in defense of creationism. He does not believe in the biblical account of creation. He contends that evolutionary theory is unsubstantiated, and that it falls under its own weight.

All of which leads us to ask again why so many people believe in evolution if the evidence doesn't support the theory. St. Paul speaks about "men who suppress the truth" and whose "thinking has become futile." He adds that "since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind" (Romans 1:28).

Johnson's book, *Darwin on Trial*, helps us to appreciate the truth that, wittingly or unwittingly, men still "suppress the truth."

Joel C. Gerlach



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



### Organists' farmclub

Thank you for the article, "Katie, organist since age 12" (Oct. 15). My niece and my daughter were given the opportunity to play for services at the same age as Katie. Through their experiences, both have become accomplished musicians.

Wouldn't it be wonderful if our larger congregations had an organists' farmclub? They would let these young people learn under an accomplished musician, and the congregation would encourage it by ignoring a few errant notes. In today's transient society, the young do not stay in the congregation of their youth. What a wonderful surprise it would be for smaller congregations to have someone who is capable of handling this much-needed position.

*Margaret Covach  
Bothell, Washington*

### Cuts hurt, but heal

In response to Letters (Oct. 15), "Saving souls vs. new programs," recent budget shortfalls have resulted in extensive cuts in teacher positions in the Apache mission schools.

Budget cuts hurt because there are children who are not allowed to enroll in school to learn God's word. In spite of these cuts at our schools in Peridot, Cibecue, and Bylas, the faculty and parents are showing a greater willingness to assume the responsibility of operation and maintenance of property. Also, our families are more willing to fund salaries.

We hope that Partners in Apache Learning (PAL) will help to ease the budget cuts. This program will allow concerned WELS members to support an Apache child who is in need of school assistance.

We believe that God is making us stronger. The cuts are healing. For this we are grateful.

*Paul Schulz  
Bylas, Arizona*

*For more information on PAL, contact  
Pastor Philip Koelpin, 141 Mohave Rd,  
Tucson AZ 85705.*

### Rock music

I am concerned about our churches using rock music. Contemporary Christian music is great, and light rock has a place in worshipping God. Heavy metal bands who worship Satan and sex prefer hard rock with its loud, sensual beat.

The music of Malachi (Music with a message, Oct. 15) is loud.

I am 37, and I grew up with rock. More than once I came away from a dance with ears that were numb from being exposed to sounds that exceeded 120 decibels. I found out too late that this is enough to cause permanent hearing loss. I now have a recurring condition known as tinnitus, or ringing of the ears.

If our churches are going to use rock music, they should be careful, because it can be harmful in more ways than one.

*Linda Schrimpf  
Goodhue, Minnesota*

### Be Bereans

In the aftermath of the synod convention there seems to be a feeling of uneasiness or dissatisfaction over some of the decisions that were reached.

We must remember that Scripture is the ultimate truth and that the ideas, perceptions, and practices of our society and culture must be discarded when they conflict with the unchanging word of God.

In Acts 17:11 Luke writes, "Now the Bereans . . . received the message with great eagerness and examined the Scriptures every day to see if what Paul said was true." We err when we stop searching Scripture and rely on our culture, our opinions, and even our church to tell us what to believe. Where would we be today if Martin Luther had done that?

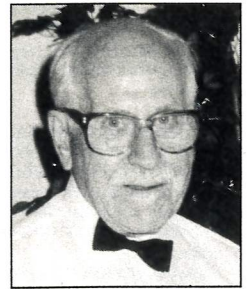
Dust off your Bible today. Dig it out, see what it says. Then humbly and prayerfully submit to its teachings and boldly correct the rest of us when we stray from the truth. Let's all be Bereans.

*Steve Huhn  
Wautoma, Wisconsin*

### Taking time

How my heart was warmed by the touching article, "Let me take time" (Nov. 15). Maybe the readers would like to know a bit more about the author.

I met John Engelmann at a concert. Shortly after that he joined our WELS string group, Instruments of Joy. He taught himself violin and now he comes



John Engelmann

every week 12 miles each way with his wife, Maude, to rehearse with us.

He talks about taking time. This remarkable gentleman is 83 and walks with difficulty. Yet he has time to go to work every day, a one and one-half hour bus ride each way. He reads German novels and is now reading a book on Russian history. He has time to pay attention to other people, spicing up the conversation with bits of spontaneous humor. No conversation is dull when John is around.

*Grace Bartel  
Hudson, Wisconsin*

### The easiest evangelism

Recently I was a visitor at a WELS congregation. I was stared at but not spoken to. No one offered me the use of a hymnal or bulletin. I was made to feel like an intruder, an outsider.

Imagine how others feel when they enter our churches and receive the same treatment. They are looking for something missing in their lives and we make them feel like outcasts. No wonder our churches aren't growing as fast as we'd like.

Evangelism includes all members of the church, not just the minister. The easiest evangelism is a smile at newcomers, sharing your bulletin, making them feel welcome. No amount of visits by the pastor can make up for a cold atmosphere in church.

*Twila J. Fickel  
Chadron, Nebraska*



## NOTICES

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

### CALL FOR NOMINATIONS DR. MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE

The Board of Control requests the voting constituency of the WELS to nominate qualified candidates for the following positions:

#### Music

Nominees should be qualified to direct band and teach band-related courses, music theory, music history, and if possible help with keyboard instruction.

#### Physical education and coaching

Nominees should be qualified to teach physical education and coach football and other sports.

#### Education

Nominees should be qualified to teach professional education courses, secondary school methods, and student teaching.

#### English

Nominees should be qualified to teach literature, primarily American, and composition.

Names of nominees with as much pertinent information as possible should be in the hands of the board's secretary no later than Jan. 27. Those who desire the names of nominees may obtain them by contacting the secretary, Pastor Robert Bitter, 173 E Waupun St Box 277, Oakfield WI 53065.

### THERAPISTS NEEDED

Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service has positions available for qualified Christian therapists. Basic requirements include a master's degree in the field, direct counseling experience, and the ability to apply Biblical truth in individual, family, and group therapy programs. We have immediate openings in our Wausau, Morton Grove, and Fort Atkinson offices.

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, PO Box 23980, Milwaukee WI 53223; 414-353-5000.

### NAMES WANTED

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

**Brandon/Riverview/Greater Tampa area** — Pastor Christopher Kruschel, 13208 Parkhurst Court, Riverview, FL 33569; 813/681-2375

**Port Charlotte/Murdock/North Port/Punta Gorda** — Pastor LeRoy Martin, 1089 Marlene Street, Port Charlotte, Florida 33952; 813/7641607

### ITEMS AVAILABLE

The following are available for the cost of shipping

**HAMMOND ORGAN** — Model C with a Leslie speaker system. Entire unit has been overhauled by a Hammond specialist. Available to any mission congregation. Will help with the moving. Grace, Pickett, Wis. Call Pastor Alvin Aichele at 414/589-2781.

### ITEMS NEEDED

**CHURCH BELL** — For Shepherd of the Hills, 219 Crabapple, Fredericksburg TX 78624.

### WELS VIDEO/FILM RENTAL

#### HUMPTY

1991 24 min. 1/2" VHS color PJ  
The familiar nursery rhyme has been expanded into an allegory that resembles the parable of the prodigal son. However, this entertaining cartoon is devoid of religious significance unless a teacher is prepared to point out the similarities between the fallen sinner and a fallen egg.

Send your order for renting the videos to WELS VIDEO/FILM RENTAL SERVICE, Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N. 113 St, Milwaukee WI 53226-3284. Phone 414/475-6600, extension 127.

### AUDIOVISUAL LENDING LIBRARY

#### THE 1990 SUNDAY SCHOOL CONVENTION

Many of the workshops of the 1990 Sunday school convention were videotaped. They are available for Sunday school teacher training. The tapes are as follows:

**The Art of Storytelling** (VHS-100-AOS)  
1991 33 min. 1/2" VHS color SCA

**Using Audiovisual Resources Effectively** (VHS-101-UAV)  
1991 44 min. 1/2" VHS color SCA

**Applying God's Truth** (VHS-102-AGT)  
1991 43 min. 1/2" VHS color SCA

**Making Memory Work Meaningful** (VHS-103-MMM)  
1991 34 min. 1/2" VHS color SCA

**Discipline in Grades 5 to 8** (VHS-104-DFG)  
1991 53 min. 1/2" VHS color SCA

**Understanding the Student: Grades 6-8** (VHS-105-UTS)  
1991 37 min. 1/2" VHS color SCA

**Sunday School Superintendent and the Pastor** (VHS-106-SSP)  
1991 29 min. 1/2" VHS color SCA

**Training Children to Witness** (VHS-107-TCW)  
1991 46 min. 1/2" VHS color SCA

**Reaching the Community Through the Community** (VHS-108-RC)  
1991 44 min. 1/2" VHS color SCA

#### THE LUTHERAN PIONEERS

The Lutheran Pioneers prepared these videos to introduce both programs to congregations who may be thinking about participating in Pioneer activities.

**Loyal to Christ** (VHS-114-LTC) Girl Pioneers  
1991 14 min. 1/2" VHS color PJSCA

**To the Future** (VHS-115-OTF) Boy Pioneers  
1991 14 min. 1/2" VHS color PJSCA

**BE A PART OF THE OWLS** (VHS-113-BPO)  
1991 12 min. 1/2" VHS color CA

The Organization of WELS Lutheran Seniors are investing their time and resources in Christian growth and service. This video invites others to become a part of this active group of senior citizens.

**PROCLAIM HIS SALVATION FROM DAY TO DAY** (VHS-116-NPH)  
1991 7 min. 1/2" VHS color SCA

As a part of its centennial observation the Northwestern Publishing House has prepared this video to give viewers a glimpse into the purpose and history of this Wisconsin Synod institution, and to encourage the use of its services.

**WELS ALL OVER THE WORLD** (VHS-117-WMB)  
1991 17 min. 1/2" VHS color JSCA

Delegates to the 1991 WELS convention were privileged to view a slide lecture on world missions. Now the same presentation has been condensed into a seventeen-minute video so that all our congregations can see what WELS world missions means.

With annual subscription or rental, order from AUDIOVISUAL LENDING LIBRARY, Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 North 113th Street, Milwaukee WI 53226-3284. Phone 414/475-6600, extension 127.

### CHANGES IN MINISTRY

#### PASTORS:

**Bourman, James C.**, to Emanuel, St. Paul, Minn.

**Ellenberger, Larry G.**, from St. Lucas, Milwaukee, Wis., to Northeast Regional Mission Counselor

**Lillo, Joel E.**, to St. Paul, Hamburg, Wis.

**Lindloff, Mark A.**, from Faith, Melstone, Mont., to Faith, Rising City, Neb.

**Linn, David C.**, to Prince of Peace, Twisp, Wash.

**Lintner, Joel W.**, from Faith, River Falls, Wis., to Twin Cities Campus Ministry, Minn.

**Mann, Kenley D.**, from Immanuel, Medford, Wis., to Faith, Monroe, Mich.

**Michel, Robert H.**, to executive director, Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service, Milwaukee

**Rodewald, Duane A.**, from Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, to St. Paul, Tomah, Wis.

**Ruppel, James A.**, from Grace, Casa Grande, Ariz., to Our Savior, Grants Pass (ELS)

**Schultz, Anthony E.**, from Trinity, Campbellsport, Wis., to St. Luke, Watertown, Wis.

**Stoan, Roger D.**, from Emmanuel, Zephyrhills, Fla., to Faith, Oshkosh, Wis.

**Tullberg, Paul A.**, from Hope, Belvidere, Ill., to Good Shepherd, Wisconsin Rapids, Wis.

### SEMINAR TAPES AVAILABLE

Videotapes of the Revitalizing Parish Ministry seminar presented to pastors in each district are now available from the synod's Adult Discipleship office. Tapes on "Rethinking Our Approach to Ministry," "Adult Spiritual Growth is Essential for Parish Renewal," "Building Member Ministry," "Enhancing Christian Fellowship Life," "Planning Parish Ministry," "Transformational Leadership," and "Principles of Worship" are \$10.00 each. The 150-plus page seminar ringbinder is \$15.00.

## IS A CHARITABLE GIFT ANNUITY FOR YOU?

Are you interested in making a gift to provide for the continuation of the Lord's work after He takes you to your home in heaven?

Do you want a secure investment that will give you income for the rest of your life, or provide income for someone else?

Would you like a portion of this income to be tax exempt?

Would you like to get tax benefits now but defer income until later, possibly after retirement?

If your answer is YES to any of these questions, then a Charitable Gift Annuity may be for you. For further information, contact:

Office of Planned and Special Giving  
WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL  
LUTHERAN SYNOD  
2929 North Mayfair Road  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53222  
(414) 771-6119



**T**his first issue of 1992 marks my tenth anniversary as editor of the Northwestern Lutheran. Prior to becoming editor I had served the synod as stewardship counselor, assisting the Conference of Presidents in the funding of the synod's budget. In that area of church work 14 years is a long time, and it was time for me to move on. I was happily unaware of the terrain I would traverse as editor.

When I came to the synod's administration building in 1967, the synod was rolling along in a familiar pattern. The breakup of the Synodical Conference was only five years past, and we were still scrambling to plant our synodical banner throughout the United States — "every state by '78" was the cry — lest our confessional commitment be buried alongside our midwestern roots. At the same time our world missions were in an unprecedented expansion mode, with overseas missions and missionaries increasing rapidly.

But in the late '70s and on through the '80s, things began to change. First, a new Bible translation for the synod's instructional material was authorized by the 1977 convention. The majestic strains of the King James Version were being lost on a new generation. The convention warned, however, that the action was not to be "construed as the adoption of the New International Version as the synod's official Bible."

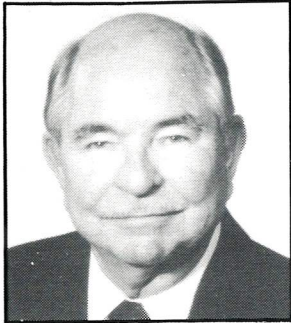
The changes picked up momentum as the '80s saw the authorization of a new hymnal. Many considered this an unnecessary disruption of their worship patterns and customs, liturgies, and hymns, sanctified by 50 years of use. The youth of our church began to be heard from, as they were organized and held national "rallies." Reports indicated some free-wheeling activities and the featuring of "Christian rock." Evangelism was elevated to a high-priority position as two of our pastors were assigned outreach responsibilities, one at the seminary and one at the national offices.

Early in the '80s, at the direction of a convention, a study of the role of man and woman in God's world was initiated. While everyone acknowledged in the course of the years of study that God's word had the final say, some divergence appeared in applying that word in today's environment.

At the same time "lay ministry" became a familiar expression as conventions urged the laity to Bible study and to "get involved" in their congregation and synod. Stagnation of our home and world mission program and our struggle with costs at our ministerial schools underlined another serious problem: the decline in synodical financial support. Add to these our country's social problems: homosexuality, AIDS, pornography, abortion, the breakup of the family, unwed mothers, the disintegration of our cities, and the angry, piercing voices of special interest groups.

This list is not exhaustive, but it represents the environment in which the Northwestern Lutheran has lived in the past ten years. No previous ten-year period has presented us with so many intractable issues. We have tried to keep our readers informed as the church grapples with these issues and reacts to them, often plowing new ground. Only as our minds, guided by the word, engage the issues will their solution become really ours. Otherwise we are merely relying on the word of the church, which, if it be not the word of truth, is a mighty slim reed.

*James P. Schufes*




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*I was happily unaware of the terrain I would traverse as editor.*

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**S**hame on you, Clarence Thomas!

I don't know if your accuser told the truth. But I know how you answered the questions about abortion. You stonewalled the committee when you had the opportunity to tell them and the world how evil abortion is.

You could have condemned the murder of unborn children. You could have described the scarred wombs and wounded souls of women who can never reclaim the children they lost. You could have expressed outrage at the values that place material advantage ahead of the life of a child.

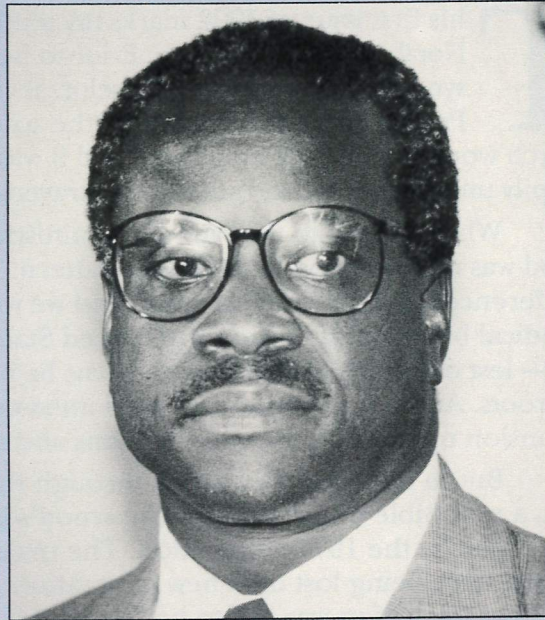
You could have quoted Mother Teresa who said, "If a mother can kill her own child, then what is left of the West to be destroyed? It is difficult to explain, but it is just that." Mother Teresa, thank you for saying that. Clarence Thomas, shame on you for not saying that.

Abortion is worse than the murder of defenseless civilians in war, for it is a crime committed against the next generation, the generation that must be nourished, the generation that must be protected because it cannot protect itself, the generation that must be equipped to support everything of value that previous generations have enjoyed.

**A**bortion is the equivalent of genocide, not of any particular race, but of the human race. When civilization consents to abortion, there is nothing left to be destroyed, for civilization has destroyed itself.

You did not have to compromise your ability to be a fair and impartial Supreme Court justice. You could have declared your respect for the constitution which must take priority over your personal beliefs. You could have denied any intention to overturn *Roe v. Wade* unless the constitution demanded its overturn.

To be sure, your honesty could have cost you one



AP/WIDE WORLD PHOTOS

## Shame on you, Clarence Thomas!

by Rolfe F. Westendorf

ers would shout out the value of nurturing parents. I wonder what might happen if pro-lifers forgot about Washington and concentrated on the home, where children should learn to dread adultery and fornication, and abhor abortion.

I do not know that such tactics would stem the rising tide of abortion. I do not know that this approach would be more effective than a reversal of *Roe v. Wade*. But I know that truth is power and honesty is respected, even in this corrupt generation.



Rolfe Westendorf is pastor of Siloah, Milwaukee.

of the highest positions in the land. On the other hand, the forceful truth on your side might have won over even the cynical hearts of politicians. Either way, your open and honest condemnation of abortion could have accomplished more than a dozen pro-life decisions.

And shame on you, too, you pro-lifers who applauded the evasiveness of your candidate. You made yourselves part of a system that manipulates the truth for the sake of political advantage. You became part of the problem instead of part of the solution.

The problem is not that abortion is legal in the United States. The problem is that people are having children they don't want. It is a moral problem, not a legal one, and politics will not solve it.

I wonder what might happen if all the energy of the pro-life movement were aimed at the promiscuity and erotic stimulation that produces unwanted pregnancies in the first place. I wonder what would happen if pro-lif-

And I wish that Clarence Thomas had dared to say, "Abortion is an abomination!"