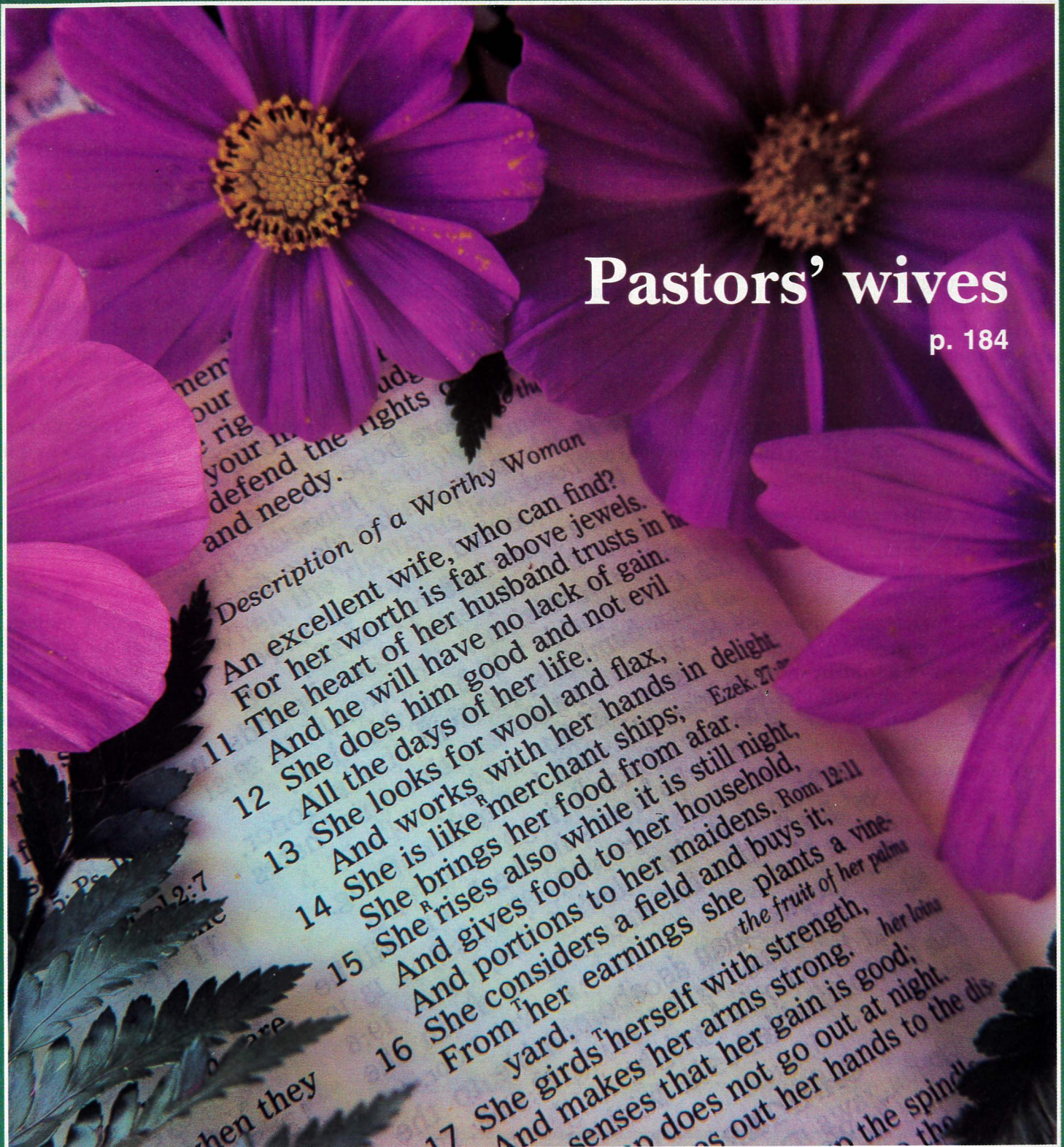


# NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN



## Pastors' wives

p. 184

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and needy.

Description of a Worthy Woman

- 11 An excellent wife, who can find?  
For her worth is far above jewels.
- 12 The heart of her husband trusts in her,  
And he will have no lack of gain.
- 13 She does him good and not evil  
All the days of her life.
- 14 She works with wool and flax,  
And looks for her hands in delight.
- 15 She is like a merchant ship; Ezek. 27:25  
And brings her food from afar.
- 16 She rises also while it is still night,  
And gives food to her household,  
And portions to her maidens. Rom. 12:11
- 17 From her earnings she plants a vine-  
yard. <sup>the fruit of her palms</sup>  
She girds herself with strength,  
And makes her arms strong. <sup>her loins</sup>  
Senses that her gain is good,  
Does not go out at night,  
Does out her hands to the dis-  
the spindle

# Praise God for Christian mothers

by Kurt F. Koeplin

Citizens of the USA know this is a national election year as we behold the spectacle of candidates promising everything. Old Roman politicians promised bread and circuses. Modern day aspirants promise, with slight variations, a car in every garage and a chicken in every pot.

As they enunciate their lists of what this country needs, the candidates will salute the flag, speak favorably about apple pie and "sort of" praise motherhood. Campaign managers cannot permit an all-out endorsement of motherhood, because the "mommy-track" is not held in high esteem by many.

Would to God that one national leader would have the intestinal fortitude to boldly state: "What this country needs are more Christian wives and mothers."

## A wife of noble character

God has just the right words of counsel concerning how we should view Christian women, wives, and mothers. Proverbs 31:10-31 focuses attention on the charm, influence, and praises of a godly woman, wife, and mother.

What sort of a woman should a young man seek as his companion through life? A barbershop tune suggests: "A girl just like the girl that married dear old Dad." Why? Because she's one who is "honest, loyal, loving and true." Not bad traits.

Far better is the advice rendered by God in Proverbs, starting especially at verse 10. Here God speaks of a woman whose life revolves around her faith. Because her chief object of affection is her Lord, her attitudes toward those whom her Lord has given her are truly blessed.

This tone poem describes her as being a godly woman full of charm and grace. We think of her as delightful, fascinating, and amiable. She busily watches over her family, industriously caring for them. She's also a good neighbor and friend. She's reliable and emotionally stable.

Above all, she possesses the most blessed of all

virtues, faith in her Redeemer. Her life, a pattern of good works, flows from the knowledge of her Savior. There is neither haughtiness nor pride, just a quiet reflection of her loving Lord.

## Her husband is respected

This portion of Proverbs also speaks of the influence a godly wife has on her husband and family.

Because of her trust and love for her Savior, she excels as the companion and helpmate of her husband. She exerts a holy and wholesome influence over him so that he also can willingly serve his Savior.

Specifically, Proverbs speaks of the husband's service to the Savior by his active participation in church work. In many instances her example serves as an inspiration to her husband to go and do likewise. Praise God for this gift to his church—the godly wife who models loving service to Jesus.

## Her children arise and call her blessed

There is also much to say about the godly mother. If God has willed it, she happily accepts his precious gift of children. They are not irksome restrictions for her pleasure, but they are gladly cared for and carefully wrapped in the blankets of love. She loves each child of any age. She doesn't ration either attention or affection in dribbles, but pours out both in full measure. Very early in life each child learns about love, God's love in Christ which enables all to truly love each other.

Friends, there is nothing in this world more fair than homes such as these. Truly, homes of this type are earth's nearest approach to heaven. If you have had or have today such a domicile, praise God, not only on Mother's Day. Try every day.



Kurt Koeplin is pastor of Atonement, Milwaukee.

*A woman who fears the Lord  
is to be praised  
(Proverbs 31:30).*

May the Lord our God be with us  
as he was with our fathers;  
may he never leave us  
nor forsake us. 1 Kings 8:57

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## FORWARD

■ Recently we asked Mary Clemons—daughter of one pastor and wife of another—to define the qualities a minister's wife should have. You're likely to recognize or be reminded of someone you know as she introduces a number of the women she has met in parsonages across the country. With her manuscript Mary also sent the illustration of the "perfect" wife, created by Dean Porter who, she writes is "a neighbor, soon-to-be-member, and

graphic artist." Her conclusions? See for yourself, beginning on the next page.

■ Easter is over, but for Eleanor and Eugene Schulz the memories linger of a unique Easter sunrise service on a mesa near Bylas, Arizona. He shares their experience with us in "Easter on the mesa" (p. 188).

DJS



# Pastors' wives

**It takes all kinds  
in the parsonage**

by Mary Clemons

**A**s someone who grew up in a parsonage, it has been my privilege to meet many women who were and are married to pastors. In my youth my father's ministry included a move approximately every seven years, a district presidency, and a synod office. As a result, I was blessed with an interesting cross-sectional view of parsonages and the people in them.

When I was a child, I generally saw pastors' wives as I saw all other adult females. They were mommies or they were not. They worked outside the home or they didn't. They were outgoing or quiet. They were pretty or plain. In other words, they were just ordinary people.

Somewhere along the line, during the years in which my own husband studied for the ministry, I almost lost sight of that fact. I started examining the many facets of a "good" minister's wife I imagined there must be. And I started to enumerate the criteria to be met.

My husband's schooling for the ministry took us from Arizona to Minnesota to Wisconsin. Because of our moves I observed a number of different women in as many different parsonages.

**G**od also blessed and enriched my life with Christian women who by their lives seemed to have a message for me to take into the parsonage. Here are just a few of the wonderful qualities

exemplified by these women.

- The pastor's wife of the congregation where I was called to teach often found herself with unexpected house guests. She greeted literally hundreds of visitors with no hint of weariness or selfishness. Holiday Inn could learn something from that lady.

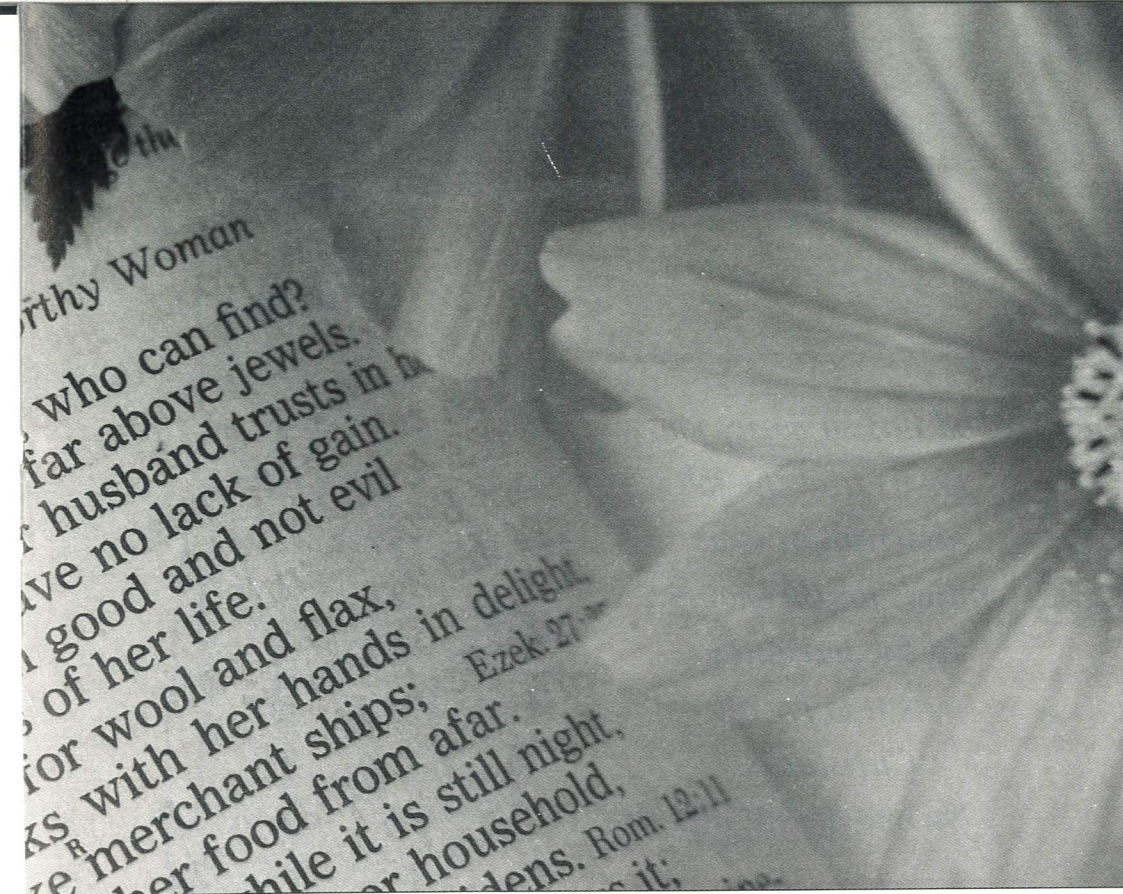
- When my husband first started his schooling for the ministry, one faculty wife in particular made students and wives feel welcome in her home. She displayed a genuine interest in our route to the ministry.

- Another faculty wife had four dear little boys. This woman had the enviable ability to take four whirlwind balls of dirt and transform them into an "angel choir" which sang for us before they trooped obediently off to bed.

- A friend of my parents took time to make us feel as if we had family in our new state, even though she had just moved there herself and had left family and home behind. She overlooked her own homesickness to befriend me and make me feel less alone when I had my first child so far away from my own family.

- A former college classmate was already in the parsonage while my husband was in school. She regularly included teens and college students into her life as a part of her church's outreach.

- During my husband's vicar year I met a lady who quietly and graciously kept the many details of her husband's busy life in order so he could do the extra work of a synod office in addition to his ministry in a



MRS. KEVIN SCHEIBEL

large congregation.

- I was reunited with a pastor's wife whom I remembered in my childhood as an at-home mommy. Imagine my surprise to see this same woman as a professional who demonstrated a remarkable and successful balancing act between home, church, and career.

- The mother of one of my students was the widow of a pastor. She lived out her years of grace in a Christ-like manner that still inspires me. She had some tough years and yet no bitterness seemed to touch her.

- Another citizeness of heaven left me with an enduring impression. Returning to the United States after many years in a foreign mission field, she faced a terminal illness. She witnessed mightily in the way she handled her last days on this earth. Her coffin was draped with a tapestry—a gift of love from the members of her former church halfway around the globe.

**N**ow for the difficult part. How does one incorporate all these positive qualities into one woman? Never mind that the wisest lady I know kept saying, "Mary, nobody does it all."

Did I really think that when my husband and I got into the public ministry I would switch gears, quit being me, and emerge from my chrysalis a full-fledged "minister's wife?"

I wanted to be as welcoming as the woman who had all the unexpected company. Indeed, many people

found their way to our door. And yet one day when an old car with out-of-state plates and a sleeping bag inside pulled up, I concluded with exasperation that this was just another person out of money on an ill-planned venture to gain employment. Was it a gentle nudge or a well-needed blow to watch as this dear man carefully unfolded the worn piece of paper containing the listing of all the WELS churches in our state? It was so important to him to have his family near a church that it was his first consideration in looking for employment.

And although I wanted to replicate the hospitality we received on the Bethany campus, somehow all I could manage was having everyone bring her own bag lunch for a craft and fellowship time. I found it time-consuming enough to shovel the contents of the toy room into a closet before all the guests arrived.

And that wonderful angel choir. What aspirations for my own children! When the grocery checker said to me, "How wonderful! I just asked your little girl what she wants for Christmas and she told me she wants a Bible," I thought my heart would burst with pride. That is, until my daughter's piercing voice announced scornfully, "I didn't say a Bible, I said a BARBIE."

And although I would love to say I followed the example of that dear lady who squelched her own homesickness to make me feel at home, I must confess I never felt homesick out on the East coast. In

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*God has so many jobs  
for us and the job  
description is as  
endless for the woman  
in the parsonage  
as it is for all  
Christians.  
No one does it all.*

---



fact, I loved it and could have lived there longer had not God had other plans. But I'm afraid my lack of homesickness made me insensitive to the many transplants who left a family and a hometown behind.

When I think of the way my friend related to the young people in her congregation, I wonder if the young people in my congregation know how special they are to me even if my musical taste stopped in 1969 and I really don't care how much better a CD player makes music sound. And even though I've never gotten comfortable with anyone under 21 calling me by my first name, I do appreciate what a difficult time of their lives this is, and I keep their spiritual well-being in my thoughts and prayers.

As for the woman who quietly helped her husband behind the scenes, the biggest problem is that I am not a quiet person. And although the word "organization" floats like a large shining banner in my imagination, having me organize the details of my husband's life would be like asking a toddler to straighten the Tupperware cupboard.

**A**s for juggling home, church, and career, I think this is one of the most difficult problems for a woman in the parsonage, and I do not profess to have any answers. I do implore, however, that we women be kinder to each other on this issue. I've lived both sides of this equation and never seemed to get "x" to equal "y."

Speaking to the examples of the women who are now gone, God has given me a very strong message. I am still on this earth. I may not leave the same mark on some young woman's heart that they did on mine. That's not the point.

The point is that God has so many jobs for us and the job description is as endless for the woman in the parsonage as it is for all Christians. You're right, Mom, no one does it all.

So many different types of women bring their special gifts and talents to the parsonage. And the parsonage is a unique place in which to continue to serve God. But it doesn't take a woman with all the gifts and it doesn't take just one kind of woman. It takes all kinds.



*Mary Clemons lives in a parsonage  
in Durand, Michigan.*

# The Nicene Creed

## Part two

by Wayne A. Laitinen

**I**n the last issue, we followed the Bishop of Alexandria and Arius to Nicaea. There an empire-wide church council was called to settle their differences. Emperor Constantine, though only a catechumen, opened the first session of the council and presided over the initial discussions.

The followers of Arius fought vigorously to convince the council that

- Jesus is not the same as God.
- Jesus is a creation of God, like man, but not exactly man.
- There was a time when Jesus was not.
- The Holy Spirit is not God, but a force from God.

The council strongly objected to Arius' arguments. To help clarify their position, the vast majority adopted a creed which, with the passing of time and several modifications, became the Nicene Creed which we use today.

### Answering Arius

The Apostles' and Nicene Creeds are similar in their beautiful description of who God is and what he has done for us. The Nicene Creed is longer—especially in those areas which were disputed by Arius. For instance:

"I believe in one God." These words dispel any notion that the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are different gods. We experienced this mystery at Jesus' baptism. There we heard the voice of the Father, we saw the body of the Son, and we observed the Spirit in the form of a dove. Nevertheless, the Lord our God is one.

"And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of his Father before all worlds." This refutes Arius' notion that Jesus was created and there was a time when he did not exist. Jesus, as the son of Mary, lived many centuries after Abraham died. Yet, as the Son of God he could honestly say, "Before Abraham was, I am."

The writers of the creed wanted to correct those who taught that Jesus was only a demi-god. To show that "in Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form" they called Jesus "God of God, Light of

Light, very God of very God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father."

The mystery of the Christ would not be complete unless we also confessed that Jesus is true man, the Son of Mary. This, too, was necessary since God's justice demanded a flesh-and-blood sacrifice to redeem our race. It is for this reason that he "came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man; and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate."

At Nicaea, the third article simply read, "And in the Holy Spirit." Fifty-six years later it was expanded to say, "I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, who spoke through the prophets."

The Holy Spirit is not merely a force from God. Nor is he an emotion. The Holy Spirit is God. He works through word and sacrament to turn hearts to Jesus Christ.

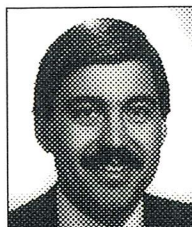
At the end of the Nicene Council, Emperor Constantine ordered Arius' writings burned. Arius and two bishops were driven from the land.

### Arius has returned

Like a phoenix, Arius' writings have arisen from the ashes. Arius himself has returned from exile to make a popular twentieth century appearance. As handsome as ever, he appears at your front door in a white shirt and black tie. He carries a Bible under his arm. Rather than circulating letters to eastern bishops, he hands you a tract from the Watchtower Society or, perhaps, the Book of Mormon.

Can he who persuaded two bishops also persuade you? Or will you seize the opportunity to testify to the truth about God? Who knows? With the power of God's word, you may succeed where Emperor Constantine failed.

*Next: The Athanasian Creed.*



Wayne Laitinen is pastor of Palos, Palos Heights, Illinois.



## Easter sunrise on the mesa

by Eugene G. Schulz

**O**f the many Easter sunrise services I have attended in my lifetime, never had I experienced one quite like this. The setting was on a mesa in Bylas, Arizona. Paul W. Schulz is the pastor of Our Savior Lutheran Apache church in Bylas, and is the son of my wife Eleanore and myself.

The work among the Apache people was the first mission field for the WELS. Next year will mark the centennial of bringing the gospel to these native Americans.

The WELS has six congregations among the Apaches. Three are in the southern half of Apache land, known as the San Carlos Apache Reservation. They are at Bylas, Peridot, and San Carlos. The other three are in the northern half known as the Fort Apache Reservation, or White Mountain Apaches. These are located at East Fork, Whiteriver, and Cibique. At East Fork the WELS has a high school and nursery.

These two reservations sprawl over several million acres of southeastern Arizona. In the south are cactus-studded desert valleys which give way to grazing land in the central region. The terrain changes in the

north, where there are mountains covered with beautiful forests of ponderosa pines, blue spruce, and aspens.

**O**n Saturday afternoon, the day before Easter, two young Apache mothers came to the parsonage to ask Paul to baptize their babies at the sunrise service. It is common practice to have baptisms on the mesa on Easter, according to Willis Hadler, who has been principal of Our Savior School for over 30 years. He said the Apache parents often wait to baptize their children until a major festival day such as Easter.

I was awakened before dawn on Easter morning by the crowing of roosters. Every Indian family in Bylas, which has about 350 inhabitants, keeps chickens. They sometimes roost inside the rusted cars that are abandoned in many of the yards.

Sunrise on Easter morning would be at 6:11 a.m. At quarter to six we loaded all the necessary items into the pickup truck and drove to the edge of town, where we turned off on a rutted dirt road. We bounced our way along the curving lane and up the side of the mesa, dodging cactus plants and piles of



junk. On the crest of the mesa there was a small cemetery, with many of the graves marked with white wooden crosses.

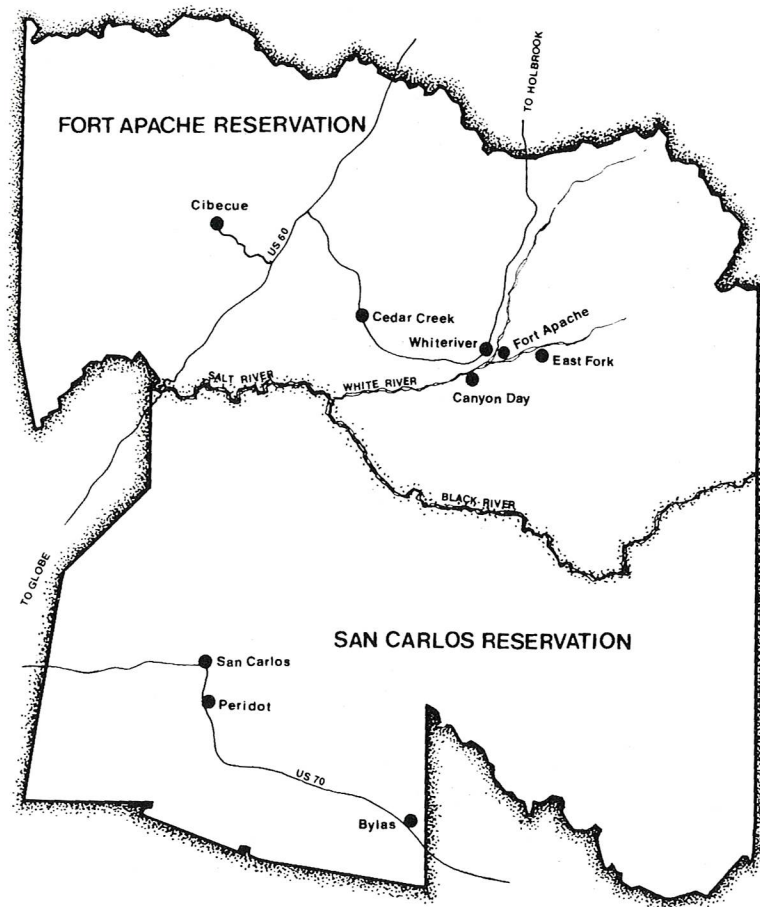
This mesa rises perhaps 100 feet above the village of Bylas and is an extension of the foothills at the base of Mount Turnbull. The mesa, which is shaped like a tongue, is narrow and flat on top. The ground is barren, except for an occasional cactus plant or creosote bush.

At the protruding eastern edge of the mesa is where Paul "built" his altar, using a card table. The small brass crucifix stood on the altar parament, which was a doily from the buffet table. Paul borrowed a casserole dish from his wife, Ella, to use as the baptismal font. A thermos bottle contained warm water for the baptisms.

Soon the members began arriving in their pickup trucks, leaving a trail of dust as each one threaded its way through the ruts to the mesa's top. The worshipers left their vehicles and assembled in front of the altar. A few elderly people brought folding chairs, but the majority stood throughout the service.

Many of the older women wore brightly colored camp dresses, which were fully cut and long, reaching to their ankles. Some of the men wore cowboy-style boots and hats. Others dressed in jeans and casual clothes. Nearly everyone wore a coat or jacket to ward off the early morning desert chill.

At precisely 6:11 a.m., the service began with the Easter hymn, "Like the Golden Sun Ascending." The "golden sun" ascended over the Gila Mountains, and "broke through the gloom of night," dispersing the "purple shadows" in the valley below. It seemed as if the hymn writer had been inspired by an identical scene. It must have been a



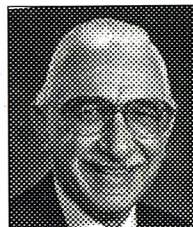
WELS congregations in Apacheland in Arizona

morning like this when Jesus rose triumphant from "death's dismal, dreadful grave."

The two families whose babies were to be baptized stepped forward to the "altar." Paul took the children in his arms and baptized them. The setting was unforgettable as these children became God's own on top of a mesa, at sunrise, in the morning chill.

I have celebrated more than sixty Easters in my lifetime, most of them in large churches where worship services were elaborate, with Easter lilies, bright paraments, choirs, beautiful organ music, and songs of

praise and thanksgiving bursting forth. To experience this unique Easter sunrise service on the mesa gave me a new appreciation of worship. It was soul-stirring, heart-warming, and thrilling.



Eugene Schulz is a member of Atonement, Milwaukee.

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Don't all churches claim to have the truth?  
How can we be so sure ours is right?

**“I'm not much  
on denominations”**

by Rolfe F. Westendorf

**O**ne of my former members put it this way: “I'm not much on denominations.”

Many of us can identify with that. We like our church for various reasons, including the teachings, but we wouldn't be able to say exactly what the teachings of our church happen to be. We get confused by all the churches claiming to have “the truth,” yet each teaching something different.

If we're happy with our church, we don't really care who says our church is wrong. And if we're not happy with it, we can be quickly convinced that some other church is better.

**We worship the same God, don't we?**

“I'm not much on denominations,” so I'll go wherever I feel comfortable, no matter what they teach. After all, we all worship the same God, don't we?

You'd never get Jesus to agree with that point of view. He said, “Because I tell the truth, you do not believe me! He who belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God” (John 8:45,47).

Truth was important to Jesus. He called people who did not teach the truth heathens and hypocrites and liars. Jesus wasn't much on denominations either. He rejected any denomination, any church, that did not teach the whole truth of God's word. God's truth was important to Jesus. It should be important to us, too.

There's another problem with lack of concern for teaching. If all churches are equally right, aren't they also equally wrong?

**Truth or opinion?**

You see, truth that is flexible becomes nothing more than opinion. We may be comfortable with our opinions. We may treasure them. We may be offended if someone disagrees with or disproves our opinions. But false opinions are worthless. They may be dangerous.

As Christians we can see most clearly the damage done by false opinions about sex, for example. They have given us AIDS, herpes, syphilis, gonorrhea, unwelcome pregnancies, unwanted children, and a

crippling deterioration of the family. False opinions about sex are dangerous indeed.

Even more dangerous are false opinions about salvation. Many share the opinion that there is no heaven or hell so why worry about it. Others have the opinion that they are earning their way to heaven with their good works. Those false opinions are even worse than false opinions about sex, because hell is just a whole lot worse than AIDS.

You don't play games with the truth, especially the truth about God. What you don't know can hurt you.

But don't all churches claim to have the truth? Don't they use the same Bible? How can we be so sure ours is right? Those questions are not easily answered.

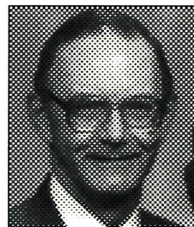
Jesus and the apostles warned that there would be false prophets who deceive others and themselves at the same time. Human sinfulness gets in the way of God's word and distorts God's truth, and human weakness accepts the distortions. It is indeed confusing.

**Know what the Bible says**

The situation requires prayer and Bible study. It is not enough just to trust the teachings of your church. You need to know what the Bible says. You need to make Bible reading a daily habit. You should be beating down your pastor's door, demanding to know why we don't have more opportunities for Bible study.

“I'm not much on denominations” is not a good excuse. God will indeed hold false prophets responsible for the people they have led astray. But God does not excuse us because of the failings of others. The blood of Jesus cleanses us from every sin, including the sin of false opinion. But that does not excuse us from our responsibility to know the truth.

Know what your church teaches, and why. Then you will be the “workman who does not need to be ashamed, and who correctly handles the word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).



*Rolfe Westendorf is pastor of Siloah, Milwaukee.*

## World Mission Conference scheduled for August

Periodically the Board for World Missions sponsors a "World Mission Conference" which brings together representatives from all of the

synod's world mission fields to a five day conference devoted to some aspect of world missions. One such conference has been scheduled for

August 10-14 to be held on the Apache Reservation at East Fork, Arizona. The last World Mission Conference was held in 1988 at Oconomowoc, Wis.

Twenty-two participants are expected to attend, representing the various partner mission churches in the world mission program and the administrators of the various fields. Guest of the conference will be Prof. James Tiefel, professor of worship and Christian education at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, who will speak on the essentials of Christian worship and education.

### SIGNED WORSHIP SERVICES OF WELS CHURCHES

*Where known, times of signed services are listed*

#### ILLINOIS

**Palatine—Christ the King**, 100 W. Michigan Ave, Palatine IL 60067. First and third Sundays, 9:15 a.m. Sunday school, every Sunday

#### INDIANA

**Indianapolis—Divine Savior**, 7315 E. 75th St, Indianapolis IN 46256; 317/849-9692

#### KANSAS

**Russell—Faith**, 502 S. Kansas St, Russell KS 67665

#### MINNESOTA

**Bloomington—Bloomington**, 9350 Portland Ave S, Bloomington MN 55420. 10:30 a.m.

**West St. Paul—St. James**, 460 W Annapolis Ave, West St. Paul MN 55118. 10:30 a.m.

**Winona—St. Matthew**, 766 W Wabasha St, Winona MN 55987

#### WISCONSIN

**Arlington—Zion**, Rt. 1 Box 43, Arlington WI 53911. Second Sunday, 10:30 a.m. Call to confirm 608/635-4000, Voice 414/623-5487 TDD

**Fond du Lac—Redeemer**, 606 Forest Ave, Fond du Lac WI 54935. First Sunday, 10:15 a.m. (Summer 9:30 a.m. June/August)

**Juneau—St. John**, 400 S Main St, Juneau WI 53039, First Sunday, 10:15 a.m. (Summer 9:30 a.m.)

**Milwaukee—Redemption**, 5641 N 68th St, Milwaukee WI 53218. Second, fourth, and fifth Sundays, 10:30 a.m.

**New London—Emmanuel**, 900 Lawrence St, New London WI 54961

**Oshkosh—Bethlehem**, 1206 Ontario St, Oshkosh WI 54901. Third Sunday, 10:30 a.m.

**Watertown—St. Luke**, 1501 S Third St, Watertown WI 53094. Third Sunday, 10:15 a.m. (Summer 9:45 a.m.). Sunday school, 9:00 a.m. signed every Sunday from Sept. through May

**Waukesha—Trinity**, 1052 White Rock Ave, Waukesha WI 53186. Monday night after second Sunday, 7:00 p.m.

**West Allis—Good Shepherd**, 1235 S 100 St, West Allis WI 53214. First Sunday, 10:45 a.m. (Summer, Monday, 7:00 p.m.)

### Need a speaker for your group?

Ever wonder what your synod's **Committee for the Hearing Impaired** does? Why it exists? How it can be of help to you or your congregation? We would be happy to clarify these and other issues for you. Speakers are available for schools, youth groups, ladies groups, Sunday schools, or any organization in your church. If you are a considerable distance from Milwaukee, don't be discouraged. Obviously good stewardship prohibits us from traveling hundreds of miles for one presentation. If, however, several requests are received from the same general area, such trips are possible.

If you are interested in scheduling a speaker, call Gene Seidel at 414/536-1651, or write CHI, 8955 W Palmetto Ct, Milwaukee, WI 53225.

*"A missionary's purpose does not end when we have gathered a group of people who are willing to listen to us. . . . That is only the beginning."*

Theme of the conference is "Nurturing This Generation of Believers" (in a world mission setting). According to Pastor Duane Tomhave, world mission administrator, "this conference overview will help us to identify on paper our principles and practices and to apply what we learn from field to field."

The theme of the conference was the direct outgrowth of the 1988 seminary conference. A report at that conference said, "A missionary's purpose does not end when we have gathered a group of people who are willing to listen to us and let us pastor them. That is only the beginning. Our ultimate goal must be to build them up spiritually to the point where they can minister to themselves so that we can move on."

The mission conferences are funded with non-budgetary gifts.

**Teens pray, read Bible . . .** Three out of four American teenagers pray at least sometimes, and 44 percent of them read the Bible in private, a recent Gallup poll shows. The study says young women are more likely to pray or read the Bible than their male counterparts; 86 percent of the 513 teens polled said they believe in the divinity of Jesus. As teens grow older, the survey shows, they are less likely to believe in a loving God: 96 percent of teens under 16 stated such a belief, compared to 88 percent among 16- and 17-year-olds.

**Bible in 322 languages . . .** The number of languages into which at least one book of the Bible has been translated rose from 1,946 in 1990 to 1,978 in 1991, according to the latest Scripture language report issued by the United Bible Societies. Thirty-two languages received at least one book of the Bible in 1991 for the first time, the largest first-time number since 1987. Complete Bibles were reported for the first time in four languages: two in Zaire, one in Guatemala, and one in Yugoslavia. That increases the number of languages with complete Bibles to 322.

**Tomb may be of high priest Caiaphas . . .** The discovery of a tomb believed to be that of Caiaphas, the high priest at Jesus' trial, was recently discovered in Jerusalem. The tomb, a burial cave, was found during the development of a park in the Jerusalem Forest on the western outskirts of the city. The burial case dates back to Herod's temple which was destroyed in 70 AD. Workers found 12 coffins, and inscriptions on three of them indicate they may have contained the remains of Caiaphas and members of his family.

**Wichita fallout . . .** A recent national telephone poll shows that Operation Rescue's protests in Wichita last summer may have had a negative impact on people's attitude toward the prolife movement. Mary Ellen Jensen of the Wirthlin Group, which conducted the poll, said that in general, whenever people engage in civil disobedience, the prevailing public sentiment tends to be negative. The Wirthlin Group also said that the media's overall negative portrayal of proliferators had an effect on attitudes.

**Pay level is fair . . .** Two out of three senior pastors feel they are fairly paid, but most part-time pastors feel they are underpaid, according to a recently released nationwide study. About half the pastors said they were fairly paid. The information was compiled from survey responses from nearly 4,000 churches nationwide. The report said that the findings closely represent the typical American church, which averages 112 members. The average annual total compensation (base salary, housing, benefits) for senior pastors, the report indicates, is \$45,515; for solo pastors, \$32,163; and for part-time pastors, \$14,442.

**Don't forget the invitation . . .** Roy M. Oswald, in *The Inviting Church*, reports the results of a survey of newcomers in 22 congregations of many denominations in Indianapolis, Philadelphia, and Atlanta. Response to the question "What brought you to church?" reveals that 2 percent saw an advertisement, 6 percent were invited by the pastor, 6 percent came through an organized evangelistic outreach program, and 86 percent came by invitation of a friend or family member.

**Lutherans plan megachurch . . .** The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has announced plans to develop a megachurch to reach people, especially those in the "baby boomer" generation, who are looking for something different from what traditional Lutheran churches have been providing. The megachurch is being designed to attract large numbers of the unchurched with contemporary and other forms of worship. Plans call for the first such experiment to begin this year in Yorba Linda, Calif. A second is planned for 1993. "It is our feeling," said Rev. Robert Hoyt, new ministry development director, "that this experiment is culturally appropriate to our society in the United States in select places. It is also our opinion that it has confessional integrity for us as evangelical Lutherans."

**Graham to North Korea . . .** In late March and early April evangelist Billy Graham was in North Korea. Graham's visit marks the first time a foreign evangelist has been invited to the East Asian nation since its formation immediately following World War II. Until recently North Korea, isolated from the West since the Korean war, had not permitted open religious activity. In the past few years, however, one Protestant and one Roman Catholic church have been constructed in Pyongyang with government assistance, and one other church building is under construction in the capital city. Each church has several hundred members.

**Euthanasia grows in Europe . . .** The following account is taken from an item in "The Religion & Society Report," edited by Harold O. J. Brown, a well-known evangelical theologian: "According to a letter printed in the British medical journal *The Lancet* . . . Dutch doctors allegedly assisted in 384 suicides in a recent twelve-month period, actively killed 2,318 patients at their request, and killed 1,030 more without an explicit and persistent request. Euthanasia and assisted suicide supposedly now account for 2.9 percent of all deaths in the Netherlands, and over half of Dutch doctors have assisted in one or more such deaths." Dr. Brown adds a comment: "Perhaps these figures are something to take into account if one is considering a trip to the Netherlands. In case of a medical emergency, arrange to be transported to Belgium or Germany."

## WELS pastor participates in Ukraine food distribution

Pastor Kirby A. Spevacek, mission coordinator for the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, recently took part in the distribution of food aid in Ternopol, Ukraine.

Spevacek and Gary Miller, a WELS lay missionary trained in the Russian language, made the trip to Ternopol in mid-January.

In a letter to his parents, Spevacek said preparation for the trip to Ternopol, especially obtain-

ing visas, consumed the better part of three days.

"Once the embassy was unexpectedly closed. On the second visit we were sent home to obtain special letters proving our credentials and exact purpose in going. Transaction of business in and with former communist countries takes about 10 times longer than in many other places. They only know the old bureaucratic ways," he wrote.

The trip from Prague to Ternopol took 22 hours by train, Spevacek said.

A warm welcome awaited the missionaries in Ternopol where four other pastors greeted them. "Our residence for the next several days was the Paedagogical Institute," Spevacek said. "They fed us royally. Of course, there was always a bottle of cognac on the table. Sausage, cheese, black bread, even cow tongue was served."

Three of the other pastors were there to teach English for a short time. "This was intended to help make contacts and to gain an opening for the mission," according to Spevacek. "We will need to look at this approach for entrance into Russia and other countries."

"On Friday we sat in on a meeting the men had with a number of English teachers from the city. Everywhere we were received with kindness and great hospitality from people with little means. Later we were 'up in front' before the camera at a sort of press conference with local government leaders and reporters. The purpose was to explain the nature of the aid and its donors," Spevacek continued.

"That evening we were honored at a special meal hosted by one of the members of the soviet of that oblast. Again, much alcohol available but not consumed by us. In fact, one of the Ukrainian officials remarked that we Lutherans did not

*"Everywhere  
we were  
received with  
kindness  
and great  
hospitality."*

—Kirby Spevacek



drink much, but still had a lot of fun and jokes," Spevacek related.

The missionary said he and the other pastors were given a tour of the holiest Orthodox shrine of western Ukraine, Pochayevsky Lavra.

"The church was certainly the most beautiful I've seen. Standing room only for the service, which was beautified by one of the excellent Russian choirs. The biggest surprise of all was that the abbot of the monastery invited us for dinner. Caviar and all," he wrote.

"Nothing much about the shipment of food for the orphanages had been arranged until the last few hours that we were there," Spevacek said. "Earlier in the week the food had been unloaded at a warehouse. In fact, the orphanages had already sent trucks to pick up some of it. Finally though, a couple of Ukrainians helped to set up a little ceremony of handing over a symbolic box of food."

Spevacek will also be working with another pastor to give Bibles to some of the Russian troops stationed in Germany. His most recent itinerary took him to St. Petersburg and Minsk. Future visits will be made to Rostoy, Volgograd, and to Sverdiovsk and Novosibirsk in Siberia. Other visitations are planned in southwest Russia. He will remain in his mission field for two years.

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my  
heart  
and  
my home

**My Heart and My Home, a stewardship program for 1992,** offers congregations timeless truth in a new format. Home study materials (in versions for homes with and without children) engage head and heart in reflecting on Scripture and discussing its implications for real life. Four full-color brochures introduce home studies pointedly and practically. Thematic emphasis on the Christian family, home church, home town, and heavenly home are developed in worship resources as well as the stewardship study tools.

Sample packets are available from WELS, Adult Discipleship office, 2929 N Mayfair Road, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.

**Book notes**

*Keeping the Servant Spark: Encouragement for Christian Care-givers* by Arnold Kuntz. Concordia Publishing House. 92 pages, paperback, \$7.95.

"Here is a thought or two to keep your servant spark alive," writes Arnold Kuntz to "the caregivers of the church, the professionals and the lay leaders and the volunteers who have taken upon themselves to get out in front and lead the parade."

Drawing on his own experience as a caregiver, Kuntz offers advice on how to deal with such problems as unrealistic expectations (one's own

and others'), mistakes (one's own and others'), criticism, and maintaining enthusiasm in what often appears to be unrewarding work. His insights, while practical and offered with a touch of humor, always turn to Jesus and always focus on the cross.

He acknowledges church workers may meet difficulties and frustration. "Christian ministry is not designed to make your life easy. It's the kingdom of God you're building. It costs something to build a kingdom."

"What we accomplish," Kuntz reminds his reader, "is achieved at a pedestrian pace, by hard work, perspiration, and drudgery. Have you got it—the power to plod on, and a

way to walk?"

He answers his own question. "It's a lonely walk to eternity. A person can get tired. No one can walk that far unless Jesus walks alongside."

When the inevitable criticism and failures seem overwhelming, Kuntz offers encouragement. "Quitting is not the answer. Jesus is. He's in it with you."

What Kuntz says has been said before, but the thoughts merit repeating. His words will bring encouragement and comfort to the church worker—full time professional or part time volunteer—who reads them, and the servant spark will burn a bit more brightly.

—Dorothy J. Sonntag

**Michigan District news**

On February 2, **St. Stephen, Adrian**, observed the twenty-fifth anniversary of their church building. On April 30, their pastor, **Daniel Gieschen**, retired after serving St. Stephen for the past 35 years. . . . **Pastor Gary Pieper** was appointed the Northwestern Publishing House contact pastor for the northern conference. . . . **Pastor Michael Bartsch** was appointed to the District Commission on Youth Discipleship. . . . **Michigan LHS** in St. Joseph is working on a policy statement that will cover all admissions, especially of non-WELS students.

—James L. Langebartels

**Also in the news**

The recent meeting of the **WELS Association of Lutheran High Schools** in which the 20 WELS high schools hold membership focused on ministerial education. Action plans to increase involvement in ministerial education were developed by the representatives of each school. . . . Nearly 40 students at Northwestern College and Dr. Martin Luther College have taken the **Summer Evangelism Experience** training course. Some will work in their home congregation but a number of teams will be assigned to assist mission and self-supporting congregations this summer. . . . **Regional youth rallies** will be held at the following locations: Bowling Green, Oh.; Spearfish, S. Dak.; Ripon, Wis.; Allenton, Penn.; and Panama City, Fla. . . . **Jim Stern**, eighth grade student at St. Lucas, Kewaskum, Wis., will represent Wisconsin in the National Geography Bee, Washington D. C., May 19-22. He will be one of 56 finalists in a competition which involved 33,000 elementary schools throughout the U. S. and its territories. . . . In spring elections, **Marlene Schumacher**, a member of Christ the Lord, Brookfield, Wis., ousted the incumbent mayor of Oconomowoc, Florence Whalen. In West Allis, incumbent mayor **Fred Cashmore**, member of Woodlawn, West Allis, lost to Joyce Radtke. In the village of West Milwaukee, incumbent president, **Ronald Hayward**, a member of St. Lucas, Milwaukee, was reelected. . . . Over 340 women attended the tenth annual **Christian Women's Retreat** held in Brown Deer, Wis., March 27-29. An additional 100 applicants were turned away. The retreat was sponsored by a committee of nine women from Christ the Lord, Brookfield, Wis. . . . Bob Stevens, father of two hearing impaired children, has resigned from the Committee for the Hearing Impaired. His replacement is **Laurie Schwark** of Cambria, Wis., who is mother of a deaf baby.



Jim Stern



**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.

# Gospel motivation

by Paul E. Kelm

**H**ere's a little quiz. Why do people come to church? Check all the correct answers in the box below.

There are other answers, of course, but the list is instructive. One is the motive of the old Adam. One is physical; two are psychological. Three are spiritual: one the false motive of legalism, another the response of awe to the nature of God, and the third gospel motivation.

We teach gospel motivation, and rightly so. "Christ's love compels us," Paul explains. "We love because he first loved us," is how the apostle John summarizes motivation.

Christians are complex beings. Mixed motives may often drive us. Some of that mixture is pride or greed or lust. Some are physical and psychological needs, which ought to be understood in the context of our creation and salvation. Some are spiritual motives that may themselves be mixed. How often have your reasons for going to church been 100 percent pure?

## Awe

There are at least three types of spiritual motivation. Awe is our response to the attributes of God. To contemplate his power, wisdom, and goodness is to praise him. Awe inspires us to affirm what that awesome God says and accept what he does. Beautiful architecture, sacred art, magnificent music, and reverent liturgies are awe's response. Awe keeps us from second-rate ministry for a first-rate God.

## God's law

God's law is a spiritual motivator, for better and worse. God intended his law to lead the sinner to repentance. But self-righteous fallen nature wants to use the law to motivate behavior. Duty or obligation is one such law-based motive. Self-justifying reward or fear-driven escape from God's judgment is another. When contrition isn't joined by faith in Jesus, the law will produce guilt and shame. Consciously and unconsciously, the law is used to manipulate people. But law motivation only works in the short term. Inevitably it

alienates people from God.

## The gospel

Gospel motivation is Christ-centered, truth-based, and love-inspiring. It grows, with faith, and is encouraged by the experience of God's promises kept. The gospel creates a whole subset of motivations.

Gratitude explains why the Gadarene demoniac—or a recovering alcoholic—wanted to drop everything and follow the Lord. Compassion is the heart of Christ moving us to answer need and alleviate hurt. Mission is the zeal of the apostles and the drive of an evangelist inspired by a salvation too great to keep to oneself. Joy is Zacchaeus hustling down the sycamore tree with his wallet open as

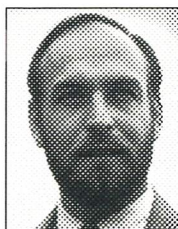
wide as his heart. Confidence is the change in posture and attitude accomplished by Christ's empty tomb. Identity is the gospel's reaffirmation of who we are in Christ which empowers what we do for Christ.

The gospel so permeates a Christian's life, so penetrates a Christian's psychology, that we can't isolate gospel motivation into a simple, single drive. The gospel is a simple, single reason why Christians experience a complex set of responses that together explain our Christian life.

We can answer the fears, challenge the stereotypes, eliminate the physical barriers, and confront the sins that are negative motivators. And we should. We can educate and nurture, counsel and encourage, in order to mature Christians and prepare them for service. And we should. But the Holy Spirit must, by the gospel, move Christians to serve—each in the unique way that matches a unique Christian. Talking about gospel motivation is no substitute for preaching and applying the gospel.

In the meantime, don't question the motives of people coming to your church. Elevate their motives while they are at church.

Life is looking up!



Paul E. Kelm is administrator for the Commission on Adult Discipleship.

### Why do people come to church?

- Because it's warm inside
- To worship a glorious God
- It's a good habit to ease the joint
- Out of love for a gracious God
- To feel better about themselves
- Out of a sense of religious duty

Jesus teaches us that we are to go boldly  
at this business of praying

# The friend at midnight

Luke 11:5-8

by Mark E. Braun

**I** throw myself down in my chamber, and I call in and invite God and his angels thither," wrote seventeenth century cleric John Donne. "And when they are there, I neglect God and his angels, for the noise of a fly, for the rattling of a coach, for the whining of a door."

Why are we so easily distracted when we pray? Why do we so quickly give up?

Jesus' disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray," and he responded with the model we've come to call the Lord's Prayer. Then he added a parable, not about proper prayer form, not about suitable prayer requests, but about how we are to go boldly at this business of praying.

**L**et's say a visitor came to your house in the middle of the night, Jesus began. One couldn't phone first, there was no public postal service, travel was slow, family trips could take longer than expected. Sometimes people preferred traveling at night, when the air was cooler.

When visitors arrived, essential etiquette required that their host serve them a meal. But the host had no unbroken bread in the house; to offer his guests loaves already broken would have been a great insult to them. His wife would be baking in the morning, but his guests were hungry now.

Village life in the Middle East was (still is) more a shared, interconnected thing than we experience in the big city. Baking at the village oven was a communal event, so the host knew whose household had bread to lend. He also knew that a visitor in one man's home was a guest of the whole community (upon entering a home in modern Palestine, a guest will be told, "You have honored our village"). It was neither unreasonable nor unexpected to go to a friend, even at midnight, to ask enough bread for a meal, and a little to spare.

But his neighbor replied, "Don't bother me." He didn't even return his friend's greeting. The massive wooden bar had already been secured across his door.

His animals were safely lodged at the front of the house for the night, while family members slept side-by-side on floor mats in the back of the house, probably under a single cover. "My children are with me in bed. I can't get up and give you anything," he said. Read: "I won't get up."

Jesus' listeners were surprised to hear of a neighbor who'd refuse to grant his friend such a basic request; we're surprised that Jesus would make the "God figure" in this parable such a disagreeable character. Is this what God's like? A stingy grouch who hates being roused from his heavenly bed? We pray and he grumbles, "Go away"?

But the lesson lies in how the host persisted. His neighbor wasn't moved by the host's need; his neighbor didn't even fear the humiliation he'd face when news of his unneighborliness hit the streets. The host got what he wanted by the absolute shamelessness of his plea. He didn't care if he woke the whole cul-de-sac. He'd pound on the door all night. His neighbor—his friend—had to give him what he asked for.

**P**rayer always arises from a relationship. Prayer works, not because we go on whining loud enough and long enough. Prayer works, not on the principle that if you hurl enough mud against the ceiling, some of it's bound to stick. We're talking to our Father. Our perfect big brother lived and died to restore us to his family. Unlike this stubborn next door neighbor, our Father loves to hear us pray.

"God tenderly invites us to believe that he is our true Father, and that we are his true children," wrote Martin Luther, "so that we may pray to him as boldly and confidently as dear children ask their dear father."

*Next: The rich fool.*



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



## What's going on at the KGB?

**N**ineteen American churchmen accepted an invitation last fall from the Supreme Soviet of the former USSR to come to Moscow to help that nation in its time of crisis. The letter of invitation said in part, "In the difficult, often agonizing transitional period that our country is experiencing, spiritual and moral values acquire a great, if not paramount, significance. We know the role which your Christian organizations are playing as you follow the great words of Christ."

The letter went on to ask for help in recapturing the "moral values of Christianity." Can you believe that? Former communists asking Christians for help?

What the 19 churchmen experienced during their visit would be totally unbelievable apart from the fact that the Holy Spirit can still make unbelievable things happen when and where he wants. Consider one example. The 19 spent one evening in a meeting with General Nikolai Stolyarov. Stolyarov was the air force general who flew to the Crimea to rescue Mikhail Gorbachev at the time of the coup last August. Gorbachev rewarded Stolyarov by making him the vice-chairman of the KGB. The 19 churchmen met with the general at the headquarters of the KGB in Moscow.

Stolyarov entered the room, introduced himself to the group, and then he said, "Meeting with you here tonight is a plot twist that could not have been conceived by the wildest fiction writer." He went on to say, "How to bring peace and quiet to the hearts of people is a great problem for us." He hoped the Soviets and the Americans could find a way to be "united in working together against the powers of evil."

Political questions such as the ones the leaders in Russia are trying to resolve, Stolyarov said, "cannot be decided until there is sincere repentance, a return to faith by the people. . . . In the study of scientific atheism, there was the idea that religion divides people. Now we see the opposite: only love for God can unite."

During a question and answer session, Dr. Joel Nederhood, the radio minister of the Back to God Hour, commented on all the people who had died in the gulags. Then he said, "Your agency, of course, is responsible for overseeing the prisons. How do you respond to that past?"

Stolyarov replied, "I have spoken of repentance. This is an essential step. There can be no perestroika apart from repentance. The time has come to repent of the past. We have broken the Ten Commandments, and for this we pay today."

For many in Russia today the need for repentance is as obvious as the need for food on the table. In this country the need for repentance is just as great, but regrettably it's not as obvious.

One wonders what the future holds. If things continue as they are there and here, it's possible that a Russian leader will someday point a Reagan-like finger at us and call us "an evil empire." And it's not inconceivable that someday a group of Russian Christian leaders will receive an invitation to come to the USA to help us "recapture the moral values of Christianity."

But instead of speculating about the future, let's thank God that a door has been opened for the gospel again, even in the headquarters of the KGB.

Joel C. Gerlach



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

Readers may be interested to know that Philip Yancey, an editor at large for Christianity Today and one of the 19 churchmen who visited the USSR, has just published a book about their experiences. The title of the book is *Praying with the KGB*.

**TeenTalk an asset**

The addition of TeenTalk to Northwestern Lutheran is not only a definite asset, but it is an excellent way to allow our young people to express themselves, especially in a spiritual manner. Their articles can motivate not only their peers but also older members. So far they have done a fine job. I have enjoyed all their contributions.

*Caroline L. Neipp  
Redding, California*

**Misleading statement**

A misleading statement appeared on page 109 (3/15): "A Chinese scholar decided to become a Christian." As you know, God's word tells us clearly that no one decides to become a Christian. Rather, the Holy Spirit works faith through the means of grace.

I acknowledge the statement is part of a direct quotation . . . and I also acknowledge that any deliberate mis-

quotation is dishonest. I feel, however, that we risk giving an uncertain message when we quote such an inaccuracy without comment. While making such a comment was not the point of the article, proclaiming God's word without error is the point of Northwestern Lutheran.

*Dana Rabenberg  
Aurora, Colorado*

**To Africa with love**

Siloah's African-based curriculum (3/15) reminded me of Ernst H. Wendland's words in his book *To Africa with Love*: "The black people, who for years were the victims of slavery, passionately yearn for identity. Why should their history be neglected? Why should their culture be considered inferior? . . . They must know where their roots lie. They must be proud of their own traditions."

*Keith C. Tullberg  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin*

**What is a creed?**

I was glad to see "What is a creed?" (4/1). Recently studying the history of our Lutheran church where the tensions existed between the pietists and orthodox, I've come to a new appreciation and love for our creeds as a profession of faith.

I fondly agree with St. Augustine's definition of a creed: "a rule of faith which is few in words but full of meaning."

*Kristy Yarbrough  
Dr. Martin Luther College  
New Ulm, Minnesota*

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 *READERS FORUM, Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N Mayfair Road, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.*

**A BIBLE STUDY ON  
MAN AND WOMAN  
IN GOD'S WORLD**

*by John F. Brug*

Probably no issue facing the church today raises more difficulties than the widespread controversy concerning the appropriate, scriptural roles for men and women. This issue calls for careful study of Scripture and God's principles that govern these roles. Part 1 of this course studies the relevant Scripture passages to discover the general principles the Lord has given to guide Christian men and women as they serve him. Part 2 discusses the application of those principles to specific situations that Christians face in the home, in the church, and in society.

**Student's Manual**, 63 pages, paperback **22N0845 \$3.50**  
**Leader's Manual**, 55 pages, paperback **22N0846 \$4.99**

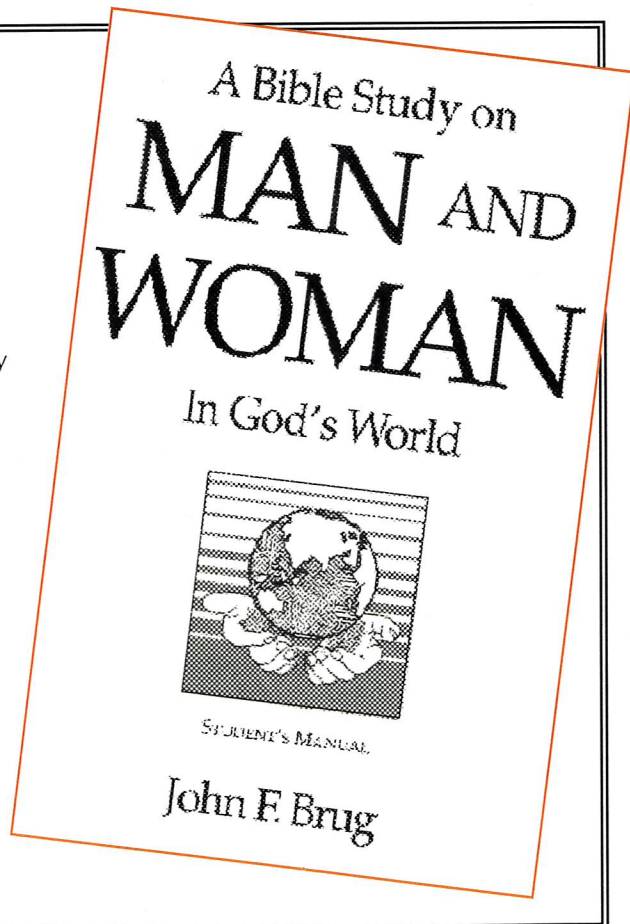


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In my last few columns I have summarized the consultant's report on a readership survey conducted last fall. According to the report, lay readers of Northwestern Lutheran by a large majority approve of what they read. The approval embraces both format and content. But there were dissenting voices. I would like to devote a few words to these dissents.

There was a common thread. First, NL has turned into a "slick magazine." Secondly, the quality of articles has declined dramatically. "NL is now a slick magazine," one lay reader commented, "full of fluff and little else. Let's go back to the old." Another reader wrote in our December issue: "In the October 15 issue I count six secular articles. . . . I count two articles with Scripture text and comment. . . . We are a religious publication, not Readers' Digest."

Partly this must be viewed in the light of the so-called Jackie Gleason syndrome, named after the contemporary philosopher who gave the classic disease its streamlined definition: "The past remembers better than it lived." For example, I opened an issue of NL selected at random from 15 years ago. Using the same criterion as our letter writer, there was only one article with Scripture text and comment and eight secular articles. It is beyond dispute, however, that we are not the NL of old.

The makeup of NL is strikingly different from what it was in my first years as editor. Full color covers were then out of the question, as was the use of color regularly throughout. Our type is larger, more legible and contemporary than it was a decade ago. Today we are able to produce a magazine which in constant dollars is not that much more expensive than the cost years ago. Modern production methods have reduced printing costs.

Formerly the editor laid out NL. I was not very good at it and early on involved the art department of Northwestern Publishing House. Layout is now the responsibility of our production manager, an employee of NPH. His professionalism shows.

But those are minor problems compared to the change in the reading habits of America. In a recent article on literacy in America *Fortune* magazine said, "More worrisome is that Americans who can read, don't. Beckoned by countless alternatives . . . Americans seem ever less willing to devote their time and attention to page after page of silent black type." According to a survey cited by *Fortune* "the average adult American reads just 24 minutes a day. . . . Roughly half of American adults almost never read books or magazines."

This state of affairs, widely reported, shapes the form of our magazine. More white space, more callouts, more pictures. One-page articles become two-page articles, two-page articles expand to three pages, and some run to four pages. The form of the text is different. There are fewer "sermonic" articles. There's less "preaching." (Those adjectives are not meant disparagingly.) Instead of using NL in a vital instructional role, a role assigned to it in 1914, there is more dependence on competent continuing adult Christian education on the congregational level. But there are more articles which describe how the Christian faith is living itself out in the lives of our WELS folk.

Finally, I believe that the creation of a "news section" has improved communication with our readers both in quantity and quality of synodical news. The more we know about the doings of our synod, the more we will involve ourselves in its mission and support it with our prayers and offerings.

James P. Schaefer

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*"The average adult American reads just 24 minutes a day. . . . Roughly half of American adults almost never read books or magazines."*

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# Have you hugged your missionary today ?

## A holy hug

The personal touch expresses the tie of Christian love that binds us

by Duane K. Tomhave

**B**umper stickers prod, "Have you hugged your kid today?" A brochure asks, "Have you hugged your missionary lately?" Such encouragement reminds those who send missionaries also to be supportive with their words, letters, and gifts. This personal touch expresses the tie of Christian love that binds us.

Paul and Peter end some of their epistles with the words, "Greet one another with a holy kiss." Such a kiss was a public ceremony, as the word "holy" indicates. A kiss upon the forehead or cheek has remained a sign of affection and honor in many cultures.

In the church the public kiss continued in use for centuries, signifying reconciliation to penitents and mutual forgiveness among family members just before going to communion. How could Judas betray his Lord with a kiss normally recognized as a sign of spiritual accord?

A handshake has become the maximum standard greeting in our US churches today, except perhaps at weddings or funerals. Did the change come through our European cultural background? Or Victorian proprieties? Brazilians hug or kiss plentifully in public. Women hug each other and kiss on both cheeks. Men greet with double bear hugs while slapping each other's backs.

Some people are more expressive than others

outside the intimate family circle. For us reserved folks accustomed to a privacy zone, it can be quite an adjustment. When my well-lipsticked aunts used to arrive at our home, this much younger kid placed himself behind protective people to try to avoid the inevitable.

**B**ut I've learned to enjoy the holy hug with our world mission families. Those greeting scenes at the airports call for more than an extended hand. Distance and separation help to make the gentle squeeze of Christian love a silent reminder of mutual faith and joint work.

Maybe it has something to do with age; older pastors more naturally receive holy hugs than young ones. Whatever it is, it should be contagious. World missions have brought a lot of wholesome influence to bear on old Ma WELS. She could do worse than learn from her absent but fond missionary families how Christians may greet one another with a holy hug.

At very least, the brochure urges hugging world missionaries by proxy with keen interest and generous support.



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