

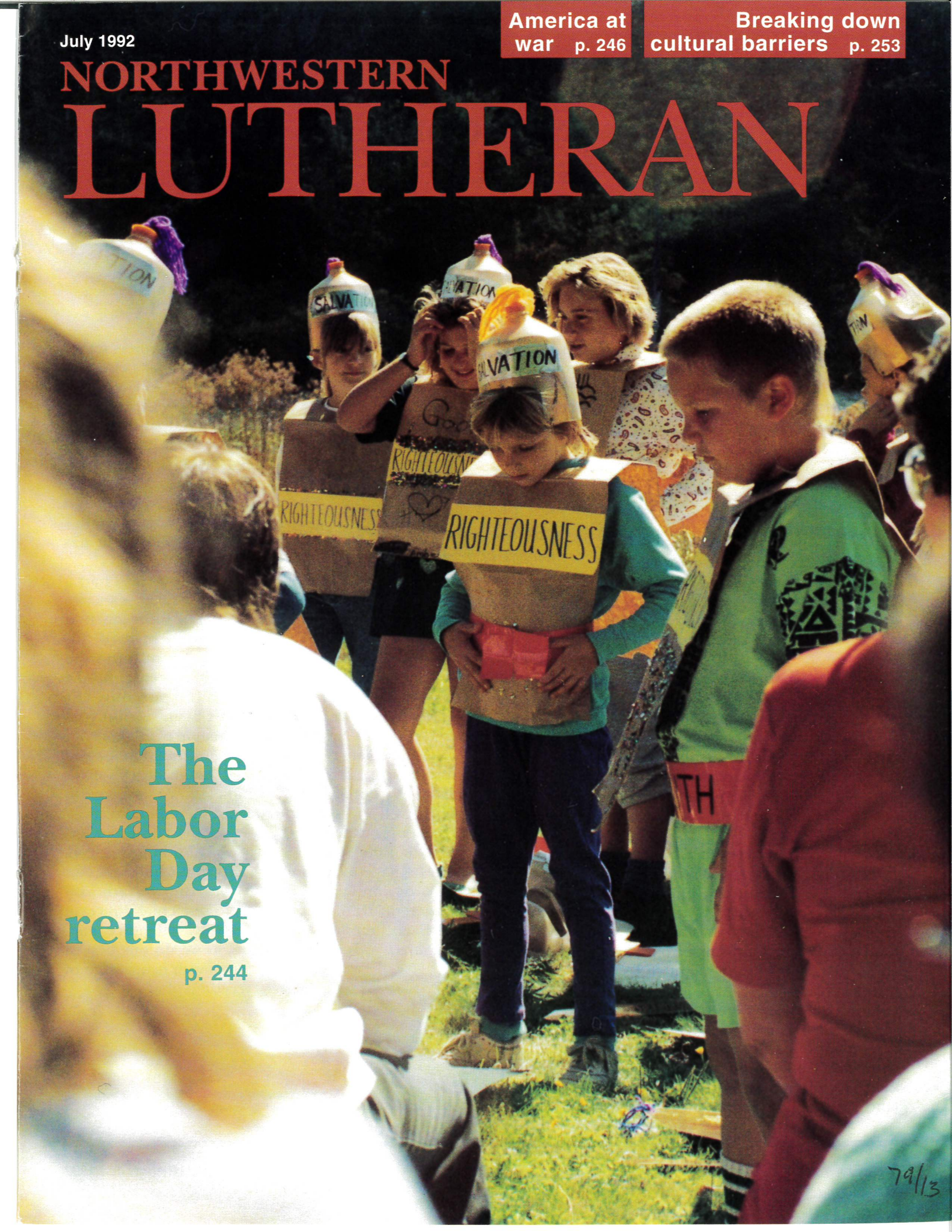
July 1992

America at  
war p. 246

Breaking down  
cultural barriers p. 253

NORTHWESTERN

# LUTHERAN



The  
Labor  
Day  
retreat

p. 244

79/13



# Freedom is not free

It always costs someone something

by Richard E. Lauersdorf

“Miss Liberty” she’s called, that statue 151 feet tall from her sandals to her torch, with fingernails as large as a dinner plate. Yet it’s not her size that impresses, but her message. Inscribed on her pedestal are those well-known words, “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, the wretched refuse of your teeming shore. Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me. I lift my lamp beside the golden door.” For 108 years that Statue of Liberty has symbolized freedom.

## Our nation’s freedom

If church doors were barred shut and worship banned, if we had to weigh every word before we would speak it and watch every ear which might hear it, if borders had armed checkpoints and passports were tangled in red tape, we might better appreciate the freedoms we enjoy. So often a blessing is not fully appreciated until it is lost.

Miss Liberty still stands in New York harbor and we are still free. We can worship where, how, and when we want. We can speak our minds freely about anything and to anyone. We can travel in our land without restriction from sea to shining sea. We have freedom. What a gift!

But freedom is never free. Always it costs someone something. Those row after row of white crosses, thousands of them in all, in the U.S. cemetery near the beaches of Normandy, speak eloquently of freedom’s price. Those crosses are just a fraction of the cost required in four major conflicts in our century alone that Miss Liberty might still stand tall and we breathe free.

Our nation’s freedom has been purchased and preserved at great cost. Needed today are people who care about our nation’s future and not just their own comfort. Needed today are old fashioned words like sacrifice, discipline, honor, honesty, diligence, vigilance, and people who model them, if Miss Liberty is

to continue holding freedom’s torch high.

## The world’s freedom

The cross of Calvary it’s called, those timbers set up on that skull-shaped hill. The wood’s long gone, but not the liberty secured there. On that cross God’s Son secured a freedom far more precious than any other in the world. That cross speaks of freedom from sin’s curse and Satan’s slavery. No more accusing pangs of a guilt-pierced conscience. No more frantic scrambling to secure salvation with our own futile works. No more chilling fear of death’s cold chamber. The Son has set us free.

This freedom also had a price. Nearly 2,000 years ago the God-Man hung on that cross, his body bruised, his

arms outstretched. On that wood he suffered the worst that both earth and hell could dispense. But he secured liberty in full by dying for our sins. His redeeming death and victorious resurrection prepared complete payment for all people of all time.

Now he offers that liberty to us without money and without price. It’s ours free of cost. Calvary’s cross tells us it’s done, totally, completely. We are free to live for God and with God, on earth and in eternity.

Remember, though, there is no liberty without loyalty. When the Son sets us free, he also makes us captive. He makes us willing servants of his holy will. Not our own comfort and gain, but the welfare and advance of his kingdom become our chief concern. Sacrifice, discipline, honor, honesty, diligence, vigilance are words we model, too, as we do our best to lift high the cross with its message of the greatest freedom of all.

*If the Son sets you free,  
you will be free indeed  
(John 8:36).*



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



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

# NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE  
WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD

JULY 1992 / VOL. 79, NO. 13

## 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

## Editorial Commission

Prof. Richard D. Balge (chairman), Mr. John Barber, Prof. John A. Braun, Mr. Mark C. Brunner, Rev. Victor H. Prange.

## Contributing editors

R. D. Balge, M. E. Braun, T. B. Franzmann, J. C. Gerlach, R. H. Hochmuth, P. E. Kelm, R. E. Lauersdorf, F. E. Piepenbrink, V. H. Prange, C. Toppe.

## District correspondents

K. H. Pasch (Arizona), H. K. John (California), R. L. Kruse (Dakota-Montana), J. L. Langebartels (Michigan), R. M. Edwards (Minnesota), T. L. Wendt (Nebraska), J. R. Bitter (North Atlantic), J. C. Eggert (Northern Wisconsin), J. S. Blum (Pacific Northwest), J. C. Voss (South Atlantic), C. L. Learman (South Central), R. A. Sievert (Southeastern Wisconsin), E. C. Stroh (Western Wisconsin).

## Production

Production services of Northwestern Publishing House. Production, layout: Clifford Koeller. Subscription: Suzanne Giese (manager), Sandy Arndt.

## Subscriber service

For subscription service, write: Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N 113th Street, Milwaukee WI 53226-3284. Phone 414/475-6600, extension 5. Allow **four weeks** for a new subscription, subscription renewal or change of address.

**Subscription rates** (payable in advance)  
*U.S.A. and Canada*—**One year, \$8.50; two years, \$17.00; three years, \$22.50.** Twenty-five or more unaddressed copies sent in a bundle to one address at \$5.50 per subscription. Every home mailing plan at \$6.00 per subscription. All prices include postage.

*All other countries*—Please write for rates.

*Northwestern Lutheran* is available on **cassette** for the visually handicapped. For information, write: Workshop for the Visually Handicapped, 559 Humboldt Avenue, St. Paul MN 55107.

NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN (ISSN 0029-3512) is published *semimonthly, except monthly in July, August and December*, by Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N 113th Street, Milwaukee WI 53226-3284. Second class postage paid at Milwaukee, Wisconsin and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *Northwestern Lutheran*, c/o Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N 113th Street, Milwaukee WI 53226-3284. ©1992 by *Northwestern Lutheran*, magazine of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

## FEATURES

<b>The Labor Day retreat</b> by Philip F. Becker .....	244
<b>America at war</b> by Fredric E. Piepenbrink .....	246
CHRISTIAN FAMILIES TODAY	
<b>Loving discipline</b> by James A. Aderman .....	248
PLANTING A MISSION	
<b>First service</b> by LeRoy A. Martin .....	250
WHAT LUTHERANS BELIEVE	
<b>Luther's Large and Small Catechisms</b> by Wayne A. Laitinen .....	251
<b>It's time to stop watching</b> by Paul O. Wendland .....	260

## NEWS

Symposium on gender-related issues • Also in the news • Breaking down cultural barriers in the church • Three students in tragic automobile accident • Southeastern and Western Wisconsin Districts news .....	252
--	-----

## DEPARTMENTS

THOUGHT FOR TODAY	
<b>Freedom is not free</b> by Richard E. Lauersdorf .....	242
PARABLES OF GRACE	
<b>The great banquet</b> by Mark E. Braun .....	255
EDITORIAL COMMENT	
<b>When the lambs are silent</b> by Joel C. Gerlach .....	256
READERS FORUM .....	257
FROM THIS CORNER by the editor .....	259

## FORWARD

- How do churches in our North Atlantic District maintain a sense of community? The 38 churches of the district are scattered over 12 northeastern states and a province of Canada. In these churches there are a tad over 5,000 baptized members. (For a comparison's sake, our Northern Wisconsin District has 81,500 baptized members in 153 congregations in an area one-third the size of Wisconsin.) One of the ways is with an annual Labor Day retreat in the Berkshires of Massachusetts. Phil Becker, a transplanted midwesterner living in New Hampshire who has written for us before, walks us through last year's retreat beginning on page 244.
- A good many of us are concerned about the drift of America. Two of

our favorite writers are also disturbed. On this Fourth of July, they urge us, "Don't just stand there. Do something!" While the church as church bears the message of salvation in Jesus Christ to the world, its members are still citizens of a country. The Israelite exiles in Babylonia were urged by God to "seek the peace" of their city. We have the same charge today, according to Fred Piepenbrink and Paul Wendland.

- One last word. You may wonder what has happened to the familiar "DJS" which normally closes "Forward." As I write, she has just undergone major surgery and is in recovery. She will—please God—be back with us soon. I hope your prayers are with her as mine are.

JPS



# The Labor Day retreat

New England congregations annually spend a weekend together in worship, study, and play



by Philip F. Becker

For 20 years, WELS members and friends have gathered in the Berkshires of Massachusetts for a Labor Day weekend retreat. It started when a few families joined together for fellowship and Bible study in the quiet of the lakes and mountains.

Last year people from as far north as Ottawa and as far south as Virginia came. The youngest was a few months old, and the oldest was 83. The largest family came with their 13 children.

This area of the country is renowned for its scenery. In the fall the trees show fringes of color. Apples hang red and fragrant in small cider orchards along the roads, and the air is cool and dry.

The weekend features Bible studies and special topics. Participants can choose either several short subjects or a series of three related studies. Bible classes for young people are also offered. Children's nursery and activities run concurrently with seminars and Bible study.

Retreaters arrive mid-afternoon on Saturday and get settled in. The "retreat festival choir" starts putting together anthems for the Sunday service. At a Saturday evening session the children prepare a song or other event for the Sunday morning service.

Over the years, the retreats have hosted significant enrichment opportunities. One year Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service presented a seminar on the Christian family. Another year, the district

worship committee conducted a music workshop. President Mischke has addressed the group. Last year the project leader of the WELS Kingdom Workers spoke on the activities of that organization.

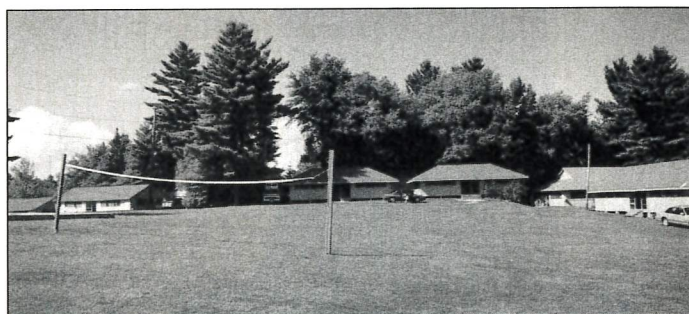
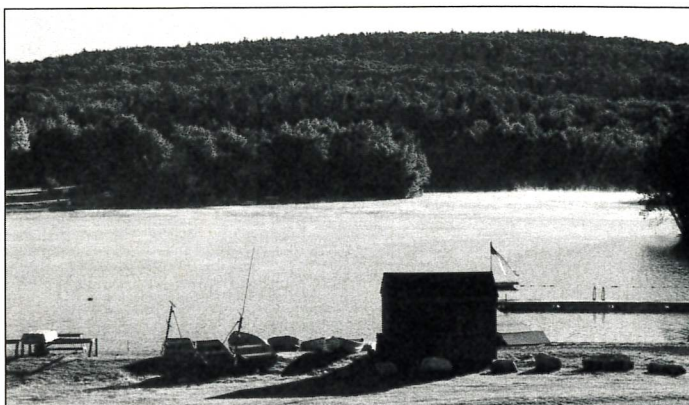
Less structured but as important as the study sessions are networking between congregations. At the last retreat a member of the council of the King of Prussia, Penn., congregation shared with a council member from Amherst, N.H., the methods and results of working with a professional church consultant. Sunday school teachers compared notes on activities and fall curriculum. A member of the Brooklyn congregation that worships in a brownstone meeting room chatted with the organist of the New Hampshire congregation. They have different ethnic backgrounds. One is a social worker, the other a computer engineer; one is a 50-year WELS member, the other a recent convert.

The weekend activities are rounded out with social and sports activities. The group sings its way through the Lutheran hymnal, with dusty corners well represented. The Scandinavian contingent requests "Behold a Host Arrayed in White." Someone insists on "All Praise to Thee my God This Night" sung to the "other" tune. The group even sang "Lift High the Cross" from memory, without accompaniment—not so dusty, would you say?

A bonfire on the beach finishes Saturday night with



PHOTOS BY PHIL BECKER



The campground.

nating the music, and leading the kitchen police.

The retreat is an ideal setting for Christian fellowship, worship, and learning. The cost per person is low, the scenery is beautiful, the gathering friendly, the weekend timing is right, child care is provided, discussions are stimulating, the atmosphere informal, and the food good.

This year's Labor Day retreat will again be held at Camp Taconic on Lake Ashmere, Massachusetts. Cost per family will be less than \$100. You are invited. Write to the author at 3 Old Evergreen Road, Bedford, NH 03110.



Phil Becker is a member of St. Paul, Amherst, New Hampshire.

more singing, marshmallows, keeping the kids from getting too close to the fire, and maybe even a horror story about bears in the woods.

Highlight of the weekend is the outdoor worship on a point of land overlooking a lake sparkling in the September sun. Last year members of Faith, the Pittsfield congregation which sponsors the retreat, joined the retreaters and Pastor Nathan Cordes led the service. Music was provided by an electronic keyboard, and a choir of 35 voices sang several anthems.

The children recited and acted out the Epistle lesson for the day: "Put on the armor of God." They had helmets made from plastic milk jugs, swords labeled "truth" made of gold craft paper, shields, and belts, too. Such enthusiasm in the Lord's army is seldom seen!

Sunday afternoon's recreation offers softball, tennis, volleyball, swimming, and boating.

Packing up and farewells are Monday afternoon after the last study session and lunch. Some people linger awhile at the beach or get in a last round of tennis.

The Pittsfield people arrange for the camp, cover advance costs, and coordinate details such as publicity, registration, finding a life-guard, and shopping for groceries. Other congregations have lent a hand with such tasks as running the children's program, planning the seminars, coordi-





On this 4th of July:

# America at war

by Fredric E. Piepenbrink

resembles what could be called war. For that we are grateful. Currently we enjoy peace with allies and foes alike. The cold war is behind us. For that we are grateful.

Yet America is at war. It is a war that takes lives. That should concern us as Christians because "life" is a special gift of God and "living" is serious business. Life as a "time of grace" is God's call to salvation and involves eternal consequences.

America is at war. The war claimed some 30,000 casualties last year alone. Lives that came to a violent, bloody end. It is a fact that more have been murdered in the streets of America than killed in all the wars America has fought in its history. A study some 20 years ago has shown that a baby born in the 1970s in this country was more likely to be murdered than an American soldier killed in combat in World War II.

It is a war that is heavily armed. There is a gun now in every other household in this country. Guns have taken more American lives by accident, suicide, or murder in the last two years than in the entire nine-year Vietnam war.

Unlike any other war in our history, this war has even entered into the households of American fami-

**H**ow is the national health doing this Fourth of July? What would a status report on the health of the United States look like if the usual Fourth of July rhetoric were cooled? The country is not engaged in any overt military action that even



lies. Domestic violence is on the rise across the country. About 25 percent of all married women are severely beaten by their husbands, and two-thirds are beaten at least once during their marriage. Even children are engaged in this war. In 1986 there were more than 2 million cases of child abuse and neglect, and those were just the ones that were reported. The result of all of this is that 1 out of every 210 Americans has been taken prisoner—incarcerated—their freedom denied because they are unfit to live in society. That figure is the highest of all civilized countries in the world, more even than any so-called “third world” country on earth.

**O**h, we are at war all right. Perhaps the most threatening war in the history of this country, because right now it is a war that we are losing. But there is a spark of hope. In recent months it seems that we are at least beginning to realize that we “have met the enemy and it is us.”

Some may question whether this is a war that even involves them. Some may wonder whether the Christian, or especially the church, should even speak on such matters of social concern. After all, Christians are not to look to this world for their peace and comfort, but the world to come, right? As long as we keep our nose clean and live a moral life, that is all that God expects. I say, that is how some might think. But let me give you four reasons why that kind of thinking is faulty. Or, to put it another way, let me explain why a drug dealer murdered in the inner city is a matter that involves both your church and you.

First, because social sin is never encapsulated. It is not like asbestos that you can seal in plastic. Social sin that goes unchecked always grows. It is like a cancer in that regard. And the problems in the city soon become problems in the suburbs and beyond. The more the unjust sin and suffer from it, the more the just suffer along with them as well.

Secondly, social sin involves Christians because it dulls consciences. You can only watch so many murders on TV, or view so many graphic acts of violence on the evening news before you too begin to lose a respect for life. You become callous, indifferent. How many Kevorkian assisted suicides will it take before a person begins to think, “Maybe life should be ended when it doesn’t seem worth living anymore.”

Thirdly, social sin involves Christians, whether they

like it or not, because for the first time in a long time society is looking to the church for help. I don’t see this as a new wave of Christianity sweeping the world, and when society hears what the church has to say they may be turned off again, but at least for now some are so desperate that they will listen to anyone, even the church. And who knows better how to curb moral decay and give people hope again than a law-gospel preaching church? This may be a new window for evangelism that God is opening, as the last era in time, to win the elect. And then will come judgment day.

Which brings us to the fourth and final reason. Even if Christians can make no difference in the sins of society, even if things just get worse and worse, we are called by God to enter the war in order that we might be there to pick up the pieces of the casualties of those who fall victims, and to serve as a warning to all that a day of reckoning is coming. That is how God often used his prophets in the Old Testament.

**P**erhaps a word from one such prophet would be in order, Micah 6:8, “And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and walk humbly with your God.” The Lord, Jehovah, requires of men not just sacrifice, not just worship, but action. So let individual Christians befriend their neighbor. You can start right in your own church. Get to know your fellow believers, young and old, black, brown, and white. Get to know their feelings, their dreams, their needs. Then spread your love to your neighborhood and eventually to your city. Let Christians march in protest, man counseling centers, fight for legislation, vote in elections, or run for office themselves. Who knows what good might be accomplished? Why, if there had been ten righteous people in the city of Sodom, God would not have destroyed it for their sakes.

So, on this Fourth of July, the 216th since that first July 4, 1776, we say, God bless your efforts. The church will pray for you. And maybe next year at this time we can rejoice that things have turned around and America is winning the war because Christians everywhere are acting fervently in love.



*Fredric Piepenbrink is pastor of Atonement, Milwaukee.*





MRS. KEVIN SCHEIBEL

hearing those words of questionable assurance shortly after being reminded of my grandmother's saying: "Kids who can't listen can feel."

Ah, discipline. The parent-child interaction that brings pain to the giver and the receiver. But did you know that punishment is not basically what discipline is about?

### Discipline is instructive

The Greek and Hebrew words God chose to describe the biblical concept of discipline focus attention on instruction, teaching, and training rather than on assessing penalties. Disciplining our children is much broader than taking away privileges, administering a stern "talking to," or meting out a well-considered, well-measured swat. Properly understood, punishment (or chastisement if you prefer) is only one aspect of parental discipline.

At the heart of discipline is love: God's generous, ever-committed, never-wavering *agape* love. The parent's task is to discipline (that is, instruct, teach, train) his children in the same way as our Father in heaven disciplines us. That's bringing our children up in the Lord's training and instruction. The Living Bible paraphrases Ephesians 6:4: "And now a word to you par-

ents. Don't keep on scolding and nagging your children, making them angry and resentful. Rather, bring them up with the loving discipline the Lord himself approves, with suggestions and godly advice."

### God and his prodigal children

God's love for his children is remarkably pictured in Jesus' story about the father of a prodigal son. The son had run off, snubbing his father's kindness and taking advantage of his wealth. Even without knowing the exact details, this father was probably well-aware

## Loving discipline

by James A. Aderman

**T**he warm-up question for the group of a dozen Bible studiers meeting in my living room was, "How did your parents teach you obedience?" Hiding behind a wily smile, someone said, "My mother taught me obedience by letting me hurt her."

The group wasn't about to allow that to pass. "Yes. . . . Go on."

"She always told me, 'This is going to hurt me more than it's going to hurt you.'"

My parents told me that, too, on occasion. I recall



of the downward spiral for which his son deserted home and him. Still he waited, watching for the wayward's return. And when he saw him "still a long way off . . . he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him."

Then, without even waiting to hear his son's entire confession, he fully reinstated him as his child and called for a celebration. The children God has given us need to know that the love that beats in our hearts for them is no different than God's love for us prodigal children.

Dr. Ross Campbell (*How To Really Love Your Child*) maintains, "Making a child feel loved is the most important part of good discipline. Without a strong and healthy love-bond with his parents, a child reacts to parental guidance with anger, hostility, and resentment."

Why should disciplining our children work in a way other than God's loving instruction works to lead us to obedience? "We love because he first loved us" (1 John 4:19). And God is much in love with us! "How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!" (1 John 3:1).

### **The message we send our children**

We strive to be loving, pure and kind, thoughtful, unselfish, and generous, because our Father treats us in those ways. Doesn't it make sense that the primary message we want to send to our children is, "Because God loves me, I am head-over-heels committed to love you. And nothing will ever change that?"

Does that mean there won't be times when our children experience some pain or loss as a result of the training they go through at our hands? Not at all. The fact that God loves us doesn't negate his using hardship to teach us. Our attitude towards a disobedient youngster is this, "I love you too much to let you behave like that." How can you translate your love into a language your child will understand?

- Make an unconditional commitment to your child for life by openly and frequently pledging your love to him. You may even write it out and post it where it will be seen each day. Your poster may proclaim, "As God has loved us in Jesus, we pledge our unconditional love to Jeremy, Jackie, and John for as

long as we live."

- Learn how to discipline your child effectively at each stage of development. Punishing a two year old for spilling his milk is as counterproductive as spanking a twelve year old. Read at least one book a year by a Bible-believing expert on appropriate discipline.

- Pay attention to your motive for discipline. Separate your need to satisfy your own frustration with your misbehaving child from what that child needs for guidance. Determine you will only respond to your child's needs.

- Treat your child tenderly, sensitively, gently. Dads especially tend to violate this rule. Go slow. Don't push. Refuse to offer immediately a solution. Listen, not just to the words but to the emotions behind the words. Remember, "Don't exasperate" (Ephesians 6:4).

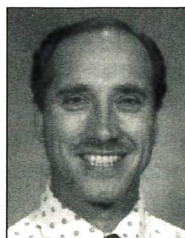
- Communicate your love not only with your lips, but also with your actions. Be available to your child. Break into your activities to do things with her. Frequently tell her you love her by gazing straight into her eyes.

- Show your child you are at least trying to understand what he's telling you. Look at him when he's speaking. Don't assume you understand what he has said; ask for more information and rephrase what you heard him say. Don't overreact to his opinions, and never ridicule him.

- Use meaningful touch each day. Let your child know you love her by the way you touch her. Don't be stingy with your hugs, handholds, kisses, sitting together on the couch, soft pats on the arm, nuzzles on the ear.

- Celebrate that Jesus' blood has washed away your failures as a parent, as well as your child's. Rejoice that Jesus' resurrection guarantees power to press on.

Discipline is not primarily about imposing sanctions. It's about loving, loving as our God "loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins" (1 John 4:10).



James Aderman is pastor of Fairview, Milwaukee.

---

*Communicate your love  
not only with your lips,  
but also with your actions.*

---



# First service

by LeRoy A. Martin

It was just a school cafeteria. About 45 parking spaces outside. And handicapped access. Talented women had stitched attractive standing banners. The altar was a serving cart covered with wood and altar hangings. The seating was cafeteria benches.

The "organ" was really a piano. And the cross was drawn with chalk on the blackboard behind the altar. Nor did all the offering baskets match.

But the worship guide was printed, making following along easy. The musicians were well practiced. A final phone invitation had been made to 300 prospects the week before. The ushers and greeters all had a smile for everyone. The cookies and coffee were ready.

You can't go wrong when you are delivering the most comforting message the world has ever known: there is a God who loves you, who forgives you, who wants you to be with him in heaven.

Would anyone show up? About 45 people had said they would be there. But it's 10 minutes to starting time, and only 20 are there. Maybe he was right, the man we interviewed who said, "The last thing we need here is another church."



But then they came. There was the faithful WELS nucleus who had worked and prayed so hard for this first service. And the friends from many miles away, who came just to be a part of this beginning. There were the 42 unchurched from the community who came, not knowing fully what to expect, but knowing we had something they wanted to learn more about.

There was the woman who was there because one of the 10,000 inserts we put into the local shopping guide had blown into her front yard. When

she picked it up and read it, she knew where she was going to be on Sunday at 9:45.

It was really just a school cafeteria. But for that hour it was a place of lavish praise. I think we each understood a little more what Jacob felt when he said of another unchurchly setting: "How awesome is this place! This is none other than the house of God; this is the gate of heaven."



LeRoy Martin is pastor of Christ the King, an exploratory mission in Port Charlotte, Florida.



# Luther's Large and Small Catechisms

by Wayne A. Laitinen

**T**he three creeds are often called "general" confessions because they have been used by Christians everywhere. The two catechisms of Dr. Martin Luther are the first of the "particular" confessions which, though worthy of universal acceptance, came from within the Lutheran church.

## The roots of the Catechism

Those who wished to join the ancient Christian church were usually instructed in the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. Often it was assumed that the Ten Commandments were already known. By the 13th century the Commandments became a formal part of catechetical instruction as well.

Luther did not write the first catechism. By Luther's time, catechisms appeared which contained various combinations of the following: the Commandments, the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, the Lord's Supper, a section on the Ave Maria, a list of sins one should remember at confession, and perhaps a table of duties, a few simple prayers and several Bible passages. These were usually written and illustrated on wall charts. A school teacher, father, or priest might own an instructor's manual called an enchiridion. Students usually learned the chief parts of the catechism from memory. Most could not afford to own the expensive, hand-copied catechisms which were available prior to the invention of the moveable-type printing press.

Luther was grateful that, in spite of all the vain philosophies and superstitions which crept into his church, the Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer were preserved.

The Ten Commandments are the most concise summary of God's holy law. In concrete terms God spells out how we are to love him above all things and love our neighbor as ourself. The Creed summarizes the gospel. Our Lord's loving hand formed us and spreads before us everything which is nourishing and beautiful. When we rebelled, he set into action a radical solution: His righteous anger was spent on his holy Son, not the guilty ones! For Jesus' sake we were declared holy once again. Then he sent his Spirit with this message of his undeserved love so that we would

believe it. Finally, the Lord's Prayer teaches us to boldly approach our heavenly Father with all of our needs. We learn what to ask and what we can expect from his grace.

## The Bible of the laymen

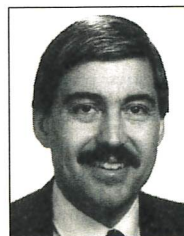
Luther preserved these three chief parts as the core of his catechism. You can see why he said, "The catechism is the Bible of the laymen. In it the entire body of Christian doctrine, which every Christian must know in order to be saved, is contained. Therefore we should by all means love and esteem the catechism and diligently impress it upon youth; for in it, the correct, true, ancient, pure, divine doctrine of the holy christian church is summarized."

In 1518, only one year after he had written the 95 theses, Dr. Luther published a poster called, "A Short Explanation of the Ten Commandments." He felt that if his church was ever to be reformed, it had to be well-instructed in the basic teachings of the faith. The reformer and his friends often preached sermon series on these three chief parts.

In 1518, only one year after he had written the 95 theses, he published a wall chart explaining the Ten Commandments. Later, he took advantage of the newly-invented printing press and had tracts made of his sermons on the Creed and the Lord's Prayer. In 1525 he prevailed upon some of his close friends to write a short summary of the three chief parts. By 1528 it still had not been done.

*Next: The Saxon visitation.*

*Wall charts are still an effective aid in teaching the chief parts of Luther's Small Catechism in the church, home, or school. A set of 30 wall charts, 34"x22" on heavy poster stock, illustrated with corresponding Bible stories, is available (\$22.95 plus \$5.25 shipping) only through: Dr. Martin Luther College Bookstore, 1884 College Heights, New Ulm MN 56073-3300, or call 507/354-8221 (ext. 214).*



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





**Nidaira San**, a 1992 graduate of the Lutheran Evangelical Christian Church of Japan seminary, was ordained and installed in April as pastor—or “sensei” in Japanese—of Praise Lutheran Church located south of Tokyo.

## Symposium on gender-related issues

Gender issues within the church was the topic when representatives of 20 WELS organizations and schools met April 25. Sponsored by the Task Force on Family Ministry under the auspices of the synod’s Board for Parish Services, the symposium sought to bring together people to begin to define the key issues and to develop strategies for addressing the issues within the church. Among the group were counselors, college students and professors, parish pastors and teachers, and parish service administrators.

“I am convinced the main problem is women want to straighten out the men, and men want to straighten out the women,” said Wayne Mueller, administrator for the Board for Parish Services. “What separates us are our doubts and fears. If our relationship with God is not long and strong, our insecurities spill over into our relationships with each other.”

“Gender is not the culprit—sin is,”

said Kenneth Kremer, editor at Northwestern Publishing House. “We could all probably use a healthy dose of awareness and sensitivity training, but that’s not enough. We need to talk with one another, rather than past one another or at one another.”

“We’re kidding ourselves if we think a problem doesn’t exist,” said panelist Angie Hafemeister, a university student active in campus ministry. “We need to work together, open the Bible, and wrestle with this issue.”

Participants listed a variety of significant gender issues, sought to prioritize them, and discussed possible strategies for dealing with the issues.

Members of the steering committee which planned the symposium were Prof. Mary Heins of Wisconsin Lutheran College, Dr. Daniel Schmeling of the Commission on Parish Schools, and Mr. Kenneth Kremer.

—Dorothy J. Sonntag

### Also in the news

**Gary Greenfield**, president of Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, has been appointed to a one-year term to the board of directors of Aid Association for Lutherans. He will replace James P. Schaefer of Brown Deer, Wis., who will retire from the board at the end of the year. Greenfield’s term will begin Jan. 1. . . . **Pastor Dennis Smith** was commissioned as a WELS civilian chaplain in Europe May 1 at a special service at the synod’s administration building in Milwaukee. He and his wife Deborah are settling down in their new home at Mainz-Bretzenheim, Germany. . . . The **Lutheran Chorale of Milwaukee** recently celebrated its 35th anniversary by repeating the same program which was sung 35 years before on the same day at Grace, Milwaukee. Prof. Gerhard Franzmann narrated the 35th anniversary concert as he had 35 years before at Grace. . . . Steps are being taken to transfer to the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Germany responsibility for the radio program *Dies Ist Der Tag* beamed to the USSR for a number of years. . . . Dr. Jerome Brooks reported to the world mission board “high activity” at the **Mwembezi/Zambia clinic** and the **mobile clinic in Malawi**. He also reported a shortage of

nurse applicants for service in the medical mission. . . . The world board also authorized a four-man team, including the board’s administrator, for a **survey of Australia**. . . . **Pastor Mark Goeglein** has been elected by the world board to replace Prof. Harold Johne on the Committee for Mission Expansion. . . . The **Committee on Relief** has reported its grants since April: \$50,000 for aid in eastern Germany; \$20,000 for food in Russia; \$8,000 for Romanian orphans; \$4,077 for world mission fields; \$25,000 for general world relief; \$23,000 for victims of the Philippine volcano; \$5,000 for flood relief in China; \$4,000 for cyclone victims in Samoa; and \$8,000 to various people for emergency aid. . . . **Norbert Manthe**, former WELS controller who has retired, will serve part time as finance-budget coordinator for the world board. . . . **Prof. Joyce Schubkegel** has been chosen as recipient of the 1991 Richard Hillert Award in composition by Concordia University, River Forest, Ill. Her composition “Wedding Processional on *Love in Christ Is Strong and Living*” will be performed at next fall’s “Lectures in Church Music” at the university.



# Breaking down cultural barriers in the church

"We're not that different—God loves us all," Mrs. Brenda Hart told the participants at a seminar on how urban churches can get started in crosscultural ministry. "Working together, we can make this place a better place."

Mrs. Hart and her husband Simon, African Americans who are members of Garden Homes in Milwaukee, were among those who presented ethnic views at the seminar held in Milwaukee April 30-May 2 and sponsored by the synod's Multicultural Ministry Committee.

"The love I feel from you Christians gives me strength," Robert Bettencourt, a Syrian and a member of Peace, Manhattan, told the group. "Even if I don't know many of you, I love all of you, because we're all part of the same body."

Pastors and laypeople from 26 congregations nationwide heard practical suggestions and gained hands-on experience on how to get started in crosscultural ministry. Seminar participants also enjoyed a fiesta dinner and celebrated with an ethnic worship service.

Arthur Soman, a native of Guyana, South America, and a member of Hope, an exploratory mission in Markham, Ontario, offered advice on how to treat people of different cultural backgrounds. "Welcome them. Show your respect for them. Learn from them. Incorporate their preferences, their traditions. Pull them into your congregation."

"Social barriers are tougher than race or language in multicultural work," Dr. Glen Thompson, pastor of Peace, Manhattan, and a member

of the committee, told the group. "When a person comes from a different background, there's a different world view. Only people in that group can understand it."

Thompson offered several models for multicultural ministries. "A good approach, if you can pull it off," he said, is the "blended congregation," in which an existing congregation integrates new cultural groups. Other models may also be effective, said Thompson. "There is no best approach. There's no one Biblical way to go about this."

Those present agreed that urban churches need to reach out to people of other cultures. "Here is where the future lies," said a participant at the seminar's close. "This is the direction we must go."

—Dorothy J. Sonntag

## Obituaries

### G. Jerome Albrecht 1925-1992

Gerald Jerome Albrecht was born in Tolstoy, S. Dak., Sept. 24, 1925. He died May 3, 1992, in Milwaukee, Wis.

A graduate of Northwestern Lutheran Academy, Northwestern College, and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, he taught at Bethany Lutheran College and Dr. Martin Luther College, and served as pastor of congregations in St. Paul, Minn.; Eugene, Oreg.; Neenah, Wis.; and Richmond, Wis. In 1984 he became an editor at Northwestern Publishing House.

During his ministry he also served on the boards of Fox Valley Lutheran High School, Dr. Martin Luther College, Wisconsin



Albrecht

Lutheran College, WELS Parish Education, and the WELS Historical Institute.

He is survived by his wife Delores; daughters Sharon, and Cynthia (William) Otto; sons Pastor Michael (Donna), Peter (Magnhild), and James (Kim); fifteen grandchildren; sisters Lois Kiecker and Elaine Ogren, and brothers Marcus, Quentin, Homer, Paul, and Martin.

Services were held at St. Matthew, Milwaukee.

### Herbert C. Buch 1912-1992

Herbert C. Buch died March 22, 1992, in Grafton, Wis. He was born September 8, 1912, in Tawas City, Mich.

A graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, he served parishes in South Dakota, Michigan, and Wisconsin. After his retirement in 1983 he served as chaplain at Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service until his death.

He is survived by his wife, Elvira; his sons, Marcus (Arlys); Pastor Donald (Jean); a sister, Beata Collins; nine grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Services were held at Calvary, Thiensville, Wis.

### Harold Albert Klatt 1909-1992

Harold Albert Klatt was born in Milwaukee, Wis., December 25 1909. He died May 12, 1992, in Manitowoc, Wis.

After graduation from Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., he taught at Zion, Columbus, Wis.; St. John, Sleepy Eye, Minn.; and at Manitowoc Lutheran High.

He is survived by his wife Sena; two daughters, Mrs. Marianna (Robert) McCrea and Elizabeth Klatt; a son, Steven (Diana) Klatt; and four grandchildren.

Services were conducted at First German, Manitowoc.



## Three students in tragic automobile accident

News has reached the states that a tragic automobile accident took the life of Bettina Wilde, daughter of President Gerhard Wilde of Zwickau-Planitz, president of the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Germany. In the accident Suzanna Lenk, the fiancée of Bettina's brother, Martin, was also

killed. Martin survived the accident but his condition is still serious. Martin was completing his first year at the seminary. When the accident occurred the three students were on their way to a study tour of Greece during the spring break.

In a communication to President and Mrs. Wilde, WELS President

Carl Mischke conveyed the sincere sympathy of the synod to the Wilde family and commended them to "the gracious care of him who once did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all."

President and Mrs. Wilde attended both the 1991 and 1989 conventions of the synod.

### Southeastern Wisconsin District news

**Apostles of Christ, Wauwatosa**, celebrated the 25th anniversary of the merger of Apostles and Divine Savior Lutheran churches. President Carl Mischke delivered the anniversary sermon. . . . On May 3 **Trinity, Waukesha**, recognized the 100 years of blessing in the establishment of its school. . . . **Trinity, West Mequon**, celebrated the 125th anniversary of its founding on June 21. . . . Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Ministry observed the 25th anniversary of the ordination of Chaplain **Steven Stern** on June 21. . . . On February 2, Christ the Lord, Brookfield, celebrated the 25th anniversary in the ministry of principal **Michael Miller**. . . . Atonement, Milwaukee, celebrated the 25th anniversary in the ministry of teacher **Cheryl Moeller** on May 17. . . . On March 29, St. John, Lomira, observed the 25th anniversary in the teaching ministry of **Sandra Roebke**. She graduated from DMLC in 1967 and has spent the past 25 years

### Western Wisconsin District news

**St. Peter, Savanna, Ill.**, dedicated its new entry addition and fellowship hall on May 3. . . . Former district president and pastor of St. Paul, Ft. Atkinson, **Donald F. Bitter**, was honored at a retirement/appreciation service at St. Paul on May 17. The first vice president of the WELS,

teaching at St. John . . . **Faith, Antioch, Ill.**, hosted 20 Ukrainian children this year, 17 of whom were enrolled in their school. . . . **St. John, Burlington**, has embarked on an expansion, including four classrooms and enlarging its fellowship hall/gymnasium. . . . On June 28 St. Paul, East Troy, observed the retirement of **Dorothy Recknagel**. She served as choir director and the principle organist for the past 54 years. . . . St. Paul, Muskego, has added a **lay director of discipleship**, Robert Garbe, as a part-time staff position. . . . On May 10, **Mt. Calvary, Waukesha**, broke ground for its new worship facility. . . . **Centennial, Milwaukee**, dedicated its new church building on May 10. . . . **David Star, Jackson**, dedicated its new organ on May 3. The 22-rank organ with parts from the previous organ was installed into two front chambers with two sets of speaking display pipes attached to the chamber openings. . . . Salem, Milwaukee, scheduled three services in observance of the retirement of its pastor, **Winfred Nommensen**. On June 7

Richard E. Lauersdorf, preached for the occasion. . . . **Faith, Lancaster**, observed its 25th anniversary June 21. . . . St. Mark, Eau Claire, celebrated the 25th anniversary of the **Eau Claire Campus Ministry** on June 27-28. Pastor Paul Lindhorst, an alumnus of the campus ministry, preached for the occasion.

—Elton C. Stroh

the children said farewell by singing Pastor Nommensen's favorite hymn, "First Song of Isaiah." June 25 was designated district and synod farewell. Pastor Nommensen preached his farewell sermon to the congregation on June 28. . . . **Earl Monday**, teacher at Kettle Moraine LHS is one of 15 teachers in a national competition to be selected as a Fellow of the National Endowment of the Humanities. The award entitles Monday to attend the six week NEH summer seminar at UW in Madison. . . . **Lindenhurst, Ill., and Louisville, Ky.**, have planning authority for a chapel. Louisville is a possible candidate for participation in the Builders for Christ program. . . . **Buffalo Grove, Ill.** recently purchased a parsonage. They had previously been renting a home for their pastor. . . . **Andrea Binter**, a junior at Wisconsin LHS had her acrylic painting "Two Windows" featured in the May issue of *Scholastic Scope*, a national magazine featuring art, photography, and writing. . . . **Gold medal winners** from Wisconsin LHS at the Wisconsin High School Forensics Association state competition in Madison were Jason Goede, Susanne Forsman, Amy Nuoffer, Kathryn Heins, Rachel Aderman, and Sarah Klumb. . . . The faculty of Wisconsin LHS selected **Ryan Wiechmann and Heather Hodorowski** to speak at the commencement on June 6. . . . **Trinity, Hartford**, celebrated its 140th anniversary on June 24.

—Robert A. Sievert



God never promised any of us tomorrow

# The great banquet

Luke 14:15-24

by Mark E. Braun

**T**he one thing God never promised any of us is tomorrow. So why do people delay?

Consider this parable: "A certain man was preparing a great banquet and invited many guests. At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.'"

The host's actions were consistent with gracious Palestinian society, and essential to understanding the story. After extending his invitation, he determined how much to prepare by the number who said yes. In sending his servant when the banquet was complete, the host was politely calling his guests to the feast they'd already agreed to attend.

How shocking that now his guests made excuses not to come. While they were, in their own way, legitimate excuses, there was something clearly unacceptable about them. Who buys oxen before testing them? Must a man inspect his new real estate tonight? Why should marrying a wife force a man to break an invitation he'd already accepted?

At very least, these guests were sadly inconsiderate of their host; at worst, their excuses were a calculated put-down of his good intentions.

But what the host then resolved to do was even more outrageous. His meat would spoil. He had a party to give. He would invite other guests! "Go out quickly into the streets and alleys of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame. . . . Go out to the roads and country lanes and make them come in, so that my house will be full."

An astounding reversal of fortune! All the people who promised to be there put themselves on the outside; all the people who had no right to be there were feasting at the buffet table.

**H**ow are we to read this parable? The great banquet pictures God's salvation. "The Lord Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples," said Isaiah, "a banquet of aged wine. . . . This is the Lord, we trusted in him; let us rejoice and

be glad in his salvation" (Isaiah 25:6,9). The long time in preparing depicts the Old Testament age, when God arranged the many details of his grand rescue operation. Those invited were God's Old Testament people, and the servant who came to announce "Everything is now ready" stands for the apostles and evangelists who accompanied our Savior.

But the guests' excuses symbolize Israel's rejection. The Father responded in anger and mercy by gathering a new people to replace the old, Gentiles along with Jews, an Israel not of race but by grace.

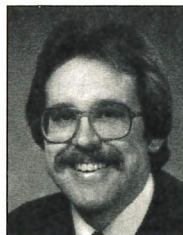
But, as St. Augustine asked, "Are not these the three excuses that hinder all people who decline to come to this supper?" Satan knows he won't lure most of us away from the kingdom by dangling wicked temptations before us. So he keeps us occupied with houses to construct, spouses to unite, property to survey, bargains to transact. Good things, all of them, but they become bad things when they are obstacles to salvation.

**S**t. Paul explained the lesson of this parable: "From now on, those who have wives should live as if they had none; those who mourn, as if they did not; those who are happy, as if they were not; those who buy something, as if it were not theirs to keep; those who use the things of this world, as if not engrossed in them. For this world in its present form is passing away" (1 Corinthians 7:29-31).

This parable contrasts two kinds of listeners. One begs off because he has too much else to do; he insults his host and seals his doom. The other is utterly astounded at his good fortune, and gratefully drinks in every word. In one, grace is sadly despised; in the other, grace is joyfully accepted.

Which kind of listener are you?

*Next:* The cost of being a disciple.



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



## When the lambs are silent

**T**he Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences awarded an Oscar last spring for best picture of the year to *Silence of the Lambs*. The Academy's choice is a distressing testimony to Hollywood's penchant for moral decadence. Whatever the professional merits of the film may be, they cannot possibly outweigh the film's unabashed affront to a civilized society.

No, I have not seen the film. My critique is based on the analysis of *Silence of the Lambs* in Entertainment Research Report as well as other reviews in the secular press.

*Silence of the Lambs* did not win an Oscar because it offers something different from standard Hollywood fare. P.B.S.'s film critic, Michael Medved has observed that "a piece of popular entertainment must present a dark and disturbing view of the world in order to be taken seriously. We have enshrined ugliness as a new standard as we accept the ability to shock as a replacement for the old ability to uplift and inspire. What ails today's films has nothing to do with the prowess or professionalism of the film makers. The true problem is a sickness of the soul."

This year's best picture of the year offers evidence that Medved's assessment is right on. The film begins in a prison where a female FBI agent is interrogating a serial killer who indulged in cannibalism. It's reminiscent of the Jeffrey Dahmer story. Entertainment Research Report's review is too gruesome even to summarize without offending the sensitivities of our readers. Nudity, obscenities, and grotesque aberrational behavior are all liberally interspersed in the film for their shock value.

Big bucks at the box office are what guarantee a steady production of films like *Silence of the Lambs*. Part of the tragedy is the fact that some people who regard themselves as lambs of the Good Shepherd flock to entertainment that they ought to be fleeing. It's their silence that helps to perpetuate trash at the cinema.

Real lambs listen for the voice of the Good Shepherd, and they follow him. He says "Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things."

A look at what the entertainment media have to offer today suggests that this is not time for the silence of the lambs.

Joel C. Gerlach



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



**Winter members**

When most of the country is preparing for the onslaught of winter, we here at Prince of Peace are eagerly awaiting the return of our WELS brothers and sisters from the north. It's like seeing the first robin of spring to see a familiar out-of-state license plate in the parking lot on Sunday morning. . . . Here in the southwest people from the north who come for the warm weather are called "snowbirds" or "winter visitors." But the term "visitor" doesn't really fit these folks. I call them winter members. They are dependable, involved, committed members of our congregation during their stay.

Two years ago we needed to build a new roof on our fellowship hall. The project was completed quickly and easily, thanks to the participation of several winter members. . . . A few weeks ago we had our spring clean-up day. There they were, men and women working together to clean God's house. . . . Our choir almost doubles in size, tenors, sopranos, altos, and basses all singing hosannas.

But it's at our Bible study classes that the winter population explosion is most gratifying. Our winter members bring with them strong faith, well founded in Scripture. They continually enrich our discussions. . . .

Now is the time our brothers and sisters in the faith head north. Each year it's a little harder to say good-bye. My prayers get longer as I ask God to watch over each one as they travel home. . . . But winter's just around the corner. . . . By God's grace our snowbirds will once again fly south and join us.

*Richard DiLorenzo  
Yuma, Arizona*

**Animal rights and wrongs**

Joel Gerlach's article, "Animal rights and wrongs" (2/15) . . . seems to be based on very limited knowledge of the subject. . . . It is certainly never justifiable in the eyes of God to destroy another's property, and there are undoubtedly non-Christian activists who place a pantheistic importance on

animal life, failing to grasp the privilege God gave man in creating him in his own image. . . . It is easy to become so enmeshed in our society's accepted way of life that we become apathetic about or even blind to our own failings in the stewardship of God's creation. We thus stand guilty as charged as hypocrites. This is hardly an asset in the sharing of the gospel. . . . Why not initiate a discussion over these concerns? This would provide an excellent opportunity for sharing the gospel, as well as learning how we as Christians can better care for God's creation.

*Dawn Schierenbeck  
Frankfurt, Germany*

**History**

In the May 1 issue there are two letters that . . . deal with the Afrocentric curriculum at Siloah.

One writer objects to using Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. as a role model because of his lifestyle. Mrs. Sonntag's article nowhere says anything about using King . . . as a role model for the students.

The gentleman from California does not know his American history nor what history is. The rewriting of history has been going on since histories have been recorded. Siloah principal Tim McNeill is correct when he says African and African-American history has been written out of texts used by American students.

*George C. Velguth  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin*

**Challenges**

John Lawrenz wrote that "our church body faces enormous challenges as we seek to pass on to our children what our fathers bequeathed to us" (4/15). The bigger challenge is reaching the children of the lost and offering something their fathers never had.

*Paul Koch  
Lincoln, Nebraska*

**E for evangelical**

I enjoyed Mildred Meyer's wonderful piece, "Eat the Bread? Not on your Life!" (4/15). Thank you for the reminder that we are not the first generation of Christians to realize what the "E" in WELS stands for.

I thank God for the faith and "able tutelage" of people like Mrs. Meyer's mother through which the Lord has preserved to us today the good news of a Savior from sin. I count myself blessed to join in Mrs. Meyer's prayer for all those who have not yet heard the good news, and privileged to join with her in the work of proclaiming it.

Thank you, Mrs. Meyer, for an encouraging glimpse at my gospel roots.

*Peter J. Leyrer  
Andover, Minnesota*

**Christian rock**

I would like to thank Pastor Paul Wendland for his article on Christian rock (4/15). As Christians we have to live in a secular world. . . . Shutting oneself off from the world is not the answer. . . . In some cases Christian rock performers are doing more than some Christians. At least they're out there spreading the word.

*Tammy Layman  
Allendale, Michigan*

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.*

**WELS Connection videotapes**

**July topics:**

- "Jesus Cares" program serves the developmentally disabled
- Gospel outreach in India

**August topics**

- Home mission exploratory in Layton, Utah
- Home mission exploratory in Port Charlotte, Florida

For more information, contact *CCFS, WELS Administration Building, 2929 N Mayfair Road, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.* Cost of a year's subscription is \$48.

**ONE ISSUE**

There is only one issue of Northwestern Lutheran for each month of July and August. The next issue will appear August 1.



## 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 Michigan Lutheran Seminary

Nominations for Michigan Lutheran Seminary were requested in the March 1, 1992, and May 1, 1992, issues of Northwestern Lutheran for two impending vacancies with ability in one or more of the following subject areas: social studies, Latin, English, or Spanish. Prof. Jerome Spaude has also announced his retirement at the end of the 1992-93 school year. His replacement will require certification training during the 1992-93 year. Because the areas of need for this call are the same as for the previous two calls, nominees for the first two calls will be considered for the third call. The board welcomes additional nominations. Certification programs are arranged and supported financially by the school.

Please send nominations and pertinent information by July 15 to Jerold Meier, 397 Auburn, Plymouth MI 48170.

### RESULT OF COLLOQUY

In a colloquy conducted April 22, 1992, Robert Strawn, formerly a pastor in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, was found to be in confessional agreement with the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod.

Mr. Strawn will enroll in summer school and two quarters at our Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin, and will be eligible for a call into the ministerium of our Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod upon the completion of these requirements.

Second Vice President Robert J. Zink  
Professor Alan Siggelkow  
District President Joel Frank

### POSITION OPEN Bethany Lutheran College

Full time dorm manager/soccer coach or faculty position/soccer coach. For more information contact David C. Thompson, Dean of Students, 734 Marsh St, Mankato MN 56001; 507/625-2977.

### YOUTH ART SCHOOL YEAR CALENDAR

Calendars for August '92 to August '93, featuring works by winners of the WELS Art Guild youth art exhibit, are available at \$6.50 each for 1-4 or \$5.75 each for 5 or more. Please also include 75¢ per calendar for postage and handling. Order from WELS Art Guild, 8800 W Bluemound Rd, Milwaukee WI 53226.

### THE CHRISTIAN LIFE CASSETTE TAPE AVAILABLE

A recording of the latest program of Milwaukee's Lutheran Chorale, titled *The Christian Life*, is available through Northwestern Publishing House. The music illustrates the various times and activities of the Christian's life: Baptism, Confirmation, Marriage, Christian Vocation, Worship, Cross and Comfort, Hour of Death, The Body's Sleep, and Resurrection and Life Eternal.

The price of *The Christian Life* cassette tape (stock no. 34-4147) is \$8.95 plus transportation and handling costs. To order call NPH toll-free at 1-800-662-6022; Milwaukee area call 475-6600 (9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday).

### ANNIVERSARIES

**MORTON GROVE, ILLINOIS**—Jerusalem (90th). Oct. 18, 8 and 10:30 a.m. Pot luck dinner following. Church office, 708/965-4750.

**KING OF PRUSSIA, PENNSYLVANIA**—Peace (25th). Oct. 18. 200 East Beidler Road, King of Prussia PA 19406.

### EXPLORATORY SERVICES

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

**TERRE HAUTE, INDIANA**—Shepherd of the Valley. Worship 9:30 a.m. Sunday school and Bible class, 10:30 a.m. Terre Haute YMCA, 951 Dresser Drive. Contact Brad Koontz, 812/234-4850.

### TRAVELING CHURCH WORKERS

Bed and breakfast available on lakefront estate 30 minutes from downtown San Diego, 10 minutes from ocean. Hiking trails, quaint village. \$10 per night for church workers, missionaries, choirs. Write PO Box 19, Rancho Santa Fe CA 92067, or phone 609/756-2152.

### LODGING FOR WELS PASTORS

Free lodging on a farm, available year-round, for one to three nights to any WELS pastor and his family traveling or vacationing in the Reedsburg/Wisconsin Dells area of Wisconsin. Accommodations are in the loft of a log home. Phone 608/986-4692.

### NORTHWESTERN PUBLISHING HOUSE STORE Vacationers welcome

Vacationers are welcome to visit the NPH store, 1250 N. 113th Street (one block north of Watertown Plank Rd. on 113th St.), Milwaukee, Wis.; 414/475-6600.

The summer hours for the NPH store from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend are as follows:  
**Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.;**  
**Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.** The hours for the office remain the same: Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

### ITEMS AVAILABLE

The following are available for the cost of shipping

**Altar cloths and organ**—Contact Sally Littau, 823 First Ave, San Manuel AZ 85631; 602/385-4507.

**Chancel furnishings**—Matching altar, pulpit, lectern/baptismal font, communion rail with padded kneelers. Contact Pastor Robert Raasch, 906/482-2509.

**Organ and pews**—Wurlitzer organ, model 4500; six pews. Contact Sonia Weber, 708/825-3087.

**Sunday school materials**—Story of God's Love teachers' manuals and students' booklets. Grace Lutheran, 1016 Church St, Waupun WI 53963; 414/324-2298.

### ITEMS NEEDED

**Hymnals**—Bethel, Waco, Nebraska. Contact Pastor Marc Frey, 402/643-4131.

### AUDIOVISUAL LENDING LIBRARY

**THEIR VOICE HAS GONE OUT  
INTO ALL THE EARTH** (VHS-122-WMLT)  
1992 19 min. 1/2" VHS color SCA

In order to share the Gospel with people in foreign lands, our missionaries must be able to communicate with them in their own language. This video describes the challenge facing missionaries who must learn a foreign language that may be very different from their own.

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.

### WELS VIDEO/FILM RENTAL

**RAIN OR SHINE**  
1991 28 min. 1/2" VHS color JSCA  
This story emphasizes that beauty is only skin deep, that God loves us "rain or shine", as a handsome suitor loses interest in a girl disfigured by a stroke, only to renew interest when her father offers him an attractive position in his company. The hero of the story is the humble teacher of mentally retarded children who remains loyal to the stricken girl. **Rental: \$5.00**

**O'SHEA**  
1991 15 min. 1/2" VHS color JSCA  
In the Old Testament God tells the prophet Hosea to take back his unfaithful wife, to demonstrate how God takes back his unfaithful people. This video tells a similar story, again to demonstrate how God is still faithful even when we are not. **Rental: \$5.00**

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

### FAMILY CAMPING IN WESTERN MICHIGAN

Camp Lor-Ray has 30 campsites nestled among pine trees on a private lake. It is owned and operated by an association of WELS and ELS congregations. Camping is available for overnight or weeklong stays from Memorial Day through Labor Day (reasonable rates). For information and/or reservations, contact: Milt Karnitz, 5281 Russell Rd, Twin Lakes MI 49457; 616/766-3152 or 616/755-2004.

### CHANGES IN MINISTRY

#### PASTORS:

**Covach, John W.**, from Lamb of God, Bothell, Wash., to St. Paul, Winneconne, Wis.  
**Fricke, James A.**, from St. John, Watertown, Wis., to retirement  
**Hirsch, Philip C.**, from Peace, Boulder, Colo., to Northwestern College, Watertown, Wis.  
**Krieger, Philip E.**, from Calvary, Eaton Rapids, Mich., to St. Paul, Manistee, Mich.  
**Krueger, Robert J.**, from Everlasting Love, Olathe, Kan., to Grace, Pueblo, Colo.  
**Mutterer, Frederick A.**, from St. Michael, Fountain City, Wis., to retirement  
**Pankow, James W.**, from Good Shepherd, Lafayette, Ind., to Abiding Love, Cape Coral, Fla.  
**Russow, William H.**, from Trinity, Clear Lake, S. Dak., to exploratory, Eagle/Yampa Valley, Col.  
**Schwertfeger, Mark L.**, from St. Paul, Cannon Falls, Minn., to Mt. Olive, Shakopee, Minn.  
**Smith, Mark H.**, from Shepherd of the Hills, La Mesa, Calif., to Trinity, Saline, Mich.  
**Varnum, Neil R.**, to St. John, Pelican Lake/Grace, Monico, Wis.  
**Wood, Arden L.**, from Immanuel, Black Creek, Wis., to retirement.  
**Correction: Weimer, Robert L.**, from Christ Our Redeemer, Gillette, Wyo., to retirement.

#### TEACHERS:

**Averbeck, Robert**, from Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., to St. John, St. Paul, Minn.  
**Bodi, Patricia**, from St. Peter, Chilton, Wis., to Trinity, Kaukauna, Wis.  
**Bowe, Keith**, from Shepherd of the Valley, Westminster, Colo., to Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Feliciano, Marilyn**, to Prince of Peace, Yucaipa, Cal.  
**Fluegge, Michele**, to Siloah, Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Haakenson, Dinah**, to Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Haglund, Elke**, to Winnebago Lutheran Academy, Fond du Lac, Wis.  
**Hass, Brenda**, to First, LaCrosse, Wis.  
**Johnson, Victoria**, to Jerusalem, Morton Grove, Ill.  
**Landvatter, Robert**, from St. Matthew, Oconomowoc, Wis., to retirement  
**Lotito, Katherine**, to Good Shepherd, Burton, Mich.  
**Luehring, Fred**, from Good Shepherd, Sioux Falls, S. Dak., to Our Redeemer, Madison, Wis.  
**Maas, Linda**, to Centennial, Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Mellon, Thomas**, from Luther HS, Onalaska, Wis., to Kettle Moraine LHS, Jackson, Wis.  
**Schmoldt, Clifford**, from East Fork Mission, Whiteriver, Ariz., to St. Paul, Brownsville, Wis.  
**Schroeder, Timothy**, from Winnebago Lutheran Academy, Fond du Lac, Wis., to Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.  
**Schultz, Naomi**, from Bethel, Bay City, Mich., to St. John, Manitowoc, Wis.  
**Timm, Rollin**, from Lord and Savior, Crystal Lake, Ill., to Zion, Columbus, Wis.  
**Weber, Carol**, to Our Savior, Longmont, Colo.  
**Westphal, Riley**, from St. Peter, Weyauwega, Wis., to Winnebago Lutheran Academy, Fond du Lac, Wis.

### ADDRESSES

#### PASTORS:

**Berg, John W.**, 7443 22nd Ave, Kenosha WI 53143  
**Clark, David**, 7709 W Comet Ave, Peoria AZ 85345  
**Cox, Raymond G.**, PO Box 2069, Whiteriver AZ 85941  
**Feuerstahler, Michael**, 7030 Bovey Ave, Inver Grove Heights MN 55076  
**Fischer, Victor J.**, 6700 - 30th Ave, Kenosha WI 53142  
**Krueger, Robert J.**, 4361 Blueflax Dr, Pueblo CO 81001  
**Kuske, Herbert**, 707 E Franklin Ave, R3 Box 392, Owensville MO 65066  
**Miller, John A.**, 3431 S 12th St, Milwaukee WI 53215  
**Unke, Timothy A.**, 2508 Deepford Dr, Woodbridge VA 22192



One day recently it appeared on my desk, a fringe benefit of occupying the editor's chair. It was the first report produced by the synod's new statistician, Charles Dennis Skeels, who replaced Pastor David Worgull of Chandler, Ariz., statistician since 1970.

Statistics have followed the Wisconsin Synod through its 143 years. At its first convention in 1850, the number of congregations and pastors was listed: five pastors representing 18 preaching stations. Parish reports indicated that in the past year 90 children were baptized; 55 confirmed; 671 communed; and 15 were buried. Through 143 years the statistics have kept on coming, in ever greater detail.

There are some who hold that statistics are all but irrelevant in the church. There is much to that contention. When, under God, David felled the Philistine giant or Gideon's handful smote the heathen host hip and thigh, numbers didn't count much.

But on the other hand the Bible itself reports that Jesse's boy selected "five smooth stones" from the stream—not four or six—for his lethal sling. And it was God who specified and insisted on 300 men with 300 trumpets and 300 jars as the total for Gideon's army. In the New Testament the Holy Spirit gave the New Testament church its statistical start through Luke who noted that the number of converts on the first Pentecost were "about three thousand." So, it all depends.

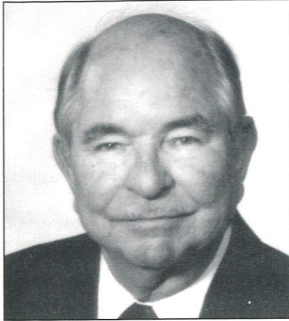
Now back to that statistical report for 1991 on my desk. The report lists the statistics of every one of the 1,222 congregations of the synod. As I scanned a summary of the report, there was one statistic that jumped out: Bible class attendance. Since 1970 our attendance at Bible class has more than doubled, although we have had only a 20 percent increase in communicants.

There is another indicator of growing spiritual strength: the willingness to share our money more generously with Christian causes. During the '80s (the decade of greed!) the total all purpose communicant giving almost doubled, from \$76.8 million to \$146.8 million. Synod mission offerings, however, lagged behind the all purpose giving, increasing by only 38 percent. This lag in mission giving has imposed serious constraints on the synod's budgeting. On an average Sunday approximately 45 percent of our baptized membership attends services. Leading the average is the South Atlantic District with 61 percent of its baptized membership in church on Sunday.

Lutheran church bodies are losing members at the rate of about 150,000 per year. It is estimated that there are 4 million Americans who call themselves Lutheran, but are not on the roster of a Lutheran congregation. In the last decade we report a modest gain of 14,000 baptized members, though during the last three years there has been little increase.

If this glance at the statistical report for 1991 has whetted your appetite, there may be a copy around the church somewhere. All pastors and male teachers receive a complimentary copy. They will be happy to share it with you, I'm sure.

James P. Schaefer




---

*Lutheran church bodies are losing members at the rate of about 150,000 per year.*

---



# It's time to stop watching

Our country is coming apart at the seams

by Paul O. Wendland

**D**id you watch the LA riots on TV? Did you hear what some of those folks were saying as they walked away with their arms full of stolen goodies? Did you see (how could you not) the Rodney King beating? Did you hear how some of the policemen joked about it on their radios afterwards?

Well, it's time to stop watching. We're looking at our country coming apart at the seams on TV—live and in color. The Rodney King beating, the acquittal of those who beat him, the LA riot. Who'd ever have thought it would come to this? Death by videocam! And we sit comfortably on our couches eating chips, watching the world go by.

I am convinced that our biggest problem as American citizens is our lack of feeling connected to what's going on out there. It happens here, it happens there, and we shake our heads and blow it off with some flip remark. “— are to blame,” we say. Fill in the blank: corrupt politicians, greedy bankers, lawyers, gangs, blacks, whites, men, women, Republicans, Democrats. But, fortunately for us, after the blame come the game shows. Wheel of Fortune soothes the sleeve of care unraveled by the evening news.

We may even get mad. Shake our fists and rage at the TV screen. “If only those guys would change, this country would be a better place.” Good thing there are reruns of *Mash* and *Cheers* to settle us back down.

**W**hen I was growing up, we all were taught that America was a melting pot. Now, maybe that was always more ideal than real. Maybe even that ideal had some glaring flaws. It was too simple. It showed a lack of recognition of our individual, cultural, and religious differences. Okay, so it wasn't a perfect idea. But at least it said this much: we belong together, we're in this together, this is our country. Our triumphs belong to us all. So do our problems. When my arm hurts, I don't ignore it. My whole body wants to fix it.

We don't talk about the melting pot anymore. Now it seems we're each of us spinning off into his own little group. And if my little group is okay, who cares

about the rest? The melting pot is broken, the metal is flowing out and we're all congealing into hard and separate little pools.

We've got to know that it was Cain—Mr. Anti-Social himself—who said, “Am I my brother's keeper?” We've got to see that our chief problem as a country is that we're losing our sense of community.

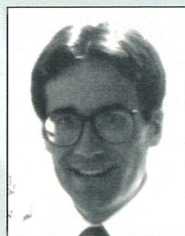
**C**ommunity means we are connected. Community means we care. Community means we listen—really listen—before we speak. Community means we speak our understanding of earthly truths with as much love as we can muster. Community means we don't deal in “corn-pone opinions” as Mark Twain said, or shout out bumper-sticker solutions at each other.

And community means commitment to do something, something we can do. We can't make human society perfect. We can't solve every problem. But we can grab a broom and sweep up broken glass. We can pull a voting lever. We can speak out and reject a racist remark. We can volunteer for community service. We can pay our taxes with a little more joy and a little less grouching. We can listen to how our neighbors on the other side of town feel. We can do what we can to help our brother in need as members of one and the same society.

Isn't that a Christian thought, too? Jeremiah told the Israelites who were living in exile in Babylon, “Seek the peace and prosperity of the city to which I have carried you. . . . Pray to the Lord for it, because if it prospers, you too will prosper” (Jeremiah 29:7). Of course Christians are always foreigners, and of course we long for the perfect peace we'll see only in heaven.

Meantime, though, can't we show a little concern for our temporary country? Pray. And after praying, work. Work to patch up this shantytown we call home for now.

As citizens, it is our duty. As Christians, our joy.



*Paul Wendland is pastor of Prince of Peace, Salt Lake City, Utah.*