

Born in the town
of David p.3



A Christmas far
from home p.8

The
carolers p.10

Cookies for
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NORTHWESTERN

December 1993

LUTHERAN



THE
APACHE
MISSION

p.6

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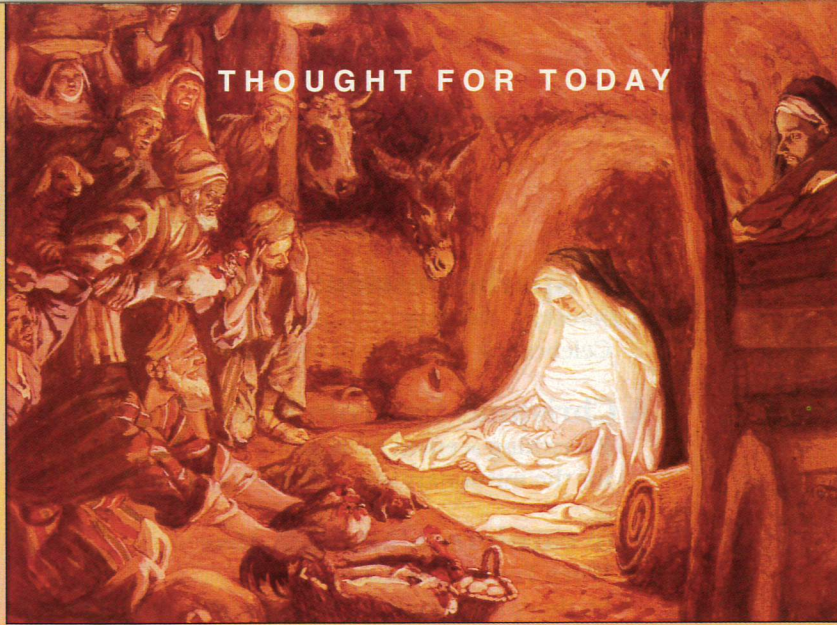
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Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you: he is Christ, the Lord (Luke 2:11).

Born in the town of David

by Richard D. Balge

How did it come about that Jesus was born in Bethlehem, when his mother lived in Nazareth and the capital city of his people was Jerusalem? In God's providence and according to God's plan it came about because a heathen tyrant chose to place all the subjects of his empire on the tax rolls. It came about because the Jewish people were permitted to register in their traditional way, each person going to the city of his ancestors. It came about because Joseph belonged to the house and line of David and he took Mary along to David's town.

Born in the least likely place

Caesar Augustus would not have willingly served the God of the Jews by getting the tax registration program underway. God used Caesar's Roman pride and ambitions to accomplish his own saving purpose. The idea of a census was repugnant to the Jews, especially a census carried out by the command of a Gentile ruler. The facts of life dictated, however, that they must obey and they did. It was not a convenient time for the carpenter and his pregnant wife to be traveling, but to Bethlehem they went.

While all were busy with their own concerns, while the town was full of people who had come to register, while the innkeeper enjoyed boom times, while shepherds guarded their flocks in the fields, God was alive and awake and aware. In a most unlikely town and in the least likely place in that town, a Savior, Christ, the Lord was born.

Born to defeat death

Savior, Christ, Lord—how easily those titles slip off

our tongues, how glib we can be with names that are familiar. Each word, though, is filled with meaning.

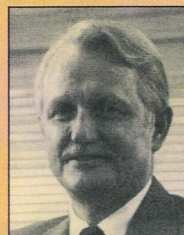
A Savior! God has sent a child to rescue the human race from the consequences of sin. Can a frail baby grow up to defeat death?

He can, because he is the Christ. He is the Messiah, the Lord's anointed, anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power. He will sacrifice himself for us sinners and ascend to heaven to intercede for us—our priest. He will establish the preaching of forgiveness by his own life, death, and resurrection—our prophet. He will rule in hearts and lives with his truth and grace—our king.

Born because God is in charge

"He will do it," said the prophets, the psalmist, the angel who came to Mary. "He has done it," say the Christmas angel, the apostles, the Christmas gospel. He could and he did because he is the Lord. We will never understand how this could be, but there is no mistaking who this child is: "the Lord." God has given us himself as a present, to be our salvation.

Today, when "liberated" peoples demonstrate that they are still in bondage to age-old hatreds, when people know more about killing than about living, when there is so much brilliance without wisdom and so much power without conscience, God is in charge. He has his purpose and it is gracious and, through us or in spite of us, he carries it out. Glory to God in the highest.



Richard Balge is dean of students and teaches church history and homiletics at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin.

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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FEATURES

- The Apache mission: Alive and well after 100 years** *by Dorothy J. Sonntag* 6
Celebrating a century of world missions.
- A Christmas far from home** *by Paul O. Wendland* 8
Everything seemed to be going wrong for the missionary wife so far from home.
- The carolers** *by Mildred O. Meyer* 10
When Fred heard the carolers, he thought the angels had come to take him home.
- YOUR NEW HYMNAL
Hymns for the heart *by Bruce R. Backer* 12
New hymns capture our thoughts and renew our spirits.
- THE BIBLE
General letters *by Roland Cap Ehlke* 14
Treasures of faith, truth, and love.
- CROSS-CULTURAL MINISTRY
Making people more like Christ—not more like us *by David W. Moore* 16
We must learn to understand people with “odd” customs and a different view of life.
- Cookies for the king** *by Frederick A. Kogler* 18
When Sar said, “Pastor, we don’t have Christmas,” I added Christmas cookies to my lesson plan.
- Out of the ashes** *by Thomas B. Franzmann* 19
WELS contributions help rebuild the Alpha Center.
- Wise Men from the West** *by Vernon Gerlach* 36
They never got to Bethlehem.
- 1993 Index** Insert

NEWS

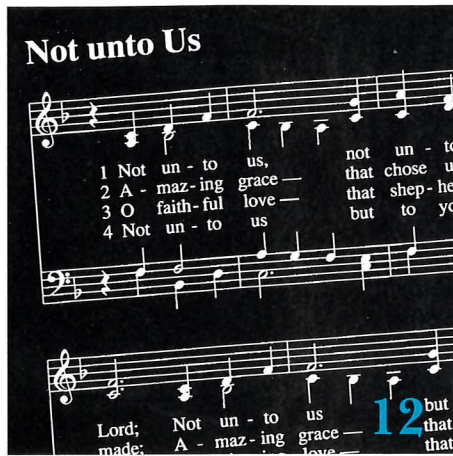
- Around the WELS** 20
- Soldier killed in Somalia didn’t fear death, pastor says
 - President says school merger resolutions are constitutional
 - Boards appointed for new schools
 - A second generation in Africa
 - OWLS volunteers serve the synod
 - Graduates receive degrees
 - Cal Thomas is keynote speaker at WELS Lutherans for Life convention
- Around the world** 27



The Apache centennial.



A cross-cultural congregation.



Hymns for the heart.

DEPARTMENTS

THOUGHT FOR TODAY
Born in the town of David by Richard D. Balge3
 NOTICES28
 FROM THE PRESIDENT
A live Christmas tree by Karl R. Gurgel29
 THE ATONEMENT
The atonement's complete satisfaction by Fredric E. Piepenbrink30
 EDITORIAL COMMENT
He became fully human by Victor H. Prange31
 YOUR QUESTION, PLEASE by John F. Brug32
 READERS FORUM33
 FROM THIS CORNER by the editor34

With this issue, James P. Schaefer's name appears on the masthead as the editor of *Northwestern Lutheran* for the last time. His goal, when he became editor in 1982, was to make it a magazine that lay people would want to read. To that end, he introduced changes in layout, design, style, and content. More than any other editor in the magazine's 79-year history, he moved *Northwestern Lutheran* from a "semi-theological" journal for pastors to a magazine for the laity. We shall miss him. Perhaps you will too.

On the cover are April Victor and Tiffany Manuel of Peridot, Arizona. They were among the group of children who delighted members and visitors with their songs during the Apache centennial celebration in October. See page 6 to learn more about past and future mission work on the White Mountain Apache Indian reservation.

You'll find several Christmas selections in this issue. We hope they'll be a welcome respite from the glitz and glitter that sometimes overwhelm us during the holidays. And from all of us at NL, a blessed Christmas.

Dorothy Sonntag

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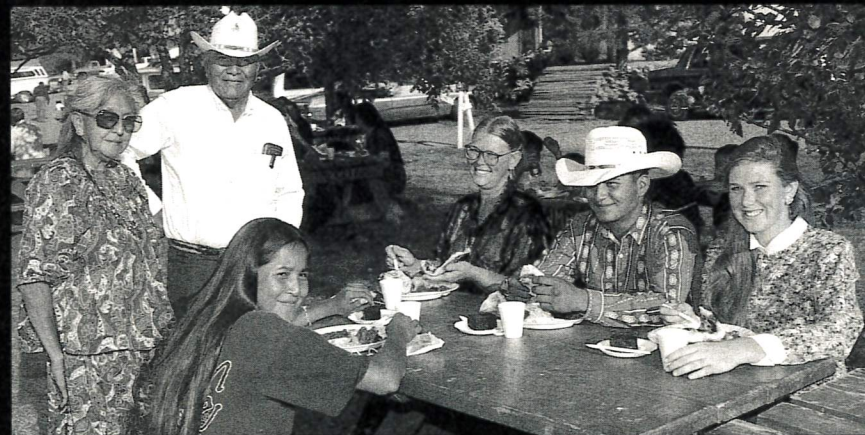
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The East Fork Lutheran High School choir sang at the Apache centennial service.



Priscilla Goseyun's students entertained after the service at Peridot.



A barbecue followed the service at East Fork.



Japanese visitors made friends with Apache children.

THE APACHE MISSION

Alive and well after 100 years

by Dorothy J. Sonntag

PHOTOS BY KAYE ECKERT AND EUGENE SCHUIZ

The large number of visitors made it evident—WELS members care about mission work. As many visitors as members were present for a weekend of worship and fellowship October 2-3 commemorating 100 years of ministry on the White Mountain Apache Indian reservation in Arizona. An estimated 500 people were present on Saturday at Peridot and about 700 on Sunday at East Fork.

The celebration was also a reunion. Smiles, handshakes, and hugs were the order of the day, as return-

ing missionaries greeted former parishioners, students, and co-workers. The oldest of those veterans of ministry was Erna Albrecht Sprengeler. Now living in LaCrosse, Wis., she spent 32 years on the reservation as a teacher and pastor's wife. She had been hospitalized a short time earlier, but she was determined to come. "I prayed, and they prayed for me in church," she said, "and here I am."

Erna Bartsch Stock, who taught on the reservation from 1942 to 1950, came from Mankato, Minn. She

was glad she made the trip. "I got enough hugs today to last a lifetime," she said.

Visitors came from across the country—and even across the Pacific. Holding the record for distance traveled was a group of Japanese women from the Lutheran Evangelical Christian Church of Japan. Although they spoke little English, the women taught a group of Apache children the art of origami. Smiles and gestures overcame language barriers as Japanese and Apache Christians shared a bond of friendship.

A world mission in America

The Apache mission is under the auspices of the synod's world mission board. When the synod began work among the Apaches, Arizona was not yet a state. The missionaries who first made their way to the White Mountains in 1893 encountered language, customs, and a land vastly different from most of America.

Today the reservation is a blend of western American and Apache customs. At the centennial celebration, men with Stetson hats and cowboy boots sat next to women wearing brightly colored Apache camp dresses. The liturgy and hymns were from the new WELS hymnal—except for the hymn the Apache choir sang in their native language. Tribal members who addressed the assembly spoke in both English and Apache.

In the time-honored Lutheran tradition, a church supper followed the services "That's a custom we made sure we taught them," joked a missionary. But instead of jello salad and casseroles, the menu was barbecued beef—from steers the Apaches slaughtered themselves—and fry bread cooked outside over a fire. Diners avoided the Arizona sun by eating in a thatched-roofed, open framework called a squaw cooler.

A gift for President Karl Gurgel, who preached at the Sunday afternoon service, also reflected Apache ways. Raymond Endfield of Whiteriver presented Gurgel with a burden basket, which Apaches used the way others use tote bags. "We want you to have this," Endfield explained, "to lighten your load."

A century of mission work

The event also marked the centennial of the synod's world mission endeavors. "WELS world mission work started here," said Pastor William Meier, chairman of the Board for World Missions. "From here it spread to Africa, to Japan, and throughout the world."

Meier said the synod's experience among the Apaches has helped the board make decisions about other world missions. "God put us in Apacheland to

learn what to do and what not to do," he said. "What we learned there we've used in all our world missions." Meier knows firsthand about work among the Apaches. He grew up in East Fork, where his father was a teacher.

The Apaches are interested in missions, too. Half of the offering received at the centennial was designated to be used for mission work among other native Americans.

The future in Apacheland

During the weekend, visitors to East Fork toured the mission compound, which includes the building that formerly housed East Fork Lutheran Nursery. For 71 years Apache children were cared for there.

The nursery, closed only months earlier, still held reminders of the little ones who stayed there. The smell of baby powder hovered in a room where a pink and blue toy lay forgotten on a shelf. A child-sized chair sat in the corner of an otherwise vacant room. The nursery was quiet. Except for one room now serving as a classroom, the building is unused.

Duane Tomhave, administrator for the world mission board, hopes the building won't remain empty. He wants to establish a Bible institute there. "We need to get more Apaches involved in ministry," he said. "The first step is to begin with lay ministry." Classes would be held in the nursery where Apache children used to play. Besides training for ministry, the institute could offer seminars in marriage enrichment, financial planning, and other classes that would help with daily Christian living.

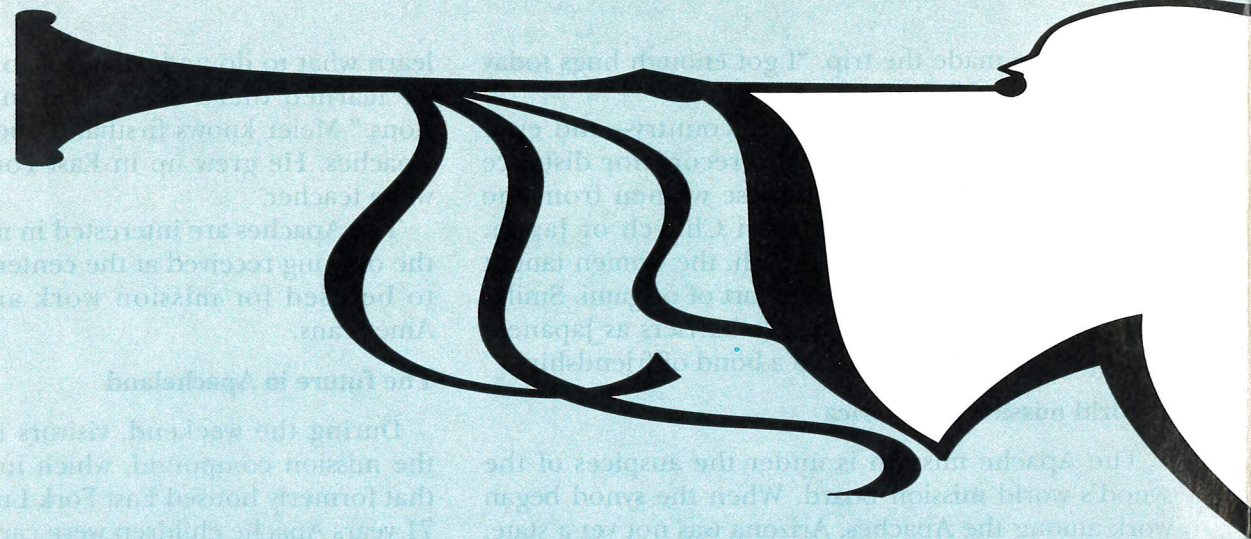
Tomhave hopes a lay ministry program will lead to more Apaches in full-time ministry on the reservation. One Apache, Joseph Henry, is presently taking instruction to become a lay leader. Another graduated from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary but is no longer a pastor. Although several have become Lutheran teachers, the only Apache presently teaching on the reservation is Priscilla Goseyun.

She was one of the Apaches who spoke after the service at Peridot. "We see all races here, all colors," she told the visitors whose love for mission work had brought them to the reservation. "We thank you for

coming to help us celebrate our Apache Lutheran mission. When you go back, tell the people the Apache mission is alive and well. Pray for us, and we will pray for you."



Dorothy Sonntag is assistant editor of Northwestern Lutheran.



A Christmas

by Paul O. Wendland

She could just cry. In fact, she had. She was so frustrated. Nothing had turned out right. Nothing had gone as she had hoped. It wasn't as if she was a stranger to the fact that sometimes some things go wrong. "Into every life a little rain must fall," she used to say to the kids. But everything? All the time? At least that's the way it seemed this Christmas, here in this country so far away from home.

It had started with the Zimtsterne, those cinnamon star cookies she always made for Christmas. She had managed to find cinnamon, in a little Indian shop on Cairo road. But do you think she could find the almonds for the recipe? If she had a nickel for all the blank stares she received after asking store clerks for them, she would have had enough money to corner the world market on those wretched nuts!

Next on the list of disasters was the shipment of their household goods. She had hoped to have them arrive by Christmas time. It seemed a modest hope. After all, they had sent them off from the United States back in August. Fat chance! After letters and frantic telegrams to Dar es Salaam, no one seemed to know the whereabouts (or even wish to acknowledge the existence) of those crated boxes containing all their earthly possessions. "And if my husband says one

more time, 'A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions . . .'" she thought, and found herself glaring at the cast-off, ancient fry pan she had been using for the last three months.

And who could forget the debacle of the manger scenes? She certainly couldn't. She had encouraged the women on the mission compound to make little clay dolls of Mary and Joseph "and the Babe lying in a manger." Everything seemed to be going well. Little clay figures could be seen everywhere, drying in the fierce African sunlight of December. Yes, all went well until the husbands got up in arms, accusing their wives of practicing witchcraft. Scratch the manger scenes.

All these things she had swallowed. Taken in stride, even. A child of the depression, she was used to adver-

*“Unto you is born a Savior,”
the song of the angels at last
found its echo in her heart.*

far from home

sity. She had managed to bear the dirt, the flies, the shortages, the bugs, the heat, the humidity—all this with nary so much as the whisper of a murmur, or the tiniest chirp of complaint.

But the straw that broke the camel's back came when her husband, proud of his ruthless Germanic efficiency, entered the house and triumphantly announced that he had taken down the Christmas tree, which she and the women had set up over at church. They had lavished many hours on that tree, decorating it with handmade paper-and-ribbon ornaments. It had looked lovely on Christmas Eve. Lovelier still Christmas Day. The day after—THE DAY AFTER, mind you—he came waltzing in and said, “Oh, by the way, I took down the tree,” looking for all the world as if he expected to be patted on the head for a job well done.

It was galling: her beautiful tree, the one thing that had gone right this Christmas. Up one day and the next unceremoniously tossed into the garbage pit, without so much as a by-your-leave! To top it off, he didn't have the least notion why she was so furious.

Anger spent for a moment, she glanced idly at the Christmas cards spilling over the basket reserved for them on the dining room table. One caught her eye. She hadn't noticed it before.

And she did so this time only because its dull colors stood out in sharp contrast to the bright plumage of the rest. It appeared almost crude by comparison. The picture showed a stable, looking dark and cold, lit only by a smoking oil lamp. The scene it illuminated seemed shabby: straw strewn haphazardly about on a bare dirt floor. Joseph looked weary beyond words. And Mary (what an unusual picture of her!) appeared pale and tired—dark circles under her eyes and flecks of straw stuck in her hair.

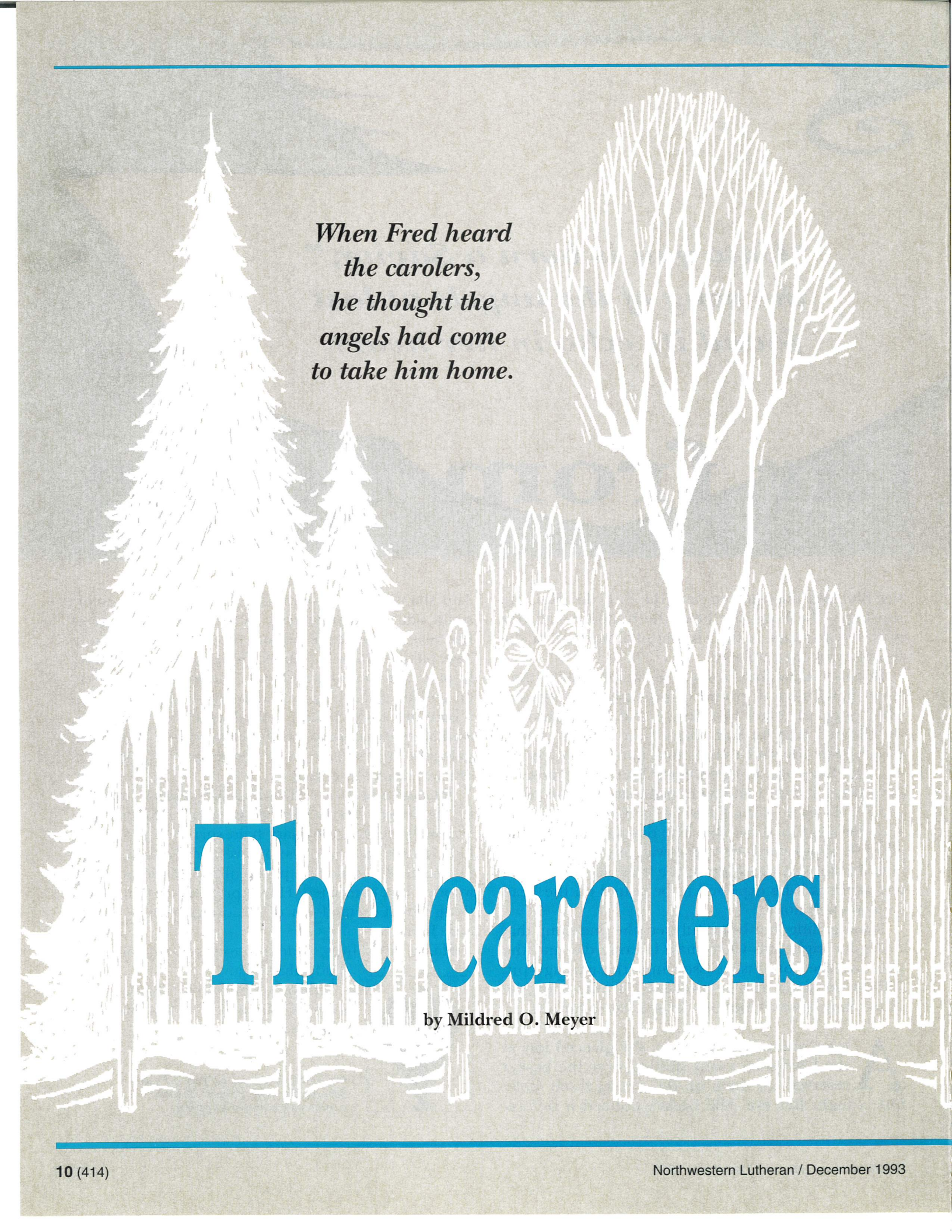
Yet her expression! How had the painter captured it? He showed her looking down into a plain wooden box without the customary halo surrounding it. The look on her face was one of awe and wide-eyed wonder, as if she had only just realized what the plain wooden box contained. Her expression was the single thing which seemed out of the ordinary in that drab little barn.

Hard, bitter lives, suddenly touched with wonder, made alive by joy.

“Unto you is born a Savior,” the song of the angels at last found its echo in her heart.



Paul Wendland is pastor of Prince of Peace, Salt Lake City, Utah. He spent his youth in Africa with his missionary parents.



*When Fred heard
the carolers,
he thought the
angels had come
to take him home.*

The carolers

by Mildred O. Meyer

The crackling of the timbers indicated the mercury in the outdoor thermometer had fallen below zero. When cold weather arrived, the church choir rehearsed in the living room of our home. Mother, the choir director, made the arrangements. Being a middle sibling in our family of eight children, I was considered too young to mingle with the group in the living room.

Often I would creep out of bed, perch on the top-most step of the open stairway, and view the scene below. Fred, our milkman and lead tenor, would give me a secret sign. Satisfied, I was happy to return to the warmth of my bed.

I loved Fred. The pockets of his white milkman's coat served as a cache for many a treat—licorice candy, bloodberry gum, and other treasures to delight a child.

Mother also had a special place in her heart for Fred. Many small choirs have difficulty finding tenors. Here Fred shone. He had a beautiful voice, rich timbre and tone. Above all, Fred was just as punctual about rehearsal attendance as he was about delivering milk.

“Isn't there something we can do for Fred?”

A few weeks before Christmas, Fred became very ill. Rumor said he would not live to see the new year. Hearing this I crept to our attic, hugged the chimney for warmth, and let the tears no one should see roll down my face.

Mother found me there. She placed her arms around me and let me cry.

“Isn't there something we can do for Fred?” I sobbed.

“I've been thinking of having the choir carol for him Christmas Eve. You have a nice voice. You could sing along, too.”

When Mother broached the subject to the choir, there were varied reactions.

“On Christmas Eve?”

“Well, some other night. Fred has been a valuable member of this group for many years,” pleaded Mother. There were too many conflicts: visiting relatives, parties, dinners.

“If we're going to sing, it's got to be nice”

Mother wasn't discouraged for long. She rallied her family around her. “We will carol for Fred.”

Despite all the pre-Christmas activity, Mother found

time to begin. “Now if we are going to sing for Fred, it's got to be nice, really nice.”

Every evening after supper we gathered around the piano and sang. It was too much for the little ones to learn all the words. They just hummed. Annie, our hired girl, claimed she couldn't carry a tune, but joined us. Father, who had never sung with any choir, tackled the melody, lower than the rest, very much like the basses in our church choir.

It sounded pretty miserable at first. We kept on practicing. Improvement followed.

“Fred thought it was the angels”

On Christmas Eve we attended the service in church. Then we walked to Fred's house. The night was cold. The two younger children rode in boxes nailed to two little sleds. Swathed in blankets and scarves, the wee riders were almost unrecognizable.

Arriving at Fred's house, Mother grouped us according to voice. She hummed a tone. Mother had one final instruction: “Sing softly. We don't want to startle Fred.”

And so we sang “From Heaven Above to Earth I Come,” “Come Hither, Ye Children,” and finally, “Silent Night.”

The porch door opened. Fred's wife appeared with a shawl draped about her shoulders. While Annie began herding us children homeward, Father and Mother exchanged a few words with Fred's wife.

“What did she say?” we chorused when our parents joined us.

“She said at first Fred thought it was the angels come to take him home.”

Shortly after the New Year the angels did take Fred's soul home. When I heard Fred had died, I again fled to the attic, hugging the chimney for warmth while tears streamed down my cheeks. Finding me there, Mother knelt down and drew me close to her.

After the sobbing somewhat subsided, she explained that Fred would never have any pain again,

would be forever happy, and best of all, “My child, if you keep your faith in Christ, you, too, will go to heaven where you can join Fred in singing praises to our Lord Jesus.” It was a most comforting thought.



Mildred Meyer is a member of St. John, Jefferson, Wisconsin.

In Adam We Have All Been One

396

1 In Ad - am we have all been one. One huge re - bel - lious man;
 2 We
 3 But
 4 O

Not unto Us

392

1 Not un - to us, not un - to us be glo - ry,
 the worlds were
 through faith - less
 e be glo - ry,
 our name be praise;
 ur Son to save;
 our truth;

HYMNS OF THE LITURGY

265

Refrain

to - ry for our God,
 T

This Is the Feast of Victory
Dignus est Agnus

END TIME

218

Then the Glory

Then the glo - ry Then the rest Then the Sab - bath peace un - bro - ken
 Al be
 eous -
 from

Hymns for the heart

by Bruce R. Backer

Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal, the synod's new hymnal, invites us to put our hearts into the music with which we worship. Besides old favorites, some which are well known but were not in *The Lutheran Hymnal*, are new hymns whose powerful images capture our thoughts, renew our spirits, and remind us we worship a loving, almighty God.

We are in need

Yes, my friend. You are in desperate need. That is why you have come to the Lord's house. You are a rebel. You have inherited your rebellious nature from Adam and Eve. And you cannot get rid of this terminal illness, nor can I. Every day I say no to God. What an awful person I am! Who will deliver me from this destructive life? Poet Martin Franzmann helps us understand the cosmic rebellion of which we are a part in "In Adam We Have All Been One" (CW 396):

In Adam we have all been one,
One huge rebellious man;
We all have fled that evening voice
That sought us as we ran.
We fled our God, and losing him,
We lost our brother too.
Each singly sought and claimed his own.
Each man his brother slew."

However, the voice of God in the garden, a voice of grace and love, has come to our rescue and continues to speak to us:

But your strong love, it sought us still
And sent your only Son
That we might hear his shepherd-voice
And, hearing him, be one.
O Savior, when we loved you not,
You loved and saved us all;
O great good Shepherd of mankind,
Oh, hear us when we call. ©*

He saved us

Yes, it is true. God sent his only Son to save us all from our destructive life. Poet Kurt Eggert glories in the grace of God in a hymn he is now singing in the presence of God: "Not unto Us" (CW 392).

With sure strokes of his pen, but also with a compelling tenderness that accompanied him every day, Eggert reminds us of our election in eternity, proclaims to us our justification through Christ, comforts us with God's unyielding love that would not let us turn from him, and points us to the path he has trod and the home where he has gone.

Not unto us, not unto us be glory, Lord.
Not unto us but to your name be praise.
Not unto us but to your name all honor be giv'n
For matchless mercy, forgiveness, and grace.

Amazing grace—
that chose us e'er the worlds were made;

Amazing grace—that sent your Son to save;
Amazing grace—that robed us in your righteousness
And taught our lips to sing glory and praise.

Not unto us but to your name be glory, Lord,
For grace so rich, so wide, so high, so free.
Abide with us till trav'ling days are over and done,
And pilgrim feet lead us home, Lord, to you. ©**

So let's shout for joy!

Yes, let's come to the Lord's house and sing alleluia in a stream of unending praise to our gracious God. Here he banquets us with the precious gospel of Jesus' victory over sin, Satan, death, and hell. "This Is the Feast of Victory" (CW 265) helps the community of believers all over this planet sing praise to God:

This is the feast of victory for our God,
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!
Worthy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain,
Whose blood set us free to be people of God.
Sing with all the people of God,
And join in the hymn of all creation.
Blessing, honor, glory, and might
Be to God and the Lamb forever. Amen. ©***

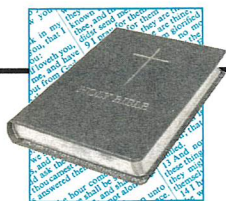
We'll share the ultimate adventure

Our gracious God helps us get a sharp focus on the home to which we are traveling. The Scriptures reveal to us that we will meet our Lord in the air and be with him forever. Hymns we have sung for generations point us beyond the skies, where we ourselves would rise. Poet Jaroslav Vajda has given us another hymn, "Then the Glory" (CW 218), to refresh our wearied spirit as we press on to meet the Father and the Lamb in majesty:

Then the glory, then the rest
Then the Sabbath peace unbroken
Then the garden, then the throne
Then the crystal river flowing
Then the splendor, then the life
Then the new creation singing
Then the marriage, then the love
Then the feast of joy unending
Then the knowing, then the light
Then the ultimate adventure
Then the Spirit's harvest gathered
Then the Lamb in majesty
Then the Father's Amen.
Then, then, then. ©****



Bruce Backer teaches music
at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota.
He served on the synod's Joint Hymnal Committee.



General letters

Treasuries of faith, truth, and love

by Roland Cap Ehlke

While the apostle Paul directed his letters to congregations or to individual Christians, most of the other New Testament letters do not designate specific places or people. They are known as the general letters or catholic epistles, that is, intended for the church at large. Although several different men authored these books, the general letters harmoniously direct us to Jesus.

Anyone who searches these letters will find treasures of faith, truth, love, and much, much more.

Encouraged in faith and works

Hebrews is thought by some to have been written by the apostle Paul. Yet, unlike Paul's other letters, this book does not name him as author. Barnabas and Apollos are more likely candidates for authorship. Long ago the early church writer Origen summed up the perennial speculation, "Only God truly knows who wrote the epistle to the Hebrews."

The book is directed to Jewish Christians and shows Christ as the fulfillment of the Old Testament. Some have designated Hebrews as "the better epistle," because it shows that Jesus is superior to the Old Testament system of sacrifices. We see Christ, the "great high priest," portrayed as the perfect Savior from sin. One of the book's most dramatic sections is chapter 11, which offers many stirring examples from the past to strengthen us in our faith.

James originally was also directed to Jewish believers, "to the twelve tribes scattered among the nations" (1:1). Four persons in the New Testament bore the name James. The one who wrote this epistle was most likely Jesus' brother, who became a prominent leader in the Jerusalem church.

This has been called the epistle of good works. Because of its emphasis on works, Martin Luther spoke of it as a "strawy writing." However, far from contradicting the truth that we are saved by faith without the deeds of the law, James shows that a living faith produces good works. "Faith by itself, if not accompanied by action, is dead. . . . Show me your faith without deeds, and I will show you my faith by what I do" (2:14-26). In emphasizing proper conduct and speech, James is reminiscent of Old Testament

wisdom literature.

1 Peter encourages Christians who are facing persecutions. The key term in this letter is "living hope." Christians are reminded that "though now for a little while you may have had to suffer grief in all kinds of trials . . . you are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy, for you are receiving the goal of your faith, the salvation of your souls" (1:6-9).

In addition to such encouragement, Peter offers godly advice for married couples: "Wives, . . . be submissive to your husbands. . . . Husbands, . . . be considerate to your wives" (3:1-7). This epistle also includes some famous words on witnessing: "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have" (3:15).

2 Peter further encourages Christians. Besides discussing persecutions and troubles from *without*, this book describes the believer's struggle against temptations from *within*. The defense against a false sense of security? "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (3:18). About half the epistle deals with the certainty of Christ's return. We are warned of scoffers who will come "in the last days" and say, "Where is this 'coming' he promised?" (3:3,4).

Peter's second letter contains an interesting note on the early Christians' awareness of the inspiration of the New Testament, even as it was in the process of being written. Peter refers to Paul's letters as part of the "Scriptures," written "with the wisdom God gave him" (3:15,16).

Abiding in love and truth

While Peter was foremost among Jesus' twelve disciples and one of the great pillars of the early church, his two letters comprise only a small portion of the Bible. The two most prolific New Testament writers were Paul and Luke. The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write thirteen epistles, which comprise one-fourth of the entire New Testament; Luke's two works—the Gospel and Acts—make up slightly more than that. The next most productive writer was John. Along with his Gospel, John wrote the book of Revelation and three letters.

1 John is best known for its message of love: "This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. . . . God is love . . ." (4:7-21).

The book also tackles the ancient heresy of gnosticism, which wrongly taught that spirit is good and matter is evil. Some gnostics said Jesus only *seemed* to have a human body; others said the divine Christ joined the man Jesus at his baptism and left him before he died. Both denied the biblical truth that Jesus is true man and true God. John's opening verse describes Jesus as the God-man, whom the disciples heard, saw, and touched. Later John refutes all false distinctions between the divine Christ and the human Jesus: "Who is the liar? It is the man who denies that Jesus is the Christ. Such a man is the antichrist" (2:22).

2 John—like the next two general letters—is only one chapter long. John refers to himself as "the elder" and addresses "the chosen lady." Perhaps this was a woman in Asia Minor, where John worked, or maybe a figurative reference to some local congregation.

The epistle warns against compromising with doctrinal error. In John's day, as now, "many deceivers . . . have gone out into the world." And John warned Christians then, as now, "If anyone comes to you and does not bring this teaching [of Christ], do not take him into your house or welcome him."

3 John is addressed to a man named Gaius, perhaps a pastor or church leader. John speaks against a certain Diotrephes, "who loves to be first," and who was pushing his weight around in the congregation, gossiping about John, and refusing to "welcome the brothers."



JAMES J. TISSOT

The apostle John penned the famous words, "God is love."

Clearly, John's last two letters point to ongoing congregational problems. The second epistle warns against becoming too *inclusive* and accepting false teachings and teachers. The third letter cautions against becoming cliquish and *exclusive*, driving away even those who are brothers in the faith.

Jude was another brother of Jesus. Mark 6:3 mentions Jude (there called Judas) along with the Lord's other brothers, including James. Apparently for a time during Jesus' ministry, his own brothers did not believe in him (John 7:5). When he wrote his letter, Jude had become a staunch defender of the faith.

Jude's letter closely parallels 2 Peter 2, as it warns against false teaching. (The Bible's constant treatment of this topic underscores its importance.)

Jude presents a powerful encouragement to Christians of all ages: "Dear friends, . . . [I] urge you to contend for the faith that was once for all entrusted to the saints." He closes his brief book with a wonderful doxology, praising the great Savior "who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence."

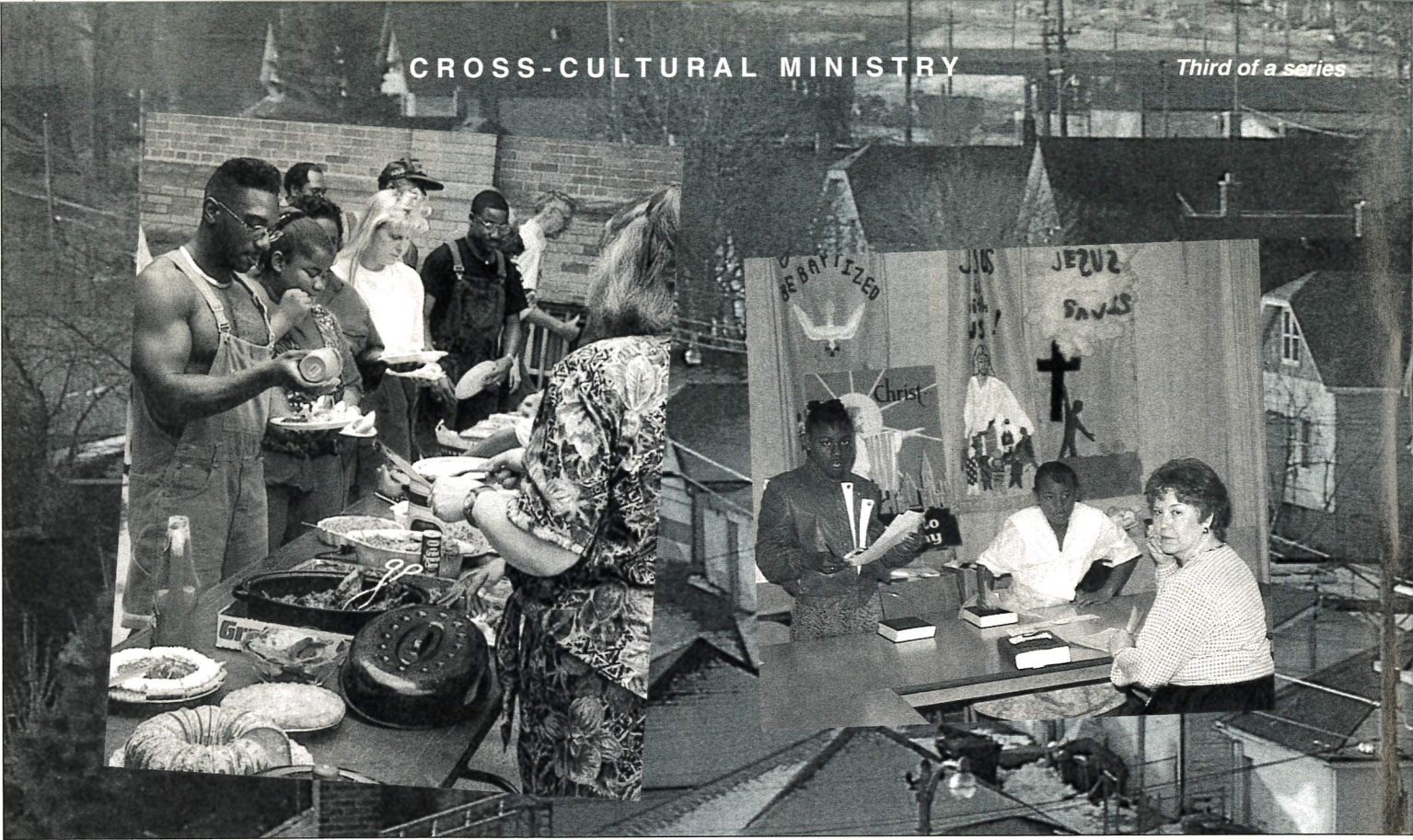
Scripture's general letters are truly gifts from God! We'll want to mine their priceless treasures.

(More information is available in *The People's Bible commentary series*, published by Northwestern Publishing House.

The general letter available at this time is Hebrews. This book may be ordered by calling toll-free 1-800-662-6022; in the Milwaukee area call 414/475-6600.)



Roland Cap Ehlke is a member of St. Matthew, Port Washington, Wisconsin.



Making people more like

by David W. Moore

Several years ago, I met an army helicopter pilot from Georgia. During our conversation, he drawled, "Y'all must be from Wescons'n." When I asked how he knew, he said "Y'all talk funny." I resisted the urge to comment on his speech.

Whether we realize it or not, every day we say and do things that tell people where we grew up and whom we grew up with. For example, when you get cold do you get goose bumps or chill bumps? When you're thirsty, do you drink from a bubbler or a drinking fountain? Do you keep maps in the car pocket or the glove compartment of your car? When you're hungry, do you crave bratwurst, chitlins and grits, or refried beans?

When you agree with the preacher's message do you say "Amen!" out loud, or nod silently to yourself? Do you prefer praying silently in private, or out loud, holding hands in a circle? How do you feel about people who answer these questions differently than you?

Culture binds us together

You are who you are today because of what you learned from your parents and peers. Think back to your school days. You learned to talk, dress, and act so you would fit in. You learned that to be different was

to invite ridicule from other children. You learned from your community what was and was not acceptable behavior.

Why is one way of doing things better than another? Every culture will come to its own conclusions. The answers bind people together by giving them a sense of identity, belonging, and continuity.

Culture can keep us apart

We live in a culturally diverse nation. Experts predict that by the year 2050, people of northern European descent—most WELS members—will become the minority in this country. As these trends continue, God will continue to lead people with "funny" names, "odd" customs, and a different view of life into our neighborhoods. As we seek to carry out our Lord's commission to make disciples, we must learn to understand each other.

As our congregations become integrated, will people from different cultures, with different worship experiences and expectations, be able to worship together? Any member of an integrated congregation will say that one of the most difficult aspects is developing a partnership that respects each other's culture.



As the neighborhood integrated, Zebaoth, Milwaukee, became a cross-cultural congregation.

Christ—not more like us

Teaching culture is not preaching the gospel

We are all products of our culture. As we communicate the love of Christ, we don't want to obscure the message by injecting our own culturally derived opinions about what is best and beautiful and acceptable. We need to distinguish between our opinions and God's will. That difference needs to be clear in our own minds, and it needs to be clearly communicated to others.

We stress this point lest we make the same kind of mistakes made in the past. The pages of church history show us that some missionaries to Hawaii or Africa or India or even to native Americans were as eager to teach Western culture as they were the gospel of Jesus Christ. They assumed that Western opinions (such as what kind of shoes to wear, or what kind of language to speak, or what kind of music to sing) were superior. Our goal is not to make people more like us, but to be more like Christ.

Other ways of doing things

Early in my ministry I attended a funeral for the father of a member of our congregation. I was the only white person in the funeral home. The congregation and soloists sang rousing but unfamiliar songs. The

preaching was accompanied by riffs on a keyboard and a chorus of "amens!" and "tell it, preacher!"

I sat there feeling awkward and a bit embarrassed. A thought struck me: Is this how visitors to our congregation feel? Does the silence make them feel uncomfortable? Are they embarrassed trying to follow an unfamiliar liturgy?

Interesting things begin to happen when you take the time to understand a different culture. You begin to realize that you don't have all the answers to all the questions. You find there are other ways of doing things. You also come to appreciate even more the good things of your own culture.

Conflict over cultural differences is not new. Jews and Gentiles struggled with it. At times it threatened to divide the early Christian church. Through the power of God, with love, patience, and understanding, they were able to work through their differences. Not surprisingly, the same recipe still works today.



David Moore is pastor of a cross-cultural congregation, Zebaoth, Milwaukee.

Seated around a table in the church basement with the confirmation class, I was about to launch into the third commandment. It was the second Tuesday in Advent; the youngsters were Cambodian and American.

Before we began, I asked one of the boys, "Dan, did you get your Christmas cookies baked yet?" Dan is a tall, bespectacled 14-year-old whose parents have more German blood than most people in our congregation. With red-faced, teen-aged embarrassment he responded, "No, my mom bakes them, I just eat 'em."

Then Keun, a bright-eyed, diminutive Cambodian beauty, asked, "Pastor, what are Christmas cookies?"

"Say what?" I queried in surprise.

"What are Christmas cookies?" she asked, even more quietly.

Keun's question triggered more. The class asked everything from "why" to "how" and "when" about Christmas.

I asked Sar what sort of Christmas customs they followed in their Cambodian family home. She responded, "Pastor, we don't have Christmas."

I immediately revised my lesson plan. I described the church calendar with its seasons and the reasons. And then we planned to talk about the Christmas customs that help us remember the grace and love of God.

The previous week we had placed a Christmas tree in the church basement. Little did I realize that the



Cookies for the king

When Sar said, "Pastor, we don't have Christmas," I added Christmas cookies to my lesson plan.

by Frederick A. Kogler

I explained how God's gift of Jesus is remembered by the gifts we exchange when we celebrate his birth. We talked about how we could use Christmas cookies as gifts.

Under my wife's guidance, the youths learned how to make Christmas cookies. In a cloud of baking flour, they rolled, cut, baked, and decorated several dozen. The aroma, fun, and excitement carried us through the hour and a half with lightning speed.

While the cookies cooled, we gathered around the Christmas tree and read the story of the Savior's birth. The young people viewed the manger scene beneath the tree with new understanding and awe, all because of cookies for the king.

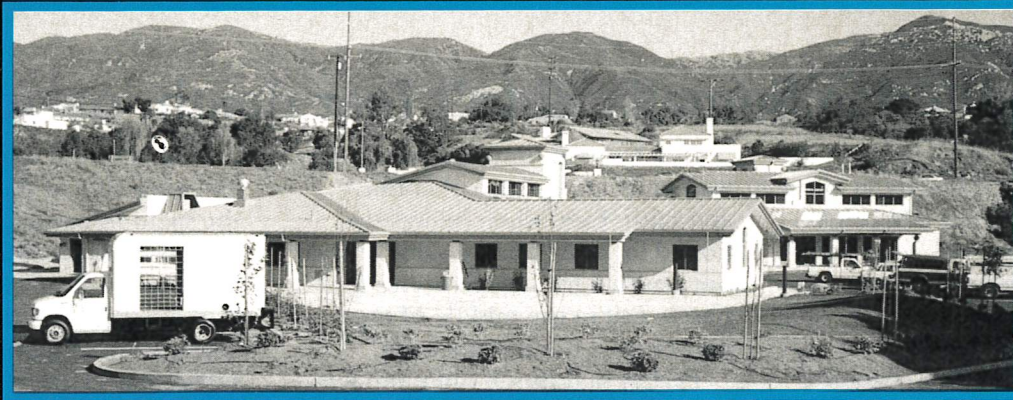
Frederick Kogler is pastor of Emanuel, St. Paul, Minnesota.

Hmong and Cambodian youths had been puzzling over the appearance of a freshly cut balsam fir decorated with blown glass ornaments.

The following Tuesday we had fun talking about some American customs—lutefisk, lefse, caroling, Christmas trees, Christmas cookies, wreaths and candles. The flood of questions was matched by a tide of teenage enthusiasm.

Then we zeroed in on two Christmas customs—decorating the Christmas tree and baking Christmas cookies.

We reviewed the fall into sin. I told the young people how forbidden fruit was represented in medieval times by apples hung on a tree, and gingerbread men were used as a reminder that eternal life was restored through the Savior.



Out of the ashes

WELS contributions help rebuild the Alpha Center

by Thomas B. Franzmann

Several years ago wildfire ravaged a section of Santa Barbara, California. Over 600 homes and businesses were destroyed. Among the buildings razed was the Alpha Training Center, a facility for retarded adults, operated by the Association for Retarded Citizens (ARC). About 100 people depended on the center for education, activities, job placement, and legal counsel.

The fire leveled the buildings and devastated the emotions of the people who spent so many happy hours in them. Staff members who had devoted countless hours to the center had difficulty coping.

Members of Our Redeemer in Santa Barbara feel close to the Alpha Center because it's located just down the road, and because a member of our church, Carolyn Rangel, attends the center daily. We see Carolyn and her mom in church every Sunday.

Within days of the fire we contacted our synod's Committee on Relief. Almost immediately we received \$10,000, half of which was given to help rebuild the Alpha Center, the other half to the American Red Cross for assisting dozens of fire victims.

The Alpha Center operated in rented facilities while it went through planning, fund raising, and reconstruction. When the new building was completed recently, we attended an open house. On the wall in the main lobby is a "tree." Engraved on its leaves are the names of all who donated toward the center. The name "Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod" appears on one of the leaves.

Sean Dunn, the development director for the center, told us that the gift from WELS was particularly

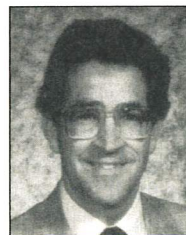
uplifting because of its size and timeliness. He asked us to convey his thanks to all our readers.

The new Alpha Training Center is a cluster of buildings nestled in a little valley along Cathedral Oaks Drive, an east-west alternative to the freeway. Most residents of the area have the opportunity to glance down on the buildings, lawns, playing field, greenhouse, and gardens as they hurry past. Often you see the clients crossing the road on their way to "school" or work, or outdoors engaged in various activities.

The architect has done a remarkable job of creating a campus pleasing to the eye, utilitarian, and cost-effective. One building houses a large lobby which doubles as a reception area, classrooms, a kitchen and lunch room, and work rooms. Another building houses a wood shop and maintenance facilities. A third structure has a multi-purpose room for performing arts and physical education. The upper level of this building contains the ARC offices.

More than once, as we have driven past the Alpha Training Center, and have seen the new buildings rising out of what was just ashes and rubble not long ago, an even greater lesson has come to mind.

Seeing those buildings rise out of the ashes is a reminder of a far more amazing resurgence. All of us spiritually handicapped will leave the dust and ashes of earth and death to rise to our own Alpha Center, where Jesus the Alpha and Omega reigns.



Thomas Franzmann is pastor of Our Redeemer, Santa Barbara, California.

Soldier killed in Somalia didn't fear death, pastor says

by Dave Tienen

Baraboo, Wis., a little city so often defined by the laughter and bright colors of the circus, took on a different hue Monday morning.

On 10th Street, a few blocks north of St. John Evangelical Lutheran Church (WELS), stood a

Busch was an unusual young man with an abiding sense of country and faith. Even when he was stationed far away, Parlow said, "It was not unusual for me to receive a phone call in the middle of the night with a Biblical question."

Parlow said Busch often fell into

They were all there Monday morning, 400 of them, overflowing the main floor and spilling into the balcony, family, friends, and brothers-in-arms. There were babies and frail older people with walkers. There were white-haired American Legionnaires and 24 vital young soldiers in dress uniforms.

And so Parlow used the occasion on Dan Busch's passing to caution the living that our grasp on life is frail and the time of our passing unknown. He quoted Jesus: "Keep watch, for you do not know the day or the hour."

"The last thing Dan wanted his friends to know, Parlow said, was that, "when it comes time to stand before your maker, the only thing that matters is your relationship with Jesus Christ."

Even before Busch and his buddies were buried, the country had begun to debate the meaning of their mission in Somalia.

After the service, some Baraboo Legionnaires who served in earlier wars reflected the division over that mission in interviews.

Alvin Vogt said he supported President Clinton and felt the U.S. had to stay in Somalia so that thousands would not starve. Dan Dallmann said, "I went into the Second World War to defend my country, but I don't believe we should police the world."

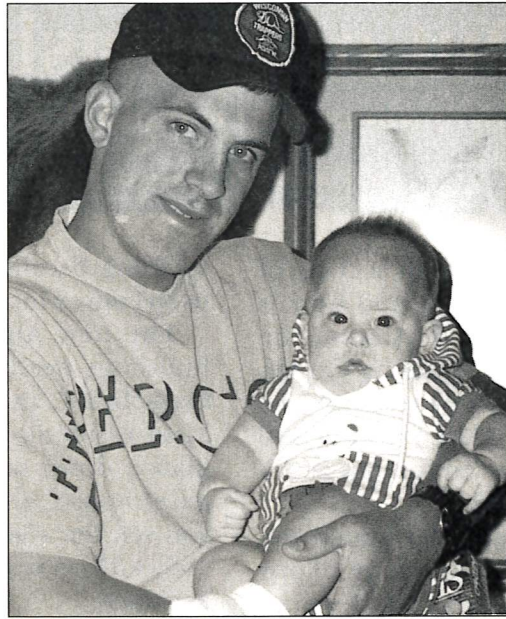
At the service, though, the emphasis was on another mission, a transcendent mission. It was summarized in the familiar chorus of the hymn that closed the service:

"Onward Christian soldiers, marching as to war. . . ."

Dave Tienen is a staff reporter for the Milwaukee Sentinel. Reprinted with permission.



Daniel and Traci Busch.



Dan Busch with his son Mitchell in a photo taken the day before Busch left for Somalia.

house with the usual assortment of Halloween goblins and witches decorating the windows. On the lawn, however, was a symbol of a more somber cast: a flag at half staff, a silent reminder of the flag draped casket of Staff Sgt. Daniel Busch, which at that moment stood inside St. John.

A volunteer for the Army's Special Forces, Dan Busch, 25, was one of a dozen U.S. soldiers killed Oct. 3 when their helicopter was shot down in Somalia. Busch left behind a wife, Traci, and a six-month-old boy, Mitchell. Busch grew up in Baraboo and attended St. John with his wife.

None of that, however, was what the Rev. John Parlow chose to emphasize in Busch's funeral.

the jargon of the military, a foreign language where distances are measured in meters and "clicks," or kilometers. From those talks the two of them developed a phrase, "A Christian soldier knows he is always one click from heaven."

"Dan did not fear death because he knew at the moment of his death that he'd be in heaven with Jesus Christ," Parlow said.

If Busch did not fear death, he did take it seriously. He planned with his friend and pastor what he wanted said if the moment of his funeral ever came to pass.

"Together we chose the text," Parlow said. "Dan had specific things he wanted to say to Traci, to Mitchell, to his brothers, even to the media."

President says school merger resolutions are constitutional

In October the synod's pastors, synod school faculties, and principals of Lutheran elementary and high schools received a letter from President Karl R. Gurgel dealing mainly with the school resolutions of the August synodical convention held in Saginaw, Mich.

The convention resolved that Dr. Martin Luther College (for teachers) and Northwestern College (pre-seminary) amalgamate under a new name on the DMLC New Ulm, Minn., campus, with each school maintaining its own specialized educational track. The convention set a target date of June 1995 for the amalgamation to be completed.

The convention also voted to merge Martin Luther Preparatory School at Prairie du Chien, Wis., with Northwestern Preparatory School at Watertown, Wis., also under a new name. For this merger the conven-

tion set a target date of July 1995.

The convention debated at length on the two moves, and the final vote was close, 195 delegates voting for the resolution and 176 voting against it. Unrest and dissatisfaction, however, continued over the action. Some have charged that the resolutions were unconstitutional.

The president's letter takes note of the charge: "Several constitutional questions were raised," he writes, "and referred to the Committee on Constitutional Matters. This is their unanimous opinion, 'It is the committee's judgment that all resolutions of Committee #5 were constitutional. No bylaws were rescinded, added, or amended which requires a two-thirds vote of the convention. Bylaws pertaining to our present schools are still in effect.'"

Several steps have been taken, President Gurgel wrote, "to provide

forums for input and to have your questions answered." A three man team is available for district-wide meetings. A meeting of circuit pastors and the communicators from the Commission on Communication for Financial Support has been moved up on the agenda. He also told the church workers that "a rather broad-based group will meet with the new boards of control [for the combined schools] to hear their initial proposals and to provide responses."

"Deciding isn't always easy," President Gurgel concluded his letter, "accepting decisions isn't either! However, when Christians decide a matter not determined by the word, even if the decision reached is not what we personally may have preferred, we will continue in love to talk, walk, and work together as Christian brothers and sisters."

Obituary

Kermit A. Stevenson 1909-1993

Kermit A. Stevenson was born March 30, 1909, in Davenport, Iowa. He died July 26, 1993, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

A civil engineer graduate of Michigan State University, he worked for the Army Corps of Engineers for 20 years before accepting a call to Wisconsin Lutheran High School in 1960. He was one of the founding members of the Lutheran Science Institute and for many years served as its executive director.

He is survived by his wife, Ruth (Schnilker); two daughters, Enid and Sarah (Robert) Cook; and a granddaughter, Kylie.



Ruth Wedle (left) and Erna Speckin chatted when the Workshop for the Visually Handicapped celebrated its 25th anniversary recently. Wedle is the workshop manager. Speckin was the first chairperson of the Mission for the Blind. The workshop, located in St. Paul, Minn., provides recordings, large print, or braille materials of *Meditations*, *Northwestern Lutheran*, and religious books.

A second generation in Africa

by Ernst H. Wendland

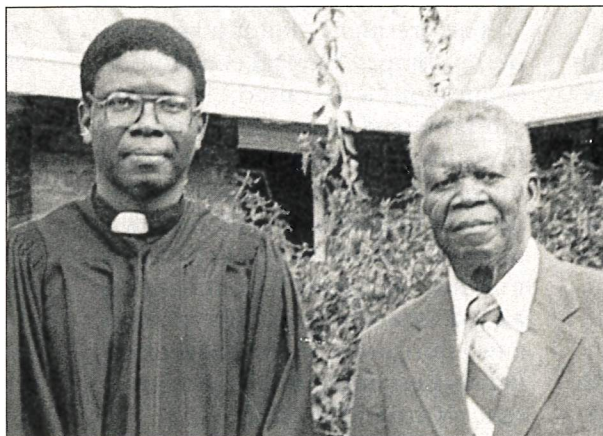
In our synod, here in America it's not unusual to have one family provide several generations of pastors. This year the Lutheran Church of Central Africa made a start in this direction when Samuel Kawiliza was ordained and installed as pastor of the congregation in Chelston township, Lusaka, Africa.

Samuel's father, Benford, presently serving as pastor in Chipata, Zambia, was one of the first students at the Lutheran Bible Institute and Seminary in Central Africa. His own ordination took place thirty years ago. On June 27, 1993, he participated in the ordination of his son.

Upon completing his secondary school training in Lusaka, son Samuel began the two-year course of study in the same Bible Institute which his father had attended. That was followed by two years of pre-seminary service in local congregations. He then entered the Lutheran Seminary, completing the three-year course of study and the required two years of vicarship. He was assigned to the Lutheran Bible

Institute congregation which he had help develop as a vicar.

The ordination service was held in the seminary chapel, which comfortably seats 150 people. Well over 300 managed to crowd in for the service. Three choirs from neighboring congregations came unan-



Samuel and Benford Kawiliza

nounced and were hastily included in the service. Four national pastors came to take part. Five vicars were also present. The officers of the congregation, who responded for the people, marched in with the opening procession.

The service began in a calm and

sedate manner. Our European antecedents would have felt right at home. The sermon text? First Samuel chapter three. Where can one find better material for the call, commissioning, and blessing of a Samuel!

And then came the African touch. African custom dictates that following the service special gifts be presented to the ordinand. Individuals and groups come forward with their gifts, row after row, in rhythmic step, placing their offerings on a table, while the choirs sing anthems. There is ululating, clapping of hands, and dancing in the aisles. It's all spontaneous and unrehearsed, a beautiful exhibition of unrestrained joy.

Those of a different racial background may never approximate it fully. They cannot duplicate it exactly. They can only stand in awe of it. It must be close to what David expresses in Psalm 103, when he encourages us to praise the Lord with all our inmost being. It is a lasting impression that those who visit Africa can never forget.



Dr. Martin Luther College professors John Nolte, Irma McLean, and Jack Gronholz recently observed anniversaries. McLean has completed 40 years of ministry; Gronholz and Nolte have served 25 years each.

Touch of laughter

Our granddaughter, Jessica, came home from school and told her mother, "We saw a video about Frankenstein and Myrrh." Her mother asked what she meant. Jessica replied, "You know, what the wise men brought baby Jesus."

*H. Linberts
Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin*

OWLS volunteers serve the synod

The fastest growing segment of the US population is the over 65s. Demographers tell us that by the year 2010, it will be the largest segment of the US population. With the growing longevity of this cohort, its better health and earlier retirement, a growing pool of people is available for volunteer service.

Ten years ago this state of affairs led a group of WELS lay persons to found an organization known as OWLS—Organization of WELS Lutheran Seniors.

“Seniors might be over the hill age-wise,” says OWLS vice-president Larry Carlovsky of Sebring, Fla., “but they are not over the hill when it comes to serving the Lord.” He points out that the OWLS handbook “puts it this way—we are to serve and be served.” He adds, “They definitely do not want to be relegated to ‘rocking chair’ Christians. Congregations: *Involve your seniors!*”

Through the years the organization has had a slow but steady growth. At its tenth annual convention, held this year in St. Cloud, Minn., there were 250 registered, mostly from the Midwest, but also from Arizona, California, and Florida. There are presently over 1650 members and 44 chapters from coast to coast.

Underscoring its service function, the 1993 convention approved a new program called Crossing Generations. The program aims to involve the seniors and the young in a variety of settings. Among the settings are tutoring, serving as teachers’ aides, being adoptive grandparents, big brothers or sisters, baby-sitting, and having outings together. “It’s not just for parochial schools,” explains Carlovsky, “but for all of God’s children, young and old.”

The OWLS are pleased with their part in launching Builders for Christ,



Music editor Kermit Moldenhauer talks about the new hymnal at the OWLS convention.

volunteers with a variety of skills and talents who help in the erection of mission churches. Since the beginning of the program, six missions have been helped, saving untold thousands of dollars. Administration of the program recently became more than the OWLS could handle, and responsibility for the program has been turned over to Kingdom Workers, a WELS volunteer agency with missionary interests. Builders for Christ still draws heavily, however, on the talents and capabilities of OWLS members.

The OWLS also have a gospel outreach program. Its major outreach is telephone canvassing from the OWLS office in Milwaukee, where a bank of telephones are used by volunteers. Last year over 15,000 calls were made by volunteers to four mission neighborhoods located in Florida, California, and Pennsylvania. Over 600 prospects were found, according to Carlovsky.

For some years a prison ministry program has been sponsored by the OWLS. “Bibles written on the reading level of the prisoners—a transla-



Over 200 OWLS members attended workshops such as this during their convention.

tion by Pastor Julian Anderson—are being distributed to jails and prisons all over the country,” says Carlovsky. “Bible studies have been developed for the prisoners. The prisoner completes the lesson, and it is channeled to an OWLS volunteer who corrects the lesson and makes personal contact with the prisoner.”

On the OWLS executive board are Lester Ring, president; Lawrence Carlovsky, vice-president; Dorothy Kubal, secretary; Marion Getka, treasurer; Wilfred Bauer; and Jerry Kirschke. For more information contact OWLS, 8420 W Beloit Rd, West Allis WI 53227; 414/321-9977.

Graduates receive degrees

Four graduates received their bachelor of science degree in education at the end of the summer term at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn. They are Sheila M. Krause, Katherine A. Schlomer, both from Milwaukee, Suzanta M. Pohlman, Wausau, Wis., and David M. Stoltz, New Ulm.

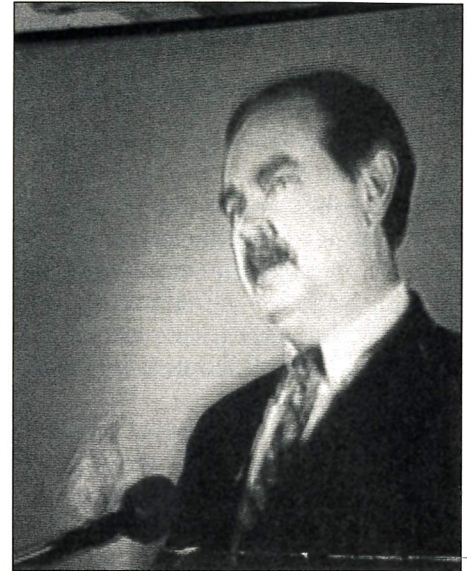
Six teachers were recommended for synod certification, which means they have earned 18 credits in reli-

gion, theology, and Christian education. All the required courses can be obtained off campus.

Teachers who completed this course work are Suzanne M. Colantonio, Morton Grove, Ill.; Terry A. Gates, Anchorage, Alaska; Cheryl A. Henckel, West Bend, Wis.; Thomas M. Nitz, Eagle River, Wis.; Travis A. Kurth, Phoenix, Ariz.; and Chris C. Poetter, Watertown, Wis.



Workshops at the WELS LFL convention were filled to overflowing.



CLARENCE MILLER

A video camera projected Cal Thomas' image on a large screen.

"There are many ways to fight a war. I wouldn't tell anyone what they're doing is not as good as what I'm doing."

Demonstrations raise awareness, he noted. "What I don't like is when people use Operation Rescue as an excuse for doing nothing. If they're not picketing, they ought to be doing something else. Actually, I like Operation Rescue. It stirs things up and makes believers think. I wish its critics would stop complaining and go out and save a few babies."

Thomas was reluctant to name his church affiliation. "The church is not in buildings, it's in individual believers," he said. "I don't like labels." He finally revealed that he attends "a conservative Presbyterian church."

The day-long WELS LFL convention offered participants a variety of workshops on life issues. Children were also invited. While their parents attended the sessions, the youngsters enjoyed a day of activities and projects.

The convention celebrated the tenth anniversary of WELS LFL. The 1994 national convention is planned for Nov. 4-5 in Orlando, Florida.

—Dorothy J. Sonntag

Cal Thomas is keynote speaker at WELS Lutherans for Life convention

"The problems in America are not political and economic. They're social and moral." That was the message from syndicated columnist Cal Thomas, keynote speaker at the WELS Lutherans for Life national convention, held at Wisconsin Lutheran College in Milwaukee October 9.

The solution to America's problems? "We need to stop looking to the government," Thomas told the audience of over 900, "and start looking to God."

How America uses technology is one issue, according to Thomas. "We were promised that technology would make our lives better, but it's often been a curse," he said. "We have technology without rules. Technology does not dispense with the need for human judgment."

He cited RU 486, often called the abortion pill, as an example. "RU 486 makes it possible to make abortion as easy as taking aspirin."

The issue is greater than abortion, Thomas told the pro-life audience. "It's about the handicapped, the elderly. When just one category of human life is in danger, all others are in danger. When moral absolutes are sucked out of society, human life is treated with all the dignity of a used Kleenex."

Thomas believes Americans need to do two things to improve society.

The first is prayer. Too many people look at America's problems as insurmountable, he said. "They say all we can do is pray. What do they mean, all we can do? Why do we treat God as a last resort?"

Second, Thomas said, "Look back. Recover respect for tradition and history." That includes returning to a tradition of acknowledging God. "This is the formula for the revival of America," he told the audience, quoting Abraham Lincoln: "Those nations only are blessed whose God is the Lord."

Thomas exudes confidence. Well over six feet tall, self assured, he dominates a room. He laces his conversation with humor, but he states his convictions in a manner that discourages contradiction.

In an interview, Thomas expanded on the theme on which he often writes: "We need to stop looking to the government and start looking to God. The government is taking away the church's role."

People view the government "as redeemer," he said. "Today they pray, 'Yea though I walk through the valley of poverty, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy food stamps protect me.'"

Milwaukee was the scene last year for pro-life demonstrations at abortion clinics. Picketing isn't the only way to stop abortion, said Thomas.



Campers at a retreat sponsored by Jesus Cares Ministries joined in a sing-along led by Pastor Michael Turriff. Over 50 people

attended the outing held at Camp Minikani Sept. 11-12 for people with developmental disabilities and their families and friends.

WELS capsule news

- At its September meeting the Board for Home Missions authorized **five mission start-ups**. They are located in Boise, Ida.; Houston, Tex., a cross-cultural mission; Phoenix, Ariz.; St. Paul, Minn., also a cross-cultural mission; and northeast Dallas county, Tex. Funding for the missions is from Lift High the Cross offerings. Exploratory status was granted to Tallahassee, Fla. Subsidy was granted to assist ministries involved with outreach to the Cora Indians in Montrose, Colo., and the campus ministry in Mankato, Minn.

- **Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary**, Mequon, has been awarded \$22,000 in grants from Aid Association for Lutherans. The funds will be used to provide financial assistance to 15 first-year seminary students, 15 faculty members working toward advanced degrees, and 35 pastors attending the June 1994 summer session.

- **Sixteen congregations in the La Crosse, Wis.**, area recently completed a media assisted gospel outreach effort, GO '93, reports Pastor Duane Rodewald of St. Paul, Tomah, communication coordina-

tor of the effort. "Over 100 television spots aired on the three major networks, newspaper ads were run, radio spots were purchased, yard signs displayed, and banners hung proclaiming the freedom in Jesus that is found and preached in the WELS. . . . Nearly 5,000 homes were contacted, uncovering almost 400 unchurched families." One member who participated in the outreach said, "We've got enough follow-up calls to make to last for years!"

- Recently missionary Tim Soukup reported on the two-year-old **Mozambique mission efforts**. "The Lord of the harvest," he writes, "has really blessed our efforts among the Mozambican refugees in Malawi. . . . The reason the work began so early and has gone forward so quickly is because God blessed us with Pastor Daice Boloweza of our Lutheran Church of Central Africa. He has done most of the legwork among the refugees." Soukup reports that they are currently working in two refugee camps. In one village, the chairman of the congregation is also the chief of the village and has been very cooperative. The last refugee camp they started working in is near four Malawi congrega-

tions. "I really hope to hit this camp hard," he writes. Soukup says there are over 300,000 refugees left in Malawi. "It is wonderful that we struck when we did. We have contacts and open doors into another country with some 12 million people."

- The Minnesota District Newsletter carries some **flood news**. "Just a little update on the situation in Iowa and Missouri. One member in Des Moines lost a home and business. The church and other members were spared. Pastor Tom Unke was installed in July to do exploratory work in West Des Moines. We are happy to report that he and the area he is working in are not affected by the major part of the flood. At Martin Luther congregation in St. Louis they say, 'It's a miracle' that none of their members lost their homes. But there is much devastation in the area."

- The **home mission board** has received a grant of \$92,000 from Lutheran Brotherhood of Minneapolis, Minn. The grant is used to provide financial assistance for outreach efforts in the synod's mission congregations, especially through the use of various mass media materials.



Students at Grace School, Alma, Mich., displayed the check they presented to their pen pals, the family of missionary Mark Wendland of Malawi, Africa. The children corresponded with the Wendlands during the school year. They got the chance to deliver their gift when the Wendlands visited Michigan while on furlough.

Writers' workshop planned

A writers' workshop, planned for July 22-24, 1994, in Milwaukee, will offer advice and practice in writing magazine articles, Bible studies, nonfiction, and devotional material for the church.

Writers are invited to contact Wisconsin Lutheran College, 8800 W Bluemound Rd, Milwaukee WI 53226 or call 414/774-8620 for more information.

Book notes

Law and Gospel: Foundation of Lutheran Ministry. (With Special Reference to the Church Growth Movement) by Robert J. Koester. Northwestern Publishing House. 234 pages, softcover, \$10.99 plus \$4.25 for postage and handling, stock no. 15N0548.

This book is the doctoral thesis submitted by Koester to Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, Calif. This fact is newsworthy because the book is highly critical of the church growth movement, the center for which is found at Fuller's school of missiology.

Koester, who serves a WELS church in Moorhead, Minn., finds plenty wrong with the theology and practice of the church growth movement, a movement within the Reformed family of churches. Reformed theology, says the author, presents "an incomplete gospel, since the gospel is viewed as the good news that God will renew a person—and renewal is never complete." It likewise has an incomplete kingdom of God since

the "reality of the kingdom is measured in the observable results of God's rule." And finally it has an incomplete conversion since conversion is viewed as "a turning from wrong to right—and such turning is never complete this side of heaven."

All of these errors fatally infect the church growth movement. "Whenever the church focuses on numerical growth, or sanctification, or renewal, or on any of the byproducts of the gospel," writes Koester, "it runs the danger of losing the very treasures it is striving to keep." Making the gospel the central issue instead of the various techniques of the church growth movement is one of the strengths of the book, for anything that obscures the gospel of the forgiveness of sins in Christ's death on the cross can endanger the foundation of the church.

Readers without a theological background will find the book accessible. And since the growth movement is a hot topic today, the book should find a warm welcome especially by those who have leadership roles in the church and who may be tempted by the movement.

Christianity, Cults, and World Religions by Roland Cap Ehlke. Northwestern Publishing House. 83 pages, softcover, \$3.50 plus \$3.25 for postage and handling, stock no. 22N0849.

This is a Bible study course for adults on 10 non-Christian religions or cults. It closes with a sketchy but satisfying chapter on Christianity. Since one or the other of these cults is often at the door—whether Mormons, Jehovah's Witnesses, or some messenger from the New Age movement—the study is timely and appropriate.

The text explains clearly the teaching of each cult, suggests books for further reading, and closes with study questions guaranteed to stir up discussion.

The booklet is based on a series of articles which appeared in *Northwestern Lutheran* in 1990-91.

—James P. Schaefer

These books may be ordered from Northwestern Publishing House by calling toll-free 1-800-662-6022; in the Milwaukee area call 414/475-6600. Phone between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. on weekdays.

Adultery not as rampant as it appears in movies, TV shows

According to an Associated Press dispatch, the vast majority of married Americans don't cheat on their spouses, a sex researcher says, disputing claims that adultery is as rampant as it appears in movies, TV shows, and popular magazines.

About 15 percent of married or previously married Americans have cheated on a spouse, estimates Tom W. Smith of the National Opinion Research Center. Smith, director of the center's General Social Survey, says perhaps three to four percent of husbands and wives have a sexual partner outside their marriage in a given year.

"There are probably more scientifically worthless 'facts' on extramarital relations than on any other facets of human behavior," Smith said in a report to a recent American Enterprise Institute seminar. Smith said TV talk shows and popular magazines commonly report much higher numbers of marital cheaters.

For example, author Shere Hite wrote that 75 percent of women married more than five years reported having affairs. And in a 1990 magazine article, Joyce Brothers said 50 percent of married women have had affairs.

"The problem has been the lack of good scientific information," Smith said in an interview. "There's been a vacuum. And when you have a vacuum, something fills it up. It may be Phil Donahue, it may be Shere Hite."

For example, a 1987 ABC News-Washington Post national telephone poll found that 89 percent of respondents said they never had an affair while married. The General Social Survey has found the level of extramarital activity basically unchanged since 1988, its first survey on the subject, Smith said.

Religion threatened by public secularism, writer charges

Stephen Carter is a former clerk to the late Thurgood Marshall, a professor of constitutional law at Yale University and, at 38, an accomplished African-American scholar. His first book published in 1990 was a critique of affirmative action.

Several months ago, his second was published, "The Culture of Disbelief." It is a summons to rethink the role of religion in America. He contends that religion is now threatened by state-enforced "public secularism." In the court of public opinion, he charges, the nation's liberal elites have "come to belittle religious devotion, to humiliate believers and, even if indirectly, to discourage religion as a serious activity."

"Religion is, at its heart," he says, "a way of denying the authority of the rest of the world." Its role in public affairs is to provide an "independent moral voice" and to "mediate between the citizen and the government."

The wall of separation between church and state erected by the

First Amendment, he writes, "originated in an effort to protect religion from the state, not the state from religion." He believes that today the "regulatory ubiquity of the modern welfare state" threatens the autonomy of religion far more than religious fanaticism endangers the country.

A devout Episcopalian, he sends his own children to an Episcopal school. "As a religious parent," he writes, "I would not dream of sending my children to a school that felt itself constrained not to reinforce the message of abstinence that my wife and I teach."

Carter is disturbed by secular liberals who reject religious motives and rationales in public debate in such issues as abortion, euthanasia and the teaching of evolution. He strongly urges a "politics of inclusion" that welcomes religion's alternative readings of reality—much as advocates of multiculturalism insist on ethnic pluralism.

QUICK QUOTE

"I don't let my children watch network TV for the same reason I don't let them drink out of the toilet."

—Steve Farrar
(quoted in National & International Report, 8/9/93)

TV families

According to *Newsweek's* review of the new TV shows, the networks are turning their hearts toward home this season. Judging by the prime-time population, "parents rarely come in pairs" anymore.

In reality, only 25 percent of U.S. families are headed by a single parent, but nearly two out of three of the new TV families are headed by a single mother. When dad is a single parent, the family really looks dysfunctional. And at least two sitcoms about intact families revolve around a mother and/or father acting like overgrown kids, such as *Family Album*.

News reported in this section is derived principally from Religious News Service, but use is also made of the Ecumenical Press Service, Evangelical Press Service, and Lutheran World Information.

The deadline for submitting notices is six weeks before publication date.

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS
Dr. Martin Luther College**

The Board of Control of Dr. Martin Luther College invites the voting constituency of the synod to nominate additional names for the position of professor of music. Nominees should have the ability to direct a choir and teach piano and general education courses in the field of music. Nominations with pertinent information should be in the hands of the secretary by Dec. 20. A complete list of nominees will be available upon request from the secretary, Pastor Robert Bitter, 173 Waupun St, Box 277, Oakfield WI 53065.

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS
Northwestern College**

Since Professor Gerhard Franzmann will retire at the end of the academic year, the Northwestern Board of Control and the synod's Board for Ministerial Education has approved calling a replacement.

The candidate should be seminary trained and have some experience in pastoral ministry. He will be called to teach psychology and history and will be given opportunity for graduate study to prepare further for his assignment.

Nominations may be submitted by voting members of our congregations to Northwestern Board of Control, Pastor Kenneth Gawrisch, Northwestern College, 1300 Western Ave, Watertown WI 53094. Please submit nominations with pertinent information by Dec. 20.

The list of nominees will be shared with the Conference of Presidents. Interested parties may write to the college for a list.

**CALL FOR NOMINATIONS
Editor for Northwestern Publishing House**

The Northwestern Publishing House Board of Directors is extending a call for an editor and requests members of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod to nominate candidates for this position. The candidate should be a member of the WELS or in fellowship with it. The nominated person must be a seminary graduate experienced in the pastoral ministry and show mature theological judgment. The individual should have some journalism and computer education or experience, or be willing to obtain this education. He should be competent in English literature, composition, and grammar; and be able to write clear, contemporary English. This position requires someone who is tactful, courteous, dependable, and ethical in his professional conduct.

Nominations including all pertinent information should be received no later than December 31. Send all information to Mr. Elmer Wohlers, Secretary, NPH Board of Directors, 1250 N 113th St, Milwaukee WI 53226-3284.

**FACULTY POSITIONS
Wisconsin Lutheran College**

Wisconsin Lutheran College is seeking candidates for these fields: business, computer science, economics, education, German, mathematics, music (instrumental), philosophy, physics, psychology, theatre, or theology.

Candidates should hold a doctorate or equivalent. Doctoral students will be considered. Previous college or university experience preferred. WELS or ELS membership required. Candidates may be required to supply a curriculum vita or resume and transcripts. Please send names to Dr. John Bauer, 8800 W Bluemound Rd, Milwaukee WI 53226; 414/774-8620; fax 414/744-9367.

CONGREGATION TREASURERS

The cutoff date for Synod Mission Offering (SMO) receipts in the synod's post office lock box is the last business day of each month. December 1993 lock box offerings will be credited as 1993 receipts through January 10, 1994 as long as they are received in the lock box on or before that date and are clearly labeled as "December" offerings on the Form 220. Please note that offerings must be mailed to the lock box rather than delivered to the synod offices.

Randy E. Matter
Controller

**AMALGAMATED COLLEGE
Nominees for president**

The following nominations have been submitted for consideration by the board of control for the amalgamated ministerial college as it calls a president. Teaching duties will be determined by common consent of the man called and the board of control.

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| David E. Bode | Delano, Minn. |
| Wayne M. Borgwardt | Waukesha, Wis. |
| John A. Braun | Watertown, Wis. |
| Joel D. Fredrich | Watertown Wis. |
| James F. Korhals | Watertown, Wis. |
| David P. Kuske | Mequon, Wis. |
| John C. Lawrenz | New Ulm, Minn. |
| Wayne D. Mueller | Waukesha, Wis. |
| Theodore B. Olsen | Prairie du Chien, Wis. |
| Russell L. Schmidt | Coon Rapids, Minn. |
| David J. Valleskey | Mequon, Wis. |
| Mark G. Zarleng | Fort Atkinson, Wis. |

The board will meet in late December or early January to extend a call from this list. Correspondence regarding the candidates should be sent no later than Dec. 20 to Chairman Roland Zimmerman, N83 W15250 Manhattan Dr, Menomonee Falls WI 53051.

**COMBINED PREPARATORY SCHOOL
Nominees for president**

The following names have been submitted for consideration by the board of control for the combined preparatory school as it calls a president. Teaching duties will be determined by common consent of the man called and the board of control.

- | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| John A. Braun | Watertown, Wis. |
| John M. Engel | Monticello, Minn. |
| Robert J. Hellman | Montrose, Minn. |
| Thomas D. Lindloff | Watertown, Wis. |
| Theodore B. Olson | Prairie du Chien, Wis. |
| Mark G. Schroeder | Watertown, Wis. |

The board will meet in late December or early January to extend a call from this list. Correspondence regarding the candidates should be sent no later than Dec. 20 to Chairman Dennis Hayes, 1100 N Maple St, Watertown SD 57201.

**COMMISSION ON WORSHIP
Nominees for administrator**

The following nominations for administrator for the Commission on Worship have been submitted for consideration by the Board for Parish Services.

- | | |
|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Mark R. Bitter | The Woodlands, Texas |
| Timothy H. Buelow | Port Huron, Mich. |
| Bryan M. Gerlach | Citrus Heights, Calif. |
| Joel C. Gerlach | Wauwatosa, Wis. |
| Mark A. Jeske | Milwaukee, Wis. |
| Harlyn J. Kuschel | South Milwaukee, Wis. |
| Wayne A. Laitinen | Oklahoma City, Okla. |
| Richard W. Lehmann | Muskego, Wis. |
| Mark J. Lenz | New Ulm, Minn. |
| Kermit G. Moldenhauer | West Bend, Wis. |
| Carl S. Nolte | Manitowoc, Wis. |
| James F. Pope | Bradenton, Fla. |
| Victor H. Prange | Janesville, Wis. |
| Daniel E. Schmal | Stevensville, Mich. |
| Wayne I. Schulz | Madison, Wis. |
| James P. Tiefel | Mequon, Wis. |
| Mark G. Zarleng | Fort Atkinson, Wis. |

Correspondence regarding the candidates should be sent no later than Dec. 20 to the BPS secretary, Pastor Allen Zahn, 6310 Cromwell Rd, Indianapolis IN 46250-2716.

ITEMS AVAILABLE

CHURCH—Matching white altar 14' 8", pulpit, lectern, baptismal font, number board. Price negotiable on 26 11' pews, salvage material, or complete 32' by 50' church building (standing) plus tower. Contact Robert Richert, RR1 Box 49, Ulysses NE 68669; 402/526-2250.

ORGAN—Electronic, two-manual Hammond. Bench, remote speakers, and connecting cords included. Free for cost of shipping. Contact James Grasyb, 3399 Division Rd, Jackson WI 53037; 414/677-4051.

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS—"God so loved the world" materials available for grades 5-8. Contact Tim Grams, 15809 CTH FF, Merrill WI 54452; 715/536-3404.

THE LUTHERAN HYMNAL—Over 100 available. Pastor Fredrich Mueller, 715/732-0459.

WOMEN'S RETREAT

A spiritual renewal weekend will be held March 18-20, 1994, in Rochester, Minn. Approximate cost will be \$90. For more information contact St. Peter Lutheran Church, 427 W Mulberry St, St. Peter MN 56082; 507/931-1866.

LITERACY CONVENTION

A literacy convention sponsored by Dr. Martin Luther College will be held June 28-July 1, 1994, in New Ulm, Minn. For more information contact Mae Tacke, 315 S Highland Ave, New Ulm MN 56073; 507/354-2727.

HANDBELL FESTIVAL

The 1994 National WELS Handbell Festival will be held at Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School, Jackson, Wis., April 16-17. For more information contact Cheryl Pasbrig at Wisconsin Lutheran College, 414/774-8620.

MANUSCRIPTS REQUESTED

Northwestern Lutheran welcomes unsolicited manuscripts. These must be typed and double-spaced. Please send one copy only. Manuscripts not accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope cannot be returned. Although there are exceptions, feature articles should not be less than 500 words or more than 1000 words. Send manuscripts to *Northwestern Lutheran*, WELS, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398. (NL mail is delayed if it is sent to the publishing house.)

ANNIVERSARIES

CEDAR RAPIDS, IOWA—Good Shepherd (40th). Dec. 5, 3:00 p.m. worship. Dinner following with entertainment. 319/393-5656.

NAMES WANTED

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

JACKSONVILLE/WILMINGTON/GOLDSBORO, NORTH CAROLINA—All eastern cities. Contact Tadd Fellers, 109-B Park West Apts, 203 Valencia Dr, Jacksonville NC 28546; 910/353-7000.

ITEMS WANTED

COMPUTER EQUIPMENT—mission congregation needs donated equipment to key and print music into service folders. Donations of a midi interface, midi keyboard, or money for software would enhance the service. Please contact New Life Lutheran Church, 1027 Alden Lane, Buffalo Grove IL 60089-1304, or call Chris Cordes, 708/520-9176.

PEWS—used. Contact Paul Wendland, 1441 W Tamarack Rd, Salt Lake City UT 84123; 801/262-9168.

CHANGES IN MINISTRY

- PASTORS:**
Barlow, Michael T., from St. Paul, Henry, S.D., to Zion, Sanborn, Mich.
Heidemann, Frederick W., from Emanuel, New London, Wis., to retirement.
Heup, Charles A., from St. Paul, Oconto Falls, Wis., to Good Shepherd, Plymouth, Wis.
Kleist, James R., from St. Paul, Cudahy, Wis., to Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee, Wis.
Kogler, Richard A., from Prince of Peace, Yucaipa, Calif., to St. Stephen, Fallbrook, Calif.
Sullivan, John J., from mission counselor, Germany, to Novosibirsk, Russia.
Sweet, David T., to Trinity, Winslow, Ariz. (additional to Rock of Ages, Payson, Ariz.)

ADDRESSES

- PASTORS:**
Hartwig, John P., PO Box 81, Chiang Mai, 50000 Thailand; 011/66-53-210-114.
Meister, Robert W., PO Box 81, Chiang Mai, 50000 Thailand; 011/66-53-272-006.
Wendland, Ernst H., em., 7438 CTH B, Two Rivers WI 54241.

A live Christmas tree

Do you prefer a live Christmas tree at your house? If you do, selecting it may be one of the rituals of the season. While children usually want the biggest tree, parents may want the freshest one. They may even shake the trees, or try snapping one of the needles, to see how fresh they are.

If the trees on the lot are fresh, the next step is deciding its shape. Generally speaking, people prefer a tree that is well-shaped on every side. Or, if not perfectly shaped, it needs to have only one bad side, which can be hidden in a corner.

But, finally, what really matters, at least to children, is what's beneath the tree, the presents.

Just look at the CHRISTmas tree. It couldn't be any fresher, fresh-cut from Jesse's stump. What more pleasant aroma could it have? It's the fragrance of God's love. And did you say gifts? How could there be anything finer than what is lying beneath this tree?

Jesse's stump, it's true, appeared dry and lifeless. That's what sin does to any of us; it takes the sap out of us, leaving us dry and lifeless. You can almost smell death and decay.

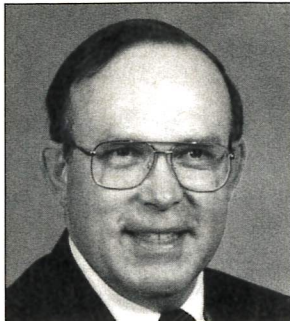
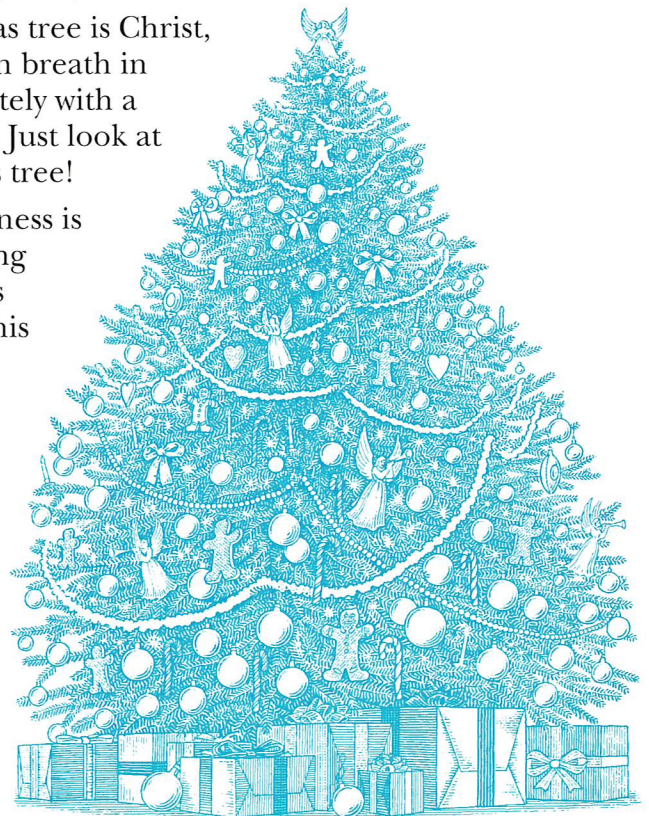
The aroma is one of the things I like best about a live Christmas tree. Coming into the room where it stands, you want to take a deep breath and let its freshness fill you up completely.

When your live Christmas tree is Christ, you can do exactly that! You can breath in deeply and be filled up completely with a sense of freshness and new life. Just look at the life-giving gifts beneath this tree!

The freshness of forgiveness is new to us every day. The pleasing aroma of the eternal banquet is reserved for us in heaven. All this and more is wrapped up in the Christ-child, the gift God presents to us beneath his CHRISTmas tree.

There is no Christmas tree any fresher, with a more pleasing aroma anywhere.

Karl R. Gurgel



*Pastor Karl R. Gurgel
is president of the Wisconsin
Evangelical Lutheran Synod.*

The atonement's complete satisfaction

God is just. He makes the guilty pay. And there, hanging on that cross, is the payment—Christ Jesus

by Fredric E. Piepenbrink

Jesus covered our sins with his blood and made us one with God. But Jesus also made God one with us. That, too, is part of atonement. In fact, without the second, the first would be of no benefit whatsoever.

Justice attacked

Even though our sins are covered there is still the matter of offense. God has been wronged. His righteous laws have been trampled under foot, his holiness and majesty insulted, his honor despised. God cannot pass by such conduct and be true to himself. The perfection of his nature demands satisfaction.

We may draw a parallel in the court system. The family of a murder victim loses a loved one. An assault victim loses a sense of security. The criminal may be tried, found guilty, and punished, but that doesn't restore what the victims have lost.

God, in a sense, is the victim of our sin. His very nature, particularly his justice, has been attacked. But he will not give up any part of that nature; he cannot and still remain God.

Justice maintained

That is where the second part of Jesus' atonement comes into play. Jesus was doing more than paying for our sins and making us one with God. He was satisfying God's justice and, in doing so, making God one with us. Paul wrote, "God presented him [Jesus] as a sacrifice of atonement through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice" (Romans 3:25).

If there is one message that comes through loud and clear in the crucifixion of Christ Jesus it is this: God is just. He makes the guilty pay. And there, hanging on that cross, is the payment—Christ Jesus who satisfies God's justice, holiness, and righteousness by paying for the sin of the world, while at the same time saving the sinner.

Paul explains this further: ". . . because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished—he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time" (Romans 3:25,26).

Have you ever wondered how the Old Testament people were saved? God is just. Sins had to be punished. But for the Old Testament people, Christ had not yet died on the cross to cover their sins and satisfy God's justice. So how could they be saved?

God postponed the punishment. He let it go until the time that Christ came to pay for their sins and do his work of atonement. The Old Testament people were saved just as we are, by faith in the Savior. Theirs was a looking-ahead faith, ours a looking-back. But in both cases God's justice was maintained at that one point in time on the cross.

Still grace alone

When talking about the complete satisfaction made by Jesus, one more thought needs to be considered, and that is "grace." Even though our sins are covered and we are one with God again, even though God's justice is satisfied and God is one with us again, God is not bound from any necessity of his nature to forgive or justify anyone. Once mankind fell into sin it had no right to ever be declared righteous and holy. So even after Jesus performed his work of atonement, God was under no obligation to justify.

The atonement was only the instrument for God's justification, it made it possible for him to justify, but the fact that he actually did is purely by grace—God's undeserved mercy and love. That is why the Bible over and over explains that we are saved, forgiven, and justified purely by grace through faith in Christ Jesus.



Fredric Piepenbrink is pastor of Atonement, Milwaukee.

He became fully human

No item in the new hymnal has elicited more discussion than the two words in the Nicene Creed: "fully human." The entire sentence says of Jesus Christ: "For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became fully human."

Some suggest that if Jesus Christ is really fully human, he is in some way tainted with sin. Such a view implies that human nature is essentially sinful, that a person cannot be fully human without being a sinner. We know from Scripture that this is an erroneous teaching. Adam and Eve, as they came from the creative hand of God, were fully human; they lacked nothing essential to their existence. And before falling into sin, they were pure and holy. So also Jesus Christ, though fully human, is without taint of sin. This is so because he "was incarnate of the Holy Spirit."

Another objection to the words "fully human" is the charge that they were chosen to deny the maleness of Jesus. A careful look at the wording of the Nicene Creed will show that the male pronoun "he" is used repeatedly when speaking of Jesus. There is no denial of his maleness.

But the point which the fourth century church fathers are making in the Nicene Creed is this: just as Jesus Christ is fully divine so also he is fully human. They needed to confess this because there were false teachers back then who denied that Jesus was fully human. These false teachers simply could not imagine how someone who was fully divine could also be fully human. In seeking to safeguard the divinity of Christ, they denied his full humanity. The church confesses: Jesus Christ is both fully divine and fully human.

The Gospel for Christmas Day spells out this truth clearly. John 1:1 says of the Word, the second person of the Holy Trinity: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Then in v. 14 we hear: "The Word became flesh and lived for a while among us." To "become flesh" is exactly what the Nicene Creed is saying with its word "incarnate." Jesus is the incarnate Word, fully human.

Martin Luther gloried in this truth. He wrote a model sermon for Christmas Eve which includes the sentence: "I am talking about this so that we may have a foundation for our faith and that we let Christ be a natural human being, in every respect exactly as we are" (LW 52:12).

One of the new hymns in *Christian Worship* has a wonderful line addressed to Christ: "You came into our hall of death, O Christ, to breathe our poisoned air, to drink for us the deep despair that strangled our reluctant breath" (CW 400:3). That's the good news of Christmas: Jesus Christ is one with us in our world. He became fully human.

Victor H. Prange



Victor Prange is pastor of Peace, Janesville, Wisconsin. He is chairman of the synod's Commission on Worship and was chairman of the Joint Hymnal Committee.

by John F. Brug

Recently on a radio service I heard a Lutheran pastor use the words in the Apostles' Creed, "I believe in the holy catholic Church." Someone told me "catholic" was originally in the creed, but Luther changed it to "Christian." What would you say about using "holy catholic Church" in the creed?

The term "catholic" originated as a Greek word meaning "universal." It referred to the church throughout the world, in contrast to local congregations. It also carried the connotation of orthodoxy, referring to the church which kept the doctrine the apostles had taught.

Since the evangelical Lutheran church teaches the apostolic doctrine of Scripture, we could call ourselves a catholic church. Since catholic also refers to the traditions and the way of worship developed in the Western church, the Lutheran church could properly be called catholic since it has preserved the best of this heritage.

Nevertheless, there are two good reasons for not using the term "catholic" in our translation of the creed. The real meaning of the term "catholic" has been obscured in people's minds, because of the way in which the Roman church has claimed that the word belongs to it alone.

Although the papal church exists throughout the world, we would deny it the right to the name "catholic" since it does not continue in the apostles' doctrine. Although it might be possible to educate people to the difference between the real meaning of "catholic" and the Roman church's use of "catholic," the word would probably remain confusing to many and thus is best not used.

A more important reason for refraining from using the word in the creed is that the term is understood by many as referring primarily to the visible church. But the creed is not talking about any visible organization, denomination, or style of worship. It is talking about the invisible church, the communion of saints. Everyone everywhere in the world who has been brought to saving faith by the gospel is a member of this one church. In contemporary English, as in Luther's German, the term "holy Christian church"

expresses this truth more clearly than the term "catholic." For these reasons our new hymnal retains the term "the holy Christian Church."

I have always understood if you are not baptized, you are not saved. My husband was raised Baptist and was never baptized. Does this mean he is not in heaven?

Jesus said, "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved" (Mark 16:16). Baptism is a means of grace through which God creates faith. We should never neglect or despise it or deprive our children of it.

Jesus did not say, "Whoever is not baptized will be damned." He said, "Whoever does not believe will be condemned." God can create saving faith in a person through baptism or through his word. If God has created saving faith in an unbaptized person, he will be saved. We should, however, remind him not to neglect God's command concerning baptism.

Is baptism the replacement of circumcision of the Old Testament? If so, how was an infant girl brought to faith during Old Testament times?

Colossians 2:11,12 draws a parallel between circumcision and baptism. Circumcision was a seal of faith and an entry into a covenant relationship with God just as baptism is. Beyond this, Scripture does not answer the question of whether circumcision and baptism are parallel in all respects.

God created saving faith in the children of Israel, male and female, through his promises of the Savior. We can also assume that the sacrifices for sin which were offered each day in the temple applied to the children as well as to the adults.

We know we no longer need to practice circumcision or sacrifices. We are to use baptism and the Lord's Supper. That is really all we need to know.

"Catholic" refers to the church throughout the world, in contrast to local congregations, and describes the church that keeps the doctrine the apostles taught. We could call ourselves a catholic church.



Send your questions to *QUESTIONS*, Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N Mayfair Road, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398. Questions of general interest are preferred. Questions will be answered, however, only through this column.

John Brug teaches theology and Old Testament at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin.

**Christian Worship:
A Lutheran Hymnal**

I appreciate the new/revised hymnal. We truly have a gift from God to aid us in our daily life of worship.

The liturgical portion is so easy to follow. I like the music for Service of the Word and how well it centers on the word. I look forward to psalm singing. The personal prayers encompass a great many needs for every day use. And I'm really excited about singing the new hymns.

Finally, one phrase leaps off each page on which it's printed, "In the Name of Jesus." That very well sums up our life of worship, our service to God. I believe Luther and Bach would agree!

*Evelyn Drews
Cudahy, Wisconsin*

I love our new hymnal! The very first day I brought it home, I found I had to tear myself away from the piano. *Where Shepherds Lately Knelt*, (CW 54) is an especially beautiful Christmas hymn.

It is a wonderful memorial to Pastor Eggert and we owe heartfelt thanks to our hymnal committee for their hard work.

May our children and grandchildren take those hymns to heart!

*Jean M. Pless
Pewaukee, Wisconsin*

Second career conference

Perhaps the US members of WELS would be interested to learn that two of the 46 men who attended the second-career conference last spring [to consider entering the pastoral ministry] were from their neighbor to the north, Canada. Our congregation has been blessed to have these men in our midst and we are thankful this oppor-

tunity was available to them as they prayerfully consider this career move.

*Deborah Haar
Scarborough, Ontario*

A first-class publication

In the past years your magazine has become a first-class publication. There have been many topnotch feature stories. The Bible studies and general news about the synod and its districts are greatly appreciated. I hope your successor will keep up the excellence you have started.

*Larry Carlovsky
Sebring, Florida*

No action on minority report

The article "A convention of change" (October) erroneously reported a decisive defeat (257-85) of the seven-member minority report to the worker training amalgamation question. In truth, "the minority report was read to the delegates, but no action was taken" (Proceedings, p. 69).

*David Priebe
Seminole, Florida*

Pastor Priebe, a signatory of the minority report, is correct. The "decisive defeat" in our convention account refers to a substitute motion calling for a two-year delay in deciding the merger issue; it does not refer to the minority report. In the 1993 Convention Proceedings, Secretary Worgull correctly notes: "The minority report was read to the delegates, but no action was taken." We regret the error.

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.*

**January
'94**

- 1. 1 John 1:1—2:2
- 2. 1 Jn. 2:3-27
- 3. 1 Jn. 2:28—3:10
- 4. 1 Jn. 3:11—4:6
- 5. 1 Jn. 4:7—5:3
- 6. 1 Jn. 5:4-21
- 7. 2 and 3 John
- 8. Isaiah 40
- 9. Is. 41
- 10. Is. 42:1—43:13
- 11. Is. 43:14—44:23
- 12. Is. 44:24—45:25
- 13. Is. 46, 47
- 14. Is. 48
- 15. Is. 49:1—50:3
- 16. Is. 50:4—51:16
- 17. Is. 51:17—52:12
- 18. Is. 52:13—53:12
- 19. Is. 54
- 20. Is. 55
- 21. Is. 56, 57
- 22. Is. 58
- 23. Is. 59
- 24. Is. 60
- 25. Is. 61:1—63:6
- 26. Is. 63:7—64:12
- 27. Is. 65
- 28. Is. 66
- 29. Matthew 1
- 30. Matt. 2
- 31. Matt. 3

One of the marks of God's people is their love for his word. Many have said, "I will start at Genesis and read the Bible through to the end." But the project is soon abandoned. These proposed readings—5 to 10 minutes each day—will take you through the entire Bible systematically and with variety. The next month's readings will appear in the next issue.

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When retiring from the ministry, it is customary in the Wisconsin Synod (as well as elsewhere) to hand out some thanks to people who have been directly involved in that ministry. After 46 years of listening to others bid farewell, it is now my turn. As of December 31 at exactly 24:00 hours you will have a new editor, and it's retirement for me. Many of you will be wide awake on that special eve, and I would deem a *sahud* to me appropriate, whether in regret or relief. If this sort of column is not your cup of tea, you may now turn the page.

First of all, I am thankful to God and his grace for calling me to a ministry for which I was not worthy. In my case others may suspect it, but only God and I know it for sure.

My first call in 1947 was to Atonement, Milwaukee. With those stalwart saints of God I spent 20 years. Among other things we built a new church together—\$1.2 million worth in today's market—always a bracing experience. (My successor, Pastor Kurt Koeplin now with God, assured me that it is also a bracing experience to pay for it!) I thank Atonement for the love and warmth it has shown me as a fellow member for 63 years.

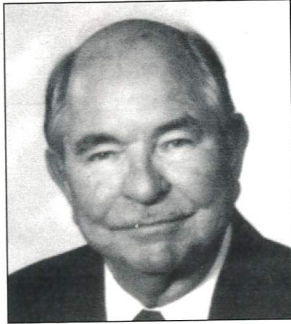
My next—and last—calling body was the Conference of [District] Presidents (COP), guardians of doctrine and practice in the synod and to which the synod has also assigned the task of funding the synod's budget. The first call from them was to serve as full-time director of a special building fund offering, *Missio Dei*, for nine months in 1965-66 and part-time until November 1967 when I was called by the COP as the synod's first stewardship counselor. I served in that position until 1981 when I was called by the presidents to *Northwestern Lutheran*. For the good years together, I thank the district presidents and the three synod presidents—Oscar J. Naumann, Carl H. Mischke, and Karl R. Gurgel—for giving me an opportunity to serve my Lord and his people.

No, I'm not done yet. My days at *Northwestern Lutheran* have been brightened and lightened by three persons. First, Bev Brushaber, my administrative assistant for 25 years at Atonement, in the stewardship office, and as assistant editor at *Northwestern Lutheran*. Few people have been served better than I was. What can I say about Dot Sonntag and Linda Baacke. Dot is an outstanding professional journalist, as our readers well know. Linda, our editorial assistant, just arrived, is a bright, quick study, destined for greater things than editorial assistant. My pain is in the parting!

Thank you, too, my dear readers, for letting me invade your homes and patiently waiting for me to correct my mistakes. As NL changed through the years, your support and approval were noted and dearly appreciated. God bless you and the next editor.

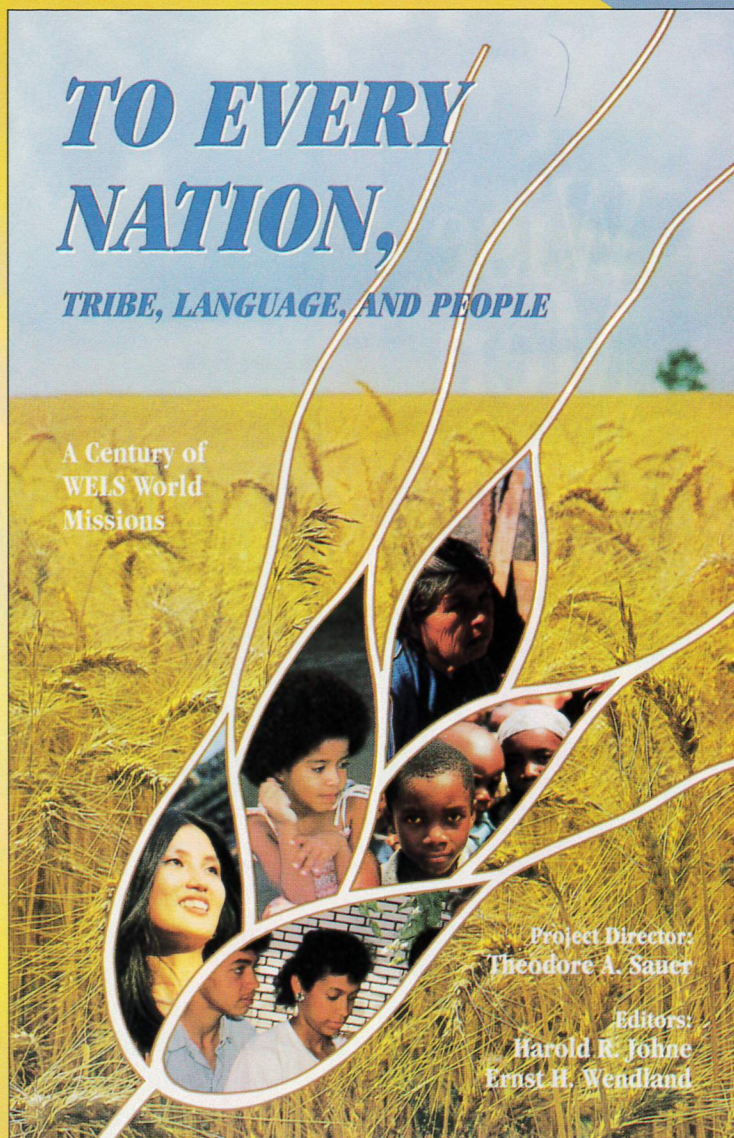
And behind it all was the captor of my heart, my dear wife, Ruth, and mother of our six offspring. I will not try to write what she has meant to me. Her unfailing love, support, and wisdom has tided me over dark, dark days. I look forward to our unbroken days together here—please God—and above.

James P. Schaffer



*Thank you,
my dear readers,
for letting me
invade your
homes and
patiently waiting
for me to correct
my mistakes.
God bless you
and the
next editor.*

The sun
never
sets on
WELS
world
missions



From a humble beginning among the Apaches in 1893, God has enabled the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod to expand into 14 world mission fields. Close to 40,000 baptized members worldwide are being served by almost 60 WELS missionaries who work with about 150 national pastors and evangelists. In this centennial year, it can be truly said that the sun does not ever set on WELS world missions.

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writing of this 340-page book. There are 15 full-page maps to help you locate where important events have taken place and where WELS is doing mission work now. The book includes a chronology with 175 entries, a bibliography, and an index.

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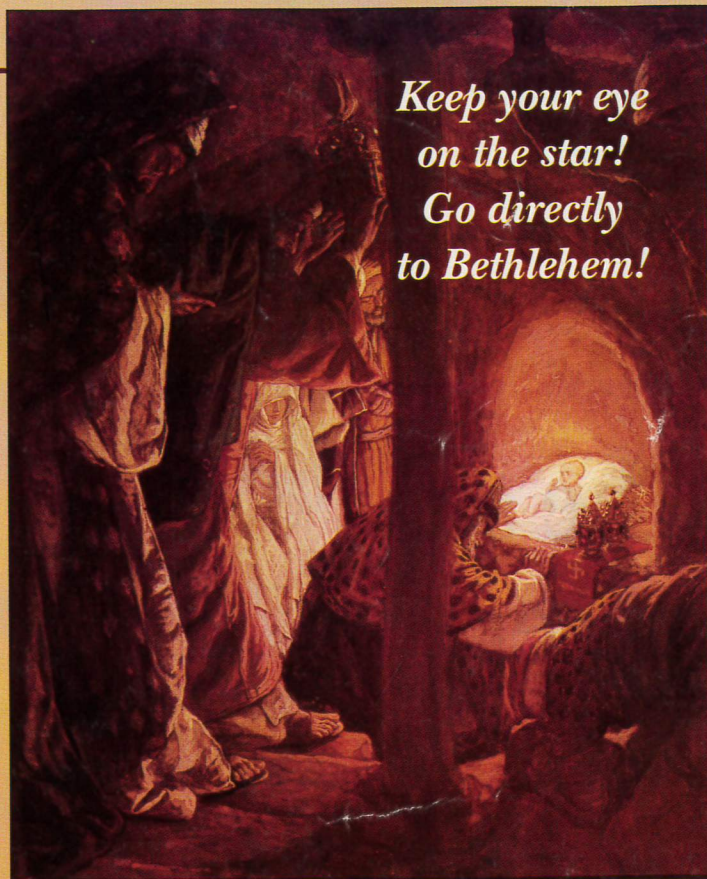
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Wise Men from the West

by Vernon Gerlach



*Keep your eye
on the star!
Go directly
to Bethlehem!*

JAMES J. TISSOT

During the time of King Herod, wise men from the east came to Jerusalem. What if they had come from the west? And what if they held the dominant ideas and drives of contemporary western civilization? The extra-canonical scriptures might read like this:

Wise Man One: merchant prince, CEO of Admiral Motors, master salesman. He began to follow the star, thinking of the untapped markets in the countries he would cross. Countless new sales territories for new Admirals. Exports doubling, tripling over the next four years. He called on all the new car dealers along the way. Orders were so numerous that he couldn't close his briefcase. Meanwhile, the star disappeared.

He never got to Bethlehem.

Wise Man Two: minister of war (both defensive and offensive). Before following the star, he assessed the need for armed protection for himself and his gifts. He would be traveling through strange lands among hostile peoples. He mustered a strong force and armed them well. The recruitment took time. So did arms procurement. The star gradually faded away.

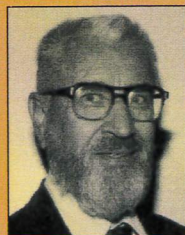
He never got to Bethlehem.

Wise Man Three: president of Balthazar, Balthazar, and Balthazar, the most prestigious advertising and public relations firm in the western world. He knew how big it would be to find a new king. Publicity possibilities staggered the imagination. Press releases at every town along the way, entertainment for the key local media. He made a detour into Egypt to ensure complete coverage. The star grew dimmer, fainter.

He never got to Bethlehem.

Business, pleasure, Christmas shopping, bowl games, Christmas cards, rehearsals and concerts, gifts, trip reservations—all these conspire to keep us busy. What a miserable exchange it would be to trade any such activity for a view of the star, for a trip to Bethlehem, for a visit with the Babe in swaddling clothes, for the sight of our Salvation.

Keep your eye on the star! Go directly to Bethlehem! We'll see each other at the manger.



Vernon Gerlach is professor emeritus of psychology in education, Arizona State University. He is a member of Emmanuel, Tempe.