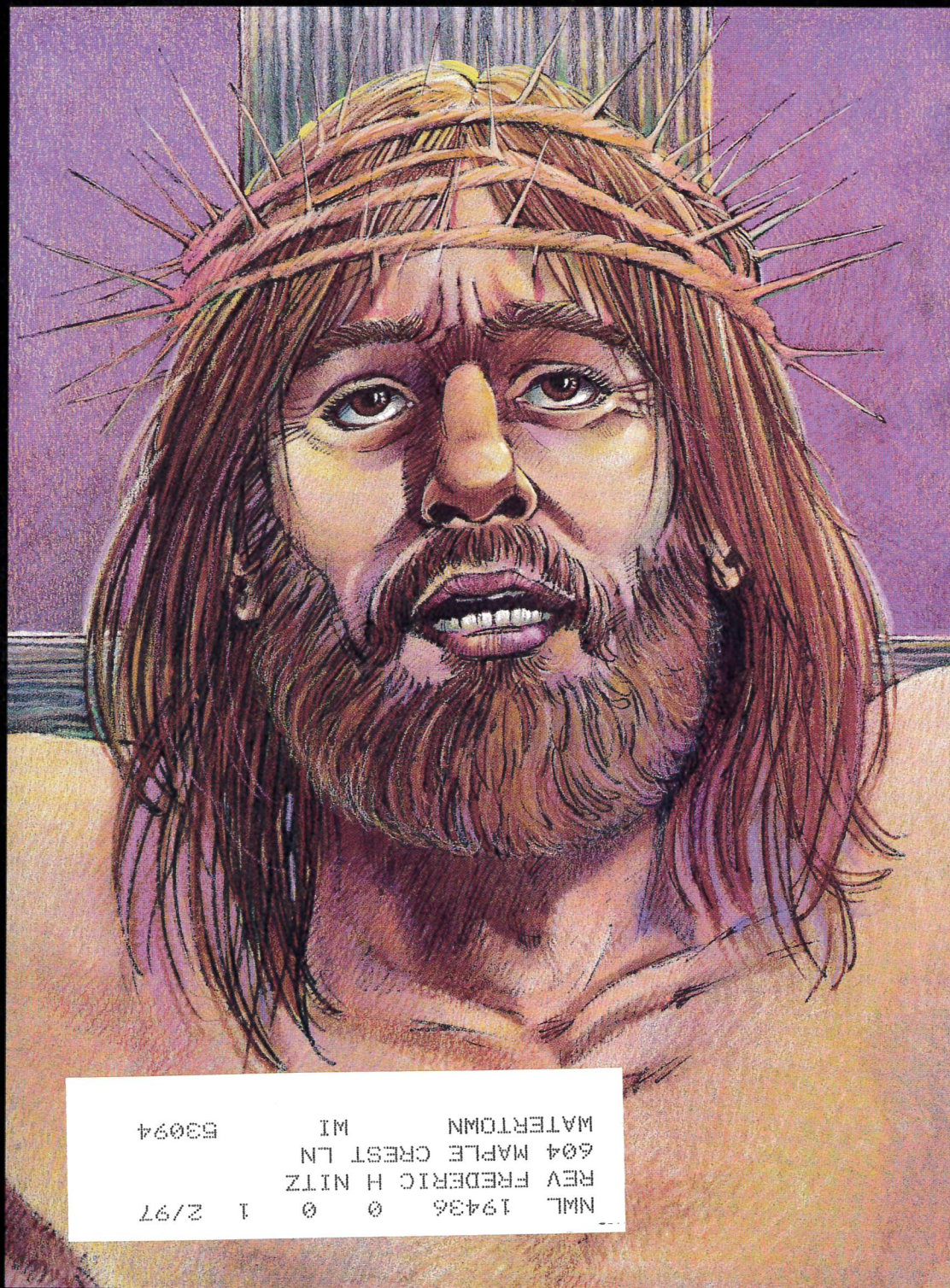


# LUTHERAN



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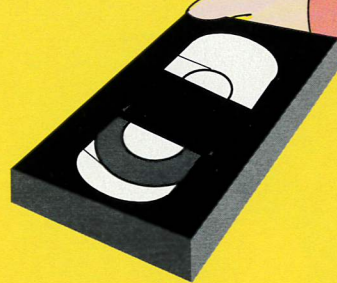
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# Get Real!

Meet Ralph, spokesman for today's Christian family. His video, *Get Real!*, will help your family begin talking about spiritual life in your home.

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We express our appreciation to Aid Association for Lutherans for a grant, which made this program possible.

# Attracting sinners through sensationalism

*“If you are the Son of God . . . throw yourself down.” Matthew 4:6*

**Robert C. Hochmuth**

**A**fter failing to mislead and disqualify our famished Savior in the wilderness, Satan brings him to the city and tries to thwart God’s saving plan by maneuvering the young man from Nazareth into challenging heaven’s design and distorting the Father’s will. “If you are the Son of God,” the devil says, “throw yourself down.”

Satan’s logic is hellish: “You were sent into this world to gain a following, and here is a way to get publicity even as you demonstrate your unflinching trust in the Father. This sensational exhibition will certainly stir the people and draw crowds for your cause. You must realize that you can influence more people by exciting them than by trying to sway their consciences.”

Then Satan cites Scripture to support his logic.

## Quiet dedication of Jesus’ mission

Hallelujah! Jesus overcame the lure of appealing to people’s carnal cravings to gain a throng of fans. He remained dedicated to carrying out his mission for restoring repentant sinners through his obedience and sacrifice.

We get glimpses of his dedication every time we observe our Savior dissuading people from publicizing his miracles. He performed extraordinary healings, but his motivation was mercy, not sensationalism, even as his commission from the Father was redemption of the lost, not entertainment of the curious.

Our situation would be hopeless if Jesus had yielded to the temptation for celebrity status minus thorns or nails, curse or cross. Without a ransom we are slaves of sin.

## Sensational spectacle of Satan’s lies

Now Satan employs his tactics in our lives—and most devilishly, even with a biblical reference to suit his purpose, distorting our vision and plunging us into disregard for God’s way of drawing sinners to himself.

If we are lured away from repentance and trust in Jesus’ ransom, our situation is desperate. Satan has not given up. He still attempts to enchant people by sensationalism.

Christians should feel an urgent concern about winning others for the kingdom and to make an inviting and attractive setting for the message of salvation. But they need to beware of hell’s logic: Attract a crowd by making an impression. Provide spectator seats in place of servants’ sandals.

Compete with the entertainment world. Appeal to the flesh’s preoccupation with excitement.

## Gentle whisper of God’s Word

To gain perspective, we need to observe Jesus recruiting Zacchaeus, the Samaritan woman, or Levi’s guests

by convicting them of sin and convincing them of salvation. We need to see him thwarting the sensationalism of the 5000 and frustrating Herod’s yen for a spectacle.

We can also focus on Paul cautioning against those whose mind is linked to the earthly. We can listen to him instructing new believers in Thessalonica, reminding them that their conversion came about by the gospel brought to them.

We can go, too, with Elijah to the heights of Horeb, to be reminded that the Lord changes sinners’ hearts not by nature’s awe or pyrotechnics, but through the gentle whisper of his life-giving Word.

And we can show our trust in God through quiet devotion and service.

*Robert Hochmuth is interim pastor at Good Shepherd, Pleasanton, California.*





- With this issue we introduce a new look and two new series. "By faith they led" (p. 6) takes a look at some of the people God used to shape the Wisconsin Synod. The series, written by Morton Schroeder, starts off with Johannes Bading, whose influence is reflected in the synod's conservative theology. If you'd like to nominate someone who you think should be included in the series, let us hear from you.
- The second new series is also about faith—the fruit of faith. The author, Pastor James Aderman, introduces it with a description of how the Spirit changes us when he comes into our hearts. You'll find "Remodeling our hearts" on page 30.
- She had been an active church member, but she fell away. "I don't need church!" she told herself. "I just need God. Enough of these ties with the church!" Rosane Aguirre describes how God led her back to the church in "The independent Christian" (p. 14).
- We hope you'll like our new look. Editor Gary Baumler explains why we've made some changes—and why we won't make others—in "The editor's pen" on page 34.

—Dorothy Sonntag

**Cover by Ed Koehler**

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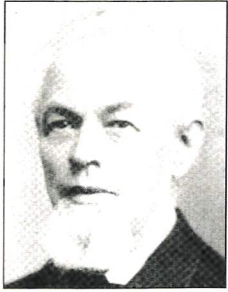
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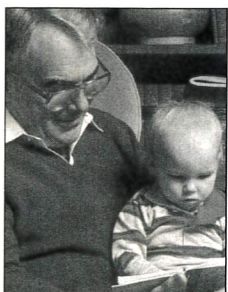
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# Johannes Bading:

## He helped shape the synod's theology

**Morton A. Schroeder**

Johannes Bading, one of the mold-makers of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, was born in 1824 in Prussia.

Bading prepared for his vocation in Berlin's Gossner Missionary Society. Founded to protest unionism in the Berlin Missionary Society, Gossner encouraged students to be modern-day Pauls and support themselves with their talents and skills.

---

*Devotion to truth, an ability to seize the moment, and boundless energy made him a leader.*

---

Preparing to work in Africa, Bading transferred to Mission House, Hermannsburg, Hanover, to study theology under Georg Ludwig Harms. Although Bading failed to complete the prescribed course, he was indelibly stamped by his teacher's conservative theology.

Perhaps frustrated by Hermannsburg's demanding schedules or influenced by descriptions of Wisconsin, Bading changed direction. Deciding to go to America, he transferred to the Rhenish Mission Society at Barmen. When he finished his work, the Langenberg Mission

Society sent him to America.

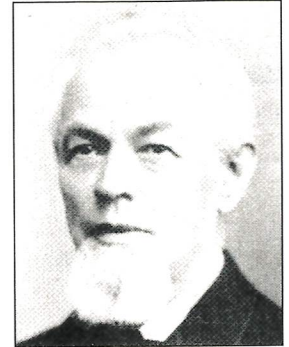
### Coming to America

Among thousands who poured into Wisconsin between 1840 and 1870 and ballooned its population from 31,000 to 1,054,000, Bading arrived in Milwaukee in July 1853. Then just another nobody, this man would later make a difference.

After a rest stop with Pastor John Muehlhaeuser, president of the Wisconsin Synod, Bading sailed to Manitowoc to meet Carl Goldammer, pastor at Newtonburg. Urged by him to plant the gospel farther west, Bading set out for Brothertown, on Lake Winnebago. From there he followed the shoreline to Calumet in Fond du Lac county, making contacts with area Lutherans seeking a "decent" preacher. After two trial sermons, Bading was called to the tiny congregation at a place now believed to be Malone. Antique Wisconsin charts show Malone was on a railroad and had a postal service and a Lutheran church.

Bading was called to St. Paul in Lomira Township in 1854. During his stay, the congregation built a log church, organized, and joined the synod.

In 1860, St. Mark Church, Watertown, called Bading and he accepted, an event forever linked



### Johannes Bading

- Born Nov. 24, 1824, in Rixdorf, Prussia. Died May 24, 1913, in Milwaukee, Wis.
- Pastor at Malone, 1853-54; St. Paul, Lomira Township, 1854-60; St. Jacobi, Theresa Township; St. Mark, Watertown, 1860-1868; St. John, Milwaukee, 1868-1908, all in Wisconsin
- Associate editor, *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Gemeinde-Blatt*
- President, Northwestern College board of trustees, 1865-1912
- Synod president, 1860-1864 and 1867-1889
- Chief negotiator with the Missouri Synod in forming the Synodical Conference
- President, Synodical Conference, 1882-1912

with the congregation's change from the liberalism of its first pastor to its subsequent conservative stance.

Bading's last charge was St. John in Milwaukee. Two dissimilar but striking facts demonstrate Bading's lasting impact on St. John: During his 40-year ministry he performed 7,180 baptisms. And although he did not pour the building's concrete, his strength girded the congregation while it built a landmark Gothic-style church. One knowledgeable enthusiast called it the "finest Lutheran church" he had seen.

### Extending his sphere of influence

Bading's influence extended beyond family, parish, and the 1500 square miles of Wisconsin he knew in serving four parishes and their satellites. During the summer of 1855, he and his like-minded friend, Pastor Philip Koehler, set out to find new harvest fields. They traveled from West Bend to Manitowoc and along Lake Michigan to Algoma. Their survey prompted the synod to send workers into this first home mission.

Bading was primarily responsible for having Northwestern College sited in Watertown, Wisconsin, and he supported the school vigorously. He was president of Northwestern's board of trustees from 1865-1912 and was one of 12 who formed the college alumni society.

*Bading's grave is marked with a seven-foot granite cross. Like his theology, it has stood the test of time.*

To keep the school solvent, Bading—with his pregnant wife and their two children—left for Europe in 1863 on a fund-raising tour. While his family remained in Hermannsburg where the Badings' third child was born, Bading embarked on an exhausting 3500-mile trip through Germany, today's Baltic countries, and Russia.

Bading was accepted warmly wherever he went. The czar approved his work, and the king of Hanover gave him an audience. But the 16-month trip was not without its pathos.

Records tell us that Bading suffered from the bitter cold because much of the time he had no overcoat.

Although many pulpits were open to Bading and although he was umbilically connected with the German mission societies whose aid he now sought, he did not hesitate to cut the cord when necessary. When more ecumenical Lutheranism was demanded of him, he forfeited 42 percent of the \$17,715 he had raised.

### Molding the synod

Bading's devotion to truth, an ability to evaluate a situation and seize the moment, and boundless

energy made him a leader. His colleagues formalized their recognition of his talents by electing him synod secretary in 1856 and president in 1860. Bading was president until 1889, 1864-1867 excepted. This position gave him the necessary leverage to form the synod according to his lights and mold it in biblical Lutheranism. He also served as synod vice-president.

Bading was instrumental in having the synod acknowledge its doctrinal agreement with the Missouri Synod in 1868 and with the Minnesota Synod three years later. He was chief negotiator with the Missouri Synod in forming the Synodical Conference in 1872, and he served as the conference president from 1882 until the year before he died.

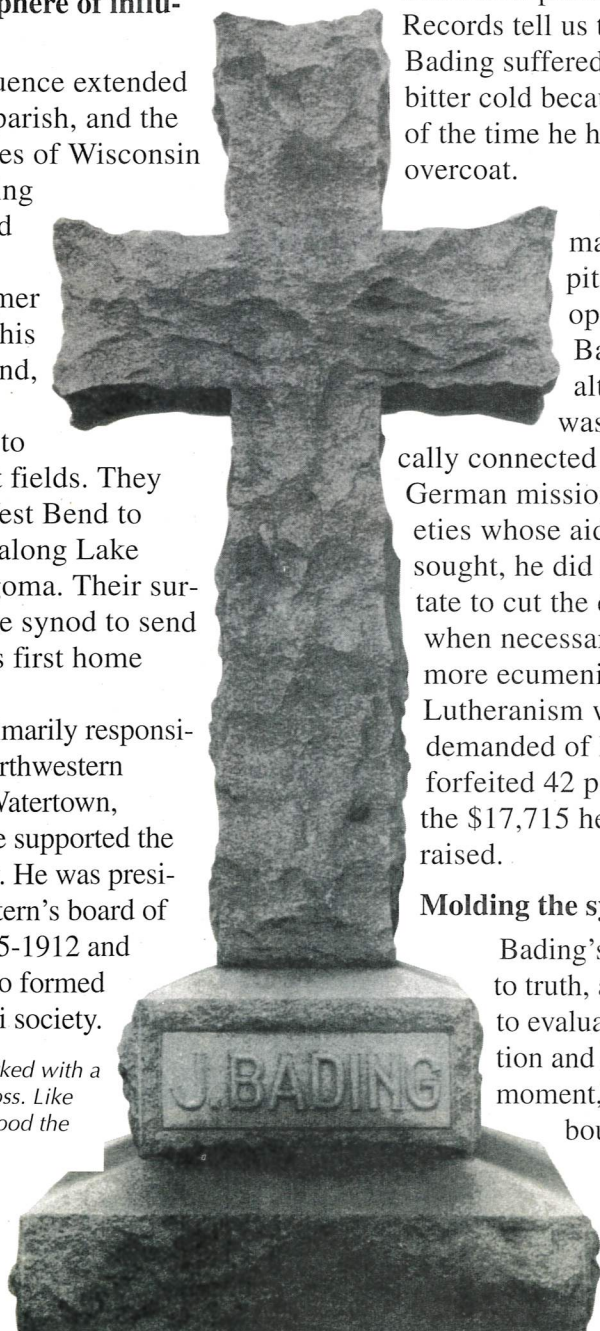
When the synod decided in 1865 to publish a magazine called *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Gemeinde-Blatt*, Bading was chosen associate editor.

Bading died in 1913, almost 60 years after arriving in America. Pastor G.E. Bergemann, president of the synod, preached the funeral sermon. His text was Joshua 1:2: "Moses my servant is dead." Bading was buried in Union cemetery in Milwaukee. Immediate survivors were his widow and five children. Mourners numbered in the thousands.

Marking the grave of this mold-maker is a rugged seven-foot granite cross. On its face is a simple inscription: "J. BADING." Like his theology, it has stood the test of time.

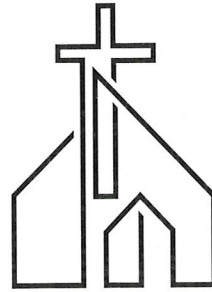
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*Morton Schroeder, a retired professor, lives in Appleton, Wis.*



# Growing together in Christ

**Members of St. John, Vesta, Minn., grow together through faith.**



**Linda R. Baacke**

*Through God's grace, the Church is living and growing.*

*Take a moment to visit St. John, Vesta, Minn., and see how its members are growing together in Christ.*

**T**hey rely on God's power to grow their crops. And they rely on God's grace to grow their church. Members of St. John, Vesta, Minnesota, know that God's presence is vital for growth of any kind—their crops or God's kingdom.

## Rural ministry—blessings and challenges

Located in a small rural community, most members of St. John work in farming or farm-related industries. In fact, during harvest time, said Pastor Randy Bader, "if I need to talk to someone, I can usually drive a block down from church and find them waiting in line at the elevator in their grain truck or tractor."

While living in a rural community may make pastoral visits easier, it has its challenges also. The rural population is declining. "Also," said Bader, "the 'graying' of the rural population has had a significant impact on our congregation."

Frank Wilkinson, a member of St. John for 20 years, commented, "Our membership is declining. People are moving out, looking for jobs in bigger cities. It's getting



St. John, Vesta, Minnesota  
Organized 1900  
Randy Bader, pastor  
Debra Schmidt,  
pre-kindergarten teacher  
270 members

tougher, just like for other churches in rural areas."

"However," said Bader, "there are a number of young families—including about 55 children—several families with college-age children, and quite a number of 'empty nesters.' Our future might perhaps look brighter because we have quite a good age mix in our congregation."



*First grade Sunday school class.*



## Planting the seed

Even though the population is declining, members find they don't know everyone in town anymore. "When everyone knew everyone else, outreach happened as a fruit of faith without any formal program. That may need to be a more focused effort now," said Bader.

"What we strive for as we go into the community," he explained, "is to inform people not just what we stand against, but what we stand for—faithfulness to God and his Word."

There may not be large numbers of opportunities for outreach into the community, but members see the need to use the opportunities the Lord gives them.

Vacation Bible school and the church's prekindergarten ministry show the community the congregation's concern for those outside the church.

A somewhat unusual outreach comes from the contacts made when teenagers from the community drop in on confirmation classes. "On more than one occasion, that is the opportunity the Lord provided for us to speak to young people about the love of our Lord," said Bader.

## Watering the plant

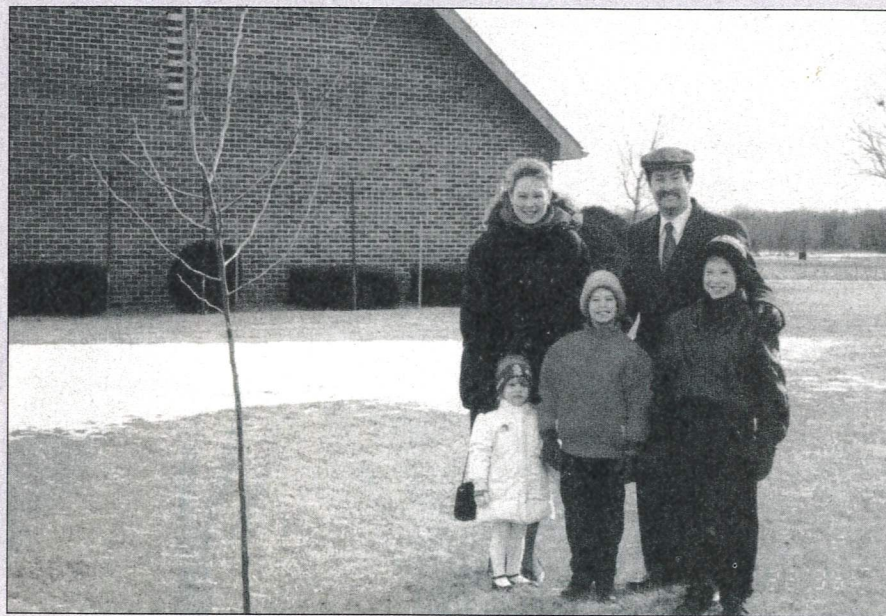
Looking for opportunities to spread the Word, members also see the need to grow and nourish their own faith. Participation in adult Bible class has been increasing over the past few years. "One of the joys of the ministry here is to see people growing and maturing in their Christian faith, and then stepping forward to take more active roles in the congregation's ministry," said Bader.

St. John offers opportunities for service such as church council,

One day while listening to the radio, Mary Ellen Busiahn heard how pastors are often underappreciated. "I realized that we don't comprehend how much Pastor Bader has to do," she said. "My husband Gerry and I talked about it and started talking to others in the congregation. We wanted to let our pastor know how much we appreciate all he does for us. So we planned a Pastor Appreciation Sunday. Everyone embraced the idea. It wasn't a lot of work, but it expressed our feelings, which is sometimes hard to do."

One Sunday after church in October, the congregation planted a tree which serves these purposes:

- It reminds them that as a community that depends on God's power and grace to grow its crops, they need God's power and grace to grow their church and his kingdom.
- It is a visual reminder to the pastor and his family of the congregation's love and appreciation.
- It is a visual reminder to the congregation to pray for and support the pastor and his family.



*A wind chill of 25 degrees below zero doesn't stop Pastor Randy Bader, wife Carolyn, and children Katrina, Micah, and Jesse from appreciating the tree planted for them on Pastor Appreciation Sunday.*

Sunday school teaching, youth fellowship, and ladies aid. There is also an evening ladies' guild for working women.

"I look forward to going to church," said Wilkinson. "We're like one big family so we get to serve other people. In a big city you might not even know your neighbors."

"What's most wonderful though," said member Mary Ellen Busiahn, "is the fellowship. There's a special closeness because we exist for a common goal."

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*Linda Baacke is communications assistant for WELS Communication Services.*

As Simon Peter stood warming himself, he was asked, “You are not one of his disciples, are you?”

He denied it, saying,

“I am not.”

JOHN 18:25

The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter.

LUKE 22:61



# Trust is restored

**If you cannot trust Peter to do the right thing, whom can you trust?**

**Gary P. Baumler**

Superman, where are you?

Where is the rocklike apostle, Simon Peter, who is supposed to help get us excited about confessing Jesus Christ? What happened to the beautiful confession Peter made for us on another day? Now he has denied being Jesus' disciple and has insisted, "I am not one."

All our idols have clay feet.

Isn't that just the way it goes?

Listen to a few not altogether imaginary conversations:

"You know, I used to really respect Doctor Smoghammer. But after what he pulled last week, I'm not so sure."

"Of all persons, I just wouldn't have expected that of her."

"Even Proper Percival and All-American Arthur are doing it."

Or ponder the following: Is your favorite world-class athlete a junky or a sex offender? Has your favorite

entertainer posed for any slick magazines or otherwise betrayed the values you have held dear? Is there any politician you trust implicitly?

All our idols have clay feet.

---

*All our idols have clay feet.*

*Isn't that just the way it goes?*

---

We hear it in the church: "The principal doesn't spend enough time at school." "The pastor only wants things his way." "The administrators in Milwaukee have forgotten how it is in the parish."

Forgive me if I seem to get carried away.

But if you cannot trust Peter to show you the right way and to do the right thing, whom can you trust?

Whom can you trust?

The question echoes in a cavern of human failings. And the answer echoes after it: "Not me, not me, not me," it repeats over and over again. "I am not a disciple." "I don't know him."

You come to the end of the line. There is no one. The arm of man must fail. You look up. There stands a man—a lonesome figure, a suffering human being, a man unjustly condemned by men, a man on his way to die. Everyone else has gone—Peter, the big names, the politicians—everyone. He turns and looks straight at you.

And trust is restored.

NL

*Gary Baumler is editor of Northwestern Lutheran and the synod's Director of Communications.*

# Under the Father's watchful eye

**All my problems seemed to disappear as I watched and listened to the birds. Their heavenly Father was protecting them and me.**

**John A. Braun**



As the sun came up around my deer stand, I noticed the birds feeding in the brush in front of me. Chickadees perched on the dry, brown stalks of goldenrod, looking for seeds. Slate-colored juncos flew among the stalks and found a bare spot to land. Cardinals came down from the trees behind me. They perched on the tall stalks, scouting for danger before they dropped to the ground, and chirping back and forth to one another.

### Quiet reflection

I stood quiet and still. The birds flipped and hopped on the dry leaves and grass, making me listen carefully for the sound of a deer making its way through the brush. They came in waves: first the chickadees, then the juncos, and then the cardinals. Sometimes for no apparent reason the birds would all disappear, and everything would be quiet.

With the rising sun, the day grew pleasant. As I stood in the warm sunlight, the birds would return and surround me. The chickadees tapped the dried stalks with their beaks. They flew around my head, landed next to me, and hopped on the dry ground at my feet. One even landed on my shoulder.

Besides the chirp of the cardinals, the chickadees reassured each other with their high-pitched call that sounded like "Naugh, naugh."

### God's wonderful care

All my problems seemed to disappear as I watched and listened to the birds. Their heavenly Father was protecting them and me.

A doe emerged from the brush into the clearing about 20 yards away. She looked toward where I was standing, her enormous ears turned to catch any sound. I stood

perfectly still. I couldn't shoot her; she didn't have antlers. After a moment or two she turned away and ambled past me along the trail. Her heavenly Father watched both of us.

I shifted my attention to the birds again. Their tweets and chirps and the flutter of their wings reminded me of God's wonderful care of his creatures. Birds don't store food in granaries, nor do they sow seed and harvest crops. Yet God feeds them and knows when they fall out of the sky. Jesus reminded his disciples not to worry and illustrated his lesson by referring to the birds.

### Ever-present reality

From where I stood in the woods, suddenly I heard the sirens of the nearby community's volunteer fire department. I listened to their trucks scream down the highway toward a fire off in the distance. I watched black smoke rising above the trees until it stopped.

Listening to the radio in my car on the way home, I heard that two hunters had been accidentally shot and killed. Even the birds can't close the door on the world around us. We all know tragedy and death. Maybe they're off in the distance, but only for a time.

### Eternal security

The language of nature is beautiful and eloquent. Poets write about it. The created world speaks to us about God's eternal power. Yet not one chirp, one flutter of wings, one ray of warm sunshine, or one rustle in the brush will ever speak the name of Jesus. Those sounds in the woods can bring calm, joy, and pleasure. They cannot bring salvation. No one can know of the death and resurrection of Jesus by watching the birds or admiring the sun-

rise. No one can come to faith by such quiet contemplation of God's created world. Faith requires a different language.

Although the day in the woods brought relief from the tensions and pressures of life, I returned to the world of sirens, smoke, and death. On days of turmoil, I can recall the bliss of solitude I found among the birds. Yet the birds cannot tell me of Jesus' forgiveness and victory over death. That message comes only from the words of God in the Scriptures. The sound of those words brings me faith, life, and hope in Jesus. The message of the chickadee brings pleasure, but no hope of forgiveness or eternal life.

### Joy in a song

Now winter is well along. In the midwest, the cardinal has begun to sing from the top of a bare tree. He exchanges his short fall chirp for a longer clear whistle. He stakes out his territory with that song. I mimic his song, and for a moment we sing to each other. I greet his song with a smile, look up to spot his red feathers in the treetops, and thank God.

Now, too, we celebrate Lent. I go to the house of God to hear of my Savior's agony, death, and resurrection. I find pleasure in the birds' music, but I treasure the song of God's love for me in Jesus. Only that message brings eternal life and victory over a sinful and painful world. The songs of the birds won't ever be enough.

NL

*John Braun is vice president of editorial services for Northwestern Publishing House and president of Northwestern College.*

# The independent Christian

**She thought she didn't need the church.**

**Rosane N. Aguirre**

It was just another morning. I was on a crowded bus, trying to find a little space in the aisle where I could at least breathe, when the sign passed in front of my eyes: "CCI—Christian Center for Information."

The word "Christian" attracted my attention. I asked myself, "What's this? Another one of those cults? Why 'Information?' And what kind of information?"

On following days, I tried to look more carefully to see if I could read what this Christian Center was offering. There was a kind of class about the Bible. It was free, and anyone could take it. I wanted to go in and ask a few questions, but I wasn't sure that it would be a good idea. There are so many crazies running around.

And how do you ask for information without revealing anything about yourself? Maybe they would ask me questions, too. They might want to know my religion, what I do for a living, whether I was married, whether I smoked or used drugs, whether I walk around lost and asking for help, all those kinds of things. "No. I definitely do not need that kind of risk," I thought.

At the same time, I needed God in my life. Those were difficult days for me. Not that I had any apparent problem; what was happening with me was something you can't see.



## No need for church

During my childhood and teenage years I had been a good Catholic. Then I met people who helped me to understand God's Word, and I began to understand his love shown to me through Christ's death on the cross. I think I was a good Christian, faithful in my worship and other activities of the church: choir, Bible class, youth group, and work groups.

*I didn't want to hear anything about church. But I really did need communion and peace with God.*

Then one day I got upset about something at church and said to myself, "I don't need church! I just need God. I'm going to be a good Christian, but I don't want any more obligations. Enough of these ties with the church!" And so I became a "good independent Christian."

I don't know how much time this took, but it wasn't a lot. I didn't even notice when I stopped reading my Bible or talking with God. When I did finally notice, I had already left God behind, and I was too far away to come back. Yes, I really was too far, because I didn't want to come back any more.

I met new people. I made different friends. I moved, changed jobs, changed my life style. I thought I was the greatest. I became more independent, modern, daring.

Once in a while I thought about God, but it never helped me much. Little by little I was becoming more afraid—of danger, of punishment, of the unknown, of the night, of

being alone. I tried not to think about it. When people tried to talk to me about church, I was indifferent. I already knew about churches and didn't want anything more to do with them.

The sign in front of the Christian Center for Information awakened in me doubt at first—and fear, too. I didn't want to hear anything about church. But I really did need communion and peace with God.

## A need for God

For years I had hidden from God, thinking that by myself I could find solutions for my problems. In fact, I had solved many of them, but there was a problem inside me that I couldn't solve. Of course I believed that God existed. But I had lost his friendship. I had sent him away, and now I felt he didn't want me anymore. But he still did want me.

I thank God for helping me find the Christian Center for Information. It wasn't easy to get over my preconceived notions of the center. When I found out it was a mission of a Lutheran church from the United States, I had even more doubts. But I thought, at least I would take their class. After all, it was free. How could it hurt?

Then I saw their great concern for teaching only what was true, and in a way that was clear. I saw a faithfulness to the gospel that really impressed me. Suddenly I was learning so much that was new to me, and so important. I don't know if before, during my "good Christian life," I hadn't tried to learn with such dedication, but I do know that what I have gained now is a great treasure to me.

God may have been angry with me. I know he certainly had reason

to be, but I also know he always loved me. If it weren't true, he wouldn't have given his Son to be crucified in my place. Having peace in the heart means being sure of his love and forgiveness.

In the end, I stopped trying to be a "good independent Christian." After all, is there anything better than being part of God's family?

NL

*This article originally appeared in the newsletter, "Fonte da Fe," a publication of the Christian Center for Information in Porto Alegre, Brazil. The translation is by missionary Bruce J. Marggraf.*

## Your WELS missionaries in Brazil:

**Charles and Elsbeth Flunker**  
Rua N 158—Pq Alvodora  
79823-440 Dourados—  
MS Brazil SA

**Charles and Wendy Gumm**  
Rua da Mata 129 Apt 32  
04531-020 Sao Paulo—  
SP Brazil SA

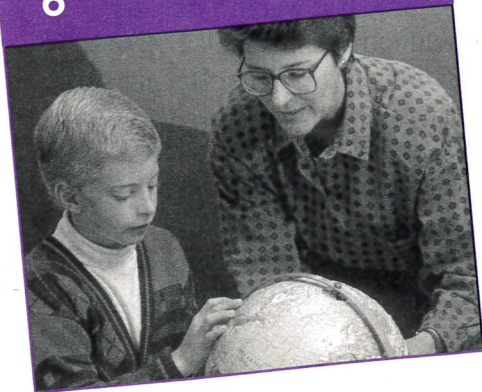
**Bruce and Kathy Marggraf**  
Avenida dos Gauchos 645  
Porto Alegre—  
RS 91110-090 Brazil SA

**Guy and Linda Marquardt**  
c/o Ronald Marquardt  
1207 Fernmeadow Dr  
Appleton WI 54915



6

MONDAY



Millions of Americans may be suffering from anorexia. No, not the anorexia nervosa Karen Carpenter's death brought to national prominence nearly two decades ago. I'm talking about anorexia of the soul.

To be sure, there are some similarities between the two. An anorexic avoids food. A spiritual anorexic believes the delusion that avoiding the nourishment of God's Word is all right—perhaps even desirable.

I suppose there are as many reasons for spiritual anorexia as there are spiritual anorexics. Some fear that too much of God's Word might make them spiritually fat. "After all," one woman protested, "I don't want to get fanatical." But when you hear that you've been snatched from the jaws of hell, it's hard not to get a little fanatical, isn't it?

# Spiritual anorexia

**A spiritual anorexic believes the delusion that avoiding the nourishment of God's Word is all right—perhaps even desirable.**

Wayne A. Laitinen

The spiritual anorexic may say anything from "My faith is strong, no one can ever take it away," to "I've heard that all before."

---

*If anyone could say, "I've heard it all before," it was Jesus. In fact, as true God, he wrote the book. Then why did our Savior make it his custom to be in the synagogue every Sabbath? Why did he bother to listen to ordinary sermons by sinful rabbis?*

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Of course, the anorexic says that so we'll leave him alone. If anything, his self-diagnosis should heighten our concern.

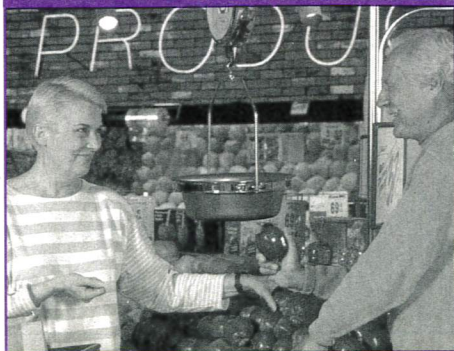
These words exhibit two more symptoms of anorexia: a distorted self-image and denial.

## We need a rich diet

Our Lord Jesus has a much more objective understanding of the human condition. Peter, his disciple, once boasted that his faith in Jesus would never fail. With a doctor's care, our Lord prescribed a stern warning from God's law. Tossing the Physician's words aside, Peter denied his Savior only hours later. As long as we carry with us the sinful flesh, we, too, are in danger of falling from faith and that spells eternal death. Our Savior prescribes a diet rich in "the one thing needful," the Word of Christ. And he gives us the blessing of like-minded Christians who watch for our souls.

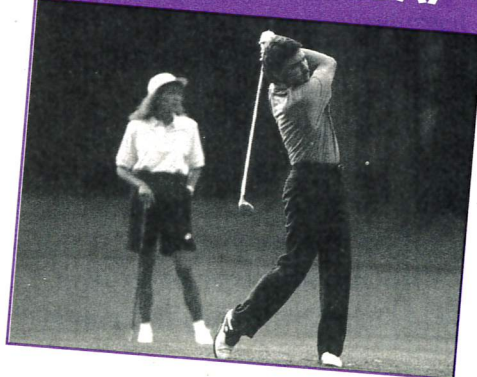
7

TUESDAY



8

WEDNESDAY



9

THURSDAY





Even our Lord Jesus found himself in God's Word and God's house constantly. In Luke 4:16 we read, "Jesus went into the synagogue, as was his custom."

**We need a regular diet**

We might say it differently. We could say that Jesus was a regular churchgoer. After all, the synagogue was the place where Moses and the prophets were read and explained. There were times, of course, when Jesus was asked to be the preacher for the day. There were certainly other times when Jesus listened to others teach from the Bible.

Isn't that amazing? The all-knowing Son of God made the weekly trip to church, whether or not he was the preacher! As true God, what did he expect to learn? Something new?

Imagine a gray-headed rabbi standing in front of our Savior reading from the scroll of Moses: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. . . ."

Jesus could have replied, "Yes, I know that well. All things were made by me and without me nothing was made that has been made."

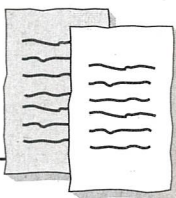
When the story of God's covenant with Abram was read, Jesus could reply, "Before Abraham was, I am."

**THIRD COMMANDMENT**

Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy.

*What does this mean?*

We should fear and love God that we do not despise preaching and his Word, but regard it as holy, and gladly hear and learn it.



Was the reading about God's grace to King David? Jesus was David's son and David's Lord.

If anyone could say, "I've heard it all before," it was Jesus. In fact, as true God, he wrote the book.

**No more excuses**

Then why did our Savior make it his custom to be in the synagogue every Sabbath? Why did he bother to listen to ordinary sermons by sinful rabbis?

Because he was in every way like we are, except without sin. He was tempted as we are. Both Satan and his own disciple, Peter, tried to lure him away from the path to the cross. He had family problems. His

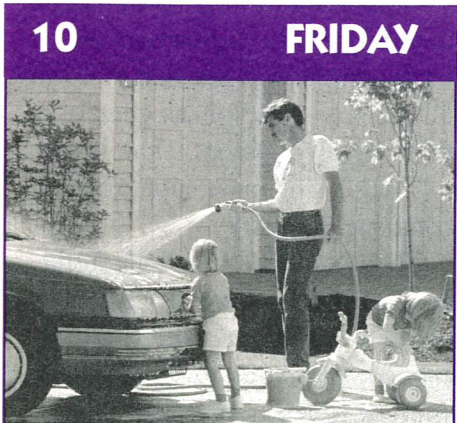
mother and brothers tried to drag him away from his "pulpit." They thought he was taking his work too seriously. He was persecuted by his religious community for calling himself the Messiah. His love was spurned. The future looked terrifying. The sins he had to carry for us seemed more than he could bear. And, finally, who really did care if he died for them?

Even the sinless Son of Man needed to hear the Word of God, which gave him strength and reassurance. Through the chant of his rabbi, Jesus could hear his Father's voice, "You are my beloved Son. I am pleased with what you are doing."

I suppose there are a lot of excuses for spiritual anorexia. But who of us sinful mortals needs God's comfort, assurance, and direction less than our Savior?

NL

*Wayne Laitinen is pastor at Gethsemane, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.*



10

FRIDAY



11

SATURDAY



12

SUNDAY

# Titles and terms: the scope of ministry

**Titles for ministers can be confusing. It's important to work toward common definitions.**

**Wayne D. Mueller**

Everything used to be less complicated. At least that's what we'd like to think when faced with the array of titles and terms in today's ministry. We long for the good old days when minister meant pastor and ministry was what the pastor did.

But nostalgia can be naive. Things never were so simple. Already in Bible times there were many different kinds of public ministers. There were apostles, elders, deacons and deaconesses, bishops, prophets, evangelists, teachers, administrators, and interpreters. Ephesians 4 and 1 Corinthians 12 offer long lists of titles, and Romans 12 provides additional descriptions of ministry functions.

Our church also assigns many titles to its public ministers. Men trained at our seminary serve as pastors, professors, administrators, editors, chaplains, and missionaries. Teaching ministers are

called as preschool, elementary, and secondary instructors, principals, editors, professors, and ministers of education.

## Staff ministers

So it was nothing much out of the ordinary when our synod decided to begin training staff ministers. Staff ministers serve in specialized areas of parish work. Youth and family, adult instruction, administration, music, and evangelism are the most common areas of service. Formal training for staff ministers begins this fall at Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota.

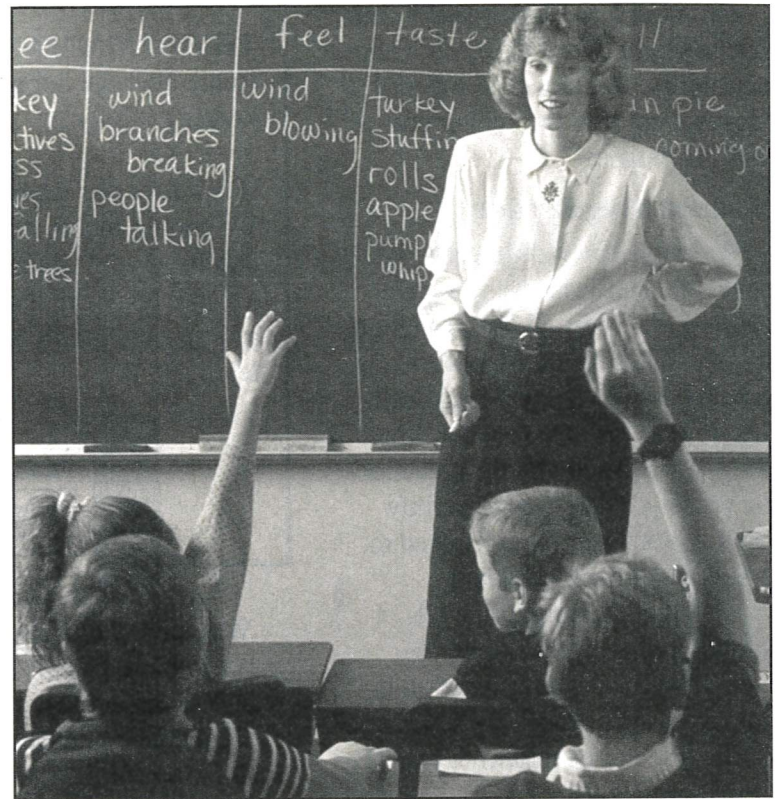
Before our synod convention voted to train staff ministers, more than a dozen of our congregations had already created such positions. The decision to certify staff ministers, then, did not create a new ministry form. Rather it was to give congregations the confidence that

those they call possess the same qualifications and Bible knowledge as teaching ministers. When their classroom work and internship are completed, future staff ministers will be called to congregations, just as pastors and teachers are now.

## Lay ministers

Today's many forms of ministry are really only differing ways to serve Jesus. Still, all those terms and titles can be confusing, and so it's important to work toward common definitions. Agreement on terms will help us see that all forms of ministry work for the good of the whole body of Christ. That, in turn, will help us be more supportive of all gospel ministry.

Though there are various forms, there is only one ministry of good news. In some way, every form of service contributes to spread the word of Jesus. Jesus called this



ministry the keys because it opens the door of heaven by offering his forgiveness.

Sometimes ministry is called the office of the keys. This means nothing other than the authority or privilege to serve Jesus by spreading his message. Jesus gave this right to all believers, and only to believers. Borrowing from Peter's wording, we call the effort individual Christians make to share the gospel the priesthood of all believers.

Of course, you don't have to be a professional to read the Bible or share its message. That's why the use of the keys by all believers is often called lay ministry. Lay means untrained. Lay ministry is our daily, personal ministry. As priests of Christ, we represent our personal faith when we witness to others and serve our family with the Word of God.

### Public ministers

A small dictionary full of terms greets us when we begin to talk about public ministry. These titles usually derive from the scope of the individual form of ministry.

When a group of Christians calls a public minister, they define the nature and extent of his or her service. That definition is what we mean by the scope of public ministry. Every public minister's call is limited in scope to some extent.

Titles for public ministers usually describe the scope, or general nature of their duties. Words like professor, preacher, pastor, teacher, editor, administrator, chaplain, counselor, and missionary describe the main thrust of each public servant's work.

The same is true for new forms of public ministry that arise. Staff

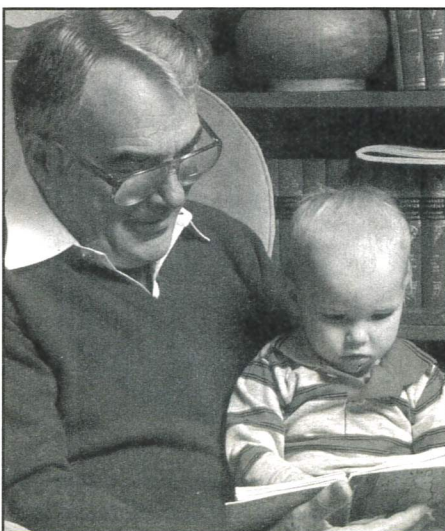
ministers are so called because the scope of their call limits them to an assigned area of ministry on a pastoral staff.

While every call is limited to a certain area of service, a divine call may be also limited in time. One does not have to serve full-time to be a public minister. In fact, many work part time or in shared-time ministry.

### Member ministers

In addition, thousands of non-professionals serve our parishes part time in the public ministry as officers, elders, and teachers. By election or appointment, God calls them through the people they serve to be his representatives.

Because these church members are not professional public ministers, their service is mistakenly labeled lay ministry. This, however, is an unclear use of the term. It confuses the personal lay ministry of every believer with the public ministry that only a few have by virtue of a call from God. To honor their service as public ministry, it would be better to refer to part-time parish workers as member ministers.



### Many ministers, one ministry

The various titles for today's public ministers take our thoughts back to the names for Jesus. Emanuel, Savior, Redeemer, Shepherd, Friend, Counselor, Lord, Son of Man, and Rabbi are some of the names the Bible gives him. Jesus' names, too, describe the various aspects of his saving ministry for us.

Though he had many titles, Jesus had only one ministry. Jesus told Pilate that his sole purpose for being born and coming into the world was to testify to the truth. Every aspect of Christ's work served this one central purpose of getting out the message of good news.

So it is with the one ministry Jesus gave us, his church. All believers carry out their daily, personal ministry. Some also serve in the public ministry where they represent those who have called them. These public ministers may wear various titles.

But, as long as we all serve that single purpose of getting the truth of the gospel out to the world, there remains just one ministry in the church. Within the body of Christ, titles and terms do not divide. They help me appreciate better where my area of service fits in with all the others.

Then I marvel that Jesus gave a sinner such as me such a privilege at all.

NL

*Wayne Mueller is administrator of Board for Parish Services.*

# Helping Christians evangelize

## Pastor Robert Hartman answers questions about the Commission on Evangelism.

### What's the purpose of the evangelism commission?

We remind people of the priority that every congregation should give to outreach, and we provide resources, programs, and strategies to assist them.

We get calls from congregations saying, "We want to do this. What is available? How can we use this?" So we serve as a resource office.

### How do you help congregations?

The number one way is the school of outreach. It's a weekend experience in the spring or fall, and a congregation can bring in six to ten people. We work one-on-one with them as they evaluate their local situation and develop a plan for evangelism or outreach for their community.

We also are training district people. Part of our role is to work with the district commissions and coordinators so they can provide hands-on assistance to congregations.

Our focus has changed. Ten years ago, our focus was to develop a lot of resources because there weren't many available. Today we have resources available, and our focus is more on helping congregations use those resources.

### What are some challenges as you provide resources today?

One, we try to make them parochial. In other words, rural and small towns want things that do not

necessarily apply to large cities. Inner cities need things that do not apply to suburbs. So we try to provide resources that are culturally specific for different kinds of congregations and different kinds of settings.

Two, we provide more training for personal witness now than we did ten years ago. For example, we have a series of three workshops: "Friendship Witnessing;" "Minding the Message," that teaches how to apply communication skills in personal witness; and (soon to come) "Sharing Our Faith," that will focus on listening and how to speak your faith.

### Do people really need help in personal witnessing? Isn't that a natural result of the gospel at work in us?

Yes, it is. But Satan is also at work on us, and we have fears that

hinder our witness. We have a fear of rejection. We have a fear of not knowing what to say at the right time. If a person asks a question or raises an objection, we are afraid that we will give the wrong answer and perhaps even make the situation worse rather than better. Friendship witnessing training helps us overcome those fears and understand that the gospel working in us enables us to witness—the Holy Spirit makes it happen. And we review again the message that saves in Christ.

### People today speak of "growing the church." How should we understand that?

When we talk about the growth of the church, we recognize that the tools God uses to grow the church are the means of grace [the gospel in Word and sacraments], and we are the messengers of the means of grace. We are trying to help people be the best messengers they can be.



*The Evangelism Commission staff:  
Audrey Bluhm and Bob Hartman.*

*For help with your church's evangelism, contact WELS Commission on Evangelism, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222; 414/256-3272.*

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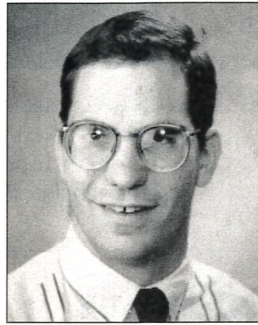
# Dr. Martin Luther College

## GRADUATES

On Dec. 22nd, fourteen graduates of Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., received Bachelor of Science in Education degrees. Names followed by an asterisk are elementary/secondary education graduates. The rest received elementary education degrees.



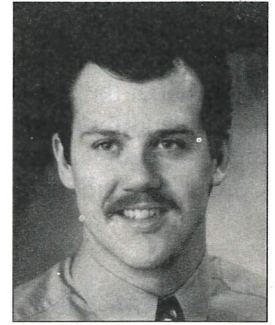
Andrew Asmus  
Watertown, Wis.



Paul F. Blakely  
Springville, N.Y.



Rachel M. DeShone  
Saginaw, Mich.



Scott Deters  
New Ulm, Minn.



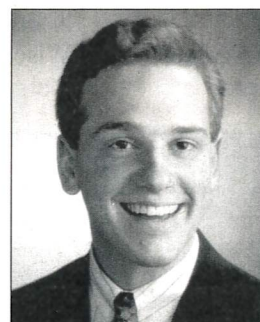
Jennifer K. Hermanson  
New Ulm, Minn.



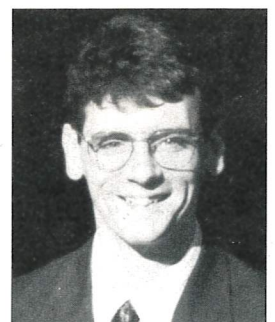
Matthew J. Heyn  
New Ulm, Minn.



Tammy Ann J. Nickel  
Mayville, Wis.



Jonathan A. Roux \*  
Saginaw, Mich.



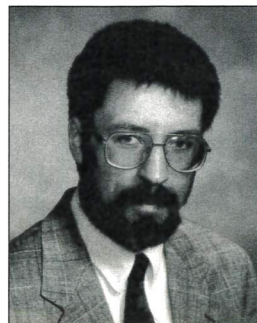
Dale R. Rundgren  
East Hartford, Conn.



Amy M. Schaumberg  
New Ulm, Minn.



Naomi R. Sehloff \*  
Manitowoc, Wis.



Damon S. Tracy  
Jefferson, Wis.



Leah M. Tracy \*  
Milwaukee, Wis.



Michael J. Vathauer  
Belle Plaine, Minn.



## WELS Connection leads to Kids Connection

The popularity of WELS Connection, a video magazine for adults, has led to Kids Connection, a similar program for young people.

"We want to encourage kids to use their faith," said Gerald Kastens, "and provide them with a positive look at WELS, its members, and its mission." He is administrator for the Commission on Youth Discipleship, which produced the video.

WELS Connection offers news briefs about the synod and its members. In addition to news of interest to young people, Kastens said, Kids Connection will include a short

Scripture lesson.

The video magazine's pilot issue features a conversation with a NASA scientist who is a WELS member, a visit to a Lutheran school on a Caribbean island, and a child-centered Bible message.

In February every WELS congregation received a complimentary video. Whether more Kids Connections will be produced will depend on the number of subscribers, Kastens said. The pilot issue was funded by grants from WELS Kingdom Workers and the Siebert Foundation.



Kids Connection hosts—Maurice Brown, Rachel Leverage, and Seth Gurgel—wait to begin taping Kids Connection. The teens anchor the video magazine.

## Financial aid helps second-career students

You're married and have a family when you decide to study for the ministry. How do you provide for your family and pay for tuition while you're a full-time student?

Dan Schmidt is a second-career student at Wisconsin Lutheran

Seminary. When Dan decided to study for the pastoral ministry, he left his job in Minnesota, enrolled in the seminary certification program at Northwestern College, and moved to Wisconsin with his wife Naomi and their four children. The decision was

difficult because it involved a number of financial uncertainties.

Some of those uncertainties were overcome through the generosity of two WELS couples. Each couple recognized how God had blessed them financially. Each wanted to use some of those blessings to help a ministerial student.

One couple contacted Northwestern College to offer housing for a married student. The Schmidts moved in. This family has continued to supply direct financial assistance to Dan and his family.

Another couple contacted the seminary, wanting to "adopt" the children of a second-career student. This couple has provided gifts and assistance for the Schmidt children.

If you are interested in helping a student with special financial needs, contact our seminary, colleges, or prep schools. You may be able to help a future pastor or teacher in a direct and personal way.

—John M. Brenner



Dan and Naomi Schmidt, with Kristina, Jessica, Hannah, and Alyssa, are grateful for financial help while Dan studies for the ministry.

## Reformation rally— Texas style

A climb up Enchanted Rock, an informal service at a ranch, and a barbecue—that's how 200 Texan Christians observed Reformation Day last Oct. 30. Billed as Reformation on the Ranch, the day's agenda included a talk by Prof. Richard Balge of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, interspersed with congregational singing and music by three choirs.

"It was probably the largest gathering in our area. People came from San Antonio, Austin, Temple, and Killeen," said Pastor Roy Brassow of Shepherd of the Hills, Fredericksburg, Tex. The congregation hosted the rally at a ranch in Stonewall.



## WELSNET can link synod and spread the Word, says program director

"Once WELS members begin to use WELSNET and see how easy and quick it is, it will become a necessity in every home," predicts Amanda Kohlmetz. She is the director of program development for WELSNET, an electronic bulletin board for synod members, and she's excited about its possibilities.

"WELSNET can link the synod, and it's quick and cost-effective," Kohlmetz said. "Pastors, teachers, and lay members can get instant news about what's happening at other churches across the country." They can also receive information on a variety of topics.

She explained how the system works. "On an electronic bulletin board system, you write a letter on your computer and use a telephone line to send the message from one computer to another."

Kohlmetz hopes that WELSNET will soon be part of Internet, a nation-wide bulletin board. When it joins that information superhighway, she says, WELSNET can do more than link synod members.

"It's a great way to evangelize. Once we're part of Internet, any person anywhere can get information about our beliefs, where our churches are, and whom they might contact locally. WELSNET can reach people without the cost and time it normally takes to communicate with them. It's another way God has given us to spread his Word."

Membership on WELSNET is \$20 per year. For information, call Northwestern Publishing House at 1-800-662-6093, ext. 119; or call WELSNET at 414/475-7514 and fill out the on-line subscription form.



The youth choir from Shepherd of the Hills, Fredericksburg, Tex., sang at the Reformation Day rally in Stonewall, Tex.

## WELS EXPO offers information about synod

WELS members can learn more about the synod and talk to its representatives March 25 at a day-long exposition at the Days Inn in LaCrosse, Wis.

Over 25 organizations sponsored by or affiliated with WELS will have displays and offer presentations. At a "town hall" meeting, representatives from the synod's national headquar-

ters will talk about plans and answer questions.

Sponsored by WELS Kingdom Workers, WELS EXPO is the first of 12 expositions, one in each synodical district. The second is planned for October at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.

## District News

### Western Wisconsin

**Grace, Wausau, Wis.**, celebrated its 110th anniversary Oct. 9. The congregation has worshiped for all of those years in the same building, although the church did relocate once—a few feet. In 1934 a windstorm moved the building from its foundation. Originally known as Andrew-Grace Lutheran Church, the congregation changed its name to Grace in 1945.

### Michigan

**St. John, Hemlock**, observed the 75th anniversary of its school Jan. 8. The guest preacher, Randall Ott, was a graduate of the school. . . . **Grace, Muskegon**, dedicated a new electronic organ in October. The digital instrument also has Midi capability.

### Minnesota

The Ladies Aid of **Christ, Zumbrota**, will be experienced at planning cen-

tennials when the parish reaches its 100th birthday. The women's group, which celebrated 100 years in August, is two years older than the congregation. President Irene Clemenson reports that the anniversary meeting closed with the hymn used at the first meeting—"Jesus, Lead Thou On."

### California

**California Lutheran High School** dedicated its new campus and buildings on Jan. 28. The new 8.5-acre campus is in Wildomar, midway between San Diego and Riverside. The campus consists of six modular classroom units and a dormitory with two apartments for dorm supervisors. . . . **Nancy Smith** was honored Nov. 20 by **Reformation, San Diego**, for 25 years of teaching in Lutheran schools. She has been teaching at Reformation since 1971. . . . **Beautiful Savior, Carlsbad**, hosted a discipleship workshop Sept. 24. . . . The choir of **Ascension, Escondido**, was invited to sing Christmas carols at

Sea World of San Diego . . . . President Karl Gurgel was the preacher at the 1994 joint **Reformation service** at St. Paul First, North Hollywood. Congregations of the Los Angeles and Mountain View circuits sponsored the service. . . . **King of Kings, Garden Grove**, celebrated a double anniversary Oct. 2: the 30th of the dedication of the sanctuary and the 34th of the congregation's first service.

### Dakota-Montana

The **Dakota-Montana District** will celebrate its 75th anniversary July 9-10 at **Mobridge, S. Dak.** Plans call for a reception on July 9. A service on July 10 will be followed by a banquet. . . . James Valley, Jamestown, S. Dak., dedicated its new church Oct. 16. . . . **D. Thomas Rawerts, St. Peter, St. Albert, Alberta**, and **Paul Metzger, Apostles, Billings, Mont.**, each observed 10 years in ministry.



### Centenarians

Siloah, Milwaukee, recently celebrated its centennial, but two members are even older than the church. Hilda Wussow was born in 1891 and Hilda Burckardt in 1893. "Join Siloah and live to be a hundred!" quipped Pastor Keith Tullberg.

### Obituary

#### Emma Roeder Hackbarth 1905-1994

Emma Sophie Caroline Hackbarth, nee Roeder, was born Nov. 22, 1905, in Rochester, Minn. She died Nov. 22, 1994, in Mankato, Minn.

A graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, she taught at Bethlehem, Hortonville, Wis., and St. Paul, New Ulm, Minn.

She is survived by daughters Charlotte Hackbarth, Eunice (Milton) Owens, Lydia (John) Schibbelhut, Grace Anderson, Lois (Wouter) Fireling; sons Arthur (Judith), Hilbert, and Frederick (Ronda); 34 grandchildren; and 26 great-grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husband, Herbert; daughter, Rachel Seebach; and brother, John Roeder.

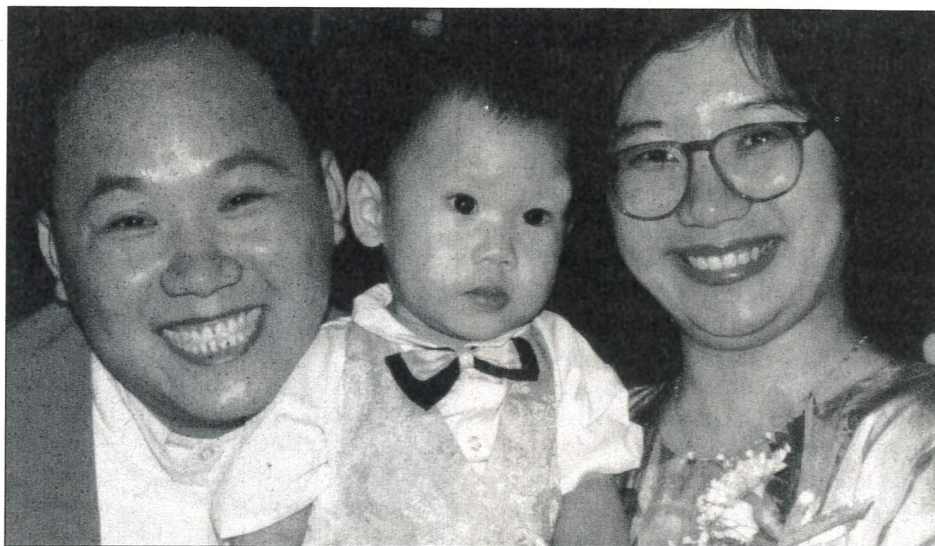


## Chinese pastor ordained in Hong Kong

Yeung Wai Shing of Hong Kong was ordained a pastor in the South Asian Lutheran Evangelical Mission (SALEM) on Sept. 4. He serves the Sam Shing church in Tuen Mun.

Yeung, who was baptized in 1982, studied for the ministry at SALEM's Bible Institute and Seminary.

"Yeung has been instrumental in leading Sam Shing Church to self-support," reports missionary Gary Schroeder. "Sam Shing's members reflect Yeung's commitment to leading souls to Christ."



Daniel and Carol Yeung, with son Douglas, beam with joy at Yeung's ordination. Besides their Chinese names, the Yeungs use English names.

## In English or Russian, the same Christmas service

While WELS children in America were reciting a Christmas service in English, children across the Atlantic were taking part in the same service in Russian.

"Where Shepherds Lately Knelt" was the children's Christmas service produced by Northwestern Publishing House and widely used by WELS churches. That service, based on a hymn, was translated into Russian for the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Church in Novosibirsk, Russia.

"The Lord filled our auditorium to standing room only," reported missionary Darren Green. "We had about 235 people. About 50 children participated in the service. We read the narrations and readings in English and Russian." The children sang and recited in Russian.

Whether in America or Russia the response was the same. "The children did a wonderful job," said Green. "Many people expressed how much they enjoyed the service. We pray that the Lord will use the message to touch many hearts."



### Jesus: God's Christmas gift

At the Rockford (Ill.) Park District's annual Festival of Lights last December, members of Peace, Loves Park, reminded the community of the true meaning of Christmas. Over 250,000 people visited Sinissippi Park to view 75 displays, most set up by local businesses. Peace's display read, "Jesus: God's Christmas gift to Rockford."

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## Retirement centers foster Christian friendships

Many of the residents of Stoney Creek Adult Community in Muskego, Wis., were friends before they became neighbors, and those who didn't know each other are becoming friends. Friendship flourishes when faith is a common bond.

That common bond was the reason for building Stoney Creek, an independent living center for Christians that opened last September. Most of the residents are members of Wisconsin Synod churches. Stoney Creek's manager, George Guhr, calls them "sharing, caring, and happy."

Besides Stoney Creek, WELS-affiliated retirement communities include Arizona Lutheran Retirement Center in Phoenix, Luther Haven in Milwaukee, The Lutheran Home in Belle Plaine, Minn., Well Haven in River Falls, Wis., and Buckley, in Caledonia, Minn. All offer the opportunity for Christian friendships.



Stoney Creek Adult Community, in Muskego, Wis., was dedicated last September. The center has 52 apartments for adults over 55.

"We have potluck dinners, birthday parties—anything we can celebrate. We're one happy family," says

Ron Davis, manager of the Arizona center. "Being with Christians makes a big difference."



### DMLC volleyball

The 1994 Dr. Martin Luther College volleyball team won the National Small College Athletic Association title, capping a season total of 27 wins and 8 losses. Sarah Lawrenz and Staci Meier were selected for the all-tournament team and were named NSCAA All-Americans. Drew Buck coaches the team.

## Book notes

*Outline of The Book of Concord*  
 by Lyle W. Lange  
 Hardcover, 136 pages, \$16.99

Although it is not meant to be a stand-alone book, this book stands alone as a unique tool to help scholars and beginners alike study the Lutheran Confessions. The outline is sufficiently detailed and clear to allow the reader to get a basic understanding of the doctrines covered in each Confession. However, the author intends it especially to lead the reader into the Confessions themselves. It can serve as an aid to find where the Confessions treat specific doctrines and as a basis for discussion of the Confessions in Bible classes.

—Gary P. Baumler

## Cash contributions projected to rise

If you can depend on consumer projections and the aging of the baby-boomers, you can expect cash contributions for church and charity to rise significantly soon. According to a 1993 Bureau of Labor Statistics' Consumer Expenditure Survey and *American Demographics*, total expenditures will increase nearly two percent between 1995 and 2000, but cash contributions will increase nine percent.

This projection is based on the pattern of increased giving among older people and the large numbers of baby-boomers who will be in the 45-54 age group by the end of that period. It is unclear, however, how generous the new generation will be or how they will distribute their gifts, according to the report.

## Christianity on the rise worldwide

There are now 140,000 Christian missionaries serving around the globe, according to *Operation World*. Evangelical Christianity is the only religion growing because of actual conversions.

Over 500 million strong now, evangelical Christianity has grown 100-fold in the last 100 years—10 times faster than any other religious group that size.

Reports at a recent missions conference indicate that it is possible that every person on earth may hear the gospel by the year 2000.

(*Wesleyan Advocate*, Oct. 1994, cited in *Current Thoughts & Trends*, Jan. 1995)

## Lutherans in 104th Congress

There are 20 Lutherans in the 104th Congress of the United States—two less than the number of Lutherans that were in the 103rd Congress, according to the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs, Washington, D.C. Eleven are Republicans, and nine are Democrats.

Lutherans in the US Senate: Conrad Burns (R-Mont.), Byron L. Dorgan (D-N.D.), Rod Grams (R-Minn.), Ernest F. (Fritz) Hollings (D-S.C.), Paul M. Simon (D-Ill.).

Lutherans in the US House of Representatives: Douglas K. Bereuter (R-Neb.), Norman D. Dicks (D-Wash.), Steven Gunderson (R-Wis.), Fred Heineman (R-N.C.), Tim Johnson (D-S.D.), Thomas Lathan (R-Iowa), David Minge (D-Minn.), Mark Neumann (R-Wis.), Jim Nussle (R-Iowa), Michael G. Oxley (R-Ohio), Collin C. Peterson (D-Minn.), Thomas E. Petri (R-Wis.), Martin Olav Sabo (D-Minn.), Floyd D. Spence (R-S.C.), Charles W. Stenholm (D-Texas).

Representative Neumann is a member of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod and Senators Burns, Grams, and Simon and Representative McCurdy are members of Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod congregations. The rest are members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.



## Religious T-shirts approved in Texas school

An elementary school in Spring, Texas, has agreed to allow its students to wear T-shirts with religious messages on them, the Rutherford Institute has announced.

The non-profit religious liberties group based in Charlottesville, Va., said school officials had told the parents of Jason and Justin Hutchens that the twins could no longer wear T-shirts that depicted Jesus' bloody, nail-pierced hands with the slogan, "His pain, your gain."

School officials said the shirts promoted violence.

But the Rutherford Institute insisted the boys had a First Amendment right to wear the shirts. After being contacted by the institute, the school changed its policy.

## Belief in a supreme being remains high

According to a recent Gallup poll, 96 percent of the American people profess belief in a god.

The poll also revealed that 90 percent of Americans believe in heaven, up from 84 percent in 1981, while 73 percent affirm there is a hell, up from 67 percent in 1981. Belief in the devil has grown 13 percentage points from 52 percent in 1981 to 65 percent today.

For the first time, the pollster asked about miracles and angels, with 79 percent affirming belief in miracles and 72 percent in angels.

It found that 27 percent of those polled believe in reincarnation, up from 21 percent in 1990, and 28 percent believe in contact with the dead, up 10 points from 1990.



## Americans believe Jesus will return to earth

More than 60 percent of Americans believe Jesus Christ will return to earth. Of those believers, more than a third think it will be within a few years or decades. The poll, conducted for U.S. News and World Report, revealed the following:

**59%** of Americans believe the **world will come to an end or be destroyed**, and more than a third of that group believe it will happen within a few decades.

**60%** believe there will be a **final Judgment Day**.

**49%** believe there will be an **Antichrist**.

## Religious intolerance rises in Egypt

Several Egyptian Christians have been arrested in recent months for "insulting Islam" and "evangelizing Muslims," the group Christian Solidarity International has reported.

The first arrest was of a convert from Islam to Christianity, a girl named Nashwa Abd El-Aziz, and her pastor, the Rev. Boulos Samaan Abd El-Sayed. A deacon and a church employee were also reported arrested. Next came an Assemblies of God pastor, the Rev. William Gayed, who reportedly was arrested for evangelizing Muslims.

In November, a 45-year-old Coptic Orthodox priest, Father Boulos Simaan, was arrested for "insulting Islam."

All but Gayed were reported still in custody.

## New trial ordered

The Vermont Supreme Court reinstated a lawsuit against a printing shop that refused to print membership cards for a group favoring legal abortion (NL Feb., p. 27), saying the owners of the shop did not do enough to demonstrate how their religious beliefs would have been violated by the job. The court ordered a new trial in the case.

News reported in this section is derived from Religious News Service, Ecumenical Press Service, Evangelical Press Service, and Lutheran World Information. World news items do not necessarily reflect the views of WELS or *Northwestern Lutheran*.

## Christian missionary ranks thinning

While the opportunities for foreign mission work are rapidly expanding, the number of those seeking to enter the mission field are declining, according to the Southern Baptist Convention's Foreign Mission Board.

George Verwer, a leader of the AD 2000 and Beyond Movement, which seeks to evangelize the world, told the mission board the world needs 200,000 new missionaries and "half should come from the United States."

But the number of career missionaries from the United States has shrunk from 50,000 in 1988 to 41,000 in 1992, according to Verwer.

Possible reasons, according to the report, are that churches of the West have lost confidence, turned inward, and have become sanctuaries of retreat rather than launching pads.

Another factor, the report said, is the value system of the baby-boom generation: an emphasis on individual fulfillment and short-term commitment make it difficult for people to respond to a missionary's call.

## Reconciling faith and academics

Is the term "Christian university" a contradiction in terms? Can a university or college affiliated with a Christian denomination compete academically with big-name secular institutions?

Researchers at Pepperdine University, based in Malibu, Calif., and affiliated with the Church of Christ, are exploring the issue of whether a strong spiritual commitment helps or hurts a college's ability to compete on the academic stage.

Central to the issue, Pepperdine said in a release, "is the conventional wisdom that to be recognized in America as 'pure' academic, one must shed all religious and theological premises. Conversely, to be considered 'religious,' one must automatically question scholarly work that has no spiritual component."

"Many institutions determine that their religious commitment is a detriment to serious scholarship, and eventually they shed their Christian orientation," says Richard Hughes, a professor of religion at Pepperdine. Conversely, he noted, many conservative church-related institutions often find it difficult to reconcile top-quality scholarship with their faith.

As a result, Hughes concluded, few Christian institutions compete academically with America's top colleges and universities, though there are exceptions.



## The angels have a magazine

With the popular angel phenomenon (see February NL) has come a national magazine, *Angel Times*, "completely devoted and dedicated to the angelic realm," according to Linda Vephula, publisher.

# Bulletin BOARD

& NOTICES

To place an announcement, call  
414/256-3231; FAX 414/256-3899.  
Deadline is six weeks before  
publication date.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

**NWC/WLS ALUMNI**—Sing in chorus for joint concerts April 2. Call before March 3; 414/261-4352, ex. 121.

**TEACH VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL** for mission congregations

- Bolton, Ont., Can.—June 19-23, July 10-14
- Beckley, W. Va.—mid-July
- Manderville, La.—June 16-30; July 29-Aug. 11

Housing will be provided. There will also be time for sight-seeing and recreation. Contact Dale Mueller at WELS Kingdom Workers, 414/771-6848 or 1-800-466-9357.

**HOUSE-SIT IN AFRICA** for a furloughing missionary for about two months in the summer. Contact Dale Mueller at WELS Kingdom Workers, 414/771-6848 or 800-466-9357.

**HELP AT YOUTH CAMP**—Bible study leaders, crafts leaders, cooks, and maintenance workers for youth camp this summer at Camp Phillip. Also registered nurses or EMTs for one-week and half-week sessions. Contact Camp Phillip, c/o Steve Huhn, Rt 3 Box 190, Wautoma WI 54982-9330; 414/787-1085.

## ANNIVERSARIES

**HORTONVILLE, WIS.**—(125). April 30: Education Sunday (former teachers invited). June 11: Confirmation Sunday. Aug. 13: Looking to the future (church picnic). A meal follows each service.

**FLINT, MICH.**—EMANUEL (75). April 30: German-style potluck follows. June 11: former confirmands invited, meal follows. July 9: missions. Aug. 13: education, church picnic. Sept. 16: 3 pm, meal follows.

**DAKOTA-MONTANA DISTRICT**—(75). July 10, Moberge, S.D. Early motel reservations essential. Contact Zion Lutheran Church, Moberge; 605/845-3704.

## NAMES WANTED

**TALLAHASSEE, FLA.**—Pastor Nathan Strobel, 3037 Corrib Dr., Tallahassee FL 32308; 904/668-0286. Bible class, 9 AM; worship, 10:15 AM, at the Arthur Murray studio in the Pavilions shopping area, 1410 Market Street.

## NEEDED

**PHOTOS, BRIEF ANECDOTES, INTERESTING FACTS, TRIVIA**—about the synod's seminary, colleges, prep schools for a special NL edition. *Northwestern Lutheran*, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222; 414/256-3231 or FAX 414/256-3899. Needed by March 31.

**ARTICLES, STORIES, NEWS**—*Northwestern Lutheran* welcomes manuscripts, news items, and photos for possible publication. Call 414/256-3231 or send to *Northwestern Lutheran*, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.

**STORIES FOR WELLSPRING**—WELS family magazine needs articles and stories. Stories do not need to be in publishable form. Please contact Kenneth Kremer, *Wellspring*, Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N 113 St, Milwaukee WI 53226-3284.

**PEWS AND COMMUNION RAIL**—for mission church. Call 814/944-7288 evenings, or write Our Savior Lutheran Church, PO Box 347, Hollidaysburg PA 16648.

## AVAILABLE

**INDIVIDUAL CUP COMMUNION SERVICE WITH TRAYS**—Free to any mission congregation. No shipping fees. Call St. Luke, Watertown, Wis., 414/261-3345.

**JESUS CARES MINISTRIES COOKBOOK**—Includes microwave and no-cook recipes, crafts. 122 pages. Proceeds benefit ministry to developmentally disabled. \$7, plus \$1.50 postage. Call 414/541-6066 or write Jesus Cares Ministries, 8420 W Beloit, West Allis WI 53227.

## COMING EVENTS

**NORTHWESTERN COLLEGE TOURING CHORUS**—concert schedule:

March 2	Trinity	Watertown, Wis.
March 3	Zion	Lansing, Mich.
March 5	Hope	Toronto, Canada
	St. Paul	Ottawa, Canada
March 6	Beautiful Savior	Portland, Me.
March 7	St. Paul	Amburst, N.H.
March 8	Good Shepherd	S. Attleboro, Mass.
March 9	Our Savior	East Brunswick, N.J.
March 10	Prince of Peace	Fairport, N.Y.
March 11	St. Paul	Mayville, Mich.
March 12	Salem	Owosso, Mich.
	St. Paul	Stevensville, Mich.
March 13	Mich. LHS	St. Joseph, Mich.

**WELS EXPO**—Learn about the Wisconsin Synod through displays and presentations. March 25, 9 am-5 pm at the Days Inn in LaCrosse, Wis. Sponsored by WELS Kingdom Workers. For more information call 1-800-466-9357.

**LADIES' TIME OUT**—March 18, 9 am-3 pm at Salem (107th), Milwaukee, Wis. Speakers: Author Bonnie Wasser and Deaconess Sarah Owens. To register, call the church, 414/353-8141, or Deb Witte, 354-0051.

**CONCERT**—Northwestern College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary will present joint concerts April 2. 3 pm at WLS, Mequon, Wis. 7:30 pm at NWC, Watertown, Wis.

**WOMEN'S DAY RETREAT**—April 1, St. Paul school, New Ulm, Minn. Speakers: Political involvement, Julie Quist; Pro-life movement, Larry Olson. Fee, \$5.00. Contact Lu Kolander, 507/354-4254.

**SHAKESPEARE'S HENRY V**—April 28, 29; 7 pm, April 30; 2 pm, Northwestern College's final production. Tickets available at the door.

**SINGLES SEMINAR**—For the "still single" and the "re-single." Topics include single parenting, Christians in the workplace, sexuality and dating. May 6, 1-5:30 pm, at St. Jacobi, Greenfield, Wis. Social, 5:30-midnight. Call Susan Johnson, 414/546-0275 or Nancy Rutter, 453-4041.

**FRIENDSHIP-WITNESSING RETREAT**—Learn how to share Christ with your friends and enjoy a weekend at Camp Croix in northern Wisconsin June 2-4. Bring the family. Peter Leyrer, 612/754-0707.

**TOUR ITALY**—The Latin department of Michigan Lutheran Seminary invites Latin students and adult WELS members to join a study tour of ancient Rome and the early church May 29-June 13. Contact Dr. Glen Thompson, 2777 Hardin St, Saginaw MI 48602; phone/fax 517/893-1788.

**DR. MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE 1995 COLLEGE CHOIR TOUR**

March 1	St. John, Libertyville, IL
March 2	Illinois LHS, Crete, IL
March 2	Grace, St. Joseph, MI
March 3	Michigan, St. Joseph, MI
March 3	St. Paul, Columbus, OH
March 4	Ascension, Harrisburg, PA
March 5	Atonement, Baltimore, MD
March 5	Resurrection, Virginia Beach, VA
March 6	Bethlehem, Manassas, VA
March 7	Divine Peace, Largo, MD
March 8	Faith, West Newton, PA
March 9	Trinity, Jenera, OH
March 10	Mount Calvary, Waukesha, WI
March 11	St. Peter, St. Peter, MN
March 26	St. Paul, New Ulm, MN
March 31	Christ, Zumbrota, MN
April 1	Zion, Arlington, WI
April 1	St. John, Waterloo, WI
April 2	St. Paul, Fort Atkinson, WI
April 2	St. John, Baraboo, WI

## POSITIONS AVAILABLE

**CANDIDATE POOL**—The WELS Human Resources Office is developing a candidate pool of people with backgrounds in finance, accounting, office support, education, real estate, or general business. When an opening occurs, candidates will be contacted. Most positions require a working knowledge of computers. All require interaction with coworkers and the public. Contact Human Resources Office, WELS, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398; 414/256-3269.

**CHRISTIAN THERAPIST (Michigan)**—Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service is expanding its services into Michigan and seeks a Christian therapist. Requirements: master's degree, counseling experience, and the ability to apply Biblical truth in individual, family, and group therapy. Send resumes to Fred Matzke, WLCFS Social Services, PO Box 23980, Milwaukee WI 53223; or call 414/353-5000, ext. 44.

**SUMMER JOBS**—Camp Phillip, a ministry of the Milwaukee Federation of WELS Churches, needs counselors, waterfront director, lifeguards, adventure coordinator, cooks, junior staff director, family programming specialist. May 30-Aug. 16. Room and board plus \$1350-\$2000. Contact Steve Huhn, Camp Phillip, Rt 3 Box 190, Wautoma WI 54982-9330; 414/787-1085.

## CHANGE IN MINISTRY

### Pastors:

**Becker, Bruce H.**, from Trinity, Brillion, Wis., to administrator, WELS Adult Discipleship.

**Blobaum, Gerald G.**, from St. Paul, Roscoe, S. Dak., to Syndoulos, Fairbanks, Alas.

**Bourmann, James C.**, to multi-cultural mission, Houston, Tex.

**Carter, Roger A.**, from St. Peter, Schofield, Wis., to St. John, Fremont, Wis.

**Eickmann, Paul E.**, from Northwestern College, Watertown, Wis., to Trinity, Watertown, Wis.

**Huebner, John P.**, from Ascension, Sarasota, Fla., to NE region mission counselor.

**Ibisch, Paul A.**, from Beautiful Savior, Marquette Heights, Ill., to First, La Crescent, Minn.

**Merseth, Niles B.**, to Emanuel, West St. Paul, Minn.

**Spaude, Cyril W.**, from Northwestern College, Watertown, Wis., to St. Mark, Watertown, Wis.

**Staab, William E.**, to Good Shepherd, Burnsville, Minn.

**Zimmermann, Roland**, from Bethlehem, Menomonee Falls, Wis., to retirement.

### Teachers:

**Asmus, Andrew**, to St. Matthew, Oconomowoc, Wis.

**Barthel, Susan L.**, to Emanuel, New London, Wis.

**Haar, Mary H.**, from St. Paul First, North Hollywood, Cal., to retirement.

**Hermanson, Jennifer**, to Beautiful Savior, Cincinnati, Ohio.

**Krause, Sheila**, to Centennial, Milwaukee, Wis.

**Rundgren, Dale**, to St. Paul, Norfolk, Neb.

**Roux, Jonathan**, to Divine Peace, Largo, Md.

**Schaumberg, Amy**, to St. Paul, Norfolk, Neb.

**Schultz, Lynn M.**, to Our Savior, Wausau, Wis.

**Sonnenberg, Richard H.**, from St. Paul, Appleton, Wis., to retirement.

**Thaens, Sarah**, to Trinity/St. Luke, Watertown, Wis.

**Wessel, Roger H.**, from St. Peter, Fond du Lac, Wis., to retirement.

# Remodeling our hearts

**A striking change takes place in our hearts when the Holy Spirit makes his home there.**

**James A. Aderman**

While vacationing, we stopped at the church where I formerly served. The pastor's wife welcomed us into their home—our old home. It looked different. The furniture and colors had changed. It was no longer our house.

A more striking change takes place in our hearts when the Holy Spirit makes his home there. When the Spirit unpacks his bags, he remodels. He transforms. Where there was death, he brings life. Where there was weakness, he displays power. Where there was sin, he gives righteousness. Where the Spirit is, Paul wrote the Galatians, there is his "love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control" (5:22,23). Paul calls these the "fruit of the Spirit."

## Rebelling against remodeling

We're not always happy about the Spirit's remodeling. A part of us doesn't like the new furniture, wall hangings, or color scheme. A part wants darkness and death back. It misses the lies and weakness and sin. The apostle warns, "The sinful nature desires what is

### FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. Compare the way Galatians 5:16-18 describes the flesh/Spirit conflict with Romans 7:15-25.
2. Note the difference Spirit-worked faith makes in our lives according to 2 Corinthians 5:17-19 and Ephesians 4:21-24.
3. How does the Spirit encourage us to Bible study in John 20:31, Romans 1:16, Romans 15:4, and 2 Timothy 3:15?

contrary to the Spirit, and the Spirit what is contrary to the sinful nature. They are in conflict with each other, so that you do not do what you want" (5:17,18). The Spirit and the sinful nature will never agree on a decorating theme. No compromise will accommodate their divergent tastes.

The Spirit has no reason to compromise. The sinful nature, the original occupant, is an unwelcome intruder. God has claimed us, paid our purchase price with his Son's life, and signed the deed in his

Son's blood. But the Spirit's legal right to us doesn't stop our sinful nature from trying to evict him.

## Struggling and strengthening

That means a struggle if we're to enjoy the Spirit's fruit. We deal with that conflict on two fronts: weakening the sinful nature and strengthening the Spirit. Our flesh responds to God's law, "If you sin, there's a price to pay." Paul calls using the law on the old Adam crucifying the sinful nature.

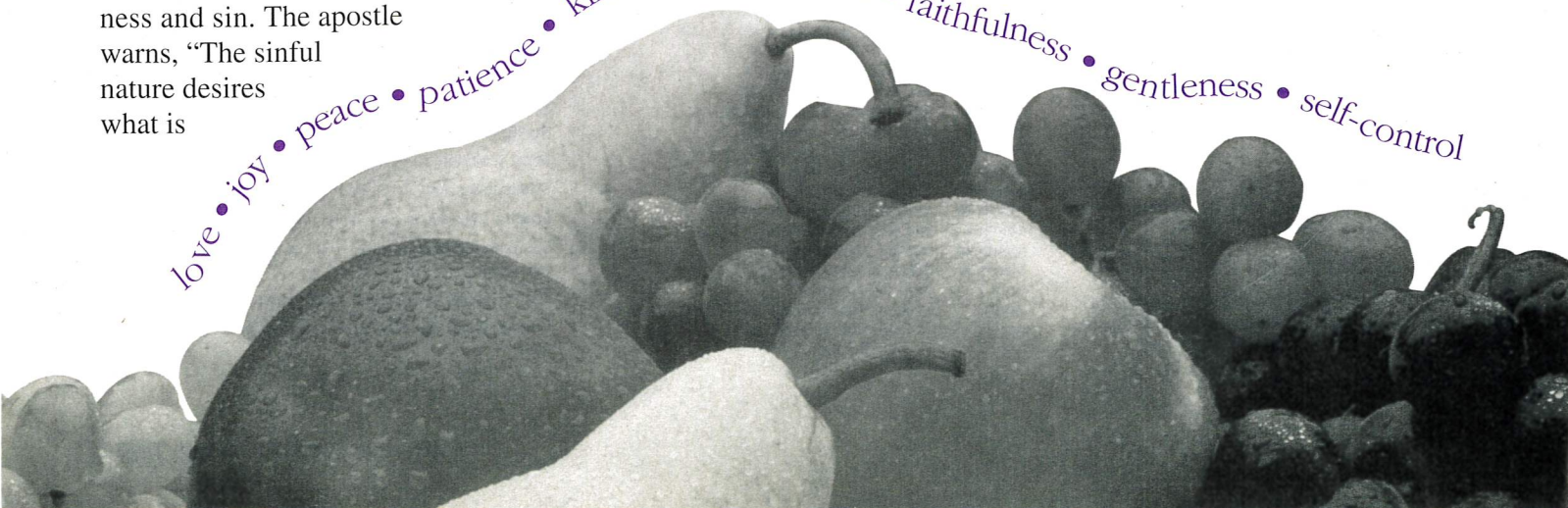
Strengthening the Spirit requires a more powerful tool. "Live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the sinful nature" (5:16). Living by the Spirit means drawing our life-force from him. "Those who live in accordance with the Spirit," Paul told the Romans, "have their minds set on what the Spirit desires" (8:5). The Word and sacraments keep us focused on the Spirit's desires.

The Spirit moved into our hearts, creating faith in Jesus. He transformed us. His fruit is ripening within us. The fruit of his virtues are ready to produce a rich harvest in our life.

*Next: The virtue of love*

*James Aderman is pastor at Fairview, Milwaukee.*

love • joy • peace • patience • kindness • goodness • faithfulness • gentleness • self-control



# The purpose of confirmation

**Victor H. Prange**

In the coming months, many young members of our congregations will be confirmed. In 1993 there were 6,057 confirmations in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Just what is the purpose of confirmation?

The word "confirm" means "to support or establish the certainty or validity of; to make firmer; to strengthen." The King James translation uses the word to describe what Paul did at the conclusion of his first missionary journey: "confirming the souls of the disciples, and exhorting them to continue in the faith" (Acts 14:22). This is the basic purpose of confirmation: to strengthen faith in Jesus Christ as the Savior.

It is important to emphasize that confirmation does not make one a member of the church. Baptism incorporates a person into the church, the body of Christ. "We were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink" (1 Corinthians 12:13). Those being confirmed are already members of the church.

The process of confirming takes place during the many hours of instruction which precede the rite called confirmation. Among the goals of this instruction is to help young Christians distinguish between the law and the gospel and to prepare them to receive communion for the first time.

Confirming is the work of the Holy Spirit, through the Word of God, which is the basis of the instruction. The rite itself gives public recognition that these

Christians have completed a course of study in God's Word and are prepared to receive the sacrament.

The Bible does not prescribe the exact way confirmation instruction should be carried out. Peter gives all believers the admonition to "grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). Obviously the apostle is not directing these words solely to young Christians of confirmation age. Growing in grace and knowledge should be an ongoing task for Christians, young and old. Through worship, Bible classes, and private study of God's Word, the Holy Spirit continues to confirm believers in the faith.

At the conventions held in the twelve districts of our synod last summer, a report was presented titled "Expanding the Nurture of High School-Age Youth." This report raised questions about the best age for confirmation instruction, the involvement of parents in the process of instruction, the course of studies and number of years of instruction, the question of uniformity among the congregations of our synod, and the wording of the confirmation rite.

Confirmation has a long history among us. As we discuss possible changes, let us not lose sight of the basic purpose: to strengthen faith in Jesus Christ as the Savior.

*Victor Prange is pastor at Peace, Janesville, Wisconsin.*

*Confirmation  
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Those being  
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members.*

# Can a divorced person be an elder?

**John A. Brug**

*Can a divorced person serve as an elder? I interpret Titus 1:5, 6, which says he must be the husband of only one wife, to mean that he cannot.*

In Titus 1 and 1 Timothy 3, the Scriptures set the qualification that elders (who in the New Testament were more similar to our pastors than to our elders) must be "one-woman men" who have a good moral reputation. This requirement would make a man who divorced his wife for unscriptural reasons, one who committed adultery or other sexual immorality, or a polygamist ineligible to serve in such an office. The passage does not refer to a man who remarries after the death of his first wife.

A man whose divorce was brought about by the unfaithfulness or desertion of his wife would not necessarily be disqualified by a divorce. However, the need to avoid offense might make it difficult or impossible for him to continue to serve in the same congregation immediately following the divorce.

Obtaining an unscriptural divorce disqualifies a person from serving as a pastor or elder. Can a person who has become ineligible through such a sin regain eligibility through repentance? Repentance does not instantly restore eligibility. The person must reestablish a good moral reputation. Whether or not this is

possible and how long it might take would depend on a number of factors, including whether the person was a Christian when the offense occurred, whether the person was already in a position of trust when the offense occurred, and the notoriety of the offense.

*In the hymnal the sign of the cross is included in the absolution and benediction, but not in the consecration of the communion elements. Why is it in one part of the liturgy and not another?*

The sign of the cross is not a means of grace that brings about a certain blessing. It is a symbolic action that reminds us of the blessings we have through the death of Jesus on the cross. As such, it is always a matter of free choice, not a divine command. The church is free to use it or omit it.

After we have received absolution or the benediction, or after a person has been baptized, the sign of the cross is an appropriate reminder that the blessing the person has just received was won by the death of Christ on the cross.

Some Christians, however, have used the sign of the cross superstitiously as if it had magic power. If pastors use it during the consecration, some observers might get the impression that the sign of the cross is being used to change the bread

and wine into Christ's body and blood. For this reason, some pastors prefer not to use it then. Most pastors use the sign of the cross as the communicants are being dismissed after receiving the Lord's Supper. This seems to be more appropriate. Then it reminds the recipients that the blessing they have just received was won by the cross of Christ. At this point of the communion, its use is more parallel to that in the absolution, benediction, and baptism.

The hymnal committee omitted the sign of the cross with the consecration because the sign was traditionally associated with baptism and mention of the Trinity, not with the Lord's Supper. In addition, it was not Luther's practice to use it with the consecration.

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

*Send your questions to QUESTIONS, Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398*



**“No organist? Get a computer”** [Dec.] was thought provoking. A computer may temporarily solve the problem of no organ or organist. We are the singing church and our musical heritage is second to none. A computer may be a stopgap, but the idea that our churches do not have qualified musicians is sad. Musical ministry is very important in our worship.

Computers are useful, but let us continue our fine tradition of sacred music. Let us make it a goal to have organs in our churches as well as organists, choirs, handbells, and other instruments, all tuned in praise to God.

*Patricia Backhaus  
Waukesha, Wisconsin*

**No pastor? No choir? No Sunday school teachers? No problem—get a computer** [Dec.]. I have been a church organist for over 40 years. Sometimes I was paid, sometimes I wasn't, but it really didn't make much difference. I felt that I was using a God-given talent to serve the Lord and also helping others in the congregation by leading them in singing praises to God.

Suddenly I find a short article that says in essence, “We don't need church organists—just get a computer!”

*James Hopman  
Goodhue, Minnesota*

**There are hundreds of slogans and signs just like “God accepts you for what you are”** [The god in my pocket, Jan.]. Maybe readers have seen “I know I'm somebody because God don't make no junk.” I drink out of a coffee mug which says “I do my best and leave the rest to God.” It's reading a volume from one sentence to say that these slogans represent God as one whose plan of salvation is unnecessary. Certainly it's not a clear law-and-gospel message, but neither is it heresy to say “God accepts you for what you are.” In Christ he does.

*Keith C. Tullberg  
Milwaukee, Wisconsin*

**I would like to offer another viewpoint in response to Glenn Jones' comments regarding childcare centers** [Dec.]. The stay-at-home mom is not traditional, but a

product of the industrial revolution and post-World-War-II workforce. In our pre-industrial revolution society, parents worked as partners in providing for their families. That frequently meant that both parents worked the farms. Younger children were cared for by older children and elderly relatives.

This doesn't mean that parents of yesteryear, nor dual-career parents of today, neglected their duties. It just means that there were many acceptable forms of family life other than the 1950s TV sitcom situations.

Please don't take this as criticism of the parent who chooses and is financially able to be at home with young children. That is a wonderful privilege for both. However, that does not make that couple better parents than the dual-career family who provides the best possible day care for their children. Parenting is far more than one parent watching the kids all day.

*Donna E. Schiman  
Stevensville, Michigan*

**In the December issue there was an article, “The ten virgins.”** I don't think it is wise to modernize a biblical account. Time and space would be better spent to interpret the parable.

The author doesn't give us the point of the parable, that we should nourish our faith through the Word and sacraments so when Christ comes we will not be found lacking in faith.

The article seems to trivialize heaven, describing it as a party, and that we don't want to miss the fun. These statements cheapen heaven and hell.

Finally, the article misses the mark in explaining the parable. This parable is a beautiful warning for us to stand firm in the faith. The way to do this is by reading God's Word and going to the sacraments.

*Michael Sullivan  
Watertown, Wisconsin*

*Prof. Braun stressed being ready in faith for Jesus' coming, which is the primary point in the parable. Mr. Sullivan has called our attention to how our faith is nurtured so we will be ready. —ed.*

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. Letter writers are responsible for the accuracy of their statements. *Northwestern Lutheran* cannot research letters to determine factuality. Address your letters to READERS FORUM, *Northwestern Lutheran*, 2929 N Mayfair Road, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398; Fax 414/256-3899

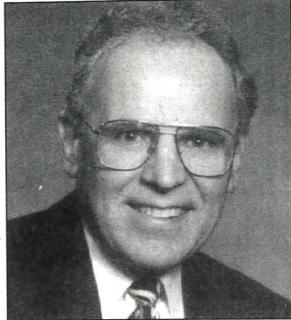
THROUGH MY  
**BIBLE** in 3 YEARS

April 1995

- 1. Luke 17:1-19
- 2. Lk. 17:20-37
- 3. Lk. 18:1-17
- 4. Lk. 18:18-34
- 5. Lk. 18:35-19:10
- 6. Lk. 19:11-28
- 7. Genesis 27:1-45
- 8. Gen. 27:46-28:22
- 9. Gen. 29:1-30
- 10. Gen. 29:31-30:43
- 11. Gen. 31:1-32:2
- 12. Gen. 32:3-32
- 13. Gen. 33
- 14. Gen. 34
- 15. Gen. 35
- 16. Gen. 36
- 17. Gen. 37
- 18. Gen. 38, 39
- 19. Gen. 40:1-41:13
- 20. Gen. 41:14-57
- 21. Gen. 42
- 22. Gen. 43
- 23. Gen. 44
- 24. Gen. 45
- 25. Gen. 46:1-47:12
- 26. Gen. 47:13-48:22
- 27. Gen. 49
- 28. Gen. 50
- 29. Luke 19:29-46
- 30. Lk. 19:47-20:26

Next month's readings will appear in the next issue.

# The more we change, the more we stay the same



Gary Baumlner is editor of *Northwestern Lutheran*.

## Northwestern Lutheran MISSION

*The purpose of Northwestern Lutheran as the official periodical of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod is to promote the synod's gospel ministry by providing inspiration, instruction, and information to the synod's constituents as well as to a wider circle of readers.*

## OBJECTIVES

*To achieve its mission Northwestern Lutheran endeavors to testify faithfully to God's truth as it is revealed in the inspired and inerrant Holy Scriptures. It strives through the ministry of the printed word to nourish the faith of God's people and to extend the borders of Christ's kingdom. It seeks to inform its readers concerning the programs, policies, and activities of the synod and its members.*

Did you notice anything different about this issue of *Northwestern Lutheran*?

Part of me hopes you did. Part of me hopes you didn't. Let me explain.

With this issue, we made several design changes, all meant to make NL more readable. The changes we made should, we hope, make a good general impression, such as a "clean" look. They should not draw undue attention to themselves. We're not trying to turn a frog into a prince. We're trying to dress our prince in a new, modest suit of clothes.

The changes range from uncluttering the masthead, to making the page numbers more obvious, to selecting a more legible typeface. To say more defeats the purpose. We just want you to feel comfortable picking up this magazine and reading it.

We will make design changes from time to time, usually without fanfare, if we feel they will serve you. We will not, however, change our dedication to the principles that have undergirded NL since its beginnings 81 years ago. God's Word guides what we print.

We pray the prayer of Solomon (1 Kings 8:57) as it appears in every issue: "May the Lord our God be with us as he was with our fathers; may he never leave us nor forsake us."

As we serve the God of our fathers in the name of his Son, we seek to

- inspire: The gospel of Jesus Christ inspires us. May you always see Jesus—crucified, risen, ascended, and coming again—in the pages of NL. May you see him also at work in the lives of his followers as told here.
- instruct: Every issue brings instruction from God's Word, answers

questions in light of God's Word, and applies God's Word to everyday issues.

- inform: NL tells you how we are doing the Lord's work in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod—our mission outreach, our ministerial education, our congregational activities. You learn what's happening in religion around the world, and you get news briefs about Christians in our fellowship.

We change our focus from time to time, as two new series, "WELS at work" and "By faith they led," indicate. Watch for a series coming soon on our world mission fields.

Still, may it always be said of NL, "The more we change, the more we stay the same."

If you like the changes, you may want to let our design people at Northwestern Publishing House know: Marie Farley, who coordinated the project, and Tyra Baumlner, who created the design template and laid out this issue.

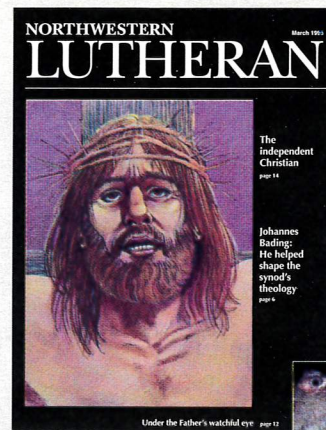
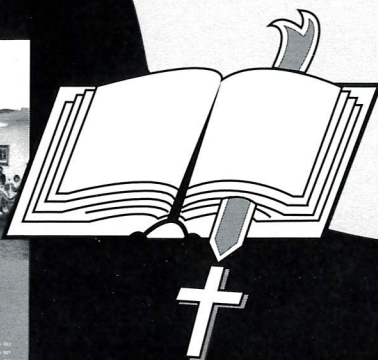
If you feel disappointed in anything we've done, tell me.

*Gary A. Baumlner*

*Special thanks to Clifford Koeller who has faithfully guided NL through production for 13 years, designing and laying out each issue for the past five. We owe Clif deep gratitude for all he has done for the magazine, and we wish him rich rewards as he begins a new position in marketing for Northwestern Publishing House. God be with you, Clif.*

# NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN

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# “What in heaven is man-made?”

**What could be man-made in heaven? I worried about the answer.**

**Eric S. Hartzell**



I have to admit I was nervous when he first said it—and when he said it again.

“What in heaven is man-made?” Velas Quade, the Apache chairman of our East Fork, Arizona, congregation, asked the confirmation class.

He had asked for the chance to talk to the young people “to help them in their faith.” He began his talk to them by telling them how he had become a Christian.

“Twelve years ago I was not a Christian. I knew the words ‘Jesus’ and ‘God’ and ‘faith.’ But I really didn’t know what they meant. My daughters, who came to this school, led me to be a Christian. They brought their memory work to me and asked me to listen as they recited it. It was through the words that they said to me, words of the Bible, that I learned to know about ‘Jesus’ and ‘God’ and ‘faith.’ I have studied Scripture and I believe it. I have learned many things, but I still have many more things to learn.”

## The riddle

That was the way Velas began his talk to the confirmation class. What a good way to begin this school year, I thought. Velas is a living example of the reason for a Christian school and a confirmation class. He is proof that memorizing Scripture is still important. He is a believer because of it.

And then he brought me up short with the riddle that he wanted the young people to solve: “What in heaven is man-made?”

What could possibly be man-made in heaven? I worried about the answer and whether, as the pastor and teacher of the confirmation class, I would be able to live comfortably with it.

He repeated the question, a faint, sad smile on his face. There was a little stirring in the classroom. We were waiting. He had our attention.

## The answer

“The answer to the riddle of what is man-made in heaven is the scars

on Jesus’ hands and feet and side,” Velas told the young people. “They are man-made. You and I made them when Jesus died for our sins.”

Velas’ answer to his riddle stunned me. It got through the chinks in my armor and wounded me.

I had never heard it said this way before. I had never thought this before. It was true. My handiwork is in heaven, displayed in the scars on my Savior’s hands and feet and side.

Thank you, Velas. Thank you for that insight and for your riddle. I can live with the answer. I can live because of it!

*Eric Hartzell is pastor at East Fork, Whiteriver, Arizona.*