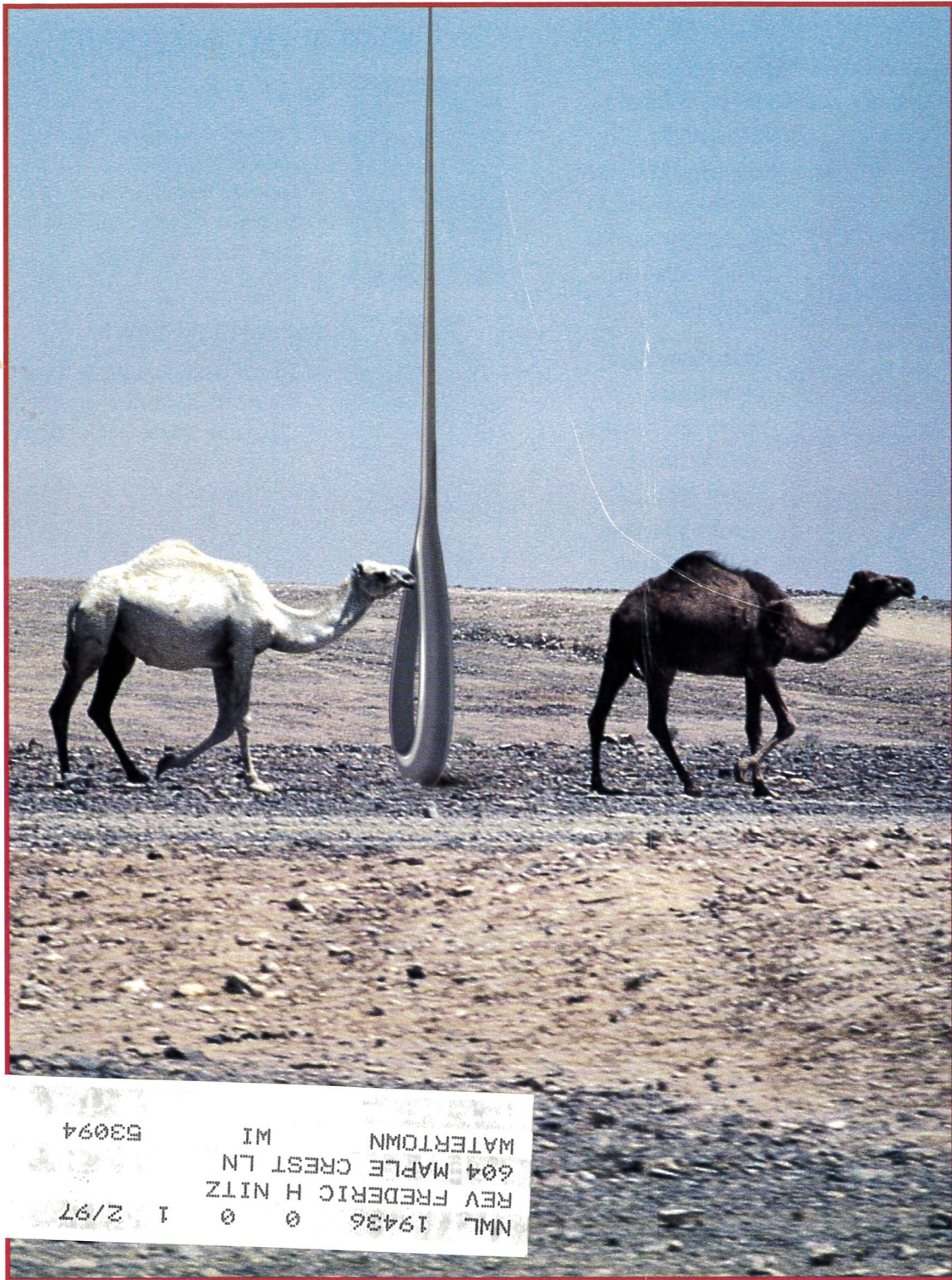


LUTHERAN



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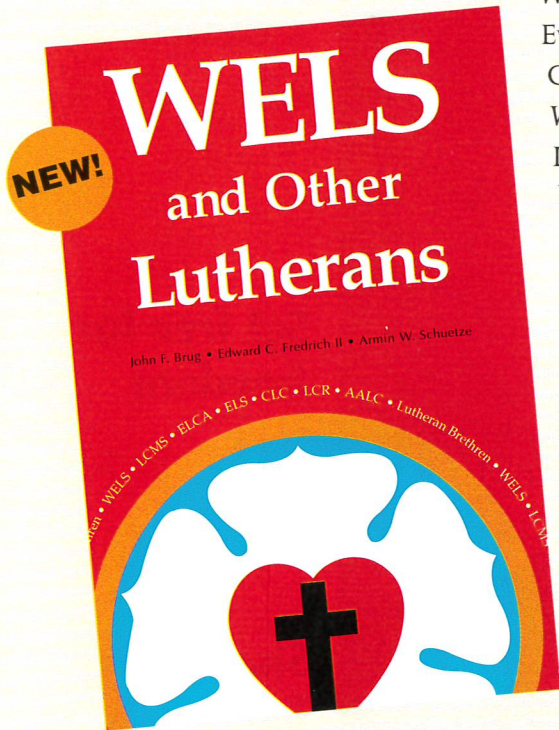
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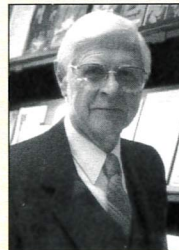
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“I believe in the forgiveness of sins”

Even pillars of the church need forgiveness.

Richard D. Balge

Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Psalm 32:1

Joy, honesty, security—to have these is to have spiritual health. To believe in the forgiveness of sins is to have these.

Joy

From youth David was blessed by God. He grew up to be a man after the LORD's own heart. But for about a year he was a man under God's condemnation.

He had been guilty of adultery, of murder, of causing neighboring nations to scoff at the God of Israel. He was an impenitent sinner, miserable until the prophet Nathan confronted him with his guilt and assured him of God's forgiveness.

God lifted the burden of guilt. David learned and he teaches us: “Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him” (Psalm 32:2). That does not mean God winks at sin or arbitrarily ignores it. Rather, Christ Jesus covers us with the robe of his righteousness. He took every sinner's sin and had it charged to himself and died because of it. In doing that he won forgiveness for us. Believing this, we have true happiness in life and optimism for eternity.

Honesty

David also learned, “Blessed is the man . . . in whose spirit is no deceit” (Psalm 32:2). The person who confesses that his sins are forgiven through Jesus Christ is not

hiding, denying, or trying to excuse his sin. He does not fool himself that God is indifferent to how he acts.

David had tried to deceive himself. He was a hero, a “pillar of the church.” Then he had fallen into something more than sordid. To acknowledge it would hurt.

But to hide it hurt even more. He ached all over: “When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long” (Psalm 32:3). Conscience roared at him, and God's hand was heavy on him, because he was trying to hide from others what he could not hide from himself.

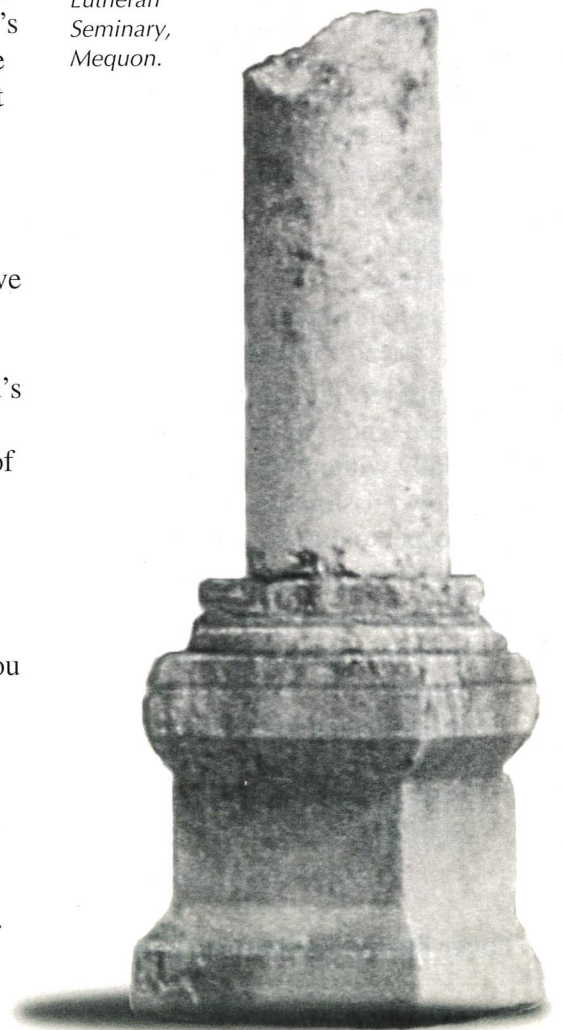
One of the things Jesus accomplished at Golgotha was to deliver us from self-deceiving notions that sin doesn't matter or that we can live up to God's standards. If that were true, Christ would not have had to live God's law and experience God's wrath for us. “I believe in the forgiveness of sins” is an expression of honesty, because it acknowledges that I need forgiveness.

Security

As forgiven sinners, we can address the Lord as David did: “You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance” (Psalm 32:7). As we acknowledge our sins before God, knowing that for Christ's sake they are already forgiven, we are secure in his love.

When the flood waters of a guilty conscience close in on you, when the thunder of God's law terrifies you, when your sins hem you in, there is security to be had. “I believe in the forgiveness of sins,” not smugly or complacently, but in the knowledge that Jesus has borne my punishment for sin.

Richard D. Balge is professor at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon.





- July—Independence Day. Freedom. Does real freedom exist? “It exists all right,” says Gary Baumler on page 8. “You have real freedom in Christ.” But he adds a caution: “You are set free from sin. You are not set free to sin.”
- More thoughts on America’s freedom: “We often think that our nation’s greatness traces back to its political philosophy,” says Joel Gerlach (p. 31). “But the truth is that a nation’s health and strength are inseparably linked to the health and strength of its families.”
- First Lieutenant Kelly S. Koepsell learned about lack of freedom when he was stationed in Saudi Arabia. “The Islamic faith does not welcome other religions,” he says. “It was taboo to even mention religion.” On page 16, Koepsell tells how he shared his freedom in Christ with his friend, Mohammed.
- Until recently, Bulgaria and Albania were lands without freedom—especially without freedom in Christ. Now missionaries are bringing the gospel to these countries. *Malko po malko* begins on page 10.
- Beginning on page 21 are pictures of men and women who know real freedom in Christ and are prepared to share their knowledge. They’re the graduates of Dr. Martin Luther College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

—Dorothy Sonntag

Cover illustration by Tyra Baumler

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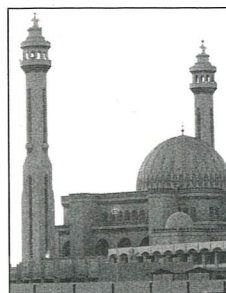
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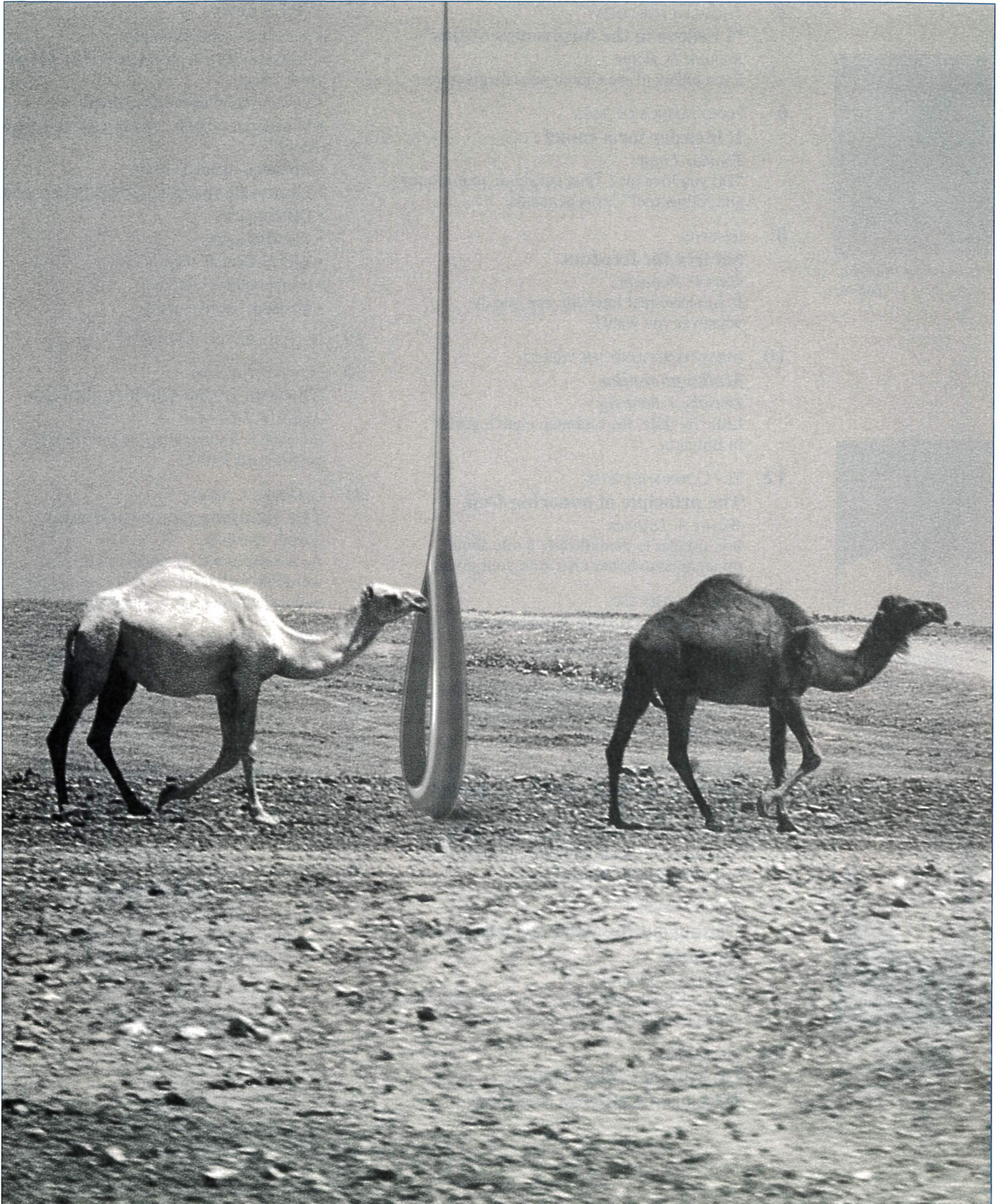
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It is easier for a camel . . .

“Do you love me? Then get rid of your money and follow me!” Jesus demands.

Thomas H. Trapp

“It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.”

Mark 10:25

“It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle. . . .” No saying of Jesus is harder for the western mind to accept. It hits us where it hurts—in the pocketbook. “Do you love me above all things? Then get rid of your money and material goods and follow me!” Jesus demands.

Are you hesitating?

Jesus knows all about giving up everything. He went to Jerusalem to give up his life for us to win our freedom from the love of money and its damning end.

“What must I do to enter the kingdom of God?” the rich young man asked Jesus. Jesus knew his money-loving heart: “Go sell everything you have, give it to the poor and follow me.”

Stunned by the answer, the man walked away sad “because he had great wealth.” The rich man loved the gift, not the giver.

Where does this leave Christians who are rich? In the company of Abraham, David, Solomon, and Joseph of Arimathea. It’s not wrong to be rich. It’s wrong to love riches.

Happy people

At the start of the 1994 major league baseball strike, a Milwaukee Brewers radio announcer wondered, “There are billions of dollars to be made in this game. What will make people happy?” Good question.

Here’s a harder question: What will make us happy? More video games? More real estate? More Tupperware? More money?

It’s not wrong to be rich.

It’s wrong to love riches.

The gift of Jesus’ life and death for our sins and eternal salvation is to be our joy. Yet such basic joy is not easy in an affluent society. It’s easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.

Can a camel get through the eye of a sewing needle? Impossible! Ridiculous! That’s the hyperbolic point Jesus is making.

Even though they were not affluent themselves, the disciples were shocked by Jesus’ statement. “Who then can be saved?” they asked. Good question.

Giving people

Jesus gave an answer: “With man this is impossible, but not with God; all things are possible with God.” God’s grace turns our hearts from

loving the gift to loving the giver. The giver turns us into people who give.

In 1940 an American missionary in China was arrested and expelled from that country. On leaving China he traveled to India to arrange for his return home. Passing through the coastal area of India, he encountered a large number of Jewish refugees. Many were living in attics, barns, tents, or under the sky. The refugees were fleeing from Nazi persecution in Germany and desperately needed help.

The missionary felt he had to do something. So he cashed the check he had received for his passage home and gave it to one of the refugee families. He waited a long time until his mission society could send him another check for his return home.

When he finally arrived home, a reporter asked him details about his expulsion from China and his travel through India, including his contacts with the Jewish refugees.

The reporter asked, “Why did you, a Christian, give your money to those Jews? After all, they do not believe in Jesus.”

“But I do,” the missionary replied.

By God’s grace, so do you.

NL

Tom Trapp is campus pastor for Wisconsin Lutheran Chapel and Student Center at the University of Wisconsin—Madison.

Set free for freedom

If you have real freedom, can you do whatever you want?

Gary P. Baumler

As a onetime teacher of English composition and now as an editor, I'm always on the lookout for redundancies. For example, I never want you to write the biography of your life. Your biography will do. Why cooperate together when we do just as well to cooperate? By now we probably are



approaching a consensus of opinion that if I repeat a redundancy again, I should bring this introduction to its final completion.

However, some redundancies have their purpose. Take, for example, this redundancy from God's Word: "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free" (Galatians 5:1). Set free for freedom!

Clearly, if you're not set free for freedom, you're not set free.

Release a prisoner from a cell but keep him behind prison walls, and he's still a prisoner. Tell a person he or she is set free in Christ, then impose restraints that must be met to assure the freedom, and you take away the freedom. In church we call that legalism, a problem that plagued the Galatians and hasn't let up on us to this day.

So, with the purposeful redundancy, God tells us, "Look, in Christ you have real freedom. Don't let anyone or anything change that."

"Real freedom!" Do you realize what a precious gift that is?

Everyone dreams of real freedom. Everyone! Little children look forward to getting free from parental restraints—free to stay up late, free to eat what they like, to buy what they want. Many a teenager leaving home for college or for work, has a euphoric feeling of finally being set free. On another level, presidential candidates know you'll vote for the one you believe is most likely to help gain or preserve your freedom.

Still, the more we think about freedom, the more questions we are likely to have about it. What is real freedom? Does real freedom exist?

It exists all right. You have real freedom in Christ. Does that mean you can do whatever you want

without constraints? "No!" says God through Paul. In Christ, you have liberty, you don't have license. "Do not use your freedom," says the Lord, "to indulge the sinful nature" (Galatians 5:13).

Freedom is a funny phenomenon.

In its simplest sense it has no restraints, no restrictions. In reality, it must exercise restraints or lose its identity. For example, any community that exercises unbridled freedom, and everyone does whatever each one likes to do, reaps anarchy. Around the world, we have seen no end of troubles in recent years from countries like that. In the name of freedom, then, people become captive to uncertainty, fear, and suffering. They aren't free at all.

*Everyone dreams
of real freedom.
Everyone!*

Similarly, while we Christians enjoy real freedom in Christ, we create a kind of spiritual anarchy instead when we use our freedom to indulge our sinful flesh. Let me illustrate with the three dreaded D's—drink, dance, and dress.

Some Christians, as you know, insist that you must not drink alcohol, you must not dance, you must not dress in certain ways, or else your very faith may be suspect. "A real Christian doesn't do those things." So we, in true Christian freedom, have drinks at social gatherings, dance at parties, and wear a variety of styles of dress that some people might not approve of. So far so good. We're free, and we mean to exercise our freedom.

But what happens when our flesh takes over? We refuse to refrain from drinking even when the laws of the state forbid it. Then too, we like the feeling we get from the alcohol, and we drink too much. At the dance, my partner and I find it easy to do some public petting or otherwise arouse sinful thoughts and desires. The way I dress and carry myself becomes a temptation, a lure, a means to attract lustful looks. Or perhaps I use dress as a way to express my contempt for authority.

What, then, has happened to my freedom? It has become license and has led me captive to the sins of my flesh, my "sinful nature." Then I need to hear Jesus telling me in John 8: "Everyone who sins is a slave to sin." I need to hear Peter in his second letter: "A man is a slave to whatever has mastered him." Slavery has replaced freedom. I need to hear God's law to curb my flesh, to show me just how damnable my sin is, and then, too, as a guide in my life of faith.

We said it before and it's still true: In Christ, you have real freedom. As Luther said it: "You are saved. Christ is your liberty and your life. Therefore law, sin, and death may not hurt you or drive you to despair."

Real freedom is priceless. Jesus died to set you free. Jesus lives to keep you free. "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free." But in your freedom, be sure to take this thought with you: You are set free from sin. You are not set free to sin.

NL

Gary P. Baumler is editor of Northwestern Lutheran and WELS Director of Communications.

Malko po malko

Little by little, the Lutheran church grows in Bulgaria.

Dorothy J. Sonntag

A store, English lessons, medical supplies, cooking classes—missionaries in Bulgaria use these tools to lead people to the Savior.

Leading Bulgarians to the Savior is especially urgent, because few of them know the way. For 50 years this eastern European country's communist regime suppressed the gospel. The government confiscated Bibles and forbade religious services.

Communism's fall ended religious oppression and opened the country to outsiders. WELS missionaries arrived in Sofia, Bulgaria's capital, in 1993. By 1994 eight new confirmands were charter members of the Lutheran Church in Bulgaria. Since then, the church has grown *malko po malko*—little by little.

Building little by little

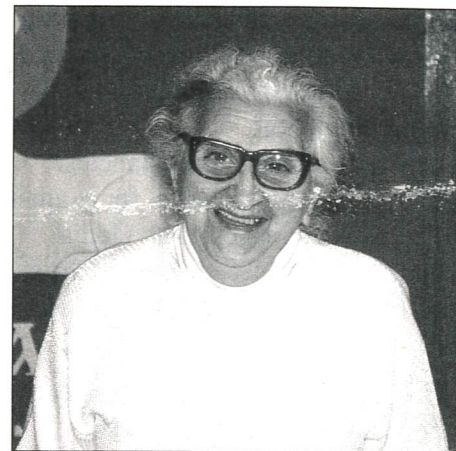
Headquarters for the Lutheran Church in Bulgaria is the Christian

information center in downtown Sofia. The center includes a worship center, classrooms, library, and a food store. Presently an average of 60 people worship there weekly, and about 25 attend Bible classes, reports missionary Kirby Spevacek.

To draw people to those services and classes, the mission team—Spevacek, John Roebke, teacher Rob Dusseau, and lay volunteers Marie Haskings and nurse Linda Philips—use a variety of methods to open the door for the gospel.

√ **English classes**—The center's classrooms are used for English classes, with the Gospel of Mark as a teaching tool. Students interested in further study are invited to join a Bible class.

√ **A store**—Run by the lay volunteers, a food store helps the city's poor by selling packaged foods at low prices. The volunteers witness and offer customers religious tracts and books.



Violetta is a Jew who narrowly avoided Auschwitz during World War II. She was baptized in the Lutheran Church in Bulgaria in April.

√ **Christian literature**—The tracts and books that Philips and Haskings distribute are available thanks to retired pastor Harold Essmann. He frequently leaves his Wisconsin home for extended stays in Sofia, where he works with Bulgarians to translate religious literature.

√ **Prison ministry**—That literature has also found its way into Bulgarian prisons. Essmann recently distributed over 600 copies of the Bible to prisoners. In addition, he reported, "Over 500 copies of the Bulgarian edition of 'God's Great Exchange' [a booklet teaching basic Bible truths] were delivered to the prisons in Bulgaria."

√ **Medical ministry**—Linda Philips distributed "God's Great Exchange" and other pamphlets to nurses and doctors at a medical convention. "By Sunday afternoon not one pamphlet was left," she reported. "Just think, 15,000 pamphlets distributed throughout hospitals and clinics all over Bulgaria! Praise to God!"

Distributing medical supplies also opens the door for Philips to



Men from the mission staff meet with mission board members. From left, Kirby Spevacek, Stephen Valleskey, John Roebke, Harold Essmann, Rob Dusseau.

witness. With the supplies, she includes Christian literature.

√ **Friendship evangelism**—The missionaries also witness in their neighborhoods. Spevacek and his wife, Audrey, invite women to their home to learn American cooking. “We have a devotion and prayer time also,” said Spevacek. “They are eager to hear the Word of God.”

Roebke witnesses while dog-walking. “Taking the dog for walks gives me opportunities to hand out cards and tell people about our church,” he said. “So far no one has come, but I meet the same people daily, and I hope to build friendships.”

Roebke is not dismayed by the slow response. “Our philosophy has been *malko po malko*—little by little,” he said.

√ **Curriculum**—Another means of evangelism is also proceeding little by little. Synod representatives have met with Bulgarian officials to propose a religion curriculum for Bulgarian schools. The courses would be one of three options for religion, said parish schools administrator Daniel Schmeling, “but we’ll develop the materials. We’d be reaching at least one out of three.”

NL

Dorothy Sonntag is assistant editor at Northwestern Lutheran

Sharing the gospel in Bulgaria:

- Kirby and Audrey Spevacek
- Robert and Cathy Dusseau
- John and Nancy Roebke
- Linda Philips
- Marie Haskings

Reaching out little by little

The mission team also is reaching people in other places.

√ **Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria**—Last January John Roebke and Linda Philips went to Blagoevgrad and met with Dr. Nikolai Bojkov at the American University. “He said he would check into our making presentations to students,” Roebke reported.

They also visited a hospital. “I had opportunity to tell doctors what the Lutheran Church stands for,” said Roebke. “We were well received, and we left books, medicines, and medical supplies.”

√ **Lom, Bulgaria**—Roebke and Spevacek also went to Lom, where they have been working with a Gypsy congregation. “We put up for the night at the home of Rosanka, a Christian woman,” related Roebke. “She fed us and gave us a place to sleep free of charge.”

√ **Albania**—Another area recently explored is Albania. In March Spevacek, Dusseau, and Essmann visited six families there and baptized 10 people. They learned of the families through Robert Muarem, of Kenosha, Wis. Muarem, whose father emigrated from Albania, keeps in touch with his cousins there and has sent them



Dr. Islam Veliu, of Kajava, Albania, was baptized when missionaries visited there. Because of years of communism, few adults have been baptized.

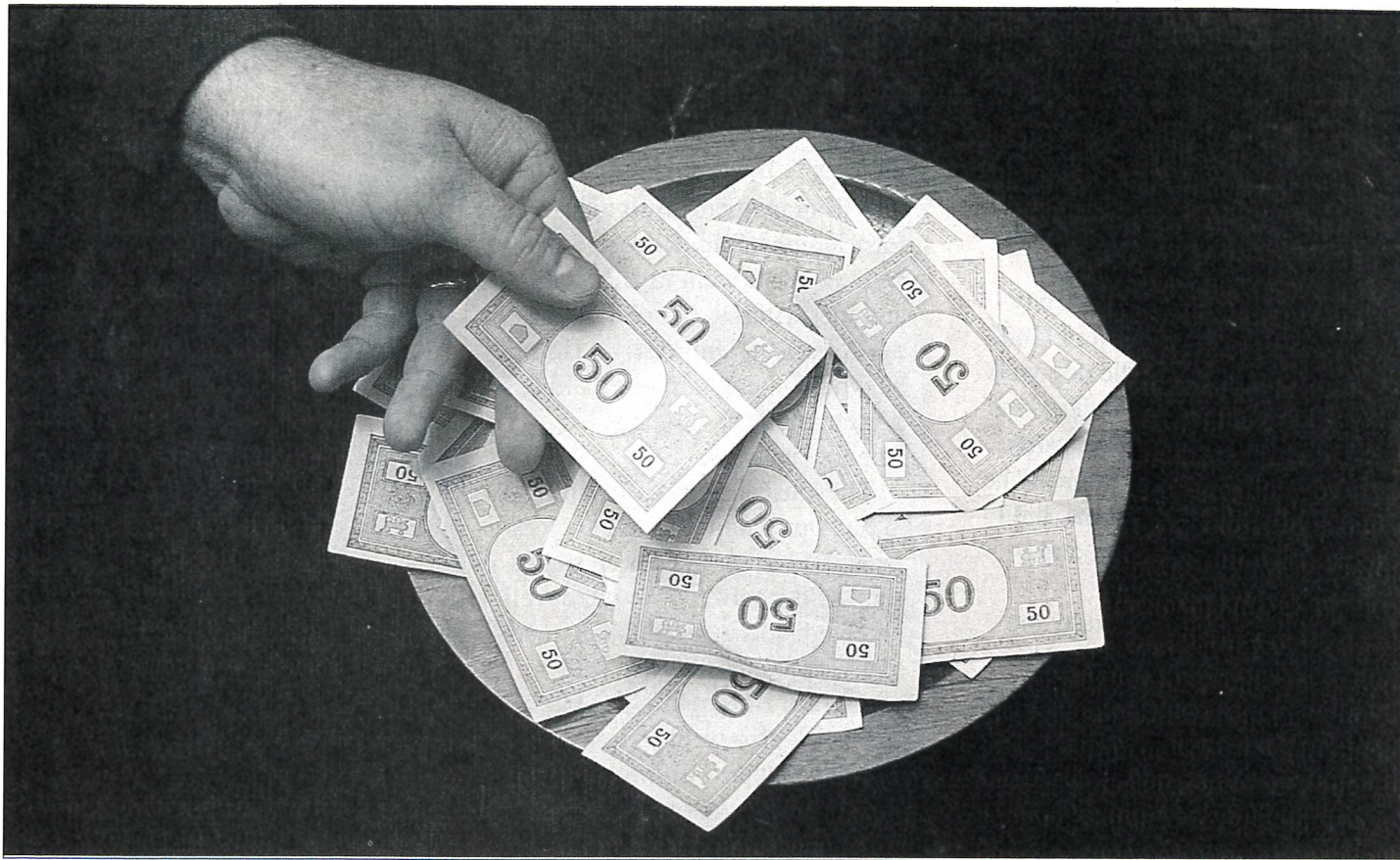
Bibles and Christian literature.

“In all our visits, the families expressed the desire to study Scriptures,” Essmann reported. They wanted the missionaries to come again, he said.

Unless—or until—missionaries are assigned to Albania, Spevacek hopes to return there every three months. “In the meantime we will send literature,” he said.

In the meantime, too, he and the rest of the mission team in Bulgaria will continue building the Lutheran church *malko po malko*.





The principle of honoring God

It would be much simpler if we ignored the principle of honoring God and manufactured a rule: “This morning we will all take \$50 out of our wallets and throw it into the offering plate.”

Wayne A. Laitinen

Those who don't understand principles need rules.

For instance, the proverb, “Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the firstfruits of all your crops” (Proverbs 3:9), begins with a principle: Honor the LORD. As such, it is a trifle vague.

We cannot manufacture honor

Honoring God has nothing to do with throwing a sum of money into

an offering envelope. It has to do with reverent awe. It is a grateful acknowledgment that all we are and all we have belong to God. We want what God wants. We honor God when we use God's gifts his way.

Job understood what it meant to honor God when, in the darkest hour of his life, he confessed, “The LORD gave and the LORD has taken away; may the name of the LORD be praised” (Job 1:21).

We cannot manufacture honor. It's one of those gifts the Holy Spirit gives at conversion. But the “C” word—conversion—is not in the vocabulary of the sinful flesh. Conversion means death to our old, self-centered way of thinking. When faced with church budgets, our flesh perceives conversion as too time-consuming, uncomfortable, and impractical.

We dare not manufacture rules

It would be much simpler if we ignored the principle of honoring God and manufactured a rule: "This morning we will all take \$50 out of our wallets and throw it into the offering plate." There! That was much easier. While some may feel a little indignant that God got more than his fair share, they could go home with the false security that they've done what God wants. God's honor, may have nothing to do with it.

When a heart honors God as its provider, protector, and Savior, giving the firstfruits, giving the very best, comes naturally. Abel didn't need to be told what firstfruit giving was all about. His heart belonged to God, so he gave God the "fat portions from some of the firstborn of his flock."

Could you imagine Jesus and his disciples wringing their hands because they were too financially strapped to do kingdom work?

Cain, on the other hand, had an unbelieving and ungrateful heart—and it showed. He gave "some of the fruits of the soil." It would have been much easier for Cain if God had given him a rule: "Give me that carrot, that pepper, and that cabbage, and you will have done your duty."

But God doesn't eat coleslaw. He is simply looking for evidence of a loving and trusting heart.

We need God to create a clean heart

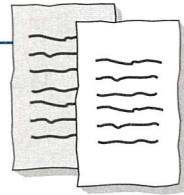
"Create in me a pure heart, O God. . . . You do not delight in sacrifice, or I would bring it. . . .

SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not steal.

What does this mean?

We should fear and love God that we do not take our neighbor's money or property or get it by dishonest dealing, but help him to improve and protect his property and business.



The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. . . . Then there will be righteous sacrifices . . ." (Ps. 51).

Rules are not bad. At times they are necessary. They just aren't the reason Christians do things. Christian parents often make rules for their children. "Each dollar you earn is to be divided this way: "10 cents in your offering envelope, 40 cents in the envelope marked 'college,' 30 cents for clothing, 10 cents for gifts. . . ." These rules help children translate the principle of honor into action. God made similar rules for Old Testament believers.

Finally, there comes a time when God treats us as mature adults. He expects us to see ourselves not as paupers, but as children of a gracious and almighty King. He has sent us into the world with all the material and spiritual resources we need to perform his regal mission.

And the King's checks don't bounce. As mature heirs, we are to be well-practiced in saying "no" to the flesh and "yes" to what we can do in Christ.

We honor God when we trust his Son

Could you imagine Jesus and his disciples wringing their hands because they were too financially strapped to do kingdom work? It paints a repulsive picture of Jesus as a hollow-eyed beggar, tin cup in hand, waiting patiently outside the church door—at the end of a long line of bill collectors. If our Lord can't even support his church, why should people trust him with their eternal souls?

The gospel of Christ calls us to trust him for everything in this life and the life to come. The disciples once held a brief budget meeting in a remote place. They had exhausted all earthly means of feeding 5,000 households. When they were through, their shepherd said, "You give them something to eat." He was not asking the impossible. He was calling them to honor the Bread of Life who supplied all their needs.

The Son of Man didn't even have a place to lay his head—a far cry from America's five-digit poverty level. Yet no one found Jesus on a street corner holding a cardboard sign: "Homeless. Need money. God bless you!" Rather, he called a rich man out of a sycamore tree into the riches of his grace, and Zacchaeus saw wealth through a new set of eyes. That unfettered freedom of Christ's forgiveness is where we begin to honor God with our wealth.

NL

Wayne A. Laitinen is pastor at Gethsemane, Oklahoma City, Okla.

Christoph Ludwig Eberhardt: the traveling missionary

This itinerant preacher's Michigan travels were a saga of near epic proportions.

Morton A. Schroeder

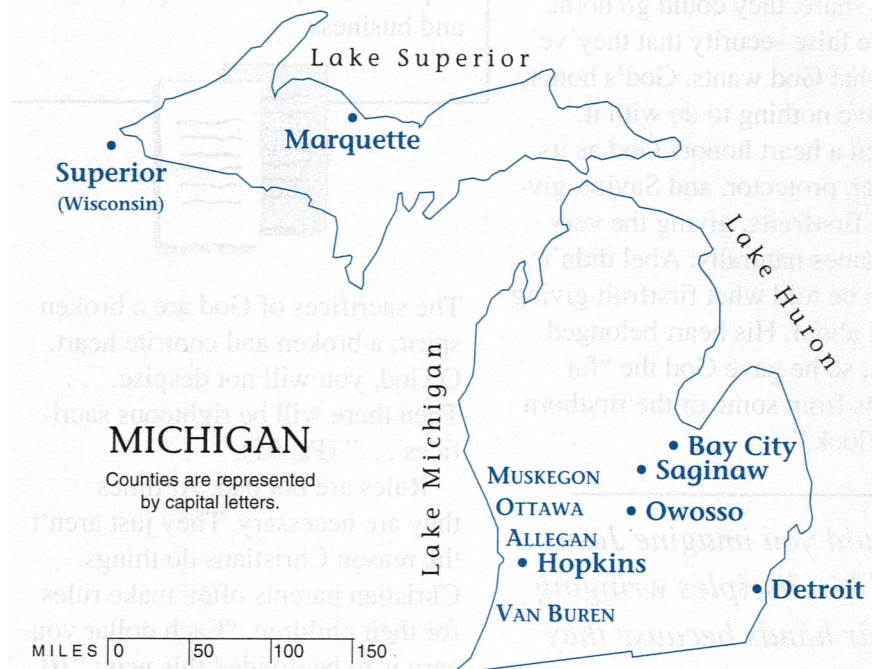
Christoph Eberhardt's exploits are the stuff that makes legends.

Consider the liabilities: His working field, Michigan, was still undeveloped. Communication, hostelry, and transportation were primitive. Getting from here to anywhere required stamina, courage, and the conviction that someone, somewhere, sometime would provide food and shelter, succor, and directions, when necessary.

Eberhardt's working language, German, was a barrier to communication with the natives and the English who had arrived in Michigan before he had. It was a liability he soon corrected.

His first charge, as a traveling missionary, was unfunded by the synod that called him to "... small groups of forsaken and scattered sheep." Extra collections failed to fill his coffer.

Consider the assets: Eberhardt was brave and resilient. Taught to be a weaver by his father, he acquired the patience of the artisan. Shaped by personal bent and professional training, he went the extra mile when situations called for selflessness. By faith he led and was led, convinced the Lord had called him to do extraordinary work in extraordinary places during extraordinary times.



A plea for help

All of this resulted in a fruitful, exciting life in Eberhardt's chosen land. The story begins two years after he was born.

A letter sent to Basel Mission House in Switzerland in 1833 asked for help. "I believe, dear elders, that it is high time that a student of our Mission House be sent there before the people become dispersed. . . ."

The plea was answered. The mission society sent Friedrich Schmid to Michigan, but 25 years passed before a student whose work complemented Schmid's arrived in Schmid's bailiwick. The student: Christoph Eberhardt. His vague assignment

from the mission society: "a field somewhere between Lake Michigan and Lake Huron." He and Stephan Klingmann reported for duty at Schmid's door seven months before Ft. Sumter was fired on.

The traveling missionary

Two Michigan positions were vacant. Klingmann went to Adrian, south of Ann Arbor. Eberhardt, who went to a mission in western Michigan, said, "I will become the traveling missionary." He believed he was "strong, healthy, and better able to endure hardship," an overly optimistic evaluation echoed by Schmid.

Eberhardt set to work from a temporary base in Hopkins. And so

began the travels of the first itinerant preacher of what would be the Michigan Synod. A saga of near epic proportions, it was possibly duplicated in other states but probably never surpassed.

Eberhardt covered a circuit of 360 miles, serving 16 preaching stations in Allegan, Ottawa, Muskegon, and Van Buren counties in western Michigan. Traveling by foot, he served small groups at regular intervals. He carried Bibles and prayer books, selling them or giving them to people poorer than himself. Later travels farther east and north, to Owosso and West Bay City, make his itinerary sound like a 19th century Michigan gazetteer.

The Michigan Synod

Eberhardt and Schmid's lives crossed again when Schmid's plan for a synod surfaced. The two of them, Klingmann, five other clergy, and several laymen met in Detroit shortly before Christmas 1860 to discuss Schmid's plan. A second Michigan Lutheran Synod was born. (The first had been a short-lived synod formed by Schmid.)

A key section of its constitution said, "The Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Michigan and other States pledges itself to all the canonical books of Holy Scripture as the sole rule and norm of its faith and life; also to all the symbolical books of our Evangelical Lutheran Church as the true interpretation of Holy Scripture."

This soundly Lutheran confession was due primarily to Eberhardt and Klingmann. Schmid was less interested in confessionalism than they. But the delicacy of the situation was palpable. Schmid was about 25 years older than Eberhardt and

Klingmann, and he had been in Michigan 25 years longer. But truth and right, out of the mouths of youth and inexperience, prevailed.

Michigan Lutheran Seminary

In 1861 Eberhardt made an exploratory trip to Michigan's Upper Peninsula. He taught on the shores of an inland sea, preaching and administering the sacraments from Marquette to Superior (Wis.), at the far west end of Lake Superior. Although one church, St. Paul, was founded in Marquette in 1863, pleas to reach even more isolated miners fell on ears deafened by financial stringencies.

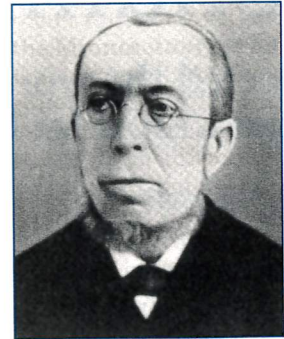
Eberhardt's rigorous schedule took its toll, and he, less robust than believed, fell ill. When he recovered, he resigned his itinerant ministry and devoted his time to his congregation and its school, St. Paul in Saginaw, to Michigan Lutheran Seminary, and to the synod.

Eberhardt's move to Saginaw, his influence in parish and town, his wife's philanthropy, his personal generosity and willingness to teach at the seminary without pay, and especially his leverage as synod president prompted the synod to relocate Michigan Lutheran Seminary to Saginaw.

Eberhardt's life has an interesting footnote. Although he and his wife, whom he married in 1863 and survived by only nine days, have been dead for more than a century, they left a bequest that exists to this day: 32 grave sites in Oakwood cemetery remain for use by St. Paul's called workers.

NL

Morton Schroeder, a retired professor, lives in Appleton, Wisconsin.



**Christoph
Ludwig
Eberhardt**

- Born January 3, 1831, Lauffen, Wuerttemberg, Germany
- Died April 27, 1893, Saginaw, Mich.
- Arrived Ann Arbor, Mich., September 27, 1860
- Pastor, St. Paul, Saginaw, 1861-93
- Introduced English instruction in congregation's school, 1865
- Father of Michigan Lutheran Seminary
- President of Michigan Synod, 1881-90. Served also as secretary, vice president

Sharing my faith with Mohammed

I expected the words I said would change Mohammed's heart. I forgot I must let God work through the words I spoke.

Kelly S. Koepsell

“You believe in Jesus Christ, yes?” my friend Mohammed asked.

“Yes,” I answered, “I believe in Jesus Christ as my Savior.”

“We believe in Jesus Christ, too. You say that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, yes?”

“Yes,” I answered.

“Then why did you kill him?”

Oh boy! I started to explain my faith.

Talking about religion

I had been working with Mohammed for three months. I was the chief air traffic control liaison for the United Nations coalition force at King Abdul Azziz Air Base in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

Mohammed was a Saudi air traffic controller who worked for the Presidency of Civil Aviation. He had a robust sense of humor and a very personable air. A good Muslim, he prayed five times a day, and he wanted me to share the joy he thought he had found in Islam.

I had often talked to Mohammed about his job, his family, the United States, and other things, but I had not talked to him about religion.

The Islamic faith does not welcome other religions. Our military chaplains could not wear a cross on their uniforms, and we could not call the chaplains' meeting place



Lt. Koepsell in desert combat uniform.

the chapel. It was taboo to even mention religion. If Mohammed brought it up, however, we could talk without fear of reprisal.

I told my friend how Jesus died to save us.

“This is ridiculous to me. I would rather believe that a cow is the son of god.” Mohammed was not angry. He was simply stating what he believed.

Mohammed and I talked at length that day. He listened, but he showed no sign of recognizing Jesus as the Savior and not just

another prophet. Some of the things he said even left me feeling some doubt about my salvation.

Taking up the sword of the Spirit

I worried that I had not explained clearly to Mohammed what I believed and why I believed it.

A few days after our conversation, I read Ephesians 6:16-17, “take up the shield of faith . . . and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God.” I realized that my shield of faith was not as thick as I thought, nor my sword as sharp as it should be.

My conversation with Mohammed made me see that to sharpen my sword, I had to read the Bible. I not only had to read it, I had to study it. I also needed to spend more time in prayer.

I had brought my Bible to Saudi Arabia. The Islamic authorities in the Saudi government did not prevent military personnel from doing that, thank God. My parents sent me *Meditations* and *Northwestern Lutheran*. My church mailed me the bulletin and copies of the pastor's sermons. The military chaplain agreed to allow me to use his Bible concordance. I used all these materials to study God's Word. God led me out of my doubt and blessed me with a stronger faith.

Trusting the Holy Spirit

But I was disappointed that Mohammed showed no faith in Jesus as the Savior. I had expected the words I said would change Mohammed's heart there and then. I forgot I must let God work through the words I spoke.

I forgot that Jesus doesn't command us to give faith. That awesome responsibility is the Holy Spirit's. Jesus commands us to spread his Word. And that's what I had done, not as eloquently as I

would have liked, but I had shared the gospel with Mohammed. Had I made a difference in his faith? I don't know.

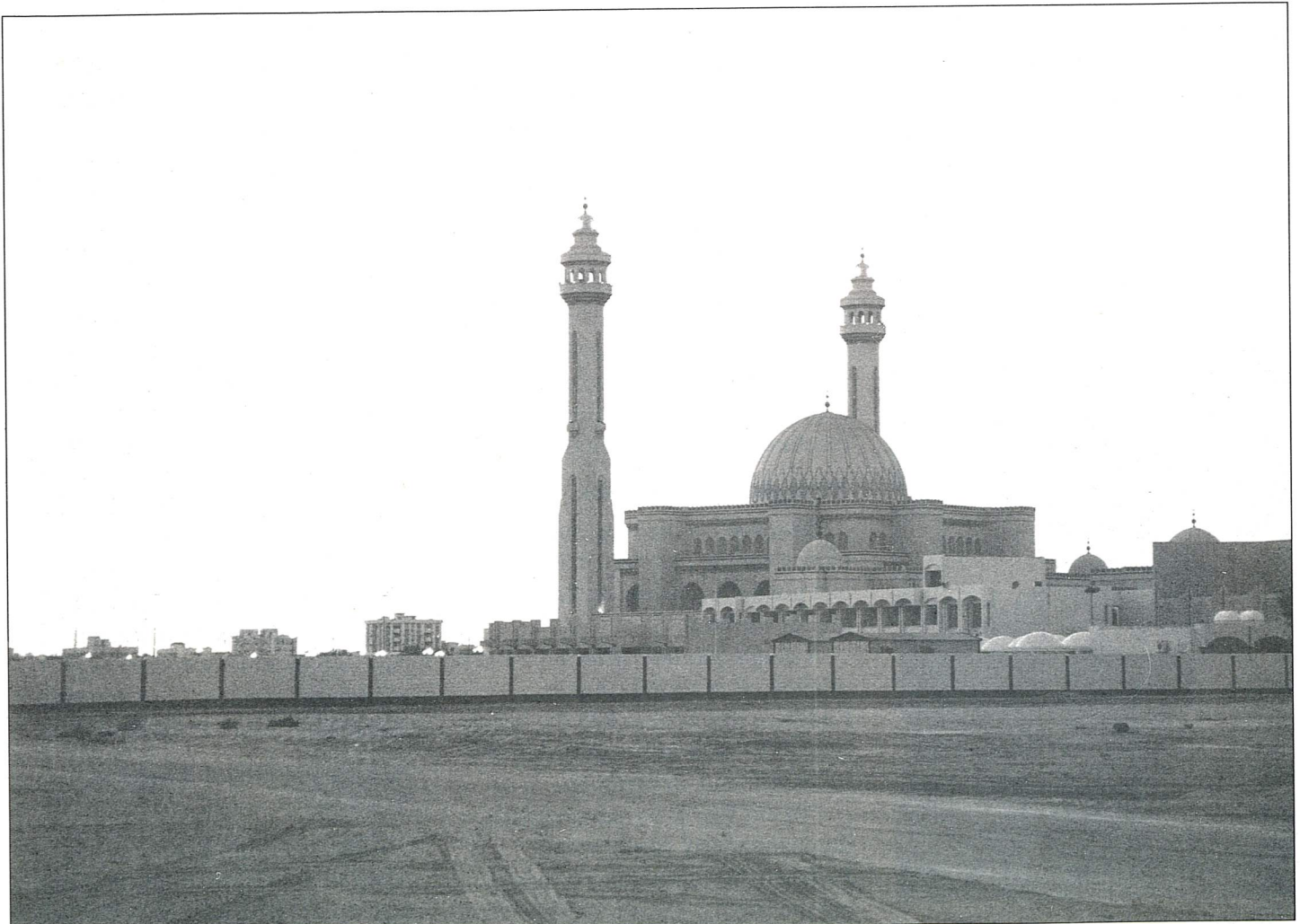
I left Saudi Arabia in September 1994. I have not heard from Mohammed since, although I wrote to him. It is possible that the Muttawa (Islamic police) did not let my letter reach him; they censor everything that comes into the country. I will write again, hoping he will answer.

God willing, I won't be the last

to share the gospel with Mohammed. I pray my good friend will come into contact with the Word again, and that the Holy Spirit will give Mohammed the precious gift of faith.

NL

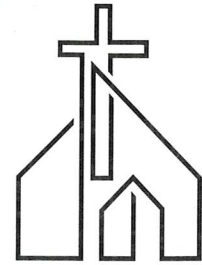
First Lieutenant Kelly S. Koepsell was the Chief Air Traffic Control Liaison for the United Nation's Coalition Forces in Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. He is a member of Amazing Grace, Panama City, Florida.



The Grand Mosque in Bahrain, one of the few that westerners are allowed to tour.

Getting out the Word by getting out the word

WELS Kingdom Workers helps two Colorado churches make their presence known.



Dorothy J. Sonntag

“**M**any people don’t even know we exist,” says Steven Kahrs, pastor of two small churches in Colorado’s Arkansas River Valley. He and the members of St. Paul’s, Las Animas, and Christ Our Savior, Ordway, are working to get the word out, so they can get the Word out.

Las Animas and Ordway are among a cluster of small towns in the southeast corner of Colorado. “Most people think of mountains when you mention Colorado,” said Kahrs’ wife,

Lori, “but this area is flat.”

Members of the Ordway congregation, Steven Kahrs said, “mostly hold jobs in the service industry.” At Las Animas, most members’ jobs are related to ranching or farming.

Christ Our Savior in Ordway has nine members. Except for two people who come from Rocky Ford, 12 miles away, the members live in Ordway.

None of St. Paul’s 40 members lives in Las Animas, however. “The closest family is about 12 miles away,” said Kahrs. “One family comes 80 miles.”

Because the members live such a distance away, he said, “everything is done on Sunday—Sunday school, worship, Bible class, and confirmation class. If there’s a meeting, it’s also on Sunday.”

Struggling for survival

Distance is only one inconvenience for the parishes. They’ve had greater problems in their struggle for survival.

A congregation began in Ordway in 1934, according to Kevin Raddatz, who researched the history of WELS churches in Colorado. In 1934 it had 70 members.

“World War II hit the congregation particularly hard,” wrote Raddatz. “So many people moved out that from 1943, no services were held in Ordway.” The church’s members worshiped in nearby

Sugar City. Not until 1956 were services again held in Ordway.

Ten years later, however, according to Raddatz, “declining Arkansas Valley population, a particularly difficult transition from German to English, and the poor health of the pastor all combined so that by 1966 no regular services were held.”

The handful of believers didn’t give up. The congregation reorganized in 1969 and joined the tri-parish of Ordway, Rocky Ford, and Las Animas. (Rocky Ford closed in 1978.)

The Las Animas church, St. Paul’s, began as a preaching station in 1944. A dual parish with Lamar, it lost its pastor when he and the Lamar congregation left the synod in 1961.

For over ten years, visiting pastors served the churches at Las Animas and Ordway. In 1975 retired missionary Theodore Kretzmann came to serve part time. When he fully retired six years later, pastors came occasionally from Pueblo. On most Sundays the worshipers used videotaped services. “I admire their dedication,” said Lori Kahrs.

Help from WELS Kingdom Workers

The two congregations finally received a full-time resident pastor, thanks to WELS Kingdom Workers. The organization is providing funding for Kahrs for three years.



Christ Our Savior, Ordway. “The picture makes it look huge,” says Pastor Steven Kahrs, “but it is small.”

Steven and Lori Kahrs and their children moved to Las Animas last year. One of their first priorities was to get acquainted in the community.

“Long-time residents of both towns are surprised to learn a church is there, or that it’s still in existence,” said Steven. One way he’s letting people know about the church is by canvassing.

Lori Kahrs helps her husband canvass. “Our members are willing to help,” she said, “but they live an hour or more away. By the time they can get here after work, it’s dark. That’s really a drawback for evangelism.”

Kingdom Workers members have helped canvass, said Pastor Kahrs, and parish members help when they can.

“Many people are canvassing for the first time,” he said. “Most didn’t know if they would like it. But after they tried it, they enjoyed it.”

He’s not surprised. “You start out listening to gather more information, and people pour their hearts out to you,” he said. Other people have questions about God: Who is he? How can I know about him? It is a joy to sit down with them and tell them about who God is and what he has done for them.”

Sharing the Word

Members who can’t help canvass find other ways to share the gospel, Kahrs added. “One member has begun a Bible class in Kit Carson, using the *Communicating Christ* video series.”

Another way of sharing the Word with the community has been vacation Bible school. Most children at last summer’s VBS were non-members, said Lori Kahrs. “Only a handful of members’ children could

come—they live too far away.”

The congregation has also advertised in the local paper, mailed invitations to Christmas and Easter services, and put up banners and signs to draw attention to the church.

Lori said community response is positive but slow. When she and her husband are canvassing, she said, “People invite us in, offer something to drink, wish us well.”

But they’re not quick to join the church, because they don’t know much about it. “It’s not like the Midwest—people out here don’t have a clue about what ‘Lutheran’ is,” Lori explained. “We’re working on letting the community know who we are.”

She wishes the community would learn more quickly. “I’m not a patient person. I get discouraged,” she said. “I have to remember that God does things in his time.”

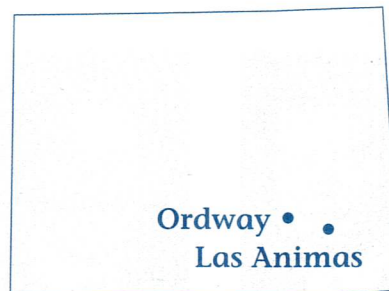
NL

Dorothy Sonntag is assistant editor for Northwestern Lutheran.

CHRIST OUR SAVIOR

Ordway, Colorado

Organized 1934
Reorganized 1969
Nine members



COLORADO

ST. PAUL'S

Las Animas, Colorado

Organized 1944
40 members

Pastor: Steven Kahrs



Joint mission festival—St. Paul's, Las Animas, and Christ Our Savior, Ordway, Col.

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

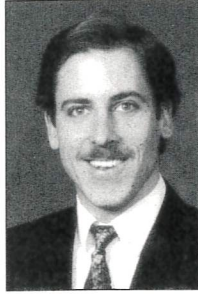
Mequon, Wis.

1995 GRADUATES

At the Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary graduation service on May 26, 30 graduates received their Masters of Divinity degrees. Call assignments will be listed next month.



Paul T. Baur
New Ulm, Minn.



David J. Blaho
Lilburn, Ga.



Bradley E. Bode
Prairie du Chien, Wis.



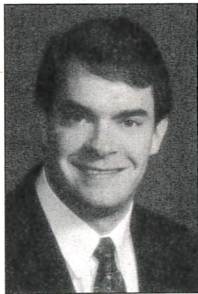
Donn G. Dobberstein
Mequon, Wis.



Paul A. Doletzky
Wayne, Mich.



Steven P. Dorn
Watertown, Wis.



Michael J. Ewart
Broken Arrow, Okla.



Paul M. Fanning
Janesville, Wis.



James S. Fleming
New Berlin, Wis.



Stephen H. Geiger
Belmont, Calif.



William R. Kant
Butterfield, Minn.



Jonathan P. Kehren
Marshall, Minn.



Philip L. Kieselhorst
Cedarburg, Wis.



David B. Malchow
Tucson, Ariz.



Stephen C. Melso
Neenah, Wis.



Ib V. Meyer
Winston, Ore.



Joel D. Otto
Milwaukee, Wis.



Joel E. Pankow
Milwaukee, Wis.



Matthew J. Schaeewe
Yale, Mich.



David S. Schleusener
Tomah, Wis.



Larry M. Schlomer
Monterrey, Mexico



David P. Schneider
Savanna, Ill.



Paul N. Schossow
Belvidere, Ill.



Daniel M. Schroeder
Saginaw, Mich.



Paul R. Schroeder
Oconomowoc, Wis.



Thomas J. Schultz
Goodhue, Minn.



James E. Turriff
Waukesha, Wis.



Eric D. Verlein
Baraboo, Wis.



David R. Wendt
Las Vegas, Nev.



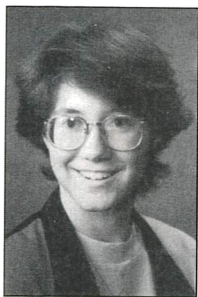
Joseph M. Wright
Ravenna, Mich.

Dr. Martin Luther College

New Ulm, Minn.

1 9 9 5 G R A D U A T E S

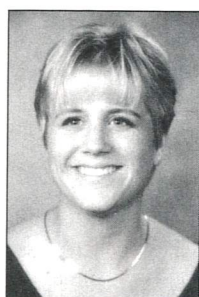
At the Dr. Martin Luther College graduation service on May 20, 101 graduates received their Bachelor of Science in Education degrees. Call assignments will be listed next month. Names followed by an asterisk (*) are certified for elementary and secondary education.



Michelle A. Adrian
Milwaukee, Wis.



Heidi R. Arndt
Menasha, Wis.



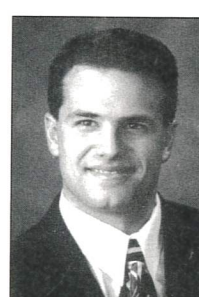
Jennifer D. Baeckl
Bay City, Mich.



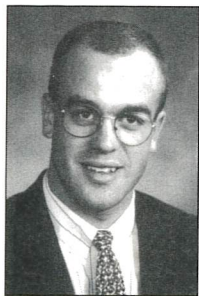
Richard P. Bauer
Jefferson, Wis.



David L. Baumann
Bemidji, Minn.



Brent D. Bloomquist
Norfolk, Neb.



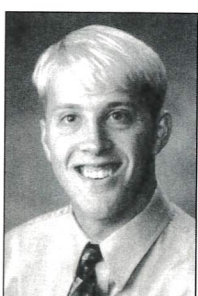
Jeremy D. Bock
Hustisford, Wis.



Heather M. Boese
Franklin, Wis.



R. Matthew Bowman
Laurel, Md.



Daniel S. Brands
Saginaw, Mich.



Naomi S. Brohn
South Haven, Mich.



Laura A. Buch
New Ulm, Minn.



Melissa L. Buelow
Lake Mills, Wis.



Jennifer L. Bullens
Antioch, Ill.



Connie L. Cushman
LaCrescent, Minn.



Jennifer A. Drayer
Utica, Mich.



Allen J. Enter
Nicollet, Minn.



Julie L. Feuerstahler
Lannon, Wis.



Laura A. Follendorf
LaCrosse, Wis.



Elaine V. Fostervold
Baltimore, Md.



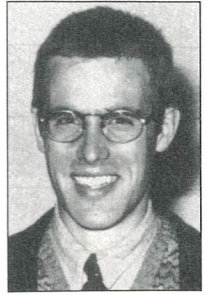
Jennifer A. Fredrich
Kewaskum, Wis.



Amy E. Giese
Mobridge, S.D.



Linda E. Gronholz
Winthrop, Minn.



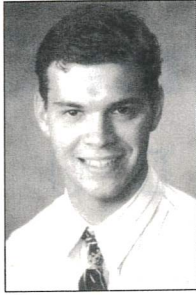
Douglas J. Gurgel *
Lake Mills, Wis.



Amy M. Hansen
South Haven, Mich.



Laura M. Hatter
Jacksonville, Fla.



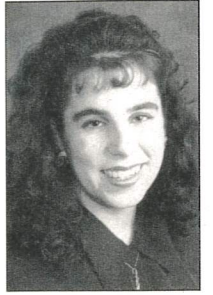
Steven M. Hennig
Watertown, Wis.



Michael A. Henning
Milwaukee, Wis.



Jodi L. Hermanson *
New Ulm, Minn.



Shelley K. Hildenbrand
Franklin, Tenn.



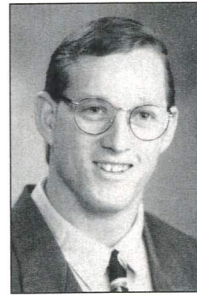
Christy A. Huet
Phoenix, Ariz.



Stacey M. Hummel
Saginaw, Mich.



Mary L. Hussman
New Ulm, Minn.



Dominic P. Jacobs
Charles City, Iowa



Christina K. Knobloch
LaCrosse, Wis.



Shelley L. Koelplin
Tucson, Ariz.



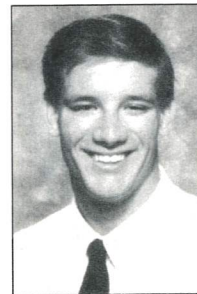
Matthew T. Koepsell *
New Ulm, Minn.



Kelly A. Krahn
Oconomowoc, Wis.



Joel P.L. Kramer
West Salem, Wis.



Michel W. Krebs, Jr.
Fort Atkinson, Wis.



Bethany E. Kriewall
Ann Arbor, Mich.



Martha L. Krueger
New Ulm, Minn.



Kristine A. Krug
Madison, Wis.



Stanley G. Lange *
New Ulm, Minn.



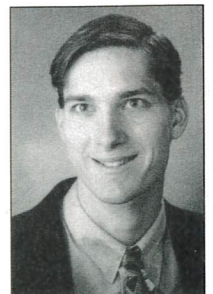
Sarah H. Lawrenz
New Ulm, Minn.



Rosemary C. Leerssen
Sauk Rapids, Minn.



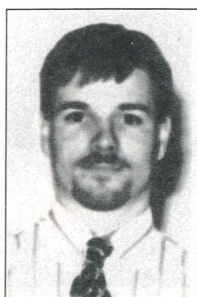
Lara M. Lemke
Wauwatosa, Wis.



David A. Leyrer
Saginaw, Mich.



Elizabeth H. Loescher
Salem, Iowa



Kurt E. Maciejczak
Fairchild, Wis.



Cynthia M. MacKain
Long Beach, Cal.



Janae' M. Manausa
Owosso, Mich.



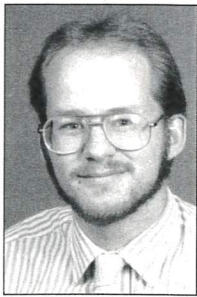
Amy L. Markgraf
New Ulm, Minn.



Stephanie L. Marten
Fond du Lac, Wis.



Matthew S. Meitner
Eden Prairie, Minn.



Andrew G. Mildebrandt*
N. Fond du Lac, Wis.



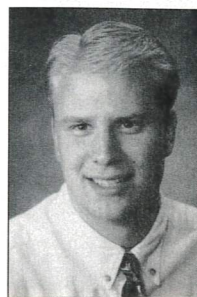
Michael J. Mittelstadt
Juneau, Wis.



Monica M. Mueller
Muskego, Wis.



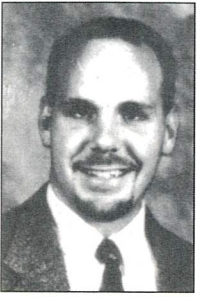
Karen K. Nielsen
Greenwood, Wis.



Justin L. Ninmann
Hustisford, Wis.



Susan M. Nolte
St. Joseph, Mich.



Mark C. Otte *
Ulysses, Neb.



Paul R. Patterson
New Berlin, Wis.



Darlene D. Petermann *
Appleton, Wis.



Jonathan M. Plocher
New Ulm, Minn.



Ellen A. Popke
Oshkosh, Wis.



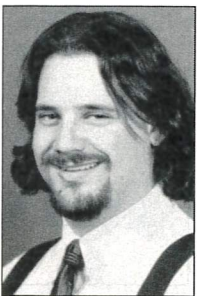
Philip G. Punzel
DeForest, Wis.



Kyle R. Raymond
Milwaukee, Wis.



Jennifer R. Roach
St. Paul, Minn.



Ryan D. Rosenthal*
Mequon, Wis.



Ray R. Rothe
Oshkosh, Wis.



Debbra E. Schams
Dakota, Minn.



Laura J. Schaper
Milwaukee, Wis.



Lisa A. Schneider
Savanna, Ill.



Tammy L. Schmitt
Cedar Rapids, Iowa



Carl J. Schroeder
Parma, Ohio



Joel T. Schultz
Waukesha, Wis.



Bethany M. Sievert
New Ulm, Minn.



Nathan P. Sievert *
Sioux City, Iowa



Scott R. Sievert
New Ulm, Minn.



Jill L. Slattery
Oshkosh, Wis.



Heather M. Steffen
Sanborn, Minn.



Julia A. Stoltz
St. Francis, Wis.



Brenda K. Stueber
Watertown, Wis.



Rebecca J. Suhr
Watertown, Wis.



Nicole A. Supernaw
Kenosha, Wis.



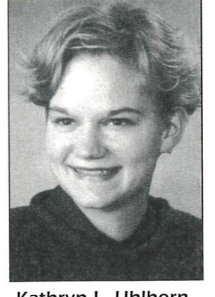
Gretchen A. Thiesfeldt
Richfield, Wis.



Rachel J. Thornburg
Owosso, Mich.



Dana M. Twietmeyer
Monee, Ill.



Kathryn L. Uhlhorn
New Ulm, Minn.



Rachel M. Vogt
Lansing, Mich.



Amy N. Von Deylen
Cincinnati, Ohio



Jody D. Walkins
Watertown, S.D.



Jody L. Weeden
Helenville, Wis.



Linda A. Wellstein
Waukesha, Wis.



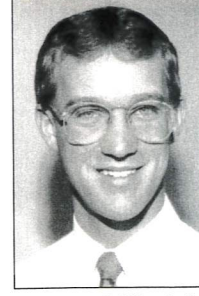
Renee A. Westphal
Fond du Lac, Wis.



Annette L. Wiese
Lynd, Minn.



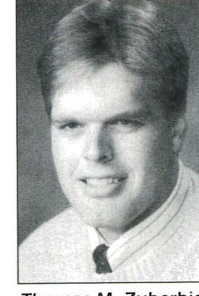
Nicole N. Wilson
Colgate, Wis.



Matthew J. Wordell *
Sheboygan Falls, Wis.



Elisabeth M. Zarling
Sterling, Va.



Thomas M. Zuberbier
Milwaukee, Wis.

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THIS
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Encouraged by someone's story of faith? Uplifted by a Bible study? Inspired by a devotional thought?

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Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222; 414/256-3232.

State buys school campus

The state of Wisconsin has bought Martin Luther Preparatory School in Prairie du Chien for \$2.5 million, the amount WELS paid for the campus in 1978. The campus will be converted into a juvenile institution for boys.

Two homes and 48 acres of land will be sold separately. Clair Ochs, administrator for the synod's board of trustees, estimates that the combined sales will total \$2.9 million. He noted that the sale saves the expense of campus upkeep at about \$462,000 per year plus taxes, once the property is not in use.

The synod sold the school to merge MLPS with Northwestern Prep in Watertown, Wis. The new school, Luther Prep, will open in August.

MLPS was itself the result of a merger of two other schools, Martin Luther Academy, New Ulm, Minn., and Northwestern Lutheran Academy, Mobridge, S.D.

Wellspring to have new format

Wellspring, a magazine for Christian parents, is changing its format and even its name, said editor, Kenn Kremer. "We're going to do two independent magazines—*Lutheran Parent* and *Lutheran Parents' Wellspring*," he explained.

Lutheran Parent will be a 16-page magazine with features for parents of school-age children. *Lutheran Parent Wellspring* will be a devotional magazine for families.

Both magazines will be published six times a year. They are available in individual or bulk subscriptions from Northwestern Publishing House.

Peers can help keep youth in church, says task force

Although WELS churches are adding new members, they're losing more than they gain. Many of those losses are young adults. Other young people can help prevent those losses, said Robert Hartman, administrator for the commission on evangelism.

"Since 1970, we've lost 188,000-plus members," said Hartman. "Those are backdoor losses—people removed from membership or going to another church body."

Statistics indicate that as many as 70 percent of young people who were churchgoers stop coming by age 19. "It used to be they'd come back [after age 30], but now fewer come back," said Hartman. "We're losing 50 percent permanently. If we can keep youth from leaving, we'll stem the tide of backdoor losses."

Even young people who belong to a church don't attend regularly. "About 15 to 20 percent of Americans are in church on a Sunday," Hartman said, "and the ones least likely to be there are 18- to 29-year-olds."

The way to get young adults into church, he believes, is to enlist other young people. "We need peer ministry. Why not have young people doing evangelism and 'elder' work with their own age group?"

To help congregations find ways to use peer ministry, a task force that met in March made plans for one-day workshops for congregational teams of young people and adults.

"They'll work with a consultant," Hartman explained. "By the end of the day they'll have some direction for themselves and will know the key things they want to work on." Consultants will also provide follow-up help.

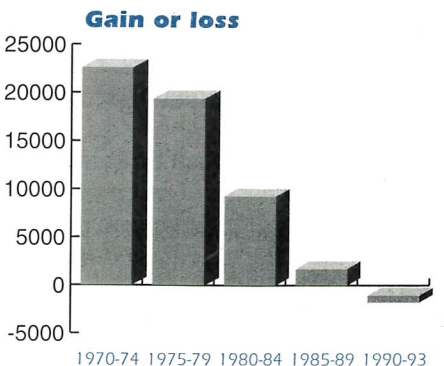
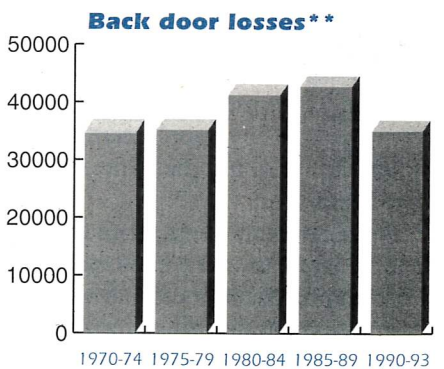
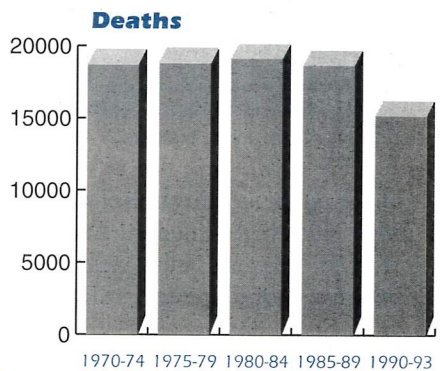
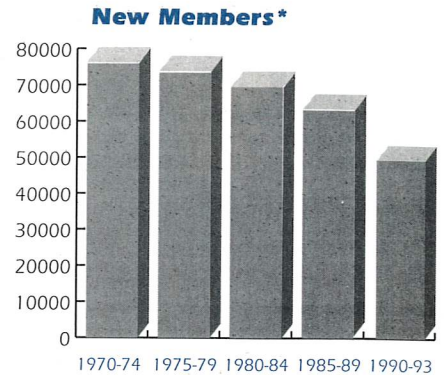
The first workshops are planned for the Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minn., and Madison, Wis., areas next June.

* Members gained by confirmation or profession of faith.
 ** Removed from membership or joined a church not in fellowship.

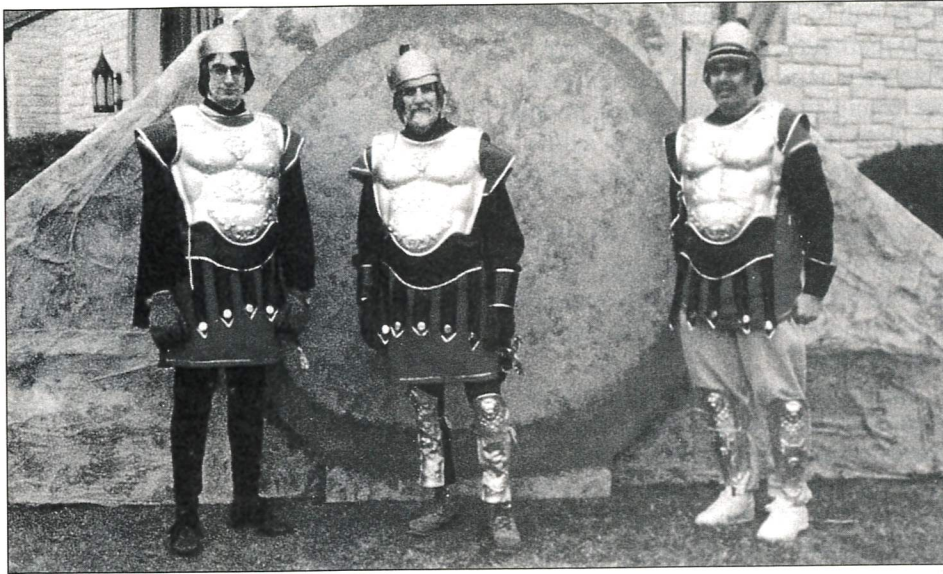
Total backdoor losses since 1970 are 188,737 or 59.6% of current communicant membership total.

Statistics provided by WELS Commission on Evangelism

WELS gains and losses 1970-present



Libertyville church re-creates Easter scene



Soldiers guard the tomb outside St. John, Libertyville, Ill.

From Good Friday through Easter Sunday soldiers guarded the tomb in front of St. John in Libertyville, Ill. Three-men teams, dressed as Romans,

stood watch around the clock.

On Easter morning at sunrise the congregation assembled in front of the tomb. Three robed women

approached the tomb as a man in white rolled away the stone to reveal the empty grave.

The tomb was Rick Grundman's idea. He is principal of St. John school. "We did it to create awareness in the community," he said. "We wanted to let people know we're here and what we're about."

Grundman's students wrote "The Jerusalem Journal," describing events surrounding the crucifixion and resurrection, and handed it out to visitors. So many people came by that the students ran out of copies.

Grundman was on guard duty when a family arrived at 5:30 Easter morning. They had been there the day before.

"The mother told me they came back because of their little girl," he said. "She woke her family up and insisted they come back. She had to see if Jesus was up yet."

Financial aid lets students concentrate on studies

Most students at Martin Luther College cannot earn enough in a summer job to meet expenses for the school year. They supplement their income by working part-time during the school year.

Some students work more than 20 hours a week to make ends meet. Such employment interferes with their education, limiting study time and participation in school activities.

Increased student assistance can provide a solution to the needs of our future pastors and teachers. Our synod's gift-planning counselors can suggest ways for you to help.

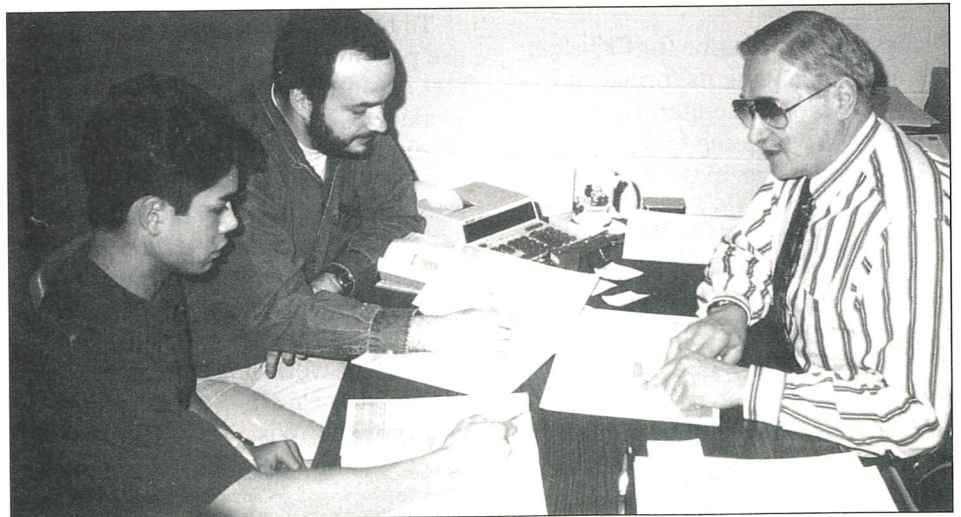
One counselor, Paul Soukup, reports that a husband and wife recently received a large sum in an insurance settlement. They donated \$50,000 to the Student Assistance Endowment Fund, with income gener-

ated by the gift designated for students at Martin Luther College. The gift will assist students for years to come.

For information on how you can

help, contact the WELS Ministry of Planned Giving, 414-771-0697 or 800-827-5982.

—John M. Brenner



Prof. Wayne Zuleger helps students fill out forms to apply for financial aid.



Students of Choma Lutheran School in Zambia, Africa, display awards they won at Nansai Bush School on Sports Day. "Our children made a very good showing, and Caitlin Hartmann even broke the long jump record for six-year-olds," reports Caitlin's mother, Sharon Hartmann. Her husband, John, is a missionary in Choma.

Ministerial schools' enrollment "a success story"

Current enrollment levels at ministerial education schools are "a success story after deep concern a half decade ago," according to a report from the synod's ministerial education board. Enrollments are at levels to meet projected needs for pastors, teachers, and staff ministers.

Luther Preparatory School in Watertown, Wis., anticipates 560 students in the newly combined school, and Michigan Lutheran Seminary awaits 345. The total in prep is nearly 100 more than the projected number in the synod's vision statement.

Projected enrollment for Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary next

year is over 160, and Martin Luther College is expected to have 750 students preparing for teaching, staff, or pastoral ministry.

The college board of control struck a note of concern about teaching ministers, however. "We have more graduates than we can immediately place in WELS schools," says the report. "This is particularly true of women." The report called on the synod "to develop new opportunities for young women to realize their desire to serve the Lord."

The boards' full reports are printed in the synod's *Book of Reports and Memorials*, available at your church.

Obituary

Paul T. Ruege
1926-1994

Paul T. Ruege was born in West Allis, Wis., Aug. 16, 1926. He died in Milwaukee, Wis., Sept. 2, 1994.

A graduate of Northwestern College, he taught at Lutheran High School and Wisconsin Lutheran High School, Milwaukee, and Wisconsin Lutheran College (Milwaukee Lutheran Teachers College).

He is survived by his wife, Mary; sons, David (Cindy), Joel, and Daniel (Anna); five grandchildren; and a brother, John (Dorothy).

WELS stewardship counselor leaves

WELS stewardship counselor James Diehl has ended his services to the synod. For 13 years Diehl, accompanied by his wife, Judy, helped parishes across the country develop stewardship programs.

Budget cuts led to the elimination of his position. The Commission on Adult Discipleship is seeking alternative ways to provide stewardship assistance and materials, according to its administrator, Bruce Becker.

District news

Michigan

Trinity, Bay City, dedicated a new digital organ April 30. The instrument is a MIDI sound module/sequencer with two manuals and 38 speaking stops. . . .

Michigan LHS, St. Joseph, kicked off a three-year fund drive aimed at raising \$750,000. The program coincides with the school's 25th anniversary. . . .

Grace, St. Joseph, celebrated its 50th anniversary May 21. . . . Teachers observing 25 years in ministry are **Donna Bickel**, Toledo, **Jerold Meier**, Plymouth, **Beverly Mulinis**, Toledo, **Daniel Boehm**, Bay City.

Western Wisconsin

St. Paul, Wisconsin Rapids, observed 25 years in ministry of its principal, **David Brown**. . . . **Mt. Olive, Monroe**, celebrated its 50th anniversary April 30, and **St. John, Barre Mills**, observed 125 years June 11.



Aaron Wakeman, an eighth-grader at Bethany, Manitowoc, Wis., represented Wisconsin paper carriers on a 10-day trip to England. The Milwaukee

Journal Sentinel and *Parade Magazine* chose Aaron because of his service as a carrier.



When a new student named Doris joined our class, one third-grader got excited

because now we had someone to pray for. I asked what she meant and she explained, "You know—'O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good, for his mercy and Doris forever.'"

—Sandra Johnson
Hales Corners, Wis.

Former editor honored

At its May 13 commencement service, Wisconsin Lutheran College conferred an honorary doctorate on retired *Northwestern Lutheran* editor James Schaefer to commemorate his service to the church.

Before becoming editor, Schaefer directed the synod's stewardship programs. He also was the synod's director of public relations and serves on its constitution committee. He is presently spiritual advisor for WELS Kingdom Workers.

NL wins awards

Northwestern Lutheran has received three awards from the Associated Church Press, an international association of nearly 200 church-related publications. Awards went to "Drying

their tears" by Victor Vieth (Oct. '94), "Copyright: is your church breaking the law?" (June '94) and "Journey to the cemetery" (Feb. '94), both by Dorothy Sonntag.

Missions receive grants

Over 80 mission stations in the US and Canada will have funds available for publicity, thanks to a \$92,000 grant from the Lutheran Brotherhood Foundation. Harry Hagedorn, administrator for the synod's Board for

Home Missions, reported that the money will be used for advertising, flyers, brochures, letters, telephone canvassing, and other evangelism efforts.



A fire in my kitchen was extinguished, but not before smoke and flames damaged my house. I was crying when my son arrived with his two boys. Steven, age 5, said, "Grandma, why are you crying? You should be happy the firemen didn't carry you out in a big black bag." Only through the eyes of a small child did I see my blessings.

Janina Ebel
Crystal Lake, Ill.

My grandson Jason, a first-grader, wrote this for a class assignment.

Today's perfect family:
Take 1 Dad.
Add 1 Mom.
Adopt 2 boys.
Adopt 1 girl (to be added later).
Mix in 3 cats and 6 dogs.
Add 1 heart.
And wrap in 2 arms of God.

Carol Jean Pope
Racine, Wisconsin

Send your contributions to Bright Side, Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.

Financial report WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD

BUDGETARY FUND

Statement of changes in fund balance / Nine months ended March 31, 1995

	1995 actual	1994 actual	1995 budget
Revenues:			
Synod mission offering	\$11,905,467	\$11,662,661	\$11,697,000
Gifts and memorials	313,319	113,489	112,000
Bequest/planned giving income	540,438	143,932	375,000
Tuition and fees	5,818,786	5,378,718	5,860,000
Other	53,140	67,486	60,000
Transfers-endowment/trust earnings	154,099	160,077	168,000
Transfers-gift trust	5,642,578	5,219,878	5,848,000
Transfers-continuing programs	1,661,788	1,204,224	1,496,000
Transfers-other	50	—	—
Total revenues	26,089,665	23,950,465	25,616,000
Expenditures:			
Administration	1,997,701	1,988,356	2,059,000
Home missions	4,383,050	4,243,124	4,652,000
World missions	5,032,832	4,893,261	4,973,000
Ministerial education	12,359,827	11,808,290	12,175,000
Parish services	816,533	845,172	962,000
Fiscal services	1,075,377	1,089,044	1,067,000
Total expenditures	25,665,320	24,867,247	25,888,000
Net change	424,345	(916,782)	
Fund balance-beginning of year	155,746	1,075,572	
Fund balance-end of period	580,091	158,790	

SUBSCRIPTION OFFERINGS RECEIVED

District	Communicants	1995	Year to date projected	3-month offerings	Percent of sub.	Ave. per comm.
Arizona-California	16,420	\$950,146	\$200,256	\$188,034	93.9%	\$45.81
Dakota-Montana	9,340	432,230	62,701	60,725	96.8	26.01
Michigan	37,272	2,090,667	361,177	420,690	116.5	45.15
Minnesota	44,834	2,454,042	422,582	385,202	91.2	34.37
Nebraska	10,010	537,906	84,281	72,351	85.8	28.91
North Atlantic	3,605	326,428	61,830	74,194	120.0	82.32
Northern Wisconsin	61,350	2,524,580	393,945	372,657	94.6	24.30
Pacific Northwest	4,745	252,972	50,764	44,556	87.8	37.56
South Atlantic	6,172	386,716	92,273	87,895	95.3	56.96
South Central	4,053	314,366	64,069	69,302	108.2	68.40
Southeastern Wisconsin	58,165	3,235,311	528,135	487,063	92.2	33.50
Western Wisconsin	60,255	2,929,615	456,046	494,866	108.5	32.85
Total this year	316,221	16,434,979	2,778,059	2,757,535	99.3	34.88
Total last year	316,748	16,240,856	2,646,796	2,747,628	103.8	34.70

Bulletin BOARD & NOTICES

To place an announcement, call 414/256-3232; FAX 414/256-3899. Deadline is six weeks before publication date.

COLLOQUY REQUEST

Lowell Holtz, former LCMS teacher, has requested a colloquy for the purpose of entering the WELS teaching ministry. Please address pertinent correspondence to Pastor Herbert Prah, 215 E Hamilton, Eau Claire WI 54701.

RESULT OF COLLOQUOY

In a colloquy conducted May 4, Mr. Ger Yang was found to be in confessional agreement with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Mr. Yang will continue his study under the tutorage of Pastors Mark Cordes, Don Fastenau, Jonathan Ladner, Leon Piepenbrink, and Loren Steele. He will continue his preministerial training under the supervision of Pastor Steele. The colloquy committee will make its final decision on his eligibility into the ministerium upon completion of these requirements.

Second Vice President Robert J. Zink
Professor Harold Johnhe
District President Larry Cross

On May 19, Rao Dasari, formerly a pastor in the Bible Free Lutheran Church in India, after having successfully completed the steps of our colloquy program, which included three quarters of study at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, was declared eligible for call into the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod ministerium.

First Vice President Richard E. Lauersdorf
Professor John F. Brug
District President Larry E. Cross

CHANGE IN MINISTRY

- Teachers:
- Blaho, Kristin**, to Sola Fide, Lawrenceville, Ga.
 - Bode, Jeannette R.**, to Redemption, Milwaukee, Wis.
 - Braun, Bruce W.**, from St. Jacobi, Greenfield, Wis., to Peace, Hartford, Wis.
 - Cudworth, Irene R.**, from St. John, Saginaw, Mich., to retirement
 - Doell, Gladys C.**, from Immanuel, Greenville, Wis., to retirement
 - Dretske, James L.**, from Trinity, Hoskins, Neb., to St. Paul, Saginaw, Mich.
 - Ebeling, David F.**, from St. Jacobi, Greenfield, Wis., to Bethlehem, Hortonville, Wis.
 - Fenske, Daniel J.**, from St. John, Waterloo, Wis., to Northland LHS, Wausau, Wis.
 - Frandsen, Thor F.**, from St. Paul First, N. Hollywood, Cal., to retirement
 - Horneber, Michelle**, to Holy Word, Austin, Tex.
 - Hosbach, Harold A.**, from Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, to retirement
 - Janke, Steven J.**, from St. Andrew, St. Paul Park, Minn., to Christ, Big Bend, Wis.
 - Jensen, Steven W.**, from Mt. Olive, Delano, Minn., to West LHS, Hopkins, Minn.
 - Kaesmeyer, John L.**, from Trinity, Nicollet, Minn., to Christ the Lord, Brookfield, Wis.
 - Kaye, Donna R.**, from St. Paul, Lake Mills, Wis., to Lola Park, Redford, Mich.
 - Kitzrow, Craig R.**, to Winnebago Luth. Academy, Fond du Lac, Wis.
 - Kock, Kathleen F.**, to St. Paul, Saginaw, Mich.
 - Koepsell, Tamara J.**, from Zion, Moberge, S.D., to St. John, St. Paul, Minn.
 - Lecker, Cynthia S.**, to Immanuel, Greenville, Wis.
 - MacKenzie, Jean**, to St. Paul, Livonia, Mich.

- Mammel, Otto F.**, from Luther HS, Onalaska, Wis., to retirement
 - Marquardt, Elizabeth**, from Peace, Hartford, Wis., to St. Lucas, Kewaskum, Wis.
 - Miller, Brian L.**, from Peridot, Peridot, Ariz., to St. Luke, Oakfield, Wis.
 - Nelson, Jason M.**, from Lakeside LHS, Lake Mills, Wis., to Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee.
 - Noack, David W.**, from St. Mark, Eau Claire, Wis., to Salem, Stillwater, Minn.
 - Noon, Amy B.**, from Redemption, Milwaukee, Wis., to Bethlehem, Menomonee Falls, Wis.
 - Panning, Frederick H.**, from St. Croix LHS, W. St. Paul, Minn., to retirement
 - Proeber, Leonard A.**, from Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee, to Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw.
 - Prost, Matthew J.**, from King of Kings, Maitland, Fla., to Lakeside LHS, Lake Mills, Wis.
 - Rathke, Judith S.**, from Divine Savior, Indianapolis, Ind., to retirement
 - Rautenberg, Ann M.**, to St. Paul, N. Fond du Lac, Wis.
 - Rust, Anne K.**, to St. Mark, Eau Claire, Wis.
 - Saatkamp, Susan M.**, to St. Matthew, Milwaukee, Wis.
 - Schumacher, Peter J.**, from Gloria Dei-Bethesda, Milwaukee, Wis., to Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee.
 - Schwartz, Linda C.**, to St. John, Waterloo, Wis.
 - Sebald, Walter M.**, from Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee, to retirement
 - Spaude, Lily V.**, from Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, to retirement
 - Spiegelberg, Lyla M.**, from Good Shepherd, West Allis, Wis., to retirement
 - Sprain, Ruth A.**, from Lakeside LHS, Lake Mills, Wis., to Minnesota Valley LHS, New Ulm, Minn.
 - Stein, Mark A.**, from St. Peter, Appleton, Wis., to Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee.
 - Stoltz, David M.**, from St. Peter, Milwaukee, Wis., to Trinity, Bangor, Mich.
 - Unke, Lori L.**, to St. Paul, Lake Mills, Wis.
 - Weihrauch, Carl J.**, from Samuel, Marshall, Minn., to St. Paul, Stevensville, Mich.
 - Whitney, Daniel E.**, from Salem, Milwaukee, Wis., to St. Matthew, Iron Ridge, Wis.
 - Wiebusch, Anne M.**, to Mt. Calvary-Grace, LaCrosse, Wis.
 - Winkler, Craig C.**, from First, Green Bay, Wis., to St. Peter, Helenville, Wis.
 - Winkler, Wendy S.**, from First, Green Bay, Wis., to St. John, Jefferson, Wis.
 - Young, Melissa**, to St. Croix LHS, St. Paul, Minn.
 - Zibrowski, Craig S.**, from St. John, Juneau, Wis., to Trinity, Nicollet, Minn.
 - Ziel, Elisabeth**, to St. Matthew, Oconomowoc, Wis.
 - Zimmer, Ronald C.**, from Friedens, Kenosha, Wis., to Trinity, Minocqua, Wis.
 - Zoellner, Mark J.**, from King of Kings, Garden Grove, Cal., to Bloomington, Bloomington, Minn.
- Pastors:
- Bauer, Andrew P.**, from Good Shepherd, Holmen, Wis., to New Life, Buffalo Grove, Ill.
 - Fischer, Wayne L.**, from Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee, to Great Plains LHS, Watertown, S.D.
 - Frey, Kenneth L.**, from Lincoln Heights, Des Moines, Ia., to St. Paul, Appleton, Wis.
 - Froelich, Richard A.**, to Lone Star, Tyler, Tex.
 - Haag, David E.**, from California LHS, Wildomar, to Winnebago Luth. Academy, Fond du Lac, Wis.
 - Neitzel, Mark A.**, from St. John, Kaukauna, Wis., to Nebraska LHS, Waco, Neb

- Schroeder, Winfried J.**, from St. John, Wetaskiwin, Alberta, Canada, to St. John, Roscoe/St. John, Bowdle, S.D.
- Schulz, James R.**, from Christ Our Redeemer, Aurora, Col., to David's Star, Jackson, Wis.
- Schwark, Melvin**, to St. John, Cornell, Wis.
- Stelljes, Ross A.**, from Immanuel, La Crescent, Minn., to exploratory mission, Denver, Col.
- Wendt, Theodore L.**, from Redeemer, Norton, Kan., to Novosibirsk, Russia
- Wolfgang, Arno J.**, from First German, Manitowoc, Wis., to Sofia, Bulgaria

POSITION AVAILABLE

Cataloger—Martin Luther College library. MLS from ALA-accredited institution. MLC Library, 1995 Luther Ct, New Ulm MN 56073; Prof. David Gosdeck, 414/262-8102.

Family staff minister—Communicator, motivator, administrator, program developer. Background in Lutheran theology and heritage. King of Grace Lutheran Church (ELS), 6000 Duluth St, Golden Valley MN 55442.

COMING EVENTS

- Parish nurse workshop**—July 14-15, Martin Luther College. 507/354-8221, ex. 282; FAX 507/354-8225.
- WELS EXPO**—Sept. 29-30, Wis. Luth. Sem., Mequon. Displays from WELS divisions and organizations. Question-and-answer period with synod officials.
- WELS Kingdom Workers Convention**—Wis. Luth. Sem., Mequon. Sept. 29, 30. 414/771-6848 or 800/466-9357.
- Christian Educators for Special Education** conference Aug. 11, 8:30-3:30, Wis. Luth. College. 414/774-8620.
- Curriculum workshop**—Aug. 17, Manitowoc LHS. 8:30 AM-2:30 PM. Marcia Wendt, 414/756-2302.
- Men's leadership retreat**—Sept. 15-16. Shepherd of the Valley, 8820 Field St, Westminster CO 80021; 303/867-5500.

AVAILABLE

The Lutheran Hymnal—80 copies. 100 copies of *Lutheran Liturgy* inserts. Cutler Ridge; 305/251-1744.

NEEDED

- Overhead projector and screen**—Abiding Faith, Fort Worth, Tex. 817/294-9303.
- Communion ware** for Russian mission. World Mission Board, 414/256-3233.

ANNIVERSARIES

- St. Louis, Mich.**—Zion (75). Aug. 6, 11 AM and 3 PM. Dinner, 1 PM. 517/681-5633.
- Milwaukee, Wis.**—St. Andrew (100). Aug. 6, 9 AM. Sept. 10 and October 8, 8 and 10:30 AM. Nov. 12, 10:30 AM, dinner following. Carl Cornehl 414/764-4357.

VACATIONERS

- Rocky Mountain National Park**—Abiding Love, Loveland, Col., worships Sundays, 9:30 AM, 206 E. 29th St, in Century 21 building. 970/669-9678 or 970/667-9545.
- Banff National Park**—Mountain View, 1 1/2 miles west of Calgary, south of Hwy. 1, Old Banff Coast Road exit. Bible hour 10 AM, worship 11:15.
- Tampa, Fla.**—Northdale's summer schedule: worship 9 AM.

The fruit of the Spirit is patience

Patience is loving others so much that we endure their faults.

James A. Aderman

Throughout his life Paul marveled at God's patience. "I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man," he confessed. "For that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his unlimited patience" (1 Timothy 1:13, 16).

God's astounding patience! Long after humans have given up on incorrigible degenerates, the Lord continues to reach out to them. Christians can find that patience hard to understand. "Lord, how could you let Jeffrey Dahmer live long enough to confess faith in Jesus?"

God's patience prompts patience

I wonder how many first-century believers asked God to destroy Saul the Christian-hunter. But the Lord is patient, "not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance. . . . Bear in mind that our Lord's patience means salvation" (2 Peter 3:9, 15).

God's patience with Paul prompted patience in Paul, so Paul could say, "You . . . know all about my teaching, my way of life, my . . . patience" (2 Timothy 3:10). He urged, "Be patient with every one" (1 Thessalonians 5:14).

He prayed that believers would live "strengthened with all power . . . so that [they] may have great endurance and patience . . ." (Colossians 1:10,11). He commanded Pastor Timothy, "Correct, rebuke, and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction" (2 Timothy 4:2).

Patience defined

The word Paul uses to describe this evidence of the Spirit's presence in our lives is the opposite of anger. The King James Version captured the sense of the Greek word with the translation "longsuffering."

Paul defines this patience. "Be patient, bearing with one another in love" (Ephesians 4:2). Patience is loving others so much that we endure their faults. Patience is a quality we, by faith, put on. "As God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with . . . patience" (Colossians 3:12).

Patience comes with faith

Every Christian has patience. It comes as standard equipment along

with faith in Jesus. So there is no need to pray for more patience; our petitions are for fuller use of the patience the Spirit has already given us.

We use the patience we have received to thank God for his patience. We clothe ourselves with patience because we are God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved.

James Aderman is pastor at Fairview, Milwaukee.

FOR PERSONAL STUDY

1. Think about 1 Timothy 1:13-16. In what ways must you echo Paul's description of himself as a sinner? How is it a comfort to you that Paul, "the worst of sinners," was shown "unlimited patience"?
2. Read Jesus' parable about the unmerciful servant (Matthew 18:23ff). In which of your relationships have you acted the part of the unmerciful servant? Jesus has forgiven you for that. When will you apologize to him and the person(s) with whom you were impatient?

Next: The virtue of kindness

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



The changing American family

Joel C. Gerlach

A cartoon in *The New Yorker* (2/13/95) depicts a little tyke in his terrible twos, standing with hands on hips and a defiant look on his face. Around a corner, out of sight, are his mom and dad. She quips to her husband, "Do you want to tell him he's taking all the fun out of our marriage or shall I?"

Funny? Hardly! It's not the kid who has the problem. It's his parents. They provide a regrettable commentary on contemporary attitudes and family values.

Traditionally, the Fourth of July has been a time for celebrating America's independence. We often think that our nation's greatness traces back to its political philosophy and its economic policy. But the truth is that a nation's health and strength are inseparably linked to the health and strength of its families. As go the nation's families, so goes the nation.

Parents who think kids take all the fun out of marriage are a symptom of a nation in decline. Signs of decline are abundant. Nowhere is that more apparent than in the changing American family.

Changes in the American family were documented recently by Schmeling and Thurmer Associates in Brookfield, Wisconsin, consultants for strategic planning. Their research was done to assist Lutheran high schools develop strategies to deal with the changing environment. Their depiction of the changing American family includes the following:

- The Dick-and-Jane family of the 1930s, '40s, and '50s is no longer in existence. In 1955, 60 percent of the households in the US consisted of a working father, a housewife mother, and two or more school-age children. In 1980, that fami-

ly unit was only 11 percent of our homes, and today it is less than 7 percent—an astonishing change.

- Fifty-nine percent of children born in 1983 will live with only one parent before reaching age 18.
- Every day in America, 40 teenage girls give birth to their third child.
- Women now head 29 percent of US households.
- There were 3 million unmarried-couple households in 1990, up 80 percent since 1980.

As we observe Independence Day, we would do well to focus on the family along with celebrating our independence. If independence means merely that we are free to do as we please, heedless of the values essential to our national well-being, we will find we are living in a state of anarchy in which freedom no longer means anything.

America will never be a Christian nation. It never has been and never will be. But it can be a nation that cherishes and nurtures family values. It has been, and it can be again.

But it won't be, unless Christian families set the example and the pace for others by being what God calls us to be when he incorporates us into his family of believers. Deploring a desperate situation will not help. Imploring God to help us, as we let our actions be part of his answer to the problems of the American family, will help.

Joel C. Gerlach is pastor at St. John, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.

As we observe

Independence Day

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celebration of our

independence.

Grape juice for the Lord's Supper?

John A. Brug

Our congregation permits people who have a problem with alcohol abuse to receive grape juice rather than wine at the Lord's Supper. One member objects because the Lutheran Confessions mention only wine in references to the Lord's Supper. What is the right thing to do?

Because grape wine was used at the Passover, the church has used wine for the Lord's Supper. Scripture, however, does not specify "wine," but "fruit of the vine" as the element used. It has, therefore, been the Lutheran practice that only grape wine should be used.

We have refused to accept the demands of those who claim that grape juice should be used instead of wine because use of alcoholic beverages is wrong. If we would agree to such a legalistic demand, we would be allowing false teachers to add to God's law. Scripture warns against the abuse of alcohol, but just as clearly permits its use.

Scripture specifies that Jesus used bread and fruit of the vine as the elements of the Lord's Supper, but it does not insist that we use the exact form he used. Since Jesus used unleavened bread at the Passover, we use unleavened bread similar to, but not identical with, the Passover bread. Some Christian churches use leavened bread.

In the Old Testament laws regulating the use of wine, such as the law of the Nazarite in Numbers 6:3, all products of the grape are dealt

with as a unit, regardless of the percentage of alcohol they contain. We should not, therefore, be too dogmatic about the percentage of alcohol that "fruit of the vine" must contain to be used in the Lord's Supper.

Many people who have a problem with alcohol abuse say receiving wine at the Lord's Supper does not contribute to their problem. The quantity of wine can be small, and it can be diluted with water as it often was in ancient times and as it sometimes has been done in the Lord's Supper. These solutions preserve the symbolic unity of all who attend the Lord's Supper.

If, however, certain communicants are convinced they cannot use any alcohol, we do not have to refuse them, since Scripture does not specify that wine must be used.

What is fatalism? How is it different from believing in God's providence?

Fatalism is the belief that everything that happens is inevitably predetermined, no matter what a person does. A fatalist will, therefore, face life with a "whatever will be will be" attitude. In some religions, fate is determined by a blind, irrational, impersonal cosmic power. In Islam, fate is determined by Allah.

During the Gulf War, some Muslims reportedly did not take cover during Scud missile attacks since they believed no matter what precautions a person may take,

whatever God has determined will happen. Such conduct is like the testing of God Satan suggested when he urged Jesus to jump off the temple roof.

God controls all things, but his rule is neither blind nor arbitrary. He considers our conduct and hears our prayers. Although the scales of justice will not be perfectly balanced until Judgment Day, God rewards the righteous and punishes the wicked during this lifetime. Good and evil conduct influence our fate. God's providence does not eliminate our responsibility for our conduct.

Nevertheless, many things remain outside our control—natural disasters, accidents, violent crime. They seem to occur in an arbitrary and unfair pattern. Scripture assures us, however, that God controls and uses even these evils so they work for the good of his people.

Knowing that God is in control of everything does not lead us to the pessimism of fatalism. We remember three truths:

- God wants us to live as his children who realize we are responsible to him for our actions.
- God considers our actions and our prayers as he determines the course of our lives.
- God will direct everything in life for our good.

Have a question?

*Write Northwestern Lutheran,
2929 N Mayfair Rd,
Milwaukee, WI 53222-4398.*

Thirteen people on the planned giving staff? [Open doors, April.] I wonder how many missionaries could be supported by the slice of the synod budget that covers incomes, air fares, and gas mileage for these individuals. Isn't our primary objective to make disciples? Are we losing our focus?

*Karen Straeske
Lowell, Wisconsin*

Ronald Roth, director of planned giving, replies:

By assisting WELS members to make gifts for the work of the Lord, gift-planning counselors help supply even more missionaries. Eleven of the 13 counselors are paid out of a 10 percent allocation from the special gifts.

Regarding Thomas Haar's comments on a "fair salary" for public ministers [Reader's forum, May] . . .

It's one thing when ministers adopt lifestyles of restraint to set a good example. It's another when they have difficulty providing their families with basic necessities because of a stingy congregation. We ought to be ashamed of ourselves when our ministers qualify for WIC benefits from the government.

When young people hesitate to enter the ministry because they find the financial prospects unenchanting, they're sometimes accused of being greedy and materialistic. We ought to ask ourselves just who are the greedy ones.

*Ken Cherney, Jr.
Mandeville, Louisiana*

In his sermon on the mount Jesus gave us some wonderful promises.

He told us not to be so concerned about temporal need, but to "seek first the kingdom of God." If we really put his kingdom first, many churches would be built and many hungry souls could be fed the good news of his gospel. Do we believe his words? If we really do, why does synod have to ask for funds?

*Wm. Kenneth Ness
Hot Springs Village, Arkansas*

I'd like to thank the leaders in the classrooms of our synod. Teachers attend meetings of the school board, parent-teacher organizations, youth group, and conferences. They direct choirs, coach, play organ, and have many other duties that go unnoticed. They spend hours preparing lessons. When the school day has ended, their day has not. They've got papers to correct. So let's say a huge "thank you" to the teachers of our synod.

*Marlys Kohrs
Lake City, Minnesota*

On behalf of WELS members who attend or teach at public schools, thank you, Curtis Peterson ["Public schools, April]. If we want to spread the light of God's Word we must spread it to everyone.

*Brenda Kado
Spring Valley, Wisconsin*

"Public School" [April] presented some misconceptions. Enrolling children in Lutheran schools does not prevent them from being salt and light; it trains them and provides opportunity to practice it. The public school with its humanistic leadership will destroy more faith than it gives opportunity to exercise. It is not smart to deny children Christ-centered instruction just so we can give them the opportunity to be light and salt. They are still children. Let's listen to Jesus' plea to let them come to him before we send them out to evangelize.

*Thomas Koepsell
Oshkosh, Wisconsin*

It is true Christ placed us here to be salt and light ["Public schools, April] but who's to say we can't witness in Lutheran schools? I am a sophomore at Bethany Lutheran College and have many opportunities to witness right here. Had I not gone to a Lutheran high school, I probably would not have been as effective a witness.

*Rachel Ruddat
Mankato, Minnesota*

Send your letters to Readers Forum, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398; FAX 414/256-3899. Include full name, address, and daytime phone number. Letters are edited for clarity and conciseness. Writers' views are not necessarily those of WELS or Northwestern Lutheran.

rē · li · giōn

Defining religion

intercessory prayer: To ask God for something for someone else. The Bible urges us that "requests, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority" (1 Timothy 2:1-2).

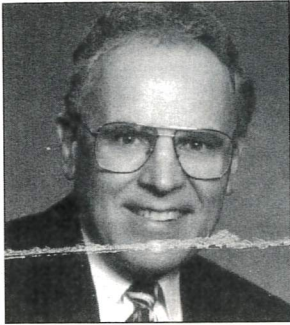
THROUGH MY BIBLE in 3 YEARS

August 1995

- 1. Amos 6
- 2. Amos 7:1-8:3
- 3. Amos 8:4-9:15
- 4. Hosea 1, 2
- 5. Hos. 3
- 6. Hos. 4:1-5:14
- 7. Hos. 5:15-8:14
- 8. Hos. 9, 10
- 9. Hos. 11, 12
- 10. Hos. 13, 14
- 11. Psalms 13, 14
- 12. Ps. 15, 16
- 13. Ps. 17
- 14. Ps. 18:1-30
- 15. Ps. 18:31-50
- 16. Ps. 19
- 17. Ps. 20, 21
- 18. Ps. 22:1-21
- 19. Ps. 22:22-31
- 20. Ps. 23, 24
- 21. Ps. 25
- 22. Ps. 26
- 23. Ps. 27
- 24. Ps. 28, 29
- 25. 1 Thessalonians 1
- 26. 1 Thess. 2
- 27. 1 Thess. 3
- 28. 1 Thess. 4
- 29. 1 Thess. 5
- 30. 2 Thessalonians 1
- 31. 2 Thess. 2:1-12

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

A touch of this and a dash of that



Gary P. Baumler is editor of Northwestern Lutheran and WELS Director of Communications.

It has been said that Professor Fredrich had more of the history of WELS in his head than is to be found written in books.

This month I want to share some tributes, some quotes, some insights—with no particular connecting link.

✠ In a year when ministerial education is in the spotlight, WELS said goodbye to one of its guiding lights. Prof. Edward Carl Fredrich II, AKA “Whitey,” who spent the final 37 years of a 50-year ministry in ministerial education, entered heaven in March.

The consummate professor, Fredrich had a hand in educating the majority of today’s WELS pastors and a representative number of teachers. His ministry was marked by a love for the gospel and a deep interest in church history. It has been said that Professor Fredrich had more of the history of WELS in his head than is to be found written in books.

In 1992 Northwestern Publishing House published his book, *The Wisconsin Synod Lutherans: A History of the Single Synod, Federation, and Merger*. In 1994, the Lutheran Historical Conference awarded him its “Distinguished Service Award.” The award recognized his efforts on behalf of Lutheranism and Lutheran history through research, writing, teaching, preservation of the Lutheran heritage, and partnership in the Lutheran Historical Conference.

Those who got to know Fredrich personally also enjoyed his measured sense of humor and perhaps a game of *Skat*.

We can all thank our Lord for this gift to his church.

✠ Overheard on Good Friday, following an hour-and-a-half service with five separate sermonettes:

Boy: “That was a long service.”

Grandma: “It was a special service.”

Boy: “But it was long.”

Grandma: “Not nearly as long as Jesus hung on the cross for us.”

✠ The following was written in defense of the Pope and Roman Catholicism (who, according to the polls, were out of step with American Catholics), but I think we might relate: “Christ enjoined [his disciples] to teach, not to take polls, and certainly not to ‘adapt’ his teaching to the contemporary world. ‘Trend analysis’ on Good Friday would probably have shown a poor prognosis for Christ’s message” (Joseph Sobran in *The Milwaukee Journal Sentinel*, April 14, 1995).

✠ What next? One company offers *Divorceware* for couples involved in do-it-yourself divorces. Instead of trying to hold marriages together, we work at making it easier to break them up.

✠ Should we ever be surprised at how bold people are about their sinning? Oswald Chambers reminds us, “The nature of sin is that it destroys the capacity to know you sin” (Quoted in *Current Thoughts & Trends*, Feb. 1995). Sad to say, many are bold in ignorance as sin holds sway.

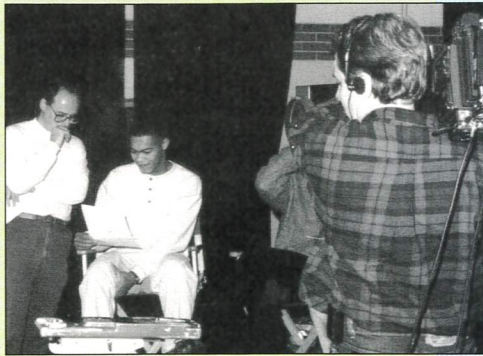
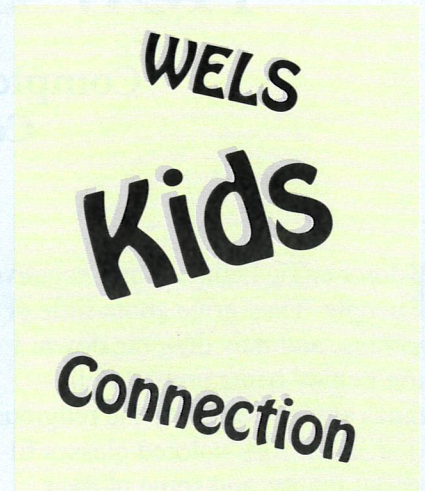
✠ After more than six years, Dorothy Sonntag’s name will no longer appear as assistant editor on the *Northwestern Lutheran* masthead, since she has left NL.

We will miss Dorothy’s contribution to NL. Significantly, just this year, she won two awards for articles in NL from the Associated Church Press. Appropriately (see above), Dorothy credits Prof. Fredrich with helping instill in her a love of writing.

God be with you, Dot.

Gary P. Baumler

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How Christians complain

**Complaining to others only spreads gloom.
Complaining to God is different.**

Paul E. Kelm

I don't enjoy being around negative people. They gripe about little or nothing, and they drag me down. I don't enjoy being around Pollyannas either, especially the religious kind. Their rose-colored glasses filter out reality, and some of their "hallelujahs" seem like pouring syrup on sin to make what's wrong with life go down easier.

The psalms teach Christians how to complain. Take Psalm 13, for example. "How long, [O Lord], will you hide your face from me? How long must I wrestle with my thoughts and every day have sorrow in my heart? How long will my enemy triumph over me?"

Christian complaint doesn't deny feelings or minimize problems. Christians don't pretend when they come before their Father. Honest-to-God means being honest with yourself as well. What makes complaint Christian is that it is addressed to God. Pouring out your heart to a friend has value. But when you can't seem to let go of frustrations and hurts, when your sorrow has bitterness around the edges, when "why" or why me" are the questions stuck in your craw, you need to complain to God.

Christian complaint is more than a recitation of the problem, however. Psalm 13 concludes, "But I trust in your unfailing love; my heart rejoices in your salvation. I

will sing to the Lord, for he has been good to me."

Christian complaint is addressed to God because God cares, and Jesus proved it. Christian complaint trusts that God will answer, both in our heart and in our life. Christian complaint is tempered by the perspective of God's blessings in the past, by the promise of eternal blessings in the future. Christian complaint knows that we are never outside the sphere of God's forgiving love.

Some things just get under your skin, wear you down. Some moods just seem to last, affect the way you look at life. Sometimes you just need to complain. That's why God gave the invitation and promise of prayer. That's why he inspired psalms known as "laments." Complaining continually to others only preoccupies you with your problem and spreads gloom.

Complaining to God is different. He can do something about it. He won't let you lie to yourself in hyperpessimism or phony optimism. He won't let you forget his love and your blessings.

Try Psalm 13 the next time you need to complain.

Paul Kelm is campus pastor at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee.

