

# LUTHERAN



**The victory:  
helping us  
fight a lifelong  
struggle**

page 6

**The charismatic  
renewal among  
Lutherans**

page 16

**CELC  
convention  
news**

page 18

MML 19436 0 0 1 2/97  
 REV FREDERIC H NITZ  
 604 MAPLE CREST LN  
 WATERLOO MI 53094



# Happy Birthday

# Lutheran PARENT

## WE'RE ONE

### ... Great Parenting Magazine!

The first year of *Lutheran Parent* has enhanced the spiritual lives of many families. We have become a valued resource for the Christian home, tackling controversial issues and difficult-to-answer questions. Many congregations and families have chosen *Lutheran Parent* because we encourage parents to build on Christ. *Lutheran Parent's* *Wellspring* devotional booklet helps the school-age family share frequent talks about what God has done for them. We are two great publications in one great magazine.

### We're Celebrating with a GIFT FOR YOU!

Receive a FREE ISSUE when you order a ONE-YEAR subscription to *Lutheran Parent*. That's 7 issues of *Lutheran Parent* and the devotions of *Lutheran Parent's* *Wellspring* bound together for just \$18.99 (a \$22.49 value).

Call subscription services at **1-800-662-6093 ext. 8**

(Milwaukee area [414] 475 - 6600 ext. 5) 8 A.M. to 4 P.M. weekdays  
or use the convenient order form below.

I would like *Lutheran Parent*  
for one year (plus the FREE issue) at \$18.99.

Name (please print) .....

Address .....

City/State/Zip .....

Daytime phone (.....)

#### METHOD OF PAYMENT

Check or money order enclosed (make payable to Northwestern Publishing House)



Card No. ....

Exp. Date .....



Northwestern Publishing House  
1250 N 113th Street  
Milwaukee WI 53226-3284

NL

# Contaminated bread alert

*Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Matthew 16:6*

Robert H. Hochmuth

A shortage of loaves was on the disciples' minds when Jesus voiced this warning about an issue more menacing. Earlier, Pharisees and Sadducees had approached Jesus with an insincere request for a sign from heaven.

## Competing labels

In response to their request for a sign, Jesus indicated only the sign of Jonah was in place. As Jonah revived after three days in the fish, so Jesus' return from the grave would certify his call for repentance, startling the unrepentant on the left and on the right.

Recall that the two groups represented distinctly diverse positions. The liberal Sadducees, with a shell of religion, accepted compromise for the sake of tasting the good life here and now. Pharisees were reactionary, earnest about maintaining the old ways, proponents of the view: "If people would be more respectable and decent like us, we could all count on heaven's help to restore our good fortune."

On the surface, two opposing positions. Yet when responding to their devious request to perform something impressive, Jesus dealt with one factor common to both. Neither the liberals nor the self-satisfied reactionaries in Jerusalem acknowledged a need for repentance, in spite of Jesus' testimony.

Their differing religious views clashed on social and political issues. They tangled in their council chambers. But Jesus addressed their perversity in common.



## Same taint

When he cautioned his disciples about the yeast of these parties, his words called attention to ferment that influenced liberals and reactionaries alike. Though on opposite sides of the religious aisle, they were under the same roof spiritually, impenitently resisting God's will.

This common denominator showed up on other occasions. In spite of dissimilarities, they formed a coalition reacting to the popularity of John's baptism. Assessing the strong religious fervor of the crowds, and concerned about maintaining their own position and prominence, they appeared where John was baptizing. Both evoked John's denunciation.

Neither group was genuinely motivated to serve God. Though at odds, each group continued on a course prompted by similar unconverted desire to gratify self rather than glorify God. Whether liberal or traditional, the common denominator came down to: "What's in it for

me?" With this mind-set they could even come to Jesus with a joint request for an impressive sign from heaven.

## Same ingredient

That yeast can penetrate affairs in opposite camps today too. Even Bible-bashing liberals at times dispense a form of religion, minus repentance toward God and trust in his Redeemer-Son, for meeting society's spiritual hunger. On the opposite wing, people advocate a diet of traditional values, a so-called Judeo-Christian ethic, respect for life, family, and morality. But, sad to say, a person advocating righteous causes can be motivated by self-interest too.

Emphasis on law and order, after all, increases the likelihood of greater personal security in the pursuit of happiness for me and my loved ones. Combating indecency can be prompted by a concern for property values as much as for souls of people affected. Bible quotes can be heard even among the spiritually self-reliant.

Involvement in religious activism while bypassing the issue of our sinfulness and need of an atoning Savior is dangerous leaven. Being aware of it can keep us reaching for the Bread of Life.

*Robert Hochmuth, a retired pastor, lives in Pleasanton, California.*



- Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them." Yet during a church service in Africa, one woman exclaimed, "These children should not be baptized!" Turn to page 8 to find out the whole story.
  
- In April, the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference held its second convention. On page 18 you'll see photos of and hear about these Christians "From every nation, tribe, people, and language."
  
- At NL we strive to bring you information, instruction, inspiration. We believe the two series that end this month achieved our goal—let us know if they did. Our thanks to Wayne Mueller for instruction and information on the book of Revelation, and to Paul Wendland for inspiration on prayer.
  
- We start a new Bible study this month. James Aderman will author the new series based on the book of Samuel. He will also provide questions for further personal study. So get your Bible, turn to page 34, and join us as we study Samuel's life.

—LRB

Cover photo by Paul Burmeister

## NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN

Official magazine of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

August 1996 / Vol. 83, No. 8

### Editor

Rev. Gary P. Baumler, 414/256-3230

### Communications Assistants

Linda R. Baacke, 414/256-3232

Julie K. Tessmer, 414/256-3231

### Northwestern Lutheran

#### WELS

2929 N Mayfair Road

Milwaukee WI 53222-4398

Phone 414/256-3888

FAX 414/256-3899

### Communication Services Commission

R. J. Zink (chairman), R. D. Balge,  
J. M. Barber, W. F. Bernhardt, M. D.  
Duncan, T. L. Schultz.

### Contributing Editors

J. A. Aderman, R. D. Balge, W. F.  
Beckmann, M. E. Braun, J. F. Brug,  
T. B. Franzmann, J. C. Gerlach,  
R. H. Hochmuth, R. E. Lauersdorf,  
F. E. Piepenbrink, V. H. Prange.

### Art Director

Paul Burmeister

### Graphic Designer

Melissa Homan

### Photographs and Illustrations

Jerry Kiesow, p. 3  
Paul Burmeister, p. 6  
Theodore Sauer, p. 8  
Chad Hug, p. 10  
courtesy of the Schuetts, p. 12  
Duane Tomhave, Eugene Schulz, p. 18  
John Boettcher, p. 34  
Mrs. Kevin Scheibel, p. 40

### Subscription services

1-800-662-6093 ext. 8

Milwaukee area 414/475-6600 ext. 5

### Northwestern Publishing House

1250 N 113 St

Milwaukee WI 53226-3284

USA and Canada—one year \$9. All other countries—one year, air mail \$40; one year, surface mail \$24. Write for multi-year, blanket, and bundle rates.

Available on audio cassette from Mission for the Visually Impaired, 559 Humboldt Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55107.

NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN (ISSN 0029-3512) is published monthly by Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N 113th Street, Milwaukee WI 53226-3284. Periodical postage paid at Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

**POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *Northwestern Lutheran*, c/o Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N 113th Street, Milwaukee WI 53226-3284. ©1996 by *Northwestern Lutheran*. Printed in the USA.

### TO ORDER

#### *Northwestern Lutheran*

Send this coupon with check or money order to:

Northwestern Publishing House  
1250 N 113th Street  
Milwaukee WI 53226-3284

A subscription  
in U.S.A. or Canada

- for 1 year at \$9.00  
 for 2 years at \$17.00  
 for 3 years at \$24.00

Name (print) \_\_\_\_\_

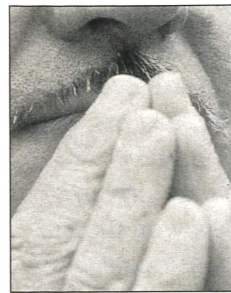
Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

(Note: You can also subscribe to *Northwestern Lutheran* by calling subscription services toll-free 1-800-662-6093, ext. 8. In the Milwaukee area call 414/475-6600, ext. 5. Phone weekdays between 8:00 AM and 4:00 PM)



"These children should not be baptized!"  
page 8



Hallowed be your name  
page 10



A true man  
page 14

- 3 THOUGHT FOR THE DAY  
**Contaminated bread alert**  
*Robert H. Hochmuth*  
Involvement in religious activism while bypassing the issue of our sinfulness and need of an atoning Savior is dangerous leaven.
- 6 SEVEN KEYS THAT OPEN THE REVELATION  
**The victory: helping us fight a lifelong struggle**  
*Wayne D. Mueller*  
Jesus has won the victory for us, yet we must constantly do battle for him.
- 8 PART OF GOD'S FAMILY  
**"These children should not be baptized!"**  
*Ernst R. Wendland*  
A message for parents who bring their children for Holy Baptism.
- 10 PRAYER  
**Hallowed be your name**  
*Paul O. Wendland*  
When God's name loses its meaning, there is no prayer possible.
- 12 PART OF GOD'S FAMILY  
**"See the Lord working"**  
*Linda R. Baacke*  
After over two decades, one couple heard about the impact their daughter's death and her friends' witness had on those around them.
- 14 INSIGHTS  
**A true man**  
*Eric S. Hartzell*  
Jesus really was a true man. He knows every hair on every head and every sparrow on every street corner, but he didn't know if there were figs on the tree.
- 16 THEY SPOKE IN OTHER TONGUES  
**The charismatic renewal among Lutherans**  
*Mark E. Braun*  
Charismatic renewal has touched Lutherans, yet official Lutheran response to the movement has been mixed.
- 18 CELC CONVENTION  
**From every nation, tribe, people, and language**
- 19 GRADUATES  
**Martin Luther College**
- 25 WELS NEWS
  - What they do "for the least of these"
  - LCCA ordains pastor
  - Book addresses fellowship
  - Stewardship program available
  - Life concert planned
  - WELS membership growth patterns
  - Living solo
- 30 WORLD NEWS
  - Marriage and faith
  - Homosexuality "incompatible" with Christianity
  - "Feel good" religion
  - Florida governor vetoes school prayer bill
  - Euthanasia legal in Australia's outback
  - No tax break for the Bible
  - Back to the basics of the Bible
  - Making a list and checking it twice
- 32 BULLETIN BOARD
- 33 PERSON TO PERSON  
**Showers of blessings**  
*Karl R. Gurgel*  
Let's summarize the showers of blessings we have received.
- 34 AN UPSIDE GOD IN A DOWNSIDE WORLD  
**Samuel: an answer to prayer**  
*James A. Aderman*  
The Lord's answer to Hannah's imperfect pleading flowed from his loving faithfulness.
- 35 EDITORIAL COMMENT  
**Blessed fellowship**  
*Walter F. Beckmann*  
We encourage each other to sound scriptural practice, but we also remember that love keeps us from being too quick to judge each other as we apply this doctrine with patience.
- 36 YOUR QUESTION, PLEASE  
**The pastor's job and who can do the job of the pastor**  
*John F. Brug*
- 37 READERS FORUM
- 38 EDITOR'S PEN  
**The credible church**  
*Gary P. Baumler*  
Having no God-given absolutes, disagreeing on essential teachings, and giving equal value to all traditions and teachings are the ways to break down credibility, not build it.
- 40 INSIGHTS  
**This card means business**  
*Carl R. Henkel*  
Quite possibly, right now one of your friends, relatives, acquaintances, or neighbors needs to hear about Jesus.

# The victory: helping us fight a lifelong struggle

Jesus has won the victory for us, yet we must constantly do battle for him.

Wayne D. Mueller

Everybody loves a winner. That's why the Olympics command so much attention. That's why winning teams consistently fill stadiums. That's why sports heroes are recruited to sell tennis shoes and hamburgers.

Believers are winners, too. But we compete in an arena more important than any Olympian or professional athlete ever entered. In the spiritual arena, victory is not a matter of medals or merit. Eternal life and death hinge on the outcome of our struggle.

## Fighting the good fight

The Revelation of St. John is a book about winning. It was written for those who fight the good fight of the faith. The Revelation contains dozens of word pictures for Christian combatants. St. John calls our struggle "the hour of trial" (3:10) and "the great tribulation" (7:14). He urges us to hold on to what we have, to preserve and endure hardships, to overcome, to suffer persecution, and to be faithful unto death.

To appreciate the last book of the Bible we must understand that it



was written for Christian soldiers. Revelation is reveille for the unrepentant and call to arms for the faithful. The devil and the world are gathered for battle against the believers. "They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves" (20:9). Still, we live each day confident that Jesus fights for us. "With justice he judges and makes war. . . . He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood, and his name is the Word of God" (19:11-14).

Christian soldiers are driven by twin truths. Jesus has won the victory for us, yet we must constantly do battle for him. These two seemingly contradictory facts are more than our sinful nature can handle. When things go bad, we doubt Jesus' victory and become despondent. When things go well, our flesh relaxes and lets up in our battle against sin.

## Overcoming the devil

The Revelation meets this spiritual conundrum head on. In the opening verses, Jesus appears as both Victor and Fighter. "Out of his

Seven keys that  
open the Revelation



mouth came a sharp double-edged sword" (1:16). The two-sided sword symbolizes the gospel and law. The gospel proclaims Jesus' accomplished victory and squelches our fears. The law warns us never to relax in our battle against sin.

When he rides into the world scene on his white horse, Jesus wears the crown of victory and carries the bow of battle (6:2). He rides out as a "conqueror bent on conquest." Jesus has won the victory, but he stands ready to help us fight our battles.

*Knowing the outcome, of course, doesn't make our daily battles any less intense.*

Twenty-seven times Jesus appears as "the Lamb." The Lamb "who was slain" (5:6, 12) sits victoriously on God's throne in heaven. Throughout the book, the Lamb shares the blessings of his victory with his people. He washes away their sins with his blood (7:14), writes their names in the book of life (21:27), and calls them to the great wedding banquet of heaven (19:9).

The victorious Lamb enthroned in heaven is simultaneously at the side of his soldiers on earth. Every day the Victor helps us win the good fight of the faith. John says those who struggle against the devil overcome "him by the blood of the

Lamb" (12:11). Worldly powers and influences "will make war against the Lamb, but the Lamb will overcome them because he is Lord of lords and King of kings" (17:14). Believers keep "themselves pure" from their own sinful desires because "they follow the Lamb wherever he goes" (14:4).

**Celebrating the victory**

Since the victory already belongs to us, we celebrate it now. We cause damage to our own faith and offend the faith of others when we spend too much time commemorating our lost battles. The Revelation urges us to refocus. It diverts our attention from the casualties and injuries on today's battlefield and lifts our eyes to celebrate Christ's victory.

To celebrate the victory, John's seven visions are interspersed with uplifting songs of praise to God and the Lamb. All of chapter 18 celebrates the thorough defeat of Satan and his worldly cohorts: "Rejoice, saints and apostles and prophets!" (18:20). Hallelujahs punctuate chapter 19's invitation to praise: "Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory!" (19:7). Chapter 21 draws the reader to live every day in happy anticipation of the glory of the New Jerusalem.

Revelation's victory theme shapes our worldview for a lifelong struggle. Pagan celebration is based on box scores that have no bearing on the final outcome. God will not

declare the winners of eternal life on the basis of their health, wealth, or social standing. Winners of the World Series have no advantage in the world to come.

The book of Revelation inspires a long-term optimism that does not waver with fluctuations in the stock market. Short-term setbacks can't dampen the Christian soldier's desire to celebrate victory. The death of a saint becomes an occasion to praise the Lamb for taking one of his warriors home. We can celebrate trials as an opportunity to grow in faith. We don't have to wait for the final buzzer to sound. The fight of faith is one contest where it is over before it's over. It ended at the cross when Jesus said, "It is finished."

Knowing the outcome, of course, doesn't make our daily battles any less intense. But the confidence we have in the final outcome motivates every personal victory along the way. To believe the Jesus of Revelation is to trust that his past victory makes us sure winners in the present and future. We don't fight to win what Jesus has already won. The daily fight of faith is to stay with the one who won it all for us.

NL

*Wayne Mueller is administrator of WELS Parish Services.*



# "These children should not be baptized!"

A message for parents who bring their children for Holy Baptism.

Ernst R. Wendland

The little mud block church in rural Chipanama was about 50 kilometers from home, but due to poor roads, it had taken over an hour to get there. The rough trip was worth it, however, for the congregation filled the place and sang hymns as they waited. I was to examine seven adult confirmands that day and baptize any children the parents had brought along. I would not return for three months.

The service was progressing smoothly. The seven confirmands (one of whom was also to be baptized), all members of the choir, had answered their doctrinal review questions reasonably well. I turned to the four children needing baptism. I was checking through their names, a sometimes confusing affair in Africa, when a young woman blurted out, "Pastor, these children should not be baptized!"

It was not surprising the woman commented aloud during the service. (African worship customs, especially in rural areas, tend to be a bit "freer" or more flexible than in the U.S.) But what she said was unexpected: Do not baptize these children. Why not? The only controversies I had experienced in baptizing infants concerned having the baby wear traditional medicinal charms to protect against evil powers, or if the husband was from another church. Could either one of these be the problem?

## **Baptism and the parents' responsibility**

A vigorous discussion followed the woman's protest.

She explained her concern. Apparently, the mothers of those children did not regularly attend church, especially in recent months. The reason they came today, the woman claimed, was they knew I would baptize their babies. But, the woman argued, next Sunday and in the future, we will not see them in church. Based on past performance, it is unlikely they will be regular attenders. Nor is it likely, then, their children will come to Sunday school when they got older.

---

*Are we encouraging  
indifference if we  
baptize children whose  
parents are not serious  
about their faith?*

---

So why are they being baptized? How could they grow in faith if their parents did not attend services, or if the children did not come regularly for Sunday school? And what about the promise the parents make to bring their children up "in the training and instruction of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4)? Are we encouraging indifference if we

baptize children whose parents are not serious about their faith?

This woman had a valid point. She was not denying that children should be baptized and become members of God's family. She knew from the Bible that by the Spirit at work in the Word of God, children—even infants—could believe.

But, what would happen to that infant faith after the children had been baptized? Would it wither and die due to the neglect of unfaithful parents? These mothers should first show their commitment to the spiritual welfare of their children by attending worship services regularly. By so doing they would demonstrate their readiness to have their children baptized.

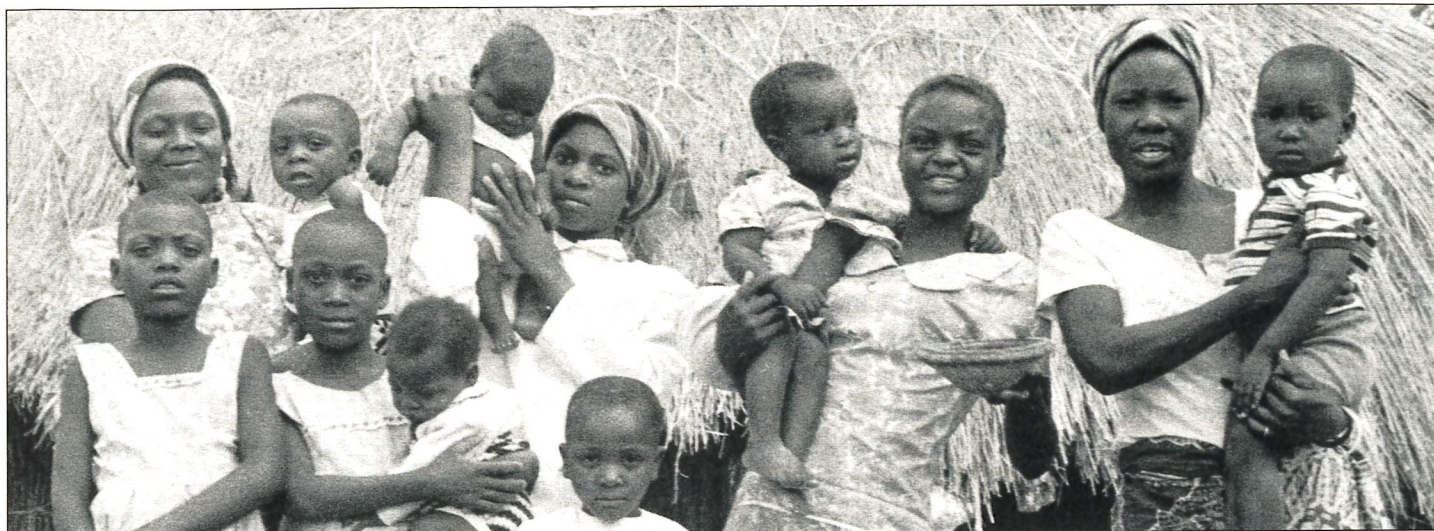
The woman's argument was compelling. Loud voices from the women's side of the congregation joined in her support. The four mothers remained silent. Perhaps they knew the criticism was true.

## **To baptize or not?**

The men, however, were not so sure. This had never been done before—to refuse baptism to a member of the congregation, no matter how nominal. Was this going too far in church discipline, at the expense of helpless little babies?

It did not take long before the women (wives included) had convinced them it would be better if baptism were postponed until the





*These children were baptized on the same day at one of the churches in the Lutheran Church of Central Africa.*

mothers (only one father was present) more fully demonstrated their fidelity to the gospel. In the end, it seemed a consensus had been reached: The four children should not be baptized that Lord's day.

I could sympathize with their sentiments and the reasoning behind them. They did not appear to be malicious. No petty jealousies manifested themselves. The young woman, and all who spoke up, sounded genuinely concerned about the four infants' spiritual welfare. How could this best be ensured, humanly speaking?

Nevertheless, I felt uneasy. To what extent were these parents responsible for the faith of their children? And to what extent would I be responsible if I went along with the congregation, did not baptize the children, and one of them died before I returned to Chipanama congregation in three months? That would be a heavy load to carry.

### **An evangelical compromise**

We were about to begin the baptism for the adult. Then an elderly woman at the back of the congregation spoke: "Ah, but why can we

not forgive those mothers today and baptize the children they brought? Why should they go back home just like that [without having their children baptized]? They have learned their lesson by being rebuked. They will be faithful now. Besides, if we do not baptize their babies, they may become offended and not come to church again soon."

The word "forgive" is a strong one in Bantu society. When activated, it ends any possible hard feelings or ill will between two or more parties. "We will try to get our young sisters to be more faithful," the old woman continued. "We will see that they bring their children to Sunday school."

One could almost feel a sigh of relief passing through the congregation. The four infants should be baptized after all. There was no further discussion, not even from the young woman who first raised the issue. Everyone knew she had spoken correctly, but where such small children were involved, everyone agreed it was better that "mercy triumphs over judgment" (James 2:13). The congregation would deal

with the parents after their children had been received into the Lord's kingdom through baptism.

### **A lesson from real life**

An African parable? To many readers it may seem so. But it goes beyond that. This true story has a lesson to teach us all. It concerns the power of the Word to change hearts and lives from unbelief to faith and faithfulness. The sacraments, through which God proclaims and applies the gospel, are vitally important to the spiritual well-being of the Church, whether in Africa or anywhere else. The sacraments also involve a certain responsibility by those who receive their sacred benefits. That includes all parents who bring their children to the Lord in baptism. May we be ever faithful to our Christian duty as parents.

NL

*Dr. Ernst R. Wendland, language coordinator, is a professor at The Lutheran Seminary, Lusaka, Zambia.*

# Hallowed be your name

When God's name loses its meaning, there is no prayer possible.

Paul O. Wendland

***I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips!***

It seems no one speaks honestly anymore. Everywhere I look, it's just people selling, selling, selling. They try to sell me their ideas. They

try to peddle themselves. They try to get me to buy more stuff I don't need. I think sometimes the only use people have for words is to finagle the other guy into doing what they want.

So empty is our talk, so unclean

our lips that even the name of God has become little more among us than a meaningless expression of surprise, "Omigod!" It doesn't even shock us anymore, probably because Americans have grown deaf to blasphemy.

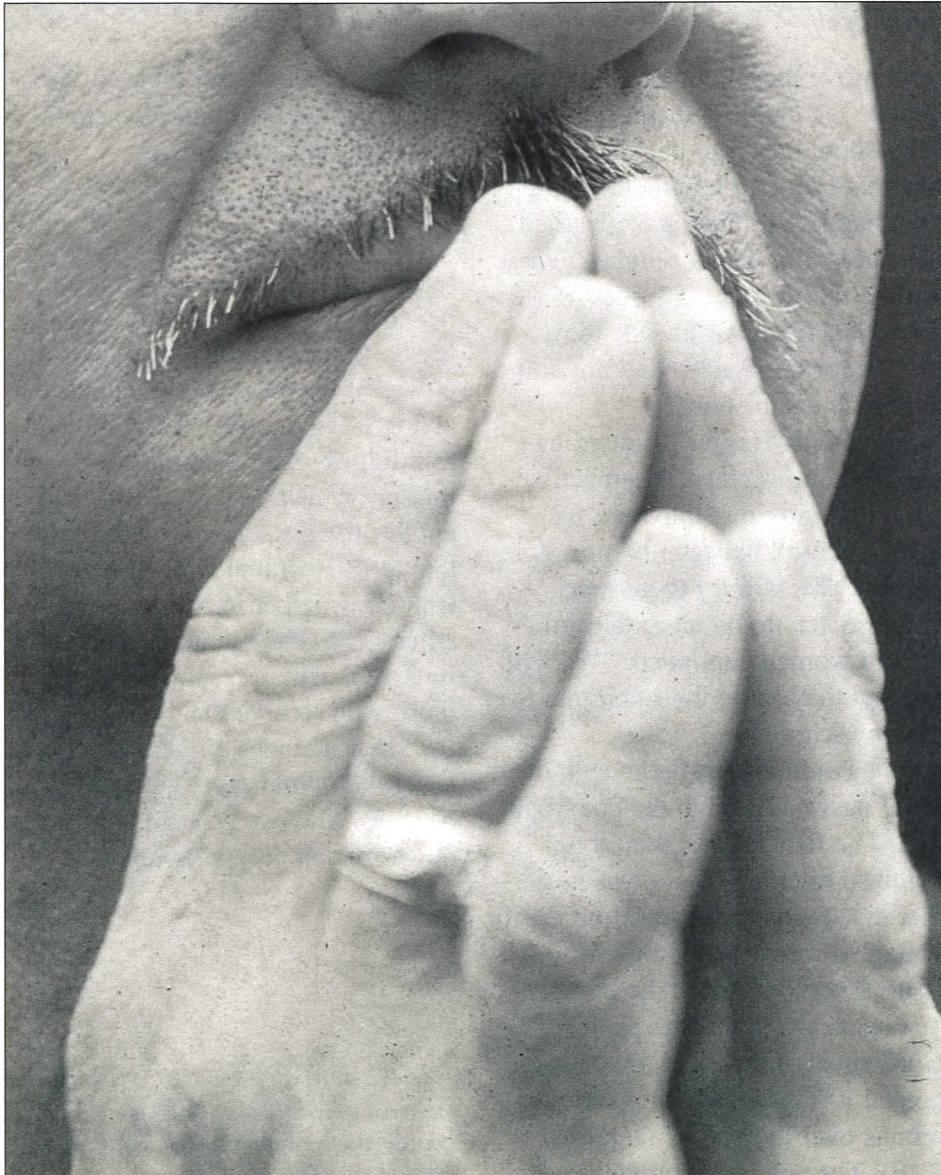
Meanwhile, we grope around in this gray mist, trying to find each other, looking for something true to set our hopes on. But whenever we think we see some break in the clouds, some lightening of the gloom, it turns out to be just another puff of words, another eddy in the mist. And then the clouds close in again.

***Ah, dear God, cleanse our speech, convert our tongues, reverse this Babel!***

Jesus answers, "When you pray, say . . . 'Hallowed be your name.'"

Now maybe you hear this and wonder how a prayer can help us talk straight to each other, or how the holiness of God's name connects with the purity of our lips. Think it through with me. What happens when God's name and prayer go away from our lives? What is bound to happen to our speech when we lose the heart to pray? What will happen to our concern for truth if the one who governs truth is nothing in our mouths but an empty word?

When God's name loses its meaning, there is no prayer possible. When God's name goes away, then every name, every noun, every



verb, every word ever uttered is nothing but sounding brass and a clanging cymbal. When God is removed from our vocabulary, we can think of no one in all the universe to whom we must account for our words. There is simply no human power capable of dividing light from darkness, truth from lies. When God is gone, all we say is doomed to be either meaningless or manipulative.

Speech can only become strong again and clear and truthful when each sentence is spoken by someone who knows he stands before the throne of God even when he turns to speak to his neighbor. "Pray without ceasing," says Paul. For us to become aware of God in this way, we must know who he is and learn to speak his name.

***But how can I, a sinner, speak your holy name, dear God?***

"Remember," King David sang by the power of the Spirit, "Remember the wonders God has done, his miracles and the judgments he pronounced" (1 Chronicles 16:12). God's name is the record of his mercy to us, revealed in the sacred texts of Scripture. There, God spells out his name, telling us of the way he remembered humankind's desperate predicament, and how he tore open the fabric of time to set us free in his Son. When God remembers man, blessings flow down from a love undeserved. When man remembers God, he sings God's praise for saving him, for taking his sin away.

Remembering God's name helps us in a way our own memories never can. If we sit down to reflect

on our own past triumphs, what are we doing but building another Babel tower? It will surely fall. Dwelling on past failures is just as useless. Those recollections will snuff out our hope and leave us sitting in darkness. As for all the rest of our memories, what are they but joys we can never relive and sorrows we cannot undo?

Our mind is a graveyard full of silent monuments, etched with the names of people no longer there. That is why any songs we sing about our own past must conclude in tones of longing and sad regret.

***"Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, and his mercy endures forever."***

Our memory of God is different, must be different. To sing of God's past is to sing the song of salvation. Though there remains so much we don't understand, and though what we do know is only partial, we can be absolutely certain that our loving God has summed up all the ages in Christ. We open the pages of Israel's chronicle and read our own story. We open up the gospels and rediscover there the burning coal of truth that cleanses our mouths from sin, the soothing salve that heals our wounded memories.

With his living finger, God has etched our names, not on stone, but on his heart forever. Jesus has taken up our griefs, carried our sorrows. He laid them all down in his grave. There they are still, swallowed up in his death. If we look for him in the Word, if we go with the women to his tomb, we'll see no dead name there, written on silent rock. We will hear the angel say, "He is not here; he is risen, just as he said."

***"Oh, give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, and his mercy endures forever."***

God asks us to remember him, to recall and recount his mighty deeds, to lift up our voices in songs of praise. To sing God's praise for his mighty deeds in the past is to proclaim God's presence in our lives today. It is a reminder of that new song we will all be singing before long, a song much too large for the narrow halls of this old world. It is fit only for the new heavens and the new earth our Lord will bring with him when he comes.

"All our yearning, Lord, all our striving, all the prayers of all the saints from the dawn of time have been tending toward that day when your kingdom will be perfected, and all creation set free from dust and rust and ruin. Then the morning stars will sing for joy; the hills and forests clap their hands. Then we will forget how to cry, and remember only you. Then at last we will speak the truth in perfect love. Until that great and everlasting moment of truth, dear Lord, purify our lips daily by your pardoning grace. Help us hallow your name by the pure and sincere teaching of your word and the steady love of our life" (Luther's Prayers, Brokering, p. 11).

***You must open our lips, Lord; then our mouths will declare your praise!***

NL

*Paul O. Wendland is a professor at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota.*

# “See the Lord working”

After over two decades, one couple heard about the impact their daughter's death and her friends' witness had on those around them.

Linda R. Baacke

Two years ago, Carl Schuett was in the wrong place—between Jeff Beifuss and the coffee pot.

“I needed coffee during a break in our morning meeting,” says Beifuss, “but a man was in my way. I saw part of his name tag, and out of the blue, asked, ‘Are you any relation to Kathy?’”

Yes, he was.

Carl's daughter Kathy had died 23 years ago.

**It was 1971. A little after midnight the doorbell rang.** Before the Sheriff's department deputy could tell Dorothy Schuett, she told him: “Kathy's dead, isn't she?”

But what Dorothy couldn't tell him, because she didn't yet know, was the impact Kathy and her death had on those around her.

**Kathy was a student at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.** Like many other DMLC and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary students, she spent her summer working at Glacier National Park, Montana.

“This was something Kathy wanted to do,” says Dorothy. “There were a lot of WELS students out there. We wanted her to stay home, but she was 20. She wanted to go out there too.”

Kathy was coming home on Sept. 1. On Aug. 22, nine days before she was to leave Glacier Park, Kathy and two other girls went for a hike.

As the girls hitchhiked a ride back to the lodge, the driver lost control.

All three girls and the driver were killed.

**Jeff Beifuss was working at Glacier Park that year.** In fact, he was dating Kathy's best friend, Jean. Beifuss had been confirmed as a Methodist but was searching.

“My first serious exposure, other than social, to WELS was through Kathy's death,” he says. “What struck me was how the WELS community there comforted each other in a way I didn't quite understand.”

The WELS students organized and conducted a worship and memorial service on their own.

“I found it striking—the kids' witness and support, and how faith brought them through tragedy,” says Beifuss.

“They focused on the gospel. And they comforted each other, knowing Kathy was in a far better place.”

**But Jeff wasn't the only one affected by these events.** Kathy's roommates wrote to the Schuetts after Kathy's death.

“Her roommates loved her and were grateful to have known her,” says Carl. “Their letter said Glacier was inspiring to Kathy and, in turn, she was inspiring to them.”

Kathy was also trying to help one girl who was on drugs.

“I told Kathy she shouldn't feel frustrated; sometimes even profes-

sionals cannot help,” Dorothy continues. “I heard from that girl also. She said with Kathy's help she was able to get off drugs.”

**Kathy witnessed to others because she believed in God's love and forgiveness.** Through that faith, she wasn't afraid of death.

The Schuetts received a letter Kathy mailed a few days before she died. When she got lonesome she would go on a hike. She said it was as if she could reach up and touch God. “If heaven is one millionth as pretty as Glacier Park, it must be a beautiful place to be,” wrote Kathy.

And as Dorothy was going through Kathy's belongings, she found a paper Kathy had written. “It was called ‘The state of death.’ She got an A+ on it,” says Dorothy. “She knew more about dying than I did. That was very comforting.”

**But when a child dies, comfort can be hard to come by.** Hoping to get some of their questions answered, the Schuetts made five or six visits out to the park to talk to people and see the site of the accident. “We really had to know,” says Dorothy.

Even though they found some answers after Kathy's death, it took a long time to come to terms with it. “We think of her almost every day,” says Dorothy. “At first we thought of her every five minutes. As one woman told us, ‘The wound will



Kathy Schuett (left) and Debbie Marquardt on a hike in Glacier National Park. Kathy, Debbie, and Debbie's sister, Amy, were killed in a car accident the next day.

always be there, but the edges won't be quite so jagged.' ”

**Both Carl and Dorothy found a few more answers**, and the edges became a little less jagged, the day Jeff Beifuss spotted Carl. Jeff told Carl his story—how through Kathy's death, the students witnessed to their faith. And how that affected and encouraged him.

Jeff had married Jean and joined WELS in 1976.

“I got deeply involved in my faith, making it a bigger part of my life,” says Jeff. “Now I'm president of my congregation and a communicator for WELS. I'm in about as deeply as a lay person can get.”

“I didn't believe it at first,” says Carl. “But after a while I realized what he said was true. It is amazing how he found me because I wasn't even supposed to be at the meeting.”

“We feel God allowed this to happen so Carl could hear about the impact of Kathy's life—and her death,” says Dorothy. “And it was so comforting to hear.”

Although the Schuetts live in Wisconsin and Beifuss and his family live in Utah, they still keep in touch. “This is pretty stunning for me,” says Beifuss. “Especially to the extent that this can be a witness for Christ.”

And this story is a witness for Christ. “You can see the Lord working,” says Carl. “That's what it's all about.”

NL

*Linda Baacke is a communications assistant for WELS Communication Services and Northwestern Lutheran.*

# A true man

Jesus really was a true man. He knows every hair on every head and every sparrow on every street corner, but he didn't know if there were figs on the tree.

Eric S. Hartzell

It is hard to understand why he looked for figs in the first place. Mark 11 tells us it wasn't the time for figs. Besides that, he was God. Surely he didn't need to go up to the tree and look through its branches to see if there were figs. But he did. And of course he didn't find any.

We can understand all this in only one way. That is to know that Jesus, the man, didn't know everything. As a carpenter he didn't at first know what a mortised joint was or a right angle for that matter. Until he learned them

from his carpenter father, he didn't know what they were. And good chance as a carpenter he probably didn't know it wasn't the season for figs. Why else would he have gone up to the tree? But he was hungry, and just like any other man he couldn't see from the distance that there weren't figs on the tree—just like any other man could not do it—and so he came closer to rustle branches and peer and poke up into the greenery. “He found nothing but leaves.”

**Jesus really was a true man.** He was true God at the same time, but he was so much a true man that he had to go up close and look to see if the tree had figs. I'm glad that he had to do that. It is a comfort to me because he was like me. I drive across town to get something on sale and am told at the cash register, “I'm sorry, that sale ended.” (It was not the season for figs!)

Jesus was true man all right. He didn't know everything. As a child he grew in wisdom and stature. He was the Word,

the sum total of all good speech, and yet as he learned the language of his parents he no doubt said things that were grammatically incorrect. The Spirit teaches us to say, “Abba, Father.” There was a time when Jesus' tongue and lips said “Abba!” for the first time.

---

*As a true man he couldn't see that there weren't figs on the tree . . . so he came closer to rustle branches and peer and poke up into the greenery. “He found nothing but leaves.”*

---

He sat listening to the scribes and teachers not just to make a point and to impress people with his being there, but to learn things. He asked them questions. When he asked in agony of his friends,

“You are not going to leave me too, are you?” he wasn’t just asking a rhetorical question. He didn’t know. He wondered.

He was in all points tempted like we are yet was without sin. When I see my Savior looking in the fig branches I am the more convinced of that. He is like me! I do not have a high priest who cannot be touched by the feeling of my infirmities. He had them too. He lived with ignorance just as we all do.

**Jesus’ action in the episode of the fig tree is a mystery, but it shows us how completely our Savior took on himself our nature.** As God he holds everything in his hand—me too, and all believers—but he himself was held in his mother’s arms. When Mary held him in her arms, his baby arms couldn’t hold anything. He is the light of the world, but a star had to shine above his cradle. He is able to do all things, but he shed helpless tears over Jerusalem. He has all wisdom and understanding, but even his own family looked at him and thought he had taken leave of his senses.

On the third day of his creating, he cast the sea like a mantle around his world, but after the ninth hour of his suffering on the cross, he begged, “I thirst.” He breathed into man and made him a living being, but his own breath was wrested

from him in death on the cross. He was the life of the world, but Joseph and Nicodemus pried his limp and dead body from the cross.

He knows every hair on every head and every sparrow on every street corner, but he didn’t know if there were figs on the tree. He who neither slumbers nor sleeps as true God slumped down on the well of Samaria “tired as he was from the journey.” He who made the Tree of Life and planted it in heaven on each side of the River of Life to bear its fruit 12 times a year didn’t know about the fig tree outside Bethany.

Knowing Jesus like this makes us love him more. He really is our brother. When we say our prayers, they go before one who is truly like us, who empathizes and sympathizes. He did not think equality with his Father was something to be grasped. He gave it up and humbled himself and took on himself the form of a servant. It wasn’t phony play acting. It was as real as his dismay in a fruitless fig tree.

**NL**

*Eric Hartzell is an exploratory pastor at Georgetown, Texas.*

# The charismatic renewal among Lutherans

Charismatic renewal has touched Lutherans, yet official Lutheran response to the movement has been mixed.

Mark E. Braun

One might suppose Pentecostalism and the charismatic renewal would not find much support among Lutherans.

- For Lutherans, the Gospel centers on the person and work of Jesus. Pentecostalism accentuates the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, particularly in the dramatic gifts of healing, direct prophecy, and speaking in other tongues.

- The Lutheran Confessions call justification by faith “the chief topic of Christian doctrine” (Apology IV, 2). Charismatics focus more on the believer’s inner life of spiritual experience and sanctification.

- Lutherans give top priority to Scripture: “God grants His Spirit or grace to no one except through or with the preceding outward Word” (Smalcald Articles III, VIII, 3). Charismatics maintain that God gives guidance and leadership to the church today through visions and dreams or direct prophecy.

- Lutherans teach that the Spirit works through means: “God does not wish to deal with us otherwise than through the spoken Word and the sacraments (Smalcald Articles III, VIII, 10). Pentecostals expect a direct outpouring of the Spirit, without means. (In fact, Pentecostals often regard water baptism and Holy Communion as external works.)

- Lutherans are taught to disregard—even distrust—their emotions; for certainty, we look to the words and promises of God. Even one of their own, Charles Farrah of Oral Roberts University, admits, “Charismatics tend to judge theology by whether or not it makes them feel good.”

## A paradoxical connection

Yet the charismatic renewal has also touched Lutherans. “Paradoxically, perhaps,” observes Grant Wacker, “the movement showed greatest success among ‘high church’ bodies such as Catholic, Episcopalian, and Lutheran.” The Lutheran International Renewal Center reported in 1984 more than 1,300 pastors on its list who were openly charismatic, including over 400 in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS).

(The movement seems largely to have bypassed WELS. In the 1981 *Profile of WELS Lutherans*, half of those surveyed did not respond to the question of whether or not they were charismatics; of those who did, 94 percent of teachers and 100 percent of pastors said no.)

Pastor Larry Christenson, one of the first Lutheran charismatics, has said that after speaking in tongues he has “known the reality of Christ in a new way. Before, it was pri-

marily my thoughts that were affected, my system of ideas. Now it is my life and actions, and my deeper attitudes and feelings as well.” LCMS pastor Rodney Lench, in a widely quoted statement from his booklet *My Personal Pentecost*, explained:

I didn’t feel loved of God, although intellectually I could say, “Yes, but God’s Word says you are even if you don’t feel it.” But when the Holy Spirit flooded my soul with love, I felt it. There was no need to keep quoting Bible passages. The Holy Spirit was now ministering that love from within my heart and not just through my intellect.

## A “Lutheran” explanation

How do Lutheran charismatics reconcile their doctrinal convictions with charismatic contentions?

Christenson says what charismatics are bringing forth “is not a new statement of the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, but a fresh experience of it.” In his view, the movement heightens the historic teaching about the Spirit, rather than degrading it.

Lutheran charismatics cite the Augsburg Confession (XX, 27-34) and the Formula of Concord (Thorough Declaration II, 65), saying after the Spirit brings us to faith, “through the power of the Holy



Ghost we can and should cooperate" in living a life of sanctification. This cooperation "does not occur from our carnal and natural powers, but from the new powers and gifts which the Holy Ghost has begun in us in conversion." Charismatics "find no fault with Luther's doctrine of justification," Christenson says, but they fear "the work of Christ will get narrowed down to forgiveness and nothing more."

They still view the sacraments as means of grace, but they believe the Spirit can be released in a fresh, experiential way.

Baptism in the Spirit will vary among denominations. In a Lutheran prayer group, speaking in tongues will be no more emotionally charged than prayers in English. "The reason speaking in tongues is tied to emotionalism in many people's minds," one charismatic

(ing) that charismatic gifts were given primarily in the age of the apostles. Their 1972 statement, *The Charismatic Movement and Lutheran Theology*, advises: "Even in the apostolic church . . . it is not clear that all Christians possessed these charismatic gifts. . . . The Christian church must therefore be extremely careful not to place too much emphasis on any one of these gifts."

LCMS President J.A.O. Preus,

### A comparison of major emphases of Lutherans and Charismatics



## Lutherans

person and work of Jesus  
justification by faith

Scripture

Spirit through the Word and sacraments  
words and promises of God

## Charismatics



presence and power of the Holy Spirit  
inner life of spiritual experience and sanctification

visions and dreams or direct prophecy

Spirit without means  
personal feelings

Lutheran charismatics claim a profound respect for the written Word, but they insist the Word does not rule out spiritual experience. Spiritual experience is legitimate, but must be measured by Scripture. (Here, however, they concede that this has not always occurred throughout the charismatic movement.)

Lutheran charismatics distinguish themselves from other Pentecostals concerning the means of grace. While classic Pentecostalism sees the bestowal and manifestation of the Holy Spirit as an added endowment of the Spirit (often dismissing water baptism), Lutheran charismatics see it as a releasing of the Spirit already given in water baptism.

explains, "is because the practice of it, until quite recently, has been confined almost exclusively to religious groups which follow a rather free and emotional form of worship."

#### A guarded response

Official Lutheran response to the movement has been mixed. The Lutheran Church in America and the American Lutheran Church, the two largest constituent bodies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, were cautiously favorable. The ALC deemed some convictions in the movement un-Lutheran, and discouraged speaking in tongues in public gatherings.

The LCMS reacted more negatively, suggesting (though not insist-

addressing the Eighth International Lutheran Conference on the Holy Spirit in Minneapolis in August 1979, said:

It is dangerous to teach the opinion that God desires every Christian, following water baptism, to have a spiritual experience called "baptism with the Holy Spirit" and that such an experience is necessary for Christians in order that they may be certain of having faith and salvation. We must take care lest the impression be given that people who have not had such an experience have incomplete faith.

NL

Mark E. Braun is a professor at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee.

## From every nation, tribe, people, and language

The Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference's (CELC) convention, helped remind members of their oneness in Christ.

"It is the work of God that people from different languages, cultures, countries, and backgrounds hold a common faith and a common purpose," said Prof. Lyle Lange, vice president of the CELC.

The convention took place April 23-25 in Quebradillas, Puerto Rico.

"It brought to mind the words of John as he beheld a vision of God's people in heaven: 'There before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people, and language, standing before the throne (Revelation 7:9),' " said Lange.

The pictures tell the story.



Karl R. Gurgel, WELS president, gives communion to CELC participants. Over 90 people from 15 countries attended the convention. Member churches' participants came from Africa (Nigeria, Zambia, and Malawi), Mexico, Puerto Rico, Finland, Germany, Australia, Sweden, Norway, Japan, and the United States (WELS and ELS) along with guests from Hong Kong, the Ukraine, Granada, and Antigua.



Pastor Yeung Wai Sing, Missionary Gary Schroeder, and Vicar Chia Lap Foo, visited the convention. These members of South Asian Lutheran Evangelical Mission (SALEM), Hong Kong, are gearing up for 1997, when Hong Kong reverts back to communist rule.



Dr. Joseph Ibanga, a delegate from Nigeria. He is president of Christ the King Lutheran Church of Nigeria, and is a professor at the University of Nigeria.



Mark Tuffin, pastor in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Australia, delivers one of seven convention essays, all under the theme "Justification by grace through faith: our heritage from the Lutheran Reformation."



CELC actions included accepting the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Church of Russia and the Evangelical Lutheran Synod in Peru as new member churches, adopting a provisional constitution, and appointing a commission to summarize CELC convention essays.

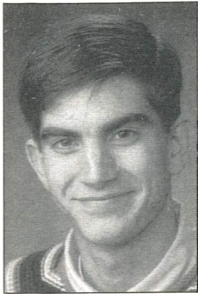
Thanks to Lyle Lange of Martin Luther College for supplying information for this article.

# Martin Luther College

New Ulm, Minn.

## 1996 GRADUATES

One hundred fifty-four people graduated from Martin Luther College on May 18. Graduates either received a Bachelor of Science in Education degree or a Bachelor of Arts degree.



**Matthew P. Ampe**  
Kenosha, Wis.



**Jon T. Bartel**  
Appleton, Wis.



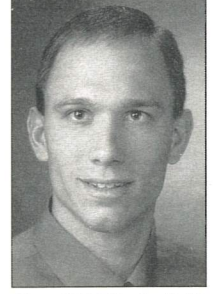
**Lori M. Bavuso**  
Kenosha, Wis.



**Benjamin W. Berger**  
Milwaukee, Wis.



**Kim M. Beyer**  
Algoma, Wis.



**Brent T. Biesterfeld**  
Crete, Ill.



**Rachel M. Biesterfeld**  
Crete, Ill.



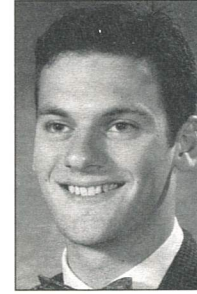
**Edwin J. Binder**  
Yorktown, Va.



**Katherine L. Bivens**  
Mequon, Wis.



**Sara A. Bode**  
Sussex, Wis.



**Lucas D. Boehm**  
Bay City, Mich.



**Rebecca L. Borree**  
Kaukauna, Wis.



**Stephanie A. Brands**  
New Ulm, Minn.



**Katherine L. Braun**  
Watertown, Wis.



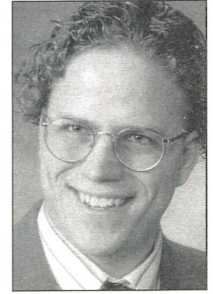
**Julie A. Bruce**  
Pigeon, Mich.



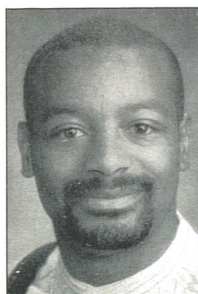
**Ryan D. Buch**  
New Ulm, Minn.



**John A. Byus Jr.**  
Bexely, Ohio



**Daniel L. Cole**  
Canby, Minn.



**Brady E. Coleman**  
Detroit, Mich.



**Matthew P. DeNoyer**  
Waukesha, Wis.



**Gregory T. Diersen**  
Caledonia, Minn.



**Kathy M. Dobrunz**  
Dakota, Minn.



**Matthew K. Doering**  
New Ulm, Minn.



**Christopher S. Doerr**  
Milwaukee, Wis.



**Timothy D. Dolan**  
Fond du Lac, Wis.



**Jeffrey A. Duquaine**  
Sturgeon Bay, Wis.



**Christopher M. Esmay**  
Corpus Christi, Texas



**Bert P. Falak**  
Baroda, Mich.



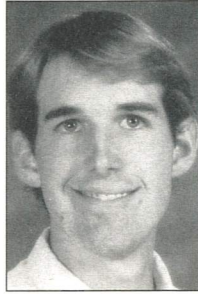
**Trisha K. Feder**  
Watertown, Wis.



**Andrew D. Fix**  
Tucson, Ariz.



**Renee A. Fluegge**  
Lannon, Wis.



**Edwin J. Fredrich**  
Kewaskum, Wis.



**Steven P. Gabb**  
Watertown, Wis.



**Sarah B. Geiger**  
Belmont, Calif.



**Joyce L. Gonzales**  
Santa Barbara, Calif.



**Michael F. Gorte**  
Manitowoc, Wis.



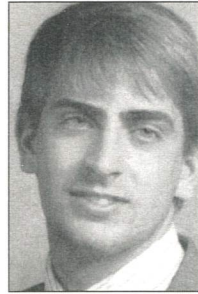
**Barry A. Gostchock**  
Milwaukee, Wis.



**James D. Grabitske**  
Arlington, Minn.



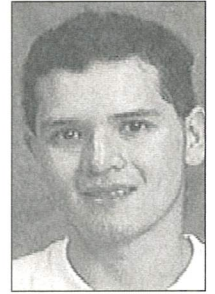
**Kim E. Green**  
Mountain Lake, Minn.



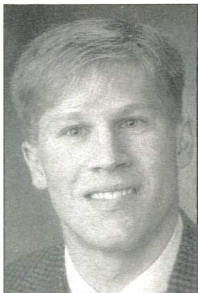
**Daniel K. Grunewald**  
Mt. Calvary, Wis.



**Sarah J. Grunke**  
Fairfax, Minn.



**Ronald J. Gusman Jr.**  
North Hollywood, Calif.



**Jonathan P. Hackbarth**  
Lake City, Minn.



**Daniel B. Hahn**  
Los Alamos, N.M.



**Sarah J. Hartwig**  
Maribel, Wis.



**Jessica L. Hein**  
Saginaw, Mich.



**Heidi S. Hellwig**  
Madison, Wis.



**Shawn L. Herkstroeter**  
Loveland, Colo.



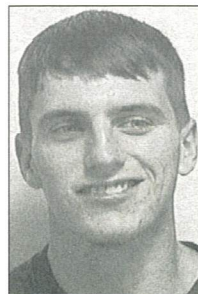
**Ryan R. Hill**  
Saginaw, Mich.



**Michelle L. Horn**  
Fond du Lac, Wis.



**Corinne M. Humann**  
Inver Grove Heights, Minn.



**Troy D. Jacobs**  
Milwaukee, Wis.



**Jason G. Kapanke**  
Sleepy Eye, Minn.



**Michelle L. Kegler**  
Waterloo, Wis.



**Debra L. Keller**  
Menomonee Falls, Wis.



**Jacob J. Klingbeil**  
Eau Claire, Wis.



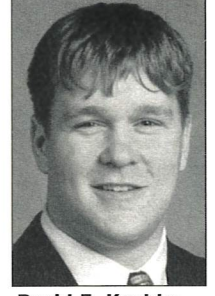
**Carrie M. Knickelbein**  
West Allis, Wis.



**Heather L. Kobleske**  
Watertown, Wis.



**Deborah J. Koch**  
Fond du Lac, Wis.



**David E. Koehler**  
Leland, Mich.



**Dawn E. Koelpin**  
Waukesha, Wis.



**Cindy A. Kom**  
Canistota, S.D.



**Jennifer L. Kowske**  
Northville, Mich.



**Jennifer L. Krause**  
New London, Wis.



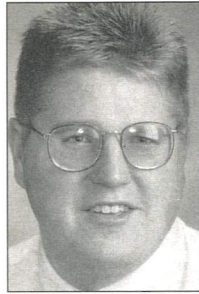
**Julie A. Krebs**  
Greendale, Wis.



**Greta L. Kreutzman**  
Shiocton, Wis.



**Jennifer L. Krueger**  
Winona, Minn.



**Nathan D. Lauber**  
Fond du Lac, Wis.



**Paul J. Learman**  
Friendswood, Texas



**Amy J. Lemke**  
South Shore, S.D.



**Heidi J. Lemke**  
Lakewood, Wash.



**Kathryn A. Lindner**  
Beaver Dam, Wis.



**Kelly J. Loberger**  
Manitowoc, Wis.



**Scott D. Loberger**  
Manitowoc, Wis.



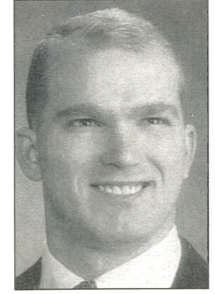
**Jason A. Lockhart**  
Meadow Vista, Calif.



**Jason H. Lowrey**  
Saginaw, Mich.



**Kathryn M. Manthe**  
Oak Creek, Wis.



**Robert B. McLain**  
Redding, Calif.



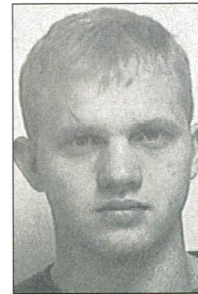
**Ann L. Meihak**  
Wabasha, Minn.



**Jill M. Meyer**  
Phoenix, Ariz.



**Stephen J. Meyer**  
Milwaukee, Wis.



**David L. Mielke**  
Fond du Lac, Wis.



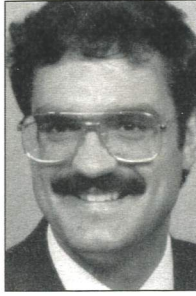
**Richard M. Miller**  
Bay City, Mich.



**Terri L. Miller**  
Waupaca, Wis.



**Carolyn A. Muenkel**  
Milwaukee, Wis.



**Scott A. Muske**  
Kalamazoo, Mich.



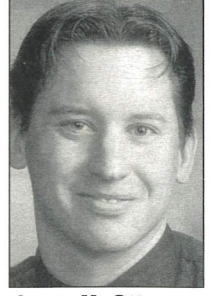
**Amy L. Nell**  
Fond du Lac, Wis.



**Robin D. Nelson**  
Hortonville, Wis.



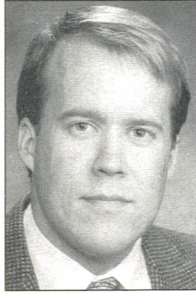
**Rachel A. Orvold**  
Fort Atkinson, Wis.



**James M. Ott**  
Stevensville, Mich.



**Mary I. Otte**  
Ulysses, Neb.



**Scott E. Pearson**  
Hanover, Minn.



**Brian R. Pechman**  
Oshkosh, Wis.



**Jodi L. Ping**  
Farmington Hills, Mich.



**Michelle L. Pontel**  
Whitewater, Wis.



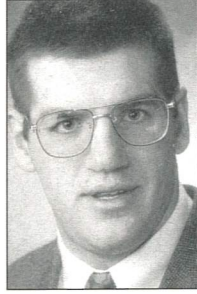
**Ruth A. Potthast**  
Brillion, Wis.



**Deborah L. Quandt**  
Sterling Heights, Mich.



**Danielle S. Raiser**  
Watertown, Wis.



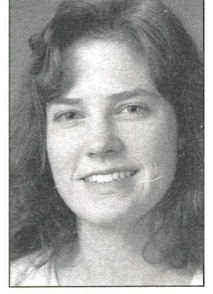
**David C. Rau**  
Neenah, Wis.



**Daniel J. Rautenberg**  
Fond du Lac, Wis.



**Aaron T. Robinson**  
Milwaukee, Wis.



**Julia L. Russ**  
Emporia, Kan.



**Kristin B. Rutschow**  
Downers Grove, Ill.



**Lynnette M. Saatkamp**  
Palm Harbor, Fla.



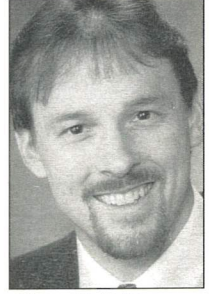
**Jeffrey L. Samelson**  
Libertyville, Ill.



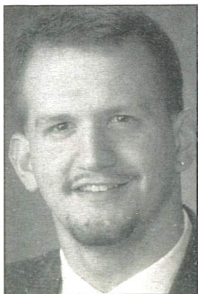
**Beth A. Schaefer**  
Kewaskum, Wis.



**Daniel H. Scharp**  
Watertown, Wis.



**Allen M. Schleusener**  
Tomah, Wis.



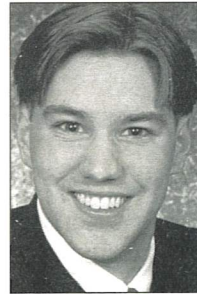
**Neil A. Schlieve**  
Watertown, Wis.



**Jason L. Schmidt**  
New Ulm, Minn.



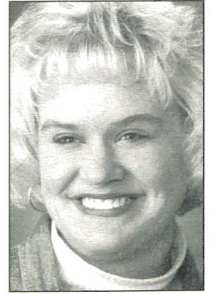
**Nicole R. Schmidt**  
Norfolk, Neb.



**Peter T. Schmidt**  
Coon Rapids, Minn.



**Michael A. Schroeder**  
Saginaw, Mich.



**Deborah R. Schultz**  
Milwaukee, Wis.



**Laura J. Schulz**  
West Bend, Wis.



**Sarah L. Schuster**  
Lacrosse, Wis.



**Lori L. Schwark**  
Cornell, Wis.



**Paul M. Seager**  
Milwaukee, Wis.



**Ann M. Seifert**  
Midland, Mich.



**Dorene S. Siverly**  
Waukesha, Wis.



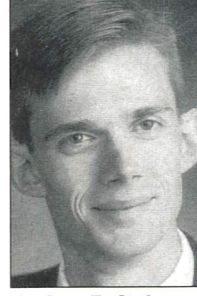
**Anna M. Smith**  
Fond du Lac, Wis.



**Timothy P. Sonntag**  
Alpine, Calif.



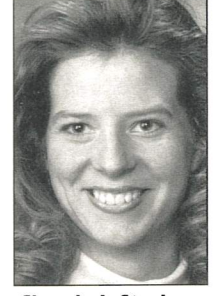
**Susan K. Spevacek**  
Sofia, Bulgaria



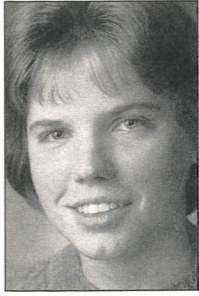
**Joshua E. Stahmann**  
Gainesville, Fla.



**Rebecca A. Staude**  
Onalaska, Wis.



**Chanda I. Steele**  
Mendota Heights, Minn.



**Becky L. Steffenhagen**  
Hudson, Wis.



**Danielle D. Stein**  
New Ulm, Minn.



**Kathrine M. Stelljes**  
Columbia, Mo.



**Joshua D. Sternhagen**  
New Orleans, La.



**Jeffrey D. Strehlow**  
Milwaukee, Wis.



**Sarah A. Swift**  
Kent, Wash.



**Marni L. Thon**  
Saginaw, Mich.



**Rachel B. Treuden**  
Brookfield, Wis.



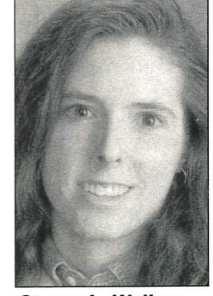
**Gena L. Uhlenbrauck**  
Appleton, Wis.



**Ellen K. Vannieuwenhoven**  
Appleton, Wis.



**Daniel M. Vogel**  
Kennewick, Wash.



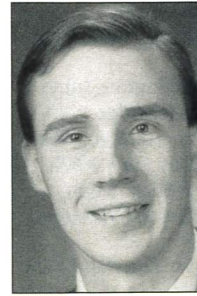
**Stacey L. Walker**  
Tucson, Ariz.



**Elizabeth D. Wallace**  
Escondido, Calif.



**Aaron T. Weber**  
Mequon, Wis.



**Craig R. Weide**  
Gibbon, Minn.



**Michael J. Weigand**  
Milwaukee, Wis.



**Jennifer S. Wempner**  
Neenah, Wis.



**Travis W. Wendt**  
Aurora, Neb.



**John P. Werner**  
Cochrane, Wis.



**Jennifer L. Westendorf**  
Mequon, Wis.



**Timothy J. Westendorf**  
Mequon, Wis.



**Kathryn E. Wiegman**  
Onalaska, Wis.



**David G. Wilson**  
Colgate, Wis.



**Peter F. Wolfgramm**  
Manitowoc, Wis.



**Chad E. Wright**  
Marietta, Ga.



**Natosha B. Wright**  
Marietta, Ga.



**Jason A. Zahn**  
Indianapolis, Ind.



**Michelle L. Zittlow**  
Eagle River, Alaska

## a s s i g n m e n t s

The Conference of Presidents met May 16-17 to issue calls into the teaching ministry to these Martin Luther College graduates. Assignments include graduates from previous years.

**Ampe, Matthew P.**, St. John, Watertown, Wis.  
**Anthony, Rachel M.**, Memorial, Williamston, Mich.

**Baeckl, Jennifer D.**, Luther Prep School, Watertown, Wis.

**Bavuso, Lori M.**, St. Paul, Brownsville, Wis.

**Beyer, Kim M.**, Emmaus, Phoenix, Ariz.

**Biesterfeld, Brent T.**, Christ, Milwaukee, Wis.

**Biesterfeld, Rachel M.**, St. Matthew, Stoddard/St. Peter, Chaseburg, Wis.

**Bivens, Katherine L.**, New Salem, Sebawing, Mich.

**Blakely, Paul F.**, Grace, St. Joseph, Mich.

**Bock, Jeremy D.**, Luther Prep School, Watertown, Wis.

**Boehm, Lucas D.**, Trinity, El Paso, Texas

**Boese, Heather M.**, Luther Prep School, Watertown, Wis.

**Borschlegl, Arlin M. Jr.**, Christian Information Center, Novosibirsk, Siberia

**Brands, Daniel S.**, Christ the Lord, Clearwater, Fla.

**Braun, Katherine L.**, Mt. Olive, Overland Park, Kan.

**Buboltz, James A. Jr.**, Lakeside LHS, Lake Mills, Wis.

**Byus, John A. Jr.**, Shephard, Albuquerque, N.M.

**Diersen, Gregory T.**, Great Plains LHS, Watertown, S.D.

**Dobrunz, Kathy M.**, St. John, Waterloo, Wis.

**Doering, Matthew K.**, Our Savior, Bylas, Ariz.

**Falak, Bert P.**, Great Plains LHS, Watertown, S.D.

**Feder, Trisha K.**, St. John, Wrightstown, Wis.

**Fredrich, Edwin J.**, St. John, Goodhue, Minn.

**Geiger, Sarah B.**, St. Paul, Columbus, Ohio

**Gensmer, Amy N.**, St. Lucas, Milwaukee, Wis.

**Gostchock, Barry A.**, St. John, Minneapolis, Minn.

**Gross, Megan R.**, St. John, Two Rivers, Wis.

**Grunewald, Daniel K.**, Salem, Milwaukee, Wis.

**Grunke, Sarah J.**, East Fork, Whiteriver, Ariz.

**Hahn, Daniel B.**, Grace, Eau Claire, Mich.

**Hartwig, Sarah J.**, Abiding Word, Houston, Texas

**Hein, Jessica L.**, St. Paul, Arlington, Minn.

**Herkstroeter, Shawn L.**, St. Paul, Menomonie, Wis.

**Hill, Ryan R.**, Holy Word, Austin, Texas

**Hillmann, Carrie B.**, Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich.

**Hinz, Nathan W.**, Resurrection, Aurora, Ill.

**Humann, Corinne M.**, Bethlehem, Menomonee Falls, Wis.

**Kapanke, Jason G.**, Good Shepherd, Omaha, Neb.

**Kegler, Michelle L.**, Zion, Denver, Colo.

**Keller, Debra L.**, St. Paul, Tomah, Wis.

**Knickelbein, Carrie M.**, Bethany, Manitowoc, Wis.

**Knutson, Mark J.**, St. Paul, Arlington, Minn.

**Kobleske, Heather L.**, Zion, Mobridge, S.D.

**Kobleske, Kristi B.**, Faith, Fond du Lac, Wis.

**Koch, Deborah J.**, St. John, Bay City, Mich.

**Koelpin, Dawn E.**, St. Luke, Vassar, Mich.

**Kom, Cindy A.**, Christ Our Savior, Columbia, Tenn.

**Krause, Jennifer L.**, Mt. Olive, Overland Park, Kan.

**Krebs, Julie A.**, Garden Homes, Milwaukee, Wis.

**Kreutzman, Greta L.**, St. Andrew, Chicago, Ill.

**Kriese, Brett T.**, St. Paul, Algoma, Wis.

**Krueger, Jennifer L.**, St. Martin, Watertown, S.D.

**Lauber, Nathan D.**, Good Shepherd, West Allis, Wis.

**Lemke, Amy J.**, Divine Grace, Lake Orion, Mich.

**Lemke, Heidi J.**, Martin Luther, Plzen, Czech Republic

**Leyrer, Dana M.**, Atonement, Milwaukee, Wis.

**Loberger, Scott D.**, St. John, Peshtigo, Wis.

**Lowrey, Jason H.**, Arizona Lutheran Academy, Phoenix, Ariz.

**Manthe, Kathryn M.**, St. John, Saginaw, Mich.

**Marten, Stephanie L.**, Luther Prep School, Watertown, Wis.

**McLain, Robert B.**, Pilgrim, Minneapolis, Minn.

**Meihak, Ann L.**, Emanuel-Redeemer, Yale, Mich.

**Mensching, Randy L.**, Luther Prep School, Watertown, Wis.

**Mielke, David L.**, St. John, Hemlock, Mich.

**Miller, Terri L.**, Trinity, Caledonia, Wis.

**Muenkel, Carolyn A.**, Zion, Torrance, Calif.

**Nelson, Robin D.**, St. Matthew, Iron Ridge, Wis.

**Ott, James M.**, St. Martin, Watertown, S.D.

**Papenfuss, Jennifer R.**, Timothy, St. Louis Park, Minn.

**Ping, Jodi L.**, St. John, Libertyville, Ill.

**Pontel, Michelle L.**, St. Bartholomew, Kawkawlin, Mich.

**Potter, Anna G.**, David's Star, Jackson, Wis.

**Potthast, Ruth A.**, Shoreland LHS, Somers, Wis.

**Quandt, Deborah L.**, Shepherd of the Mountains, Reno, Nev.



**Raiser, Danielle S.**, Nebraska LHS, Waco, Neb.  
**Retzlaff, Sondra J.**, First Lutheran, Elkhorn, Wis.  
**Rosenthal, Darlene D.**, Trinity, Neenah, Wis.  
**Rutschow, Kristin B.**, St. Paul, Muskego, Wis.  
**Saatkamp, Lynnette M.**, Morning Star, Jackson, Wis.  
**Schlieve, Neil A.**, St. Matthew, Appleton, Wis.  
**Schneider, Lisa A.**, Luther Prep School, Watertown, Wis.  
**Schultz, Deborah R.**, St. Matthew, Niles, Ill.  
**Schulz, Laura J.**, Zion, Egg Harbor, Wis.  
**Schloff, Naomi R.**, East Fork, Whiteriver, Ariz.  
**Sievert, Amy E.**, Martin Luther, Neenah, Wis.  
**Siverly, Dorene S.**, Good Shepherd, Benton Harbor, Mich.  
**Slattery, Jill L.**, St. John, Westland, Mich.  
**Smith, Anna M.**, East Fork, Whiteriver, Ariz.  
**Sonntag, Timothy P.**, Mt. Calvary, Waukesha, Wis.

**Spevacek, Susan K.**, St. Paul, East Troy, Wis.  
**Steele, Chanda I.**, Luther Prep School, Watertown, Wis.  
**Steffenhagen, Becky L.**, Beautiful Savior, Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Stein, Danielle D.**, St. Paul, Norfolk, Neb.  
**Strehlow, Jeffrey D.**, Nebraska LHS, Waco, Neb.  
**Swift, Sarah A.**, Martin Luther, Plzen, Czech Republic  
**Sylvester, Steven J.**, Beautiful Savior, Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Thon, Marni L.**, St. Peter, Weyauwega, Wis.  
**Tracy, Damon S.**, Lakeside LHS, Lake Mills, Wis.  
**Treuden, Rachel B.**, St. Paul, Appleton, Wis.  
**Uhlenbrauck, Gena L.**, Immanuel, Kewaunee, Wis.  
**Vogel, Daniel M.**, St. Peter, Helenville, Wis.  
**Wallace, Elizabeth D.**, Gloria Dei, Belmont, Calif.  
**Weide, Craig R.**, Zion, Valentine, Neb.  
**Wempner, Jennifer S.**, Resurrection, Rochester, Minn.

**Wendt, Travis W.**, Bethlehem, Menomonee Falls, Wis.  
**Westendorf, Jennifer L.**, Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich.  
**Wiegman, Kathryn E.**, Bethlehem, Hortonville, Wis.  
**Wilson, David G.**, Lord and Savior, Crystal Lake, Ill.  
**Wolffgramm, Peter F.**, Trinity, Jenera, Ohio  
**Wordell, Matthew J.**, Winnebago Lutheran Academy, Fond du Lac, Wis.  
**Wright, Natosha B.**, Huron Valley LHS, Westland, Mich.  
**Ziener, Jennifer N.**, Pilgrim, Minneapolis, Minn.  
**Zittlow, Michelle L.**, Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich.  
**Zuberbier, Thomas W.**, St. Paul, Columbus, Ohio

Staff minister

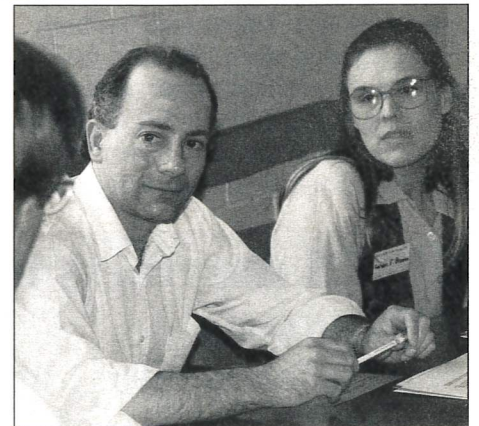
**Ruddat, Jonathan A.**, Ascension, Plymouth, Minn.

## Life concert planned

WELS Lutherans for Life will kick off its 1996 national convention at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, on Oct. 11, with an evening of music, comedy, history, and a little frivolity. The life concert will feature musical performances by Shining Star, Witness, Pastor Kurt

and Susan Ann Lueneburg, and Pat Backhaus as Helen May Butler, the female Sousa. Helen May Butler is catapulted from 1903 to 1996, and the Lueneburgs show her a bit about the future.

For more information, contact WELS Lutherans for Life, 774-1331; 1-800-729-9535.



Singles meet in one of the discussion sessions at SHARE's second annual convention.

## Living solo

About 50 singles, including those always single and those divorced or widowed, attended the second annual seminar of SHARE (Singles Helping One Another on the Road of Eternity). The seminar was held May 4 at St. Jacobi, Milwaukee.

Topics ranged from investments and retirement planning, to prayer life and healthy relationships, to a discussion of the Holy Land and the end times. The day's focus was on making each person's walk with the Lord an everyday priority as the singles renewed their knowledge on how to live solo, but never alone.



A group from the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church, our sister synod in Germany, extended their trip from the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference convention in Puerto Rico to include a visit of the synod administration building in Milwaukee. Members attended meetings held by the Commission on Inter-Church Relations.



## LCCA ordains pastor

The Lutheran Church of Central Africa (LCCA) and Shabasonje Lutheran Church took a large and visible step towards their independence as an indigenous church body. In January, called worker and longtime evangelist, Alexander Mubita, was ordained. The sermon was in *Bantu Botatwe*, the local language, and he was installed in *Nyanja*, the local Lusaka language.

One by one, LCCA congregations are preparing to call and support their own pastors. This probably sounds no different than what takes place in a mission in the WELS homeland. For LCCA, however, this has been a large and major step. Shabasonje has been a congregation since 1963 and has enjoyed the services of missionaries and support of people in WELS for a long time. Only recently have they seen the necessity of supporting their

own man and work. They realize they have grown past a child congregation and want to take the responsibility of freeing up the mission pastor and

WELS to do work elsewhere. This is a big step.

*Missionary Philip M. Birner*



From left: Mr. Tapisha, one of the original members of Shabasonje Lutheran Church and translator for missionaries in the 1950s; Pastor Alexander Mubita; Pastor Peter Chikatala; Pastor Philip Birner; Pastor Steven Lawrenz, *Zambian Mission Coordinator*; Pastor Samuel Kawiliza, *LCCA Zambia chairman*; Vicar Jophael Zulu; and Pastor Timothy Mulando.

## WELS membership growth patterns 1960-present

Year	# Congregations	Communicants	Souls	Decade Number Growth Com/Souls	Decade %Growth Com/Souls
1969	943	265,069	376,319	33,713/27,594	12.7%/7.9%
1979	1135	306,985	405,512	41,926/29,193	15.8%/7.8%
1989	1233	317,914	420,419	10,919/14,907	3.6%/3.7%
1995	1266	315,127	413,839	-2,788/-6,580	-.9%/-1.6%

*Decade confirmation and baptism totals*

*The number of communicants and souls represents the total number at the end of each decade.*

*Note that 1995 figures do not represent a complete decade.*

Year	Child Baptism	Child Confirmation	Adult Confirmation
1969	89,141	71,566	24,455
1979	81,618	74,436	28,731
1989	88,775	59,903	35,097
<b>decade to date:</b>			
1995	49,036	34,778	21,150

### Notes:

1) Child baptisms peaked during the 1950's at 105,455.

2) The decline in children's confirmations during the 1980's reflects not only a decline in births/baptisms, but also a decline in the confirmation percentage rate. In 1978, we confirmed 78% of our baptized children. In 1995 the percentage declined to 66.4%.

*Information from WELS Commission on Evangelism*

## Librarians meet

On Apr. 21, 61 church librarians met for the WELS Church Librarians' Organization (WELS-CLO) spring meeting. WELS-CLO, made up of 141 congregations, will celebrate its fifth anniversary at St. John, Pardeeville, Wis., on Sept. 28.

For more information, contact WELS-CLO, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398; 414/256-3222.



When I was putting my children to bed one evening, I was singing "Away in a Manger" to my six-month-old son. When I finished I heard a voice singing behind me. I asked my two-year-old daughter if she was singing a lullaby too. She promptly corrected me by saying, "No Momma, I'm singing an alleluia-by."

Amy L. Mowry-Hepfner  
St. Louis Park, Minnesota

## District news

### California

**Reformation, San Diego**, observed a day of prayer on May 2. The church remained open from 7 AM to 9 PM for prayer. . . . **St. Stephen, Fallbrook**, held a "Computers in Ministry Seminar" on June 9 to introduce how computers can be used successfully in churches and schools. . . . **St. John, Victorville**, will open a first grade in September. . . . **Grace, Yorba Linda**, broke ground on June 30 for its new church building. . . . **Our Savior, Pomona**, started a successful Latino outreach program earlier this year. Scott Stone, pastor at St. John, Victorville, is chairing this Hispanic (Latino) Study Committee. . . . Travel-Canvass-Witness teams served **Our Savior, Pomona; Green Valley, Henderson, Nev.; Calvary, Canyon Country; and Living Word, Petaluma.**

Hermann John

### Western Wisconsin

**Peace, Loves Park, Ill.**, dedicated four new classrooms on July 14.

Elton Stroh

### Southeastern Wisconsin

On May 29, 200 students from **Atonement Lutheran School, Milwaukee**, walked from their rented school facilities to their newly constructed school building. The walk symbolized the successful completion and transition into the new building.

### Michigan

Members of **Beautiful Savior, Petoskey**, broke ground for their new church building on May 12. Members of Builders for Christ will help the congregation with the church's construction. Beautiful Savior began as an exploratory congregation in 1989.

### Nebraska

**St. Paul, Colome, S.D.**, celebrated its 75th anniversary with two special services on June 9. . . . On June 16, St. John, Brewster, Neb., commemorated the 45th anniversary of Pastor **Robert Schumann**. . . . **Donald Laude**, pastor at Grace, Salina, Kan., and Faith, Russell, Kan., celebrated his 40th anniversary on June 23.

Keith Petersen

### South Atlantic

**Good Shepherd, Deltona, Fla.**, had an ambitious vacation Bible school program. Their theme was "Big Battles of the Bible"—Satan vs. Eve; Jericho; David vs. Goliath; Jesus vs. the devil in the desert; the battle on the cross. Each day featured a demonstration from the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, or reserves. . . .

**Hope, Irmo, S.C.**, celebrated its 25th anniversary this spring. They plan on selling their worship/education/fellowship building, purchasing property in a new exploratory area, and building a permanent site. . . . **Peace, Bradenton, Fla.**, celebrated the 15th anniversary of the ordination of their pastor, **James Pope**.

Philip Wilde



Winners of a grade school art and essay contest received prizes at the LWMS Florida-Gulf Coast circuit spring rally hosted by Northdale, Tampa, Fla. Several dozen children entered the contest. The topic was the WELS world mission in the Dominican Republic.



## Stewardship program available



*All for One . . . Each for Another*, the 1996-97 discipleship/stewardship program, is available. This is the last in a series of three programs centered around the lectionary. Materials include a stewardship Bible study and leader's guide, worship planner, sermon studies, and bulletin inserts for 15 weeks throughout the year.

For stewardship orders call the Commission on Adult Discipleship 414/256-3278; 1-800-567-8669.

## What they do "for the least of these"

Eighty-four people from 11 independent social ministries shared ideas, met new people, renewed old friendships, and gained knowledge about other organizations at a two-day social ministries symposium at St. Charles, Ill., in April.

"We are here to foster harmony among us so that while we acknowledge our differences, we work together to spread the Word," said Richard Raabe Jr., Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service deputy operating officer.

Representatives from parasynodical retirement homes, counseling centers, institutional ministries, health care facilities, and nursing homes related their blessings from the past

year as well as challenges for upcoming years. Displays allowed participants to see what other areas were doing, and open sessions gave people chances to discuss their ministries.

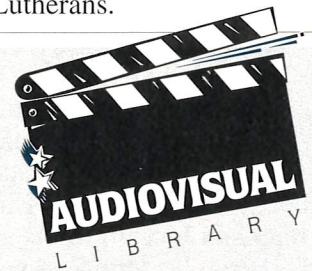
Presentations on parish services, parish nurses, the lay ministry program, and the Institutional Ministry Committee completed the symposium's events.

The convention theme, "You did it for me!" (Matthew 25:40), reminded participants of their motivation. "We do everything in responsive thanksgiving for all Christ has done for us," said Raabe.

This symposium was made possible by a grant from Aid Association for Lutherans.

## Handbell festival held

The 1996 National Handbell Festival was held April 20-21 at St. Croix Lutheran High School, West St. Paul, Minn. Thirty-five bell choirs from 27 churches rehearsed Saturday and gave a concert on Sunday. Cheryl Diener was elected as the group's first national chairperson at the festival.



**Soul Search** (Code 5176)—1995, 15 min. color, JSCA (\$5) Basic law and gospel message with an invitation to learn more about the Savior. Designed to help the Christian share his faith with an unchurched friend or relative. Copies can be purchased from WELS for use in the local evangelism program.

**The Promise** (Code 5175)—1995, 23 min. color, PIJSCA (\$5) Visualizes the events after the fall into sin when God made a promise to Adam and Eve that was fulfilled when Jesus died and rose again. Congregations can purchase copies from WELS for use in Sunday school, day school, or adult instruction classes.

Order from Mass Media, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398; 414/256-3281; FAX 414/256-3899



Visiting Washington, D.C. in March, Tom's Christian Tours, a WELS tour group led by Tom Niedfeldt (second row, far right), stopped at Congressman Mark Neumann's office for a visit. Mark Neumann (right of flag), the representative of the 1st congressional district of Wisconsin, is a member of St. Matthew, Janesville, Wis.

## Obituaries

### Katherine H. Busch 1948-1996

Katherine H. Busch was born July 7, 1948 in Grand Canyon, Ariz. She died Jan. 21, 1996 in Rochester, Minn.

A 1970 graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, she served at Faith, Tacoma, Wash., and Resurrection, Rochester, Minn.

She is survived by her parents Edward and Lorryne Busch; sister Melanie Kurth; and brothers Daniel, Theodore, and John.

### Wilmer Martin Otto Valleskey 1911-1996

Wilmer Martin Otto Valleskey was born Nov. 5, 1911 in Brillion, Wis. He died May 20, 1996 in Warren, Mich.

A 1935 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, he served congregations in Brillion, Greenleaf, and Kasson, all in Wisconsin; and Hope, Detroit, Mich. Valleskey was the initiator and chairman of the Michigan district evangelism commission. The evangelism manual, "Talk About the Savior," was a product of this work.

He is survived by wife Elsie; sons David (Janice), Stephen (Sally), and Thomas (Kirsten); daughter Rhoda (William) Kaye; brother Roman (Audrey); sisters-in-law Margie, Hilda, Teresa Bird, and Louise Kante; 15 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

### Arthur H. Koester 1906-1996

Arthur H. Koester was born March 11, 1906 in Long Prairie, Minn. He died April 9, 1996 in Fond du Lac, Wis.

A 1927 graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, he served at St. Peter School and Winnebago Lutheran Academy, both in Fond du Lac, Wis., and Wisconsin Lutheran High School, Milwaukee.

He is survived by wife Roberta; daughter Mary (Kenneth) Peachy; four granddaughters; stepsons Robert (Joan) Oberbeck and William (Peggy) Oberbeck; and sisters Alvina, Viola Duarte, and Gladys Dwyer.



Orville and Vera Elmschaeuser (left) and Norman and Betty Stellick at the missionary parents' meeting held in April at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn. Ninety parents of missionaries learned more about different mission fields as well as met each other at the meeting. The last missionary parents' meeting took place 10 years ago. WELS Kingdom Workers sponsored the event.

## youth news

The **Christian Leadership Seminar for Student Councils** was hosted by Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School, Jackson, Wis., on Feb. 26. Members of student councils from KML, Fox Valley, Luther Prep, Manitowoc, Shoreland, Winnebago, and Wisconsin Lutheran participated. The seminar examined the Christian's motivation in leadership for government, business, church, and school.

Please send photos or news on teen activities to: **youth news**, *Northwestern Lutheran*, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.

**Steve Campbell**, a sophomore at Menominee High School, was selected as one of Michigan's "Community Hero" torchbearers for the 1996 Summer Olympics Torch Relay. One of 10,000 torchbearers around the country, Campbell carried the torch half a mile through Detroit. Judges selected Campbell because he symbolized what was good about American youth and embodied the spirit of the Olympic movement. Campbell is a member of Christ, Menominee, Mich.

## Book addresses fellowship

In every generation, we need to revisit Scripture's doctrines and renew our commitment to them. Northwestern Publishing House has a new book to help us with the doctrine of church fellowship. Dealing with fellowship issues, often an emotional experience, receives detailed attention in 24 historical and current essays in the book, *Essays on Church Fellowship*.

The essays provide historical per-

spective, in-depth study of Scripture passages, and practical advice in applying principles. Every person who has wondered why WELS stands separate from many other Christian bodies can learn from this book.

*To order* *Essays on Church Fellowship* (hard cover, \$29.99, stock no. 15N0573), contact Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N 113 St, Milwaukee WI 53226-3284; 414/475-6600; 1-800-662-6093.



## Marriage and faith

According to a national survey of 1,165 Lutherans of various church bodies, conducted for Lutheran Brotherhood. Of married Lutherans:

- 50%** say religious beliefs have enhanced their marriages
- 46%** say religious beliefs have had no effect on their marriages
- 4%** say religious beliefs are a source of friction in their marriages.

The younger the respondents, the more likely they are to feel faith has had no effect on their marriages:

- 59%** of Baby Busters (born 1965-77) say faith has had no influence on their marriages
- 55%** of Baby Boomers (born 1946-64)
- 48%** of the Silent Generation (born 1925-45)
- 33%** of GI's (born 1901-24).

While many Lutherans view faith as something that enhances their marriages, the opposite is also true: many view marriage as something that enhances their faith-life. According to the survey, 51 percent of married Lutherans say marriage has enhanced their faith, while 47 percent say it has had no effect on their faith, and 2 percent say their marriage has had a detrimental effect on their faith.

*Lutheran Brotherhood did not indicate how many respondents came from each Lutheran body or if the results varied from one to another. —ed.*

## “Feel good” religion

Research is finding a strong inexplicable link between religion and health. At a Harvard University sponsored conference in December, 900 physicians, clergy, and academics met to discuss the evidence.

In one study, Dr. Dale A. Matthews of Georgetown University reviewed 212 studies in medical and psychiatric journals. Three-quarters of them found religious commitment had a positive effect on health.

Some studies looked at church attendance. For example, of 91,909 individuals surveyed in Maryland,

those who went to church at least once a week had 50 percent fewer deaths from coronary artery disease, 56 percent fewer deaths from emphysema, and 74 percent fewer deaths from cirrhosis.



Others studies looked at prayer. A study of 393 patients in a coronary care unit in a San Francisco hospital compared recovery rates of patients who were being prayed for, without their knowledge, with patients who received no prayers. The results? The 192 patients who were prayed for had significantly less heart failure, pneumonia, and need for antibiotics.

## Methodists: Homosexuality is “incompatible” with Christianity

The United Methodist Church's 24-year-old stance declaring that homosexuality is incompatible with Christian teaching was supported in April by delegates attending the denomination's General Conference.

The 8.6 million-member church's *Book of Discipline*, its rule book,

says: “Although we do not condone the practice of homosexuality and consider this practice incompatible with Christian teaching, we affirm that God's grace is available to all.” An effort to soften that wording was defeated 577-378.

## Florida governor vetoes school prayer bill

Florida governor, Lawton Chiles, vetoed legislation that would have let students pray at voluntary events at junior and senior high schools. It would have allowed school boards to permit student-approved, student-led prayers at graduation, sporting events,

and voluntary assemblies.

Chiles, a Presbyterian, said the veto was reluctant because he favored prayer in the schools, but listening to people who hold minority religious views gave him a different perspective.

### rē · li · giōn

#### Defining religion

**historical-critical method:** a method of Bible interpretation based on rationalistic literary criticism which treats the books of the Bible to a greater or lesser degree as fallible human literature. The critic places himself as a judge above God's Word, changing or altering the meaning of Scripture according to the external criteria he chooses.

## Euthanasia legal in Australia's outback

A landmark euthanasia law went into effect on July 1 in Australia's remote Northern Territory, prompting right-to-life proponents to say the remote outback region could become a destination for the terminally ill.

"You will see a whole congregation of people arriving there," said Kath Harrigan, a spokeswoman for Australia's Right to Life Association. "It will be wholesale killing of people."

Northern Territory's new law allows doctors to administer lethal injections to the terminally ill. About 20 of Northern Territory's 700 doctors are prepared to administer the injections.



## In brief

- Without comment, the **Supreme Court rejected a lawsuit to have the motto "In God We Trust" removed from U.S. coins and currency.** The Colorado chapter of the Freedom from Religion Foundation filed the suit which argued that the nation's official motto implied a government endorsement of religion.
- An estimated audience of 2.5 billion people heard the gospel in April through the **Billy Graham World Television Series.** The series was shown during prime time in over 200 countries—including some countries traditionally opposed to the gospel's proclamation. A national broadcaster called it, "a very powerful counterpoint to the daily drudgery that most of mankind faces."

## Back to the basics of the Bible

A group of evangelical-protestant leaders is concerned that "even the most conservative Protestant churches have lost their faithfulness to the Bible in both faith and practice."

"The evangelical movement is in crisis," says the Alliance of Confessing Evangelicals (ACE), an association of evangelical pastors, teachers, and para-church leaders. ACE hosted a four-day summit in Cambridge, Mass., in April and produced a document that calls for "repentance and reformation" in evangelical churches.

The five-page declaration accuses many churches of being guided by the culture rather than by the Bible. "Therapeutic technique, marketing

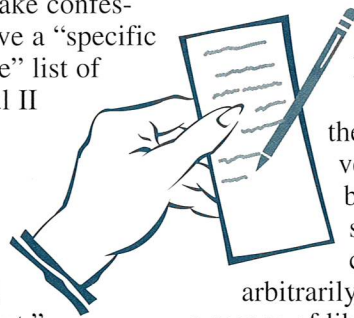
strategies, and the beat of the entertainment world often have far more to say about the church, than does the Word of God," it says.

About a dozen members of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod were part of the meeting. Participants noted significant Lutheran influence in the Cambridge Declaration. Law and gospel are presented as the content of biblical truth and the substance of biblical preaching. The document also rejects the notion that human beings must cooperate with God by their works or decisions in winning their salvation. Instead, the Cambridge Declaration clearly affirms that God in Christ does it all. [LCMS Reporter, May]

## Making a list and checking it twice

Roman Catholics who make confession to a priest should give a "specific and numerically complete" list of their sins, Pope John Paul II has declared.

The pontiff said a significant number of Catholics "do not make a complete list of mortal sins in the way called for by the Council of Trent," the church council that defined



Catholic teaching at the time of the Reformation.

"I hope and pray that these faithful, who are not very enlightened, would become convinced specific and numerical completeness is not an arbitrarily imposed burden, but a means of liberation and serenity," he said.

## No tax break for the Bible

The South African government may scrap a tax concession for those who support publication of the Bible. The government ruling could dramatically cut Bible distribution in Africa.

The Bible Society of South Africa distributes Bibles in more than 100 languages, although most of them are in the country's 11 official languages. The Bible Society distributed more

than a million books of Scripture, including 660,000 complete Bibles and thousands of New Testaments and Scripture selections in 1995.

The projected cuts in funding may force the Bible Society to cut production by up to 200,000 Bibles this year. [Ecumenical News International, Apr. 15]

# Bulletin BOARD & NOTICES

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

## CHANGE IN MINISTRY

### Pastors:

**Bey, Gregory L.**, from St. John, Newburg, Wis., to Sofia, Bulgaria  
**Borgwardt, Wayne M.**, from administrator, Board for Ministerial Education, Milwaukee, to technology director, Milwaukee  
**Drews, Daniel S.**, from WLA, Fond du Lac, Wis., to St. Peter, Mishicot, Wis.  
**Ehlert, Leon R.**, from St. Stephen, Beaver Dam, Wis., to Fox Valley LHS, Appleton, Wis.  
**Engdahl, Kenneth H.**, from Shepherd of the Hills, Knoxville, Tenn., to Arlington Avenue, Toledo, Ohio.  
**Ewings, Jerry**, from St. John, Lake City, Minn., to Lakeside LHS, Lake Mills, Wis.  
**Hankwitz, Robert P.**, from Illinois LHS, Crete, Ill., to Great Plains LHS, Watertown, S.D.  
**Himm, Ricky M.**, from Lord of Lords, Casper, Wyo., to Christ, Lodi, Calif.  
**Janke, James R.**, from Christ, Grand Island, Neb., to Bethel, Sioux Falls, S.D.  
**Kuether, Lon P.**, from St. John, Stanton, Neb., to Riverview, Appleton, Wis.  
**McKenney, Kevin P.**, from Lakeside LHS, Lake Mills, Wis., to Hope, Fremont, Calif.  
**Naumann, James W.**, from Christ the King, Palatine, Ill., to St. Luke, Vassar, Mich.  
**Pearson, Bradley J.**, from Shepherd of the Lakes, Fairmont, Minn., to Mt. Olive, Lincoln, Neb.  
**Rothe, Thomas P.**, from Christ, Menominee, Mich., to First, Prescott, Ariz.  
**Schulz, Gregory P.**, from Mt. Lebanon, Milwaukee, Wis., to WLC, Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Seiltz, Paul F.**, from Zion, Egg Harbor, Wis., to Faith, Pittsburg, Kan.  
**Sprain, Roger R.**, from MLC, New Ulm, Minn., to Puerto Rico  
**Stensberg, Burton E.**, to St. Paul, Hamburg—2W, Wis.  
**Waldschmidt, Richard**, from Grace, St. Joseph, Mich., to St. Paul, Tomah, Wis.  
**Zehms, Roger R.**, from Trinity, Crete, Ill., to Novosibirsk, Russia

### Teachers:

**Aden, Karla M.**, to Pilgrim, Menomonee Falls, Wis.  
**Anderson, Holly**, to Peace, Livonia, Mich.  
**Biedenbender, Catherine**, to Trusting Hearts preschool, Manitowoc, Wis.  
**Biedenbender, Rachel**, to Grace, Alma, Mich.  
**Buboltz, James A. Jr.**, from Nebraska LHS, Waco, Neb., to Lakeside LHS, Lake Mills, Wis.  
**Draeger, Alan A.**, from Zion, Monroe, Mich., to St. Martin, Watertown, S.D.  
**Friedrich, Janet L.**, to Minnesota Valley LHS, New Ulm, Minn.  
**Fritze, Robyn**, to St. Mark, Green Bay, Wis.  
**Gartner, Kimberly**, to Centennial, Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Gobrogge, Margaret L.**, to Trinity, Jenera, Ohio  
**Greanya, Charmaine I.**, to Gloria Dei, Grand Blanc, Mich.  
**Jacobs, Dominic P.**, from Mt. Calvary, Flagstaff, Ariz., to Emanuel, W. St. Paul, Minn.  
**Klockziem, Lisa A.**, from St. Paul, Arlington, Minn., to Minnesota Valley LHS, New Ulm, Minn.  
**Kramer, Diana**, to Christ-St. John, West Salem, Wis.  
**Lefler, Denise**, to Peace, Livonia, Mich.

**Liesener, Wendy**, to Immanuel, Medford, Wis.  
**Mears, Johanna J.**, from Immanuel, De Pere, Wis., to St. John, Lake City, Minn.  
**Meyer, Mark S.**, from St. Matthew, Winona, Minn., to Trinity, Belle Plaine, Minn.  
**Naumann, June M.**, to St. Stephen, Adrian, Mich.  
**Nolte, Carl S.**, from First German, Manitowoc, Wis., to NPH, Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Rehberger, Phillip F.**, from St. John, Hemlock, Mich., to Mt. Calvary, Redding, Calif.  
**Rhode, Steven J.**, from St. Paul, Tomah, Wis., to Reformation, San Diego, Calif.  
**Roecker, Darrell F. Jr.**, from Salem, Owosso, Mich., to Atonement, Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Russ, Todd A.**, from Shepherd of the Valley, Westminster, Colo., to Pilgrim, Menomonee Falls, Wis.  
**Siegler, Johanna R.**, to Luther HS, Onalaska, Wis.  
**Uhlenbrauck, Dale M.**, from Immanuel, La Crosse, Wis., to Christ, N. St. Paul, Minn.  
**Washburn, Eunice M.**, from Beautiful Savior, Milwaukee, Wis., to David's Star, Jackson, Wis.  
**Whitney, Marilyn J.**, to St. Matthew, Iron Ridge, Wis.  
**Wilke, Diane G.**, to St. John, Redwood Falls, Minn.  
**Wilkins, Elyn M.**, from Scarville, Scarville, Iowa (ELS), to Beautiful Savior, Milwaukee, Wis.

### ANNIVERSARIES

**Altura, Minn.**—Jehovah (100). Aug. 18. Service, 10 AM; meal, noon. 25 1st Ave SE, Altura MN 55910. Renee Christie for reservations; 507/796-5321.  
**Big Bend, Wis.**—Christ (50). Aug. 25. Services, 8 and 9:30 AM. S89 W22970 Maple Ave, Big Bend WI 53103  
**El Paso, Texas**—San Juan (30). Sept. 8—service, 10:30 AM. 580 Giles Rd, El Paso TX 79915; 915/592-9900.  
**St. Paul, Minn.**—Mt. Olive (75). Sept. 22—rededication service, 9 AM. 1460 Almond Ave, St. Paul MN 55108; 612/771-9127.  
**Courtland, Minn.**—Courtland (75). Sept. 29. Service 10:30 AM; dinner follows. 507/354-7134.  
**Cambridge, Wis.**—St. James (100). Oct. 6—organ dedication, 10:45 AM. Oct. 13—confirmation service, 10 AM; dinner, noon. Oct. 20—anniversary service, 10 AM; pig roast, noon. Box 402, 415 E North St, Cambridge WI 53523-0402; 608/423-3550.

### COMING EVENTS

**Workshop**—Communication arts: reading workshop. Aug. 15; registration, 8:30 AM. Manitowoc LHS. Marcia Wendt, 414/756-2302.  
**Pastors institute**—Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. Five Mondays, beginning Sept. 23, 1:30-4:30 PM. Topics: The principles and practice of prayer; Luther's Large Catechism. Fee: \$25. Send registration to WLS, Office of the President, 11831 N Seminary Dr, Mequon WI 53092.  
**Youth ministry workshop**—Biennial teen ministry training workshop. Sept. 20-22. Wonderland Conference Center, Wis. Contact Youth Discipleship, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222; 414/256-3274.  
**WELS Lutherans for Life national convention**—Oct. 12; registration, 8 AM. Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee. Contact Amy Pingel, 414/774-1331; 1-800-729-9535.  
**WELS-CLO meeting**—Church Librarians' Organization. Sept. 28. St. John, Pardeeville, Wis. \$7. WELS-CLO, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222; 414/256-3222.

**Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Auxiliary meeting**—Oct. 5, registration, 8 AM. WLS, Mequon. \$7.50. Checks payable to "WLSA"—include name, address, phone number, and congregation. Mail by Sept. 16 to Lois Brunner, N116 W21040 Brynwood Ln, Germantown WI 53022. Joanne Solofra, 414/763-6956.

**WELS Expo**—You and your church. Oct. 4-5. Huron Valley LHS, Westland, Mich. Kingdome Workers, 414/771-6848; 1-800-466-9357.

**Life concert**—with WELS Lutherans for Life convention. Oct. 11. 6:30 PM. Adults, \$4; students and seniors, \$3.50; ages 5-12, \$2.50; under 5, free. 414/771-1331; 1-800-729-9535.

**Women's retreat**—Today's Christian Women's retreat. April 11-13, 1997. Stouffer Renaissance Hotel, Battle Creek, Mich. Note change of date. Laurie, 616/773-2380.

**Women's retreat**—Spiritual renewal weekend for women. April 11-13, 1997. Rochester, Minn. Bev, 507/931-1866 (AM only).

### NAMES WANTED

**Seattle, Wash.**—Thomas Gunn, Grace, 11051 Phinney Ave N, Seattle WA 98133; 206/363-8551.

**Redmond, Wash.**—Todd Goldschmidt, Living Hope, 13607 174 Ave NE, Redmond WA 98052; 206/485-4547.

**Tallahassee, Fla.**—Nathan Strobel, Faith, 3037 Corrib Dr, Tallahassee FL 32308; 904/668-0286.

**Memphis, Tenn.**—Gloria Dei. Addresses of former members and friends for 25th anniversary celebration. George Swanson, 901/386-9695; Don Schuppe, 901/747-2014.

### ITEMS AVAILABLE

**Newsletter for singles**—All singles welcome. For information and a newsletter, contact SHARE (Singles Helping one Another on the Road to Eternity), PO Box 341004, Milwaukee WI 53219; Susan Johnson, 414/546-0275; Dan Stege, 414/744-1544.

**Communion ware**—New. Individual cup. Includes two trays, cover with cross, and wafer plate. Available to missionary or small church. Free for cost of shipping. Brodhead, Wis. Call or FAX, 608/897-4294.

**Altar cloths**—Altar, pulpit, and lectern. White and green. Anita Trekas, 906/428-9600; David Wierschke, 906/428-9756.

**Candles**—Nine spring tube candle sets. Available to mission congregation. Free for cost of shipping. First, Lake Geneva, Wis.; 414/248-3374.

### NEEDED

**Pen pals**—for prisoners. Letters go to PO Box in Minn. Prof. Gerhard Bauer, 507/354-3910.

**Communion ware**—especially paten and chalice. For Martin Luther Memorial Home, Mich. Pastor Orville Maasch, 1452 Kingston Dr, Saginaw MI 48603; 517/249-0829.

**Forensics manuscripts**—Original. Grade school level. Send manuscript, name, and copy permission to Sue Fink, St. John, 7531A English Lake Rd, Manitowoc WI 54220; 414/684-0467.

### POSITIONS AVAILABLE

**Early childhood teachers**—Precious Lambs Learning Center & Trinity Christian Academy, Woodbridge, Va., are looking for hardworking, outgoing, evangelism-minded people to work with children from ages two through 12. Full-time positions available. Patti, 703/670-4211.



# Showers of blessings

Karl R. Gurgel

“Mary, Mary, quite contrary, how does your garden grow?” It’s time to assess how our gardens have grown. Much depends on how much rain we have had. Showers don’t bring only May flowers, but autumn harvests as well.

Now is the time, too, to assess how other things have grown. All the synod’s districts met in conventions this summer, reviewing the work of the district and the synod. And, about a year ago by survey, over 12,000 WELS members were asked to evaluate the synod’s work. You’ve seen the results printed in the past few issues of *Northwestern Lutheran*.

How did we fare? Quite well, really. The majority who responded were pleased with the direction our synod was taking, giving it high marks in many categories. In all honesty, some expressed concerns as well. In future issues, we will address them. Today, let’s summarize the showers of blessings we have received.

Let’s begin where most people did.

We are especially grateful for our synod’s faithfulness to God’s Word. We see it as a blessing, too, that thousands of dedicated called workers bring us the Word. In calm, as well as stormy weather, we appreciate the dedication of those who shower the Word upon us.

But these dedicated workers couldn’t do this work alone. In every congregation are those—you know them—who keep the congregation running, not seeking or always receiving thanks. Their number is countless.

And, from my perspective, a word of thanks to synodical board, commission, and committee members who are deeply involved in the Lord’s work. We don’t say thanks often enough to congregations whose called workers, in addition to

faithfully serving them, serve their synod, with time borrowed from the congregations. In another shower of blessings, God has provided the synod with many talented lay people.

God has brought together so much talent and energy for a purpose. When God rains down these showers of blessing, he seeks to produce some harvest.

We have opportunities everywhere. We see a renewed interest in starting U.S. mission congregations. And the Lord seems to be directing us to parts of the world where we have not been active.

Will we be up to the task? Will we have the necessary resources to meet the challenges? Not if we depend on our own feeble strength. Not if we look to ourselves for the resources. But here, too, the showers of blessings are evident.

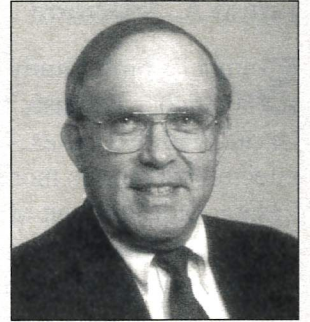
We ended the fiscal year in June with a sizable balance. Inspired by the showers of blessings God rains down, God’s people responded with generous gifts. As a result, in the tasks the Lord gives us, we were able to do more this year, and prepare for more next year, than planned.

The Lord permits us to do much more for him. Like the precious gospel itself, the monetary means used for proclaiming it are not to be hoarded, but shared.

Sometimes it’s a pleasure to stand out in the rain. After a period of drought, when the rain is beneficial, it feels good to get wet, feeling the showers directly.

That’s the way it is when it comes to God’s showers of blessings. Whether it’s the Word or those who proclaim it, the opportunities to preach it or the physical resources to accomplish our tasks, these are, indeed, showers of blessings.

It feels good to get wet with such showers!



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

---

*Let’s summarize  
the showers  
of blessings we  
have received.*

---

# Samuel: an answer to prayer

The Lord's answer to Hannah's imperfect pleading flowed from his loving faithfulness.

James A. Aderman

Samuel's birth family was a mess. His father Elkanah, though a Levite, had two wives. His culture affected his morals more than his Creator did. Still, out of such moral muck, God brought blessing.

This series rejoices in God's undeserved and unexpected blessings. Open your Bible to **1 Samuel 1:1–2:11** to see the first example.

War zone conditions prevailed in Elkanah's house. Hannah was Elkanah's favorite wife, but had no children. Elkanah also married Peninnah, who gave him children. The women didn't get along. Their ugliest fights erupted over who had children and who didn't. Not even Passover was spared such wrangling.

## Heartfelt prayer

Each Passover, Elkanah gathered his family and went to Shiloh, the Ark of the Covenant's home. On one trip, Peninnah's goading got to Hannah. The holiday joy turned bitter. Hannah fled the gathering with tears tumbling, heart broken. She sought sanctuary at the Tabernacle. There she prayed.

"O Lord Almighty, . . . do not forget your servant but give her a son!" she begged. "I'll promise you anything. I will give him to the Lord for all the days of his life."

Nazarite vows usually lasted a month or two. Hannah, however, dedicated her son to a lifetime of service to the Lord. He would never drink intoxicating beverages, cut his

hair, or go near a dead body (not even her own).

Although Hannah's heart roared, her voice remained mute. A suspicious sight. Jews prayed out loud when they came to the Tabernacle. Eli, the high priest, assumed she had been doing more partying than praying. He confronted her: "How long will you keep getting drunk?"

Poor Hannah! Not only did she have family problems, now her priest thought her drunk. "I have not been drinking," Hannah struggled to explain. "I have been praying here out of my great anguish and grief." Imagine Hannah's just-when-you-thought-things-couldn't-get-any-

worse frustration.

Eli had been a priest long enough to know when to believe someone. "Go in peace and may the God of Israel grant you what you have asked of him."

## Answered prayer

Eli's prayer was prophetic. Hannah went away at peace. Within the year she had a son. The name she chose acknowledged the Lord's answer to her prayer. She called him "Heard of God," which in Hebrew sounds like "Samuel." Her song of praise in chapter two says more of what she had learned about God's goodness.

Hannah's prayer wasn't answered because of her commitment. The Lord's never been keen on "Let's Make A Deal" prayers. God responds to prayers because of his infinite love. "I cried to my God for help," David writes. "He rescued me because he delighted in me" (Psalm 18:6, 19). The guarantee of that delight is the risen Savior. The Lord's answer to Hannah's imperfect pleading flowed from his loving faithfulness. He answers our prayers for the same reason.

God starts to arrange the scene where Samuel plays the leading man. Already the theme is evident. In his grace, the Lord brings blessing out of sorrow.

*James Aderman is pastor at Fairview, Milwaukee.*



## FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. When were you, like Hannah, overwhelmed with frustration, sorrow, or injustice? What does this story teach you about managing those times?

2. The Lord answers prayers because he is gracious. Find Scripture passages to confirm that. How does God's graciousness encourage you to pray more?

# Blessed fellowship

Walter F. Beckmann

Fellowship is a beautiful, positive, exciting, appealing word. It means a group has found common views and opinions, tastes and interests. Because of this, they enjoy each other's company, welcome opportunities to get together, and work toward common goals.

We enjoy family fellowship, where we are of one blood or have been joined by marriage. Families work, play, and pray together. If one falls on hard times, the others pull him through.

We develop fellowship with co-workers. We have a common goal to make our companies succeed. Our livelihoods depend on it. We feel so "in it together" that we may get together after work. Colleagues in the military or in law enforcement feel a bond of fellowship, an esprit de corps, because they realize their lives may depend upon each other.

We enjoy church fellowship, too, with people who share our religious beliefs. Paul gives us God's ideal church fellowship: "I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you, and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought" (1 Corinthians 1:10).

When others share our religious beliefs, we offer the hand of fellowship to them. We enjoy such fellowship in WELS. By God's grace we share the same doctrinal beliefs such as divine inspiration of the Bible. When many claim the Bible is a fallible human document, we hold that it is the inerrant Word of God. Without apology, we confess our belief in creation, original sin, the doctrines of Christ, and especially the belief that faith in Jesus' life, death, and resurrection is the sinner's only hope of eternal life. We profess our agreement in doctrine and practice by our

WELS membership and by declaring ourselves in fellowship with Christians who hold the same Scripture-based beliefs.

This fellowship brings joy each time we worship and confess our common faith with our congregation. When we're away from home, we worship in one of our sister congregations and hear the same scriptural message we hear in our home church.

To foster a greater appreciation of the fellowship WELS members enjoy, the Conference of Presidents has commissioned a Bible study on church fellowship. We're striving for a scriptural, instructive, positive, and encouraging presentation, one that makes us thankful of our fellowship and eager to practice it.

For proper balance, we will show times when a lack of agreement in doctrine and practice makes expressions of fellowship inappropriate. Love for God's truth causes us to refrain from expressions of fellowship that could encourage someone to hold to a false doctrine that could be harmful to his faith.

This document will not anticipate every fellowship question or give detailed prescriptions for dealing with them all. It will present scriptural principles and emphasize each situation must be handled with humility, patience, love, and concern for souls. We encourage each other to sound scriptural practice, but we also remember that love keeps us from being too quick to judge each other as we apply this doctrine with patience in our lives and ministries.

We have a blessed fellowship. Let's work together to strengthen it, defend the scriptural truths it rests on, and proclaim those saving truths to all the world.

*Walter Beckmann is pastor at Grace, Falls Church, Virginia.*

*We encourage  
each other to  
sound scriptural  
practice, but we  
also remember  
that love keeps us  
from being too  
quick to judge  
each other as  
we apply this  
doctrine with  
patience.*

# The pastor's job and who can do the job of the pastor

John F. Brug

*Who is permitted to serve Holy Communion when the pastor is not present? I have observed teachers or elders serving the pastor, or vicars serving the congregation.*

Discussing this, we will distinguish between assisting the pastor with the distribution, and administering the sacrament in the pastor's absence. Elders or male teachers who are properly instructed and called by the congregation commonly assist the pastor in the distribution to members or give communion to the pastor.

Vicars and seminarians who have received sufficient training may administer the sacrament in the pastor's absence if the congregation has approved of this practice.

Although ordination and seminary training are not an absolute prerequisite (to be rightly called is), under normal circumstances we should not need to ask a layman to administer communion in the absence of the pastor. If the absence is extended, a vacancy pastor should serve the congregation. If the absence is brief, a service in which the pastor is responsible for its contents can be held during his absence. Normally, preaching and administering the sacraments should be conducted only by men who have been both thoroughly trained and properly called.

This subject is discussed in considerable detail in Volume III of

*Our Great Heritage*, a set of doctrinal essays available from Northwestern Publishing House. It is recommended for lay people who want a more thorough study of Christian doctrine.

*Why do pastors have automatic tenure at their church? Why don't they have periodic performance reviews like people in other positions?*

Pastors cannot have "tenure" because they aren't employees. They aren't hired, nor do they serve under a contract. Pastors are called by Christ through the church. We are not to think of the arrangement between a pastor and a congregation as a business deal that stipulates a certain amount of work for a certain amount of pay.

---

***A pastor's duty is not merely to satisfy the desires of the congregation, but to be faithful to God who has called him.***

---

The pastor is to freely give the spiritual treasures he has received from Christ to those whom he serves. They in turn are to freely give to him from their earthly treasures (Galatians 6:6; 1 Corinthians 9:11).

An employee's performance has to satisfy the person who hires him. Unless protected by terms of a contract, he can be dismissed for rather arbitrary reasons. A pastor's duty, however, is not merely to satisfy the desires of the congregation, but to be faithful to God, who has called him (1 Corinthians 4:1-4). This means he must often tell members of the congregation truths they do not want to hear. He must confront sin, even when people are offended by his words of warning from God's Word. His "performance," therefore, cannot be judged by the same standards used by worldly businesses.

A pastor can be removed from his position for holding to false doctrine, for immoral conduct, for inability to perform the duties of his office, or for willful neglect of his duties. The pastor and church leaders should regularly discuss and evaluate the work of the church and ways in which they can serve members better, but they should do so in the spirit of Christian cooperation, not with an employer/employee mentality.

At the seminary where I teach, professors receive visits from board members, visit each others' classes, and seek student feedback. The local parish can do similar things.

*John Brug is a professor at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin.*

**Send questions to Your question, please, Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.**



**My wife and I enjoyed the article: "The millennium: figurative language for the New Testament age"** [June] by Wayne Mueller. We are living in an age of demonic deception. Christian TV and radio personalities are promoting this false doctrine of an earthly kingdom, when Holy Scripture speaks out against it. Yet the Christian audience is being swayed. If a church is teaching this "earthly kingdom heresy," what other false doctrines are they feeding their audiences?

For conscience sake, Christians should test everything against Holy Scripture. We must read, mark, and digest Scripture. By doing so, no one can deceive us—not even so-called men of God who hold high offices in the church but teach false doctrines such as "the earthly kingdom." They destroy faith, promote controversy, create divisions, and have no place in the church of God.

It is our duty to show, and to pray for, these erring Christians who believe in this "earthly millennium kingdom" that God the Holy Spirit would lead them to the truth.

*Harold Forsythe  
Sudbury, Ontario, Canada*

**The following does not relate to any recent article, but to a long-standing *Northwestern Lutheran* practice.** I capitalize pronouns referring to God. I understand why the pronouns are not capitalized in most Bibles. In some cases one cannot assign a pronoun to the deity with certainty; in other instances the pronoun may have double reference

to God and to people, as in Psalm 8.

However, when we work to convey the truth of scripture in our printed publications, we do not wish to be ambiguous. Consider: "God permitted Satan to rob Job of his earthly wealth. In the end he restored Job's wealth in double measure." To whom does "he" refer in the second sentence? Obviously, to us who know the story, "he" refers to God. But someone without our understanding might attribute this generosity to Satan. A simple capitalization of the "h" would make the message unmistakably clear.

I do not mind much if I am misunderstood should I write about car repair or gardening. But when writing about God's Word, I do not want to be misunderstood. Wouldn't capitalizing the pronouns referring to God help us communicate more exactly?

*Joel T. Luetke  
Virginia Beach, Virginia*

*ed's note: Whether or not we capitalize the pronouns for God, we need to write clearly so we do not need a capital letter to determine the meaning. For example, when devotions or articles are put on tape for the visually impaired, the message must be understandable without the help of any visual aid.*

**Re: "On the edge of the kitchen door"** [June]. My dad also marked our height similarly, but used a ruler or yardstick and marked at the bottom of the stick. He did not use a hymnal, because ours was about 3" x 5".

I would suggest the man who posed with the boy should mark the line on the bottom of the hymnal for accuracy, and not on the top as he is doing.

*Jerry Pautz  
Ft. Lauderdale, Florida*

## rē · li' giōn

### Defining religion

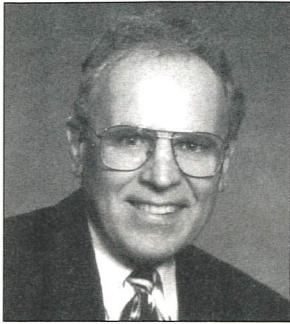
**faith:** trust, confidence. The Bible offers this definition: Faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see (Hebrews 11:1). Saving faith is trust in Jesus as the Son of God and Savior of the world.

## Through my Bible in 3 years

### September 1996

1.  2 Sam. 15:1—16:14
2.  2 Sam. 16:15—17:29
3.  2 Sam. 18:1—19:8
4.  2 Sam. 19:9-39
5.  2 Sam. 19:40—20:26
6.  2 Sam. 21
7.  2 Sam. 22
8.  2 Sam. 23
9.  2 Sam. 24
10.  Psalms 52-54
11.  Ps. 55
12.  Ps. 56, 57
13.  Ps. 58, 59
14.  Ps. 60
15.  Ps. 61, 62
16.  Ps. 63
17.  Ps. 64, 65
18.  Ps. 66, 67
19.  Ps. 68:1-18
20.  Ps. 68:19-35
21.  Ps. 69
22.  Ps. 70, 71
23.  Ps. 72
24.  1 Kings 1
25.  1 Kgs. 2
26.  1 Kgs. 3, 4
27.  1 Kgs. 5
28.  1 Kgs. 6:1—7:12
29.  1 Kgs. 7:13—8:11
30.  1 Kgs. 8:12-66

## The credible church



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

---

***Having no God-given absolutes, disagreeing on essential teachings, and giving equal value to all traditions and teachings are the ways to break down credibility, not build it.***

---

It's not a new thought. Over 30 years ago when I entered the ministry, people were saying, "How can we expect people to take Christianity seriously when we are divided into so many denominations?"

Just last year Dr. Gunther Gassmann said at an ecumenical gathering, "As divided churches, we are no longer able to work with credibility in this world." Gassmann is a visiting lecturer at the Lutheran Theological Seminary (ELCA) at Gettysburg, Pa.

A certain compelling logic keeps me from merely dismissing that thought. Divided churches do not make a unified witness. All Christians united will likely appear more credible to non-Christians than many Christians separated and at odds with one another. And didn't Jesus pray for us to "be one"?

The unity Gassmann and others call for is not a merger but an entering into "full communion." Such churches would share the sacraments, exchange pulpits, and work together in mission. Their agreement would "stress the mutual recognition of each other's ministry as more important than their traditions." Leaders of the movement admit there are still doctrinal differences between the churches but feel the differences are no reason to separate the churches in their common mission.

The issue, according to Gassmann, is credibility. The call is to make our "traditions" secondary to a nobler purpose. The result is to treat doctrines as unimportant to establishing unity in ministry

Is that credible? It obscures any distinction between a church's traditions

(e.g., the date on which we celebrate Christmas), which can change, and God's teachings, which cannot change. It minimizes Jesus' exhortations to teach all things he has commanded, to hold to his teaching, and to watch out for false prophets.

We want to be credible witnesses for Christ. On that we agree. But what is credible?

Is it credible when we join together at the Lord's table but don't agree whether Christ's own body and blood are present there for the forgiveness of sins?

Is it credible to go out hand-in-hand to baptize the nations when we can't agree about the benefits of that baptism? When some believe baptism is only a symbol, not necessary for salvation, and not essential for little children?

Is it credible to preach Christ crucified and risen but to disagree whether Christ truly is risen bodily from the dead?

Is it credible to present Jesus as the only Savior of all the world, who has won forgiveness of sins for all people, alongside those who teach otherwise?

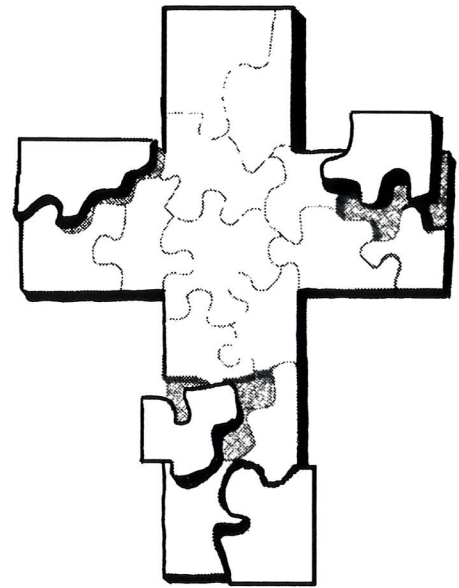
How will people know what is credible, that is, what to believe?

Having no God-given absolutes, disagreeing on essential teachings, and giving equal value to all traditions and teachings are the ways to break down credibility, not build it. Let us confess oneness and practice oneness when we are one by God's standards for this life.

We, too, seek unity, true unity based on God's teachings. With that comes credibility.

*Gary P. Baumler*

**In building a congregation, the pieces don't just fall into place by themselves.**



People need help:  
to know God's Word.  
to apply it to their own lives.  
to see how they fit into their congregation's ministry.



## **All for One... Each for Another**

The 1996-97 stewardship program contains reproducible materials for teaching stewardship and working together in ministry through worship, Bible study and personal devotions. The complete package is available for \$34.95.

WELS Adult Discipleship  
2929 North Mayfair Road  
Milwaukee, WI 53222-4398  
Phone 414-256-3278  
Fax 414-256-3899

**NEW toll-free order line: 1-800-567-8669**

# This card means business

Quite possibly, right now one of your friends, relatives, acquaintances, or neighbors needs to hear about Jesus.

Carl R. Henkel

I get lots of business cards from folks eager to do business, and most of them I throw away. But this one I kept, not because I'll ever need the services of the company on the front of the card, but because of the message on the back.

## A simple message

It was a simple message: "If we meet and you forget me, you have lost nothing; but if you meet Jesus Christ and forget him, you have lost everything."

What a tremendous testimony to Jesus. He, who is the way and the truth, is also the life—full life now and eternal life hereafter. Indeed, if you forget him, you have lost everything. Everything!

Many people still haven't met him. They've heard false rumors and malicious gossip about Jesus, but they haven't personally met him. Do you know someone who needs to be introduced to the world's only Savior?

It's been a few years since a man handed me this business card at the state fair, but I haven't forgotten him. I couldn't tell you what he looked like, but I clearly remember his sincerity and genuineness. I could sense that Jesus Christ was a big part of his life. By the way, he gave me the card before he knew

Jesus and I were already friends.

Many years ago when I preached my final sermon to the first congregation I served, I used the theme, "Forget the messenger but not the message." During the noontime potluck, the master of ceremonies picked up on that theme. He lovingly chided me and remarked that Christians will always remember with deep appreciation those who



shared with them the sweet message of Jesus. They'll forget the weaknesses and failures and sins but always fondly remember the message of grace and hope.

## A life-changing message

Quite possibly, right now one of your friends, relatives, acquaintances, or neighbors needs to hear about Jesus or needs directions for life from the Word of life. Introduce him or her to your heavenly friend.

Do you carry a personal business card? Would you consider placing a meaningful message on the card? It could change a person's life. He or she will never forget you, and the angels in heaven will rejoice.

Look for opportunities to share your faith in Jesus. Be open to the Lord's guidance. Watch for open windows. "In your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have"

(1 Peter 3:15).

Sure there are risks involved: The risk of rejection. The risk of failure. But "the person who risks nothing, does nothing, has nothing, and is nothing."

Let's pray for one another's efforts to share the love of Jesus, and as we do, remember: If we meet and you forget me, you have lost nothing; but if you meet Jesus Christ and forget him, you have lost everything.

*Carl Henkel is pastor at Mt. Olive, St. Paul, Minnesota*