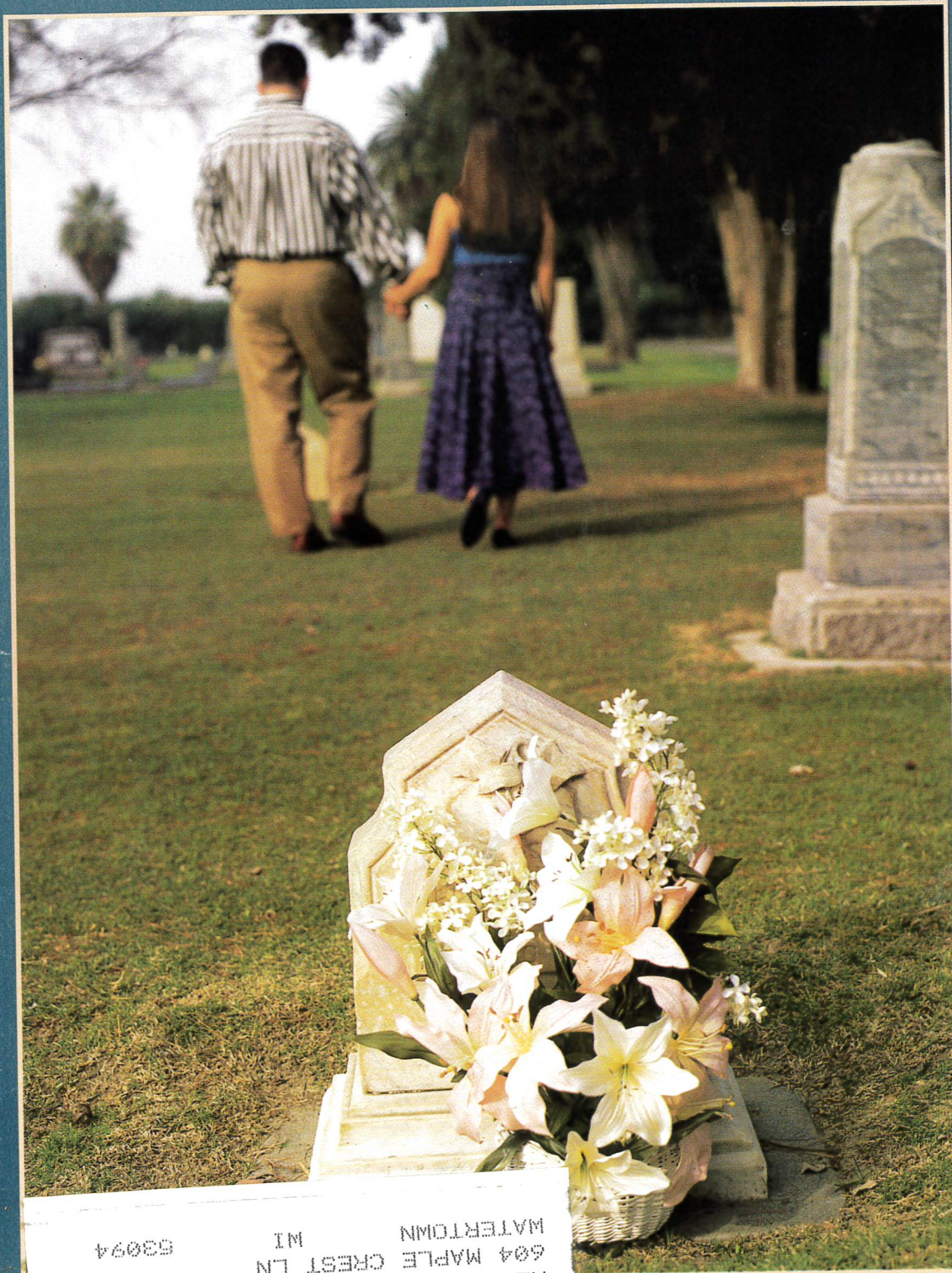


NORTHWESTERN

April 1997

LUTHERAN



**No
substitute
for Easter**

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**Freedom,
flexibility,
fulfillment**

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**Thy perfect
love**

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No substitute for Easter

But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead. 1 Corinthians 15:20

Richard E. Lauersdorf

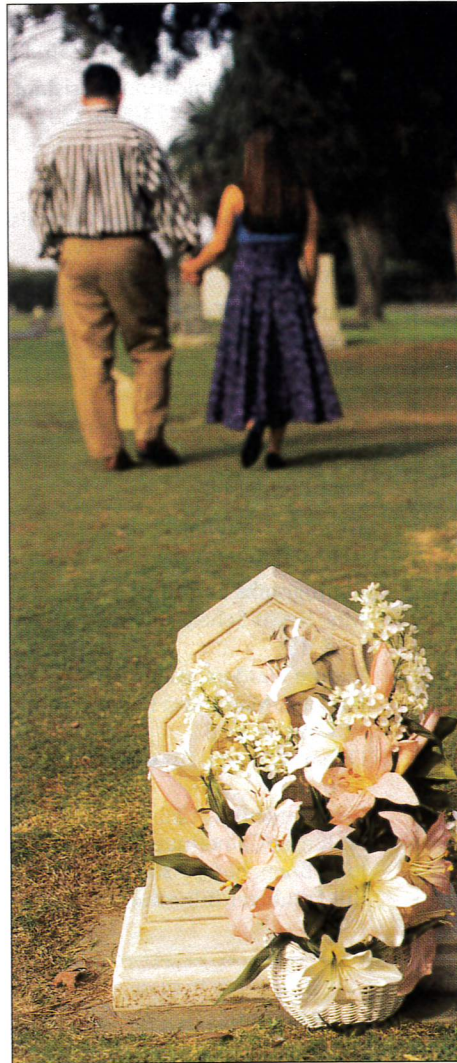
“There is no substitute for victory,” a famous general once said. When asked by the U.S. president to limit his efforts in the Korean War, he refused. Instead he insisted on all-out war and was relieved of his command. How would that general fit today in a nuclear age where all-out war promises wholesale destruction and deadly tomorrows filled with radioactive fallout?

There was a war where the effort had to be all-out, or there would have been no victory. That war escalated to its peak on Good Friday and ended in victory on Easter Sunday.

All-out war

The first skirmish took place in the Garden of Eden. When the smoke cleared, Satan stood the victor. Our first parents and, through them, all mankind were the casualties. A perfect relationship with God had been shattered. Ahead stretched the barbed wire of hell’s prisoner-of-war camp.

At Calvary on Good Friday, the battle again seemed lost. The promised “Seed of the woman” breathed his last. His gory head slumped in death, and his cheeks lost their color. Secret followers claimed his body and prepared it for a hurried burial. They placed his lifeless form into a cold tomb as hell began its victory bash. The battle had been bloody. Hell poured all the troops from its barracks and used all the weapons in its arsenal in the war. And Satan appeared to have won.



All-out victory

Until Easter Sunday! The grave is no longer full. The champion sent by a loving God to fight for us is no longer dead. “Christ has indeed been raised from the dead.” The din of hell’s victory celebration dimmed, replaced by the moans and groans of those eternally damned. But you and I celebrate with holy joy.

Oh, yes, we still fall into sin. The devil still sends out his sneaky patrols to identify and bloody us in the weak spots of our faith. But not to worry, Easter victors. Like a reader skipping ahead to the last chapter, we know the outcome. Christ has been raised from the dead, and those sins have been paid for.

Oh, yes, we still lose loved ones. Death still swings its scythe, mowing down old and young alike. But not to worry, Easter victors. “Christ has indeed been raised from the dead.” That means our graves have two doors, one marked “entrance,” and the other “exit.” That means we don’t say “goodbye,” but “see you later” to loved ones whose sleeping forms we leave at the cemeteries.

Oh, yes, we still suffer the bumps and bruises of daily life. Sickness still invades, people still disappoint, hurts still happen. But not to worry, Easter victors. “Christ has indeed been raised from the dead.” “He lives to wipe away our tears, he lives to silence all our fears.” Surely he who has won the eternal victory for us will strengthen his troops for the march along the way.

In the all-out war for our souls, there is absolutely no substitute for the all-out victory that Easter brings. With Paul we shout it out, “But Christ has indeed been raised from the dead.”

Richard Lauersdorf, first vice president of WELS, is pastor at St. John, Jefferson, Wisconsin.



■ Christ lives! Five articles pass along the joy Christians have because we know our salvation is complete. After you read these articles, remember to share your joy with a world that needs eternal hope.

- ✓ No substitute for Easter (p. 3)
- ✓ Getting a second wind (p. 6)
- ✓ Common denominators (p. 29)
- ✓ Closed tomb, open tomb (p. 34)
- ✓ If Jesus rose . . . (back cover)

■ There were some people who weren't at an Easter service this year—but desperately wanted to be there. Who were they? The elderly who physically can't get to church. In "Make the connection," Laurie Biedenbender shares how we can make our churches—and ourselves—more elderly accessible (p. 14).

■ This month Jim Aderman concludes his series on Samuel. We thank him for his work (p. 30). Also this issue, we begin two series. In the first, Wayne Laitinen focuses on the Apostles' Creed (p. 10). In the second, we'll discuss issues facing single Christians (p. 8).

■ From all of us who bring NL to you each month, we wish you a wonderful Easter filled with the peace that comes only through knowing Jesus' resurrection.

—LRB

Cover photo by Mrs Kevin Scheibel
Photography

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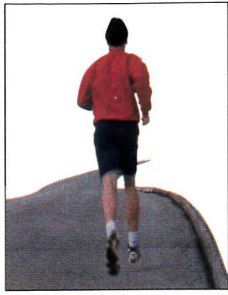
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Getting a second wind

There's one second wind we all need—the second wind of our Father's forgiveness.

John P. Hartwig



Runners cherish a second wind. If you've done any running, you know what I'm talking about. You start a long run slowly. You're happy, full of anticipation for the peace and enjoyment of what lies ahead. The body's kinks, the stiffness, the soreness smooth away. You work up to a pace. Your mind clears as the day's irritations melt. You're running.

Then, if you're running long, fatigue sets in. It'll happen at different times depending on your level of fitness and the particular day. Marathoners talk about "the wall." What had been so natural and effortless—gliding along that ribbon of road—suddenly falls apart. Just putting one foot in front of the other and breathing at the same time seems impossible. A real struggle takes place in the mind. Stop. It would be so easy.

But persistence usually pays off. You stumble on, and at some point you realize that it doesn't hurt anymore. The effortless has returned. You've got your second wind, and it feels as if you can run all day.

The second wind of energy

You don't have to be a runner to understand and appreciate the concept of a second wind. Even if the closest you've come to running lately is six strides toward a closing elevator door,

you know what I'm talking about. You've felt it. It's energy. Energy found somewhere to continue what you've been doing.

It's not only in physical things, but can apply to mental endeavors as well. You are writing a paper for school or a sermon or a report at work. You are well into the task. You have researched the topic, gathered your materials, done your reading, made an outline. But then your progress slows. Things just don't fall together. You need a second wind to get on track again.

More and more in our harried times you need a second wind just to get to the end of a busy day. And then it starts all over again eight (or six or four) hours later.

**The resurrection turns
our attention away from
ourselves and our feeble
efforts to get through
each day, and turns it
to our Savior.**

You can find a second wind in different ways. I have a friend who, no matter how hard he tries, can't keep his eyes open during what is served up as news on TV each night. To his wife's chagrin, that 20 minute nap gives him the second wind he needs to work at his desk until two.

Mom's quiet moments to herself during afternoon nap time give her the second wind she needs to carry on through the homework and supper and baths and bedtimes.

A second wind. It comes in dif-

ferent ways and enables many different activities. Although our experiences might be different, I think we'd all agree on two things about a second wind: we know when we need it, and we feel it when we have it.

The second wind of forgiveness

There's one second wind we all need. When Jesus cried out on Calvary, "Father forgive them, for they do not know what they are doing," he was talking about you and me too. We desperately need the second wind of our Father's forgiveness because every day we hit the wall of our sin. No amount of training will get us over it. It's not something we will ever be able to run through, no matter how persistent or diligent we might be.

Easter gives us that second wind. Jesus said, "It is finished." His race was won, and when he crossed the finish line, he handed us the prize. What better proof of that than the events of the first Easter morning. The tomb is empty. As the risen Lord's voice pierces Mary's blinding grief, he calls us by name too. And we answer: "Rabboni—my teacher, my Lord, my Savior." We've got our second wind.

And that second wind energizes. Mary felt it. She was exhilarated. She and her friends ran back into town to tell others, with all the energy of children heading for the playground at recess. Peter, when he heard, raced back with his friend to see for himself.

Jesus lives. That's our second wind. Christ is risen. God's promise is true. He gives us the power to hurdle the mundane, to put our life in perspective. The resurrection turns our attention away from

ourselves and our feeble efforts to get through each day, and turns it to our Savior. We see the power and love of God. We know we are his children. We feel the burden of our sin removed.

Using your second wind

Now put the second wind to good use. But how? Bring the message of salvation to the whole world, right? Whoa . . .

**Jesus lives.
That's our second wind.**

The marathoner, running on her second wind, should focus on the race she's in right now. Even though she feels great at mile 24, she'll probably be disappointed if she tries today for 50.

To the best of your ability, use your second wind to live the role that God has given you. Use it to give him glory in the simple things: as you mow the lawn again, change another diaper, drive yet one more time the familiar path to the office. Use your second wind to reconsider your response to your child's third "I'm bored. What are we going to do today?" when it's not even 7:45 AM on Saturday.

Use it when God gives you the chance to tell someone the reason for your optimistic outlook. Use it to keep on running to the finish with energy and confidence, knowing that you're going to win the race.

Use it to enjoy the run.

NL

John Hartwig is the librarian at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon.

Freedom, flexibility, fulfillment

How single Christians can find contentment in a world full of married people.

Linda R. Baacke

I flew to Antigua for a weekend. Why? Because I wanted to.

I used to play volleyball four nights a week. Why? Because I wanted to.

I can read books on Saturday mornings—and take naps in the afternoons. I can rile up people's children, then go home. I can run to the store without a second thought. Why? Because I want to. Because I'm single.

Freedom

It's true. Single people have more freedom and flexibility. One married friend muses: "Oh, to be single again." She sees single friends travel, go out on a whim, and make plans without consulting anyone. She loves her spouse and family, but she remembers when her house was clean, and she had time alone.

A group of WELS Christian singles recognized the freedom they have and decided to spend some of their extra time together. That's how SHARE (Singles Helping One Another on the Road to Eternity) was created.

"I was sick of the bar scene, and I wanted to meet some Christian friends, so I joined SHARE," says Jeff Leonard, a SHARE board member.

SHARE plans events ranging from volleyball to movies to Bible study. "We study the Scripture and keep our faith strong," says Leonard.

Studying Scripture includes studying passages where people are encouraged to remain single. In 1 Corinthians 7, Paul says it is good for a man not to marry, because a single person can devote more time and energy to serving the Lord.

"If I had been married, my choices would have been different," says Dr. Patricia Backhaus, member at Grace, Waukesha, Wis. "I can take

One estimate is that by the turn of the century over half of the members in congregations will be single. But single people are a varied lot: Younger, wanting to marry. Older, wanting to marry. Both younger and older, not wanting to marry. Divorced, no children. Divorced, with children. Widowed.

Each group has different needs. Each has different gifts. In our four-part series on singles we'll cover:

- Being single without being lonely.
- Dealing with biases in a world that touts marriage as the ultimate goal.
- Being realistic about expectations of marriage—is there one true person meant to be your spouse—and how you can prepare to be a God-pleasing mate.
- Serving and being served by single people in our congregations.

off to do whatever it is that comes along. That's not always possible for married people."

Loneliness

But don't think that freedom always equals contentment. It can be tiring to be single. All the tasks married people share singles do on their own. Paying bills, changing oil, making dinner, doing laundry, taking out the garbage. One friend would like, just once, "for someone to scrape the ice off my car in the morning."

But loneliness can go beyond wishing someone else would balance the checkbook.

After yet another friend gets married, every single has heard (for what must be the umpteenth time), "When are *you* going to get married?"

With comments like that, it's easy for singles to believe they are not complete. "It's Noah's Ark, everything in pairs," says Backhaus, president of Music Performance and Productions, Inc. "If you're single, people wonder what's wrong with you."

And don't forget the loneliness of those who are single through divorce or death. For years, these people were committed to a marriage. Now they find themselves alone and don't know where to turn. "They're full of pain," says Allen Sorum, pastor at Garden Homes, Milwaukee. "They are broken in half because of their loss."

Contentment

So how do single Christians find contentment? If they aren't content, they often feel guilty when they read Philippians 4:11: "I have learned to be content whatever the circumstances."

But note that Paul didn't say, "I have always been content." He said, "I have learned . . ." (emphasis added).

Telling singles to "be content" sounds too simple. "Singles hear that all the time," says Sorum. He suggests asking: What are you chasing after and why?

"Do you think a relationship will give your life purpose?" he asks. "Then you need to chase after God in Bible study and prayer. Determine to what degree you are neglecting your relationship with God in order to chase after a mate."

"If marriage is your only goal and it's not happening, you'll end up being a basket case," says Backhaus.

That's because chasing after something you can't control is frustrating.

"You come nose-to-nose with your powerlessness to reach your own goal," says Sorum. "You need to first hook yourself up with the

To get you thinking . . .

- ⊗ What bearing does being married or single have on a person's salvation?
- ⊗ How does God determine a person's wholeness?
- ⊗ If God automatically gave you everything you wanted, would you turn to him?
- ⊗ How does society exaggerate the benefits of being single? Of being married?

A Bible study on ministry to and by Christian singles, Issues for Every Single Christian, is available from Northwestern Publishing House. It covers issues such as remaining single, single after a spouse's death, single after divorce, and being a single parent. The Bible study is designed for married and single people alike.

one who has the power to hook you up with an incredible mate."

Purpose

By studying the Word, you will also find your purpose in life.

"Sitting and talking about how miserable you are because you aren't married isn't going to change your life," says Sorum. "Don't expect people to hold your hand in your powerlessness. Discover your purpose by serving."

Teach Sunday school, volunteer at the hospital, go canvassing, visit shut-ins. "Contribute to the health and healing of others. Just get out and do something," says Sorum.

"And don't let other people's agendas make you question the

direction of your life," says Sorum. "Why do you feel pressured to get married? Is it from other people? You need to listen to what God says, not what your mom says."

Concludes Sorum, "God wants singles to use their freedom and flexibility for his kingdom. He has a wonderful plan for the kingdom, and singles are part of it."

Linda Baacke is the senior communications assistant for Communication Services and Northwestern Lutheran.

NL



I believe in God—the Creator

We have a Creator who lovingly formed us for his purpose.

Wayne A. Laitinen

While a Michigan doctor assists in the suicide of more than 40 people, a schizophrenic justice system bounces him in and out of prison, as if it doesn't quite know what to do with him. After all, his victims desperately wanted to take their own lives. And since it's not our life, who are we to tell them they can't?

On the east coast an unmarried college couple took the life of their infant and disposed of its body in a dumpster. Some in the community cried: "How can we treat this like a capital crime? They're just kids!"

Everything is wrong

From heterosexual affairs to homosexual marriages, we have forgotten why anything is wrong.

For the past 50 years we have had it drummed into our heads that we are merely accidents of nature. What started as the theory of evolution is taught as a fact. And it has finally reached its logical conclusion: Since we owe our existence to no one, we owe our obedience to no one. Every man is a god unto himself. (Where have we heard that before?)

Now put all those egos on one planet. It makes for a cold, cruel pantheon. Which god is right today?

**When the Church says,
"I believe in God, the Father
almighty, maker of heaven
and earth," she says it
without trembling.**

Well, the old standards have been discarded. Hard evidence doesn't matter. So, the one who bribes, bullies, or buffaloes the best is Zeus-for-a-day. And, I might add, only for a day. Today's innocent verdict may well be followed by tomorrow's punitive damages.

Two intruders interrupt this narcissistic game we play: birth and death. When we stand over an isolate or a coffin, two questions beg for our attention: "Do we have anything to say about being here? Is there anything we can do to avoid leaving?" The obvious answer is, "No."

But that leads to more troubling questions, "Then who does? And what is he like?"

Christ makes things right

In all this confusion, a lone voice cries, "I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth."

It is the voice of Christ's bride—the Church. She reminds us that our moral amnesia is a symptom of our deadly mutiny against the God who so lovingly created us in his image. We know right from wrong. But we do not use our body and soul, eyes, ears, all our members, our mind,

and all our abilities to serve him. The Creator's verdict is clear: "Dust you are, and to dust you shall return."

But when the Church says, "I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth," she says it without trembling. Her voice is calm and confident, as if she has nothing to fear from her Creator.

And she doesn't. She has been schooled in the classroom of the Holy Spirit. There she learned that God saw her dilemma and gave

Apostles' Creed

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**I believe in Jesus Christ,
his only Son, our Lord,**

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended into hell.

The third day he rose again from the dead.

He ascended into heaven

**and is seated at the right hand
of God the Father almighty.**

**From there he will come to judge
the living and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

himself to redeem her. Together with himself he has given her all things she needs forever.

Since the means of grace have worked faith in our hearts, we, too, speak with the calm, confident voice of Christ's church.

Our eyes have been opened to see our universe as only God's children can see it. We can scan the night sky with a telescope and know that he created the galaxies from nothing—for us. We can see his love for us at the end of a microscope. We hear the Creator's praises sung by a choir of birds and in a Bach chorale. We marvel at the dexterity of the Olympic gymnast on the uneven parallel bars. Whether she knows it or not, she glorifies the Creator. We are humbled by the tender hand that gives a cup of cold water to a nursing home resident in the name of Jesus.

With special care he formed us from the dust of the ground. He breathed into our nostrils the breath of life, and we became a living being. We boldly confess that our Father created us in his image and for his purpose. Everything we are and have and do are works of him who loved us. We are the people he created for himself that we may proclaim his praise (Isaiah 43:21).

There is no higher joy on earth. There will be no higher joy in heaven.

NL

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

Impressions of their worship

Having been in Africa for awhile, it seems that whom one worships is of greater importance than how one worships.

Carl R. Henkel

Lizards crawl the walls, chickens and pygmy goats roam the aisle, and Lutherans in Cameroon assemble for worship. The scene is similar every Sunday, though my wife and I don't always worship in the same village or bush community. We arrive at 9 AM, bringing our little red worship books, our Bibles, and a rag. (The rag is for wiping off layers of red dust from the hard, narrow bench on which we will balance for two or three hours.) We're always the first to arrive, though we may have traveled some distance to get there. We wait for worship to begin.

I used the word "worship" four times in that opening paragraph.

Yes, I've read books and studied articles on worship and thought I understood the meaning of the word. But that was when I had a clean, comfortable, stained-glass-windowed sanctuary. After a rousing prelude on the pipe organ and the exuberant singing of "To your temple I draw near; Lord, I love to worship here," it seemed natural to stand in a flowing white gown and announce, "We have come into the presence of God . . ."

Experience, however, is forcing me to stretch beyond my comfort zone and reevaluate my ideas about worship. In America, "bells and whistles" might describe accessories on a new car. But here bells, whistles, drums, and shakers are the instruments used to praise the Lord.



Members of the Eboko Bajoh congregation. These people are fortunate to have gotten a seat. Often on Sundays, people are lined up outside to hear the Word.

"Early in the morning the house of God is full of joy," sings the family of God over and over as they clap their hands and gather for worship. There are more than 200 catchy choruses, which most seem to know from memory and others quickly learn. "Good morning, Jesus. Good morning, Lord. I know you come from heaven above. The Holy Spirit is now with us. Good morning, Jesus. Good morning, Lord."

Many things happen in worship in the Lutheran Church of Cameroon that may seem unusual to WELS folks in the U.S. In most congregations, children sit in front, women sit on the left with heads covered, and men sit on the right. Worshipers take an active part in the sermon. People are called upon to read Scripture, to pray, or to lead

a chorus. (I'm pleasantly amazed at how the men pray unashamedly from their hearts and how loudly and joyously they sing.) There is a great amount of freedom, and "Alleluia!" "Praise the Lord!" is common. Offering plates are not passed, but men, women, and children place their coins in a basket at the altar, while choruses are sung.

Permit me to share an experience. My idea of Christmas Eve worship is a candle-lit church, with choir sharing soft lullabies, and congregation singing tender carols. When we arrived at the Christmas Eve service in Kumba, which began at 10 PM, the church was "rockin'." Folks were singing in their native dialects and dancing in the aisle—literally! They were so filled with joy they could not contain them-

selves. This continued until the pastor came over and asked if he should start the service now or wait until midnight. I said now would be fine. Because it was totally foreign to my former idea of Christmas Eve worship, I did not find it worshipful. It seemed more like a New Year's Eve party than a Christmas Eve service.

Is there a right and a wrong way to worship? Is one way better or more God-pleasing than the other? If the purpose of worship is to declare the “worth-ship” of God, and to honor and praise the Lord—which I believe it is—then who am I to insist that my American way is better than their Cameroonian way? Or that my “page 15” is more God-pleasing than their joyous singing and clapping? Is it right for me to feel that my church has the edge on proper worship, and, therefore, every person who visits my church, regardless of culture or background, must conform to my way?

Jesus told the woman at Jacob's well that “God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth” (John 4:24). It is true that we all have our “comfort zone” when it comes to corporate worship, but having experienced Cameroon worship, I can no longer judge another's simply because it is different.

To be sure, there is room for refinement. Imagine 100 worshipers trying to follow the communion liturgy from no more than a dozen copies of *The Lutheran Hymnal* that appear to have gone through a flood and several tornadoes. One person holds a book high in the air, and others try to read the faded words of the Nicene Creed. In

one service, we said the Apostles' Creed twice and the Nicene Creed once. We spoke the Lord's Prayer twice and sang it once. We sang at least eight hymns and clapped to more than a dozen choruses. We ate moldy communion wafers that made us gag.

Since that time, however, there have been changes. Missionary Norb and Margaret Meier prepared copies of little red worship books that contain an order of worship, 58 traditional hymns, and 20 responsive psalms. Each congregation now has an ample amount. Worship leaders stray from the printed order of service now and then, but it's getting better.

In Cameroon, some people worship trees. Some worship spirits of dead ancestors. Some worship Allah. Some worship a universal god. But some, thankfully, worship Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Having been in Africa for awhile, it seems that whom one worships is of greater importance than how one worships.

We had a baptism last Sunday morning in which five-year-old Asongwe Melvis was “baptized into Christ Jesus . . . into his death” (Romans 6:3). We celebrated the Lord's Supper where Jesus was really present. If one can overlook the lizards and goats and dirt, and stay focused on the worth-ship of the Lord, then one can indeed return home singing, “I have walked with God today.”

NL

Carl Henkel is teaching for one year at the seminary for the Lutheran Church of Cameroon.



Young men accompany congregational choruses with drums and shakers. There are more than 200 simple and catchy choruses, which most seem to know from memory.

Make the connection

How you can reconnect the elderly to their church family.

Laurie Biedenbender

Mae began using a wheelchair at 78. With her son's help, she gets to family gatherings and to the senior citizens' center Tuesday mornings. She's found, however, that her chair won't fit through the church entryway. So she stopped going.

Rudy, 71, began wearing a hearing aid last year. Because it routinely causes the organ music to ring in his ears, he too has stopped going to church.

At 81, Laverne is healthy but hasn't gone to church since her husband died. She doesn't drive.

Loss of health and mobility disconnected these members from the rest of their church family. "It's not that they've given up on loving the Lord," says one senior. "It's just hard for them to get to church."

The connection needs to be made

We want to make it easy. Like all of us, aging members need to hear that their sins are forgiven, to commune at the Lord's table, to connect to other believers for mutual encouragement.

The elderly also have unique spiritual needs begging for the gospel cure. "Many of the aging become more fearful," says Carl Ziemer, pastor at Christ, Zumbrota, Minn., and chairman of the Committee on Services to the Aging. "Friends have passed on and family members have moved away. They're afraid of being alone."

Ziemer also notes the feeling of

loss. In addition to losing friends and family, the elderly lose their mobility, their freedom, their sense of accomplishment and purpose. "All their lives, they got up at five and did the chores. They were the breadwinners," says Ziemer. "Now

Car care

It was an anonymous letter.

When we are old, attending worship services is more important than ever. But physical infirmity or illness leaves us having to depend on others to get around. Those who have never faced this situation do not realize what a God-pleasing service they could perform by seeking out persons who don't drive, don't drive after dark, or are fearful of snow and ice. . . . I speak for many."

For how many in our congregations does this writer speak? How can we CARE for them?

Consider an elderly person you haven't seen in church lately. Is transportation the problem?

Ask your pastor or elder about the situation. Then ask the senior if you can drive him to church.

Reassure him that this is not a chore, but something you would like to do.

Encourage others to do the same. Establish a regular "Car care" transportation schedule.

they watch TV. They lose that sense of fulfillment."

Seniors may also be anxious about their health and their finances, uncomfortable with their living arrangements or home health care, angry at a changing world, guilty about past sins. Many feel a persistent dull malaise. Others despair and desperately want to die.

For all these reasons, says Ziemer, "The elderly need the message of the faithful presence of the Lord and the community of believers. Spiritually speaking, we need to give them a great big hug in Christ. We need to take them back to the cross of our Lord."

Most pastors and elders "take them back to the cross" through taped ministry programs and home visits, including devotions, prayers, and holy communion. But many of these same elderly, like Mae, Rudy, and Laverne, would rather come to church themselves and reconnect to the rest of the family face to face.

We can help make the connection

How can we help them do that? In his book, *Never Too Old* (Concordia Publishing House, 1992), Robert W. Gannatz lists many ways to make our churches more elderly-friendly:

- Add elevators and ramps for easy wheelchair and walker access.
- Widen doorways for wheelchairs and walkers.
- Put restrooms on the main floor.
- Provide hearing devices.

(Ziemer recommends the Williams Sound System: personal wireless devices that work through the public address system and magnify only the clergyman's voice.)

- Light the nave adequately to ease reading.
- Encourage the pastor to speak loudly, slowly, distinctly.
- Supply large-print hymnals and bulletins.

Ziemer adds:

- Schedule daytime Advent and Lenten services for those who don't drive at night.

- Furnish the restroom with assistance bars.
- Train your usher staff to seat the elderly and any others who would like this service.
- Serve meals after church.

While the elderly may feel disengaged from the rest of the world, we can make an effort to reconnect them to their Christian families. And we can pray that whether or not Mae's wheelchair ever fits through her church door, she will

continue to hear the good news of the one who mercifully and miraculously connected with us by becoming flesh and shedding blood—so that we could be eternally connected to him and his body, the Church.

NL

Laurie Biedenbender is a member at Epiphany, Racine, Wisconsin.

Six ideas for ministering to your church's aging

- 1—Assurance calls:** Schedule volunteers to call seniors everyday to make sure they're okay.
- 2—"Guardian angels":** Pair mobile older adults, youth, or whole families with the aging to help and befriend in many ways.
- 3—Helping hands:** Ask volunteers to do small repair jobs, cooking, cleaning, shopping, or yard work for seniors. An "I Need"/"Can Do" bulletin board can match jobs with job-doers.
- 4—Health check:** If you're far from a hospital, ask a retired doctor or nurse to make herself available once a month to check blood pressure and advise on minor medical problems.
- 5—Video tape ministry:** Replace your audio taped services with video. Tape the exit of parishioners so the homebound can see the other members.
- 6—Crossing generations suppers:** Treat seniors to a soup or spaghetti supper and entertainment hosted by your youth group.



Sound theologian, loving father

In spite of a grueling schedule and time-consuming work, John (Johannes) Schaller spent quality time with his family.

Morton A. Schroeder

John Schaller is a striking example of someone drafted to fill a gaping void. Called to the Lutheran Seminary in Wauwatosa, Wis., in 1908, Schaller was asked to fill the chair emptied by the death of Adolf Hoenecke, WELS preeminent theologian for 30 years.

Seminary professor

John Philipp Koehler and August Pieper met Schaller when he arrived. The two veterans, each a strong force in his own right, probably received the newcomer as a buffer, not thinking he would become first among equals, the apex of a triumvirate that would mold the synod's future pastors until Schaller's death.

**Naturally reserved
and seldom effusive,
Schaller was patiently
agreeable and amiable.**

The trio's combined 36 years continued Hoenecke's work of spreading what has become known as "Wauwatosa theology"—a system of thought and method of teaching stressing sound historical and grammatical interpretation of Scripture.

Schaller taught pastoral theology, dogmatics, and homiletics, disci-

plines that agreed with his natural bent, and his formal training and private studies. The 12 seminary years followed and, to a larger extent, imitated his years as teacher at and president of Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.

Teacher trainer

Schaller, his dear Emma, and their growing brood arrived in New Ulm in 1889. When they left almost 20 years later, they left with sad hearts but fond memories of a changed institution. The school that had been the seminary of the Minnesota Synod was now the teacher training school of the joint synod. The curriculum was revised, grades and classes were added, and subjects were introduced or deleted. A "practice school" in which tyros could try out their teaching skills was begun in St. Paul Lutheran School. Even physical education was legitimized.

Two history-making issues changed forever the fabric, tenor, and appearance of the school. Women were permitted to matriculate in 1896, and music, which Schaller had been trying to systematize since 1901, became a vital and vibrant force in the life of the college with the arrival of Friedrich Otto (Fritz) Reuter in the year Schaller left for the seminary.

Schaller's contemporaries and synod historians who marvel at the

enlightened and progressive era in the history of Dr. Martin Luther College and the "amazingly fruitful work" of his seminary presidency attribute much to Schaller's character. Naturally reserved and seldom effusive, he was patiently agreeable and amiable. Like his father, who was highly regarded by students at the seminary in St. Louis, and also like his sons in their time, Schaller had an endearing, easy-to-get-along-with charm.

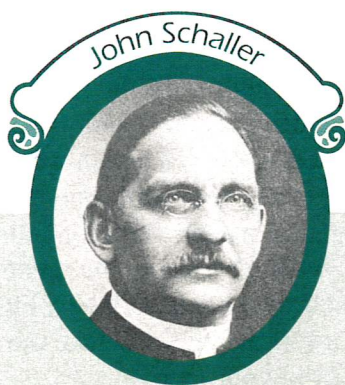
Preacher and writer

Schaller was also a preacher and a writer. He was at home in the pulpit, and, in addition to the important-occasion speaking demands made on him, he served as regular preaching assistant at Grace, Milwaukee.

Schaller wrote three widely-used books. *The Book of Books* is a basic isagogics (summary of the books of the Bible) once used as a textbook in Synodical Conference schools. Originally in German and titled *Kurze Bibelkunde*, it was published while Schaller was at New Ulm. Translated into English by Schaller, but published four years after his death, it filled a need among parochial school teachers, Sunday school teachers, and pastors. Its premise still valid, it was revised and republished six years ago.

Pastoral Praxis in der Ev. Luth. Freikirche Amerikas, outdated by

time, is one of the first systematic presentations of pastoral theology for Lutheran ministers in America. Some people believe it forms the basis for the text used at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon.



Born Dec. 10, 1859, St. Louis, Mo., to Johann Michael Gottlieb and Bertha Volck Schaller.

Baptized and confirmed Trinity Lutheran Church, St. Louis. Educated Northwestern College and Concordia Seminary.

1881, graduated from seminary

1881-1885, pastor, Little Rock, Ark.; 1885-1889, Cape Girardeau, Mo.

Sept. 19, 1883, married Emma Sophia Mumm

1889-1908, professor at DMLC, New Ulm, Minn.

1893, inspector at DMLC

1893-1908, president of DMLC

1908-1920, president of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

c. 1904, published *Kurze Biblekunde*

1913, published *Pastoral Praxis*

1918, published *Biblical Christology*

Died Feb. 7, 1920, Milwaukee, Wis.

Schaller said *Biblical Christology* “was prompted by the urgent need of textbooks setting forth Christian doctrine from the Lutheran point of view, *in the American language*” (italics added). It also was revised and republished; the project editor was, fittingly, a grandson: Pastor em. Loren Schaller.

Records tracing Schaller’s schooling are elusive and incomplete. His early training was in a parish school in St. Louis, most likely Trinity, where his father had been pastor.

His preseminary education cannot be traced with certainty. Church paper obituaries say he attended Northwestern College from 1874 to 1878; subsequent writers have accepted these dates as fact. Koehler, Schaller’s colleague for 12 years and regarded as the Wisconsin Synod historian, says Schaller “like practically all Missouri students, left [NWC] after his junior year to enter the seminary at St. Louis.” The only known extant record is a notation in what the cognoscenti call “Northwestern’s president’s file”: “John Schaller, *quinta*, 1873.”

Family man

In spite of a grueling schedule and time-consuming work, Schaller spent quality time with his family. He, the habitual, consummate pipe-smoking vicar, and she, Emma Louise Mumm, then clerking in her stepfather’s tobacco shop in Alexandria, Va., met, fell in love, married, and became parents to nine children.

Their firstborn, Elsa, died shortly before her second birthday. The others served the church in various capacities: five sons in the ministry

for more than 200 years, two daughters each as a helpmeet for a pastor, and one daughter, Ruth, who died only two years ago, as a Lutheran elementary school teacher.

Ruth, the seventh child and youngest daughter, described herself as “a little pitcher with big ears” during her childhood in New Ulm.

She described her father as a happy, cheerful, gentle man, a down-to-earth, informal, humor-loving man who delighted in simple things: fishing, smoking his pipe, and drinking his glass of beer every night.

He was a domestic person, proud of his wife and pleased with their growing family. He taught his sons to milk the cow, feed the chickens, gather the eggs. He showed them how to make butter and cheese. He played the piano and taught his children how to play. He loved chess. He knew the names of all growing things on the campus and shared this with his children. He was a bird watcher and taught his children respect for all living creatures. Far ahead of today’s neo-naturalists, one son, while librarian at Dr. Martin Luther College, gave pencils to students who spotted the first birds of the new year.

The last paragraph of Schaller’s obituary begins with these words: “We have lost much.” How true! It closes with this declaration: “To Him be glory forever and ever.” How fitting!

NL

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

Thy perfect love

Some things are so filled with loveliness, that, faced with them, a person knows that he stands in the presence of his Maker, before whom he can only bow in adoration.

Paul O. Wendland

Some may experience it at the glimpse of an eagle soaring over a remote mountain valley, others at the tumbling waterfall of joyful Bach trumpets rolling along in their precisely ordered riot of sound.

As for me, it comes when I listen to the words of a hymn, to words so beautiful that they stun the mind and overwhelm the heart with awe. God is so good, and he so lovingly rains down his gifts on us poor souls, who are less than beggars without him and who deserve not a one of them. Yet the showers keep falling all the same, and we drink in his goodness.

The hymn I'm listening to now comes from 15th-century England. It begins and ends simply, and yet in its power, it surpasses the efforts of poets who tried to say much more, but ended up saying far less:

*Jesu, my love, my joy, my rest,
Thy perfect love close in my breast
That I thee love and never rest:
And make me love thee of all
things best*

I hear the echo of Augustine, that great father of the church, who said, "Lord, thou hast created us for thyself, and our heart cannot rest

till it rest in thee." I hear a spirit akin to Luther's, who spoke of the love of Christ filling our hearts with the most perfect rest and yet making us restless till we helped others into our joy.

But this is not the end, nor are these even the best lines. The prayer-like hymn gently ascends in steps to a summit so majestic, breathing stops for wonder of it:

*And wounde my heart in thy love
free,
That I may reign in joy evermore
with thee.*

"Wounde," "love," "free." Some poetry is good, and, when I hear it, I think in my prideful heart, "Ah, I wish I could have written that!" And I suppose that somehow I sense a kindred pride in the heart of the poet who wrote the artfully-constructed line.

With this hymn, no such ungodly thinking intrudes upon the appreciation of its tranquil beauty. Some things are so filled with loveliness, that, faced with them, a person knows he stands in the presence of his Maker, before whom he can only bow in adoration.

It is the beauty of the cross, of course. No mind of man could

fashion such life and joy from death and pain. "Wound my heart, dear Jesus, for your wounds heal me forever. On that rough wood, you bore my woe, and even now you gently wound me with your love, so that I learn to die to sin and self, and begin to love a little. Yes, a little, until you make me perfect in your love."

God is so good, and he so lovingly rains down his gifts on us poor souls, who are less than beggars without him.

A few simple words in which heart calls to heart, centuries dissolve, death and all distance vanish into nothing. We are caught up together in common contemplation of him who loved us best and loves us still. Enough to wound us in his gentle love.

NL

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

This hymn is found on John Rutter's Te Deum CD, sold at Northwestern Publishing House.

The 54th Biennial Convention of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
 July 28 - Aug. 1—Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wisconsin

VOTING DELEGATES

Conference	Lay Delegates	Congregations	Teachers	Pastors
ARIZONA-CALIFORNIA DISTRICT				
Apache	Dennis Goeglein	Immanuel, Lakeside, AZ	Richard Carver Robert Faust David W. Schroeder	James R. Connell Steven Degner Paul Janke William Meier Philip Mischke James Proeber Lowell Smith Steven Spencer
Black Canyon	John Bahne Don Bollmeier Barry Cason Frank DeMuro Darrell Kraemer	Pilgrim, Mesa, AZ Emmaus, Phoenix, AZ St. Peter, Globe, AZ Salem, Scottsdale, AZ King of Kings, Apache Junction, AZ	Roger Sievert Patrick Walker Paul Schulz	
California North	Glenn Anderson Mark Baushke Stephen Ylvisaker	Faith, Anderson, CA Gloria Dei, Belmont, CA Bethany, Antioch, CA		
California South	Sam Kleinschmidt Kenneth Krueger Clayton Radtke Carl Satorius	Zion, Torrance, CA Our Shepherd, Lancaster, CA King of Kings, Garden Grove, CA Calvary, Canyon Country, CA		
Gadsden	Tim Bigelow Carl Haaland Bill Jacobs	Trinity, Duncan, AZ Peace, Rio Rancho, NM Shepherd of the Hills, Tucson, AZ		
DAKOTA-MONTANA DISTRICT				
Conference Eastern	Lay Delegates Don Denekamp Wayne Dorn George Feldhus Gene Workenthien	Congregations First Lutheran, Gary, SD Trinity, Hendricks, MN St. John, Dempster, SD Willow Lake, Willow Lake, SD	Teachers Timothy Schuh	Pastors Wayne Fischer Paul Heiderich Tim Johnston Dan Myers
Rocky Mountain	Harvey Danielson Dave Jeseritz Larry Martell	St. John, Wetaskiwin, Alberta Valley View, Helena, MT St. Paul, Calgary, AB		
Western	Calvin Frey Melvin Himmerich Philip Jung Jason Rabenberg Roger Schipke	Redeemer, Hettinger, ND St. Paul, Roscoe, SD Peace, Isabel, SD Hope, Spearfish, SD St. John, Bowdle, SD		
MICHIGAN DISTRICT				
Conference Northern	Lay Delegates Fred Ciaramitaro Don Gleeson Howard Haller Keith Humbert Gale Krueger Mitchell McLosky Millis Parshall Jr. Al Pitt Richard Zeeb	Congregations Christ, Oakley, MI St. James, North Branch, MI Christ, Imlay City, MI St. John, Gladwin, MI Good Shepherd, Midland, MI Salem, Owosso, MI Zion, Chesaning, MI St. Paul, Remus, MI Hope, Swartz Creek, MI	Teachers Mark Boileau Ronald Brutlag Randy Cochran Wayne Foelske Donald Gosdeck Daniel Hosbach Philip Kuske Robert Schroer David Snyder	Pastors Martin Bentz Michael Biedenbender Gregory Gibbons Kenneth Jahnke Steven Korth David Krueger Marcus Manthey William Natsis Alois Schmitzer Gary Schult Donald Seelhoff James Seelow John Vogt Fred Zimmerman
Ohio	David Bracy Steven Burke Jack Hoffman Herbert Schmidt	Immanuel, Findlay, OH Resurrection, Maumee, OH Our Savior, Strongsville, OH Resurrection, Centerville, OH		
Southeastern	Keith Carabell Harold Frye Greg Harper David Hirth Todd Hubert David Kirvan Stephen Vossler	Our Shepherd, Warren, MI St. John, Westland, MI Darlington, Ann Arbor, MI Salem, Ann Arbor, MI Calvary, Eaton Rapids, MI Good Shepherd, Novi, MI Zion, Lansing, MI		
Southwestern	Charles Kling Alexander Koppel Joseph Oliver William Rauh	Peace, Otsego, MI Our Savior, Hart, MI St. Paul, Stevensville, MI St. Matthew, Benton Harbor, MI		
MINNESOTA DISTRICT				
Conference Crow River	Lay Delegates Marlon deNeui Sid Goemer Jim Hovind Albert Nowack	Congregations Bethany, Clinton, MN St. Peter, Darwin, MN Abiding Savior, Elk River, MN Immanuel, Buffalo, MN	Teachers John Barenz Glenn E. Bode James Hermanson John R. Isch Gerald J. Jacobson Donald Koch Michael Koester Eugene Martens Kurt Schmidt Timothy J. Schroeder	Pastors Keith Bilitz Wesley Bruss Robert Bushaw Charles Cortright Michael Crawford Mark Henke Leroy Kaminski Robert Krueger Lyle Lange Mark Liesener Randall Ott Ralph Polzin David Rosenow William Schaefer II Gregg Warning Michael Wolft
Mankato	Michael Klatt Mike Muehlenhardt	Trinity, Belle Plaine, MN St. Paul, Arlington, MN		
New Ulm	Tony Rosener Claus Sieh	Shepherd of the Lakes, Fairmont, MN Immanuel, Gibbon, MN		
Red Wing	William Heydmann Kermit Oldre David Pfeiffer Herbert Schrimpf David Kleiber Lenus Meyer Conrad Schardin Reinhold Kehren	Grace, Goodhue, MN Christ Our Rock, Rochester, MN Our Savior, Kasson, MN St. John, Goodhue, MN Grace, Oronoco, MN Bethany, Granite Falls, MN St. John, Lake Benton, MN Christ, Marshall, MN		
Redwood Falls				
St. Croix	William Bunde Ken Diesterhaft John Dodds Walter Kitzerow Glyn Thorman vacant vacant Harold Just	New Life, Shoreview, MN Zion, Almena, WI Bethlehem, Lakeville, MN Faith, River Falls, WI Grace, Osceola, WI St. John, Minneapolis, MN Martin Luther, Forest Lake, MN Shepherd/Hills, Inver Grove Hgts, MN		

Conference	Lay Delegates	Congregations	Teachers	Pastors
MINNESOTA DISTRICT (cont.)				
Southern	Dan Bruss Kurt Nitz	Grace, Oskaloosa, IA Good Shepherd, St. Peter, MO		
NEBRASKA DISTRICT				
Southern	Martin Otte Roger Otte Steve Remmers Todd Steinbach	Grace, Seward, NE Christ, Grand Island, NE Bethel, Waco, NE Beautiful Savior, Topeka, KS	Paul Schultz Craig Schwartz	Eugene Ahlswede Jerry Enderle Robert Smith Phil Spaude Tim Winkel Mark Zander
Central	Weldon Marotz Ken Mayer	St. John, Stanton, NE Living Hope, Omaha, NE		
Colorado	Richard Gruenke Alan Ketelholm Mark Kroll Paul Schmidt	Zion, Denver, CO Christ Our Redeemer, Aurora, CO Lord of Lords, Casper, WY St. John, Platteville, CO		
Rosebud	Gary Schmidt	Our Redeemer, Martin, SD		
NORTH ATLANTIC DISTRICT				
Colonial North	Russell Becker Ralph Lange Ernest Saar	Messiah, South Windsor, CT Our Shepherd, Poltimore, Quebec St. Paul, Ottawa, Ontario		Philip Henselin Daniel Luetke Paul Ziemer
Colonial South	Rob Franzo Gary Leopold Allan Unseth	Peace, King of Prussia, PA Bethlehem, Manassas, VA Resurrection, Virginia Beach, VA		
NORTHERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT				
Fox River Valley	Timothy Arndt Robert Braun Allen Mischeel Lloyd Nimmer Donald Payne Karl Seiltz Stuart Storm vacant	St. Luke, Little Chute, WI Bethel, Menasha, WI Trinity, Kaukauna, WI Immanuel, Kewaunee, WI Emanuel, New London, WI Immanuel, Black Creek, WI St. Paul, Algoma, WI Mt Olive, Suamico, WI	Stephen Berg John Boeck Nathan Eberhardt David Ebert Daniel Gresens Clair Jammer Thomas Koepsell Brian Miller David Payne James Rahn Jeffrey Schultz Roger Smith Paul Wendland Jon Woldt Brian Zunker	John Gvach Philip Gieschen Beck Goldbeck Mark Hannemann Darrick Kolterjah Dennis Meier Robert Raasch Jonathan Rossman Arnold Ruddat Paul Thierfelder Fred Toppe Richard Warnke D. Craig Weber Larry Zessin
Lake Superior	Hugh Fruechtl Ervin Hillerman Elwyn Runstrom Craig Benz	Christ, Menominee, MI Trinity, Marinette, WI Faith, Marquette, MI St. Paul, Marquette, MI		
Manitowoc	Donald Knuth Milton Lutze Dr. Carl Toepel Keith Wakeman Tom Zamzow	First German, Manitowoc, WI Trinity, Manitowoc, WI St. Paul, Sheboygan Falls, WI Bethany, Manitowoc, WI Ascension, Antigo, WI		
Rhineland	Frank Ruebl Jerry Zimpelmann	St. Paul, Crandon, WI Christ, Eagle River, WI		
Winnebago	Tom Allen Gordon Fabian Fred Pieper Walter Pollex Roy Tindall Paul Voss	Grace, Oshkosh, WI St. John, Montello, WI Immanuel, Campbellsport, WI Bethlehem, Oshkosh, WI Redeemer, Fond du Lac, WI Zion, Van Dyne, WI		
PACIFIC NORTHWEST DISTRICT				
Alaska	Cecil Purrington	Shepherd/Hills, Anchorage, Alaska	Stanley Cole Eldon Lemke	Thomas Gumm Gary Kraklow Frederick A. Voss
Cascades	Schuyler Burkhart David Kriewall Doug Lutz Warren Menche Dennis Roth Robert Winterfeld	St. Paul, Tacoma, WA Calvary, Bellevue, WA Trinity, Coos Bay, OR Grace, Portland, OR Grace, Yakima, WA Salem, Edmonds, WA		
SOUTH ATLANTIC DISTRICT				
Cypress	Roger Buz Martin Habel Bruce Varnum	Christ, Keystone Heights, FL Peace, Holiday, FL Redeemer, Merritt Island, FL	Eric Lange	Raymond Cox Mark Eckert Jim Pankow Mark Schoeneck Paul Zell
Everglades	Bud Brendle Hugh Foster Harris Lewis	Bethany, North Fort Myers, FL Christ the King, Port Charlotte, FL St. John's, Antigua		
South Central	Steve Bohlmann Freddie Finch Kenneth Kahler	Messiah, Alpharetta, GA Amazing Grace, Panama City, FL Risen Savior, Fort Walton Beach, FL		
SOUTH CENTRAL DISTRICT				
South Central	Col. Marvin Adams Kevin Draper Ed Guterman Erik Hansen John Latzke James Rohleder	Abiding Faith, Fort Worth, TX Atonement, Plano, TX Gethsemane, Oklahoma City, OK Prince of Peace, Houston, TX Mt. Olive, Tulsa, OK Risen Savior, Austin, TX	Henry Hoenecke	Earl Kriewall David Lau Charles Learman
SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT				
Southern	Marcus Hagen LeRoy Harbach Jr. Drew Peterson	Abiding Word, Somers, WI New Hope, Racine, WI Hope, Twin Lakes, WI	Bruce Bintz Owen Dorn Gary Greenfield Tim Gustafson David Hackmann James Haferman James Hahn	Kenneth Bode Paul Eckert James Huebner Darryl Kenagy Timothy Kujath Willard Marquardt Steve Mischke
Chicago	Ted Bodjanac Don Plauck Milton Quandt	St. Andrew, Chicago, IL Resurrection, Aurora, IL St. John, Woodland, WI		

SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT (cont.)

	Fred Steiber Marty Steiber	Trinity, Crete, IL Zion, Crete, IL	Clarence Jenkins Wayne Keller Kenneth Luedke Ray Manthe John Marten John Metzger Earl Monday Jason Nelson Rich Pinski James Rademan David Schleef Cliff Schmoldt Ronald Schultz Paul Schumacher William Vlski	Paul Mueller Daniel Nitz Robert Pasbrig Ralph Scharf Roger Schultz David Seager Alan Siggelkow Dan Simons Duane Tomhave David Valleskey Stanley Weinrich Harvey Witte
Dodge-Washington	Arnold Dorn Delmar Kluball Edward Quandt Lester Unglaub	Emmanuel, Hartford, WI Grace, Milwaukee, WI St. John, Lomira, WI Zion, Theresa, WI		
Metro North	Robert Gromowski LeRoy Guidinger Al Hagert Arthur Petzold Arthur Seidel	Redemption, Milwaukee, WI St. John, Mequon, WI St. John-Clinton, Milwaukee, WI Pilgrim, Menomonee Falls, WI Gloria Dei-Bethesda, Milwaukee, WI		
Metro South	Richard Brege Robert Erdmann David Feare David Larson Douglas Luttrell Jack Zamiatala	Divine Peace, Milwaukee, WI St. John-68th St, Milwaukee, WI Zion, South Milwaukee, WI St. John-Howell, Oak Creek, WI Good Shepherd's, West Allis, WI Fairview, Milwaukee, WI		

WESTERN WISCONSIN DISTRICT

	Lay Delegates	Congregations	Teachers	Pastors
Conference Southwestern	Dr. Paul Albrecht Ken Sprain David Stigen vacant	St. John, Sparta, WI St. Paul, Tomah, WI St. John, Baraboo, WI St. Paul, Mauston, WI	Jon Benrud Paul Bertolus Robert Bock David Brown Roger Ehлке Jeff Essig David Fenske Keith Heinze Geoff Hoffmann Bill Scharf Emil Schuh James Wade Gerald Walta Roger Wickert	Del Begalka Timothy Biebert Kenneth Everdt Keith Free William Gabb Dean Gunn Roy Hefti David Hein Charles Iles Sr. Mark Lindner Kurt Mau John Meyer Roger Sachs Joseph Schlawin Glen Schmiede Wayne Schneider Roger Vomhof
Central	Gerald Baumann Jeff Buchta James Cloute Nielan Genz James Huska Wayne Klug Roy Pickhard David Schumann James Wade Richard Wentland Carl Wenzel Randy Wiessinger	St. John, Watertown, WI St. Paul, Ixonia, WI Bethany, Fort Atkinson, WI St. John, Jefferson, WI St. Paul, Lake Mills, WI St. John, Juneau, WI St. James, Prairie du Sac, WI St. Mark, Watertown, WI Trinity, Watertown, WI St. Matthew, Oconomowoc, WI St. John, Pardeeville, WI Peace, Sun Prairie, WI		
Chippewa River Valley	Dan Goller DuWayne Stevens	St. John, Cornell, WI St. Paul, Menomonie, WI		
Mississippi River Valley	Marlo Dorn Harold Lubeck Chris Olson vacant	St. John, Lewiston, MN Mt Calvary, La Crosse, WI Good Shepherd, Holmen, WI St. Luke, Pickwick, MN		
Wisconsin River Valley	Dudley Bradley Oscar Dirks Ron Fregan William Salzwedel	Immanuel, Mosinee, WI St. Matthew, Marathon, WI Good Shepherd, Wisconsin Rapids, WI Salem, Wausau, WI		
Wisillowa	Harold Buck George Schultz	St. Peter, Savanna, IL St. Mark, Normal, IL		
World Missionaries	Chris A. Cordes Larry W. Schlomer James W. Sherod Mark T. Wendland Theodore L. Wendt			

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- Officers**
 Rev. Karl Gurgel, President
 Rev. Richard Lauersdorf, First Vice President
 Rev. Douglas Bode, Secretary
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 Rev. Peter Naumann
 Rev. John Seifert
 Rev. Larry Cross
 Rev. Joel Frank
 Rev. Walter Beckmann
 Rev. Douglas Engelbrecht
 Rev. Warren Widmann
 Rev. John Guse
 Rev. Vilas Glaeske
 Rev. David Rutschow
 Rev. Herbert Prahl
- Coordinating Council**
 Mr. Merle Blum
 Mr. Robert Hering
 Mr. Don Schuppe
 Advisory: Mr. Douglas Wellumson, Program Planning Analyst
- Board of Trustees**
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 Rev. Steven Korth
 Mr. Gerhardt Lambrecht
 Mr. Dale Anderson
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 Mr. Robert Bartz
 Mr. Wilfred Bauer
 Mr. Clifford Broehm
 Mr. David Griffith
 Rev. James Liggett
 Rev. James Humann
 Mr. Michael Jacobson
 Mr. Robert Steinke

- Home and World Missions**
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 Rev. Harold Hagedorn, Administrator, Board for Home Missions
 Rev. William Meier, Chairman, Board for World Missions *
 Rev. Duane Tomhave, Administrator, Board for World Missions *
- Board for Ministerial Education**
 Rev. Roland Zimmermann
 Rev. John Lawrenz
 Rev. David Valleskey *
 Rev. Theodore Olsen
 Rev. Mark Schroeder
 Rev. Paul Prange
 Teacher Merlyn Kruse
- Board for Parish Services**
 Rev. Thomas Zarling, Chairman, Board of Parish Services
 Rev. Wayne Mueller, Administrator, Board for Parish Services
 Rev. Robert Hartman, Administrator, Board for Evangelism
 Dr. Daniel Schmeling, Administrator, Board for Parish Services
 Mr. John Barber, Media Director
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 Mr. Clair Ochs, Administrator, Board of Trustees
 Mr. Calvin Patterson, Director of Finance and Treasurer
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 Mr. Richard Sonntag, Administrator for Benefit Plans
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 Mr. Jon Flanagan, Director, Human Resource

- Committee**
 Rev. Ronald Roth, CCFs Administrator and Director of Planned Giving
 Rev. Lyle Lange, Chairman, Committee of Inter-Church Relations *
 Rev. Gerhardt Cares, Chairman, Committee on Constitutional Matters
 Rev. Gary Baumler, Editor NL/Director, Communication Services Commission
 Rev. John Braun, WELS Herald
 Rev. Wayne Borgwardt, Director, Tel-Tech Task Force
- Convention-related**
 Rev. Duane Tomhave, Convention Preacher
 Rev. Marcus Nitz, Convention Preacher
 Prof. David Valleskey, Convention Essayist
 Rev. Kenneth Cherney, Bible Study Leader
 Rev. Gary Kraklow, Bible Study Leader *
 Rev. Randy Hunter, Bible Study Leader
 Rev. Thomas Zarling, Parliamentarian
- Synod Restructuring Committee**
 Rev. Jon Mahnke
 Teacher Randall Westphal
 Mr. Arnold Schumann
- Proposed Synodical Council**
 Mr. K. Moore
 Mr. N. Frey
 Mr. D. Toepel
 Mr. Arvid Schwartz
 Mr. H. Bergmeyer
 Mr. Donald Richards
 Mr. Ronald Rathke
 Mr. Peter Dorn
 Will appoint (WWW)
 Mr. Marc Frey
 Mr. John Brooks
 Will appoint (SA)



WELS congregations celebrate big anniversaries

Eighteen WELS congregations are celebrating significant anniversaries this year.

Six congregations are celebrating 100 years: St. John, Libertyville, Ill.; St. John, Beaver Dam, Wis.; Grace, Monico, Wis.; St. John, Pelican Lake, Wis.; St. Matthew, Spring Valley, Wis.; and Immanuel, Watertown, Wis.

Eleven are marking their 125th anniversary: St. Paul, Livonia, Mich.; St. Paul, Arlington, Minn.; St. Matthew, Renville, Minn.; St. John,

Stanton, Neb.; Zion, Marathon, Wis.; St. Peter, Mayville, Wis.; St. Lucas, Milwaukee, Wis.; St. Paul (Dallas Township), Ridgeland, Wis.; St. Paul (Prairie Farm Township), Ridgeland, Wis.; St. John, Rock Springs, Wis.; and St. Peter, Weyauwega, Wis.

Salem, Milwaukee, Wis. is celebrating its 150th anniversary.

Aid Association for Lutherans gave each congregation a \$1,000 grant to help it celebrate its special anniversary.

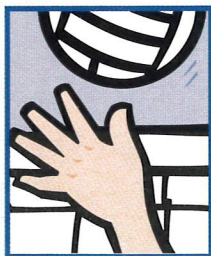


Please send photos or news on teen activities to: youth news, *Northwestern Lutheran*, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.

Volleyball team shows Christian character

These excerpts are from a letter to David Habeck, athletic director at Evergreen Lutheran High School, Kent, Wash., from Linda Wilson, officiating coordinator of the State B volleyball tournament the day after the state volleyball championships in Spokane, Wash.:

"I have had the opportunity to interact with hundreds of teams and coaches throughout my years of volleyball officiating. . . . The Evergreen LHS volleyball team is one of the best teams I have ever seen. Many people would argue, because the Eagles did not win the championship. I disagree. The players exhibited sportsmanship, enthusiasm, athletic skill, and fun—a rare but winning combination at any level. Many teams have athletes



who can win games; what they do not have is the personal integrity and character as displayed by your young women. . . .

"I know it comes from having a high quality leader. As I observed Coach Vogel and her rapport with the team, I could only envy the women who were playing for her. . . . Coach Vogel encouraged her team in a positive manner, emphasized sportsmanship and fun, and supported them when they encountered rough roads. . . .

"I have never written such a letter to any other school in my 14 years of officiating. I hope it reflects how strongly I feel about the players and coaches."

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Defining religion

transubstantiation: The Roman Catholic teaching that bread and wine in the Lord's Supper change into Christ's body and blood so that only the appearance of the bread and wine remains. The Bible teaches that bread and wine and the body and blood of our Savior are present in communion.

Needed: beta-carotene

The WELS clinic in Malawi, Africa can use beta-carotene pills, which help prevent blindness and foster normal growth and skin development.

Were you or anyone you know in the women's health study from Brigham and Women's Hospital and the Harvard Medical School in which beta-carotene, vitamin E, and low-dose aspirin or placebos in blister packs were given out? The study has been going on for a few years, and participants stopped taking the beta-carotene in January 1996.

The Mission Society of Peace, Hartford, Wis., is sending a shipment to the Medical Mission and will include the beta-carotene pills. Here is what you need to do:

1. Call 1-800-633-6911 to find out if you took beta-carotene or a placebo. Have your I.D. number ready.

2. If you took beta-carotene, either box up your blister packs with the remaining beta-carotene pills or punch them out into a clean, dry plastic peanut butter jar and send them before July 1.

Send the beta-carotene to Eunice Westendorf, 258 W Prospect St, Hartford WI 53027; 414/673-5582.

An amazing event

The 1996 WELS National Campus rally, held at the University of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz., from Dec. 27-30, amazed the over 200 people in attendance.

"I saw nothing but smiles on people's faces as the weekend went on," said Scott Terrell, senior at the University of Arizona and one of the event's organizers.

This was the first national campus rally held outside the Midwest. This, according to Terrell, made the rally more available to Southwestern students and let others see a strong WELS population outside the Midwest.

The rally, under the theme Prepare to be AmAZed, offered worship, presentations, and fellowship opportunities to over 150 college students from three countries and 24 states.

Participants could choose from presentations such as the Apache mission,

medical ethics, abusive relationships, lifestyle evangelism, trusting the Bible, and WELS Kingdom Workers. Congressman Mark Neumann was the keynote speaker. Activities ranged from going to the theater to hiking to attending a Mexican fiesta.

"And you can't beat the December weather here," Terrell added.

Along with activities, students interacted with Christians from around the country.

Said Terrell, "In a world where all too often Christians are the minority, it was encouraging to be part of the majority for a few days."



Students enjoyed one of Tucson's Mariachi bands at a Mexican fiesta. Opportunities for fellowship abounded during the WELS campus rally. "Because of our similar beliefs, I felt close to everyone, even the people I didn't get to meet personally," said Scott Terrell, event organizer.

Computer workshop answers your questions

Have you been wondering how best to use computers for classroom teaching? What about using technology for school administrative duties? And who knows what hardware and software will best suit your needs?

Dates and places of WELS National Computer Workshops

- July 7-8—Arizona Lutheran Academy, Phoenix, Ariz. (IBM)
- July 7-9—Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee, Wis. (IBM)
- July 8-10—St. Matthew school, Oconomowoc, Wis. (MAC)
- July 9-10—Nebraska LHS, Waco, Neb. (IBM)
- July 9-11—Northland LHS, Wausau, Wis. (IBM)
- July 14-15—Calvary Lutheran school, Dallas, Texas (IBM/MAC)
- July 14-16—Lakeside LHS, Lake Mills, Wis. (IBM)
- July 15-17—Saint Croix LHS, St. Paul, Minn. (IBM)
- July 16-18—Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee, Wis. (IBM)
- July 17-18—Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis. (IBM)
- July 21-22—Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich. (IBM)
- July 21-23—Fox Valley LHS, Appleton, Wis. (IBM)
- July 22-24—St. Matthew school, Winona, Minn. (MAC)
- July 23-25—Kettle Moraine LHS, Jackson, Wis. (IBM)

The WELS National Computer Workshop (NCW), offered in 14 locations in July, will answer your questions or get you thinking about how computers can aid your school.

"The workshop will help you understand where computers fit in Lutheran elementary schools, and how they can help each school achieve its mission," said LeDell Plath, chairman of the WELS NCW committee and associate administrator of parish schools.

Open to all, but focused on WELS/ELS teachers and principals, the

workshop will offer three different levels of instruction—covering those who never have turned on a computer to those who have a working knowledge. Topics include practical uses in the classroom, purchasing a computer, hardware, software, and the Internet.

The workshop, sponsored by the Commission on Parish Schools, will also get teachers together to discuss technology and to network.

"We're getting everyone together. Our teachers will teach each other about technology," said Plath. "This could only further extend our unity in WELS."

For information about the WELS NCW, contact Sue Rebers, 414/255-3952 or Dr. LeDell Plath, 414/256-3221. Space is limited. Registration deadline is April 30.



IN THE NEWS

Ardis Koeller, kindergarten teacher and special education coordinator at North Trinity, Milwaukee, Wis., received the 1996 Christian Service Award for professionals from Bethesda Lutheran Home and Services, Inc. In addition to serving on special education committees, Koeller wrote *Joy in Jesus' Love*, a beginning level curriculum, and helped write *Simplified Catechism Bible Stories*, to help others teach children with learning disabilities. The Christian Service Award is given to volunteers and professionals in the field of mental retardation services.

Else Cuppan, a kindergarten teacher at St. Peter, Fond du Lac, Wis., received the Follower of the Lamb Award from Bethesda Lutheran Home and Services, Inc., Watertown, Wis. Cuppan, a teacher and administrator for an area Jesus Cares program, helps conduct a Bible study at Winnebago Lutheran Academy, Fond du Lac, for people who are developmentally disabled. The Follower of the Lamb Award recognizes individuals who excel in the spiritual education of people with developmental disabilities.

Emily Orcutt, a freshman at the University of Green Bay (UWGB), Wis. and a member of UWGB basketball cheerleading team, cheered for the Green Bay Packers at the Super Bowl in New Orleans. The UWGB basketball cheerleading team cheers for all Packer home games. Orcutt is a member at St. John, Jefferson, Wis.

WELS begins multicultural preseminary program

WELS wants to make the pastoral ministry more feasible for minorities.

The WELS Multicultural Preseminary Program is designed to do just that. Dr. Glen Thompson will head the new program.

Few minorities serve as pastors in WELS. The program's goal is to help more minorities become pastors.

"We want to cut through obstacles that prevent minorities from considering full-time ministry," said Thompson. "Our hope is that minorities will have a better opportunity to make it into the pastoral ministry."

Level one of the program trains men for service as lay leaders and helps pastors determine which men have the gifts for the pastoral ministry. Level two provides candidates with the academic courses necessary for admission into Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon.

Students can take courses through distance learning so they won't be uprooted from their family or cultural and congregational environment.

Thompson will oversee the curriculum's development and recruit

students. The program is supervised by the Multicultural Preseminary Oversight Committee, chaired by Jerald Plitzuweit, vice president of the pastoral ministry track at Martin Luther College.

A 1977 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Thompson has a master's degree and a doctorate in ancient history, from Columbia University, New York, N.Y.



Dr. Glen Thompson

Thompson served in Lusaka, Zambia; Peace, New York; and Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw. He lectures on ancient manuscripts, the New Testament,

and the early church and is writing a book on early papal letters. He has served the Multicultural Mission Committee since 1989.

He and his wife, Beth, a business consultant, have two children: Dorothy, 17, and Luke, 15.

Synodical restructuring committee wraps up work

On Feb. 7, the WELS synodical restructuring committee completed its 32nd meeting since it formed in 1993 and looks forward to the synod convention in July. Their proposal, essentially the same as that approved in principle by all the districts in 1996, calls for reorganizing the synod with a new Synodical Council, replacing the present Coordinating Council and Board of Trustees.

In offering the new structure to the 1997 convention for final approval, the committee feels it fits the criteria they followed; namely, to develop a structure that supports the overall mission of WELS and that

1. gives proper emphasis to the spiritual, as well as the operational aspects of the synod;
2. has simple, clear lines of authority and accountability;
3. is open and transparent, allowing the synodical constituency to see input and output; and
4. permits flexibility in decision making at the lowest practicable level.

WELS expands resource ministry

WELS Outreach Resources kicked off its nationwide promotional campaign at the National Religious Broadcasters Convention in Anaheim, Calif., Jan. 25-28, 1997.

WELS Outreach Resources is devoted exclusively to providing evangelism outreach resources for a variety of witness opportunities. The campaign focuses on three distinctive evangelism tools.

One resource is *Speaking the Truth in Love to Mormons* by Mark Cares, pastor at Messiah, Nampa, Idaho. The *Christian Research Journal* has applauded Cares for his "unusually insightful compassionate and practical approach to evangelizing Mormons."

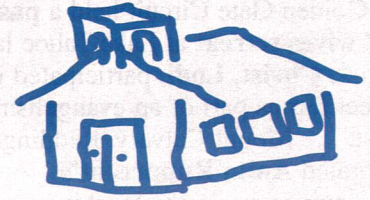
Mission and Ministry Across Cultures is a first-of-its-kind resource manual for congregations in a changing world. Author E. Allen Sorum is

pastor at Garden Homes, Milwaukee, Wis. Garden Homes is located in a neighborhood that is 99 percent African-American.

Recognizing this book's importance, Harvie M. Conn, the foremost authority on urban ministries in North America said, "Luther nailed 95 theses to a church door in a Saxon town of 2,500 people and the message of Christ alone, faith alone, turned a secularized world upside down. Can this same message move the cities again? How do we begin our reinvestment in the urban world? This book says yes, and shows us where to start."

Soul Search, a video-based law/gospel witness, rounds out the three featured resources. *Soul Search* presents a simple and clear law/gospel message as the solution for lives confused and troubled by sin.

1996-97 WELS school statistics



Early childhood education

Total schools	264
Total enrollment	4,409
Total teachers	286

Lutheran elementary schools

Total schools	361
Total enrollment	31,233
Total teachers	1,922

6 Lutheran elementary schools opened in 1996:

Hope, Penryn, Calif.
Our Savior, Pomona, Calif. (reopened)
St. John, Victorville, Calif.
St. Paul, Riverside, Calif. (reopened)
Morning Star, Jackson, Wis.
Trinity, Woodbridge, Va.

3 Lutheran elementary schools closed in 1996:

St. Paul, Round Lake, Ill.
Gethsemane, Cibicue, Ariz.
Mt. Olive, Bay City, Mich.

2 schools consolidated in 1996:

Christ, Milwaukee, Wis., and St. Peter, Milwaukee, Wis., became Christ/St. Peter

Area Lutheran high schools

Total schools	21
Total enrollment	5,302
Total teachers	396

1 area Lutheran high school opened in 1996:

Great Plains, Watertown, S.D.

Statistics provided by WELS Commission on Parish Schools.



Allen Sorum, pastor at Garden Homes, Milwaukee, Wis., was interviewed at the National Religious Broadcasters Convention. Sorum spoke on reaching across cultures with the gospel, which is the topic of his new book.



District news

Arizona/California

The Golden Gate Circuit held a **pastors' wives retreat** at Lake Tahoe last fall. . . . **Christ, Lodi**, participated in a street fair as part of an evangelism thrust. . . . Mount Calvary, Redding, celebrated **Anita Rupprecht's** 35th anniversary in the teaching ministry. . . . **Good Shepherd, Vallejo**, voted to apply for membership in WELS in November 1996. The congregation was independent but in fellowship with WELS and ELS. . . . Reformation, San Diego, celebrated Principal **Gary Krug's** 25th anniversary in the ministry last October. . . . An interest-only loan of \$500,000 was given to **California LHS, Wildomar, Calif.** This resulted in a savings of \$4,000 a month in interest payments for 1997 and \$7,000 a month in 1998. With this money, CLHS purchased the dormitory, the chapel, and the office building.

Dakota-Montana

St. Paul, Rapid City, S.D., broke ground for an 8,400 square foot addition to their facility in November 1996. The addition will provide space for four school classrooms, an office, a workroom, and an elevator. . . . **Mighty Fortress, Red Deer, Alberta, Canada**, dedicated its new church in December 1996. This 20-year-old facility was purchased from another area congregation.

Nebraska

First, Aurora, Neb., will celebrate its 50th anniversary on June 1.

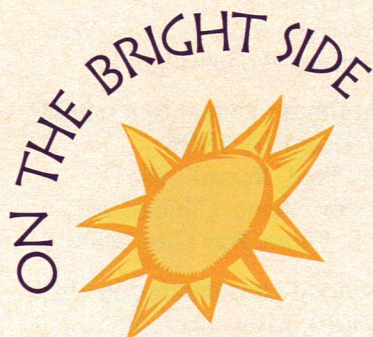
*Keith Petersen
South Atlantic*

Western Wisconsin

St. Paul, Ixonia, Wis., held the dedication service for its new school facilities on March 2.

South Atlantic

Redeemer, Merritt Island, Fla., burned its mortgage on Dec. 29, 1996. Organized in 1964, Redeemer dedicated its facilities in 1966. Members present at the church's dedication in 1966 look on. From left: Nancy Anderson, Karl Kuckhahn, Pastor David Rosenbaum, Leon Wichmann, and Joan Wichmann.



An egg-citing surprise

We were sitting around the table after Easter dinner last year when our grandson left the table and went to his room. He came back with a carton of eggs and a big smile. He took his place at the table and opened the carton. He handed his mother a plastic egg to open—inside she found a cotton ball sprayed in perfume. He handed

her a Bible, and she read Matthew 26:6-13.

This is what was in all 12 eggs:

- 1 Cotton ball; Matthew 26:6-13
- 2 Dime (he put 3 dimes in); Matthew 26:14-16
- 3 Bread crust; Matthew 26:17-29
- 4 A lime (in plastic wrap); Matthew 26:30, 36-46
- 5 Piece of paper with lipstick kiss on it; Matthew 26:47-68
- 6 Small dried chicken bone; Matthew 26:31-35, 69-75
- 7 Piece of string and a clod of dirt; Matthew 27:1-10

- 8 Piece of red cloth; Matthew 27:11-31
- 9 Cross (two twigs tied with dental floss to form shape of cross) and two nails; Matthew 27:32-44
- 10 Piece of a sponge; Matthew 27:45-56
- 11 Rock or marble; Matthew 27:57-65
- 12 Nothing; Matthew 28:1-8

Garin, 12 and a seventh-grader at St. Mark, Green Bay, Wis., put a lot of work into the eggs. After our eggs and Bible reading we had much more to talk about. Yes, it was a glorious Easter.

*Henrietta Jakubowski
Franklin, Wisconsin*



Parental rights amendment defeated

A proposed parental rights amendment to the Virginia Constitution was narrowly defeated in the state's Senate.

The measure, defeated 21-19, held that "the right of parents to direct the upbringing and education of their children is a fundamental right."

Parental rights measures have been introduced in 28 states, but the legislation has yet to gain approval.

Supporters say an amendment would insure that parents have the last word on a host of issues involving children. They argue the measures would guarantee them access to their

children's school, library, or health records and would prevent state employees from administering any psychological or physical tests without parental permission.

Critics say the measures amount to a stealth campaign on the part of religious conservatives to influence school curriculums and textbooks and would end such controversial programs as the distribution of condoms in schools. They also maintain this could prevent authorities from fully investigating child abuse cases or dealing with outbreaks of disease.

Landlords can refuse renting to unmarried couples

A federal court in Alaska has ruled that landlords who believe sex outside of marriage is a sin may refuse to rent their properties to unmarried couples.

The case was brought by three conservative Christian landlords who argued that the government should not force them to rent to people engaging in activities they consider sinful.

U.S. District Court Judge H. Russel Holland agreed. He said laws banning rental discrimination on the basis of marital status are unconstitu-

tional. Holland also said that protecting religious beliefs under the First Amendment outweighed the government's interests in preventing rental discrimination.

The judge said that under the legal codes, religious landlords were being forced to choose between following the law or their religious beliefs.

"The burden here is more than merely economic; it directly forbids plaintiffs from conforming to their religious convictions," Holland wrote.

Abortion rate lowest in 20 years

The abortion rate for American women has fallen to its lowest level in two decades, said the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). It decreased nearly 5 percent from 1993 to 1994.

Among women ages 15 to 44, the number of legal abortions in 1994 (the latest year for which figures are available) decreased to 321 per 1,000—the lowest rate since 1976. There were 334 abortions for every 1,000 live births in 1993.

Most women who had legal abor-

tions in 1994 were younger than 25, unmarried, and white. About one-fifth were 19 years old or younger.

About 88 percent of legal abortions were performed during the first 12 weeks of pregnancy, the CDC said. About 54 percent occurred during the first eight weeks.

Among the possible reasons cited by CDC for the decline in reported abortions are changes in attitudes about having an abortion, reduced access to abortion services, and fewer unintended pregnancies.

"Quote"

"It's kind of easy to bow down in the end zone. But the real test of my character is, can I bow down to God on a Monday when millions of people are not watching, and the stands aren't packed, and my wife is not necessarily saying I am a superstar, and my little boy is late for school? Can I stand for Christ when adversity comes my way? Can I stand for him on that day?"

Cris Carter

Minnesota Vikings football player

Through my Bible in 3 years

May 1997

1. Jeremiah 48
2. Jer. 49:1-33
3. Jer. 49:34-50:46
4. Jer. 51:1-58
5. Jer. 51:59-52:34
6. Lamentations 1
7. Lam. 2
8. Lam. 3
9. Lam. 4
10. Lam. 5
11. Philippians 1:1-11
12. Phil. 1:12-26
13. Phil. 1:27-2:18
14. Phil. 2:19-30
15. Phil. 3:1-11
16. Phil. 3:12-21
17. Phil. 4
18. Ezekiel 1
19. Ezek. 2:1-3:21
20. Ezek. 3:22-5:17
21. Ezek. 6,7
22. Ezek. 8
23. Ezek. 9,10
24. Ezek. 11
25. Ezek. 12,13
26. Ezek. 14,15
27. Ezek. 16
28. Ezek. 17
29. Ezek. 18,19
30. Ezek. 20:1-44
31. Ezek. 20:45-21:32

Bulletin BOARD & NOTICES

To place an announcement, call 414/256-3231;
FAX, 414/256-3899; e-mail, nl@sab.wels.net
Deadline is six weeks before publication date.

CHANGE IN MINISTRY

Pastors:

Cortez, Kevin L., from Good Shepherd, Midland, Tex., to St. John, Pardeeville, Wis.
Gumm, Alan W., from Christ our Redeemer, Gillette, Wyo., to Prince Of Peace, Yuma, Ariz.
Haag, Daniel E., from St. Peter, Globe, Ariz., to St. James, Tolstoy/St. Paul, Mound City/Zion, Akaska, S.D.
Hanke, Kevin J., from St. John, Beaver Dam, Wis., to Immanuel, Neillsville-9NW/St. John, Neillsville-6N, Wis.
Kauffeld, Eugene P., from St. John, Watertown, Wis., to retirement
Keller, Brian R., from Our Savior, Strongsville, Ohio, to St. Stephen, Adrian, Mich.
Kipfmiller, Mark T., from St. John/St. James, Reedsville, Wis., to St. Mark, Flat Rock, Mich.
Krause, Donald A., from St. Peter, Tomah, Wis., to Salem, Sturgeon Bay, Wis.
Mosher, Scott C., from Grace, Safford, Ariz., to St. Timothy, Maumee, Ohio
Nelson, David J., from First American, Mayville, N.D., to retirement
Raether, Dale L., from St. John, Juneau, Wis., to New Hope, West Melbourne, Fla.
Schmiege, Paul A., to King of Kings, Willoughby, Ohio
Yecke, Richard D., from Our Shepherd, Lancaster, Calif., to retirement

Teachers

Birkholz, Jerome P., from Michigan LHS, St. Joseph, Mich., to retirement
Brassow, Earl E., from St. Paul, Wonewoc, Wis., to retirement
Dobberstein, Donald O., from Immanuel, Kewaunee, Wis., to retirement
Dobberstein, Jeanette, from Immanuel, Kewaunee, Wis., to retirement
Hadler, Lyla M., from Our Savior, Bylas, Ariz., to retirement
Hadler, Willis E., from Our Savior, Bylas, Ariz., to retirement
Hando, Jeanette E., from Fairview, Milwaukee, Wis., to retirement
Hando, Orv, from Good Shepherd, West Allis, Wis., to retirement
Holzhueter, Donald G., from St. Paul, South Haven, Mich., to retirement
Jensen, Marilyn L., from Peace, Hartford, Wis., to retirement
Mahnke, James F., from Mt. Calvary-Grace, La Crosse, Wis., to Luther HS, Onalaska Wis.
Meyer, Jonathan P., from Faith, Fond du Lac, Wis., to St. Peter, Mishicot, Wis.
Plamann, Karen A., from Gloria Dei-Bethesda, Milwaukee, Wis., to St. Matthew, Milwaukee, Wis.
Rahn, James C., from Trinity, Neenah, Wis., to Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee, Wis.
Roelke, Werner J., from St. Paul, Saginaw, Mich., to retirement
Schlenvogt, Jane A., from Peace, Bradenton, Fla., to Eastside, Madison, Wis.
Schumann, Nancy R., to Mt. Calvary, Waukesha Wis.
Thiesfeldt, Steven R., from LPS, Watertown, Wis., to MLC, New Ulm, Minn.

Wentzel, Arden W., from St. Paul, Fort Atkinson, Wis., to retirement call, St. Paul, St. James, Minn.
West, Gregory S., from Gethsemane, Milwaukee, Wis., to St. Andrew's, St. Paul Park, Minn.
Winter, Richard M., from Manitowoc LHS, Manitowoc, Wis., to retirement
Zimmermann, Nora M., from St. John/St. James, Reedsville, Wis., to retirement

COLLOQUY

On Feb. 27, 1997, Guy Bergenthal, formally a pastor in the LCMS, was declared eligible for call into the ministerium of WELS. He completed the steps of the colloquy program, which included three quarters at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon.

Richard E. Lauersdorf, First VP
Prof. Richard D. Balge
Vilas R. Glaeske, District President

COMING EVENTS

Rededication service—100th anniversary of church building of First Evangelical, Racine, Wis. April 13. Service, 10:45 AM; dinner and program following. 728 Villa St, Racine WI 53403. Robert Petersen, 414/632-9165.

Martin Luther College 1997 choir dates

Contact Martin Luther College, 507/354-8221.
Apr. 6—Homecoming concert. St. Paul, New Ulm, Minn., 7:30 PM
Apr. 18—St. Paul, North Mankato, Minn., 6:30 PM
Apr. 19—Trinity, Marshfield, Wis., 7 PM
Apr. 20—Immanuel, Medford, Wis., 8 and 10:30 AM; St. Mark, Eau Claire, Wis., 3 PM

Women's day—Apr. 12. St. Paul, New Ulm, Minn. Beth Hauf, 507/354-3256.

Concert—Vesper Singers end time concert. 7 PM, Apr. 13 at Trinity, Watertown, Wis. Frank Zabell, 414/261-2131.

Concert—Lutheran Chorale. 3 and 7 PM, Apr. 27 at Grace, Milwaukee.

SHARE Seminar—Singles Helping One Another on the Road for Eternity. May 3. St. Jacobi, Milwaukee. Full day of sessions followed by dinner and fellowship. Doris, 414/534-7852.

Conference—WELS school leadership conference. June 24-26. Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee. For principals and leaders in schools. Dr. Daniel Schmeling, 414/256-3220 or Sue Rebers, 414/255-3952.

LWMS convention—June 27-29. Duluth, Minn. For convention information, call Julie Gutknecht, 612/682-4462 or Carolyn Baumann, 218/722-4364. For hotel information, call 800-438-5884. For registration forms, contact the LWMS Central Office, phone/FAX, 414/321-6212.

ANNIVERSARIES

Aurora, Neb.—First (50). June 1, 3 PM; 402/694-5494.

Muskego, Wis.—St. Paul (140). May 4—sanctity of life Sunday. June 1—special presentation and organ recital in the old church, 7 PM. Sunday services, 7:45 AM and 10:30 AM; Monday, 7 PM. S66 W14325 Janesville Rd, Muskego WI 53150; 414/422-0320.

Weyauwega, Wis.—St. Peter (125). Oct. 18—4 PM. Oct. 19—8:15 and 10:30 AM, lunch at noon. RSVP for noon meal. 312 W Main St, Weyauwega WI 54983; 414/867-3169.

Milwaukee, Wis.—Salem (150). Apr. 13—Lutheran Chorale. Apr. 27—youth Sunday. May 11—Mother's day. June 1—picnic Sunday, outdoor service at special time; picnic follows. Services at 8 and 10:30 AM. 6814 N 107 St, Milwaukee WI 53224-4306; 414/353-8141.

NEEDED

Preacher—Stay in Clovis, Calif., parsonage in exchange for preaching any Sunday in August. Located within two hours of Kings Canyon National Park, Sequoia National Park, or Yosemite National Park. Contact Pastor Michael Engel, 209/291-1601 or Jerry Ledermann, 209/299-7714.

Church bell—for bell tower. Contact Pastor Mark Henrich, W77 Woods Center, St. John's Antigua; phone/fax, 268/461-2324; e-mail, henrichm@candw.ag

MLC SUMMER SESSION

African safari—Offered through MLC, June 11-27. Kenya, Tanzania, the Serengeti, and Ngorongoro Crater. \$3,995. Prof. E. Heidtke, 507/354-8221.

AVAILABLE

Pews—10 antique oak pews. Free for cost of shipping. Good Shepherd, Beloit, Wis. Contact the church office, 608/362-8720 or Pastor Jim Adomeit, 608/365-4863.

Hymnals—*The Lutheran Hymnal*. 70. Free for cost of shipping. Our Savior's, East Brunswick, N.J.; 908/254-1207.

Hymnals—*The Lutheran Hymnal*. 21. Free for cost of shipping. Clifford Miller, Box 543, Paullina IA 51046; 712/448-2381.

Church furnishings—marble baptismal font; oak (light color) pulpit/lecturn; oak wedding kneeler (dark stain). Free. Petoskey, Mich. 616/347-2368.

SERVICE TIMES

Holland, Mich.—When visiting Holland, Mich., for the Tuliptime Festival, worship with Lord of Life (ELS). Call Pastor Mike Smith at 738-LIFE (5433) for times and location.

NAMES WANTED

Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada—Steve Nuss, Apostles, 1353 N Benjamin Cr, Regina SK Canada S4X 4L3; 306/543-9985; FAX, 306/543-0332; e-mail, REVNUSS@aol.com.

Elko, Nevada—WELS members in the area. Judy McCulloch, 994 Wolf Creek Dr, Elko NV 89801; 702/774-1656.

1997 YEARBOOK CORRECTIONS

Pastor David Rosenbaum's home phone number is incorrect. The correct number is 407/453-1000.

The phone numbers of several divisions of synod are incorrect. Note the following correct numbers:

Commission on Evangelism—414/256-3288
Commission on Worship—414/256-3278
Commission on Youth Discipleship—414/256-3274
Commission on Parish Schools—414/256-3223
Commission on Adult Discipleship—414/256-3278
Campus Ministry Committee—414/256-3279
Board for Ministerial Education—414/256-3237
Board for World Missions—414/256-3234

Common denominators

Karl R. Gurgel

The math teacher's assignment seemed impossible—find the least common denominator. It looked like mission impossible to take two different numbers and find any number common to both. In the end, a number was found.

In January, along with the Executive Committee for Central Africa, I visited our missions in Malawi and Zambia. What common denominators could there be between Central Africa and the United States? Not surprisingly, a number were found, including the most important ones for Easter—death and life.

We left on a blustery winter's day. The week before, the wind chill hit 45 below zero. The temperature in Africa was always in the 70s or low 80s. But like the Midwest we left, it was wet. Torrential rains fell almost every day.

A few years ago the lack of rain caused devastating famines in Africa. This year it appears there will be enough to eat, though for most it will be corn meal three times a day.

Looking at what the people wear in Africa, you might think you were in the United States a few years ago. Agencies ship clothing to Africa. There it is sold at American-like garage sales.

But most Africans don't know what a garage is. They don't need one—no car, no garage. Roads are one continuous, hazardous pothole. The "shoulders" are filled with pedestrians. Pedestrian fatalities are among the highest anywhere.

So is the infant mortality rate. Yet you see children everywhere. Infants strapped to their mother's backs. Groups of children easily coaxed to smile by a camera or a smile from you. Children, eager to learn, if only there was some-

one to teach them the one thing needful.

AIDS is rampant. Every year, 10 to 15 percent of the legislature in Zambia dies from AIDS. I'm sure, to a lesser degree, the same is true in the villages.

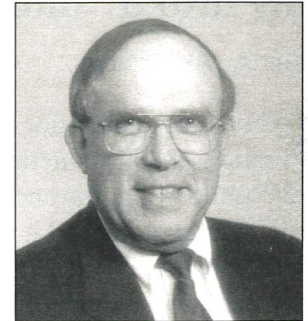
Right here, don't we have common denominators—death and life? Death, first, because it is the result of sin. Rebellion against God's standards of right and wrong is found everywhere. It's not only in Central Africa or in the United States that humans knowingly defy God's commandments or his law written in their hearts. Just as we all sin, we all get the judgment—death. Death, the great leveler, lays us low before God.

How, then, could Paul confidently ask, "Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?" Wasn't Paul vainly whistling as he passed a cemetery? You know he wasn't. "But thanks be to God! He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:55, 57). Christ Jesus bore the penalty for our sin's guilt upon the cross. It was our death he died. His resurrection gives us life.

God's gift of eternal life is there for all. By the power of the Spirit and through the preaching of the Word, the faith to receive eternal life is God's gift to us in Central Africa and the United States.

The Lutheran Church of Central Africa has about 35,000 Christians, our brothers and sisters in the faith. This Easter, as poinsettias bloom in Africa, it is the same Savior, born to die but also risen from the dead, who transforms natural death into immortal life.

That, for us all, is the most important common denominator of all.



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

The faith to receive eternal life is God's gift to us in Central Africa and the United States.

Samuel: listener to the end

The Lord chose David because this boy—like young Samuel—would grow into a “man after God’s own heart.”

James A. Aderman

God’s voice, a sacrifice and celebration, the introduction to Israel’s future king, his anointing. Samuel had experienced it before. Now there were old lessons to review and new lessons to learn. Read **1 Samuel 16:1-13**.

Uncertain of God’s plans

“I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king,” the Lord told Samuel. Three decades earlier Samuel anointed Saul as Israel’s first monarch. Now God had rejected Saul and appointed a successor.

For the first time we know of, Samuel hesitated. Even those who have walked with God can doubt his leading has an upside. “Saul will hear about it and kill me,” he countered. But God’s intention was not to proclaim David king, only to anoint him for the office. Samuel could do that with a sacrifice.

There was more to learn. Identifying Saul had been straightforward. The Lord pointed and said, “This is the man. . . .” Identifying David was not as easy.

Picture the scene. Samuel instructed the men of Bethlehem to prepare themselves for the sacrifice. He personally consecrated Jesse and his sons. The oldest, Eliab, looked like a king—tall and attractive.

“Surely the Lord’s anointed stands here,” Samuel thought.

“Don’t be misled by his appearance,” the Spirit whispered. “There is another I have chosen because of

his heart.”

Samuel made the same mistake with Abinadab, the second son. Then the third son—the fourth . . . seventh. Samuel was bewildered. The Lord distinctly told him to anoint one of Jesse’s sons.

“Jesse,” Samuel asked, “Are these all the sons you have?”

“There is still the youngest,” Jesse replied, perhaps bemused.

Certain of God’s blessings

The youngest. Was Samuel struck by the parallel with his youthful calling? Was he reminded of the

way God uses “the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are” (1 Corinthians 1:28)? Did he breathe easier, anticipating the blessings God would grant through David—blessings similar to those God worked through Samuel?

“Send for him,” Samuel demanded. “We will not sit down until he arrives.”

David was a younger version of his handsome brothers. But the Lord chose him because this boy—like young Samuel—would grow into a “man after God’s own heart.”

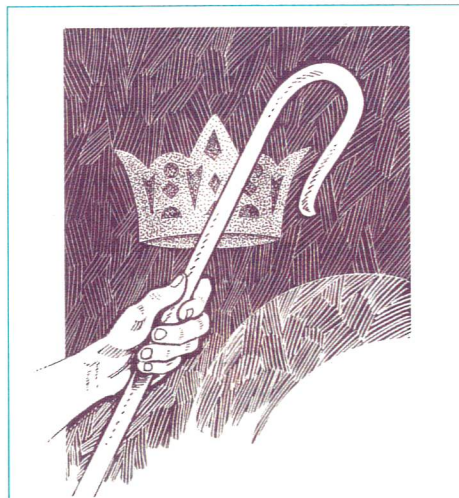
“Rise and anoint him!” the Lord instructed.

No one, except Samuel, realized the significance. David’s family did not treat him with deference afterward. Nor did David think of himself as Saul’s successor. The anointing made a difference, however; it assured the essential ingredient for service: “The Spirit of the Lord came upon David in power.”

A new era dawned; the sun of a prior era set.

The record of Samuel’s ministry ends here—brought full circle to another youth. The next time the Scriptures mention Samuel, he has died. Samuel: a prophet whose life testifies that in spite of living in a downside world, our upside God has cures for every woe.

James Aderman is pastor at Fairview, Milwaukee.



FOR FURTHER STUDY

1. How was young David a prophetic picture of Christ the king?
2. Samuel learned God’s “paths [are] beyond tracing out.” How does that truth apply to God’s grace? To ways God has led your life?

The chariots and horsemen of Israel

Joel C. Gerlach

The Romer vs. Evans decision of the Supreme Court will soon be a year old. The fallout is still settling.

That decision struck down a constitutional amendment approved by Colorado voters barring special legal rights for homosexuals as a class. The decision also robbed citizens of the use of a time-honored, democratic procedure to stem the erosion of sexual ethics and a healthy social structure.

The dissenting opinion written by Justice Antonin Scalia is a blistering indictment that assails the Court's ruling as "an act, not of judicial judgment, but of political will." He described aspects of the ruling as "absurd," "preposterous," and "insulting." It's a ruling afflicted with what he calls "terminal silliness."

Meanwhile the homosexual agenda has proceeded. Anyone who voices opposition is scorned as a hopeless homophobic.

A puzzling aspect of the Court's ruling stems from the fact that only a decade ago the Court upheld Georgia's anti-sodomy laws. The Court's new ruling, Scalia pointed out to his colleagues on the bench, "places the prestige of this institution behind the proposition that opposition to homosexuality is as reprehensible as racial or religious bias."

Following last year's ruling, opponents began referring to the Court as the Marble Curtain. There's irony in that. The Iron Curtain has come down; a Marble Curtain is being erected in its place. The external threat to our survival is being supplanted by an internal one.

It is easy to assail the liberal bent of the Supreme Court as a chief agent

responsible for the breakdown of our nation's moral fiber. But is that really where the finger of blame should point?

King Ahab's reign in Israel in Elijah's day offers noteworthy parallels and insights. The appointment of 400 priestesses to lead people in the adulterous worship of Ashtoreth, the goddess of love, by Ahab's wife, Jezebel, suggests that Israel's plight was at least as bad, if not worse, than ours today.

On the day Elijah was taken to heaven, his successor, Elisha, observed Israel's first line of defense in time of moral crisis was not King Ahab's army. The real "chariots and horsemen of Israel" were faithful prophets like Elijah (2 Kings 2:12). Israel's plight was attributable not so much to a failure of its political leader as to a failure of its spiritual leaders.

So also today. The threat we face does not come so much from liberal judges in black robes in the halls of justice across the street from the White House. It comes from thousands of preachers in clerical robes in the hallowed halls of churches all across the nation who have abandoned their role as prophets of God.

Preachers, not judges, are the shapers and guardians of the moral fiber of a nation. If we are intent on halting the continuing decline of our national morals, of which the advancement of the homosexual agenda is but one example, we will have to look for help from pulpits, not from courts. If the real "chariots and horsemen of Israel" are not doing their job, no one else can do it for them.

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

*Preachers,
not judges,
are the shapers
and guardians
of the moral
fiber of a nation.*



Fasting: doubtful or desirable?

John F. Brug

What does the Bible say about fasting? My family is trying fasting to clean out poisons and lose weight. I'm concerned about this health fad. What is the WELS position on this?

The Bible frequently mentions fasting, that is, abstaining from food for a time, as a form of spiritual discipline. God commanded the people of Israel to deny themselves on the Day of Atonement, which was the great day of repentance (Leviticus 16:29). This was interpreted as a command to fast.

To this the Jews added a number of set dates for fasting, such as the day when they mourned the destruction of the Temple. Special fasts were declared at times of national calamity (Joel 1:14). Individuals also fasted on days of personal mourning or repentance.

God warned the Israelites that fasting was not a substitute for good behavior nor a way to earn merit with God (Isaiah 58:2-8). Fasting was to be an expression of true repentance and a sign of devotion to spiritual concerns.

Because of their joy to be in Jesus' presence (Matthew 9:14,15), Jesus' disciples did not fast as regularly as John the Baptist's disciples did. Jesus condemned the fasting of the Pharisees because it was done to impress people (Matthew 6:16,17). But Jesus implied that his disciples

will fast at the right time and in the right way. The early Christians practiced fasting in connection with special times of prayer and devotion (Acts 13:2, 14:23).

The Bible has nothing to say about fasting as a health benefit.

Christians aren't commanded to fast, but Luther recommended fasting as a spiritual discipline. In his comments on preparation for the Lord's Supper in the *Small Catechism* he stated that fasting and bodily preparation are fine outward training.

On another occasion, he said: "There should be a general spiritual fast for us Christians to observe. It would be a good arrangement to observe a general fast for a few days before Easter, before Pentecost, and before Christmas, to distribute fasts over the year. But on no account dare it be done for the purpose of making it an act of worship or a means of meriting something."

Luther recommended fasting as a bodily discipline. "I would also be glad if at certain times, once a week or as often as might seem best, there were no evening meal, except a piece of bread and something to drink, to keep everything from being

used up with the kind of incessant guzzling and gobbling that we Germans do, and to teach people to live a little more moderately." Christians, therefore, may fast if it helps them focus their attention on special occasions of prayer or repentance. Fasting may also serve as a reminder of the need for bodily self-discipline.

The Bible has nothing to say about fasting as a health benefit. Here a person should depend on sound medical advice to avoid excessive fasting, which could be harmful to health.

Why isn't Edgar Elgar's "Pomp and Circumstances" played as the march for graduation exercises at our area Lutheran high schools and ministerial education schools?

Since our graduation ceremonies are usually worship services, those who are planning the service normally choose religious music for the processional that will contribute to the spiritual message of the service. For the same reason, we prefer spiritual music rather than secular music as a wedding processional.

There is, however, no rule against "Pomp and Circumstance," and it has been used at WELS graduation ceremonies.

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

**Send questions to Your question, please, Northwestern Lutheran,
2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398; FAX, 414/256-3899; e-mail, nl@sab.wels.net.**

Re: the letter from Catherine Borck [Feb.] about her desire to see articles written at a higher reading level. I ordered a subscription to *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*. That satisfies my needs to keep abreast of our synod's ministry. The People's Bible series and the new People's Bible Teachings series, as well as the Impact Series, are challenging and rewarding. I first borrowed them from our church library and then purchased many.

My compliments to Linda Baacke for the fine article on WELS-CLO. I went to my first meeting last year, and look forward to the April 26 meeting. It encouraged us to update our church library.

*Carol J. Higgins
Wauzeka, Wisconsin*

Responding to your February issue. I know a new chapel at MLC might enhance the worship—but what better way can we say “Thanks be to God,” than to put our 150th anniversary offering into missions, getting that Word out to the world?

In response to Catherine Borck's letter—I compliment you on how readable and understandable your articles are. I love your new format. Maybe Ms. Borck should subscribe to some of the teachers' and pastors' publications for deeper reading.

*Joan Slesseman
Corunna, Michigan*

“Children belong in church” [Jan.] is interesting. Every parent who has had an unruly child in church understands the trauma of such an experience. But “Tips for tots in church” misses the point. In Proverbs 22:6 we read, “Train a child in the way he

should go. How do you train a child?

Teach children to fold their hands and pray before you feed them. Have regular family devotions. Have children sit with you with hands folded. Tell them this is God's time. When you are getting ready for church, tell the children you are going to “God's House.” Explain that the pastor is speaking God's Word, the same as when you have devotions at home.

I believe children do not need picture books, crayons, or food. They can be taught to respect church property such as hymnals, Bibles, even the cards in the pews. If you haven't had time for prayer or family devotions, now is a good time to begin. Within a week or two, children will understand when they are in God's House and will know how to behave.

*Lonie Waechter
Milwaukee, Wisconsin*

Re: From pulpit to prison [Feb.].

It saddened me to read about the pastor who was found guilty of child molestation. When tele-evangelists commit the “big” sins, the world is quick to slander the church in general. I suppose the same wicked world would be quick to do the same to WELS churches after reading about a “big” sin committed by a pastor. His sin was aired before the church, families, friends, victims, local media, and God.

Even though God forgives and forgets the “big” and the “little” sins, and even though the article didn't mention any person or church by name, I felt like dirty laundry that may hurt WELS was being aired.

*Keith C. Tullberg
Milwaukee, Wisconsin*

In response to the article on guilt [Feb.]. Though most of us accept God's forgiveness through Christ readily enough, many of us cannot forgive ourselves unless we are able to clean out our grudges, grievences, hatreds, wounds. This is hard work (and re-work), but not impossible.

*George Roath
Tucson, Arizona*

I am writing in response to “Birth control and God in control” [Feb.]. Since Prof. Brug concentrated on the technological “facts” associated with the birth control pill, his commentary differs little from secular descriptions of the birth control pill. Fortunately, Prof. Brug refers readers to “Birth Control as Ethical and Pastoral Problem” by Dr. Hans Kirsten contained in *Our Great Heritage*.

Our methods of birth control must be consistent with our Christian understanding of marriage. When birth control is determined to be necessary, the best method would be that which grants the partners constant opportunity to review their motives, does not interfere in any way with the health of either the husband, wife, or possible child, and does not degrade the man, the woman, or the marriage.

My challenge to those of my generation, and all Christian married couples on the path of sanctification, is to take a long, detailed look at your motives for using birth control. Your marriage is worth the examination; it can only be blessed by the effort.

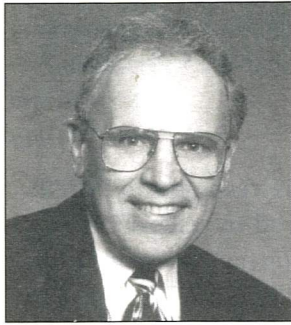


*Brenda Griffith
Carlsbad, California*

**Bible readings
can be found
on page 27.**



Closed tomb, open tomb



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

When God's enemies enclosed Jesus in a sealed tomb, the metaphor for this world seemed forever fixed. Then Jesus burst the grave's dark prison.

The world by all accounts is a sealed tomb, and the stench of death is everywhere.

Before you declare me guilty of unwarranted hyperbole, think about it. If your phone rings after you've gone to sleep at night, what's the first thing you think of, and why? Is there a news headline that can shock you any more, short of a comet striking earth? Even that? Is there a behavior so bizarre that you are surprised to witness it? Does a day, even an hour, pass that someone doesn't murder someone else somewhere?

You say it isn't so everywhere. Then why do you cry? Why do you hurt? Why do you get sick and grow nauseated and vomit and . . . ? Why doesn't the din of sin grow quiet? Why do you ask why?

You must know what I mean. You have to live with yourself. I with myself. We can hide our thoughts from others, but we know our real self. That's bad enough, but look what happens when we bring others into the mix. Whom do you really like all the time? Anger, mean-spiritedness, arrogance, hatred! Are they ever far away?

Money will fix it. Win the lottery. Get a higher-paying job. Invest! Save! Build!—Die!

I run the risk of being accused of sensationalism. I wish that were true. Then maybe it wouldn't be so real. Maybe we could color the world peaceful, happy, alive. Maybe we wouldn't have to expect bad news each time we tune in to our favorite news anchor.

The world, however, is every bit as bad as we can picture it, and God warned us so. After all, he gave us the Ten

Commandments. He probed the depths of our beings. No person among us can face his holy glory and live.

Still, there is a world with an open tomb and the sweet smell of life. Happy paradox! There's good news.

When God's enemies enclosed Jesus in a sealed tomb, the metaphor for this world seemed forever fixed. Then Jesus burst the grave's dark prison. He forever changed the outcome for those who know and trust him. He rose from the dead and raised us from the stench and decay.

The real world still surrounds us and affects us and threatens to shroud us in gloom. But the light of God's glory shines from the open tomb of Jesus. Hope replaces despair. New life emerges from the ruins of sin. The happy aroma of heaven replaces the stench of death.

You and I? Although we can't simply shed the ugliness we see in ourselves, we can like what we see with Christ living in us and know God likes what he sees because Jesus has lived and still lives for us. The world still groans and suffers in the throes of sin and death, and we are in this world. But we are no longer of it because the living Savior has opened heaven for us.

An open tomb. Life and hope for all the world.

Gary P. Baumler

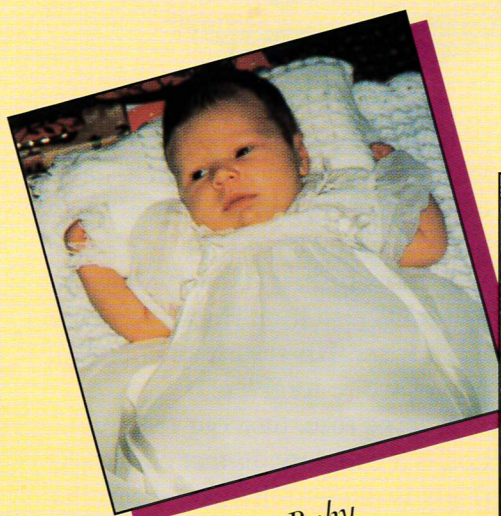
Our Tribute Gifts

remember those special occasions
that are close to our hearts



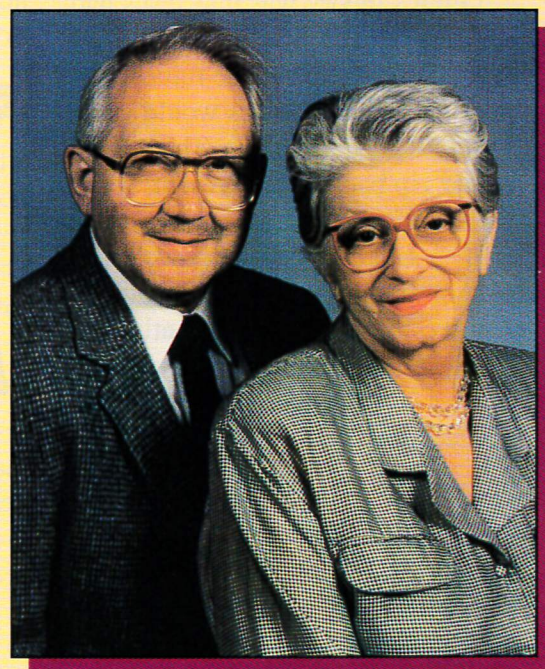
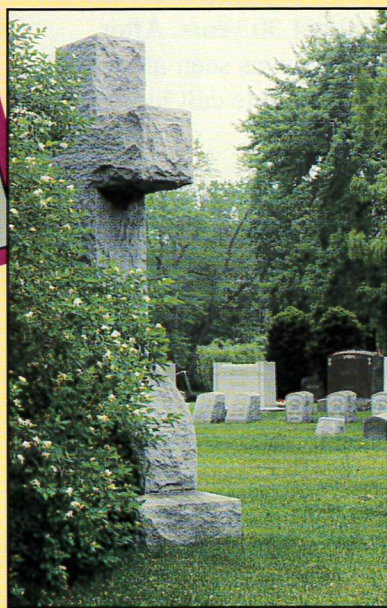
- *In memory of a loved one*
- *Birth/Adoption*
- *Birth/Adoption*
- *Birth/Adoption*
- *New grandchild*
- *Wedding anniversary*
- *Father's Day*
- *Ministerial anniversary*
- *Successful surgery*
- *Mother's Day*
- *Christmas*
- *Graduation*
- *Confirmation*

A tribute is a meaningful way to express our joy, hope and thanks to God!



Baby

In Memory



Anniversary

Please call 800-827-5482 and ask for your free Tribute Packet.

It's an easy way to remember those special people in your life and to
extend your gifts beyond yourself to benefit others.

If Jesus rose . . .

Jesus' resurrection is still a religious skeptic's worst nightmare.

Kenneth A. Cherney

I met Leigh 10 years ago. He was a successful businessman, devout Christian, and active church member. But Leigh told me it had once been another story.

At one time Leigh thought Christianity was nonsense—and he could prove it. He'd even developed an explanation for Jesus' miracles.

Leigh's theory was that Jesus had perfected the art of time travel.

Jesus could leap into the future to find out which diseases would get better all by themselves. Then he would zip back to the present, wait at the patient's bedside, and take the credit when the person got well.

If nothing else, the theory deserves high marks for creativity. Of course, not even time travel can explain Jesus' greatest miracle: his resurrection from the dead.

Theories

Jesus' resurrection is a religious skeptic's worst nightmare. Shortly after Jesus' death over 500 followers were convinced their teacher had risen from the grave. Many laid down their lives rather than deny they had seen Jesus—very much alive. Unless they were right, how can a person explain that?

Today, most skeptics resort to one of the following:



The swoon theory. Jesus didn't really die on the cross—he passed out. Days later, he spontaneously revived inside a sealed, airless tomb, removed the

huge stone from the doorway, and appeared to the disciples in such good health they decided he must be the Son of God.



The twin brother theory.

Jesus had a twin brother, who somehow escaped everyone's notice for about 30 years. After Jesus' death, he was seen alive, and obligingly let people call him their Lord and Savior.



The mass hysteria theory.

Jesus' death left his followers in such a confused mental state that their wish to see Jesus again became almost real. The confusion grew when some went to view Jesus' body, got lost, and wound up at the wrong tomb. We are supposed to believe that these followers then tramped all over the world and cheerfully gave their lives for an idea they merely wished were true.

Next to these, Leigh's time-travel theory looks almost reasonable. But why do people find all this necessary? Why not just accept that Jesus has risen?

Realities

That's easy. If Jesus rose, that fact has implications they find unacceptable.



If Jesus rose, then he is exactly who he said he was. He, then, has every right to claim our loyalty, trust, and worship.

If Jesus rose, then everything else he said is also true. His death really was for sin. His resurrection really proves we're forgiven.

If Jesus rose, then our resurrection is a certainty. In that case, there really is more to life than meets the eye. We really are here for a reason. We truly are moving toward a greater, nobler destiny than "he who dies with the most toys wins."

Jesus' resurrection means all these things—if it really happened.

Millions of people like Leigh are convinced it did happen. Every Sunday they go to church, stand together, and say so.

How about you?

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