

LUTHERAN



**Seeking
the ideal
spouse**

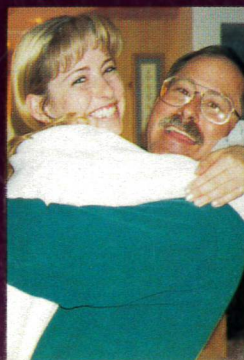
page 6

**Gifted
musician**

page 14

**You're
suffering?
Cheer up!**

page 30



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

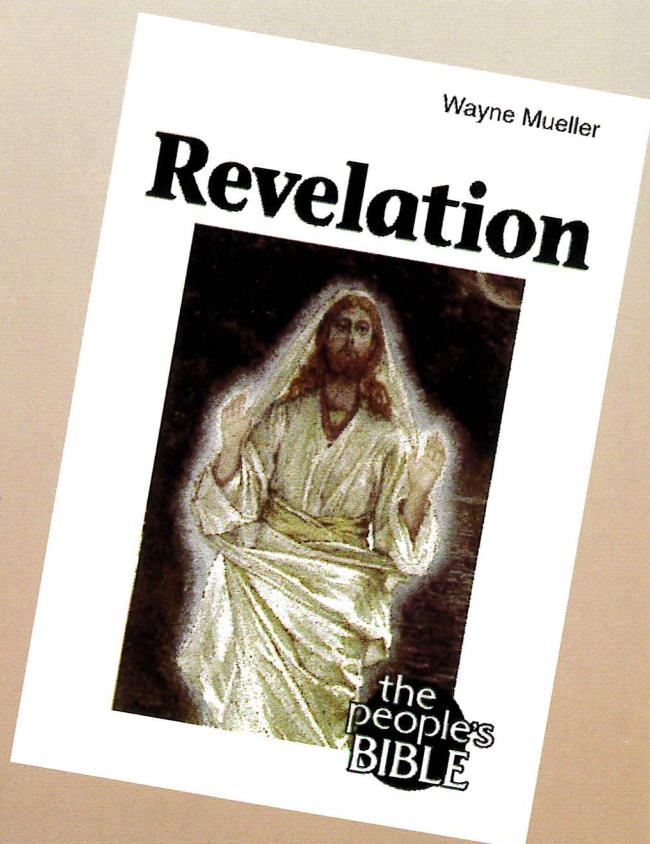
GET THE BIG PICTURE

Revelation, The People's Bible commentary series

It's here!

The message of the Bible's final book—its symbolic language and visions describing the New Testament age, the end of the world, judgment day, and eternity—is clearly revealed.

Revelation is written by Wayne D. Mueller. His clear and easy-to-read style—familiar to the readers of *Northwestern Lutheran*—avoids theological jargon and expresses insights with simplicity. This compact papercover book includes the NIV Bible text, a map, historical background, and illustrations. It's ideal for personal and group Bible study.



Revelation
by Wayne D. Mueller
Papercover. 229 pages.
LU15N0577, \$10.99

ORDER TODAY! 1-800-662-6022

Milwaukee Area (414) 475-6600 FAX (414) 475-7684
(8:00 A.M. - 4:30 P.M. weekdays)

Please place my order for *Revelation*—The People's Bible

Name (please print)

Address

City/State/Zip

Daytime Phone (.....).....

* SHIPPING & HANDLING CHARGES

If order totals	Add
up to \$ 10.00	\$3.70
\$ 10.01 to \$ 25.00	\$4.80
\$ 25.01 to \$ 50.00	\$6.25
\$ 50.01 to \$100.00	\$7.90
\$100.01 to \$150.00	\$9.40

We reserve the right to bill you for actual shipping costs when the charges exceed the schedule.



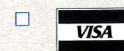
Northwestern
Publishing House
1250 N 113th Street
Milwaukee, WI 53226-3284

Check or Money Order enclosed (make payable to Northwestern Publishing House)

NPH Charge Account (net 30 days)

--	--	--	--	--	--

If NPH charge, fill in 6-digit NPH Acct. No.



Card No.

Exp. Date

STOCK #	QUANTITY	BOOK	PRICE	TOTAL
LU15N0577	<i>Revelation</i>	\$10.99	\$.....
		Merchandise Total		\$.....
		Shipping & Handling*		\$.....
		Subtotal		\$.....
		5% Sales Tax—Wisconsin residents		\$.....
		<small>Note: 5% on Subtotal required by Wisconsin law</small>		\$.....
		.6% County Tax—Milwaukee County residents		\$.....
		TOTAL AMOUNT		\$.....

He's saved the best till last

Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now. John 2:10

Eric S. Hartzell

The best till last? I don't think so.

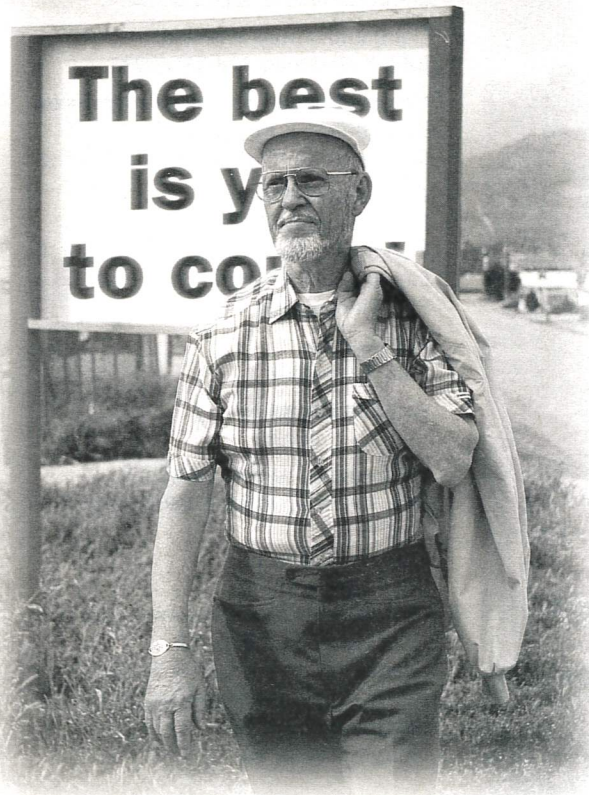
The once vast forests that covered our country are gone now. On this day alone, square miles of rain forest will disappear forever to chain saws and bulldozers. The days of cheap gasoline are over and gone. Much of the natural supplies of petroleum apparently are used up. Passenger pigeons, buffalo, and spotted owls have either left our world or are threatening to do so. There is no virgin territory to explore anymore. Things are used up and worn out. The glory days are gone.

It seems the party is over.

Using the best first

But this has happened before. Two thousand years ago at Cana in Galilee at a wedding banquet, the party was over too, and the good wine had been used up. In fact at that banquet, the only wine had been used up, and that wine hadn't been all that good to start with. That was the sad fact the master of the banquet saw. But Jesus did his miracle of bringing the best at the last.

That surprises everyone. It just isn't that way in the real world. The best always gets used up first. That is our common perception. Solomon



even tells us it is that way with life itself. The glory days come quickly in life when we are young. The best wine is served first. The time comes when "the grasshopper drags himself along, and desire no longer is stirred," when "the pitcher is shattered at the spring, or the wheel broken at the well, and the dust returns to the ground it came from" (Ecclesiastes 12:5-7).

Saving the best for last

None of us can deny the geriatric part of life with its attendant pains

and ills. But we can live with the sure expectation that Jesus delights in providing the best at the last. We are talking of course about a miracle, but it is a miracle Jesus will do. Jesus waits until people have used up their reserves and exhausted their own strength, and then he provides the best at the last.

It happens when we are saved. We call it forgiveness. We are the present day prodigals who need forgiveness. In our hands are only dry husks, but with our Father is a banquet of love and forgiveness and reconciliation. And when we sit down to this banquet, with that welcomed Prodigal we surely proclaim to our Father, "You have saved the best till last!"

And that banquet is followed by one even better. In heaven at the marriage supper of the Lamb, when Jesus' promise is fulfilled and we drink with him anew the fruit of the vine in his Father's kingdom, we will say, "He has saved the best until last."

Eric Hartzell is pastor at Cross and Crown, Georgetown, Texas.



- People dream of ideal weddings—sunshine, flowers, loved ones. On our pages we talk about God's ideal marriage—created by him, focused on him, devoted to him.
 - ✓ Read about singles' expectations of marriage and how they can prepare for a God-pleasing marriage. (p. 6)
 - ✓ By following God's design for marriage, we follow his will. (p. 31)
- God is in control. We can't hear that often enough. So we've loaded this issue with examples of how God guards his children's lives.
 - ✓ God protects us from terrors—big and small. (p. 10)
 - ✓ A congregation rebuilds after a tornado. (p. 12)
 - ✓ Parents put their daughter in God's hands. (p. 18)
 - ✓ God's protection gives us sweet dreams. (p. 29)
 - ✓ God is in charge, even as scientists debate cloning. (p. 34)
- Our series on Cameroon ends this month. We thank Carl Henkel for his honest glimpses of life in a world mission. We wish him a safe trip back to the United States. (p. 8)
- We welcome another name to our masthead. Mr. John Sprecher has been appointed to our Communication Services Commission. Sprecher is partner of Sprecher Bartalot and Company, a Milwaukee advertising and public relations firm, and is a member at St. John, Muskego, Wis. Read more about his work, p. 20.

—LRB

Cover photo by Mrs. Kevin Scheibel
Photography

NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN

Official magazine of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod
June 1997 / Vol. 84, No. 6

Editorial office: *Northwestern Lutheran*, WELS, 2929 N Mayfair Road,
Milwaukee WI 53222-4398; FAX, 414/256-3899; <nl@sab.wels.net>

Editor

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

Senior Communications Assistant

Linda R. Baacke, 414/256-3232

Communications Assistant

Julie K. Tessmer, 414/256-3231

Communication Services Commission

R. D. Balge, J. M. Barber, W. F. Gerlach, M. D. Duncan, J. Sprecher

Contributing Editors

J. A. Aderman, R. D. Balge, W. F. Beckmann, M. E. Braun, J. F. Brug, J. C. Gerlach, E. S. Hartzell, R. E. Lauersdorf, F. E. Piepenbrink, V. H. Prange.

Art Director

Paul Burmeister

Graphic Designer

Melissa Homan

Photographs and Illustrations

Mrs. Kevin Scheibel Photography, p. 3 & 6
 Carl Henkel, p. 8
 Bill Cannon, p. 10
 Gary Baumler, Julie Tessmer, courtesy of Robert Bitter, p. 12
 courtesy of Martin Luther College, p. 14
 Bill Frauhiger/Billustrations, p. 16
 Robyn Smith, p. 18
 Gerry Koser, p. 36

Subscription services

1-800-662-6093 ext. 8

Milwaukee area 414/475-6600 ext. 5

Northwestern Publishing House

1250 N 113 St
 Milwaukee WI 53226-3284

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

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

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

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to *Northwestern Lutheran*, c/o Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N 113 St, Milwaukee WI 53226-3284. ©1997 by *Northwestern Lutheran*. Printed in the USA.

TO ORDER *Northwestern Lutheran*

Send this coupon with check or money order to:

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

A subscription
 in U.S.A. or Canada

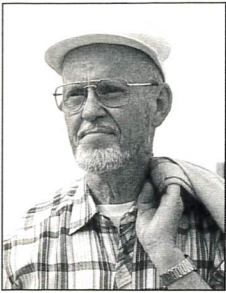
- for 1 year at \$9.00
 for 2 years at \$17.00
 for 3 years at \$24.00

Name (print) _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

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



He's saved the best till last page 3

3 THOUGHT FOR TODAY
He's saved the best till last
Eric S. Hartzell
 Jesus waits until people have used up their reserves and exhausted their own strength, and then he provides the best at the last.

6 SINGLES
Seeking the ideal spouse
Linda R. Baacke
 How you can make God-pleasing decisions as you look for a spouse.

8 IMPRESSIONS OF CAMEROON
Lasting impressions
Carl R. Henkel
 Seasoned veterans told me the experience would make me a "different person."

10 APOSTLES' CREED
I believe that God guards and protects me
Wayne A. Laitinen
 We may be tempted to think only of the more dramatic way he delivers us from danger, but most of God's protection goes unnoticed.

12 PART OF GOD'S FAMILY
God keeps his promises
Robert A. Bitter
 Oakfield, Wis., congregation rebuilds and rejoices.

14 BY FAITH THEY LED
Gifted musician
Morton A. Schroeder
 Friedrich Otto (Fritz) Reuter used his musical abilities to serve the church.

16 LAST WORDS FOR LAST DAYS
Time redeemed
Paul O. Wendland
 Without Christ, life is a misery of uncertainty. With him, it all makes sense.

18 REFLECTIONS
Letter from home
Robyn Smith
 One woman writes Luther Preparatory School to share the trust it took to send her daughter away to school.

19 SPEAKING MY MIND
Self-help Christianity
Kenneth A. Cherney
 Christianity is really about the utter futility of trying to improve ourselves by means of things we do.

20 WELS NEWS
 • Videos reach children with autism
 • Morlok quads set a record
 • Hispanic outreach in Milwaukee
 • World mission briefs
 • Students design pages in a national book
 • New school going strong
 • *Christ-Light*TM curriculum FAQ
 • Elderly congregation turns 25
 • WELS churches spared from flooding

26 WORLD NEWS
 • Christianity showing signs of revival
 • Thou shalt not steal, unless it's from the rich
 • Poll: Many scientists believe in a god
 • Baptist church: a woman's place is in the home
 • Australia's euthanasia law overturned
 • Acts of God or natural causes?

27 BULLETIN BOARD

29 PERSON TO PERSON
Sweet dreams
Karl R. Gurgel
 In the wide awake certainty of our Lord and Savior's presence with us, God provides comfort and security.

30 REAL FAITH FOR REAL LIFE
You're suffering? Cheer up!
Mark E. Braun
 James calls suffering pure joy because of what God can produce in our lives through it.

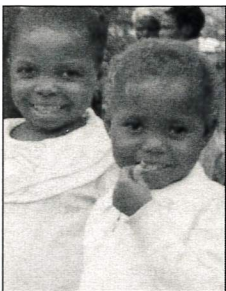
31 EDITORIAL COMMENT
Marriage is divine
Victor H. Prange
 In marriage the two are one flesh by God's design. . . . Marriage is God's doing.

32 YOUR QUESTION, PLEASE
Finer points of the Passion
John F. Brug

33 READERS FORUM

34 THE EDITOR'S PEN
Babel Babel
 Gary P. Baumler
 Look at what's missing or distorted or just plain wrong about the reasons for cloning humans.

36 PART OF GOD'S FAMILY
Small coin, big return
Steven Stern
 Eunice discovered that physical limitations did not limit her capacity to live a life full of love and purpose.



Lasting impressions page 8



Time redeemed page 16

Seeking the ideal spouse

How you can make God-pleasing decisions as you look for a spouse.

Linda R. Baacke

As a little girl, I did what all good little girls do—I dreamed of my wedding.

Mr. Right was handsome, tall, intelligent, witty, romantic, and adventurous, and he would sweep me away to live happily ever after.

Well, times—and plans—change. But maybe not as much as we think.

Mr. Right has not shown up yet. (Although more than one Mr. Not Right has made an appearance.) But if Mr. Right did show, I'm not sure I would even recognize him.

Still, almost all singles continue the crazed quest. Read the personals. People represented by initials (SBPM, SWF, DHCM) seek the perfect person (weight, hobby, and personality requirements included) to live happily ever after.

Making wrong choices

Why do we do this? Because we're in a great rush to find the *one* person to fill our needs, to take away our fears, and to make us happy.

Some of us marry because we're "in love." Or we believe we'll never

get another offer. And maybe we expect a good provider, a wonderful housekeeper, a handy car fixer, a great lover.

The problem comes, as Pastor Alan Sorum points out, when we're in such a hurry to get married that we aren't discriminating. Then we possibly marry the wrong person. That's when we find out what loneliness truly means.

Making right choices

However, if we choose a spouse for the right reasons, we'll have

Have you ever said this?

- ♥ Being single is okay, but God prefers that all his children get married.
- ♥ If I could only be married, then I would be happy.
- ♥ God will give me a sign to let me know whom I should marry.
- ♥ Somewhere on this earth is the one mate that God has destined for me.
- ♥ Dating is a worldly way to find a mate. I will just wait for God to send the right person.

Here's what God has and has not said.

God has not said . . .

- ♥ he will give a special revelation or sign to all believers as he did at times in the Bible.
- ♥ he controls every detail of everyone's life.
- ♥ there is only one God-pleasing choice in all of life's decisions.
- ♥ being married is spiritually or morally superior than being single.

God has said . . .

- ♥ he is obligated to you as your loving Father.
- ♥ he has plans to bless you and not to harm you.
- ♥ he will work all things together for good for you.
- ♥ he is with you always—married or single.
- ♥ one of his goals is to help you grow in the ability to make wise life choices. He allows you to choose badly and be hurt; he blesses you when you choose well.

Thanks to Mark Jeske, pastor at St. Marcus, Milwaukee, for information in this sidebar.



fulfilling relationships.

In the Bible, God says it is good for a man and woman to be together, that they receive his favor. But it also says it is good to be single, it is wholesome. The Bible is not contradicting itself. It is speaking to different people at the same time.

For some, it is good to be single. God gives the gift of celibacy—to be content without the sexual blessings of marriage. For others it is good to be married. God gives the gift of a spouse—and, possibly, the gift of children.

God's priorities in marriage

If you feel you aren't blessed with the gift of singleness, you are encouraged to proceed with caution and care. You can look all you want in the personals and dream all you want about your ideal mate, but if you don't make God's priorities your priorities, your marriage will not be what God intends.

Here are some of God's priorities:

Men: A woman's charm and beauty may capture your heart, but those qualities will fade. Look for a woman who fears and loves her Lord (Proverbs 31:30).

Women: Seek a man who prizes your character above your appearance; who respects you; and most important, who is an heir of eternal life (1 Peter 3:1-7).

All Christians: Have the same attitude Jesus had. Serve others in humility (Philippians 2:3-5).

Preparing for marriage

When you know what qualities God prizes, you can develop them in yourself. You can also realistically prepare for marriage by keeping in mind the following ideas that can help you build a strong marriage,

Some information in this article was drawn from the following sources. They are available through Northwestern Publishing House. Call 1-800-662-6022 (Milwaukee, 414/475-6600). Include the item number when ordering.

Singleness

Pure Joy: The Positive Side of Single Sexuality (12 2743)
Single and Feeling Good (12 2467)
Sex and the Single Person (12 2847)

Dating, engagement, marriage

Getting Ready for Marriage Workbook (12 2658)
Love for a Lifetime: Building a Marriage That Will Go the Distance (12 2698)
Growing Together in Christ (15N2005)

Bible study

Issues for Every Single Christian (22N0817)

from the beginning:

Pray for your future spouse. Don't pray desperately, "Lord, please give me a spouse." Instead, pray confidently: "Lord someday you may bless me with a spouse. For now, keep both of us close to you and strengthen our faith. Then when your time is right for our marriage, it will glorify you."

Be realistic. Marriage is not God. It cannot solve all your problems, calm all your fears, or save you from your sins. And it is not easy. The Bible states: "But those who marry will face many troubles in this life" (1 Corinthians 7:28).

Be practical. Many arguments in marriage stem from disagreements about money. To head off problems,

discuss how money will be handled and develop a budget.

Be prepared to change. Marriage changes people. You can't change your spouse, but you can change you. Go to God and make sure his Word guides your attitude, outlook, and purpose.

Be open. Are you single because you fear intimacy and commitment? To fully enjoy God's blessings through marriage, you must risk opening up.

Be forgiving. Neither one of you is perfect; your relationship will not be perfect. Be willing to live with a spouse's imperfection. Ask for forgiveness when you have sinned.

Be committed. Be sure to plan for a marriage, not a wedding. A wedding lasts one day. A marriage lasts until one spouse dies. Through it all, realize that Jesus Christ is your head. He loves you both dearly and will help you fulfill his will for your marriage.

One last thought for those who wonder . . . Just because I finished this article, doesn't mean I have it all figured out. Maybe my childhood dreams will come true. Maybe they won't. I'm not worried. Either way, God guarantees I'll live happily forever after.

NL

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

Lasting impressions

Seasoned veterans told me the experience would make me a “different person.”

Carl R. Henkel

It's quite a challenge to write of lasting impressions of Cameroon because I am unable to gaze into the future and identify those experiences that will linger in my mind five or 10 years from now.

Surely I'll always remember the congregational music: the choruses with drums and shakers; the joyous singing, clapping, and dancing. The work of the Spirit, as witnessed in steady numerical growth and inner spiritual strengthening.

I'll always remember the beautiful children, their big eyes and bright smiles. Their excitement over a small sticker or homemade Sunday school leaflet. The ability of even the three-year-olds to know all the words of the choruses and to sing with all their hearts. Their respect for adults and authority, waiting patiently for the grown-ups to get their food before they are served.

Of course, I'll remember the palm-thatch churches, the chairs of honor, the warmth of the people, their respect and hospitality. The crowing roosters and singing birds. The dust and mud, torrential rains, power outages. Our dear neighbors, Norb and Margaret Meier, and our German Shepherd, Czecho.

There will always be a soft spot in my heart for the seminary students: their sincerity, eagerness to learn, voices raised in praise. Their respect and love for us and our respect and love for them. Their



Worshippers with the church in the background. Spending one year in Cameroon, Carl Henkel discovered lots of wonderful people beyond U.S. borders.

smiling faces, but also their personal struggles and individual problems.

Oh, yes, I'll remember the walks in the lush tropical paradise, the flowers and trees, the year-round abundance of fruit, the hand dug fields, the women bent over their short hoes with babies tied to their backs. Men, women, and children carrying everything on their heads from a chainsaw to a sewing machine to a typewriter. I'll have stories to tell about the customs and the food, the post office and telephone service, the roads and bridges—or lack thereof.

On the other hand, I'll also remember the pain of separation and the extreme longing for loved ones back home. I won't be able to forget the severe poverty I've witnessed, the disease and death and

suffering, with few or no medical facilities. I'll remember the intense struggle between good and evil, the stark contrast between heathen traditions and biblical Christianity. The volatility of the crowds. The fierce challenges, agonizing heartaches, daily setbacks of two building programs. And the corruption—everywhere. Greed and corruption. And bribery. And greed. . . .

Before I left for this African sabbatical, several seasoned veterans told me the experience would be “life-changing” and would make me a “different person.” Which of these memories has had the greatest impact in shaping my perspective?

I've lived a sheltered life, rarely venturing beyond two midwestern states. One can easily develop tun-

nel vision if his comfort zone is not challenged periodically. Spending the greater part of a year in Africa has given me the opportunity to stretch myself (or better, to be stretched by the Lord) and to see things from a new and excitingly different perspective. I've discovered that there are lots of wonderful people in the world beyond the shores of America.

Likewise, there are multitudes of marvelous Christians beyond the borders of WELS. "Yes, I'm a Christian!" have become words of sweetest music to my heart. When a person is far from home, he quickly searches for common threads. In such a setting, a fellow follower of the Lamb is a new-found friend.

I keep thinking what a difference it would make if every pastor and seminary professor of our synod could have the mind-broadening, soul-stretching opportunity I've had. My, how it would impact our sermons and inspire our lectures! Getting beyond the stained glass windows and the ivory towers would compel us to take off our blinders and see the world as I believe Jesus sees it.

Rather than focusing on inconsequential day-to-day details, we'd be more eager to rejoice and thank God for every time his blessings are shared in the world. And we'd want to be part of the action.

I've sometimes heard foreign missionaries being accused of seeing nothing but world missions. These veteran missionaries get a little defensive when, in their estimation, a disproportionate amount of money is spent for fancy furnishings and bulky buildings on American soil. They come by their

prejudice honestly. They've been there. I've only caught a momentary and passing view of what their eyes have seen and their hearts have experienced, but it's been a long enough glimpse to number me among their ardent supporters. One simply cannot spend any reasonable amount of time in a foreign mission setting without compassionately perceiving, as did Jesus, that there are vast, wide-open fields of souls that are ripe for harvest.

The voices were right—those voices that promised I'd return home a "different person." I hold in my heart a panorama of unforgettable scenes. One especially gripping scene is that of tens of thousands of children assembled on Youth Day, a national holiday in Cameroon. We American Christians have the means to give these children a future and the message to give them heaven. From now on, each time I sing "Let none hear you idly saying 'There is

nothing I can do,' while the multitudes are dying, and the Master calls for you," my spirit will longingly return to that sea of beautiful Cameroonian children.

I expected my short tenure in Cameroon to be little more than "holding up the prophet's hands," assisting Missionary Norb Meier while a permanent replacement was called. But the Lord provided me with blessings beyond my wildest dreams.

As the time approaches for me to return to my stateside congregation, I pray most fervently that many, many others will be given the privilege of experiencing the things that I have experienced. Then I can wholeheartedly say to them as others have said to me, "I guarantee it'll be a life-changing adventure."

I know! I've been there, too!

Carl Henkel, on a leave of absence from Mt. Olive, St. Paul, Minn., served in Cameroon for one year.

NL



The children of Cameroon—"their big eyes and bright smiles"—are just one memory of Cameroon that Carl Henkel will cherish.

I believe that God guards and protects me

We may be tempted to think only of the more dramatic way he delivers us from danger, but most of God's protection goes unnoticed.

Wayne A. Laitinen

Albania has been the poorest country in Europe. Almost overnight it became the most dangerous country in Europe. Earlier this year many Albanians who were hungry for some quick cash invested heavily in pyramid schemes and lost what little they had. They blamed the government for their misfortune, and anarchy erupted. Rioting, looting, and general chaos made it impossible for the police to keep order. Armed thugs seized the moment and filled the vacuum.

When the trouble broke out, the American Embassy told all Americans to prepare to leave the

country immediately. Among the evacuees were two of our missionary families: Pastor Kirby Spevacek, his wife, Audrey, and their 10-year-old daughter, Roxanne, and Pastor Richard Russow, his wife, Karla, and their infant son, Caleb. An airlift evacuated some of the Americans, but the Spevaceks and Russows waited with a large crowd of foreigners at the harbor of Durres for an Italian ship to take them to safety. The ferry was kept from docking because of the random gunfire of an Albanian mob who occupied the beach. Our two missionary families

spent the rest of that day and a harrowing night waiting there for the tension to break.

How many times has the Lord allowed his saints uninterrupted sleep while he diverted some nighttime disaster?

During their wait, friends of our missionaries overheard Albanian thugs as they warmed themselves around a nearby campfire: "Let's loot them now rather than later," urged one of the mob. But another voice pleaded for restraint, "No, we shouldn't do that, since these people are here for humanitarian reasons." The angels of God camped around our two families.

Finally, Italian military ships fired charges, sending the mob stampeding through the crowd of evacuees. Many foreigners fell on their suitcases to protect themselves and their possessions. Our missionaries suffered minor injury and one lost suitcase in the confusion. Later, they safely boarded a ferry. The Lord kept the Spevaceks and Russows in all their ways—from Albania to Rome to Chicago.



God protects our bodies

We ought to recognize this as an answer to our prayer, "Deliver us from evil." It is also evidence of God the Father's love for his creation. God did not create us and leave us to fend for ourselves. He defends us from our enemies and guards and protects us from everything that would ultimately harm us.

We may be tempted to think only of the more dramatic way he delivers us from danger, such as with our Albanian missionaries, Daniel in the lion's den, or the three men in the fiery furnace. But most of his protection goes unnoticed.

How many times has the Lord allowed his saints uninterrupted sleep while he diverted some nighttime disaster? When have guardian angels distracted—just long enough to foil their scheme—those who plan to hurt us? How often has God saved us from a serious car accident with an unexpected detour or delay? We'll never know all the answers to these questions. God, in his mercy, didn't want to trouble our minds or interrupt our work with worrying about what might have been.

God protects our souls

But we must not think that bodily harm is the worst enemy. God is concerned with our whole being. If Satan can destroy the soul, he can torture both body and soul in hell forever. In Matthew 18 Jesus spoke about the spiritual harm people inflict on each other when he warned, "See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven" (Matthew 18:10). Your guardian angel is alarmed

when you hear false doctrine or worldly philosophies that lead you away from your Savior. Your angel urgently reports each attack on your soul to the heavenly Father. And our Father has an arsenal of options to use against the Adversary.

In God's economy, it may be wiser to allow a backsliding saint to suffer bodily harm so that he may turn back to his Savior before it's too late. Or a strong believer, like Job, may be drawn closer to God's Word through excruciating pain.

Since Jesus conquered the grave, even death must be God's servant in preserving us. Who knows how many times our Lord has defended a believer from future harm through an unexpected death? Although Satan may wreak bodily havoc for a moment, God double-crosses him and saves the body and soul eternally. This is ultimately what we are asking God to do when we pray, "Deliver us from evil."

The world cannot see God's gracious preservation in sickness and death. It seems unfair to them that we can say "God defends me against all danger no matter if I live or die." They say we can't have it both ways. That's because the world cannot see beyond this life. Sickness and death deprive these people of the only life they know. A man impaled on a tree is defeat, not victory. Since they don't understand the cross, nothing God does makes sense to them.

But God knows the truth about what lies beyond this life. When he gave his Son over to death, he effectively defended us from the danger of eternal hell. When he communicates this good news to us in Word and sacrament, the Holy

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.

Spirit guards and protects our blessed citizenship in heaven. Because of our living Lord Jesus, we can confidently say, "If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord" (Romans 14:8).

NL

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

God keeps his promises

One year after a tornado, Oakfield, Wis., church rebuilds and rejoices.

Robert A. Bitter

“Did you make it down into the basement?” I asked Elsie as I met her on the street in front of the place where her home had stood.

“No, we couldn’t get there,” was her reply.

“How are you still alive?” I said in astonishment.

He keeps us in times of trouble

Rudy and Elsie Redman lived across the street from our church. Elsie was getting ready to go to church when the tornado hit Oakfield, Wis., on July 18, 1996. Rudy is one of our shut-ins. He was in the living room, sitting in his recliner. The TV was on, but he was looking out the window at the time. He saw the roof lifted off our church and the big pine tree in front of our church uprooted and whisked away. “Then, whoosh,” is the way

he tells it, “I was going, too!”

Rudy next remembers waking up under debris in the front yard.

Elsie thinks she remembers crawling out from under a similar pile behind the garage in the backyard. Things happen quickly in an F5 tornado.

Since their furnace was sucked out of their basement, it’s probably just as well they couldn’t get there.

Marjorie Sonn, another shut-in, gets to church occasionally using her walker. Her home was also in the pathway of the tornado. A filling station next door was completely demolished. It was a cement block building. Brick homes in the other direction were also destroyed. But Marjorie’s little, white frame house was still standing after the tornado made its way through. Marjorie had been inside, holding on to her bedpost.

The Lord promises that no disaster will come near our dwelling. In the next verse of Psalm 91, he promises to send his angels to guard us in all our ways. One way or the other, the Lord keeps his promises.

George and Erna Arthurs huddled together in their basement, holding on to each other and some pipes, as their house was sucked away from over them. They survived. Their dog, in the basement with them, was a tornado casualty.

The Arthurs moved into their newly built home in December. Shortly after, Erna became sick. Early this year she died. The Lord also promises to deliver us from all evil by taking us from this world of sorrow to himself in heaven. In Christ, the Lord keeps his promises.

He keeps us in the family of faith

Feb. 2, 1997, was day number 200 since the tornado. It was a happy day, as over 200 people gathered at our building site for groundbreaking. Rather than look back, we turned our sights to look ahead.

Our rebuilding plans called for a larger church, more classrooms in our school, and a gymnasium. Our gym fund at the time of the tornado was close to \$10,000—after about 20 years.

Financially speaking, and in other ways, too, we are on a venture of faith at St. Luke. We have not reached a final settlement with our insurance company. Estimated cost of construction is \$2 million, not including contents. This substantial-



An F5 tornado hit Oakfield, Wis., on July 18, 1996, destroying St. Luke church and school and as many as 24 members' homes. The Redman's home (above) was destroyed while they were still in it. God, however, spared their lives.



Pastor Robert Bitter (front) and members of the Rebuilding Committee at the groundbreaking ceremony in February. Rebuilding plans for St. Luke called for a larger church, more school classrooms, and a gymnasium.

ly exceeds our insurance coverage. Our venture of faith is carried on eagles' wings. This, too, is the Lord's promise to us. We have received over 600 pieces of correspondence from friends and well-wishers. Most included gifts, large and small, from individuals, congregations, Lutheran elementary schools, Sunday schools, and vacation Bible schools. Many of the gifts included matching funds from Aid Association for Lutherans and Lutheran Brotherhood. The check that brought the amount of gifts received close to \$500,000 came the day before our groundbreaking. It was from our WELS Committee on Relief. In addition to the \$50,000 we had received to help the victims of the tornado in our church and community, we received \$100,000 from the Committee on Relief to help rebuild our church and school.

He keeps us to praise his name

What should we say about this large outpouring of gifts? "Thank you!" comes to mind. But it's more than that. It's also, "Praise the Lord,

who keeps his promise to make all things, including our troubles and sorrows, work together for good." The Lord's eagle wings also came to our rescue in the form of hundreds of volunteers who appeared in our village and at our church grounds immediately after the tornado. Many came from our sister congregations in Fond du Lac and the surrounding area, some from much farther away. Pastors Kenneth Strack and Philip Schupmann from WELS Committee on Relief also came to

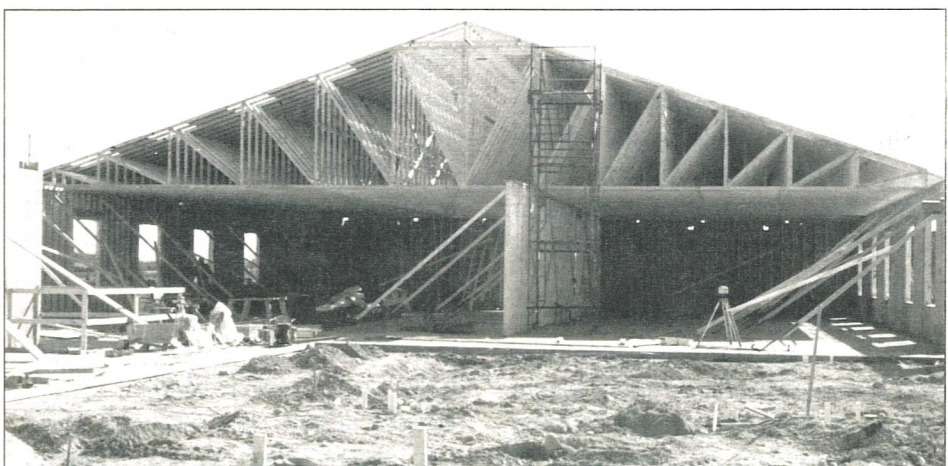
give us direction in dispensing aid to the tornado victims from our church and community.

Not only our members, but also the people of our community were impressed and thankful that the people of WELS let their light shine. Now we are looking to Builders For Christ to help us with construction. Our brothers and sisters in WELS have stood by us and continue to work with us. In many ways, they are the Lord's eagle wings.

Rudy and Elsie, Marjorie, George, and, I'm sure, Erna, too, together with our entire family of faith here at St. Luke, say, "Thanks be to God!" The Lord, who promises to bless the ministry of his gospel and bring forth the fruits of faith in the lives of his people, keeps his promises in every way. The wonder of it is that he doesn't only use angels. He uses us too!

NL

Robert Bitter is pastor at St. Luke, Oakfield, Wisconsin.



The beginnings of the new church and school in Oakfield, Wis. Dedication of the buildings is set for Aug. 24—a little over 13 months after the tornado hit St. Luke church and school.

Gifted musician

Friedrich Otto (Fritz) Reuter used his musical abilities to serve the church.

Morton A. Schroeder

Friedrich Otto Reuter died 73 years ago this month, leaving a legacy measured better by his impact on church music and church musicians than by a large, published, and performed life's work.

Known by the diminutive Fritz, rather than by a natural hand-me-down from both parents—Johann Friedrich Reuter and Ida Augusta Friedericke Kratzel Reuter—Reuter's lifecore is a compelling composition of trial and triumph.

Challenged in the homeland

Reuter's talents were recognized when he was a child. Given his training in the family home, he played piano, violin, and organ and served as church organist before his confirmation. Gifts that enabled him to enter the world of music also opened the studio doors of then-famous teachers. They helped him obtain responsible positions in area schools and churches.

Sad to say, the church introduced Reuter to discord. A member of the Saxon State Church, Reuter found himself out of tune with the rationalistic melodies sung by the corporate choir. When his voice no longer harmonized with that of the church, he sought more congenial company—the Saxon Free Church.

The break with the state church came at a critical time. As cantor of St. Laurentiuskirche, Reuter was in charge of the music program of the congregation and its community. He supervised the construction and installation of a 56-stop organ.

Knowing he would be forfeiting these joys, Reuter resigned the cantorship and took his family to Berlin when he secured a teaching position in a boys' school.

Challenged in a new land

Reuter was still troubled. Afraid that theological dissonance would keep him from composing music for church use, he and his family left Germany for a great unknown: St. John's Lutheran Church, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. The congregation paid their passage; in return, Reuter taught in the church school.

These were trying times. Like all emigrants, the Reuters severed bands that bound them to their homeland. And the new land posed formidable hurdles. Manitoba's prairies were alien and dull, far different from the romance of the Erzgebirge, the "ore mountains" forming the boundary between Germany and the Austro-Hungarian province of Bohemia.

Strangely, perhaps naively, Reuter had not prepared his family for Canada's weather. Because they were accustomed to a more moderate climate, the wide variations in Manitoba's continental climate may have contributed to their health problems. Father was seriously ill with typhoid fever, and two daughters died during this Canadian interlude. Kathe, born in Berlin six months before, died Sept. 22, 1905. Ida Johanna died 111 days later; she was not yet nine years old. The "certified cause(s) of death" were,

respectively, "bronchitis" and "summer complaint."

Although the pastor of Immanuel, a Missouri Synod congregation in Winnipeg, buried the children, the



- Oct. 11, 1863, born, Johannisback, Erzgebirge, Saxony, Germany
- 1884, graduated from Teachers' Seminary, Waldenburg
- 1884-94, member of the state church; served as assistant teacher, teacher, organist, choir director in various Saxon towns
- July 14, 1894, married Clara Ida Sonntag
- 1894-04, cantor, St. Laurentius Church, Lichtenstein-Callenberg
- 1904, joined Lutheran Free Church of Saxony
- 1904-05, teacher in private boys' school, Berlin
- 1905, emigrated to Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada
- 1907, accepted call to First Bethlehem, Chicago, Ill.
- April 3, 1908, installed as teacher of music, DMLC, New Ulm, Minn.
- Died June 9, 1924, New Ulm
- May 3, 1972, program titled *The Life and Music of Fritz Reuter* presented at DMLC

present pastor found no other Reuter records. He says, “. . . there is no mention of his name, nor any pictures on record. Therefore I don't know if he taught at the school or was an organist or choir director or if he just lived in Winnipeg.” This is immaterial: In faith, Reuter led at another place and time.

The adult Reuters never cleared other hurdles of the new world. Language was one. Clara, the woman Reuter would marry, went to school in Leipzig to learn English; she failed. German was spoken in the home. Reuter, who should have practiced English among his intimates, spoke English, according to his son, “only feebly.”

Devoted to music

Hoping to escape Canada's winters, Reuter accepted a call to First Bethlehem, a Missouri Synod church in Chicago, Ill. His stay was brief: from Feb. 4, 1907 to the end of March 1908. His departure seems to have left a residue of animosity: for leaving so quickly and for leaving, of all things, to join the Wisconsin Synod. Although both synods were Synodical Conference members, Missouri regarded Wisconsin with some suspicion.

The brief-in-time, long-in-miles, heavy-in-sorrow, and exultant-in-joy odyssey ended when the Reuters arrived in New Ulm, Minn. Soon thereafter, Reuter presented a concert at Turner Hall. When asked how he was able to give such a stirring program with so little preparation, he answered, “Discipline.”

Discipline, which usually awakened Reuter before sunrise, caused him to live in music. Such devotion was good for his calling but bad for quality family time. Several times a

year he bent his rigid routine. He and Ida took their family for a frolic on the banks of the Cottonwood, a seasonal stream that twisted south of the college campus. Swimming and hiking and games, punctuated by three meals, filled the day.

Reuter enjoyed simple delights: a glass of New Ulm beer at the end of the day and his pipe. But when visitors stopped at their house on Washington Street, the children had to run several blocks to get cigars.

Reuter's last two years were pain-filled. First thought to be suffering from a nervous breakdown, he spent time in Hot Springs, S.D., seeking surcease. He appeared recovered for the 1922-23 school year, but shortly after school opened he suffered a relapse. For several months he hovered between life and death. He rallied in the spring of 1923, only to fail again. Confined to his bed from October 1923 until his death, he fell victim to an inoperable brain tumor. He is buried in the Lutheran cemetery in New Ulm. One son, now in his 90s, survives.

Reuter's contributions to the music program of Dr. Martin Luther College and the Wisconsin Synod were many, varied, and incredibly out of proportion to his college tenure. He was organizer and director of choirs, orchestras, bands; composer and arranger; teacher and educator; builder of organs; point man for needed additional equipment; and innovator. His body of work includes hymn tunes, several of which are included in *The Lutheran Hymnal* and *Christian Worship*; compositions for mixed, male, women, and children's choirs; instrumental music; and miscellany such as *Wedding March* (1915) and *The Christmas Story* (1921).

Emil D. Backer, who followed Reuter to the music chair at DMLC, seized the man and his work in these words: “That was Reuter, a deeply religious man who served his Creator with his musical gifts with all zeal and humility.”

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

NL



Professor Reuter (left) with organist Rechling. In 1905, he moved his family to North America from Germany. In 1908, he joined the faculty at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.

Time redeemed

Without Christ, life is a misery of uncertainty. With him, it all makes sense.

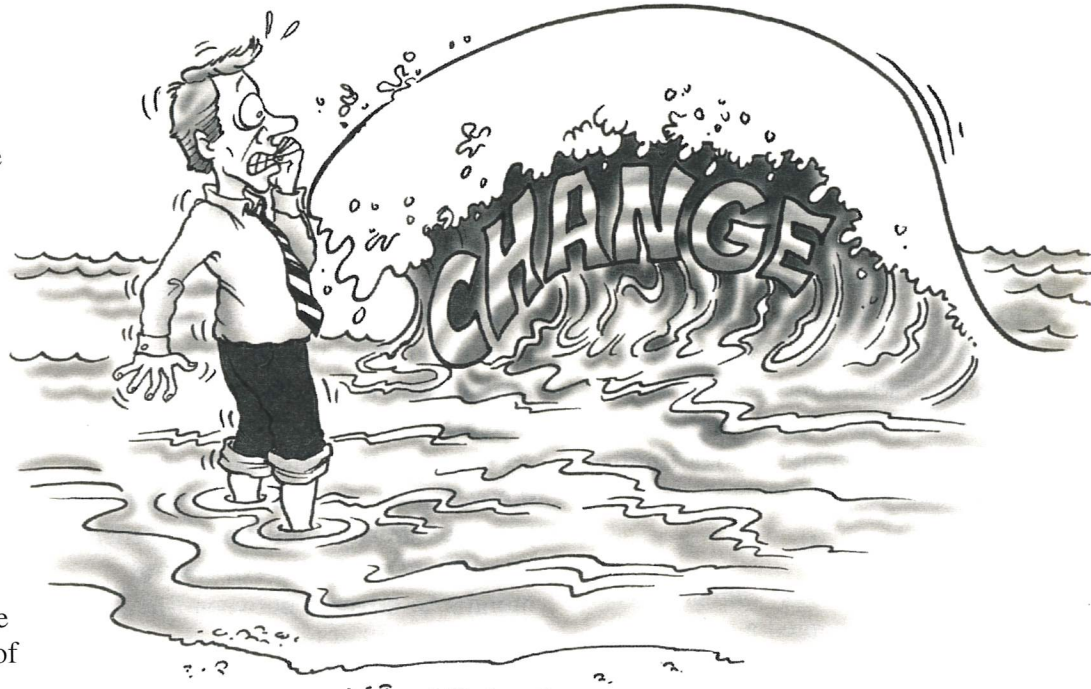
Paul O. Wendland

Coping with change can be difficult, as any of us who survived the dizzying pace of the last few decades knows too well. Things change so fast that the comforting world we knew when we were young now looms before our eyes as something menacing and alien.

Coping with change may be exhilarating, as many of us can also testify. So many new things to see, so many new experiences to have, so many sensations flooding our minds with light and sound and life. We feel like surfers riding the crest of a huge wave.

So where does our true hope lie: in harking back to the past, or in riding the wave of the future? The answer, for a Christian, must be "Neither." Instead we ask the Spirit to help us see all our days as redeemed by Christ, and all our times in God's hands.

The central truth of faith is that the one eternal God, in the person of Jesus, entered space and time to redeem us all. He willingly subjected himself to sin and death, to change and decay. Why? No other reason but love for us poor sinners. That love moved him to leave the bliss he knew so we could possess, as his pure gift, his new and deathless life. Luther wrote, "It is the nature of God that he creates out of nothing. . . . Men, on the other hand, only change one thing into another, which is a futile occupation."



Once God joins us to Christ by baptism, we are born into that new order of things ushered in when God raised Jesus from the dead. Grasped to our hearts by faith, Christ transforms every day, every hour, every minute into God's golden moment, utterly charged with hope and opportunity because it is filled with God's grace.

Transforming our past

Grafted by faith into Israel of old, with Israel of old we look at the past as the record of what God has done to save us. All of Israel's defining moments—from the choosing of Abraham, to the Exodus, to the Exile and return—become our defining moments. This is more than a wallowing in nostalgia, a pining for the good old days.

When we remember what God did for us, we proclaim the glory of the saving God who is living and active in history, and in this present moment to do us good.

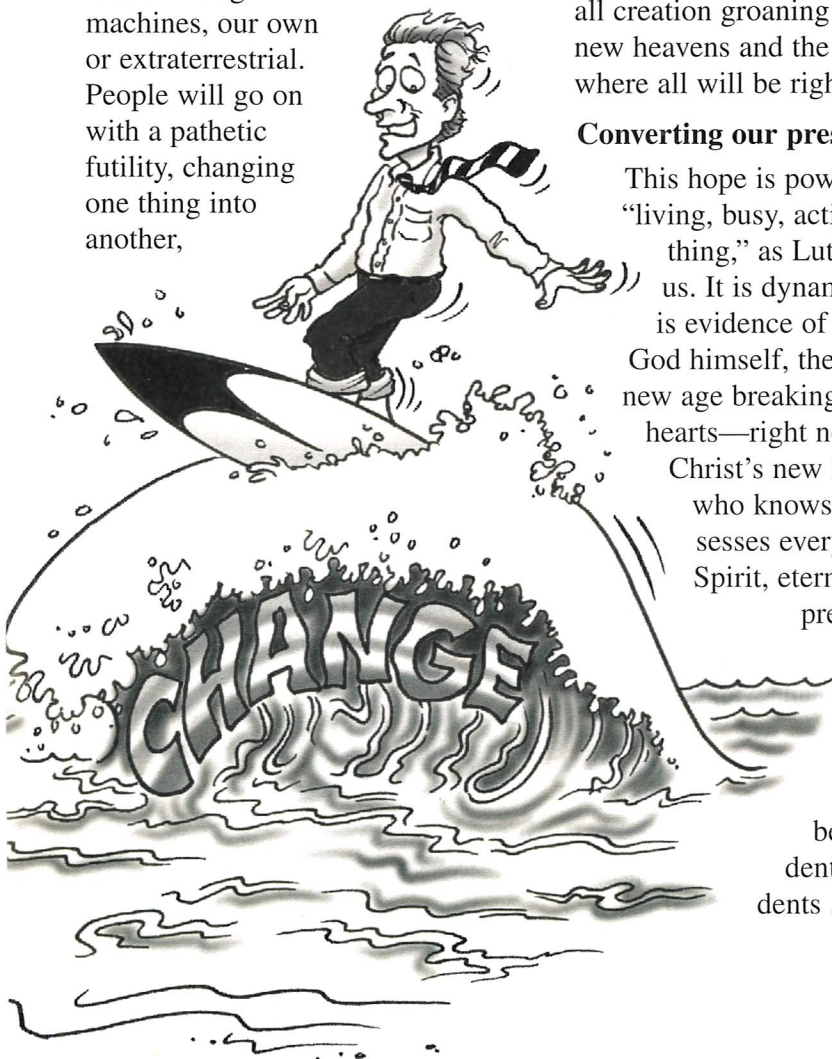
What is more: can any New Testament believer forget the meal of remembrance our Lord has given us? Far from a sterile recollection of things forever gone, in the Lord's Supper we remember a Savior who is present with his own body and blood.

We can look at our own past without blinking as well. We don't need to recreate in soft pastels a fond picture of a past that never was. Nor do we bury deep within our souls the pain of grief or some old sin, hoping it will

never rise to haunt us. Christ has redeemed my whole life and gives me the heart to believe that in all things God works for my good. If I ever have difficulty believing this (and who doesn't), I simply remember that strange man suspended between earth and sky, and my restless soul is quieted. Right there, where God's power seemed most hidden, he was, in fact, most powerfully active to save. Right then, when darkness had its little hour, the love of God was shining with the brilliance of a thousand suns.

Changing our future

The real future of humanity is not going to circle the heavens, hidden behind some comet. God will not redeem the world through machines, our own or extraterrestrial. People will go on with a pathetic futility, changing one thing into another,



until the curse works out to its deadly fulfillment. The eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels will be the lot of those who stubbornly persist in fashioning their dead hopes from the stuff of a dying universe.

For us, however, hope born in the one who makes all things new has forever altered our prospects. Our real life is not here; our true time is not now. Jesus went to heaven, and he took our hearts with him when he left.

This is our bedrock, the foundation of our being. Yet all of it is unseen. That is why we cannot invest our final hopes in anything we perceive around us. What we long for—with an expectation so fierce and compelling that we sense all creation groaning for it—is the new heavens and the new earth, where all will be right.

Converting our present

This hope is powerful, a “living, busy, active, mighty thing,” as Luther reminds us. It is dynamic because it is evidence of the power of God himself, the power of the new age breaking into our hearts—right now—with Christ's new life. The one who knows the Lord possesses everything: the Spirit, eternal life, past, present, and future.

Without Christ, men see no meaning in history beyond “incidents and accidents . . . hints and

allegations.” Without Christ, life is a misery of uncertainty. With him, it all makes sense. With him, every second counts. In Christ, my “now” has been converted into God's golden moment, the acceptable time, the time of salvation.

Those whose lives are charged by this hope discern the times and see the true purpose of life. Far more important than our own plans and actions are the prayers by which we ask for God's will to be done and God's kingdom to come.

Precisely this detachment infuriates the world about us Christians. We are walking indictments of all its false hopes and empty promises. And it is this hope that teaches us to grasp very lightly the things of this life. We don't clutch them to ourselves as if they were our only comfort.

And those whose lives are charged by this hope live free, freely laying our life down for others as Christ laid down his life for us. Unencumbered by dead hopes, we freely submit to any change if it helps us better serve our neighbor's need. We gladly let go any old way that has become a hindrance to the gospel. We are moved neither by any special fondness for the old, nor by any partiality for the new. As workers in the kingdom, we have learned how to bring out of Christ's riches “new treasures as well as old” (Matthew 13:52).

In this hope, we more than cope with change. We triumph.

NL

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

Letter from home

One woman writes Luther Preparatory School to share the trust it took to send her daughter away to school.

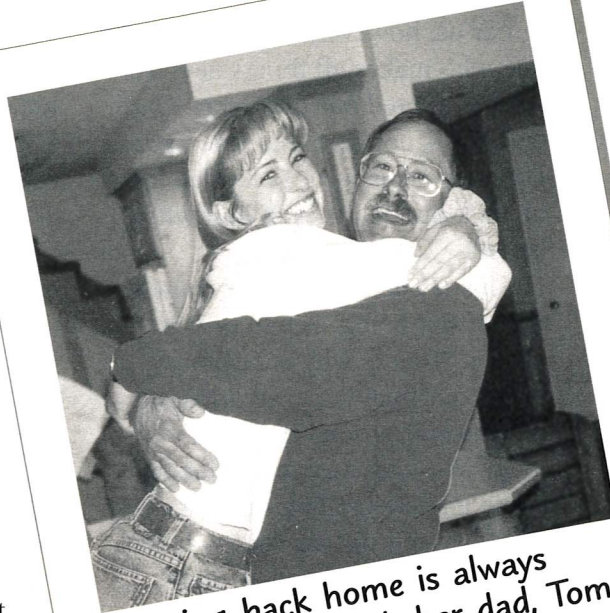
Robyn Smith

I feel compelled to write this letter because letters from other parents were such a source of strength in our early days at Luther Prep. I read them over and over. Those words of wisdom were priceless because they came from parents who understood firsthand my confusion, my worry, and my sorrow in "letting a child go" so far away from home.

Arriving at Luther Prep last year, I remember thinking about the biblical Hannah. I had taught the story so matter-of-factly, so many times to my Sunday school class. Was this how Hannah felt? How hard it must have been leaving Samuel. He was so little and so far from home—how did she do it? Was Samuel in her thoughts all the time? Did she have to listen patiently to well-meaning opinions? Did she literally feel "broken hearted?" Did it get any easier?

We thought having Toni attend prep school was one of the hardest decisions we would have to make. But heading 1,500 miles back home without her was even harder.

One thing about hardship for a Christian—it sends you to your knees. When the weight of sorrow feels so heavy, the head naturally bows. A living and loving Savior knows those feelings without us ever expressing a single one. He knows when a mother's heart feels broken.



Coming back home is always exciting—Toni with her dad, Tom.

He knows when a father's protective arms feel empty. He knows about the hole left in the family. He gives strength and peace when it seems no one can possibly understand.

We look back on a year of trials and hope. There was homesickness and learning to care about strangers. There were injuries, illnesses, and even a serious accident. There were phone calls, letters, and cards. More important, there were wonderful and concerned Christians walking with us every step of the way.

We learned that when we handed our precious child to the Lord, he provided loving hands to minister in our place. The Lord taught us that when we felt out of control, it merely meant we needed to recognize

that he loved our daughter more than we ever could, and our lives were in control in his hands.

We're almost through our second year. We feel "refined and strengthened by the fire," yet we are not immune to the tugs of the heart. They still happen. But mixed in with fewer moments of doubt is the ever present joy of seeing a young woman become committed in her walk as a Christian.

We delight in meeting her Christian friends and their parents, and

our family, instead of becoming smaller, continues to grow. We watch her faith develop in each letter, phone call, and vacation break. She gives godly counsel when we discuss family matters. We feel joy in hearing her younger sisters desire to emulate her and follow in her footsteps.

Like the poem about a tapestry and the wisdom of a powerful God weaving our life in his loving hands, we continue to trust that his promises are worth relying on—that no matter the distance, no matter what the underside of the tapestry looks like with its dark threads and knots, the thread of Jesus will run through our lives, keeping us closely bound.

Robyn Smith is a member at Prince of Peace, Salt Lake City, Utah.

NL

WELS runs a second prep school, Michigan Lutheran Seminary, in Saginaw, Mich.

Self-help Christianity

Kenneth A. Cherney

Father John Blaha of Green Bay, Wis., is known as “the Packer Priest.” As he “talked football” in a homily, Father John compared sports to religion. The former is really a department of the latter, he said, because “religion is anything you do over and over in an effort to improve yourself.”

Of course, even by that definition, watching pro football wouldn’t qualify. But doing sit-ups certainly would. So would dieting or hot oil treatments for your hair or reading. I suppose that’s why you hear people talk about doing these things “religiously.”

Most people would probably agree with Father John that the real purpose of religion is to improve yourself. Stop by a Christian bookstore sometime, scan the shelves, and notice how many books have “How To. . .” in the title. Or, talk to people about why they go to church. Often, the first thing they’ll mention is that it makes them better people.

But observe what happens when you define “religion” as “something you do over and over in an effort to improve yourself.”

Did anybody else miss that little word “God”?

Think about this. Religion used to be all about God’s revelation to man, from which we learn certain truths about who God is and what God has done. It all began and ended with God. In a self-help view of religion, however, it all begins

and ends with me. God is important to me only if he helps me achieve my personal goals. In this view, if you find that worshiping God makes you a better person, go for it. If not, don’t worry. There are other ways of accomplishing the same thing.

Perhaps we could put it this way: “Something you do over and over in an effort to improve yourself” is certainly one way to think about “religion.”

As long as you understand that by this definition, Christianity isn’t one of those pursuits.

Christianity is really about the utter futility of trying to improve ourselves by means of things we do. Instead, it brings us the good news of what God did for us. It brings us the comfort and peace of knowing we’re forgiven and restored—not because we do something “over and over” (or even “occasionally”), but because Jesus Christ did something, once and for all.

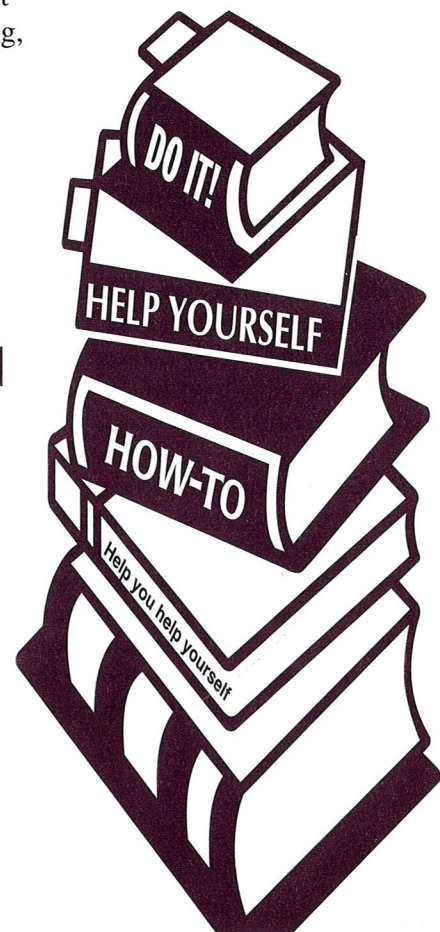
When you get right down to it, being a Christian isn’t anything at all like dieting or doing sit-ups.

It’s a lot more like getting comfortable and watching a great victory. And knowing it was won for you.

*Christianity
is really about
the utter futility
of trying to
improve
ourselves
by means of
things we do.*

NL

Ken Cherney is pastor at Living Hope, Mandeville, Louisiana.

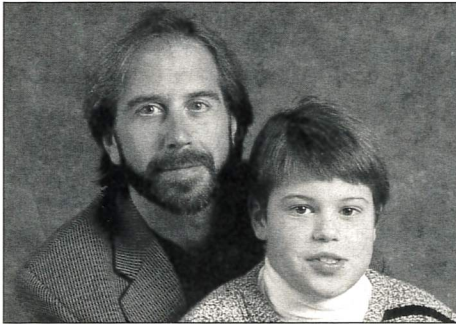




Videos reach children with learning disabilities

At age 2, Jeff Sprecher was diagnosed with autism. At the time, he knew only one or two letters and numbers and was unresponsive to his parents, John and Lori. He often appeared deaf, did not follow commands, and made minimal (if any) eye contact.

Television was the only thing that seemed to reach Jeff. So the Sprechers experimented. "I sat down and recorded myself counting," says John. They played the video for Jeff,



John Sprecher and son Jeff.

and within three months, he spoke the entire alphabet and counted to 10.

They shared their success with other parents and, in 1994, founded The Special Kids Company, Inc. So far nine tapes have been produced that talk to and teach children directly about topics such as colors, animals, numbers, letters, grooming. CD-ROMS and picture books are also in planning and production.

Special Kids tapes have recorded success stories for children with learning disabilities, including autism, Down Syndrome, Asperger's, and hyperlexia.

Parents from 14 countries, including Kuwait, Japan, Norway, and Puerto Rico, have used these tools. In addition, over 50 school systems are using Special Kids in classrooms.

But the Sprechers, who are members at St. Paul, Muskego, Wis., weren't content to teach Jeff only

about this life. They also wanted to teach him about eternal life. So they produced a tape called *All About Jesus*.

The tape presents basic facts about Jesus and Christianity. It teaches about God, and God's wonderful gift to all of us. All proceeds from this tape go to Jesus Cares Ministries, a WELS Bible study ministry for developmentally disabled children and adults. Jeff attends Jesus Cares classes at St. Paul.

The classes and the tapes have worked. Although some people think that children with autism aren't in tune with what's going on, that's not necessarily true. "When the pastor's up in the pulpit preaching, Jeff is watching him and he's right there with him," says Lori.

For more information, contact Special Kids, PO Box 462, Muskego WI 53150, USA; 1-800-KIDS-153. Check out the Special Kids website at <www.specialkids1.com>

Students design pages in a national book

When teachers and students open up the book *The 50 Great States*, they will see the hard work and dedication of the fifth- and sixth-graders, taught by Dave and Michelle Gartner, at St. John, Redwood Falls, Minn.

These children designed four pages in the book about the state of Minnesota. Michelle Gartner entered them in the contest. St. John was the only school in Minnesota chosen for this task.

For three months the students researched, drew, wrote, edited, typed, and designed the layout for their four pages. The pages include state facts, information on famous people from the state, a timeline history of Minnesota, and photographs, including one of the class. The task, though huge,



The fifth- and sixth-graders at St. John, Redwood Falls, Minn., and their teachers Dave and Michelle Gartner. The class designed four pages in a national book.

didn't seem like a big thing to the students, until a TV station interviewed them and put them on the news.

The book, published by Scholastic Books, is due out this fall.

WELS churches spared from flooding

Instead of just hearing about the Flood in religion class, Martin Luther College students directly dealt with one in New Ulm, Minn.

Martin Luther College closed down for an afternoon in April so students could help sandbag areas in New Ulm that were in danger of flooding.

Melting snow caused the Minnesota River to overflow its banks, flooding homes and businesses close to the river. Only one bridge across the Minnesota River was kept open. MLC didn't suffer any damage.

WELS churches in Minnesota and North Dakota also had firsthand experience with a flood. When the Red River, which flows south to north, ran into ice packs in Canada, it had no place to go and overflowed its banks. Moorhead, Minn., and Fargo, N.D., were flooded in April after the river reached its highest peak in 100 years—39.6 feet.

WELS churches, however, were spared. Ascension, Moorhead, and Shepherd of the Valley, Fargo, didn't suffer any damage. Other Minnesota churches were also unharmed.

"It's almost amazing we've been spared as much as we have," said Lloyd Schlomer, pastor at Ascension. "God has taken care of us."

Some members from both congregations had to be evacuated from their homes for a few days until rising waters receded.

The flooding added to the bad weather conditions in that area throughout the year. Fargo had a record 111 inches of snow this winter. The weekend before the flood another snow and ice storm cut electricity for many.


"As we were sandbagging members' homes, we were standing in water, and it was freezing. It was just miserable," said Paul Baur, pastor at Shepherd of the Valley.

Cleanup will probably last through the summer, said Baur.

Many WELS churches called right after the flood to find out how they could help with the cleanup.

"It was good to hear and see WELS members around the country were watching and were interested in helping people as much as they can," said Schlomer.

WELS Committee on Relief has been sending supplies and money to flood victims. To help, send contributions to WELS Committee on Relief, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee, WI 53222-4398.



The center house belongs to members of Shepherd of the Valley, Fargo, N.D. Residents of Fargo built sandbag dikes to help protect their homes from the floodwaters.

Christ-Light™ curriculum FAQ

Christ-Light™, the synod's new coordinated religion curriculum, will be phased into congregations over four years, starting in 1998. Gerald Kastens, youth discipleship administrator, answers the questions frequently asked about the curriculum.

Can congregations be expected to carry out curriculum planning?

Lutheran congregations are busy. Asking busy parish leaders to carry out curriculum planning from the ground up may be unrealistic and impractical. Therefore, a curriculum

planner will be provided along with a number of other resources when the second phase of CLIP training is implemented in the districts.

Congregations can expect NPH and the BPS to simplify the process as much as possible. There are two fundamental questions that congregations will need to address as a part of their curriculum study: To what extent will parents become involved with the training of their children? To what extent will the educational agencies

(SS, VBS, LES) integrate and coordinate their nurturing efforts?

Is the publication schedule accurate, and can we count on it?

We are committed to getting the elementary and junior high materials out in 1998 and 1999. To publish the remaining material in a timely manner will be a challenge. Our goal is to complete everything by 2002. The prayers and support of everyone are important.



You can encourage others to read NL. Here's how Messiah, White Rock, N.M., promoted the March issue of *Northwestern Lutheran* in its Sunday bulletin.

From "Hunkered-down Christians," p. 36 to "Color us Christians," p. 19—we have real Bible application for the real world.

From "Samuel: king rebuker," p. 30 to "Preach the Word," p. 31 and "At the foot of the cross," p. 18 with "Were you there?" p. 3—the power for real Christians is the same, world-changing power today.

From "Oscar J. Naumann: a president for his time," p. 8 to "Of light-years, tattoos, and hard hearts," p. 32, and "Loyal to Christ," p. 14—God's Word continues his eternally saving purpose.

"WELS news," p. 20 and "World news," p. 26—keep us in touch with the real world and real Christians.

We learn—"Tolerance: even a noble idea can be misunderstood," p. 29 and how to be "Seeing eye to eye," p. 10, and to be sensitive "Where I feel alone," p. 12.

"Impressions of the people," p. 16 from Cameroon and "It's easy to be a missionary," p. 6—bring the real world to our world.

Be a leader reader! Good news to tell in NL!

How has your congregation promoted NL? Write us at *Northwestern Lutheran*, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398; 414/256-3232; FAX, 414/256-3899; <nl@sab.wels.net>

To buy a gift subscription for your friends and family, call 1-800-662-6093 ext. 8 (Milwaukee area—414/475-6600 ext. 5).

Morlok quads set a record



Edna A., Wilma B., Sarah C., and Helen D. Morlok at age one. The initials of the quad's first names stand for the hospital (Edward W. Sparrow Hospital) where they were born, and their middle initials represent the order of birth.

Edna, Wilma, Sarah, and Helen Morlok, members of Emanuel First Evangelical, Lansing, Mich., are the oldest quadruplets in the United States according to the 1977 edition of *The Guinness Book of Records*.

The Morlok quads were born on May 19, 1930, in Lansing, and baptized at Emanuel six weeks later. At age 67, they are still active members of the congregation.



The Morlok quads at age 55. Standing: Edna. Seated from left: Sarah, Helen, and Wilma.

World mission briefs

Cuba: Missionary Roger Sprain, based in Puerto Rico, heads the outreach. There are 26 solid groups of Lutherans in Cuba—about 750 souls.

Dominican Republic: About 300 people per week attend Sunday school and Bible classes. Eight nationals are training for the ministry.

Japan: The Lutheran Evangelical Christian Church celebrates its 40th anniversary this year. Five expatriate missionaries and four national pastors

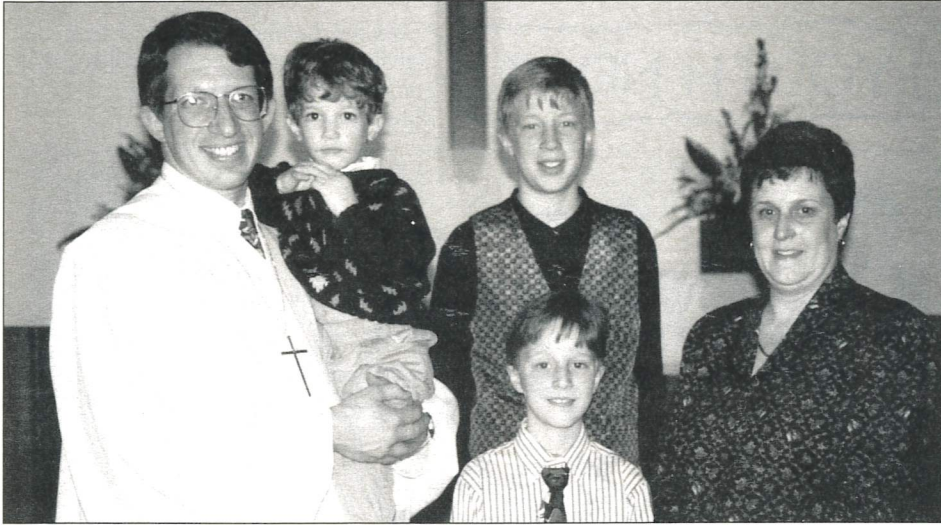
serve the congregations. Japan has 122 million people; one percent confesses Jesus as Savior.

Southeast Asia: South Asian Lutheran Evangelical Mission struggled to open a kindergarten two years ago in Hong Kong. Now 85 students are enrolled and the program is almost self-supporting.

Learn more about WELS missions in the United States and the world. Ask your pastor for an issue of Mission Connection.

rē·li'giōn **free will:** The ability to choose. Because human beings are born spiritually dead in sin (Ephesians 2:1), they do not have free will in spiritual matters. By nature they cannot choose to believe in Christ or do things that are pleasing to God (Romans 8:7,8). By nature human beings have free will to make choices in outward matters: what to eat, what to wear, to work, to marry, etc.

Defining religion



Rev. Paul Workentine was commissioned as missionary to Thailand in February at Cross of Glory, Washington, Mich. Pictured are Workentine, his wife Betsy, and their three sons, Seth, Benjamin, and Nathaniel. In mid February, Workentine and his family arrived in Chiang Mai in northern Thailand. They joined the Meisters, the only other WELS missionary family in Thailand. Thailand represents the newest field for WELS missions in Southeast Asia. The nation's 60 million people are mostly Buddhist.

Hispanic outreach in Milwaukee

The Spanish-speaking population is growing in the United States. A group of WELS members has recognized the need to reach across cultural barriers with the gospel.

Milwaukee Southside Ministries works to reach out to the Spanish-

speaking population of the city. Southside Ministries is the Hispanic outreach arm of two Milwaukee congregations—St. Peter and Christ.

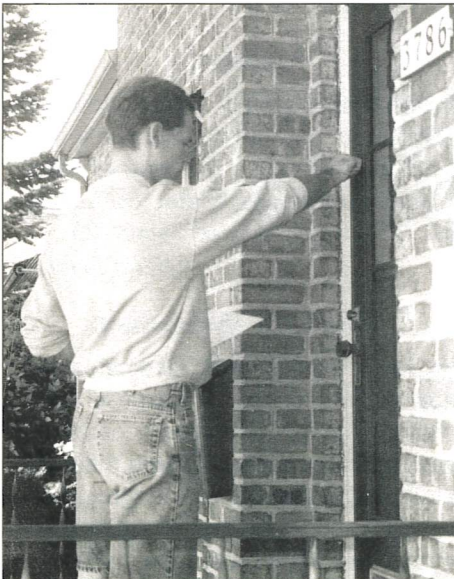
St. Peter offers a Spanish service each Sunday at 11:30 AM. Four Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary students who speak Spanish hold Bible studies in people's homes in the evening.

The process has been slow, but interest has been growing.

To create more awareness of this ministry, on Mar. 22, 68 people helped with a neighborhood canvass, inviting residents to Spanish Easter services.

The canvass participants included Spanish instructors and students from Martin Luther College, Wisconsin Lutheran College, five area Lutheran high schools, and congregation members.

As a result of the canvass, 80 prospects were found. The seminary students will make follow-up calls.



WELS congregations and seminary students are reaching out with the gospel.

News briefs

- **Six congregations celebrating their first anniversary in 1997 each received a \$1,000 grant** to support its ministry from Aid Association for Lutherans.

Abiding Love, Loveland, Colo.; Cross of Christ, Boise, Idaho; Shepherd of the Valley, Terre Haute, Ind.; Ascension, Jacksonville, N.C.; Living Word, Johnson City, Tenn.; and Victory in Christ, El Paso, Tex., received funds to use in programs such as establishing congregational libraries, planning outreach strategies, conducting special music programs, or matching member gifts to worthy causes.



From left: Basila Mvula and Sarah Schulte at Martin Luther Church, Mwembezi, Lusaka, Zambia.

Sarah's parents, Gerald and Doris Schulte, are serving as the WELS Kingdom Workers lay couple in Zambia. They assist with secretarial work and maintenance. Their big project has been helping bring electricity to the compound. The Schultes will return to the United States this summer after two years of service.

Lay volunteers are always needed for our home and world mission fields. For more information, contact John Wiederhold, Christian Volunteer Corps administrator, WELS Kingdom Workers, 414/771-6848; 1-800-466-9357; <kingwork@aol.com>



The girls' basketball team from Winnebago Lutheran Academy, Fond du Lac, Wis., finished second in the WISAA Division 2 state tournament, losing by three points to La Crosse Aquinas in overtime. Team members Heather Heiman, Erin Koplitz, and Stephanie Schmitz were named to the all-tournament team. Schmitz was also selected to the Associate Press All-state first team. Kris Clausnitzer and Riley Westphal coach the team.

Samuel Degner, senior at Minnesota Valley LHS, New Ulm, Minn., and **Nathan Kassulke** and **Justin Kennedy**, seniors at St. Croix LHS, St. Paul, Minn., were named finalists in the 1997 National Merit Scholarship Program. More than one million high school seniors enter the program: only 14,000 become finalists, 7,000 receive Merit Scholarships.

YOUTH NEWS

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



Winnebago Lutheran Academy girls' basketball team.

District news

Elderly congregation turns 25

Our Savior, Sun City, Ariz., celebrated its 25th anniversary on Apr. 20. Located in a community of retirees who must be at least 55 years or older, 40 percent of Our Savior's members are over 80 years old.

"The byproduct is many canes and wheelchairs," says Harold Moss, church president. "Others, stroke victims, cannot speak normally. And age affects the vision and hearing of many. Under these circumstances, those who can hold office, sing in the choir, do manual labor, and assist in other ways are limited."

Pastor Siegler has almost daily visits to the hospitalized, to those who are ill, or to those who are in need of a pastoral visit. "And the percent of members who leave this earthly life each year is surely higher than that in

typical congregations," says Moss.

Associate members—snowbirds—make up 30 percent of the congregation and fill the pews to overflowing during winter. In the hot Arizona summer, room is available.

There has been only one baptism in the past three years. And because there is only one child in the congregation, Our Savior does not need a cry room or a Sunday school. However, like most churches in Sun City, they are considering adding a columbarium (a vault with niches for urns containing the ashes of the dead).

"Is there another congregation in synod quite like Our Savior? Probably not," says Moss. Except, he adds, if you disregard differences caused by aging, all WELS congregations are the same—united in faith.

Arizona-California

Bethlehem, Benson, Ariz., celebrated its 40th anniversary.

Nebraska

Phil Stern of Bethel, Waco, Neb., celebrated his 10th anniversary in the teaching ministry. . . . **Fount of Life, Colorado Springs, Colo.**, celebrated its 10th anniversary on March 23.

Keith Petersen

Western Wisconsin

St. Paul, Ixonia, Wis., dedicated its new school on Mar. 2. Because the majority of the specialized contractors were members who donated their services and expertise, the congregation controlled the cost and completed the school in a little more than a year.

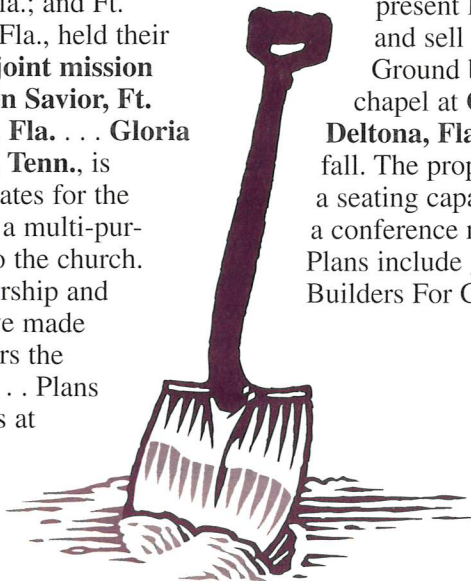
North Atlantic

Beautiful Savior, Portland, Maine, held a "Valentine's Party" in February as outreach to the children from the community. The event celebrated God's love for us and included a puppet show, singing, Bible lesson, video, snacks, craft project, cookie decorating, and lunch. . . . **Hope, Markham, Ontario**, held a multi-cultural vacation Bible school during "spring break" in March. Fifty children from at least 12 different cultures and five different continents attended, 40 of which were unchurched. . . . Harold Hoepfner, pastor at Faith, Pittsfield, Mass., and Phil Henselin, pastor at Messiah, South Windsor, Conn., **drove over 3,000 miles with seven confirmands on a one-week tour of all WELS/ELS ministerial schools and prep schools in the Midwest.** The purpose was to let the confirmands see what our synodical schools are like, with the hope that they may consider attending one of the schools. As a result, one confirmand decided to attend Michigan Lutheran Seminary.

Kevin Schultz

South Atlantic

Christ the King, Port Charlotte, Fla., has had about 480 first-time visitors since dedicating their church in November 1996. . . . On Feb. 2, the congregations of Mobile, Ala.; Panama City, Fla.; and Ft. Walton Beach, Fla., held their second annual **joint mission festival at Risen Savior, Ft. Walton Beach, Fla.** . . . **Gloria Dei, Memphis, Tenn.**, is gathering estimates for the construction of a multi-purpose addition to the church. Increases in worship and Bible study have made cramped quarters the Sunday norm. . . . Plans are in the works at **Sola Fide,**



New school going strong

Trinity Christian Academy, Woodbridge, Va., in the South Atlantic District, opened its doors in September 1996.

Trinity Christian Academy is an outgrowth of Precious Lambs Learning Center, the early childhood ministry of Trinity. Precious Lambs began in 1994 as a community outreach. Over 120 souls joined the congregation as a result.

Both the learning center with 110

students and the academy with 35 students are at capacity. Trinity Church is planning to build a gymnasium-classroom facility to house both schools and provide worship facilities for the rapidly growing church. This will enable over 350 students to attend.

Trinity Christian Academy has grades kindergarten through five. Plans call for adding at least one grade per year through grade 12.

Timothy Unke



These children attend Trinity Christian Academy, Woodbridge, Va., one of the synod's newest schools. The teachers from left are: Laura Unke, Denys Casper, Patti Kaye, and Kerri Greene.

Lawrenceville, Ga., to purchase a 22-acre site a few miles from their present location, build a facility, and sell the present property. . . . Ground breaking for the new chapel at **Good Shepherd, Deltona, Fla.**, will take place this fall. The proposed building calls for a seating capacity of 250, two offices, a conference room, and a cry room. Plans include getting the help of Builders For Christ.

Philip Wilde

CORRECTIONS:

- Our Savior, Springville, N.Y., celebrated its 15th anniversary, not its 25th, as reported in the May issue.
- In the April article, "Make the connection," the author of *Never Too Old* was spelled incorrectly. The author's correct name is Robert Garmitz.



Most news reported in this section is derived from Religion News Service. Items do not necessarily reflect the views of WELS or Northwestern Lutheran.

Poll: Many scientists believe in a god

Although a majority of scientists in the United States do not believe in a god, the number who do—40 percent—is unchanged from 80 years ago, researchers reported in April.

In 1916, researcher James Leuba shocked Americans by finding only 40 percent of scientists believed in a supreme being, and he predicted that as education improved, “ungodliness” would become more common among scientists.

Surveyors Edward Larson and Larry Witham replicated Leuba’s survey as exactly as possible. They surveyed 1,000 scientists chosen at random about whether scientists believed in a god who answers prayers, in human immortality, and in an afterlife.

They found that although 40 percent of scientists believe in a god, most scientists today “have no use for God or the afterlife.”

According to their research, mathematicians are most inclined to believe in a god—44.6 percent—while the highest rate of unbelief is found among physicists and astronomers.

1996 totals for Lutherans

WORLDWIDE

Total 60,978,623

REGIONAL TOTALS

Africa: 8,659,300
Asia: 4,955,409
Europe: 37,369,667
Latin America: 1,404,881
North America: 8,589,366

TOP THREE COUNTRIES

Germany: 14,178,295
United States: 8,298,839
Sweden: 7,600,000

Christianity showing signs of revival

One year ago, it appeared that the Christian church in the United States was on the way out—out of people’s minds, out of their hearts, out of their schedules, out of their future. But the latest in the annual series of religion tracking studies by Barna Research Group shows that the multi-year decline of Christianity appears to have bottomed out, and the Christian faith is now experiencing a renaissance of sorts.

The latest figures indicate significant increases in church attendance, Sunday

school attendance, and born again Christians. There has been no change in Bible reading, small group participation, church volunteerism, and evangelicals.

Changes in American faith during the '90s (% who participated in a typical week)

Activity	Percentage of adults involved				
	1991	1992	1994	1996	1997
church attendance	49	47	42	37	43
Bible reading	45	47	37	34	36
church volunteer	27	24	25	21	24
adult Sunday School	23	22	21	17	23
small group	24	25	12	17	18
born again Christians	35	40	36	39	43
evangelicals	7	12	7	9	7
sample size	1,003	1,009	1,210	1,004	1,007

[Barna Research Group, Ltd., March 21, 1997.

The margin of sampling error is ± 3 percentage points]

Thou shalt not steal, unless it's from the rich

A Church of England priest has proclaimed that stealing is okay—as long as you steal from big corporations.

Rev. John Papworth said that while it is wrong to steal from individuals or small neighborhood stores, mega-stores that run little stores out of business are another matter.

“Shop-lifters stealing from supermarkets are not breaking the commandment . . . because these giant stores are impersonal things without souls,” said Papworth, 75.

He also said that with large

corporations “all you are confronted with are these boardroom barons sitting around the boardroom plotting how to take the maximum amount of money out of people’s pockets for the minimum in return.”

Papworth’s Robin Hood approach to the seventh commandment prompted a quick rejoinder from Church of England officials. “As far as we are concerned,” said a church spokesman, “the commandment is quite clear: ‘Thou shalt not steal.’”

Euthanasia law overturned

By a vote of 38-33, Australia’s federal Senate overturned legislation approved by the country’s Northern Territory that permitted terminally ill patients to commit suicide with a doctor’s help. Under Australia’s Constitution, the national Parliament has the right to strike down territorial and state legislation.

The House of Representatives had previously voted to overturn the pro-euthanasia law by a wide margin. It now requires only the signature of the governor-general, who is expected to sign the measure and make it law.

Four people have committed suicide under the territory’s controversial law, which took effect in July 1996.

In brief

Mississippi Gov. Kurt Fordice signed a law in February banning same-sex marriage in the state, calling such relationships "perverse." **Mississippi is one of 22 states to pass a law banning same-sex marriage.** Under this law, the state will deny recognition of same-sex marriages performed in other states.

The Bible is still the most popular book in the world, according to the United Bible Societies (UBS). Each year, more copies of the good book are printed than any other book. According to the *Reading*, the England-based UBS's 1996 report, the **124 national Bible societies around the world distributed more than 500 million Bibles**, New Testaments, and other portions of the Bible.

Nearly 1 billion people around the world go to bed hungry or severely malnourished every night, according to Undersecretary of State Timothy Wirth. The reasons for the hunger are declining global food reserves and increases in population.

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

CHANGE IN MINISTRY

Pastors

Bergenthal, Guy R., to St. Matthew, Milwaukee, Wis.
Dietrich, Joseph M., from Zambia to E. Lansing, Mich. (exp.)
Ebert, Kurt P., from St. Peter, Fond du Lac, Wis., to Abiding Word, Highlands Ranch, Colo.
Kuckhahn, Philip, from St. Paul, Bark River 5E/Grace, Powers, Mich., to retirement
Mischke, Philip C., from Deer Valley, Phoenix, Ariz., to St. Timothy, St. Louis Park, Minn.
Ruddat, Arnold E., from St. Peter, Chilton, Wis., to Manitowoc LHS, Manitowoc, Wis.
Schleg, Frederick B., from Redeemer, Edna, Tex., to Abiding Faith, Pinehurst, Tex.
Schmeling, Arlyn L., from Faith, Columbus, Mo., to Ascension, Roseville, Mich.
Schultz, Thomas J., from Trinity, Elkton, S.D., to Christ the King, Palatine, Ill.

Teachers

Adickes, Paul A., from Michigan LHS, St. Joseph, Mich., to Luther HS, Onalaska, Wis.

Baptist church: a woman's place is in the home

A Baptist church in northwest Arkansas closed its day care center in March because the church board believes God wants women to stay at home.

First Baptist Church in Berryville said it was sensitive to the challenges of single parents but could not keep the center open because it was encouraging mothers to be employed outside the home.

The decision left 27 parents without day care.

"I don't know of too many people here who can survive on one person's salary, especially if that salary is minimum wage," said Katrena Alexander, who operates a manufacturing company with her husband. Alexander's daughter attended the day care for a year before it shut its doors.

In a letter, the church said families could get by on one salary if they gave up "big TVs, a microwave, new clothes, eating out, and vacations."

Acts of God or natural causes?

After Arkansas governor, Mike Huckabee, objected to tornados, floods, and other storms being called "acts of God" in a bill designed to protect the insurance rights of storm victims, state legislators worked out a compromise that will change the wording to "natural causes."

Huckabee, a Southern Baptist minister, refused to sign the bill because he could not in good conscience allow a law to designate "a destructive and

deadly force" as an act of God.

"I feel that I have indeed witnessed many 'acts of God,' but I see his actions in the miraculous sparing of life, the sacrifice and selfless spirit in which so many responded to the pain of others," he said.

The state House refused to remove the phrase from the bill but added the wording "or natural disasters." In the compromise bill, destructive storms are simply called "natural causes."

Bulletin BOARD & NOTICES

Allen, Ruth A., to Peace, Hartford, Wis.
Armstrong, Amy B., to Trinity, Nicollet, Minn.
Biedenbender, David K., from Manitowoc LHS, Manitowoc, Wis., to Mt. Olive, Overland Park, Kan.
Brauer, Paula, to Minnesota Valley LHS, New Ulm, Minn.
Buchberger, Beth A., from Good Shepherd, Benton Harbor, Mich., to Our Redeemer, Madison, Wis.
Fuerstenau, Brian E., from Emanuel, New London, Wis., to St. Paul, Columbus, Ohio
Grams, Brenda K., from Trinity, Merrill, Wis., to St. Matthew, Marathon, Wis.
Hillmann, Carrie B., from MLS, Saginaw, Mich., to Trinity, Bangor, Mich.
Hirsch, Eldon C., from LPS, Watertown, Wis., to retirement
Jacobs, Patricia, to Trinity, Bay City, Mich.
Kaiser, Mark S., from Palos, Palos Heights, Ill., to Prince of Peace, Salt Lake City, Utah
Karnopp, Albert I., from Our Savior, Longmont, Colo., to St. Paul, Tomah, Wis.

Karow, Eileen K., from Holy Cross, Madison, Wis., to Peace, Sun Prairie, Wis.
Krueger, Philip J., from Lord of Life, Friendswood, Tex., to Centennial, Milwaukee, Wis.
Lober, Matthew D., from Immanuel, Hutchinson, Minn., to St. Paul, South Haven, Mich.
Marquardt, Paul C., from St. John, Sleepy Eye, Minn., to Calvary Academy, South Milwaukee, Wis.
Pinske, Joan D., from St. Paul, Arlington, Minn., to retirement
Plath, Daniel L., from St. Paul, Rapid City, S.D., to Trinity, Neenah, Wis.
Plath, Timothy M., from Manitowoc LHS, Manitowoc, Wis., to Huron Valley LHS, Westland, Mich.
Raymond, Amy M., to Zion, Rhinelander, Wis.
Schaefer, Susan R., from Gethsemane, Milwaukee, Wis., to St. Mark, Citrus Heights, Calif.
Schaumburg, Dale J., from Grace, Glendale, Ariz., to Emmaus, Phoenix, Ariz.
Steinberg, Kimberle A., to Good Shepherd, Beaver Dam, Wis.
Wade, James A. Jr., from Lakeside LHS, Lakeside, Wis., to Peace, Bradenton, Fla.
Witt, Kris, to Star of Bethlehem, New Berlin, Wis.
Zickuhr, Karen L., from St. Paul, Muskego, Wis., to Bethlehem, Menomonee Falls, Wis.

Bulletin BOARD

& NOTICES

CANDIDATES SOUGHT

Next month's synod convention will address final approval of constitution and bylaws changes for synod restructuring. Based upon initial approval by the 1995 Synod Convention and all the 1996 district conventions, provisions are being made for possible organizational changes. Candidates for the proposed Synodical Council and legal documents are in place to allow an orderly transition.

A final step in preparing is to ready a slate of qualified candidates for the position of Executive Director of Support Services (EDSS). Section 2.60 of the proposed bylaws outlines the position of "an executive director of support services who, under the direction of the president, shall have overall responsibility for providing all support services not specifically assigned to others. . . ." The president of the synod, in consultation with the proposed Synodical Council, has responsibility for hiring the EDSS.

The support areas reporting to the EDSS position include accounting/finance, archives/history, benefit plans, budgeting, data information services, human resources, legal, lending, planning, real estate, and revenue forecasting.

Potential candidates with broad based experience in business, educational, or technical organizations are invited to submit letters of interest for this position by July 15 to Karl R. Gurgel, WELS president, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398. A preliminary job description along with details of the hiring process will be sent to all candidates. If the convention approves restructuring, qualified candidates will be invited to interview with a special hiring body established by the synod president. The targeted hiring date for the EDSS is Oct. 1. Questions regarding the process may be directed to the WELS Human Resources Office, 414/256-3268; <jonf@sab.wels.net>

COMING EVENTS

OWLS tour—Seven-day motor coach tour to Mackinac Island and Niagara Falls. Aug. 4-10. Cost: \$659. H. Kaesmeyer, 3317 Kipling Dr, Saginaw MI 48602; 517/793-1020.

LWMS national 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, contact LWMS Central Office, phone/fax, 414/321-6212.

Holy Land study tour—Depart Jan. 10, 1998. Cost from N.Y.: \$1,963; Egypt extension available. Host: Scott J. Stone, 1-800-244-7307; <sjs evang@cwnet.com>

NPH music reading workshops—Music from Northwestern Publishing House and other publishers. June 21—MLS, Saginaw, Mich.; July 12—MLC, New Ulm, Minn.; July 13—Bloomington Lutheran Church, Bloomington, Minn.; July 19—WLC, Milwaukee, Wis. Lila Snyder, 1-800-662-6093 ext. 163; Milwaukee area, 475-6600 ext. 163.

Convention—WELS mission for the deaf and hard of hearing. July 25-27. Radisson Hotel, La Crosse, Wis. Gene Seidel, 414/536-1651.

Hostel—Christian college training and fellowship hosted by OWLS. July 11-16 at MLC, New Ulm. Commission on Special Ministries, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222; 414/256-3241; <usr10@sab.wels.net>

NAMES WANTED

Vacaville/Fairfield, Calif.—Pastor Scott Stone, 730 Roscommon Dr, Vacaville CA 95688; 1-800-244-7307; <sjs evang@cwnet.com>

St. Paul, Minn.—name, address, year confirmed, and school years attended at St. John, St. Paul, Minn. For 125th anniversary celebration. Ea Reichow, c/o St. John, 765 Margaret St, St Paul MN 55106; 616/771-6406 by July 20.

Wisconsin—Lutheran families with retarded persons, especially residents of Southern, Central, or Northern Center circuits. Interested in starting a group home operated by Jesus Cares/Bethesda. Seeking land donation in Waukesha county. Mark Chenoweth, 414/860-0540.

NEEDED

Overhead projector and screen—St. Timothy, Maumee, Ohio. Timothy Semro, 26747 Lake View Dr #15, Perrysburg OH 43551; 419-874-0374; <semrotim@pilot.msu.edu>

Preacher—stay in Mountain Home, Ark., parsonage in exchange for preaching on July 20. Located within two hours of Branson, Mo., the Passion Play at Eureka Springs, and other Ozark sites. Dave Kapler, 870/424-2888 or 870/424-8222.

The Children's Hymnal (CPH)—for Sunday school. Please indicate quantity and copyright year. J. Fellers, 2719 Adobe Dr, Fort Collins CO 80525; 970/226-3433; <skkt@aol.com>

Memorabilia—donations of county histories, atlases, and plat books, especially those published before 1910. Anniversary and dedication booklets, service folders, newspaper clippings, and photographs of congregational anniversaries and dedications, and ordinations, installations, anniversaries, retirements, and funerals of called workers. WELS archives, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, 11831 N Seminary Dr 65W, Mequon WI 53092.

Book—anyone willing to sell, loan, or give copies of *Worth Far More Than Rubies* by Charlene Lauersdorf to David's Star women's Bible class. Susan Menk, 1410 Western Ave, Jackson WI 53037; 414/677-9927.

Preacher—Stay in Helena, Mont., parsonage in exchange for preaching July 6 and 13. Located within three hours of Glacier National and Yellowstone National parks. Dave Bitter, 406/443-6663 or Dave Jeseritz, 406/442-1691.

Preacher—Vacation in the Black Hills. Two nights free lodging at the Shady Rest Motel in exchange for conducting a Sunday service (vacancy pastor at Shepherd of the Hills, Custer, S.D.) 1-800-567-8259.

Large print hymnals—TLH. Will pay for cost of shipping & handling. Good Hope/Good Faith, Ellensburg, Wash. 509/962-8521 or 509/925-3992.

ANNIVERSARIES

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

Enterprise, Wis.—St. John (100). June 22, dinner, noon; anniversary service, 2:30 PM. On County G, four miles west of U.S. Hwy. 45; 715/487-5484.

Muskego, Wis.—St. Paul (140). June 1, special presentation and organ recital in old church, 7 PM. Aug. 17, outreach Sunday. Sunday services, 7:45 AM and 10:30 AM; Monday, 7 PM. S66 W14325 Janesville Rd, Muskego WI 53150; 414/422-0320.

Salt Lake City, Utah—Prince of Peace (25). June 1, service, 3 PM; dinner follows. 1441 W Tamarack Rd, Salt Lake City UT 84123; 801/261-3808.

Milwaukee, Wis.—Salem (150). June 1, outdoor service at special time; picnic follows. Aug. 10, confirmation reunion; ice cream social follows. Services, 8 and 10:30 AM. 6814 N 107 St, Milwaukee WI 53224-4306; 414/353-8141.

Council Bluffs, Iowa—Redeemer (50). June 8, services 10:30 AM (heritage) and 3 PM (mission); program 4 PM; dinner 4:30 PM. 2756 Third Ave, Council Bluffs IA 51501; 712/328-0157.

Eagle River, Wis.—Christ Lutheran School (40) and dedication of school addition. June 15, service 10 AM; dinner follows. PO Box 98, Spruce & Third St, Eagle River, WI 54521; 715/479-8284.

St. Paul Park, Minn.—St. Andrew (50). June 22, services 8 and 10:30 AM and 2 PM; catered dinner, noon. 1000 Portland Ave, St Paul Park MN 55071; 612/459-2569.

Milwaukee, Wis.—St. Lucas (125). June 22, July 20, Aug. 24, Sept. 21, Sept. 28, Oct. 4, and Oct. 12. Services 8, 9:30, and 11 AM. Church picnic follows June 22 services. Oct. 19, anniversary celebration at WLC, service, 10 AM; dinner follows. 2605 Kinnickinnic Ave, Milwaukee WI 53207; 414/483-9122.

North Mankato, Minn.—St. Paul (75). June 26, 7 PM, June 28, 5:30 PM; June 29, 8 and 10:30 AM, lunch follows. 304 Monroe Ave, N Mankato MN 56003; 507/345-4939 for reservations.

Rock Springs, Wis.—St. John (125). Sept. 14, 9 AM; Sept. 21, 9 AM; Sept. 28, 9 AM, potluck follows. 299 W Broadway, Rock Springs WI 53961; 608/524-5289.

Oconomowoc, Wis.—St. Matthew (75). June 15, God's grace to our family of faith, potluck follows; Aug. 3, God's grace in feeding his lambs, potluck follows; 414/567-2418.

Tampa, Fla.—Northdale (formerly Mt. Calvary) (40). June 8, service, 4 PM; dinner follows. 15709 Mapledale Blvd, Tampa FL 33624; 813/961-9195.

Dallas, Tex.—Calvary school (25). June 14, picnic, 4 PM. June 15, service, 4 PM; meal and program follows. 9807 Church Rd, Dallas TX 75238; 214/348-5567.

ITEMS AVAILABLE

Office equipment—electronic stencil scanner (Gestetner #1103). AB Dick mimeograph (#525). Free for cost of shipping. Bethany, Hustisford, Wis. Mari, 414/349-3244 ext. 21.

Organ—Hammond with bench. Two keyboards, seven pedals. For mission congregation. Free for cost of shipping. Brad or Cindy Mantzke, 414/262-0147.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Phillips, Wis.—Our Savior, W6290 Paradise Ln. Located two miles south of Phillips on Hwy 13. 715/339-6753.

The address for St. John, Mequon, Wis., is incorrect in the 1997 *Yearbook*. The correct address is St. John, 1616 Mequon Rd, Mequon WI 53092.

SERVICE TIMES

Cochrane, Wis.—Christ Lutheran. Sunday services at 10 AM; Monday evening services at 7 PM. There will be no Saturday evening services. June 1 through Labor Day; 401 S Main St, Cochrane WI 53622.

Sweet dreams

Karl R. Gurgel

It was a sweet dream, one you wanted to go on dreaming, but you had awakened. Quickly you tried to get back to sleep, hoping to pick up the dream where it had left off. Nice try! The dream was gone.

June is for dreamers. For the school child, it is the start of a seemingly endless summer vacation. For the high school or college graduate, it's what they have been dreaming about for years: the independence, supposedly, that comes with a full-time job. And for many a June bride and groom, it's the dream of "living happily ever after."

But some dreams aren't such happy occasions. Who hasn't awakened from a nightmare, only too glad to have that dream interrupted? Who hasn't, in broad daylight, daydreamed, trying desperately to escape from the unpleasant realities of life?

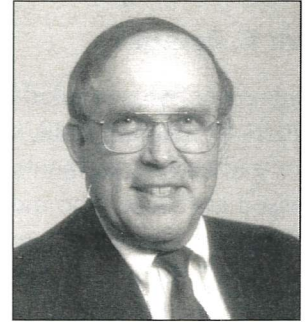
But just dreaming, whether awake or sleeping, doesn't do it. It doesn't accomplish what we hope to achieve, the kind of secure and happy life we desire. Daydreamers, as well as those who dream at night, are often disappointed. However, not those who, night and day, wait upon the Lord.

"When I awake, I am still with you," David prays to the Lord in Psalm 139:18. We too can awaken from our most troubling dreams with the firm confidence we are still resting safely in our Lord's hands. In fact, we may have

fewer troubling dreams if that confident thought occupies our waking moments before we fall asleep. And, throughout the day, whenever the unpleasant realities of life trouble us, the wide-awake remembrance of the Lord's promise to make everything work out for our good is better than any escapism through self-induced daydreaming.

In daydreaming, as in other dreams, self-sought pleasure may be our consolation and confidence. However, in the wide-awake certainty of our Lord and Savior's presence with us, God provides comfort and security. In his Father's protection over us, in his Savior's love for us, and in his Comforter's constant presence with us, truly "sweet dreams" are in the making, whether awake or sleeping.

So go right on dreaming about a June wedding, a delightful summer vacation, a satisfying career, a healthful, happy retirement. However, don't make the mistake of thinking any of these things can be self-induced merely by wishful thinking or even careful preparation and planning. Rather, be aware, whether awake or sleeping, that you are in the Lord's great and gracious hands. You can count on his goodness night and day. How reassuring it is to know, when I awake from sleep, (eventually from the sleep of death), "I am still with [God]." This comforting assurance provides us with many sweet dreams.



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

In the wide-awake certainty of our Lord and Savior's presence with us, God provides comfort and security.

You're suffering? Cheer up!

James calls suffering pure joy because of what God can produce in our lives through it.

Mark E. Braun

Jesus sometimes startled his listeners by making bold, seemingly contradictory statements: "Blessed are those who mourn." "Blessed are you when people persecute you." Such statements grab our attention and remind us God can hide his blessings in the unlikeliest places.

James did that too. He'd barely begun his letter when he wrote, "Consider it pure joy whenever you face trials of many kinds" (1:2). After explaining himself, he repeated his point: "Blessed is the man who perseveres under trial" (1:12). Near the end of his letter, he said again, "We consider blessed those who have persevered" (5:10,11).

"Blessed"? "Pure joy"? Christians don't embrace suffering for its own sake, nor do they deny the reality of pain. Instead, James calls suffering pure joy because of what God can produce in our lives through it.

A great reliance on God

"As an example of patience in the face of suffering," James advised, "take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord" (5:10). Take Moses—his leadership challenged repeatedly by ungrateful Israel. Or

Isaiah: tradition says he was sawn in half. Or Jeremiah: dumped in a pit, imprisoned, led captive to Egypt. Right down to Zechariah who was murdered between the temple and the altar.

Persevering is a resilient response to life's pressures.

Or take Job. Anyone who's read his story (all of it, not just chapters 1, 2, and 42!) can see Job wasn't always calm or patient. He questioned God's fairness and lashed out at his miserable comforters. Yet he clung to his Redeemer. Though God never explained why suffering came to him, Job learned to trust his God more. "My ears had heard of you," Job said, "but now my eyes have seen you."

God never stops loving us. His power endures forever. He sends his angels to guard us on our way. He forgives all our sins. Those facts are always true. In our suffering, we come to see them more clearly, and trust him more deeply.

A more mature faith

By mentioning "trials of many kinds," James was probably thinking of all the bad things that can happen to God's people: getting sick, losing money, being

slandered, facing death, suffering insults because you're a Christian.

They're bad things, but God can use them to produce something good. Like a refiner's fire, trials burn off what's bad and train us to stand up stronger under what life loads on our backs. "Persevering" isn't passive drifting, being bumped and bounced through life. It's a resilient response to life's pressures.

Maybe it's the word "test" that confuses us, as if God had to put us through one so he could find out if we can take it. Doesn't he know already? Think instead of your faith being exercised. God wants to strengthen the trust he's already put there. Untested faith, like unused muscle, grows flabby and remains underdeveloped. Don't use it, and you'll lose it.

God sends suffering to make us "mature and complete." Such traits don't grow by themselves, but God generates them in us as we respond to life's sorrows.

Your suffering may be intense, brutal, and seemingly undeserved, but it won't last forever. After suffering comes the crown. First century athletes trained hard to win a fading wreath of leaves, but the crown God gives us after suffering is eternal life, which he's promised those who love him (1:12).

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

real faith for real life
james

Marriage is divine

Victor H. Prange

Most couples get off to a better start than the man and woman who were married by a judge here in Janesville, Wis. Everything went downhill following the afternoon ceremony. The groom was arrested that evening for disorderly conduct after witnesses told police that he pushed and struck his wife. Two hours later the pair got into a second argument at home that led the distraught woman to take an overdose of allergy pills, landing her in the hospital. Four hours later the husband cut his wrists with a piece of broken glass. He told officers he had been drinking and slashed his wrists in an effort to get his wife's attention. The honeymoon was over before it began.

The deterioration of marriage and family has become one of the most serious problems facing our congregations. To offer assistance, our synod's Board for Parish Services is actively promoting family ministry. Its objectives are to emphasize biblical principles for families, to raise the awareness of the needs of Christian families, to encourage home devotions, and to provide a model of the healthy Christian family.

One contributing factor to increasing family problems has been society's decoupling of sex from marriage. Sex outside of marriage is commonplace and accepted. There is even the suggestion in some television sitcoms and pop music that good sex happens only outside marriage. One result of this sexual license is that children are born into and find themselves living in unstable and ambiguous family situations.

A basic problem is that many people, especially some who influence public opinion, reject the biblical teaching that marriage is divine. They look on marriage as a purely human invention to do with as one pleases. It may be altered or even discarded based on human tastes and desires.

But marriage is not simply a social custom. The Lord God, moved by divine love and wisdom, created a marriage partner for Adam. Eve was carefully crafted, not fashioned from Adam's ear lobe or little toe but from his rib. This suggests the intimate, side-by-side relationship that God intends in marriage.

For Adam it was a glorious experience to receive from the Creator this divine gift of his wife. He exclaims: "This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." In marriage the two are one flesh by God's design. God's creative will is at work. Marriage is God's doing.

Because marriage is divine, we will want to do all we can to nourish and protect this institution. Human sin and selfishness are constantly at war with God's purposes, which is nowhere more evident than in marriage and family relationships.

When, with the help of God's Spirit, husband and wife put into practice Paul's counsel to the Ephesians, "Be kind and compassionate to one other, just as in Christ God forgave you," then marriage will be divine, not only in plan but also in experience.

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

*In marriage
the two are
one flesh by
God's design. . . .
Marriage is
God's doing.*

Finer points of the Passion

John F. Brug

I read "the sun stopped shining at the moment of the Savior's death." Punctuation in some translations of Luke 23:44,45 seems to connect "the sun stopped shining" with the tearing of the curtain of the temple at the moment of Jesus' death; others with the darkness from noon to three. Is there an answer from the Greek of exactly when the sun stopped shining?

All three synoptic gospels mention the darkness from noon till three (Matthew 27:45, Mark 15:33, Luke 23:44). All three mention the tearing of the temple veil (Matthew 27:51, Mark 15:38, Luke 23:45). Only Luke places these events side by side. Neither Mark nor Matthew mention an intensified darkness among the signs occurring at the moment of Jesus' death, signs they discuss in more detail than Luke. It seems most likely, therefore, that Luke is giving a summary of the supernatural signs that accompanied Jesus' crucifixion, and that his statement "the sun stopped shining" is the conclusion of his description of the three hours of darkness.

The punctuation and the grammatical construction followed in the latest edition of the UBS Greek text supports this interpretation. Other manuscripts of the Greek New Testament have a different grammatical construction in the Greek that makes it more possible to join together the darkening of the sun with the tearing of the temple veil. These manuscripts were the ones

used by the editors who inserted verse numbers into our New Testament.

The evidence is quite strong that "the sun stopped shining" refers to the whole three hours.

Of the 16 translations of Luke 23 I consulted, 12 clearly join the entire reference to darkness into one sentence that refers to the whole three hours. Only one (New King James) clearly joins the darkening of the sun and the tearing of the temple veil. Three allow either understanding.

Based on the combined Gospel accounts, the Greek text, and the preponderance of translations, the evidence is quite strong that "the sun stopped shining" refers to the whole three hours. The significant point is that the three gospel writers all agree that three hours of darkness and the tearing of the temple veil were important signs that occurred at the time of Jesus' crucifixion.

Incidentally, since Jesus' death occurred at the full moon of Passover, the darkness could not be an ordinary solar eclipse.

I read in an article that Gethsemane was not a garden, but a cave. Is this a new idea?

Gethsemane apparently means "oil press." In biblical usage, "garden" includes what we would call an orchard. Gethsemane thus was a "garden," that is, an olive orchard.

This "garden" apparently had an oil press that gave the place its name. The press could have been either outside or inside a building. Since caves were used the way we would use a barn or farm shed, it is possible that Gethsemane's oil press was in a cave.

The cave called "Gethsemane" today is only a short distance from the "Rock of Gethsemane," which is inside the Church of All Nations. Both of them, either of them, or neither of them may have been part of Jesus' Gethsemane. Although it is not correct to say that the cave was Gethsemane as the article did, the cave may have been in Gethsemane. There is no indication that the events at Gethsemane took place inside a cave (Luke 22:41).

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; <nl@sab.wels.net.>**



We have many times more theologians in WELS than are listed in our WELS Yearbook of pastors, professors, and teachers. As I read many of the letters from month to month (April has good examples), I cannot help but say, "Thank you God for the faith of these people." As I read their words, I see a deep faith in God and a deep desire to glorify him in their lives. They speak, not only with passion as many "religious people" do, but also with the knowledge their Lord has given them as they have gotten to know him better in his Word.

I encourage all of my brothers and sisters in WELS to follow the examples of these and many other faithful Christians in our church body. Another theologian named Paul once told a group of Christians: "Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ" (1 Corinthians 11:1). May God motivate every member of WELS to be in his Word and follow the examples of other Christians' knowledge of and love for God. Then we all will be lights to this world as we attract others to Christ through our example.



*Dan Schoeffel
Holmen, Wisconsin*

In an excellent and timely article [Mar.] on tolerance as both virtue and vice, Dan Koelpin includes a sentence that calls for clarification: "A public school teacher isn't free to keep a Bible on her desk because the non religious might be offended."

After checking with public school teachers and administrators in my area, I must conclude that the sentence is misleading.

I encourage our many WELS

public school teachers to take their Bibles to work and to read during breaks to nourish their souls for the challenging task facing them. I suspect even the American Civil Liberties Union would defend the First Amendment rights of Christian public school teachers to carry one.

While we're at it, shouldn't we urge all WELS members to carry Bibles with them to work and to search the Scriptures during lunch and coffee breaks? What a wonderful way to witness. I believe most bosses would tolerate such activity.

Why didn't that teacher, like Paul in Acts 16:37, stand up for her right to keep a Bible on her desk? Sounds like a good federal case to make.

*Reuel J. Schulz
West Allis, Wisconsin*

In April, the fine article on Prof. John Schaller states that "Some people believe it [Schaller's *Pastorale Praxis*, his pastoral theology for Lutheran ministers in America] forms the basis for the text used at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon. What "some people believe" is not something incidental but is a fact. The preface in *The Shepherd under Christ* informs the reader that the authors "were asked to prepare a textbook for Pastoral Theology, using Schaller's *Pastorale Praxis* as a basis." Thus we continue to benefit from Schaller's soundly scriptural, evangelical contribution to the field of pastoral theology.

*Armin W. Schuetze
Watertown, Wisconsin*

Recently, I was attacked in my apartment. The outpouring of love shown to me by people from all over the synod was tremendous.

I thank all the caring, concerned

people who remembered me in their thoughts and prayers. This loving concern, as well as the cards, gifts, and flowers, comforted and reassured me that God works all things for our good. I am now back teaching at Faith Lutheran School, and my life is richer for the experience. Once again, thank you for your outpouring of Christian love and concern.



*Wendy Stanford
Anchorage, Alaska*

Through my Bible in 3 years

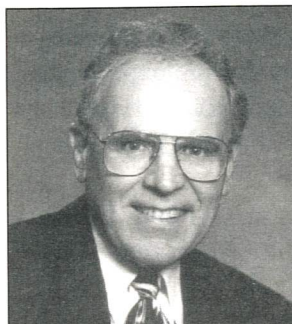
July 1997

1. Ezekiel 42:1—43:12
2. Ezek. 43:13—44:31
3. Ezek. 45, 46
4. Ezek. 47:1-12
5. Ezek. 47:13—48:35
6. Colossians 1:1-14
7. Col. 1:15-23
8. Col. 1:24—2:7
9. Col. 2:8-23
10. Col. 3:1-17
11. Col. 3:18—4:18
12. Philemon
13. Ezra 1, 2
14. Ez. 3
15. Ez. 4
16. Ez. 5, 6
17. Ez. 7
18. Ez. 8
19. Ez. 9, 10
20. Nehemiah 1
21. Neh. 2
22. Neh. 3
23. Neh. 4
24. Neh. 5
25. Neh. 6
26. Neh. 7
27. Neh. 8
28. Neh. 9:1-21
29. Neh. 9:22-37
30. Neh. 9:38—10:39
31. Neh. 11



Babel Babel

Do you want to play God?



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

Look at what's missing or distorted or just plain wrong about the reasons for cloning humans.

Baaa! Baaa! Cloned sheep, have you any peer?

How, Sir? Me, Sir? Maybe next year?

Have you thought about it? Would you, should you ever want a clone of yourself or a family member? Since God hasn't ruled it out with a direct, "Thou shalt not clone yourself or another human being," I gave it some thought. The experts say we have the technology to make it happen.

But what is a clone? It is, by all accounts, a "delayed identical twin." It does not emerge full-grown cookie-cutter style with the same psyche, knowledge, and faith as its original. It must be born like any other twin, a unique individual (except for genetic composition), but much younger than the twin. (So much for my idea for an alter ego who will edit NL while I go on holiday.)

So why clone a human being? You might do it, say some, to replace a dead or dying child. But you would not be restoring the child; you would be getting a new child. We already have ways to do that. And regardless how much alike a cloned child would appear, you would still have to deal with the loss and with raising the cloned child under different circumstances than the first.

You might want to have a clone to provide spare parts for yourself. Yes, that idea is seriously set forth, though it's fraught with ethical problems.

It doesn't get any better.

◆ You might want a clone to indulge your vanity. It takes immense ego to assume the world ought to have another person with your exact genetic makeup.

◆ Maybe you'd want a "designer child," a Brad Pitt or a Cindy Crawford look alike.

◆ Maybe you'd want a clone just to boast you had one.

◆ You might want a clone to produce a child outside marriage without normal procreation.

◆ Maybe you see a clone or repeated clones as providing a kind of immortality. There will always be another you.

You start thinking that way, and it's almost as if you've landed on another planet in another time. But you're on this planet at this time, and this matter is begging for your attention.

So you need to step back and take another look. Look at what's missing or distorted or just plain wrong. In spite of the hype, science has much work to do with animals before it can reasonably consider cloning humans. And it faces hard ethical questions as well as the following concerns:

- God and his created order are ignored. It's as if we say we don't need God. We can make a name for ourselves. We can build our own kind of Babel.

- So we beg the First Commandment. We hardly trust in God any more. We don't need to if we can manipulate humankind ourselves.

- In the process, we must be prepared to ignore the sanctity of life. Based on the sheep experiment, many human embryos will die.

- Family is left in question, and children as a gift from God suspect.

- Much of the reasoning is inherently selfish, i.e., sin tainted.

- Some of the motives suggest it is not sufficient that we already have immortality in Christ.

Baaa! Baaa! Cloned sheep, have you any peer?

Yes, Sir. Someplace. But don't look here.

Gary P. Baumler

A Worship Education Curriculum for the Lutheran Parish...

COME WORSHIP CHRIST

Four Professionally Produced Videos Introduce Nine Independent Study Courses...

CURRICULUM FEATURES

- Fits easily into a parish education program
- In-depth Bible study
- Interaction with
Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal
- Discussion-based teaching methods
- Detailed teachers' guides
- Self-directed study for organists and choir directors



STUDY COURSES

- Youth Catechism Class
- Teen Bible Class
- Adult Bible Class
- Bible Information Class
- Worship Committee
- Altar Guild
- Ushers
- Church Organist
- Choir Director

Order *Come Worship Christ* for \$69.95 by calling the WELS Commission on Worship at 1-800-567-8669 or write:
WELS Commission on Worship, 2929 North Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, WI 53222

Small coin, big return

Eunice discovered that physical limitations did not limit her capacity to live a life full of love and purpose.

Steven Stern

Eunice Daemrich was born in 1928. She died in July 1996. On paper, some would say Eunice had an average life span. For Eunice, the reality of those 68 years was far from average. Let me tell you what I mean.

A life scarred from infancy

The first year and a half of Eunice's life may have been average, but then she contracted infantile paralysis.

Her paralysis was severe and, for reasons unknown to me, Eunice could not be cared for by her own family. She became a ward of the county and was put into an institution of aged and mentally ill people.

One day, one of the patients pushed Eunice's wheelchair down a flight of steps, further complicating her delicate physical condition.

For almost 40 years, Eunice lived in this environment. In 1967 she became one of the first residents of Sage Nursing Home, now known as Marian Franciscan Nursing Home.

A life worth living

Sometime after 1967, Eunice met Chaplain Arnold Schroeder, who instructed and confirmed her. After Chaplain Schroeder's retirement, chaplain Ken Lenz and I continued to visit and commune Eunice until she died.

What was remarkable is that Eunice was a lady with many deficits who didn't let that stop

her from living a happy and productive life. She lay semi-reclined in a wheelchair. Her hands were claws unable to grasp much of anything. Her speech was somewhat slurred. Given these limitations, I think many of us would not have blamed Eunice if she had stayed in her room and turned her face to the wall.

She chose instead to talk to the staff and find out about their lives. During the day she insisted on having her wheelchair parked in the center of the nursing home. At this



Chaplain Kenneth Lenz and Eunice Daemrich. Although physically Eunice could not do much, with her winning personality and strong faith she reached out and touched many lives.

crossroads she saw everyone who came and went. She knew them all, and they knew her. She inquired about their health and their business. She joked with them. She gave them her love. She had an impact on the lives of thousands of people over those 68 years.

Eunice discovered that physical limitations did not limit her capacity to live a life full of love and purpose.

A life blessed in Jesus

The greatest gift that Jesus gave to Eunice was his love for her. That love saved her for eternity. It healed her heart from self pity. It freed her from her burdens. It made her reach out to others in pain.

In many ways, Eunice was a small coin. She had so little to offer in terms of talent and ability. But with what she had, Eunice's faith produced a tremendous return.

Thank you, Eunice, for being such a good witness to the power of the gospel. Thank you for inspiring all of us who knew you.

When we think of how small your coin was and yet how large the return you produced with that coin, may we understand more clearly it is not the size of the coin that matters. It is the size of the heart within the coin that counts.

Steven Stern is a chaplain for Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Ministry, Milwaukee.