

# FORWARD IN CHRIST

May 2002

MP 22 '02

The Word from the WELS

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unbeliever

“Unhappy  
meals”

Wanting to  
do more

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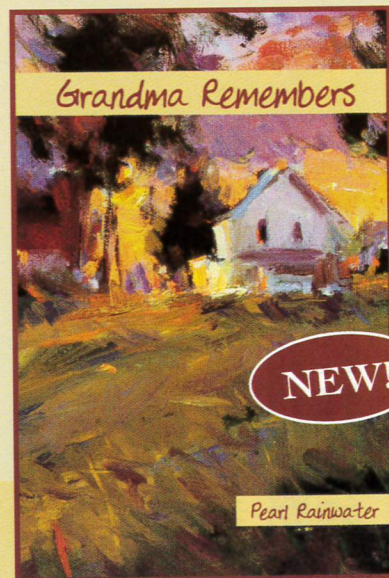


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# The Holy Spirit's work

*“You should not be surprised at my saying, ‘You must be born again.’ The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear its sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going. So it is with everyone born of the Spirit.” John 3:7,8*

Paul M. Janke

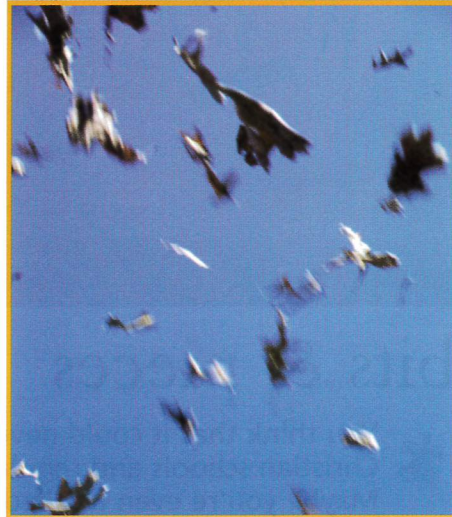
**W**e give names to the winds: hurricanes or tornadoes; exotic names like the Chinook winds of the Rocky Mountains, the Santa Ana winds of southern California, and the tropical trade winds. To name the winds, though, is not to say that we understand them completely. Scientists continue to study tornadoes and hurricanes.

The work of the Holy Spirit is no easier to comprehend. The Spirit, for example, combines the Word with ordinary water in baptism and brings about spiritual rebirth in children, who are born under God's wrath. Nicodemus, a leading Pharisee and teacher in Israel, confessed that he was baffled. “How?” he asked Jesus. Neither Nicodemus nor anyone else can completely understand the answer to that question.

## What we don't know

The Holy Spirit is God. His knowledge, power, and presence have no limits. You can't confine or control the Spirit any more than you can confine or control the wind. “The wind blows where it pleases,” Jesus said. So does the Spirit.

Why does one person hear the Word and believe it, while another hears the same Word and rejects it? How is it that missionaries can work faithfully in one field with precious little to show for it, while another field blooms and bears abundant fruit? This much we can say: Faith is due to the gracious working of the



Holy Spirit, while unbelief is due to sinful man's rejection of the Spirit's testimony. To probe beyond that is to pry into the hidden workings of the Spirit. We'll have to be content to confess that we don't know.

How can a few handfuls of water applied to the head of an infant in Holy Baptism send that child home a newborn creature? The Bible's answer is that the Spirit infuses the Word with his power. Beyond that, our powers of comprehension fall short.

## What we do know

We can, however, know with certainty some aspects of the Spirit's work, because God has revealed them to us in his Word. We know that the Holy Spirit's work is essential. Without the Spirit we would still be enslaved by our sinful natures, unable to truly love or trust God. Without the Spirit, faith in Jesus would be impossible and hell would be inevitable.

We know, too, that although the Holy Spirit is capable of doing anything he wishes, he tells us in Scripture that he wills to work through means to create and strengthen faith in Jesus. He has chosen the means of the gospel of Jesus in the Word and in the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. That is why, relying on the Holy Spirit's power and promise, we preach and teach Jesus Christ. That is why we administer baptism and celebrate communion. Through the gospel, the Spirit leads people to the conviction that God's Son was lifted up on a cross “that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life” (John 3:15).

We may not be able to see the wind, but we can sense its effects. We can feel the wind on our faces. We can see leaves blowing in a breeze. We can hear a storm buffeting our home.

It's like that with the Spirit's work. We see the same Nicodemus, who was baffled by Jesus' declaration that he must be born again, later assisting Joseph of Arimathea in taking the body of Jesus down from the cross. His labor of love and courage was the visible proof of the Spirit's work.

Admittedly, there's much we don't know about the work of the Holy Spirit. But what we do know invigorates us to use the gospel, the Holy Spirit's tool, with confidence.



*Paul Janke is pastor at St. Peter, Modesto, California.*



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Cover illustration by Tom Nachreiner

As the blessings God gave me slept soundly in bed, I gorged my sin-filled lust with Satan's latest tool: cyber porn.

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## bits & pieces



You think that it could never happen to you. You went to Christian schools and regularly attend Bible class and church. Maybe you're even a called worker. But the temptation is still there. The advertisements are getting bolder and stronger. I'm talking about getting hooked on cyber porn. One man shares his story—his warnings, his advice, his admission of guilt, and his knowledge of forgiveness. Don't skip "A dirty, not so little secret" (p. 8).



Did you ever wonder if Jonah really was swallowed by a giant fish? Or if Jesus really caused the lame to walk? Our Bible studies this month focus on those miracles and their meaning in our lives. Don't miss this opportunity to delve into God's Word. Check out "Really?" (p. 30) and "Jesus' miracles: Portraits of redemption" (p. 31).



Quack, quack, waddle, waddle. Baby ducks always follow where their mother leads. They don't suspect or watch out for dangers that could be ahead. How are we like those baby ducks? A teen shares his insights in our "whatever" feature (p. 20).



We end our "pastor track" series with a look at the Multi-ethnic Preseminary Program, which prepares second-career minority men for entrance into Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. Find out how it works and hear from some of its students (p. 16).



"He descended into hell" could be one of the most misunderstood phrases of the Apostles' Creed, according to our "in the cross hairs" writer, Prof. Richard Gurgel. Find out why on p. 32.

—JKW



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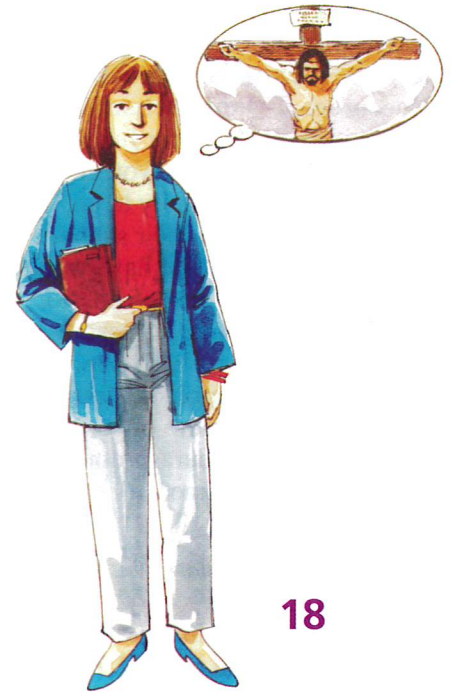
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**As one of the WELS Kingdom Worker team members that went to New York in November and December, I want to thank** the Committee on Relief for funding both trips, WELS Kingdom Workers for giving us the opportunity to go, and WELS members for their support.

Since high school, I have wanted to serve in some form of mission work, and you made it possible. It was amazing to watch how the Lord worked through our team!

I hope to have more opportunities to serve, and I encourage other lay-people to do the same.

*Pam Wilke*



*Watertown, Wisconsin*

Good intentions. Wrong words.

**Jim Hoff ["God is love," Feb.] said a lot of what needed to be said. But I don't think that love consists only in its actions.** Love must generate God-pleasing actions, but the actions without love are worthless in the eyes of God (see 1 Corinthians 13:1-4).

It is true that we could "never feel close to people who hurt us," but that's because of our sinful nature.

Fortunately for us, Jesus feels close to those who hurt him all the time. We are not capable of such love, but the Law does not excuse us from loving like that. Nor can we excuse ourselves from loving those who hurt us.

*Rolfe Westendorf*



*Milwaukee, Wisconsin*

**In "Lutherans are liturgical" [Mar.], Wayne Mueller said that Luther ended Rome's practice of celebrating the Lord's Supper in every service.** From his statement I got the impression that Luther advocated a less-frequent celebration of the Lord's Supper because the spoken word conveys the same forgiveness as the sacraments. This is what happened during the age of Pietism when misguided Lutheran leaders withheld the sacrament from the people except for a few times a

year. The Lutheran Confessions say Lutherans in Luther's time celebrated the sacrament every Sunday and on festivals, and it was offered to all who wanted it, something the Roman church did not do at the time.

*Jim Schulz*



*Wauwatosa, Wisconsin*

**Some in the church today insist that they can proclaim Christ without using the liturgy.** Mueller ["Lutherans are liturgical"] understands that good intentions do not always translate into good actions. From his view of both the historical and the contemporary church, he can observe that the loss of the Christian liturgy has invariably (not inevitably, but invariably) led the Lutheran Church away from a focus on Christ.

Confessional Lutherans have retained the liturgy because its content safeguards gospel proclamation. We can give up Elizabethan language, Anglican chant music, and Renaissance hymn tunes if we must (and in some cases we must and we ought!), but the Lutheran Church abandons the liturgy at its peril.

*James P. Tiefel*



*Mequon, Wisconsin*

**First, thank you to Richard Gurgel for his masterful use of the art of theology in dealing with the Harry Potter issue ["In the cross hairs," Feb.].** His evangelical, fair, and firm treatment of the subject helped pastors and lay readers clarify a sometimes "mysterious" topic.

Second, something in "Lutherans are liturgical" is unclear. It states, "He [Luther] also eliminated the elevation of the host, an idolatrous practice . . ."

The Lutheran church has never maintained that elevation of the host and idolatry are strictly synonymous. Luther eliminated the "Corpus Christi" parades, the display of the host in churches for prayer and adoration, etc., because of the Roman idolatry, but never the elevation.

[When] our pastors lift the bread or the cup it can convey good spiritual truths, such as "this is a gift from heaven" or "this is given and shed for you." Elevation and idolatry are not synonymous, and the article probably did not mean to convey that.

*Thomas Schultz*



*Palatine, Illinois*

**I was disappointed with "Lutherans are liturgical."** It gives the strong impression that being liturgical is an essential attribute of being Lutheran.

The first seven articles in this series dealt with doctrines. Suddenly, in this eighth installment, style is placed side by side with doctrine. This is significantly borne out by the fact that it is the first article that contains no Scripture references. That is understandable because worship style is a matter of Christian freedom. In fact, an appreciation of a Christian's freedom is one of the hallmarks of Lutheranism.

If people don't worship in the way described, does that make them less than Lutheran? This article may unnecessarily burden some consciences.

*Mark Cares*



*Nampa, Idaho*

**["Lutherans are liturgical"] left the impression that the saving power of the Lord's Supper, in Rome's view, had to do with the priest's ability to bless the sacramental elements.** It would be more accurate to say that the error was the teaching that its power came from a synergistic union of God's transforming grace and the faith of the communicant. Thus the Supper was turned into a meritorious work.

*Peter Berg*

*Plymouth, Michigan*

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# Stop eating “unhappy meals”

Douglas J. Engelbrecht

An article in *U.S. News & World Report* caught my eye. It said that PETA (People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals) has launched a campaign against McDonald’s by distributing “unhappy meals.” The meals, which come in boxes similar to the familiar Happy Meals, are covered with pictures of slaughtered animals and a “Son of Ron” doll that bears a striking resemblance to Ronald McDonald.

Now, I had never heard of an “unhappy meal” before, but when I thought about, it occurred to me that there must be such a thing. In fact, many people today seem to be having a steady diet of “unhappy meals.” I say that because so many people are so unhappy . . . people who can’t seem to find much good in anything. Nothing is ever right, nothing is ever good enough, nothing seems to turn up the corners of their mouth enough to keep others from thinking that they must have gargled with broken glass when they got up that morning.

That should never describe the Christian, says the Lord. We should never look like we have been eating “unhappy meals” three times a day. Rather, the Bible tells us that we are to always give thanks to God for everything (Ephesians 5:20).

Some people seemingly wouldn’t know a blessing of God if it hit them over the head. Too often they use the wrong measuring device to measure the blessings of God. Jacob confessed, “I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant.” We have to say the same. That’s the measuring device we need to use when we get up each morning and view our lives or certain situations in our lives. We don’t compare things to what we think we ought to have, or what others have, or what we think we deserve from the hand of God. Rather, if we measure things on the basis of what we, as sinners,

must honestly say we deserve from God, i.e. nothing, we won’t have enough hours in the day to thank God for even the little things we possess or experience.

The Christian should always give thanks in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.

A teacher once asked her class what they were most thankful for. One little boy said, “I am most thankful for my glasses, because they keep the boys from punching me and the girls from kissing me!” When you’re only five years old, it’s hard to know what you really should be thankful for. When you’re immature in faith, the same thing is true. Maybe that’s why some people go through life on a constant downer, never satisfied with what they have, who they are, or how things are going.

That should never describe the Christian who understands what he has in Christ—namely—

- the assurance of being called by God to be in heaven with him some day;
- the peace of forgiveness;
- the confidence that someone walks with him with every step he takes;
- the joy of knowing he will see his loved ones who have died in Christ again in heaven; and
- the living Word of God to lead him in the paths of righteousness, contentment, joy, and peace.

Constantly looking as if we are on a steady diet of “unhappy meals”? That should never describe you and me. If we measure all things on the basis of what we, as sinners, actually deserve, and if we recognize what we have in Jesus, then we should be able to “always [give] thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

*Doug Engelbrecht is pastor at Trinity, Neenah, Wisconsin.*

Some people  
seemingly  
wouldn’t know  
a blessing of  
God if it hit  
them over  
the head!



Dear Pastor Baumler and staff,

I know you didn't ask for anyone to write an ugly article like this one. I know you probably can't print it. But as I lay awake again tonight I couldn't ignore anymore the "push" from my heart to write this and leave it for you. Perhaps it's the Spirit moving me to do this; perhaps not. Either way, thank you for letting me empty out my heart and soul to you. If it can do any good for anyone else, praise be to God! Do with it as you please.

A fallen, but also forgiven, brother in Christ



not so  
**A DIRTY, <sup>^</sup>LITTLE SECRET**



**T**his isn't supposed to happen to good Christian boys and men. The ones who worship every weekend.

The ones who go to Bible class. Or teach Sunday school.

The ones who sit on the Church Council. Or become teachers and principals. Staff ministers or pastors.

**But I forgot to "be self-controlled and alert" (1 Peter 5:8).**

I thought years of Christian day school, Lutheran high school, and college would somehow keep me from falling this far into Satan's sick, twisted trap.

And so before long, I found myself spending far more hours in front of a computer screen than in front of my dear Savior and his soul-saving, life-giving Word. As the blessings God gave me—my loving wife and wonderful children—slept soundly in bed, I gorged my sin-filled lust with the pictures of naked men and women, brought right into my home for free, all thanks to Satan's latest tool: cyber porn. Sometimes two, three, four nights a week. Month after month.

**All the while I knew that what I was doing was wrong**—wicked—hurting me, my marriage, my family, my faith, and—worst of all—my relationship with my wonderful Father and my Savior-Brother.

But now, my sick, secret sin is out. I'm so thankful for the friends God's given me—friends I could open up to and pour my guilt and shame out to. Friends who treated me with love like Jesus himself would show. Friends who dragged my shame-filled body and spirit to that blood-spattered cross. Friends who filled my ears and mind and heart and soul with the living words of God. Words I'd heard so many, many times before, yet never like

this. The words of his piercing law that first ripped through and tore down my lurid sinful nature. Then those same friends lifted me back up with the sweet words of gospel forgiveness. Words that reminded me that "as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us" (Psalm 103:12).

**Whatever the trap, keep your eye . . . on the prize.**

I'm not proud of confessing my horrendous sin. In fact, I'm too embarrassed and ashamed to even put my name on this page. But if stepping forward can help just one fellow follower of the Lamb, it's worth the risk of being found out. Because sadly, I know you're out there. The high school student. The college student—yes, even at Martin Luther College and the seminary. The single guy, the married man, the loving father. Congregational member or called worker. Good Christian boys and men.

**Whoever you are, wherever you live—Satan is gunning for you.**

Perhaps he's already snagged you with the "free movie" in your hotel room on your last business trip. Or gotten you to open that x-rated spam e-mail that comes into your home or workplace. Whatever the trap, keep your eye away from the porn and on the prize. Pray for the strength that God is ready to give. Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.



*Due to the personal content of the article, the author remains anonymous.*

## More about Internet pornography addiction

Over 180.68 million Americans and Canadians have Internet access.\* As Internet use has skyrocketed, so have cases of Internet addiction, including addiction to pornographic material.

The three A's of Internet pornography—anonymity, accessibility, and affordability—contribute to its prevalence. An Internet user may accidentally stumble upon a pornographic Web site or open an unsolicited pornographic e-mail. Once this pornographic material is viewed, however, some people return to it and become addicted.

Because males are more likely to be visually aroused, this is a predominantly male problem. However, those male addicts who are married are affecting their spouses, too. Spouses of addicts feel violated when the addiction is discovered.

Both addicts and their spouses should talk to their pastor, seek biblically-based counseling, and join support groups that can help them through this painful time.

As Judy Otto, a counselor at Christian Family Counseling, a division of Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service, Inc., explains, "This affects all people, from all realms of life." Because that is true, remain on your guard against these attacks by Satan. Immerse yourself in God's Word and in fellowship with other believers. If you do fall into Satan's trap, seek help immediately. One place to start is the WELS Careline, which is open 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for people who need to talk. Call 800/422-7341.

\*As reported by NUA Internet Surveys, as of August 2001.



# The newest, oldest, largest . . .

Fox Valley and Wisconsin Lutheran high schools have been given much and have much to offer.

Janet Klann

Over the past nine months, this series of articles has looked closely at our WELS high schools. Principals, teachers, and students have spoken about their challenges, their goals, and what makes each school special. The series began by looking at the smaller, younger schools. This month we look at the two oldest and largest area Lutheran high schools, Fox Valley Lutheran High School (FVL) and Wisconsin Lutheran High School (WLHS).

## The newest

Anyone who visits FVL's new \$18.5 million campus comes away impressed. Dedicated in September 2000, the school is situated on a generous 63 acres, containing numerous athletic fields as well as a 14-acre nature tract. The 900-seat auditorium used for worship or performance is enhanced with beautiful cherry woodwork and includes an orchestra pit, a retractable stage, and an 18-foot drop screen for video presentations.

Technology in the entire building is cutting edge, from the computer-equipped Writing Lab and Media Center to the LCD video projectors, which bring video and Internet resources into the classroom. Two gymnasiums, a spacious Weight-Training & Fitness Center, and a Fine Arts wing—all of these make FVL a special place.

But assistant principal John Kolander insists that the important thing about FVL is "not the building

but the people." Kolander says that the "high degree of ministry-mindedness" and "a strong sense of mission and purpose" are what make the school special.

Pastor David Wenzel, religion teacher, says that FVL, like all Lutheran high schools, is unique because "five days a week, students can quench their spiritual thirst with the means of grace."

Students agree that hearing God's Word on a daily basis makes a difference in their lives. Senior Kristina Goodman says, "The teachers at FVL care about how the students are doing not only academically, but also spiritually."

Janessa Price, also a senior, says, "This school has helped make my faith stronger."

## The oldest

Ninety-nine years is a ripe old age . . . for a person or for a school.

In September 1903, Wisconsin Lutheran High School of Milwaukee began under the name Lutheran High School. It was a young ladies academy, jointly run by the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, with volunteer teachers who moved from room to room while the students stayed in one place. By the second year, the school was co-ed. In 1908 the first building was erected on three acres, with several additions made during the 1920s.

When the Wisconsin Synod and the Missouri Synod split became inevitable in the early 1950s, a newly formed Wisconsin Lutheran High School Conference of 27 congregations began planning for a building of its own, which was completed in 1959. The school has enjoyed increasing enrollment and expanding programs, necessitating building expansions in 1963, 1979, and 1998. Today, as WLHS prepares to celebrate its 100th birthday, it serves 947 students in a 200,000-square-foot facility on 12 acres.

The largest Lutheran high school in the nation, WLHS operates in an urban setting, serving a diverse student population. Principal Ned Goede says that the school's goal is for its students "to love Jesus more when they leave here than when they came." Goede says that all teachers, not just those who teach religion, demonstrate that "God's Word is alive and dynamic today by applying that Word to the lives of our teens."

### Fox Valley Lutheran High School

**Located in:** Appleton, Wis.  
**Established:** 1953  
**Size:** 609 students, 43 faculty members  
**Web site:** <[www.fvlhs.org](http://www.fvlhs.org)>

### Wisconsin Lutheran High School

**Located in:** Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Established:** 1903  
**Size:** 947 students, 71 faculty members  
**Web site:** <[www.wlhs.k12.wi.us](http://www.wlhs.k12.wi.us)>



Helping students become “servant minded” is a priority at WLHS. Our Hands for His Service, a program that has operated for 15 years, allows students to adopt specific mission projects. Last year students held car washes, a pancake breakfast, and other fundraisers to send Christmas gifts to WELS Mission to the Children in northern Mexico. Twelve students went to Mexico to see the project firsthand, while another 12 students helped with vacation Bible school in Mexico City the following summer. Students have also worked on travel-canvass-witness teams, most recently in Arkansas and Saskatchewan, Canada.

### The largest

Is bigger actually better? Larger schools do have some distinct advantages when it comes to course offerings, facilities, and finances.

In addition to the required religion classes, Wisconsin Lutheran students can choose a variety of short-term electives, such as Religion and Science, From Friendship to Marriage, Christian Life Planning, and Teenage Evangelism.

Fox Valley has special laboratories for Graphic Communications, Co-ed Home Economics, Photography, Computer Drafting, and Woodwork-

ing and Building Construction. Both schools offer remedial classes as well as advanced placement or honors classes, options that smaller schools generally cannot provide.

FVL and WLHS are supported by large federations of 38 and 56 congregations, respectively. FVL’s annual budget is \$2.6 million; WLHS’s is \$5.5 million. Smaller schools, struggling to meet payrolls and rent, may look at these figures as “easy street.” Ned Goede admits that when WLHS undertakes a new program, cost is not the first consideration. Fox Valley has an endowment fund of \$2.5 million, interest from which goes primarily for tuition assistance. However, keeping the school’s technology up to date will require large expenditures, and paying off its \$6.2 million debt will call for strong federation support.

Students and teachers in smaller schools often mention feelings of closeness and concern for each other. Can these same feelings exist in a larger student body? Mary Schmal, a new teacher at WLHS, feels that “we are truly a community of believers—helping one another as Christ’s love motivates us.”

Brian Zunker, a first-year teacher at FVL, also feels the “family atmos-

phere” among the faculty. “When the students see a genuine love among the faculty, it flows down to them,” says Zunker.

### The same Lord, the same mission

Although there may be differences between small and large Lutheran high school course offerings and facilities, their similarities are more important. All our WELS schools are built on the same rock, Jesus Christ. All share the same mission of instructing and guiding young people as they discover their unique gifts and learn how to use these gifts to benefit others and to serve the Lord. FVL and WLHS have sent over 15,000 graduates into the world as pastors, teachers, and dedicated laypeople.

“It is exciting to be part of the process of molding the future leadership of our church,” says WLHS teacher Steve Zellmer. “When I see what God is doing with our young people, I know that our church has a bright future.”



*Janet Klann is a member at Shepherd of the Valley, Surprise, Arizona.*



Fox Valley Lutheran High School coaches pray with team members after a victory during the school’s state championship season this past fall.



Wisconsin Lutheran High School students show their support for their women’s volleyball team by dressing as Vikings, their school’s mascot, at a 2001 playoff game. The volleyball team compiled a 14-0 record on its way to the Wisconsin Little Ten Conference championship.



# SUBMISSION<sup>OUT OF</sup> REVERENCE FOR CHRIST



**Submission. It's a touchy topic in our progressive society. Here one WELS woman reflects on her journey to become content with this biblical teaching.**

**Kathy Kolell**

**“H**ow can you join a church that doesn't let women vote?”

I hear that question from time to time. I grew up watching my mother and father both vote at meetings and chair various boards at my childhood church. I didn't want to join a church that didn't let me do those things. After my fiancé and I were engaged, the question arose: Where would we go to church? We needed to answer this question before we married because it was an extremely important issue for both of us.

After some painful soul-searching for both of us, my fiancé told me that he would join my home church. This is a very important point. He would sacrifice what he wanted for me.



But here we are, years later, members of my husband's church, the Wisconsin Synod. How did this happen? I could have had what I wanted. However, it seemed that God was telling me not to take my fiancé up on his offer. I believe God was telling me to trust him for my needs—that no one else could take care of me like the Lord. And he led me on a year-long journey learning about the biblical concept of Christian submission.

## My submitting to my husband is not something he can force out of me, but something I do out of gratitude for Christ's saving work.

### What does God say?

In Ephesians 5:21-28, God says:

“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to pre-

sent her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.”

### How should God's will be carried out at home?

The first sentence introduces the “how” and “why” of a wife's submission. Within marriage, submission is a response to Christ's love. Submission, though seemingly done to an individual, is “for Christ” and “as to the Lord.” So, my submitting to my husband is not something he can force out of me, but something I do out of gratitude for Christ's saving work.

The second part of this passage is God's directive to husbands. “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her. . . .” In other words, the husband is to be like Christ. He is to put the needs of the wife ahead of his own, so much so that he would die for her. Christ did this perfectly.

My husband isn't perfect, but he consistently practices a Christ-like love for my children and me. Because he does this, I can more easily and willingly submit to his headship. I believe that this is how God intended marriage to work. The man gives himself up for the woman. Then the woman finds it much easier to follow the man.

### How should God's will be carried out at church?


This husband/wife relationship can be a good way to picture our

roles at church. The pastors and the lay leaders are expected to respect, value, and build up the female members. In turn, the female members will find it much easier to trust the church leaders and yield headship to them. When this happens, often the voting question loses importance (at least it did for me).

## No church body need force my submission. I give it freely because Christ loves me.

No church is perfect, but when biblical principles are practiced, submission doesn't become the dirty word that society regards it to be. Rather, submission becomes a beautiful response to Christ's love for us. He gave himself up for us, died a hideous death, and rose again for us. Out of love and gratitude for this wonderful gift, we strive to live God-pleasing lives.

In the same way, no church body need force my submission. I give it freely because Christ loves me. This scriptural truth, namely that any submission is done “as to the Lord,” helped me be content in my adopted church, the Wisconsin Synod. God has graciously fulfilled all my needs for nearly 12 years.

 Kathy Kolell is a member at Mt. Olive, Appleton, Wisconsin.



The 12 attributes presented in this series reflect what makes Lutherans unique. Although each attribute on its own may be shared by other religious groups, when all the attributes are studied together, a uniquely Lutheran image emerges.

# Lutherans live in ~~two~~ two worlds

**Believers live under both church and state, and we should see no conflict in serving both.**

Wayne D. Mueller

**T**hey tried to force Jesus into a corner. “The Pharisees went out and laid plans to trap him in his words” (Matthew 22:15). They wanted to put him in a no-win situation. They knew the crowds hated the Roman occupation of their country. The Jews despised paying taxes to Caesar. They knew, too, that if Jesus told the crowds that they did not have to pay their taxes, the Romans would arrest him for sedition.

So, in front of the crowds, the Pharisees posed their trick question: “Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar or not?” (v. 17). Then they waited for Jesus to step into their trap. But he responded with divine wisdom, “Give to Caesar what is Caesar’s, and to God what is God’s” (v. 21).

With this simple answer, Jesus helped us see church and state as complementary, rather than competing, entities. He reaffirmed the divine right of both to exist. Church and state are ordained by God and are to be respected as such. He distinguished the purposes, and thus the roles, of church and state. He asserted that



believers live under both and should see no conflict in serving both.

### Human confusion

The muddling mindset of the Pharisees, however, reasserts itself throughout history. In Luther’s day, the distinction between church and state was nearly obliterated. The pope in Rome had for centuries meddled in—if not controlled—the activities of civil government. In Germany of Luther’s day, civil officials doubled as church leaders.

That was the political and ecclesiastic reality into which Luther reintroduced Jesus’ divine simplicity.

“These two kingdoms must be carefully distinguished,” he wrote, “and both must be permitted to remain—the one to produce piety, the other to create external peace and to prevent evil deeds. Neither is sufficient in the world without the other” (*What Luther Says* 1795).

### Our dual citizenship

Still today, nowhere more than in Lutheranism is our Lord’s clear distinction between the government and the church taught and practiced. Without confusing the two, Lutherans confess that they live simultaneously in two worlds.



Our primary citizenship is in the kingdom of God. “Our citizenship is in heaven” (Philippians 3:20). In a real but not fully understood sense, believers are already now a part of heaven. “For you died and your life is now hidden with Christ in God” (Colossians 3:3). “God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:6). What we call “going to heaven” is only the visible fulfillment of what is already true for believers.

We celebrate this reality when we sing, “I’m but a stranger here; heaven is my home” (*Christian Worship* 417). That pious sentiment echoes the attitude of ancient believers: “And they admitted that they were aliens and strangers on earth. . . . Instead, they were longing for a better country—a heavenly one” (Hebrews 11:13,16). As soon as the Spirit moves our hearts to faith, we begin living in Christ’s kingdom.

Yet equally real is our citizenship in temporary, earthly kingdoms. While on earth, we have real obligations to world governments. Besides paying taxes, Christians willingly give obedience, respect, and honor to their government (Romans 13:7).

Under the government of the United States, citizens enjoy many privileges, such as voting and peaceful protest. But Paul urges Christians to appeal to a greater influence for good government. “I urge, then, first of all, that requests, prayers, intercession, and thanksgiving be made for everyone—for kings and all those in authority” (1 Timothy 2:1,2).

### We live in two worlds

Our Lutheran teaching of the two kingdoms has often been called “separation of church and state.” A better term would be “distinction between church and state.” Neither Jesus nor

Luther taught that church and state could or should be entirely separate. Because both are divinely established, operate in this world, and share some citizens, they cannot be totally separated. Church and state have joint interests, for example, in marriage, education, and certain moral laws.

But putting Jesus’ simple advice into practice requires divine wisdom. Before we can give to God and Caesar, we must know what belongs to each. To government God gives the work of providing peace and outward order. To the church God gives the task of providing spiritual peace.

For their differing assignments, God gives church and state different tools, or means, to accomplish them. To government he gave human reason, laws, and the power of enforcement to provide outward peace. To the church God gave the gospel to bring inner peace to guilty souls.

### Avoid confusion

We confuse these divine tasks and tools if we try to force government to live by the Bible, or if government uses its political might to limit or promote the gospel. Those to the right and left of Luther indulged in this confusion. John Calvin set up his own Reformed government in Geneva, Switzerland. The pope in Rome used political pressure to try to stamp out Lutheranism.

But our Lord and his apostles ask believers to represent the two kingdoms in which they live with the tools that God has given for each. Paul told the Corinthians, “For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does” (2 Corinthians 10:3). And, when acting as citizens of God’s kingdom, we should not try to use government to promote our work of preaching peace. Lutherans address government the way Luther did:

“Therefore your power does not extend to the word of God. We recognize the emperor as a lord over temporal possessions and not over God’s word” (*What Luther Says* 1803).

When acting as citizens of the state, Christians do not leverage the gospel message for political ends. The gospel is a spiritual, not a political, tool. The way to make a country Christian is by sharing the gospel with its citizens to win their souls for Christ—not by forcing government to make its civil laws more “Christian.”

### Take action

Lutherans have been accused of being so afraid of doing something wrong that they don’t do anything right. Does that ring true in our role as citizens of the state? Our inaction may be sinful complacency, for it is easy to take the blessing of good government for granted.

If ever it was, the United States is certainly no longer a “Christian” nation. For Lutherans in the U.S. to be involved in the affairs of state is more than a privilege of our citizenship. It is a part of what we render to Caesar for Christ’s sake. To honor Christ we offer our prayers for political peace; we vote; we write our officials; we run for office; we obey laws; we pay taxes; and we serve as soldiers, police, and civil servants.

When Lutherans, as citizens of the state, use the tools God gave the state, and when as citizens of God’s kingdom we employ the gospel to bring others to faith, we are not confusing church and state. We are living out our dual citizenship according to the Savior’s ideal.



Wayne Mueller is first vice president of WELS.

WISCONSIN LUTHERAN SEMINARY



# Wanting to do more

A program helps men of diverse ethnic backgrounds get closer to realizing their second-career goal of becoming pastors.

Julie K. Wietzke

“I want to do more.” Serving on church committees, assisting with communion, and reading the Scriptures during worship weren’t enough anymore for Leonard Freeman, an African-American member of Garden Homes, Milwaukee. He wanted to be a pastor.

Now as a student at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS), Mequon, Freeman is closer to realizing his goal.

He’s there in part because WELS leaders also “wanted to do more” to help men of diverse ethnic backgrounds achieve their second-career goal of becoming pastors.

Hence the birth of the Multi-ethnic Preseminary Program (MPP), a distance-learning program supported by the Board for Ministerial Education

that helps Freeman (now its first graduate) and other minority men by preparing them to help others see the saving truth of the gospel—in their own congregations and among their own cultures.

## The rationale

When the Multi-ethnic Preseminary Program began in 1994, you could count the number of WELS minority pastors on one hand. To encourage more men of diverse ethnic backgrounds to become pastors, the program lets its students stay at home while completing courses that eventually allow them to enter the seminary.

“Traditionally, you have to spend 8 to 10 years out of your environment to be a pastor,” says Dr. Glen Thompson, program director.

“Because that was too long for

students to be away and to keep their ethnic roots, we thought that the solution was to keep them in their home environment longer.”

This allows students to stay active in their home congregations, keep their homes, remain at their jobs, and keep their kids in the same schools. It also reduces the time students spend away from home from eight years to about four years.

Graduates of the program may still have to move to attend WLS. But, the MPP Committee feels that it is necessary to finish training in Mequon.

“It’s important for them to be part of a class and to have other brothers who they get to know as their fellow pastors,” says Thompson.

## The program

To qualify for the program, a stu-

Fidel Dazen, a 32-year-old Apache from East Fork, Ariz., had always wanted to be a pastor and had even been accepted into Bethany Lutheran College (ELS), Mankato, Minn.

But when he found out about the Multi-ethnic Preseminary Program, he decided to try that instead.

“It’s hard when you have kids and a family to just say, ‘Let’s go.’ You have to think it over, pray a lot. You just don’t get up and leave. That’s why this program suited me,” says Dazen.

It wasn’t easy. Distance learning creates challenges, including learning difficult languages without having a professor standing right next to you, helping you.

When he started the program, Dazen worked full-time for the Whiteriver school district. In 2000, he was called as an evangelist for the San Carlos Reservation, serving Grace, San Carlos; Peridot, Peridot; and Our Savior, Bylas. This allowed him to help fill the vacan-

cies there by conducting home visits and leading Sunday worship, but also gave him more time to devote to his studies.

“The majority of my weeks are spent on study time,” says Dazen. “That’s my first priority—to complete my preseminary training and get up to Mequon.”

And in the fall, that’s where he and his family are headed. “I see a light at the end of the tunnel,” says Dazen. “It’s great to finally move up there and finish what I started off to do, with the Lord’s help.”



Fidel Dazen (right) and Edmond Hunter, a member at Peridot, Peridot, Ariz., where Dazen serves as an evangelist.



God's hand can be seen directing Leonard Freeman's life from the beginning—whether it was leading him to Garden Homes, Milwaukee, when he and his wife were looking for a school for their son; allowing him to retire early; or giving him knee problems so that he couldn't go into real estate when he retired.

"I can see God's hand directing me right where he wants me to be—to the seminary. It's amazing. You don't know this when you're going through it."

Freeman, now the first graduate of the MPP, began his studies while still working and continued in his retirement. Courses were difficult for him, especially the languages. "When I first saw Hebrew, I kept turning it around. I thought it was upside down."

But, with God's help, he persevered. In 2000 he entered Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS). Things were still not easy.

"When I did get to the seminary there were more challenges. I was the only black person in my class. I also didn't come up through the ranks," says Freeman.

Attending regular classes was also something to get used to. "When I was going through the MPP, I could do my work as fast or as slow as I wanted. Here it's much faster," says Freeman.

Yet his wife and the seminary professors and students are there to encourage and help Freeman during the hard

times, even when he wants to quit.

"Here on earth, my wife is my strength and helper," says Freeman. "She's the one that keeps me going."

Freeman is also doing his own encouraging.

"Leonard is sort of the mentor [of the African Americans on campus]. It's good for all the 'younger' guys to see what someone is willing to put up with in order to get into the ministry," says James Korthals, WLS professor.

Members at Garden Home are also being encouraged. "They are so proud that they have a person like me who went through the program—striving to be a pastor," says Freeman. So much so that two more from that congregation, including Freeman's son, are accepted into the program.



Leonard Freeman and his family. Back row from left: daughter-in-law Arlanda, son Donovan, grandson Donovan Jr., son Kenneth, Kenneth's friend Nicole. Front row from left: wife Maxine, grandson Kendall, Leonard, and granddaughter Kayla. Says Freeman, "It's my sincere hope that with God's help and the understanding of the seminary faculty, I may be able to reach my goal of becoming a pastor."

dent, with the help of his local pastor, must work through a curriculum of courses to give him an overall knowledge of the Bible and doctrine.

Once a student enters the program, he will study Greek, Hebrew, and more intense courses in doctrine. These will be distance learning courses, mostly taught by Martin Luther College (MLC) professors. They use textbooks, videos, the Internet, and worksheets and communicate with faxes, e-mail, phone calls, mail, and face-to-face visits. The instructors develop the courses, taking materials already used and reformatting them for distance learning.

Although MPP students may not get as many class hours as MLC students, they are still accountable.

"When you're a member of a class of one, the professor finds out every-

thing you did or didn't do," says Thompson. "You can't hide behind 20 other people in the classroom."

The program takes a minimum of three years to complete.

### The people

Right now, the program is ready to graduate its second student—Fidel Dazen, a 32-year-old Apache from East Fork, Ariz. He will join Freeman at the seminary next fall. Freeman's son, Donovan, has just begun the program.

This may not seem like many people. But when you look at the amount of WELS pastors of diverse ethnic backgrounds—no more than one out of every 160 white pastors—any number will help.

"If we could add one or two additional candidates each year, we would

consider the program to be a tremendous success, because in the past these candidates would never have been eligible for that type of service," says WLS Professor James Korthals, chairman of the committee that oversees the MPP.

The program tries to help those who want to do more, to do more. And when that "more" means getting the Word out, that's the most for which anyone can hope. ✨

*Julie Wietzke is senior communications assistant for Forward in Christ magazine and WELS Communication Services.*

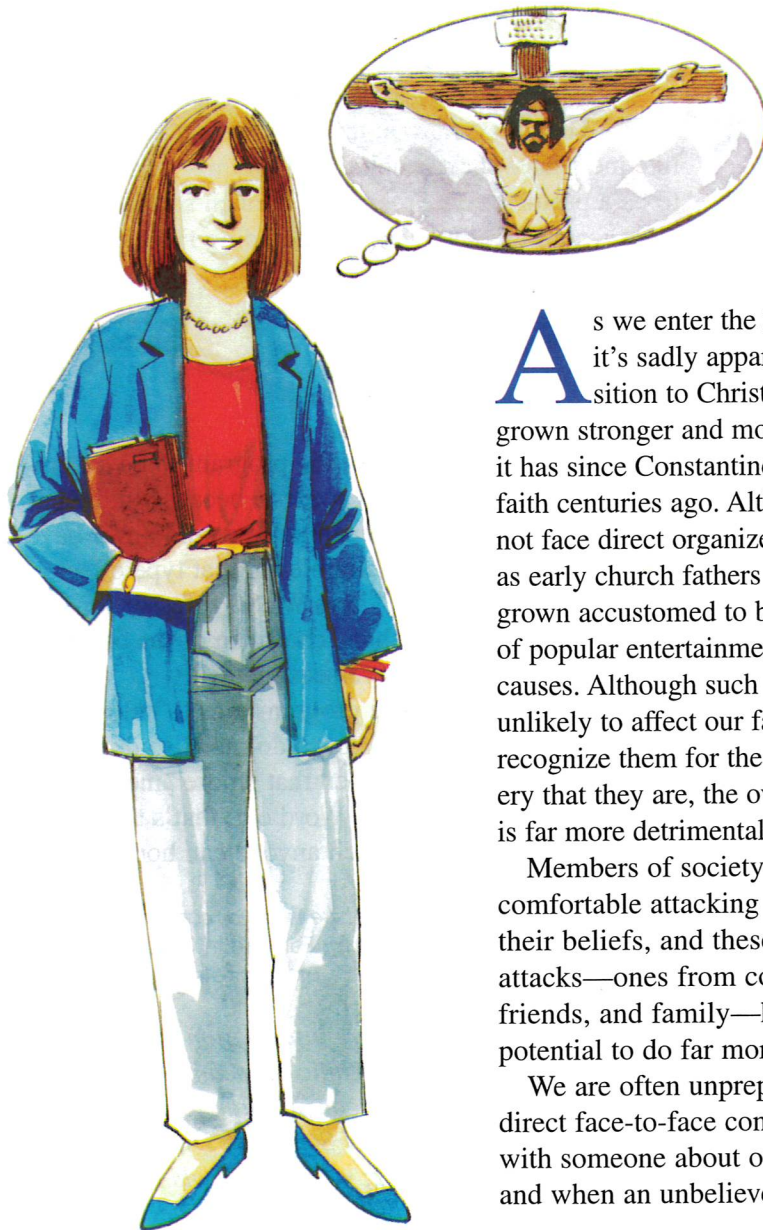
*For more information, contact the Multi-ethnic Preseminary Program, c/o Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, 11831 N Seminary Dr, Mequon WI 53092; <korthalj@wls.wels.net>; Web site, <www.mlc-wels.edu/mpp>.*



# FACING THE UNBELIEVER

When someone confronts us face-to-face about our beliefs, we often panic. Here are some common arguments unbelievers use and explanations of why they're wrong.

Charles Sonnenburg



As we enter the 21st century, it's sadly apparent that opposition to Christianity has grown stronger and more visible than it has since Constantine legalized the faith centuries ago. Although we do not face direct organized persecution as early church fathers did, we have grown accustomed to being targets of popular entertainment and media causes. Although such attacks are unlikely to affect our faith when we recognize them for the petty mockery that they are, the overall effect is far more detrimental.

Members of society are now quite comfortable attacking Christians for their beliefs, and these personal attacks—ones from colleagues, friends, and family—have the potential to do far more damage.

We are often unprepared for a direct face-to-face confrontation with someone about our beliefs, and when an unbeliever catches

us off guard, we panic. In the same way that a young man can ask a girl out in front of the mirror a hundred times—yet freezes up when he sees her, a Christian suddenly finds himself unable to think of a reasonable answer to the taunts of his antagonist. Afterwards he feels dejected, and his faith may suffer a setback because of it.

Here are some of the more common arguments against believing in Jesus as my Savior that I've come across and explanations of why they're wrong.

**“How can you believe in God when there's so much evil in the world?”**

A question like this is based on simple but powerful logic: If God is good and God is all-powerful, how can he allow evil to happen? The answer for some people is that “there is no God.” No more thought required.



It's interesting that such a simplistic answer is so widely accepted, given the percentage of people who believe that there is a government conspiracy to hide the existence of aliens or that a cast of dozens conspired to kill President Kennedy. If you cannot accept a weather balloon and a lone gunman as an answer, how can you accept "there is no God" as the final explanation?

Moving beyond the simplistic to actually look at the problem, we see that the Bible does have an explanation for it—sin. There is evil in the world because it's filled with sinful human beings who enjoy harming one another.

Why doesn't God do something about it? He did. He sent Jesus Christ to save us from our sin. This world isn't what it's about. It's the life to come that's important. That is where the paradise will be, not here.

**"How can you accept what the Bible says when evolution and science clearly shows it's not true?"**

Science is not religion. Science deals in proofs, while religion deals with faith. Science is in a constant state of revolution, but the Word of God is unchanging. Science says that all things are quantifiable, but God is beyond human understanding.

The trap we often fall into as Christians is trying to fight science with religion, which is a futile thing to do. Science's only concern is with the world, and the way to eternal life doesn't fit within that narrow view. Instead of wasting time attempting to attack scientific theories, we should be using our time and energy to point out the unbeliever's sinfulness and need for a Savior. That's what we were called by Christ to do.

Science cannot disprove the existence of God, because the central

principle of science is that there is no god. Since evolution is a theory constructed within this framework, it's no surprise that scientists come to a conclusion that doesn't include God. Scientifically, evolution as the beginning of life is a rational theory whose only failing is that it happens to be completely wrong.

**What you need to remember when someone attacks your beliefs is that faith does not demand proof or complete understanding.**

**"Your beliefs are stupid."**

"You're telling me that an invisible man lives in the sky watching you? That's stupid." Remember, many things when oversimplified sound stupid. Take the Big Bang theory, which is the basis for the scientific origin of the universe: "At the beginning of the universe there was nothing, and then the nothing exploded."

**"How can you believe in something like the Trinity, or that God is eternal? This doesn't make sense."**

We don't fully understand everything about God and what he's done for us. How can we? Such things are beyond our human comprehension. It's not necessary for my two children to understand the physical laws involved in lighting a bulb. They know that if they flick the switch the light comes on. In the same way, you don't have to understand the mysteries of God. You just have to believe them.

**Remaining strong in the Lord**

Countless other remarks out there

are used to attack Christians and may be a source of trouble for us. When confronted during these times, recognize them as opportunities to stand up for your faith and to bring the saving gospel to others. Sometimes the message will get through to their hearts, and another soul will have been brought back to God.

However, often you'll face someone who will continue in her unbelief, usually with visible scorn for you and your faith. It can be a trying time, especially if you fail to counter the argument the other person makes. When that happens, resist the temptation to fall into despair. Even if you've "lost" the discussion, you've still stood up for your belief in Jesus. If the unbeliever has given you feelings of doubt, turn to the Bible for a reminder of what Christ did for you. Instead of brooding over the negative, use it as a motivator to turn your faith around and bring you closer to your Lord.

What you need to remember when someone attacks your beliefs is that faith does not demand proof or complete understanding—"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith" (Ephesians 2:8). Also remember that the unbeliever is incapable of understanding what he's mocking—"they are foolishness to him, and he cannot understand them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Corinthians 2:14).

Finally, if you feel your faith weakened, remember that Christ himself was the victim of the taunts of unbelievers as well. Turn to him, the source of all strength and hope.



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# WHATEVER

## Mother duck, lead on!

A mother duck and her family taught me some important life lessons.

Brett Krause

**I**t happened on the way to grade school basketball camp. I was in the back seat of my mother's car with my good buddy, Jeff. I noticed that we started to slow down. I figured we must be slowing for traffic, but as we came to a complete stop, I realized that my mother had stopped for a family of ducks that was crossing the road.

The mother duck patiently led her little ones across the opposite side of the road and across the median. Now the ducks were beginning their journey across our side of the road, in front of our car.

My mother started cheering the ducks on from inside the car as if it would help them across. I, too, began cheering them on.

Thoughts raced through my mind. "Will they make it? Will they safely find their destination on the other side of the road?"

Several other cars stopped when they realized the predicament. The mother duck stood on the street, almost in shock it seemed, with her little ones following faithfully behind her. My anticipation was incredible.

"How long would the ducks stay there? Would they make it across? Be strong, mother duck, lead on!" I cheered to myself. Lead on is exactly what she did.

The mother duck finally regained her composure and guided her little ducks safely to the other side. They resumed walking up the street. A collective sigh of relief was breathed by everyone in the car. The mother duck had done it! She had led her babies to safety.

### The rest of the story

This, however, is not the end of my story—although I wish it were. As the mother duck confidently continued up the street, she approached a gutter that led down to the sewer. The mother, seeing no problem with the gutter, walked right over its grated cover with her large, webbed feet. She failed to realize that her little ones were much smaller.

As the babies faithfully followed their mother, they one by one fell in-between the cracks of the sewer grate. I

could almost hear them falling . . . plop . . . plop . . . plop. My heart sank.

It was heart wrenching to watch the mother duck boldly lead on, thinking her babies were following in stride. The mother, after confidently leading her babies to safety across the street, foolishly led them into possible death an instant later.

### The importance of the story

Every time I think of the ducks, I am reminded of Peter's response to Jesus' question, "Who do people say I am?"

Peter confessed his faith by saying, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

Immediately after that, Jesus predicted his own death. Peter replied that no such thing would ever happen to the Lord. Jesus called Peter "Satan" because only Satan would interfere and oppose the Savior's plan to save the world from its sins.

Just as the mother duck in my story confidently saved her babies from harm in crossing the street, Peter confidently passed Jesus' test of his faith. Unfortunately, though, the mother duck proceeded to foolishly lead her little ones across the sewer grate, just as Peter foolishly tried to interfere with God's plan of salvation.

As I think of that mother duck, I think about my life. I remember how easy it is to be on top of the world one minute, only to be knocked to the bottom the next because of my own foolishness.

Most important, the mother duck reminds me of my own faith. Sometimes it is strong. Sometimes it is weak. And too often, I take it for granted. The basic lesson I learned from the mother duck and her babies can be summed up with advice from Paul in 1 Corinthians 10:12: "So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you don't fall."

Brett Krause, a member at Emanuel, New London, Wisconsin, is a senior at Fox Valley Lutheran High School, Appleton, Wisconsin.





# THE UNCONQUERABLE ONE

The ascended Lord Jesus is the great conqueror.

Thomas H. Trapp

“I am the master of my fate; I am the captain of my soul,” boasted British writer William Ernest Henley. In his famous 1875 poem *Invictus* (Latin for “unconquered”), Henley also bragged about his “unbowed” head, his ability to remain “unafraid,” and his “unconquerable soul.”

Timothy McVeigh apparently felt the same way. On June 11, 2001, he was executed for his 1995 bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building, which killed 168 people. As an unspoken farewell confession of faith, McVeigh left behind a copy of Henley’s *Invictus*.

McVeigh and Henley, unconquerable? If they were invincible, why did Henley die in 1903 and McVeigh live to be only 33 years old?

McVeigh and Henley were far from unconquerable. So are we. The Bible says, “The soul who sins is the one who will die” (Ezekiel 18:4). We all have sinned. We all will die. There is, however, one person who walked on this earth who never sinned. That person, unlike McVeigh and Henley (and us), was unconquerable—even though he was tempted in every way that we are tempted.

This unconquerable one, who also lived on our planet for 33 years, did something no one else has ever done. After he was unjustly executed, he conquered sin, crushed Satan, and “destroyed death” (2 Timothy 1:10) by rising from the dead. He then “ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe” (Ephesians 4:10). This invincible one is now “far above all rule and authority, power and dominion. . . . And God placed all things under his feet” (Ephesians 1:21,22).

The Bible is as clear as clear can be. The ruler of wind and wave is the “author of salvation,” the “perfector of our faith” (Hebrews 2:10, 12:2), and the “captain of our soul.”

The unconquerable one is none other than the ascended Lord Jesus Christ!

Below is Henley’s *Invictus* and a Christian version, which rejoices in “the Conqueror of my soul.”

## INVICTUS

By: William Henley\*

Out of the night that covers me,  
Black as the Pit from pole to pole,  
I thank whatever gods may be  
For my unconquerable soul.

In the fell clutch of circumstance  
I have not winced nor cried aloud.  
Under the bludgeoning of chance  
My head is bloody, but unbowed.

Beyond this place of wrath and tears  
Looms but the Horror of the shade,  
And yet the menace of the years  
Finds, and shall find me, unafraid.

It matters not how strait the gate,  
How charged with punishments the scroll,  
I am the master of my fate;  
I am the captain of my soul.

## CONQUERED

author unknown

Out of His light that dazzles me,  
Bright as the sun from pole to pole,  
I thank the God I know to be  
For the Conqueror of my soul.

Since His the way of circumstance  
I would not wince or cry aloud,  
Under that rule, which men call chance  
My head, with joy, is humbly bowed.

Beyond this place of sin and tears  
That life with Him! And His the aid,  
That spite the menace of the years  
Keeps, and will keep me, unafraid.

I have no fear, though strait the gate,  
He cleared from punishment the scroll,  
Christ is the Master of my “fate;”  
Christ is the Captain of my soul.

Thomas Trapp is full-time campus pastor at Wisconsin Lutheran Chapel & Student Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

\*One Hundred and One Famous Poems, Barnes and Noble Books, New York, 1993. Adapted from an article by Victor Knowles in *Pulpit Helps*, August 2001.



## A world mission in Milwaukee

When I first heard of the Chinese Fellowship at St. John, Wauwatosa, Wis., I was proud that WELS was reaching out to people of other cultures. But when I learned that, now in its third year of operation, not one Chinese person has joined St. John, I wondered why they put so much effort into this program.

I was missing the point. The Chinese Fellowship does not exist to “fill up the back three pews of St. John with Chinese,” as Pastor Steven Pagels explained to me. “Our primary mission is to share the message of God’s saving love with people who desperately need it.”

Pastor Gerald Lange, who has done mission work in Hong Kong and mainland China, saw opportunity in the rising number of Chinese in Milwaukee, especially at the nearby Medical College of Wisconsin, and began the Chinese Fellowship in November 1999. The program brings God’s Word to 60-70 Chinese every Saturday, while helping them adapt to a new culture and language.

As I entered St. John’s school one Saturday, I got a taste of what it must be like for these people to be immersed in a strange culture. Many faces unlike my own came

into view, and the television filled my ears with words I could not understand. From about 3-9 PM, the school is bustling with activities from English lessons and sports to Mandarin Chinese films and Tai Chi lessons. What a blessing that these Chinese people can enjoy fellowship with others who share their culture.

Whatever may draw them in, the important thing is that they hear God’s Word. While the adults have their worship service/Bible class, the children and teenagers go to “Saturday school,” taught by volunteers from the congregation. Afterwards, they all enjoy a supper prepared by their American cooking class and maybe a game of cards or volleyball.

Most of the people that come were educated in atheism in mainland China, which is why “it is a miracle that the Chinese are willing to come to a Bible class such as this,” explains Lange.

The long-term goal of the program is to start a Chinese church. Two adults and one child have been baptized already. Three Chinese children have joined St. John’s preschool, too. As Pagels emphasizes, the greatest impact of the Chinese Fellowship may be on the children who faithfully read their Bible history books today and may lead a church tomorrow.

Although I had been frustrated that I couldn’t see the results of the program, I now see it to me: a world mission field right in Milwaukee.

*Laura Warmuth*

## Obituaries

### Francis Warner 1923-2001

Francis Warner was born Apr. 5, 1923, in Oconomowoc, Wis. He died Dec. 26, 2001, in Atlanta, Ga.

A 1949 graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., he served at St. John, Caledonia, Minn.; St. John, Juneau, Wis.; Winnebago Lutheran Academy, Fond du Lac, Wis.; St. John, Red Wing, Minn.; Peace, Bradenton, Fla.; Medellin, Colombia (a world mission field); and Immanuel, La Crosse, Wis.

He was preceded in death by his son, David. He is survived by his wife, Jen; two daughters; one son; and nine grandchildren.

### Robert E. Landvatter 1929-2002

Robert Landvatter was born Aug. 18, 1929, in West Bend, Wis. He died Feb. 13, 2002, in Kiel, Wis.

A 1948 graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., he served at Peace, Green Lake, Wis.; St. John, Fairfax, Minn.; Zion, South Milwaukee, Wis.; Grace, Oshkosh, Wis.; and St. Matthew, Oconomowoc, Wis.

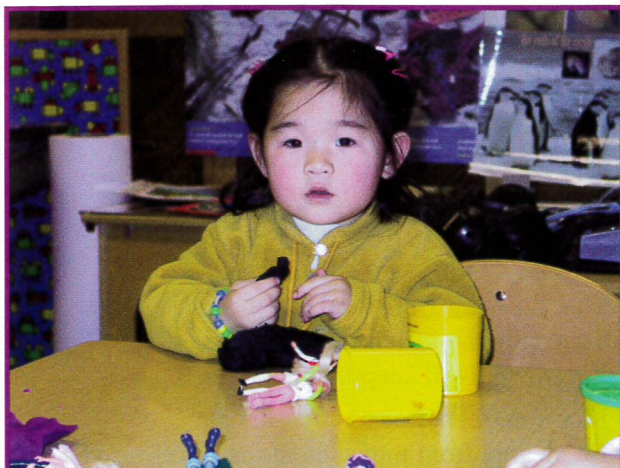
He was preceded in death by his wife, Julie. He is survived by four daughters, one son, 13 grandchildren, and two brothers.

### Edgar Hoenecke 1903-2002

Edgar Hoenecke was born Aug. 8, 1903, in Milwaukee, Wis. He died Feb. 17, 2002, in San Diego, Calif.

A 1926 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis., he served St. Peter, Plymouth, Mich. He was a pioneer for the WELS world missions program, opening missions in Zambia, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Japan, Colombia, Brazil, India, Cameroon, and Malawi. He also established several WELS churches in San Diego, Calif.

He was preceded in death by his son, Karl. He is survived by his wife, Meta; two daughters; two sons; two brothers; 17 grandchildren; and 28 great-grandchildren.



This little girl at the Chinese Fellowship sponsored by St. John, Wauwatosa, Wis., learned about Jesus preaching from a boat out on the water and is making her own boat out of Play-doh.



## Oh, brother!

When one was tying the other to a clothesline post 40 years ago, neither would have guessed they'd end up working as closely together as they now do. But brothers Jason and Joel Nelson not only share parents, they also share a passion for teaching God's Word to children.

Both brothers graduated from Dr. Martin Luther College (DMLC), New Ulm, Minn., in the seventies. From there they were called to serve as teachers and principals. Joel even had a stint as a staff minister. More recently, big brother Jason served as WELS' consultant for new schools. He accepted the call to serve as the Commission on Parish Schools (CPS) administrator in February. Little brother Joel served as the assistant administrator for the Commission on Parish Schools from the spring of '99 until he accepted the call to serve as the Commission on Youth Discipleship (CYD) administrator in January.

As Joel explains, "I frequently wound up doing the same things Jason did, but a couple of years later—eighth grade salutatorian, high school tennis, student council president, DMLC, WELS teacher and principal. Though I followed his lead many times, I always joked, 'Jason has slain his thousands, but Joel his tens of thousands.' Our adult relationship has been equally close. It's kind of cool now that he is 'following me' to CPS."

As CPS administrator, Jason "looks forward to working cooperatively with everyone that has a stake in WELS schools and learning their priorities." He believes "we are at a very critical juncture for our schools, especially our Lutheran elementary schools." Finally, he prays "that with God's grace and guidance, we can see the opportunities in the challenges and can help our schools fulfill their full potential in our congregations and, ultimately, in Christ's kingdom."

Joel, too, has visions for what he can help accomplish as CYD administrator. "I would like more people in WELS, from district presidents down to dimpled preschoolers, to better understand what CYD is all about," says Joel. "We are much more than Christ-Light and youth rallies. We are a unit whose efforts, under God's guidance and blessing, can have perhaps the greatest impact on the future of our church body and the members of our congregations and communities."

Together, Jason and Joel Nelson are working hard for WELS' youngest members.



The Nelson children often played house. Because Jason (right) was oldest, he'd play the dad. Sister Jan (middle) was youngest so she was the child. That left Joel (left) to be the mom.



Joel Nelson, Commission on Youth Discipleship administrator, and his wife, Carol.

### More about Joel Nelson

**On wife, Carol:** "She is the solid rock whose intelligence, energy, support, prayers, and spiritual example have helped me immeasurably during my entire ministry."

**Children:** Natalie, 18; Eric, 16; Lindsay, 10

### Continuing education:

Masters in family studies from Concordia University, Mequon, Wis. Pursuing doctorate in leadership at Cardinal Stritch University, Milwaukee



Jason Nelson, Commission on Parish Schools administrator, and his wife, Nancy.

### More about Jason Nelson

**On wife, Nancy:** "She is still the person I want to be with the most."

**Children:** Amanda, 24; Laura, 20; Justin, 19; Jordan, 10

**Continuing education:** Masters of education from Marquette University, Milwaukee



## Meet the district reporters—uncut

Ever ask yourself, “How does *Forward in Christ* magazine get all that district news?” In this article you can find out about our special link to the districts. Read on:

### Sharing exciting bits of news

*Forward in Christ* (FIC) magazine’s editor and two communication assistants cannot possibly know about and cover all the news going on in the 12 WELS districts. That’s why we are so thankful for the 13 pastors (the Arizona-California district has two reporters) who are appointed by their district presidents to serve as FIC magazine’s district reporters.

These pastors collect news in different ways. North Atlantic reporter Kevin Schultz, pastor at Abiding Word, Orleans, Ontario, Canada, says, “I periodically send out an e-mail to every congregation requesting news, special events, cute stories, anniversaries, photographs, etc. Then I edit what I receive and send it to [*Forward in Christ*].”

Pacific Northwest reporter David Birsching, pastor at St. Paul, Tacoma, Wash., “listens carefully at circuit meetings and district conferences for possible material.”

What motivates these reporters to volunteer in this way? Schultz explains, “I love seeing how excited congregations are about certain programs, creative ideas, or events that occur in their congregation, and also their willingness to share those things with other congregations in the hopes that they benefit from them.”

Northern Wisconsin reporter Joel Lillo, pastor at Trinity, Appleton, Wis., agrees. He enjoys “getting in touch with people when they are experiencing an exciting bit of news.”

If you have an “exciting bit of news” to share, contact your district reporter:

- Arizona—Kenneth Pasch, 480/986-0466;  
<khpasch@aol.com>
- California—Hermann John, 760/747-4276;  
<hermjoh1@myexcel.com>
- Dakota-Montana—David Wendt, 406/542-0233;  
<wendtdl@juno.com>
- Michigan—John Eich, 989/463-3056;  
<pjle@excite.com>
- Minnesota—Jeffrey Bovee, 507/354-6744;  
<revjeff@newulmtel.net>
- Nebraska—Michael Helwig, 308/382-1988;  
<saphis@juno.com>
- North Atlantic—Kevin Schultz, 613/824-2524;  
<kschultz@primus.ca>
- Northern Wisconsin—Joel Lillo, 920/757-0194;  
<revlillo@northnet.net>
- Pacific Northwest—David Birsching,  
253/627-5421; <birsch@juno.com>
- South Atlantic—Mark Haefner, 404/241-6093;  
<markhaefner@hotmail.com>
- South Central—Peter Snyder, 979/693-4514;  
<bsavior@tca.net>
- Southeastern Wisconsin—Scott Oelhafen,  
262/547-5350; <oelhafen@cyberlink.net>
- Western Wisconsin—Martin Baur, 715/421-3634;  
<stpauls@wctc.net>

## WELS news briefs

These updates are from the offices of the synod administration building.

### Board for World Missions

414/256-3233

The Administrative Committee for Japan Europe Asia Missions has decided to **transfer a manpower position from Bulgaria to Albania.**

**The first graduation from the seminary in Guntur, India, will take place in July 2002.** Eight students will graduate, along with 32 preseminary students.

**The Committee on Mission Expansion recommended that the Board for World Missions make China and the Chinese people its #1 priority for future mission**

expansion and that the Muslim world be its #2 priority.

### Tel/Tech Task Force

262/650-1592

**The initial target for distance learning over the Internet is the synodical certification program for teachers.** Professors at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., will have some time off from teaching to transform existing certification courses to the Web format.

### Commission on Youth Discipleship

414/256-3274

**Good News Daily, the 2002 vacation Bible school program, is available from Northwestern Publishing House.** Call 1-800-662-6022 to order.

The 2003 VBS program, *Back to Jerusalem*, is in production.

### Commission on Parish Schools

414/256-3220

**In August 2001, the commission held a forum with a representative group of WELS single female teachers to discuss this group’s unique needs.** Three hundred fifty-three of WELS’ 439 single teachers are female.

### Commission on Special Ministries

414/256-3240

**Five thousand copies of *God our Refuge*, a revised version of a military devotional book, were sent to New York.** WELS pastors there are distributing them among those who need the comfort of God’s Word.



## REAL TIME WITH A MISSIONARY

*In this section, you'll hear news that came via e-mail from missionaries. We hope you enjoy these tidbits from our missions.*

From Dan Kramer, pastor at Peace In Jesus, Boise, Idaho, a home mission reaching out to the Vietnamese:

December 9, 2001, was our New Member Service and Potluck. We had 10 people step forward to be members of our church from four different families.

One of our new member families is the David Malnes family. Dave is our new staff minister at Peace In Jesus. He and wife Lori, and children Chelsea, Justin, Jeremy, and Meagan, arrived around Thanksgiving. Dave was installed in an afternoon service on Dec. 16. It was a wonderful opportunity for the area congregations to join in the welcome of this new called worker.

Our main Christmas outreach was held on Christmas Day. We enjoyed a bilingual service (Vietnamese and English) that included our choir, as well as the children's choir. We are thankful for the 60 people who were able to come and hear the good news of the Savior born for every nation and culture. We give thanks to God who continues to bless our efforts as we "make known among the nations what he has done."



This young girl is happy to be at Peace In Jesus, Boise, Idaho.

## Placing priority on worship

"I used to come to church; now I come to worship," says one WELS member whose church called a parish music coordinator.

The distinction may seem small, but it isn't.

As Bryan Gerlach, the administrator for the Commission on Worship, notes, "Worship isn't just one program among many in our churches. It is the heart of everything we are and do—the time when God showers us with his gift of grace, when he blesses us with his instruction, and when we respond more intensively than any other time during the week" ("Ten Unexpected Years," *Lutheran Leader*, Summer 1996\*).

Because worship is at the heart of every congregation, more and more churches are adding worship coordination to the duties of their teachers, pastors, or staff ministers. Emanuel, New London, Wis., took this idea one step further by calling a full-time parish music coordinator.

In January 2001, Rachel Huebner accepted Emanuel's call. Part of Huebner's job as parish music coordinator is to work with Emanuel's three pastors and its school's principal and teachers to coordinate all musical schedules in the church and school; to expand the knowledge and appreciation of worship quality and variety among the congregation; to develop, implement, and evaluate a school music curriculum; to recruit, train, and supervise individuals with musical talent; and to organize, staff, and oversee all groups that provide worship-related music.

Is there really enough work, though, for a full-time worker?

According to Gerlach, there is more to worship coordination than meets the eye. "If music coordination and performance are achieved only from leftover time in busy people's lives, it will often not rise to a level that really has a powerful impact on worshippers. Pulling lots



Rachel Huebner is a full-time parish music coordinator at Emanuel, New London, Wis.

of people together in various ways takes much planning."

Huebner agrees. She says, "When a congregation calls a parish music coordinator, it shows that they are placing a priority on worship. That priority is hard to achieve if you can't dedicate yourself fully to it."

Of course, if your congregation is smaller or can't afford a full-time parish music coordinator, you could consider a half-time position for either a layperson in the congregation or a called worker. Even this step will help improve the coordination of worship and elevate worship to a place of priority in your congregation.

And, as Gerlach maintains, that priority on worship pays off: "Musical vigor from both the people in the pews and musicians contributes directly to the strength of the entire parish—including outreach; member retention; stewardship; and next generation nurture, retention, and recruitment."

\* To learn more about parish music coordinators, read these articles on the Commission on Worship Web site, <[www.wels.net/worship/art-19](http://www.wels.net/worship/art-19)> and <[www.wels.net/worship/art-14](http://www.wels.net/worship/art-14)>.





**So, God, what about ...?**

Want God's advice, but you're not sure where to look? We'll get you started with the basics. Remember these verses—and share them!

*Consumerism and materialism are two hallmarks of modern society. It's hard to resist the pull to want more . . . and more . . . and more. Yet, greed is not a new problem—it is as old as sin itself. Here's God's perspective.*

- Exodus 20:17: "You shall not covet your neighbor's house. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife . . . or anything that belongs to your neighbor."
- 1 Timothy 6:6-10: "But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it. But if we have food and clothing, we will be content with that. People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs."
- Hebrews 13:5: "Keep your lives free from the love of money and be content with what you have, because God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'"

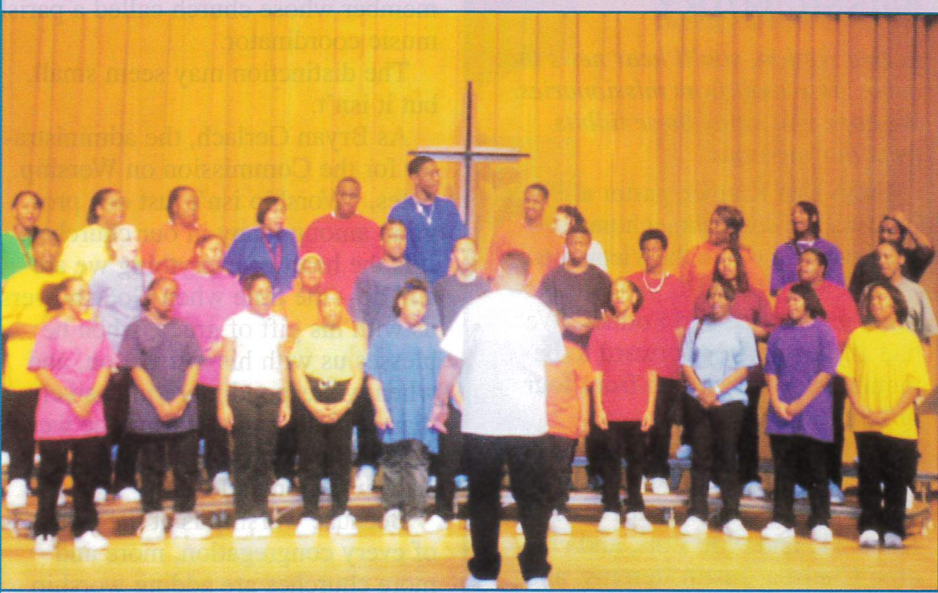
**On your own**

Learn more about God's view of contentment by reading these verses:  
 Ecclesiastes 5:10-12  
 Luke 3:10-14  
 Philippians 4:12-13

This year instead of daily Bible readings, we are providing topical Bible readings. If you want a list of daily Bible readings, check out the WELS Web site, <[www.wels.net/sab/frm3yr.html](http://www.wels.net/sab/frm3yr.html)>, or order a copy at <[www.shopWELS.net](http://www.shopWELS.net)>; 1-800-662-6022.

**District news**

**Southeastern Wisconsin**



On Jan. 19-21, 33 young people in the Youth Gospel Choir from Siloah, Milwaukee, Wis., sang praises at St. John, St. Paul, and Martin Luther College, all in New Ulm, Minn.

**California**

On Mar. 17, a dedication service was held at **St. John, Vacaville, Calif.**, for the congregation's refurbished facilities.

**South Atlantic**

**Risen Savior, East Manatee County, Fla.**, one of WELS' newest exploratory churches, held its first service on Mar. 17. The church is made up of current members of Ascension, Sarasota, Fla., and Peace, Bradenton, Fla. New members are being identified by door-to-door and telephone canvassing.

**South Central**

**Beautiful Savior, Bella Vista, Ark.**, moved to a new location on Mar. 3. The dedication for the new church was held on Apr. 14.

**Pacific Northwest**

**Daniel Tacke**, a senior at Evergreen Lutheran High School, Des Moines, Wash., won the Music Teachers National Association composition competition. Tacke traveled to Cincinnati, Ohio, on Mar. 18 to perform his piano

piece at the Music Teachers National Association Convention.

**Michigan**

On Mar. 3, a dedication service was held for the newly expanded facility at **Christ, Rockford, Mich.**

**Nebraska**

**Rebecca Remmers**, a senior at Nebraska Lutheran High School, Waco, was chosen to be a cheerleader at the 2002 Orange Bowl football game.

**Happy Anniversary!**

**CA—St. John, Tarzana, Calif.**, WELS' second congregation founded in California, celebrated its 50th anniversary on Feb. 10.

**SA—Members at Crown of Life, Fort Myers, Fla.**, celebrated the congregation's 25th anniversary on Mar. 3.

These pastors are the reporters for the districts featured this month: CA—Hermann John; MI—John Eich; NE—Michael Helwig; PNW—David Birsching; SA—Mark Haefner; SC—Peter Snyder; SEW—Scott Oelhafen.



## 2001-2002 WELS school statistics

As we end the 2001-02 school year, here are some statistics from our WELS schools. For a more complete summary, contact the Commission on Parish Schools to obtain the "School statistics 2001-2002" booklet.

### High schools

24 schools\*  
5,680 students  
456 teachers

### Elementary schools

362 schools  
28,930 students  
2,058 teachers

### Early childhood education

329 schools  
• 253 with an LES\*\*  
• 76 without an LES  
(free standing)  
6,241 students  
364 teachers

### Eleven new free standing preschools/child care centers

Ascension Preschool, Plymouth, Minn.  
Beautiful Savior Preschool, Spooner, Wis.  
Brooklyn Bridge Preschool, Brooklyn Park, Minn.  
Growing in Grace Preschool, LeSueur, Minn.  
Heritage Preschool, Gilbert, Ariz.  
Lamb of Grace Development Center, Charlotte, N.C.  
Redeemer Child Care Center, Tomahawk, Wis.  
Risen Savior Preschool, Woodbury, Minn.  
St. John Pre-Kindergarten, Vesta, Minn.  
Tree of Life Preschool, Lake Zurich, Ill.  
Zion Smiletime Learning Center, Allenton, Wis.

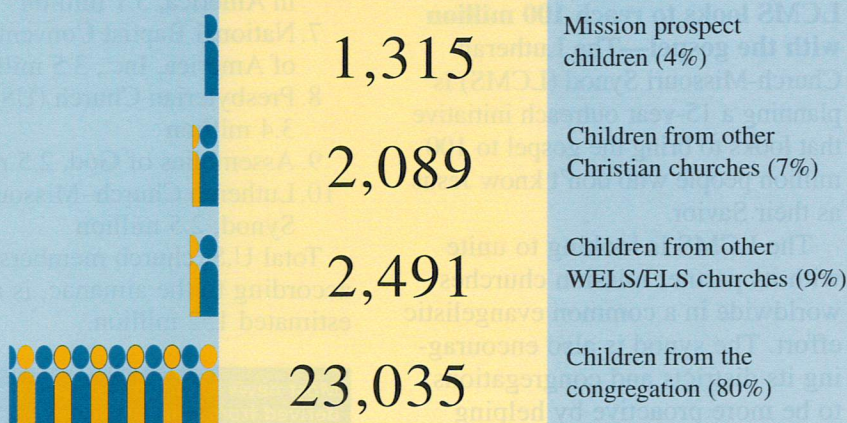
### Four new Lutheran elementary schools

Cross of Glory, Washington, Mich.  
Grace, Kenai, Alaska  
St. John's, Pardeeville, Wis.  
Westside, Middleton, Wis.

### Eight congregations in Milwaukee merged their schools to create four schools with new names:

St. Matthew and Gloria Dei became Faith  
Gethsemane-St. Andrew and Centennial became Word of Life  
North Trinity and St. John's-Clinton Ave. became Loving Shepherd  
Woodlawn and Jordan became Lamb of God

### Breakdown of students who attend Lutheran elementary schools



\*Two of these high schools are still in the planning stages

\*\*LES=Lutheran elementary school

## LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE

*In the spirit of Matthew 5:16, we're sharing examples of people who live their faith.*

Bess Quade, a.k.a. Besi, likes to share her faith—but maybe not in the traditional way that you're thinking.

"Whenever you approach someone and say something about Jesus, they seem to freeze up," says Quade, a member of Immanuel, Taylor, Ariz.

So she discovered a different way to tell others about the Savior. She creates original religious bookmarks with markers and gives them to people.

"I can just give them something that's pretty, and they don't have to say anything but 'Thank you,'" says 77-year-old Quade. "But every time they open their books, there's Jesus."

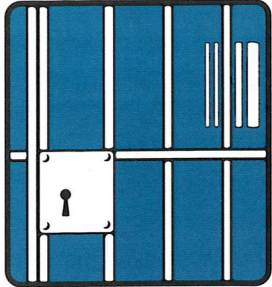
Quade, a retired schoolteacher, started this ministry three years ago. She leaves bookmarks with tips at restaurants, hands them to grocery store clerks, and sometimes just gives them to people she sees on the street. So far she has given away 300 to 400 bookmarks—with no refusals.

"When I gave a bookmark that says, '... And God loves you, too!!' to one little old lady, she smiled and said, 'I know he does.' That made my day," says Quade.

Her joy and excitement can be heard in her voice as she talks about her bookmark ministry. But her humbleness is apparent too. Says Quade, "It's just a little of something I do."







**Wiccan chaplain serving at a Wisconsin jail**—A Wiccan was selected to serve as the prison chaplain at the Waupun Correctional

Institution in Wisconsin.

A Wisconsin state lawmaker who disagrees with this selection intends to propose rules that require chaplain appointments to take into consideration the percentage of prisoners who share the chaplain's faith. His proposal would also cut off funds for that position.

About 30 of the 1,200 inmates at this maximum-security institution are Wiccan.

**Nine denominations work toward unity**—Churches Uniting in Christ, a commitment to cooperative action—especially the struggle against racism—between nine Protestant denominations, was officially inaugurated in January.

Under this new relationship, participating church groups will gather for local worship services, anti-racism efforts, and other mission work. Although this is not a merger for these church bodies, members will recognize each other's churches and baptisms, promote unity, and share communion.

Discussion began in 1999 but it took until 2002 before all the denominations approved the plan. Members of Churches Uniting in Christ have set a deadline of 2007 to solve all of their ministry differences.

Participating members include the African Methodist Episcopal Church, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Episcopal Church, Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, International Council of Community Churches, Presbyterian Church (USA), United Church of Christ, and United Methodist Church. The Evangelical

Lutheran Church in America declared itself a "partner in mission and dialogue," which means it will join in the efforts to combat racism and take part in future talks.

**Quebec bans human cloning**—

The province of Quebec, Canada, has banned all destructive research involving human embryos. New guidelines on ethical research were unveiled in January in which the creation and use of stem cells extracted from human embryos (resulting in the death of the embryos) is "forbidden."

The guidelines also forbid all human cloning, including cloning for research purposes only.

The government did promote adult stem cell research.

[LifeWire, Jan. 14, 2002]

**Did you know?**—The total number of languages in which books of the Bible are available now stands at 2,287, according to the annual tally by the United Bible Societies.

The complete Bible has been published in 392 languages, with eight languages reported for the first time in the last year. Of these eight, four are African languages, two are Asian languages, and two are languages spoken in Australia, New Zealand, and the Pacific islands.

**LCMS looks to reach 100 million with the gospel**—

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS) is planning a 15-year outreach initiative that looks to bring the gospel to 100 million people who don't know Jesus as their Savior.

The LCMS is looking to unite with its partner mission churches worldwide in a common evangelistic effort. The synod is also encouraging its districts and congregations to be more proactive by helping plant congregations in the United States and overseas.

Other objectives include doubling the number of career and volunteer missionaries in the synod and its partner churches, planting 5,000 Lutheran congregations and mission stations worldwide, and funding ready resources for meeting unexpected mission opportunities and handling emergency situations.

First estimates guess that about \$100 million is need to carry out the objectives of the new initiative.

[LCMSNews, Feb. 12, 2002]

**Mormon church body growing**—

For the first time, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons) has been listed among the top five largest churches in the United States, according to the 2002 *Yearbook of Canadian and American Churches* compiled by the National Council of Churches.

The Latter-day Saints bumped the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to sixth place.

The top 10 U.S. churches are:

1. Roman Catholic Church, 63.6 million
2. Southern Baptist Convention, 15.9 million
3. United Methodist Church, 8.3 million
4. Church of God in Christ, 5.4 million
5. Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 5.2 million
6. Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 5.1 million
7. National Baptist Convention of America, Inc., 3.5 million
8. Presbyterian Church (USA), 3.4 million
9. Assemblies of God, 2.5 million
10. Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 2.5 million

Total U.S. church membership, according to the almanac, is an estimated 152 million.

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





CHANGES IN MINISTRY

Pastors

- Eggert, Jan C., to Mt. Olive, Tulsa, Okla.
Goens, Brian L., to St. Paul, Hyde/Grace, Powers, Mich.
Loescher, Kurt W., to David's Star, Jackson, Wis.
Pries, David C., to Bethany, Hustisford, Wis.
Reichel, David D., to Ascension, Mitchell/Faith, Huron, S.D.
Strawn, Robert A., to retirement
Strutz, Nathan W., to Bethel, Galesville, Wis.
Ziemer, Carl W., to Commission on Special Ministries administrator, Milwaukee

Teachers

- Bender, Kyle M., to Bethel, Sioux Falls, S.D.
Boileau, Vicki A., to St. Mark, Green Bay, Wis.
Bruss, Marlene H., to St. John, Maribel, Wis.
Eberhardt, Gretchen, to Palos, Palos Heights, Ill.
Eberhardt, Patricia F., to St. John, Maribel, Wis.
Falck, Karena S., to Good Shepherd, Cedar Rapids, Iowa
Gray, Mary B., to Grace, Portland, Ore.
Koepsell, Jean M., to Our Redeemer, Madison, Wis.
Nelson, Jason M., to Commission on Parish Schools administrator, Milwaukee
Schalow, Kristin K., to St. John, Mukwonago, Wis.
Schmeling, Beth M., to Faith, River Falls, Wis.
Schmidt, Michelle M., to Martin Luther, Oshkosh, Wis.
Van Brocklin, Frank C., to St. Peter-St. Paul, Hopkins, Mich.
Welke, Dawn M., to St. Matthew, Iron Ridge, Wis.

Staff Ministers

- Boileau, Philip N., to St. Mark, Green Bay, Wis.
Kaiser, Paul E., to St. Paul, Stevensville, Mich.

ANNIVERSARIES

- West Salem, Wis.—Christ (100). Services, 8 & 10:30 AM.
May 5. Pig roast to follow. RSVP, 608/786-1250.
June 30. Picnic to follow.
Clatonia, Neb.—Zion Lutheran School (50). June 9. Service, 10 AM. Open house and dinner to follow. RSVP, Steven Kahrs, 402/989-4775.
St. Louis Park, Minn.—Timothy (50). June 23. Service, 9:30 AM. Pig roast to follow. RSVP, Stephen, 952/933-2946.
Cream, Wis.—Zion (125). June 23. Services, 10:30 AM & 2 PM. Dinner served between services.
Milwaukee, Wis.—Mt. Lebanon (75). June 23. Service, 9:30 AM. Picnic to follow.
Tawas City, Mich.—Emanuel (125). September 22. Services, 8 & 10:30 AM & 3 PM. Noon meal.

COMING EVENTS

- Women's Day 2002—May 4-5. Mighty Fortress, Red Deer, Alberta. Carol, 403/346-4140.
Graduation dates—
Martin Luther College commencement concert, May 17, 7:30 PM
Martin Luther College graduation, May 18, 10 AM
Martin Luther College call service, May 18, 2:30 PM
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary call service, May 21, 10 AM
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary commencement concert, May 21, 7:30 PM
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary graduation, May 22, 10 AM
Michigan Lutheran Seminary commencement concert, May 24, 7 PM

- Michigan Lutheran Seminary graduation, May 25, 10:30 AM
Luther Preparatory School commencement concert, May 24, 7 PM
Luther Preparatory School graduation, May 25, 10 AM
LWMS National Convention—June 27-30. Las Vegas, Nev. LWMS central office, 414/321-6212.
Summer camps—Camp Phillip, Wautoma, Wis. Summer camp programs for youth K-12. June 19-Aug. 14. Family camping also available. Call 920/787-3202 for a brochure.
National OWLS Convention—July 9-11. Ramada Convention Center, Wausau, Wis. Lester Ring, 507/354-4403.
Camp—Good Shepherd Bible Camp, Angelus Oaks, Calif. July 7-13 and July 14-20. Campers fourth through tenth grade. Families welcome. Charles Found, 805/492-8943.
DMLC 25th class reunion—class of 1977. July 20. Appleton, Wis. Ed and Laura Becker, 708/672-0713. <eb-ssp@rocketmail.com>.
WELS Weekend LIVE 2002—hosted by students from Wisconsin Lutheran Chapel and Student Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Aug. 2-4. Four Points Sheraton Hotel, Milwaukee. Kati Hatfield, 608/257-1969.
Regional youth rally—Minnesota District. Aug. 4-7. St. Louis, Mo. 507/232-3938.
Ukraine tour—sponsored by Thoughts of Faith, an Evangelical Lutheran Synod independent mission society working in Ukraine. Sept. 24-Oct. 8. Tour starts in Warsaw, Poland. Sightseeing in historic Ukrainian cities of L'viv, Ternopil, Odessa, Yalta, Kharkiv, and Kyiv. Fellowship with Ukrainian Lutheran congregations. Inclusive tour includes air, hotel, daily breakfasts and dinners, and motor coach. 1-800-521-1322 or 1-877-892-4718.
5th annual Run for the Prize 5K run & walk—Oct. 19, 10 AM. Immanuel, Findlay, Ohio. David Braun, 800/688-8151 ext. 210.

ITEMS AVAILABLE

- 1996 Columbia organ by Estey—offered to a church or school. Free for pick-up in Delafield, Wis. Contact Sandy Wood after 6 PM, 262/369-5466.

SERVICES AVAILABLE

- What is Truth—a presentation that answers the movement in America that the truth is what you make it. Is truth alterable? Or is truth unchanging? Brian Jira is available to present this program to WELS churches or schools. Contact him at 920/563-0554 or 920/568-1190.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

- Child care providers—Grace, Charlotte, N.C., is seeking WELS/ELS individuals to work at Lambs of Grace Child Development Center (ages six weeks to five years). Experience a plus but not necessary. Patti Fellers, 704/366-9309.
Teach English in a foreign country—Has the Lord ever laid on your heart a desire to share Jesus with people of a foreign country? If so, this may be the opportunity you are looking for. We have English language teaching positions open. Airfare, housing, health insurance, and an in-country livable wage will be paid. Main qualification is a desire to serve Jesus and share your faith. WELS people with teaching degrees and teaching experience preferred but not required. Husband/wife teams okay. One-year commitment minimum. <asia-usa@juno.com>.

SERVICE TIMES

- Bella Vista, Ark.—Beautiful Savior, 648 Lancashire Blvd. Sunday worship, 9:30 AM. Sunday school and Bible class, 10:45 AM. Russel Kobs, 479/876-2155.

NEEDED

- Preacher(s)—to conduct services at Trinity, Mountain Home, Ark. June 23 & 30. Home in area provided as lodging. Branson, Mo., and Ozark sights within two hours. 870/424-2888.
Communion ware—(common cup) for ELS mission churches in the Czech Republic. <mgrubbs@sml.cz>.
Actors/actresses—for the pilot episode of a WELS-produced television series titled "Fifth Pew from the Front." All ages welcome to audition. Send a headshot, resume, and if possible, a video of a performance to Steven Zambo, WELS Media Communications Director, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222. <stevez@sab.wels.net>. Photos and videos will not be returned.
Gold cross—baroque or plain, five to six feet tall. Faith, Alpena, Mich., will pay for shipping. D. MacNeill, 989/356-6787.

NAMES WANTED

- Sheridan, Wyo.—Pete Zietlow, 307/672-7599.
Artists—for the National Conference on Worship, Music, and the Arts. July 21-24. Carthage College, Kenosha, Wis. Display works of art. Assist in the development of art for conference worship. Send contact information with description of artwork or portfolio to Worship Arts Subcommittee, c/o Peter Schaeve, 1014 S Main St, Jefferson WI 53549; 920/675-0219.

To place an announcement, call 414/256-3210; FAX, 414/256-3899; <BulletinBoard@sab.wels.net>. Deadline is eight weeks before publication date.

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# Really?

This dialogue answers some questions skeptics have about Jonah's experiences.

Paul E. Zell

**Question from skeptic:** Really?

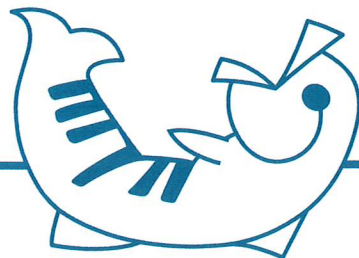
**Answer from Bible-believing Christian:** What do you mean—really?

**Q:** Friends of mine ask, “Do you really believe that Jonah was swallowed by a whale and lived to tell about it?” Their remarks make me wonder whether this really happened. Aren't there Bible scholars who say this is just a fable?

**A:** But it isn't told as a fable, is it? The Scriptures tell us that Jonah fled from his God-given assignment to preach to real people at Nineveh. He boarded a real ship and headed out to sea. God sent a real storm. Real sailors cast him overboard. He sank into real seawater. He was really in danger of drowning, “but the Lord provided a great fish to swallow Jonah” (1:17).

**Q:** Sometimes I imagine this as Disney might portray it. Swallowed by a whale, Jonah sits comfortably on the whale's tongue, lights a candle, and tries to figure out how to escape.

**A:** We cannot tell whether the Lord appointed a whale or a shark or some other “great fish” to rescue Jonah, but this was no cartoon. It was a life-threatening situation. In fact, it's hard to imagine being trapped among the odors and acids of a sea creature's churning stomach. Yet the Holy Spirit chose not to dwell upon such details.



## BIBLE READING

**Jonah 1:11,12,15,17; 2:10**

<sup>11</sup>The sea was getting rougher and rougher. So [the sailors] asked [Jonah], “What should we do to you to make the sea calm down for us?”

<sup>12</sup>“Pick me up and throw me into the sea,” he replied, “and it will become calm. I know that it is my fault that this great storm has come upon you.” . . .

<sup>15</sup>Then they took Jonah and threw him overboard, and the raging sea grew calm. . . .

<sup>17</sup>But the LORD provided a great fish to swallow Jonah, and Jonah was inside the fish three days and three nights. . . .

<sup>2:10</sup>And the LORD commanded the fish, and it vomited Jonah onto dry land.

**Q:** Really?

**A:** We are simply informed that the great fish swallowed Jonah, that “he was inside the fish three days and three nights” (verse 17), and that, when the Lord commanded it, the fish deposited Jonah on dry land. The Lord used one of his creatures to save his prophet's life and redirect the course of his ministry.

**Q:** Does anyone else in Scripture discuss what happened to Jonah?

**A:** You will recall that the Lord Jesus performed miracle after miracle, proving that he is the Son of God. Many

refused to believe. Finally, when a group of his opponents demanded still another miraculous sign, Jesus spoke about Jonah. “None will be given it except the sign of the prophet Jonah,” he announced. “For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish, so the Son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth” (Matthew 12:39-40). Whenever we read about Jonah's experience, the Holy Spirit would have us celebrate a much greater miracle.

**Q:** Really?

**A:** Yes. Jesus fulfilled what he foretold. He escaped the grave on the third day. His resurrection demonstrates that the redemption payment he deposited on the cross is acceptable to our Father in heaven. It also proves that all who believe on his name will someday escape the grave at his command and be raised to eternal life. The “resurrection” of Jonah on the third day is really the lesser of two similar miracles. It points to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the greatest and most important miracle of all.

**Q:** Really? You've given me something to squelch my doubts and share with my skeptical friends. I'm really glad we had this conversation.

**A:** So am I. Really!



*Paul Zell is pastor at Messiah, Alpharetta, Georgia.*





# Jesus' miracles: PORTRAITS OF REDEMPTION

Mark J. Lenz

**INTRODUCTION**

Forgiveness of sins is Scripture's main theme. This theme also runs through the accounts of Jesus' miracles. How is forgiveness the main theme of Jesus' healing the blind? Of his opening the ears of the deaf? Of his healing the lame?

Why is the assurance of forgiveness so vital for us? How is it the focus of our worship services? How is forgiveness found in the sacrament of Baptism? How is it found in the Lord's Supper? Why do we need to be reminded of our forgiveness every day?

**TEXT—MARK 2:1-12**

When Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. <sup>2</sup>So many gathered that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. <sup>3</sup>Some men came, bringing to him a paralytic, carried by four of them. <sup>4</sup>Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus and, after digging through it, lowered the mat the paralyzed man was lying on. <sup>5</sup>When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, "Son, your sins are forgiven."

<sup>6</sup>Now some teachers of the law were sitting there, thinking to themselves, <sup>7</sup>"Why does this fellow talk like that? He's blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?"

<sup>8</sup>Immediately Jesus knew in his spirit that this was what they were thinking in their hearts, and he said to them, "Why are you thinking these things? <sup>9</sup>Which is easier: to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Get up, take your mat and walk'? <sup>10</sup>But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins. . . ." He said to the paralytic, <sup>11</sup>"I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." <sup>12</sup>He got up, took his mat and walked out in full view of them all. This amazed everyone and they praised God, saying, "We have never seen anything like this!"

**QUESTIONS**

1. What indicates that people were enthusiastic about Jesus' return to Capernaum?
2. How did the four men manage to bring their paralytic friend into Jesus' presence?

**QUESTIONS, CONTINUED**

3. Why did Jesus first say to the paralytic, "Your sins are forgiven," instead of "Be healed?" Why did the teachers of the law consider this blasphemous?
4. What does Jesus' ability to read the minds of the teachers of the law say about him?
5. Agree/Disagree: Forgiving sins is easier than healing people.
6. What did the healing of the paralytic testify about Jesus?
7. How did the people respond to the miracle?

**APPLICATIONS**

1. In recent years remarkable advances have been made in helping paraplegics and quadriplegics. How does Jesus' healing of the paralytic compare with what modern medical science is able to do?
2. Why do we, like the people in Capernaum that day, often focus more on physical than spiritual matters?
3. There are those who believe that spiritual health contributes to physical health. Do you agree? Why or why not?
4. The paralytic was unable to come to Jesus on his own. How does he represent the spiritual condition of the entire human race?
5. The four men in this account put forth a great deal of effort to help the paralytic. Who has gone to great lengths to show interest in your spiritual nurture? Who are you striving to help spiritually?

**PRAYER**

Thank you, dear Savior, for the forgiveness of sins won by your death on the cross. Help me treasure this blessing above all else. Give me many opportunities to bring others to the knowledge of their forgiveness in you. Thank you for the many people who have seen to my spiritual nurture in the past and for those who continue to be concerned about my soul's health. Cause me to walk in your ways and to use all that I am and have in your service. Hear me for your mercy's sake. Amen.



# IN THE CROSS HAIRS

Richard L. Gurgel

## TOPIC: JESUS' DESCENT INTO HELL

**Question:** I presume the Apostles' Creed is focusing on Jesus' post-resurrection appearances when it puts his descent into hell before his resurrection. But shouldn't our catechism spell out the actual order—resurrection, descent into hell, appearances on earth—lest people associate the descent with the time when Jesus was still dead?

**Answer:** "He descended into hell" may be the most misunderstood phrase in the entire creed. Its placement in the creed—before the resurrection—almost certainly results from the fact that when the creed was formed (several centuries after the apostles) many misunderstood what Scripture said about Jesus' descent into hell.

Many taught that Jesus' descent happened while he was still dead. Some of those taught that Jesus' soul descended to finish paying sin's penalty. Others taught that Jesus descended into an "abode of the dead" or "limbo" to free souls who died in faith in the Savior but who could not enter heaven until the work of salvation was completed. Many even taught that Jesus gave a second chance to souls who rejected the gospel in this life.

Because so many false teachings spoke of Jesus' descent taking place while in the grave, it's not surprising that this might influence the positioning of this phrase in the creed.

However, as your question indicates, Scripture places Jesus' descent into hell after he had come back to life on Easter morning. "For Christ died for sins once for all, the righteous for the unrighteous, to bring you to God. He was put to death in the body but made alive by the Spirit, through whom also he went and preached to the spirits in prison" (1 Peter 3:18-19). Gloriously reunited body and soul and very much alive, it was no longer a suffering servant, but a victorious and conquering Lord, who descended into hell to make "a public spectacle of [Satan and his angels], triumphing over them by the cross" (Colossians 2:15).

Nonetheless, despite the historic confusion, the descent into hell can be properly understood where the creed places it, for the descent is the beginning of his glorious

Easter triumph. Jesus hadn't yet shown himself alive to witnesses in this life. It is those appearances that we associate with Jesus' resurrection on the third day.

As long as we teach both his descent and resurrection as glorious truths of Jesus' exultation, there's no harm in perpetuating the creed's "order."

Finally, although you were not asking for a restatement of the descent's purpose, allow me to close with its comfort for us. As Jesus bowed his head and died it seemed that those who hated Christ had won. But on Easter morning, in the heart of hell itself, the Savior proclaimed the truth.

Perhaps no one caught that point from Scripture better than C. F. W. Walther in his Easter hymn, "He's Risen, He's Risen" (*Christian Worship* 143). Walther uses poetic license to paint the picture of a presumptuous Good Friday party in hell.

*The foe was triumphant when on Calvary  
The Lord of creation was nailed to the tree.  
In Satan's domain did the hosts shout and jeer,  
For Jesus was slain, whom the evil ones fear.*

But an uninvited guest crashes their party!

*But short was their triumph; the Savior arose;  
And death, hell, and Satan he vanquished, his foes.  
The conquering Lord lifts his banner on high;  
He lives, yes, he lives, and will nevermore die.*

That our Savior could announce his triumph in hell itself assures us that Satan and hell have lost their hold on us. Hell would have been our home forever. But the Risen One who announced in hell our victory has prepared for us another home. He is the victor, and he lives to take us safely there!



*Richard Gurgel is a professor at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin.*

*Have a question you want answered? Send it to 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222; <fic@sab.wels.net>.*



Dec. 26, 2001-Jan. 5, 2002, 15 adults and students connected with Winnebago Lutheran Academy followed the path of the Israelites from their exodus out of Egypt to their entrance into the Promised Land. Kay Wege, one of the group members, writes the following:

While enjoying a sailboat ride down the Nile, we tried to envision a small woven basket hidden among the papyrus reeds at the water's edge. However, these dark and murky waters did not entice me to bathe there

as the Pharaoh's daughter had done.

Fishermen checked their nets as we ate lunch at an open-air restaurant on the Nile, and I wondered what those fishermen of long ago did when the river turned to blood and spewed frog after frog up onto the land. . . .

A pastor reminded me, "Once you know something better, you appreciate it more." Fifteen of us were privileged to grow, study, and appreciate an important part of Old Testament history through the footsteps of Moses.

## Picture this



The group from Winnebago Lutheran Academy imitates the mummies they saw at the pyramids of Giza.

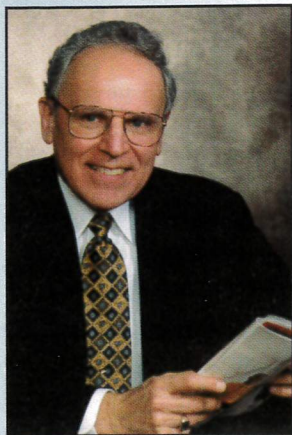
Send pictures to *Picture this*, Forward in Christ magazine, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398. On a separate sheet, give us information about the photo. Those whose photos are chosen will receive a small gift.

"Television is not a member of the family; it's a stranger. Would you let a stranger into your child's bedroom?"  
(Joan Anderson, quoted in *Current Thoughts and Trends*, Sept. 2001)

"If you think you can't fall into sexual sin, then you're godlier than David, stronger than Samson, and wiser than Solomon."  
(Bill Perkins, quoted in *Current Thoughts and Trends*, Sept. 2001)

"I don't know what your destiny will be, but one thing I know: the only ones among you who will be really happy are those who have sought and found a way to serve."  
(Albert Schweitzer)





Gary P. Baumler is editor of *Forward in Christ* magazine and WELS Director of Communications.

We have come to expect the unbelieving world to promote sex in virtually any form. But Christian leaders?

## Shhh! It's about sex.

Ethics are seldom easy. Often when ethical questions are posed, there is much gray and little black and white from which to form an opinion. For example, in the movie *Bounty*, a man on a dinghy in the open sea, sensing he was near death, offered to have the others in the boat, when he died, eat his flesh to keep themselves alive. The offer was rightly (I think we agree) rejected. However, the ethics of doing so are not so easily decided.

So, let it be said, ethicists have a tough job that begs for courageous wisdom, often trying to determine the greater good when the choices aren't good. It follows, doesn't it, that Christian ethicists have an easier job than others when Scripture has spoken clearly on a subject? That's why the news article, "Christian Ethicists Approve of Sex for Fun" (Religion News Service, 01/16/02), caught my attention.

The title raised a caution flag for me, but I withheld judgment. Surely we have gotten past the days when the very word "sex" was never spoken aloud in proper company. Just as surely, sex is not inherently dirty, a curse to be endured in order to have children. We have come to realize, from Scripture (most notably Song of Songs), that sex in marriage can be a thing of joy. Prudery and Christianity are not natural bedfellows.

But, back to the article. The opening paragraph reads: "Sex is sacred. Sex is good. Sex can be for fun alone. Sex can be fine with oneself and, in some circumstances, it can be terrific outside marriage." Talk about going from the sublime to the ridiculous—or better, from the sublime to the irreligious! Yet these are "Christian" ethicists that offered those opinions.

We have come to expect the unbelieving world to promote sex in virtually any form. But Christian leaders? Those who speak out for Christian ethics?

Maybe you're not shocked by that, but you should be saddened and shamed by it. The

larger Christian community has apparently chosen not to listen to God's Word when speaking for God on sexual morality. So, ignoring clear words of Scripture to the contrary, these Christians speak in favor of sex outside of marriage, masturbation (now called "self-pleasuring"), homosexuality, and "abortion as a backup" when contraception fails.

But God is not to be so easily pushed aside. His plan for sexual expression is different from the world's, works better, and lasts longer. It doesn't leave a person with the cold emptiness following one-night stands, the guilt of marriage compromised, the constant seeking for acceptance of practices that are clearly unnatural, the lost pleasure of a unique union on the wedding night.

Oh, the forbidden fruit often looks better, but it leaves a bitter taste. So it is where sin holds sway.

I suppose the Christian ethicists weren't exactly advocating one-night stands, though. The politically correct password seems to be "committed relationships." But once the restraints are removed, who's to say where the line gets drawn? How do you define a committed relationship?

I, for one, am all for truly committed relationships:

- Committed to the ways outlined by the Lord.
- Committed to faithfulness in marriage.
- Committed to fighting against the temptations of the world.
- Committed to the blessings that abound in a Christ-centered home.
- Committed to the wonderful mystery of two becoming one flesh for life.

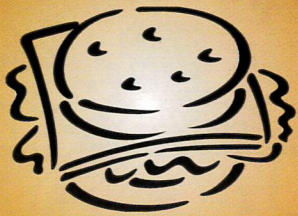
As for the Christian ethicists: if all they can come up with is a garnished version of what the world has already served up, it would help if they didn't operate under the guise of Christian.

*Gary P. Baumler*

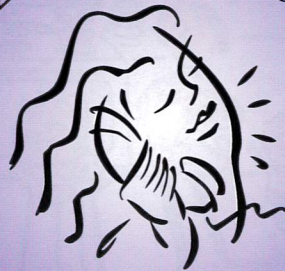


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a hamburger



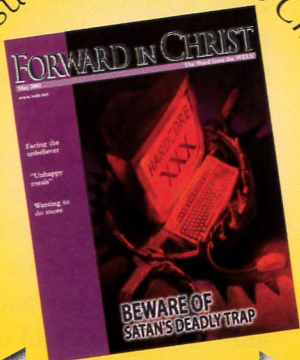
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a 2-liter bottle of soda



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# Who I am

Ruth E. Westendorf

I am a wife, mother, writer, and graphic designer.  
But do those things really define who I am?



Lately I've been having an identity crisis. I can't figure out just who I'm supposed to be. In high school I decided that I wanted to be a writer. In college I thought I should pursue a career in graphic design. Then God showed me a wonderful man to whom I would become a wife. Soon after that, I discovered that I would be a mother as well.

But somehow I didn't feel like I fit into any of these roles. Yes, I can be all of these things, but I don't think they really define who I am.

I often catch myself thinking, "If I can only find a job where I can really use my talents and feel useful, then I'll be who I want to be." Yet deep down I know that this won't really fix my problem. I'll still feel that I'm not quite who I'm supposed to be.

Then in Bible study last week a friend of mine confessed, "I keep doing things that I know I shouldn't be doing, but it's so easy to think

'I can't help it. That's just how I am.' It's so easy to make excuses for my pet sins." We all agreed—this was a problem that we all had. It's so difficult to be the saints that God called us to be while still living in our sinful flesh.

... I never can, in this life, become who I'm truly meant to be.

**Suddenly everything clicked.** The reason I don't feel like I am who I want to be is that I never can, in this life, become who I'm truly meant to be. The saint that I'm supposed to be won't be fully realized until I'm in heaven.

It felt as if a burden had been lifted from my shoulders. I finally knew who I was meant to be, the realization of all of the potential God had created in me. It doesn't matter if I never write a bestseller or land my dream job—what matters is how

close I can come in life to the person I will be in heaven, a person with perfect, joyful obedience to all that God asks of me and perfect love for those around me.

So now I have a goal, a definite purpose in life and a reason for everything I do. Jesus, the only true earthly saint, gave his life for me so that I could understand who I really am—a beloved child drawn out of sin's bondage so that I can live and love my Savior.

My challenge, then, is to strive to become more like myself as God made me to be—to love my husband, children, friends, neighbors, and yes, even enemies, as God asks me to do. That's quite a challenge, but I have God's own assurance that with his help I can overcome "that's just how I am" in my sinful flesh and be more like the saint he redeemed me to be.

Ruth Westendorf is a member at Trinity, Neenah, Wisconsin.

