



The  
Northwestern  
Lutheran

NOVEMBER 1, 1986

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May the Lord our God be with us  
as he was with our fathers;  
may he never leave  
or forsake us. 1 Kings 8:57

# The Northwestern Lutheran

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PHOTO CREDITS — 368: Chan Harris.

COVER — Street scene in Taipei, Taiwan.

# By faith

*Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see (Hebrews 11:1).*

**H**ow do you describe life? Among the many descriptions, there is this brief one: you have victories and you have defeats. As time passes we discover that not all those events we placed into the victory column have turned out to be victories and the same is true of those events we placed into the defeat column.

The story that Jesus told the disciples of the rich man and poor Lazarus makes that point. Human judgment would give the rich man a long line of victories and poor Lazarus only defeats. Such judgment ignores God's gifts of faith. Without faith the rich man was led to the eternal defeat of hell. With faith Lazarus was led to the greatest of victories, eternal salvation.

The 11th chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews has a long list of victories. The name given to all these victories is, "By faith." These two words are repeated over twenty times.

## "Sure of what we hope for"

The word that is used for faith means: Leaning the entire human personality upon God in absolute trust and confidence in God's power, wisdom and goodness. The originating point of this faith is clear: "Faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ" (Romans 10:17). God is the giver of this faith.

In life we have plans, hopes and dreams. We add the words, "God willing." That is the way it is with our earthly lives. Now faith takes our wishful desires and makes them sure. The surety of faith is that God will lead us, guide us in life according to his will and our good. We are given the example of Abraham. God called Abraham to leave his home and go to a strange, unknown place. How many hopes Abraham must have had. In verse eight we are told, "By faith Abraham made his home in the promised land." Abraham leaned his entire personality upon God. We are given the example of Noah, who "by faith in holy fear built an ark to save his family." And the list goes on, "By faith Moses' parents hid him for three months after he was born. . . . By faith the people passed through the Red Sea. . . . By faith the walls of Jericho fell."

"Faith is being sure of what we hope for." Lean your entire personality upon God in absolute trust and confidence in God's power, wisdom and goodness. Our gracious God gives us "by faith" victories when the situation of the moment appears impossible. "By faith" we live each day until we reach that ultimate victory of the resurrection to life everlasting. We give thanks to God for that victory of victories through our Lord Jesus Christ.

## "Certain of what we do not see"

Show me! Prove it to me! I want courtroom evidence! In verse three we read, "By faith we understand that the universe was formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what is visible." We see God's creation all around us. We have seen a man standing on the moon. We see it but we do not see any visible evidence of how it was made. God tells us that. God said, "Let there be . . . and there was." By faith we are certain of this even though we do not see. By faith we know that God alone is the creator. We are certain because in faith we lean our entire human personality upon God.

So often in life we cannot see or understand why things are the way they are. The frequent child's question is, why? Our frequent response is, because! There is no obvious, visible answer. With childlike faith we are to meet the roadblocks of life saying, Savior, you lead and I will follow — in faith. That is our surety, certainty for each present moment and for the future. We do not see the future.

We know that our lives on earth are limited. We know that we haven't brought anything into this world and it is a sure thing we are not going to take anything along when we leave. Leaning our entire selves upon God we know that God's power, wisdom and goodness will bring us safely to our heavenly home. Heaven, prepared by our ascended Savior, Jesus Christ, we have not seen, but we are certain of it.

The 11th chapter of Hebrews gives us a lengthy list of Old Testament believers and the victories God gave them "By faith." Life! You have some victories and some defeats. How easily we place events into the wrong column. "By faith," that precious gift of God's grace through the power of the Holy Scripture, we live each day of our lives. We use the abilities God has given us to work, to serve, to make plans for the future. We may change our place of living, change careers but by God's grace never change "by faith." We each make applications in our personal lives as we lean our entire human personality upon God, "sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see." □



Lyle Lindloff is pastor of Calvary, Thiensville, Wisconsin.

## EDITORIAL COMMENT

### Why not “This is what the Lord says”?

In sexual issues the Catholic church has an “absolute” ban on artificial birth control, homosexuality, abortion, premarital sex and divorce. (In the case of divorce, Roman teaching is even more restrictive than the Bible is.) Pope John Paul II has taken the lead in maintaining his church’s position on sexual matters. But the Rev. Charles E. Curran, a professor at Catholic University of America in Washington, D.C., holds that there are times when these acts can be morally justified. He has even departed from the Catholic church’s condemnation of homosexuality by arguing that “homosexual acts in the context of a loving relationship striving for permanency can in a certain sense be objectively morally acceptable.” The Vatican is moving to dismiss Father Curran from his tenured position at Catholic University of America because he is neither “suitable nor eligible” to continue teaching theology there.

Father Curran insists that the official Catholic position is “open to dissent.” He defends his dissent by pointing out that the pope has made no “infallible” pronouncements on sexual issues as he has, for example, on such fundamental doctrines as the divinity of Christ and the virginity of Mary. “Non-infallible” Catholic teaching can be challenged, with the limitation that the fundamental doctrines of the Catholic church not be denied. But the pope doesn’t think so.

The Charles Curran issue is likely to become a celebrated case in America. Liberal Catholic clergy and educators will form a chorus of protest if Curran actually is dismissed from his post. Joining them will be non-Catholics who are making a to-do about academic freedom at an institution of higher learning, and about the right of inquiry and criticism.

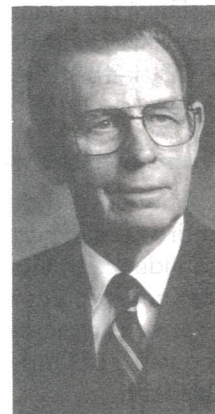
Why doesn’t the Vatican simply state that God’s word settles the matter? Because in the Roman church something else ranks above God’s word. Both the pope and Father Curran will appeal to Catholic teaching tradition. There will be repeated references to “existing hierarchical teaching.” What is “existing hierarchical teaching”? Is it what priests are teaching in American Catholic churches? Is it what priests are teaching in Poland or in France? Is it what is being taught on the campus of Catholic University of America? What is Rome’s authentic teaching, which every Catholic is obliged to accept?

May Catholic teaching even be as variable and unsettled as Father Curran maintains it is? He holds that, “according to Catholic tradition, the word and work of Jesus must always be made present and meaningful in the contemporary cultural and historical circumstances.” What is absolute truth in the Catholic church if it is what people happen to think today that determines what Jesus means to say to them?

Where is God’s word and authority in all of this? Why not settle sexual issues with a “This is what the Lord says,” instead of, “This is what the Holy Father says,” or “This is our tradition”?

Isaiah 8:20 has a message for Father Curran and for Pope John Paul II and for all Catholics: “If they do not speak according to this word [God’s revealed word], they have no light of dawn.”

Carleton Toppe



*Professor Toppe is president of Northwestern College, Watertown, Wisconsin.*

# Luke 24

## Good news — the greatest victory ever

**T**ry to imagine the awful disappointment and sadness that filled the hearts of Jesus' followers as the Passover sabbath began, a few minutes after Jesus' dead body was hastily put in the cave owned by Joseph of Arimathea. All their hopes and plans had suddenly been smashed into a thousand pieces. And they spent the whole day brooding and weeping, fearful of what might happen to them.

### The great mystery

But early Sunday morning, the third day, the two Marys and Salome gathered the spices and oils they had purchased last evening and started out to the tomb, just as the first bit of light was showing in the eastern sky. They were going to finish the burial rites which had been done so hurriedly and incompletely last Friday afternoon. As they hurried along their one concern was the huge stone which had been rolled in front of the cave's mouth. How would they ever be able to roll it away?

But when they arrived, the stone had been rolled away. And when they went inside, they didn't find Jesus' body.

They were standing there, all confused, when suddenly there were two men standing right beside them, dressed in clothes that were flashing like lightning. And they were frightened.

Then one of the men said to them, "Why are you searching among the dead for someone who is alive? Remember, while he was still in Galilee, he said that the Son of Man would be given over into the hands of sinful men and be put on a cross, and that he would come back to life again on the third day." And then the women remembered that this was what Jesus had said.

So the women ran back to the city and reported all this to the eleven and the others. But their story did not make any sense to the apostles, and they didn't believe the women's story.

But Peter and John at once ran out to the cave to look for themselves. But all they found there were the pieces of cloth that had been wrapped around the body. So they returned, wondering what had happened (vv. 1-12).

### The great discovery

Later that day two of Jesus' followers, one of them Cleopas, were on their way home from the festival, walking to Emmaus. And when a stranger joined them, they told him the whole sad story of what had happened to Jesus.

Later, when they got to Emmaus, they invited the

stranger to have dinner with them. And their guest took a little loaf of bread and said a prayer of thanksgiving and broke it and began to hand the pieces to them. And then they suddenly realized that this "stranger" was Jesus. But then, all of a sudden, he disappeared. And they were so excited that they hurried back to tell the others.

They had no sooner arrived and were beginning to tell their story when suddenly Jesus was standing right there in the middle of the room. He gave them his usual greeting and showed them the nail holes in his hands and feet, and invited them to touch him to prove that he had risen with a real body.

During the next few weeks he appeared on several occasions, sometimes to just one person, sometimes to several of the apostles, at least once more to all of them, and once to over 500 people (1 Corinthians 15:5-7). And finally he appeared to all of them one last time, and then ascended back into heaven while they watched.

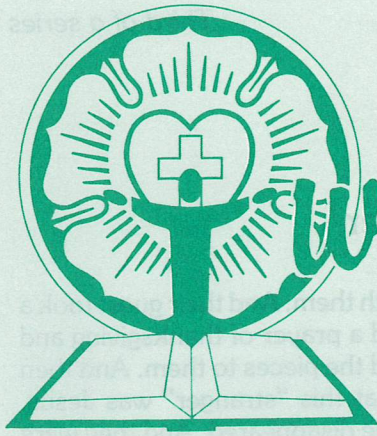
### The great news

Possibly we have become so accustomed to hearing this Easter gospel that we no longer realize what tremendous news this is. The Apostle Paul summed it up very neatly when he wrote, "... Jesus was handed over to die because of our sins, and was raised back to life again because we are now perfectly holy and without sin in God's sight" (Romans 5:25,26). As we know, Jesus died to pay the penalty for all our sins, and all the sins of the whole world (1 John 2:2). But the fact that he rose back to life again on the third day is proof of the fact that God has accepted his payment, which means that the whole world is now perfectly holy and without sin in God's sight. That is truly astounding news — the greatest news the world has ever heard — news of the greatest victory ever. For it tells us that all of our greatest enemies — sin, death and the devil — have been defeated and have lost their power over us.

Of course, if we are going to enjoy the benefits of this victory, we must believe this good news when we hear it. And wherever this good news is announced the Holy Spirit is there to create that faith in our hearts. □



*Julian Anderson is a retired pastor and seminary professor living in Naples, Florida.*



# Where we stand

by Mark E. Braun

## Babies too

**Q**uestion: You're a Lutheran, aren't you?  
**A**nswer: Right.

**Q:** Then you baptize babies, don't you?

**A:** Right.

**Q:** But the Bible never says, "Go and baptize babies."

**A:** Sure it does. Jesus said, "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them . . ." (Matthew 28:19). All nations means everybody. All ages, every race, both sexes — everybody. Babies too.

**Q:** But why baptize babies? They're such innocent looking little things. Until they reach the age of accountability, they don't need baptism anyway, do they?

**A:** Oh yes they do. Babies are sinners, from the moment they're alive. Babies are sinners because they're our babies, and we're sinners. "Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me" (Psalm 51:5). The "age of accountability" is a nice, neat, sensible-sounding teaching. The trouble is, it's not in the Bible.

**Q:** You're saying babies are sinful?

**A:** Absolutely. "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23), right? Babies die, right? Then babies are sinners.

**Q:** But the Bible also says, "It is by grace you have been saved, through faith" (Ephesians 2:8). How can babies believe?

**A:** How can anybody believe? Christian faith isn't an intellectual decision. I can't choose to believe in Jesus Christ. Oh, it may look as though people do the choosing. But faith is the Holy Spirit's gift. "No one can say, 'Jesus is Lord,' except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:3). The Holy Spirit can give his gift of faith anywhere he wants to. Jesus talked about "little ones" who believe in him (Matthew 18:6).

**Q:** But baptism looks like such a harmless little ceremony.

**A:** Maybe. But it's pretty powerful stuff. The Bible connects baptism with forgiveness: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven" (Acts 2:38). "Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the

word" (Ephesians 5:25,26). The Bible connects *being baptized* with *being saved*: "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved" (Mark 16:16). "[God] saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5). It may look like a harmless little ceremony. It may look like plain old water. By itself it is plain old water. But the words are God's words. That makes all the difference.

**Q:** But if God wanted babies baptized, wouldn't we read about infant baptisms in the Bible?

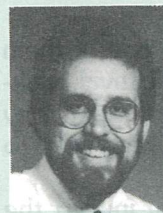
**A:** We do. "[Lydia] and the members of her household were baptized" (Acts 16:15). The jailer at Philippi "and all his family were baptized" (Acts 16:33). Sometimes individual adults were converted and baptized. We would expect a new faith to make initial converts among adults. But whenever entire families came to the faith, there were "household baptisms." Peter said, "The promise is for you and your children" (Acts 2:39).

**Q:** But it seems so young, doesn't it? Such little babies?

**A:** Baby boys in Old Testament Israel were circumcised at a young age too — eight days old. The Bible compares baptism with circumcision. "In him you were also circumcised. . . , having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God" (Colossians 2:11,12).

**Q:** But this is what I don't understand: If Lutherans believe God wants babies to be baptized, and if babies are sinners and need to be baptized, and if the Holy Spirit uses baptism to give babies faith, and if we receive forgiveness and salvation in baptism, why do so many Lutheran parents wait so long to have their babies baptized?

**A:** Good question. □



Mark Braun is pastor of St. John, Sparta, Wisconsin.

# Guardian Angels

by Thomas B. Franzmann

“**A**re guardian angels assigned to each person?” That was a question submitted when a pastor asked for suggested topics for Bible class. There is a popular notion that every person has a guardian angel who shadows him day in and day out. Artists have sometimes portrayed children, each with an angel watching over him.

A Lutheran theologian of centuries past, Quenstedt, wrote: “Is a certain angel assigned by God to every believer for his protection? That not only one, but many good angels are given to the individual believers for their protection is clearly stated in Scripture. However, whether a certain angel is assigned to every single believer from the day of his birth as his guardian . . . is uncertain.”

We don’t read or hear much about angels these days. Perhaps, in a scientific age, people feel uncomfortable with the supernatural. Angels *are* supernatural. Angels are invisible beings created by God. They are spirits; they have no body of their own. They possess a superior intellect and great power.

At an early point in history some of the angels followed their leader Satan and fell from grace. Since then there have been evil angels and good angels. The evil angels are bent on the destruction of Christians, the demise of the Christian Church, and the dishonor of God’s name.

The good angels have many duties. They praise God, they serve as messengers of God, they rejoice in the repentance of a sinner, they escort the souls of believers to heaven, they will accompany Christ on judgment day.

And they serve as guardians of God’s people on earth. Psalm 91:11,12 says: “He will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone.” Jacob found great comfort in the presence of the angels, both when he was fleeing from his brother Esau who wanted to kill him and when he was returning to be reconciled to him.

Angels protected the armies of Israel when superior enemy forces confronted them. An angel warned Joseph

to take Mary and the baby Jesus to Egypt to escape the wrath of Herod. An angel led the Apostle Peter out of prison.

**A**ngels seem to have a special concern for children. In Matthew 18:10 Jesus said: “See that you do not look down on one of these little ones. For I tell you that their angels in heaven always see the face of my Father in heaven.” Doesn’t every Christian parent remember times when it must have been angels who preserved their children from harm?

The previous passage is one that leads some people to conclude that each person has an individual guardian angel. Another is Acts 12:15. When Peter was released from prison, he appeared at the outer entrance of a house where many Christians were praying for him. When the gatekeeper announced: “Peter is at the door!” they told her, “You’re out of your mind. It must be his angel.”

Whether or not each of us has a particular angel we cannot say for sure. But we certainly can take comfort in knowing that God has appointed angels to stand guard over his people as they struggle against the dangers and enemies of life.

Martin Luther sprinkled his writings with references to angels. Once he said, “The angels are very close to us and protect us and other creatures of God at his command. To be able to protect us they have long arms, and so they can easily chase Satan away when he tries to harm us. They stand before the face of the Father, next to the sun, but without effort they swiftly come to our aid. The devils, too, are very near to us. Every moment they are plotting against our life and welfare, but the angels prevent them from harming us. Hence it is that they don’t always harm us although they always want to harm us.” In his morning and evening prayer he taught countless believers to pray: “Let your holy angel be with me, so that the devil may have no power over me.”

It is good for us to know that we have intelligent, powerful servants of God watching over us. Yet, they would be powerless to help us if Christ himself had not come to redeem us. Luther emphasized this. Once, while he was on a lengthy trip, in failing health, his wife Katy was worrying about him. He wrote her: “You worry about me instead of letting God worry, as if he were not almighty and could not create ten Doctor Martins, should the old one drown . . . or burn . . . or perish. Free me from your worries. I have a caretaker who is better than you and all the angels; he lies in the cradle and rests on a virgin’s bosom, and yet he sits at the right hand of God, the almighty Father. Therefore be at peace.” □



Thomas Franzmann is pastor of St. Mark, Citrus Heights, California.

# Lots of gwansyi in Taiwan

by Cheri Harris

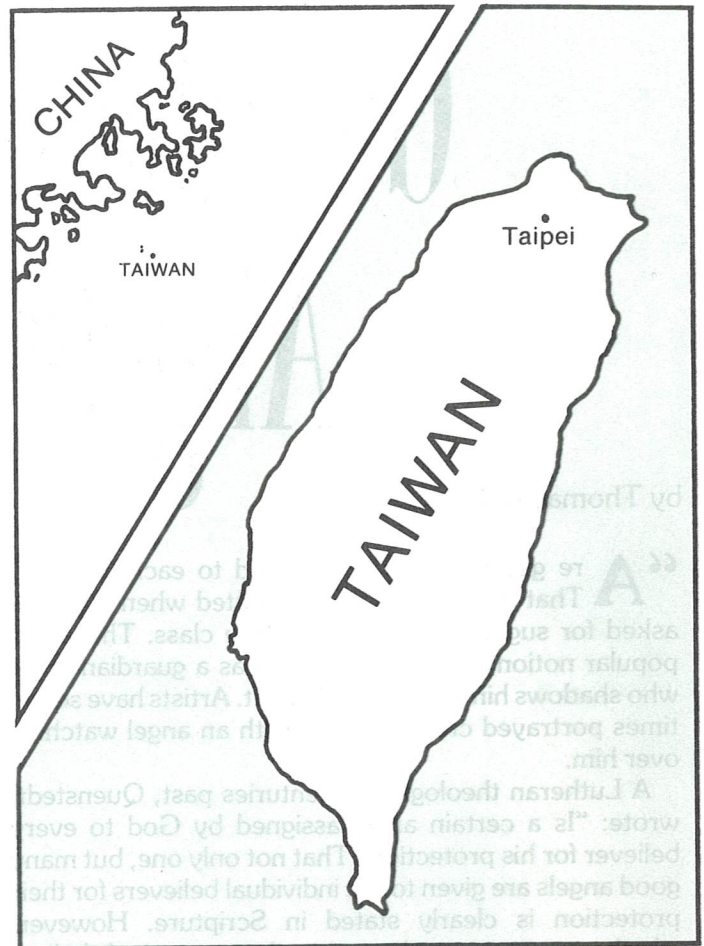


**R**ob and Judy Siirila have developed a lot of *gwansyi* in the last three years thanks to new Chinese friends in Taiwan. The Mandarin word means “personal relationships,” a condition Siirila says is very important in Chinese society.

“The Chinese are family and group oriented. They take their friendships very seriously,” Rob said. “You become a friend for life. It’s not a casual thing.” The rapport the Siirilas have developed among the Chinese in Taipei is essential to Rob’s mission work with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) there.

“It’s a slow process. You can’t stand on street corners or knock on doors,” he said. “The Chinese learn to write English in school but they have the desire to speak it. So we teach them, using simple Bible stories and sharing our faith. It’s a gradual, developing relationship.”

The Siirilas are back in Door County as part of a three-month furlough. Before leaving for mission work in



1983 Rob was assistant pastor at St. Peter Lutheran Church, Sturgeon Bay, for nearly five years.

WELS missionaries normally get a furlough every three years when they may return to the U.S. to visit families and share their experiences. While the Siirilas are enjoying the fishing and fellowship here they are anxious to return to Taiwan at the end of October.

The Chinese would appreciate that attitude. “They don’t understand the idea of a vacation,” Rob said. “It’s okay to go and see family and do workshops but to sit around and do nothing doesn’t make sense to them. They’re interested in America because many of them have relatives living here.”

He and Judy describe the Chinese as a friendly people who are good hosts and forgiving of cultural faux pas. Because many Americans involved in business, military and church work live in Taiwan, the locals are accustomed to helping their counterparts learn the language.

Rob has spent 26 months full time learning Mandarin while Judy has learned in part-time courses. “They say spoken Mandarin Chinese is the easiest spoken language in the world grammar-wise but there are different tones that make different words,” Rob explained.

On the other hand, written Mandarin is the most complex of languages. “It takes an enormous amount of time to become literate,” Rob said. “You have to learn the language to learn the people. You can’t understand peo-





ple until you know their language. We'll never be Chinese but we're beginning to understand a little more year by year."

While Judy said she can read most of the Bible in Mandarin and gets along fine at the open air market, the Siirilas admit they have trouble reading children's stories because of the intricate, written characters. "You get the sense of the story but that's about all. And these are books a six-year-old Chinese child can understand," Rob said.

But he has seen breakthroughs in the WELS mission work saying this is the first time in nine years that there are three missionaries qualified to work in Mandarin.

**O**ther WELS missionaries in Taipei are Ralph (Bonnie) Jones from Woodruff, Wisconsin and Rob (Nora) Meister from Denver, Colorado. Each couple has four children and the Siirilas have two, Aaron, 4½ and Robin, 2½.

"Our work is young. In the next three years there will be more growth. The Chinese word for missionary means 'to spread church teaching.' It's evangelistic."

Rob drives 10,000 miles a year on the island that is only 300 miles long, ministering to farmers as well as cosmopolitan Chinese in the international city of Taipei. The three missionaries serve three congregations and also train Chinese men to be pastors. "If they want their

church to grow they need their own as pastors. We want to hand the work over to them. It's a satisfying thing, to replace ourselves," Rob said.

Churches there are not the conventional steeped version Americans think of. Instead a full floor in an apartment building may have been converted into a church. Because of small space congregations number about 120 people, a condition Rob says which limits growth.

He cited an example of a new government housing complex that opened and 3000 people moved in within a half block of his church. "We get through to them with the English training. It's a natural way to develop relationships, to teach English with a religious topic. All we ask is to develop friends and share with them what we consider so important. And people are willing to do that," he said.

Friends the Siirilas have made include teachers and college students, some of whom don't understand the family's need for privacy. "There's no word for it there," Judy said. "They call and mysteriously show up at dinner or family activities. They think the more the merrier."

According to Rob many college students think all religions are superstitions, including Christianity. "They give up on all religions and go for modernism," he said. "Yet among students Christianity has the greatest success. It's the most popular non-Chinese religion.

Taiwan, a country with five large cities that hold 80 percent of the population, is also home to two million



Some of the seven million motorcycles in Taipei.

farmers who speak the Taiwanese dialect. They are more superstitious, involved in ancestor worship and offering sacrifices to late relatives in hopes of getting peace and happiness. Siirila describes it as a country of contrasts and an exciting place to live.

"The Philippines are only a couple hundred miles away and there are a lot of developing countries nearby," he said. "Taiwan is a newly industrialized nation. Within 15 years it will be a developed country rather than a third world place," he said.

But that creates problems like thefts, overcrowding and pollution. Judy says there are seven million motorcycles, one million cars and 30,000 taxis in Taipei alone. "I'm scared to drive there," she said, "and that's coming from a girl who has driven Chicago tollways."

With the abundance of public transportation it is easy for her to shop the city's markets. She reported the family eats less beef and is actually tired of shrimp because it is so plentiful. She rarely shops in an American suburb because conventional U.S. products are more expensive. A cake mix could cost \$2.50. "People make things more from scratch," she said.

She has learned to cook not only the sweet and sour Cantonese style but also Szechwan's hot and spicy fare and Peking and Taiwan style meals. Yet American food franchises are plentiful and Rob says McDonald's broke world sales records when it opened in Taipei.

**R**ob's parents visited the family, and Judy's family plans to tour there next spring. Otherwise they keep in touch with tapes from a video cassette recorder and telephone calls.

"It's not a primitive place," Rob said. "Living conditions aren't all that different." The family lives in a single family townhouse in a suburb of Taipei apart from the popular high rises. They outgrew a small apartment they occupied when they first moved to Taiwan where Judy's American-made stove and refrigerator were too large for

the kitchen. "Americans don't adapt products to fit Far Eastern nations. They're either too big or too expensive," Rob said. "The Chinese buy food every day and meat is fresh. There are no gardens so there are no freezers."

While Americans have access to two English newspapers and radio as well as Voice of America on short-wave, the Siirilas admit they miss public radio and television, especially comedies, sports and cultural shows. "I miss *Prairie Home Companion*," Judy laughed. They attended a Chinese opera which they described as a spectacle complete with beautiful costumes. Television shows are mostly in Chinese. "Mr. T. speaks Chinese there," Rob smiled.

"When you live in another country you see America differently. Things are so good here, the lots, lawns and homes that are taken for granted. The average Chinese own their own home despite the low wages. But they are small condo-types with no lawn. Average living space is 1000 square feet for four people."

He described the island's inhabitants as very anti-communist. "There is concern about the mainland because it is so close," he said. The Taiwanese think theirs is the rightful government. They have progress and prosperity and a good degree of freedom."

"With everything you learn you don't assume Americans have all the answers or are the best. The Chinese look up to us as scientifically and technologically superior but think their morality and culture are superior. We have to fight our American pride and learn things their way."

The Siirila children will attend an English-speaking school maintained for overseas businessmen's families with American teachers and curriculum. Aaron can understand his Chinese babysitter and both he and Robin can count in Chinese. "It's a low pressure way to learn and develop their natural interest," Rob said. Aaron was only two and Robin was two months when the family left Sturgeon Bay for Taipei. Now they think the U.S. is "weird" according to their mother.

"There we boil the water," she said. "They can't understand how we can drink it from the tap here, and it's not as cold as when we get the purified water out of the refrigerator there," she said.

Because of heavy traffic in Taipei the children don't recognize Door County's quieter roads as a place inhabited by cars. Judy says she has to stay on the lookout so the kids don't wander into the roadway which "seems like a playground to them." Aaron also misses all the stop lights of Taiwan.

"America is funny," he said. "It only has stop signs." □



Cheri Harris is a reporter for the *Door County Advocate*, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, and a member of St. Peter, Sturgeon Bay. The article is reprinted with permission.

# Where's the music?



by Mark C. Wagner

**I**t occurred to me this morning that I was listening to more music than I had in a long time. As I dusted off the old Christian records and spun through them, I didn't feel so lonely.

Lonely? That isn't a regular emotion for me in the ministry and at my stage of life. The phone breaks into my work pattern so routinely that I have very little chance to feel lonely. And I love it. It's an unusually busy, but most rewarding, lifestyle. Where there are people there is action . . . and need. To serve the Lord by filling those needs gives me all the company I could want. At times I even build up a desire to get away from people — like Jesus did — to go to the mountains and pray. How could I be lonely with so much to do? So as I lingered on the words of the songs, I wondered, where had the music been?

When you are alone for awhile any sound seems welcome, but most of all the warmth of the human voice. Perhaps that was part of the reason that I was craving the music. I was alone. My wife, two boys and baby-to-come had been gone for over three weeks visiting family back in the "homeland." I had been so busy at work with congregational details and a special project that it took time for me to miss the sounds, the love, the companionship of my "people." How silly, I thought, that I couldn't put my finger on it earlier. My people are my music!

It came crashing in on me when I finally realized why I hadn't been listening to Christian albums as much. I had music all around me: the laughing, crying, squealing and even the screaming of my boys; and the soft hello, the tender "see you later," the project list of my sweetheart. Music. All around me in the home, so constantly, so beautifully, so thoroughly entwined in my life.

**T**his time was not like others though. This time I had the fear of losing some of that music. My firstborn son had an emergency while away and was put into the hospital for tests. I had no one to hold, no one to reassure me that it would be all right. The first few days of trauma left me with a sizable phone bill, but without an ounce of regret. Nothing like money could matter to me if I would lose my music. I longed for the sound of their voices, not

muffled by the miles.

I had a chance — indeed, a precious opportunity — to comprehend my God's love for me. Not only did he calm my heart as I sought his word for strength, but he helped me once again to take account of my blessings. The sound of the human soul — the prayer, the life which seeks to serve and the voice that praises him — is the music in God's ear. How he must long for his children and family as I longed for mine. How Jesus, so much more than I, had the desire to hear the unique music of a prodigal child come home. How his heart must weep to think that some of his own children would reject him, deny him the music of their souls and maybe never come home.

There are all types of music in our world, but none so wondrous as that of the Christian home. I knew that the Lord would bring my family back to me safe, and from the depths within me I gave him thanks.

After such an experience, the words came to my lips without effort, "Lord, make the sounds of my home sing sweetly to you, and for you. You, my Lord, are my song!"

If you haven't taken time lately to hear the music all around you — or if you haven't been making music of your own for the Lord, then why don't you stop with me for just a moment and ask yourself, "Where's the music?"

I think you'll find an answer worth having. Music? Once you listen to the promises of God's word, you will feel the loneliness of your heart replaced by his most masterful, most marvelous music. "Sing to the Lord a new song," says the Psalmist, "play skillfully and shout for joy. For the word of the Lord is right and true; he is faithful in all he does." □



Mark Wagner is pastor of Shepherd of the Plains, Lubbock, Texas.

***Is it right for a pastor to refuse to conduct a funeral service for someone whose family are devout members of the pastor's church? Isn't the funeral service for the family's sake and comfort? By refusing to conduct the funeral service the pastor is saying that the departed loved one didn't believe and isn't with God. Who is he to judge?***

The pastor who regretfully cannot officiate at the funeral of someone who neither held membership in his church nor confessed faith in Jesus Christ, to the pastor's knowledge, is *not* passing judgment on the eternal destiny of the departed. In fact, to conduct a Christian funeral in such a case would be presumptuous judgment that the person was a Christian. The refusal to bury a non-member is simply a statement that the church and its pastor do not know the spiritual state of the individual before death and, therefore, the everlasting status of the deceased.

A Christian funeral is the proclamation of Christian confidence in the resurrection and eternal life, as well as a ministry of Christian comfort to bereaved believers and a testimony to the Christian faith for guests of the family and church. Because Christianity promises eternal life alone through faith in Jesus Christ, a Christian burial in uncertainty would be a contradiction and would vitiate the church's testimony.

The pastor who feels conscience-bound to decline the request that he conduct a funeral understands the family's hurt and experiences a hurt all his own. His decision is based solely on the conviction that no personal feelings — his own or those of the grieving members — can supercede the church's uncompromising witness to an uncompromised gospel.

The pastor will seek to comfort the family with every promise of Scripture except that which can only be offered when the departed's confession of faith is known — the promise of everlasting life. Both pastor and congregation will seek to comfort, counsel and support the family, with their presence, their words and their prayers, as often and as long as possible. The pastor may even offer to have a devotion with the Christian family members following visitation hours at the funeral home. He loves his grieving members, and he prays they will come to understand that he was not judging their loved one. That role he must leave to God. His difficult role is to demonstrate faithfulness in a ministry of both love and truth, when to the grieving those twin marks of Christianity seem in conflict.

***Periodically I read in the Northwestern Lutheran that a pastor of another church body "has requested a colloquy for the purpose of entering the pastoral ministry of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod." Just what is a colloquy and what does it entail?***

A colloquy is a formal interview conducted to determine whether the applicant for a call into the ministry of our synod is in agreement with the doctrine and practice of our synod. The announcement of a colloquy in the Northwestern Lutheran allows members of the synod to respond with pertinent information to a particular request for membership in the ministerium of the WELS.

Because the Conference of Presidents, like our seminary, takes seriously its role of recommending people for a call, the process is a bit more complex than the formal interview. The initial response to a request by a pastor of another (Lutheran) church body is a preliminary meeting with the officers of the WELS district responsible for the area in which the applicant lives. This meeting is to determine whether there is sufficient basis for a colloquy. Confessional convictions, not personal problems, justify a man's desire to leave the ministry of one church body for that of another. Character references are pursued to assure that the man meets the qualifications for the ministry established by the pastoral epistles.

The colloquy is conducted by a committee appointed by the president of the synod. That committee, consisting of a seminary professor, a vice-president of the synod and the district president responsible for the area in which the applicant lives, interviews the man in depth to assure theological unanimity with our synod.

When the colloquy determines that there is agreement in doctrine and practice, the applicant is asked to attend our seminary for a period of time preceding his eligibility for a call. During this time at the seminary the common bond of faith is confirmed and the man's assimilation into our fellowship is initiated practically. If both pastor and congregation request membership in our synod, a post-colloquy program of orientation through neighboring WELS pastors may replace attendance at the seminary.



Send your questions to *Questions, The Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N. Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53222*. Questions of general interest are preferred. Questions will be answered, however, only through this column.

*Pastor Paul Kelm is the synod's executive secretary of evangelism.*

## LETTERS

### "Children on the quick?"

Thank you, Professor Toppe, for a timely article, "Bringing up children on the quick?" (September 15). And please continue to stress the importance of mom staying home with her children.

It doesn't take long to see our influence upon our children. Unknowingly, our four-year-old daughter mimics me in her words and actions daily. To a lesser degree I noticed the same mimicking in my primary students in my single days as a teacher.

In our own home the Lord has chosen to impress the importance of children on us doubly. Our two pre-school children have a chronic illness which has hospitalized them and put their very lives in danger at times. Through this we've been drawn closer together as a family. Spending time with the precious lambs God has entrusted to our care is no longer taken for granted. It is viewed as a precious gift of God.

*Wendy Feuerstahler  
Lake Mills, Wisconsin*

Professor Toppe's article, "Bringing up children on the quick?" offers sage advice. Mothers, beware of supporting a career at the expense of your precious children. I also grew up with this traditional view that a mother's place was in the home caring for the children. You can imagine, then, the pangs of conscience that I experienced as I left for work with the wails of two pre-schoolers ringing in my ears, "Mommy, don't go!" Yet, after prayerful consideration my husband and I concluded that for our family at that time a part-time job on my part was the best course for our situation. So I went with a prayer that the Lord would use me in some way to spread his word while I worked.

Still I struggled with that question, "Am I making my children my top priority?" or even more specifically, "Am I neglecting my children?" As I reviewed the passages that apply to mothers and wives, I was struck by the *absence* of one passage in particular — the passage that proclaims mothers to be solely responsible for the upbringing of the children. Instead I found that there is a definite emphasis on the role of the *father*. In Ephesians 6:4 Paul exhorts fathers to "bring (children) up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." And in Genesis

God says that woman was created in part so that man might have a helper; one who can assist him in his duties and tasks.

Who am I, then, that I should take for myself total responsibility for the upbringing of our children? Am I not by my feelings of guilt ascribing to myself more importance than God designed? (I am the only one who can properly care for my children?) God said of Abraham, "I know him, that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord . . ." (Genesis 18:19). Gradually I have come to realize that my continual presence 24 hours a day with the children might not be as important as I had thought.

In fact our family realized some important benefits when I was working. We were able to work it so that my husband cared for the children in my absence. They gained a closer relationship. The children had and have the benefit of "imprinting" not only from me but also from their father. (He also has an intimate understanding of some of the frustrations associated with caring for three very active pre-schoolers all day. I classify that as "marriage enrichment.") When he was unable to care for the children because of his job, grandma took over. Again we saw many benefits. The children could see in her, too, the Christian lifestyle and receive from her Christian admonition, reinforcing the teaching my husband and I try to instill.

I still prefer being a full-time "mama" but I am thankful that when I must work, the Christian training of my children is not neglected but reinforced. And I am thankful that my husband realizes his responsibility in raising the family and that we can share in that precious and important work together.

*Ann A. Styx  
Coos Bay, Oregon*

Professor Toppe's editorial comment, "Bringing up children on the quick?" makes me wonder how those children brought up by working mothers will define "quality time" when they reach age 35 or 40.

My husband, who is 47, was brought up by a mother who ran her own business out of their home six days a week. Even though she was home physically she was always very busy with customers or bookwork or something that kept her mentally occupied. He

remembers her as being angry a lot and rarely available when he needed or wanted her. A succession of housekeepers and babysitters took care of him while he was growing up. To compensate for the time she didn't spend with her children during the week she always had something special planned for Sundays — going to grandma's for dinner, going to the zoo or museum, etc.

He hated it. He didn't want "quality time" from his mother. All he wanted was for her to be there at home, not always *doing* something, so she'd be available when he needed or wanted her time.

Needless to say, he doesn't want a "working mother" raising his kids.

*Name withheld*

### "Somebody else's child"

"Somebody else's child" (September 1) touched my heart. Bonnie Wasser is letting her light shine as a homefront missionary. I empathized with her not understanding why some Christian families are reluctant to care for "somebody else's child." However, what concerns me more are those Christians who fail to emotionally support those of us who do.

When adoptive parents of large families excitedly report the arrival of a new blessing, we're oftentimes met with comments like, "I think you have your hands full with what you already have," or "Do you really think adding another one is fair to your children?"

Yes, we do have our hands full, but we trust the Lord not to give us more than we can bear and he doesn't. And, yes, we know how our children feel. Our 13th child was thrilled we hadn't stopped at 12. Our other children vividly remember how it hurts to be unloved and alone, so, they continually encourage us to open our heart and home again and again. Christian love and encouragement are so important to those of us who keep the door open for "somebody else's child."

*Mrs. Peter Sampe  
Janesville, Wisconsin*

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Letters between 100 and 250 words are preferred. In the interest of conciseness, letters are subject to editing. Full name, address and phone number should accompany each letter. Names will be withheld only under unusual circumstances. Letters cannot be acknowledged, nor can all letters be used. Address your letters to *LETTERS, The Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N. Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53222.*

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## NEWS around the world



**Supreme Court rules in church issues . . .** In refusing to review a lower court decision the Supreme Court has left standing a ruling that permits a church to refuse to hire women for pastoral positions. Acting on the last day of its 1986 term, the high court left standing a ruling of the 4th Circuit Court of Appeals that the Seventh-Day Adventist Church is not subject to the anti-discrimination provisions of the 1964 Civil Rights Act for refusing to hire a woman, Carole A. Rayburn, to a pastoral position. The lower panel ruled earlier that the church's refusal was protected by the religion clauses of the First Amendment. Appealing that decision, attorneys for Rayburn argued unsuccessfully that the government has such a compelling interest in eradicating race and sex discrimination in employment that it should at least be allowed to investigate the Seventh-Day Adventist claim that being forced to hire women in pastoral positions would violate its free exercise of religion. The church also claimed the government would violate the First Amendment's ban on an establishment of religion were it to subject the church to the provisions of the Civil Rights Act in the employment of ministers. In another ruling the Supreme Court upheld the right of a state civil rights agency to act on a complaint from a woman who was fired by a Christian school. In a unanimous decision written by Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist, the high court rejected a claim by Dayton, Ohio Christian Schools. The schools had argued that proceedings by the Ohio Civil Rights Commission relating to the firing of Linda Hoskinson violated their right to free exercise of religion. Hoskinson was told in 1979 that her teaching contract would not be renewed for the following year because she was expecting a child and the schools believed that mothers should stay at home with their young children. When Hoskinson was fired for taking her firing to an attorney who threatened to sue the schools, she filed a formal complaint with the commission. The schools countered by filing suit in a federal district court challenging the panel's jurisdiction on a church-state ground. The Supreme Court sent the case back to the district court with instructions not to decide the dispute until the state panel issues its ruling. In the decision, Chief Justice Rehnquist wrote that "even religious schools cannot claim to be wholly free from some state regulation."

News items appearing in *News Around the World* represent current events of general interest to the readers of *The Northwestern Lutheran* and should not be interpreted as representing the views of the editors.

**Quality time may be TV time . . .** The October *Psychology Today* reports the result of a recent survey on family life. Emerging from the survey is a portrait of family life in the U.S.: a picture of parents, children and a large television set in the foreground. Not only did watching television prove to be the most popular leisure activity for every man, woman and child, but it was the single major recreational pursuit shared between parents and children. Television viewing took up about one-fourth of the time spent together each week. Homemaker mothers spent more time watching TV with their kids than working mothers did — a total of about eight hours each week, on average. Employed mothers averaged six hours and 40 minutes of shared weekly viewing. "The most striking finding was the relatively small amount of time parents in either type of household spend in 'quality time' activities," the researchers report. These activities were primarily focused on the children, such as reading to them, conversing or playing with them. Fathers, mostly employed outside the home, spend even less "quality time" with their children than working mothers do. Dads devoted a scant eight minutes to their children each weekday, and only 14 minutes a day on weekends. And the way fathers spend their time is not affected by whether their wives work or not.

**Congregations may not join merger . . .** Conservatives in the American Lutheran Church who oppose the ALC's impending merger with two other Lutheran bodies are talking about starting a new denomination that would retain ALC positions which they say will be lost in the new Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The break is being promoted by a group of 16 ALC pastors and 10 lay people, led by Pastor James Minor of St. Paul and Pastor Duane Lindberg of Waterloo, Iowa. In interviews Minor and Lindberg said the fundamental issue for their group is the belief that the Bible is inerrant and infallible. Those descriptions are in the present ALC constitution but not in the constitution of the new church.

**Denver crusade gearing up . . .** Billy Graham's 1987 crusade, although ten months away, already is gearing up with 20 full-time employees and expenditures of more than \$60,000. The staff has contacted 2700 churches in Colorado, enlisted 150 volunteers to help with the event, and received calls on four telephone lines that will soon be expanded to ten lines. Organizers hope that by March more than 150,000 persons will have pledged to join an around-the-clock prayer chain which will continue through the crusade, scheduled for July 17-26. Tom Phillips, director of the event, said he did not know how much the Denver crusade will cost, but that most Graham crusades now cost between \$600,000 and \$1 million. More than 670 churches in the Denver area have committed themselves to help, he said. □

## Voss accepts presidency at Northwestern

Pastor Robert J. Voss, executive secretary of the Board for Worker Training, has accepted the call as president of Northwestern College, Watertown, Wis. He will assume his duties July 1, 1987.

He succeeds Prof. Carleton Toppe, who has been president of the 121-year-old school since 1959.

Voss, 60, is a native of Wauwatosa, Wis., and graduated from Northwestern College in 1947. In 1950 he graduated from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon.

After his seminary graduation, he spent a year at the college assisting the dean and teaching history and Latin. He entered the parish minis-

try at Faith, Fond du Lac. In 1955 he was called to Siloah, Milwaukee. In 1963 he left Siloah to become president of Wisconsin Lutheran College.

At the 1969 convention of the synod it was decided to close the college at the end of the 1969-70 school year and merge it with Dr. Martin Luther College. In 1970 Voss was called to become the first executive secretary of the Board for Worker Training, a position he has held since.

His graduate work was done at Marquette University in educational administration where he completed the classroom work for his doctor-



Voss

ate.

In 1951 he married Carol Holz of Milwaukee. There are five children, none of whom is at home.

## World Mission Seminary Conference

St. Paul's exhortation to Timothy, "Study to show thyself . . . a workman that needeth not be ashamed," provided the theme for the seventh conference of missionaries involved in our national theological training programs in WELS world mission fields.

Nine fields: Colombia, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Japan, Malawi, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Taiwan and Zambia were represented by their theological training directors. Plans are underway to supplement the synodical schools' effort in the Apache Mission with a locally led basic program beginning in January 1987. This means that each of our synod's world fields has a pastor training program in place and functioning.

Languages used at these mission schools include English in Apacheland, Malawi, Zambia, Nigeria and Cameroon supplemented by the vernacular; Spanish in Puerto Rico, Colombia and Mexico (El Paso); Bahasa Indonesia in Indonesia; Cantonese in Hong Kong; Mandarin



Participants at the World Mission Seminary Conference

in Taiwan; and Japanese in Japan. All are adapting the basic courses of our Mequon seminary with adjustments made to fit each country's needs and programs. In addition to the seminary, pre-seminary programs are also offered.

At this conference the four main disciplines of theological training were reviewed in six papers presented by Professors Panning, Gawrisch and Valleskey of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary. Discussion of field reports showed a high interest on the part of nationals in including Greek and Hebrew as a goal in their seminaries, with some

already reaching it.

It was interesting to note that the theme-oriented sermon still is reported as the best way to present God's word in all our world mission worship settings. Training of laymen to assist in evangelism, lay preaching and teaching under pastoral supervision and active participation in gospel outreach is also a part of each field's program.

Supported by generous extra budgetary gifts from WELS groups and individuals, these conferences meet every two to four years to compare programs and experiences.

— John Kurth

## IN THE NEWS

### Minnesota District

**Grace of Oronoco** dedicated its new worship facility on August 3. The facility provides worship space for 300 people with a balcony for the music program and a spacious narthex. Future plans include a bell tower and carport. All but \$42,000 of the cost of the project has been paid. . . . Immanuel of Buffalo honored **Mr. Walter Gutknecht** for teaching Sunday school for the last 40 years. When he was presented with a gift from the congregation he said, "I hope that I have been able to assist some on the way to salvation." . . . **St. John of Renville** celebrated its centennial on June 15. Speakers included Pastor Wilbur Dorn and President Carl Mischke. St. John is presently served by Pastor Michael Hatzung. The Ladies' Aid of St. John has been busy these past nine years sewing 1122 blankets for the WELS Committee on Relief. In addition, the women of St. John have sent 38 lap robes to the Lutheran Home in Belle Plaine, 15 large pillows to the East Fork Nursery in Ariz., and nine quilts to the Wise Penny Thrift Shop in Buffalo and the Treasure Haus in New Ulm, two thrift stores associated with our area Lutheran high schools. . . . Twenty-fifth anniversary celebrations were held for **Teacher Paul Fritze of Timothy, St. Louis Park; Pastor David Ponath of Christ, North St. Paul; and Teacher Doris Panning of St. Andrew, St. Paul Park.**

— Charles Degner

### Nebraska District

**St. Mark of Lincoln** dedicated its expanded worship facility on June 22. The congregation, organized in 1956, numbers 350 baptized members. . . . **Trinity of Hillrose, Colo.,** celebrated the 50th anniversary of its founding and the 10th anniversary of its worship facility on June 29. Pastor Philip Kuckhahn of Bark River, Mich. was guest speaker. . . . **St. Paul of Grand Junc-**

**tion, Colo.,** observed its 10th anniversary on July 13. Pastor Thomas Spiegelberg serves the congregation. . . . **St. John of Brewster** observed its 100th anniversary on July 20 with two special services, according to Pastor Milton Weishahn. Pastor Gerald Free of Omaha was the guest speaker. . . . **Trinity of Hoskins** celebrated its centennial on July 27. Guest speakers were former pastor of the congregation, Andrew Domson and Pastor Joel Frank, whose father had served the congregation. Among those in attendance were ten of the children of the late Pastor Immanuel Frey, a former pastor of Trinity. James Nelson is the present pastor of the 343-member congregation. . . . **Good Shepherd of Kearney** dedicated its worship-education-fellowship unit on August 17. Donald Seelhoff is its pastor. . . . **Living Hope**, an exploratory mission in Omaha, held its first service August 3 with 92 in attendance, according to Pastor Kurt Ebert. . . . The **Denver area congregations** held an intercongregational picnic on August 31 at a mountain park near Conifer, Colo. It proved to be a wonderful opportunity for fun fellowship. . . . "**The God Makers**" was the title of a film presented by Pastor William Goehring at the Rocky Mountain Circuit LWMS rally in Grand Junction, Colo. September 27. Sixty-five women and twenty men heard Pastor Goehring of Salt Lake City give a presentation on the Mormons.

— Tim Bauer

### North Atlantic District

The fifteenth annual Labor Day weekend **family retreat hosted by Faith Lutheran of Pittsfield Massachusetts** was held August 30 through September 1 at Camp Chimney Corner in Becket, Massachusetts. This year's record attendance of 302 consisted of members and friends of seventeen WELS congregations from Connecticut, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan,

New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont and Wisconsin. The program, "Let Your Light Shine," was subdivided into the following seminar electives: "Principles of Friendship Evangelism" (Pastor Paul Kelm), "Be Joyful" — Philippians (Pastor David Kehl), "Dry Bones" — Ezekiel (Pastor Kieth Kuschel), "Rock Music" (Pastors David Kriehn and Mark Freier), and "WELS New Hymnal Study" and choir singing (Phil Becker). An educational children's study was led by the Sunday school teachers and parents of Christ the Redeemer Lutheran of Barre, Vermont. The Sunday outdoor worship service was led by the host congregation's pastor, Mark Schulz. Plans for next year's retreat are already being formulated with the selections of the theme "God's Plan for Excellence." WELS President and Mrs. Carl Mischke will be joining us in 1987 for another special Labor Day weekend family retreat. . . . The **WELS-Manhattan group**, our New York City exploratory mission, has officially adopted the name Peace Lutheran as it moved its worship and office needs into a rented commercial loft space at 2121 Broadway. A \$9,000 mass media outreach is now underway to reach the people in the nation's largest city with radio broadcasts and direct mailings to the 12,000 apartments within a one block radius of the congregation's new worship facility. Pastor Glen Thompson serves our outreach there. . . . The outreach exploratory in **Fayetteville, North Carolina** went public on September 7 with a "grand opening" worship service. Seventy-five people representing many different races and walks of life attended the first service and the potluck that followed. **Beautiful Savior** congregation has been averaging 35 in attendance in the weekly worship and Bible Study following its grand opening. Its pastor, Mark Schoeneck, serves our members and outreach in a large part of southeastern North Carolina.

— David Kehl





Samuel Harvey explaining the picture to his pastor, Joel C. Gerlach.

## Liberty painting unveiled

Members of Our Redeemer Lutheran Church of Santa Barbara, California, observed Liberty Week-end with the unveiling of a painting commemorating the Statue of Liberty. The artist, Samuel Harvey, is a political refugee from Belize (formerly British Honduras). His painting is his thank you to America for the opportunities this country has given to him and to his family.

Harvey, an art teacher in two of Belize's secondary schools, was the winner of his country's highest art

award for five consecutive years.

He holds certificates from Cambridge and London Universities and has the distinction of having served Belize as a delegate pro-tem to the United Nations.

The Harveys were active in politics, but they spoke out as the government became less and less democratic. That opposition resulted in his being blacklisted by the government. This prompted the family to emigrate to the United States.

The Harveys have two children, Kevin, a U.S. Marine, and Marcia, a student at Martin Luther Preparatory School, Prairie du Chien, Wis.

### DISTRICT NEWS SCHEDULE

**November 1:** Minnesota, Nebraska, North Atlantic

**November 15:** Northern Wisconsin, Pacific Northwest, South Atlantic

**December:** South Central, Southeastern Wisconsin, Western Wisconsin

**January 1:** Arizona, California, Dakota-Montana, Michigan

If your district does not appear, it is because no news items were reported by your district reporter.

## WITH THE LORD

### Fred E. Bartling 1908-1986

Pastor Fred E. Bartling was born November 7, 1908 in Richton, Ill. He died September 2, 1986 in La Crosse, Wisconsin.

A 1933 graduate of Concordia Sem-

inary, Springfield, Ill., he served congregations in Chicago, Northlake and Freeport, Ill. In 1964 he accepted a call to Wisconsin Synod churches in Freeport and Elizabeth, Ill. After his retirement in 1974 he served as vacancy pastor in the La Crosse area.

In 1937 he married Vera Schultz. He is survived by his wife; daughter, Rhoda (Clyde) Wobeck; son, Pastor Mark Bartling and three grandchildren.

Funeral services were held September 5, 1986 at Immanuel, La Crosse, Wis.

## NOTICES

The deadline for submitting items is four weeks before the date of issue

### CALL FOR NOMINATIONS BOARD FOR WORKER TRAINING Executive Secretary

The Board for Worker Training requests the voting members of the synod to nominate candidates for the office of executive secretary of the BWT. This office became vacant when Pastor Robert J. Voss accepted the call to serve as president of Northwestern College.

The responsibilities of the executive secretary, as established by the synod, include: 1) being involved in the board's long-range planning and policy making; 2) supporting the educational programs of the individual worker training schools of the synod; 3) assisting schools in meeting their stated objectives; 4) offering counsel in the recommendation and planning of additional facilities at the schools; and 5) monitoring the administration of the synod's worker training system as a whole.

Nominees should be experienced in administration, knowledgeable in the field of education, and appreciative of the synod's program of worker training.

It is asked that nominations, together with pertinent information, be in the hands of the undersigned no later than November 28, 1986.

Board for Worker Training  
Prof. William G. Zell, Secretary  
1300 Western Avenue  
Watertown, WI 53094

### CALL FOR ADDITIONAL NOMINATIONS MARTIN LUTHER PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Inasmuch as the Board of Control of Martin Luther Preparatory School, Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin has during the past year extended numerous calls for the vacant professorship in the language department, and whereas circumstances have changed for many of the original nominees, the board, with the concurrence of the Board for Worker Training, invites the voting membership of the synod to nominate additional male candidates for the above position. Nominees should be qualified to teach Latin and German on the first year training level, and to assist in athletics. All nominations, with as much accompanying data as possible, should be in the hands of the undersigned no later than December 10.

Mr. Dale Markgraf, Secretary  
MLPS Board of Control  
20 South Jefferson St.  
New Ulm, MN 56073

### NAMES WANTED

Survey work preliminary to conducting exploratory services. People interested in WELS services, contact pastor noted.

TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA — Pastor Lynn Wiedmann, 4618 NW 41st St., Gainesville, FL 32606; 904/372-5509.

**LIGHT FIXTURES WANTED**

St. Mark, Eau Claire, Wisconsin, is expanding its worship area and is in need of light fixtures to match existing ones, a type used in home mission congregations around 1970. The fixtures consist of six 18" high aluminum cylinders, each on the end of a 22" aluminum spoke, with light bulbs aimed both upward and downward. The central hub has a rod to attach it to the ceiling. If you have information please call Tim Petermann, 715/834-8363 or the church, 715/834-2595.

**CONFERENCES**

**Nebraska District, Nebraska/Colorado Missionaries' Conference.** November 4-5 at Shepherd of the Hills, Greeley, Colo. Agenda: How the New/Revised Hymnal can serve in the Interest of Outreach in a Mission Congregation (Egert); Mission Explorer Methods and Materials (Hage-dorn); The God Makers (Goehring).

**Northern Wisconsin District, Winnebago Conference.** November 10. Agenda: Exegesis: 1 Corinthians 7:1-16. When Does the Term Apply in Marriage and Divorce? (Meier); Church Discipline in Matters of Marriage and Divorce (Beck).

**Christmas At Home**

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Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53226-0975

**Southeastern Wisconsin District, Southern Conference.** November 11 at St. John, Burlington. Agenda: Exegesis: 1 John 2:12-17 (Loescher); What Constitutes Malicious Desertion? (Schroeder).

**ADDRESSES**

**PASTORS:**

- Anderson, Dean L., 3534 S. 24th S., Milwaukee, WI 53221; 414/282-7168, off. 281-8820.
- Bernthal, Leonard G., P.O. Box 837, Lovelock, NV 89419; 702/273-7152.
- Birshing, Paul R., Box 125, Waco, NE 68460; 402/728-5509, off. 728-5239.
- Clark, David W., 1153 W. Glenford Rd., Glen Aire Trailer Park #38, St. Joseph, MI 49085; 616/429-0240, off. 429-7861.
- Himm, Ricky M., 711 W. 45th St., Casper, WY 82601; 307/235-2770.
- Jaeger, Joel, Kastanien #4, 6501 Klein Winternheim, West Germany; 011-49-6136-8041.
- Jahnke, Kenneth R., 21825 Woodruff Rd., Apt. F-1, Rockwood, MI 48173; 313/782-3726.
- Johne, Harold R., 11821 N. Seminary Dr., Mequon, WI 53092; 414/252-4641.
- Knickelbein, Thomas B., 7411 Scio Church Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48103; 313/663-5708.
- Kuske, John D., 4040 Crow Rd., Apt. 711, Beaumont, TX 77706; 409/898-7243.
- Sievert, Robert A., 6618 N. 78th St., Milwaukee, WI 53223; 414/358-1349, off. 353-5000.
- Steele, Loren E., 780 Mohican Ln., Mendota Heights, MN 55118.
- Tisdale, Robbin G., 5275 Stella Dr., Gibsonsia PA 15044; 412/443-2001.
- Wendland, Mark T., 1002 McEwan St., Clare, MI 48617; 517/386-7216.
- Wenzel, Kenneth L., Box 1251, Wonewoc, WI 53968; 608/464-5576.

**NEW WELS CHURCHES**

**Names Requested**

In recent months the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod began work in the states and cities listed below. Please send all names of members who moved into the general area of these cities, as well as names of people who may be interested in a Wisconsin Synod mission, to:

WELS MEMBERSHIP CONSERVATION  
2929 N. Mayfair Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53222

Names as well as pertinent information regarding members referred will be forwarded to the nearest pastor and/or mission board chairman.

- Alaska ..... Anchorage (South)\*  
Juneau\*
- Arizona ..... Chino Valley  
Cottonwood  
Gilbert\*  
Glendale (North)\*  
Tucson (Northeast)\*  
Tucson (Southwest)\*  
Fayette/Bella Vista\*
- Arkansas ..... Pleasanton\*
- California ..... Poway
- Colorado ..... Colorado Springs (East)\*
- Florida ..... Deltona  
Jupiter\*  
Miami (Hispanic)\*  
Ocala  
Panama City\*
- Georgia ..... Alpharetta\*
- Illinois ..... Buffalo Grove/Wheeling\*  
Streamwood\*
- Indiana ..... LaFayette\*
- Michigan ..... Houghton/Hancock\*
- Minnesota ..... Elk River\*  
Shoreview\*
- Nebraska ..... Omaha (Southwest)\*
- New Mexico ..... Roswell\*
- New York ..... Manhattan\*  
Poughkeepsie\*
- North Carolina ..... Fayetteville\*
- Ohio ..... Marietta\*  
Toledo (Northwest)
- Pennsylvania ..... Bucks County\*
- South Dakota ..... Custer\*
- Texas ..... Abilene\*  
Amarillo\*  
Atascocita\*  
Beaumont\*  
San Antonio (Northeast)\*  
Sherman\*  
Waco\*
- Washington ..... Everett\*  
Spokane Valley\*  
Woodinville/Bothell\*
- West Virginia ..... Parkersburg\*
- Wisconsin ..... Madison (Hispanic)\*  
Portage\*  
Waunakee\*
- Ontario, Canada ..... New Market\*

\*Denotes exploratory services.

**TEACHERS:**

- Bode, Randy P., 113 William St., Watertown, WI 53094; 414/262-9665.
- Borchert, Kenneth, 10410 Mt. Tacoma Dr. SW, Tacoma WA 98498; 206/588-6912.
- Granberg, Stephen, 3918 Stevens Ave. S, Minneapolis, MN 55409; 612/822-0601.
- Heckman, Gary, 2103 Court St., Saginaw, MI 48602; 517/792-7796.
- Kelm, Paul H., 891 Blackoak Rd., Eau Claire, WI 54701; 715/839-9176.
- Koepsell, David P., 2309A Kroos Ct., Sheboygan, WI 53083; 414/458-8317.
- Manley, Curtis J., 147 S. Cedar St., Belle Plaine, MN 56011; 612/873-6382.
- Markgraf, Daniel J., 211 N. Government, Valentine, NE 69201; 402/376-3134.
- Peterson, Jon M., 1138 W. Prospect Ave., Appleton, WI 54914; 414/731-5797.
- Retzlaff, David N., 6564 Pipestone St., Eau Claire, WI 49111; 616/461-6695.
- Schacht, Brent, 303 Barksdale Rd., P.O. Box 300, DuPont, WA 98327; 206/964-0495.
- Schroeder, David, 6021 Birdcage St. #91, Citrus Heights, CA 95610; 916/723-5964.
- Schultz, Jeffrey D., 1013 N. 21st St., Manitowoc, WI 54220; 414/684-0216.
- Sonnenberg, Gary L., 1926 S. 50th Ave., Omaha, NE 68106; 402/556-8204.
- Williams Mark W., 508 S. Cleveland, Kennewick, WA 99336; 509/783-1724.
- Yerks, Troy D., 238 W. Water St., Brillion, WI 54110; 414/756-2436.

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## FROM THIS CORNER

When Anders Nygren, the Swedish theologian, was asked what he thought of Karl Barth, the great Swiss theologian, he responded, "I don't know. In Sweden we live by the centuries." It wasn't quite true, of course. But the truth in his words is that fads must be separated from the legitimate movements of history, and only time is the great separator.

Living by the centuries tends to dampen enthusiasm for the current fad and is all but impossible for the average American whose idea of ancient history goes all the way back to the Elvis Presley era. The "third wave," the "greening of America," or "management by walking around"? Let's hear the judgment of the century.

All this came back to me as I read a lengthy article in the New York Times (9/29) explaining the dawning of the "New Age." Mrs. J. C. Knight is a prophetess of the New Age. Thousands of people all over the country are flocking to pay \$400 to see her "transform" herself into "Ramtha," a 35,000-year-old man who delivers the New Age message that man is God, that man can achieve whatever he wants, create whatever he needs.

"I think people have realized," she said, "that they have gleaned many great lessons from their religions, but it doesn't work anymore. People are beginning to discover their own divine self. We're pulling away from congregational, fear-oriented religions."

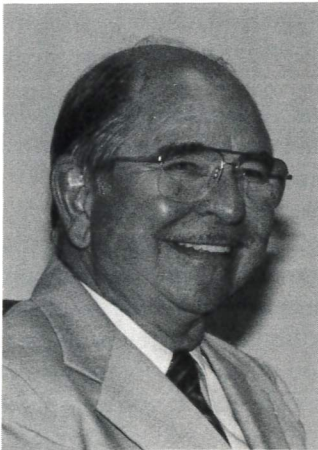
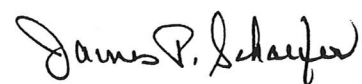
To get to the New Age — current wisdom dictates — you must enter an "altered state of consciousness" through the use of psychological techniques such as meditation, hypnosis, chanting, biofeedback, prolonged isolation and the intervention of "spirit guides" or ghosts.

Hot stuff, you say? How about this? At Stanford University's Graduate School of Business, they're running a seminar on creativity in business. The syllabus includes meditation, chanting, "dream work," the use of tarot cards and discussion of the "New Age Capitalist."

Prof. Carl A. Raschke, a professor of religious studies at the University of Denver and a critic of the trend, describes it as "the most powerful social force in the country today. I think it's as much a political movement as a religious movement, and it's spreading into business management theory and a lot of other areas. If you look at it carefully you see it represents a complete rejection of Judeo-Christian and bedrock American values."

What did we expect? When the Biblical view of the human condition is abandoned, forgotten or perverted, then the heresy of the New Age and its ilk, none of them younger than the high priestess at Delphi, not only claim a hearing from our frightened contemporaries, but in fact are summoned forth like goblins, just as when King Saul of ancient Israel in his panic consulted the Witch of Endor in the dead of night.

Live by the centuries? Try eternity!



# When were you born?

by John W. Mattek



Perhaps some think that institutional ministry in our synod is something new. It isn't. It has taken on different dimensions, is done by different people, and headed by different committees. But basically the work remains the same.

About thirty years ago if a pastor accepted a call to a mission congregation, one would be expected to serve the institutions of that area. I accepted such a call to Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, and as part of my assignment was asked to serve both the county medical institution and the "poor farm." It is the "poor farm" that I think of today.

It was operated by fine WELS members of the Redeemer congregation in Fond du Lac. I believe they were instrumental in having services conducted at the "farm" every Sunday afternoon. We met in the dining room and attendance was great . . . percentagewise. The residents greatly appreciated someone coming to them so that

their poverty might not be advertised in local churches.

Many of the residents were lonely. When they spoke to me in private they would tell me of children who were ashamed to come to see them and of relatives who never mentioned them or wrote to them because they lived at the "poor farm." In my ten years of service to these people, I believe I witnessed tears on every face.

Then a sad thing happened. I arrived one Sunday to find only a handful of the faithful at the service. I questioned our good administrator regarding the low attendance and was advised that an epidemic of tuberculosis had gotten into the group and many were bedridden. He was especially concerned about one man who had been taken to the hospital. After visiting the residents confined to their beds, I went to the hospital where I found George, a very sick man.

I was about to minister to him when he raised his hand. He wanted to speak. George asked me to baptize him. I was taken aback — he was over seventy years old. He went on to explain that he had been born in the South and perhaps had been of Baptist parents. At any rate, his mother never mentioned his baptism and he could not remember being baptized. He realized how ill he was and wanted the comfort he had so often heard about as he attended our services.

After summoning two nurses, I asked him if he believed in the Triune God, and applied water as prescribed by our Savior. George was baptized.

Now for the rest of the story. Only minutes later as I finished the devotion I had originally planned to present, a young intern came into the room. With pen and clipboard he seated himself next to George and began asking questions. "Your name?" he questioned, and George gave him his name. "When were you born?" the intern asked, and with a twinkle in a very sick eye, George replied, "About five minutes ago." "No time for jokes," the intern snapped. And then a very weak, dying old man uttered one of the finest confessions ever heard by an institutional pastor. He explained his baptism and boldly professed his faith in the Savior. He told the young intern that nothing would avail him anymore. And, like a true evangelical, he asked the intern if he shared his joy, and told him how sincerely he wished that joy for him.

I never saw George alive again. I presided at his funeral. At the funeral there were not only residents from the "poor farm" — there was a young intern.

Yes, we do institutional ministry because of people with souls, people precious to our Lord and people like George with whom we will share heaven. □



John Mattek is pastor of St. Peter, Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin.