

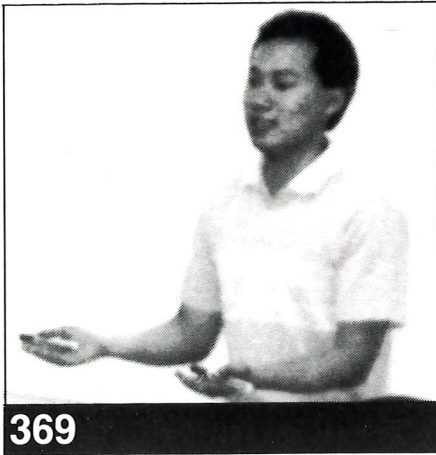
NOVEMBER 1, 1987



The
**Northwestern
Lutheran**

“All the pieces into one . . . ”

page 374



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

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE
WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD

NOVEMBER 1, 1987/VOL. 74, NO. 19

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Production

Production services of Northwestern Publishing House: Production coordinator, Clifford Koeller; Design and page make-up, Matthew Schaser, Duane Weaver; Subscription manager, Judy Olson.

Subscriber service

For subscription service, write: Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N. 113th St., P.O. Box 26975, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53226-0975. Phone 414/475-6600. Allow **four weeks** for a new subscription, subscription renewal or change of address.

Subscription rates (payable in advance)

U.S.A. and Canada — **One year, \$7.00; two years, \$13.00; three years, \$18.00.** Twenty-five or more unaddressed copies sent in a bundle to one address at \$4.00 per subscription. Every home mailing plan at \$4.50 per subscription. All prices include postage.

All other countries — Please write for rates.

The Northwestern Lutheran is available on **cassette** for the visually handicapped. For information, write: Workshop for the Visually Handicapped, 559 Humboldt Avenue, St. Paul, Minnesota 55107.

THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN (ISSN 0029-3512) is published *semimonthly, except monthly in July, August and December*, by Northwestern Publishing House, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Second class postage paid at Milwaukee, Wisconsin and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *The Northwestern Lutheran*, c/o Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N. 113th St., P.O. Box 26975, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53226-0975. ©1987 by *The Northwestern Lutheran*, magazine of the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod.

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“It is written . . . ”

by Kurt F. Koeplin

Jesus answered, “It is written” (Matthew 4:4).

Are we too far away from it to appreciate it? Have time and distance, circumstance and culture, history and technology dulled our feelings of joy, gratitude and thanksgiving? Is the 16th century Reformation like an “old love” to 20th century Christians; the memory is “nice” — but the “thrill” is gone?

Oh sure, we still send “the old girl” a verbal box of candy, a bouquet of flowers and a sentimental card of remembrance. But it just isn’t the same anymore.

Do the names of Luther, Melancthon, Wittenberg, Worms and the Wartburg stir up any dramatic images before the mind’s eye; do a few “goose bumps” creep up the arms?

Is all of this: the noting of the last day of October, the special services and choirs, the music, the publicity, the possible pageantry, the messages in three short Latin phrases which most of us can’t pronounce properly, let alone instantly grasp their meaning — is all of this just so much form without substance, formality without meaning?

Don’t take blessings for granted

God forbid! May that day never come among us that we take blessings for granted. May that day never come among us that the Reformation truths restored to us by God’s servant, whose name we bear as Christians, fail to thrill us from the roots of our hair to the tips of our toes. May that day never come among us that *Thus saith the Lord* becomes just another museum piece of famous sayings, such as: “54-40 or fight,” “Remember the Maine,” or “Win one for the Gipper.”

Rather, from here to eternity let us pray that strength be given us to follow the example of Jesus. God, through Luther, restored the Scriptures to their rightful place in our lives. But it was especially our Savior, who by personal example, demonstrated what *It is written* should mean to us at all times.

It is written said Jesus to Satan in the wilderness — and that was the end of the argument.

It is written that man does not live on bread alone. He *exists* — but he doesn’t *live*, really live, on things for the body; but rather we live with a capital L on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

We live by the word of God

Our bodies function on the meat and potatoes,

clothing and shoes, houses and homes, fields and cattle of life. But we live, our souls live on the life-sustaining, strength-giving word of our God. *It is written* — and that is more than sufficient for us. It dispels doubt, calms hearts, establishes priorities, instills courage, creates real joy, is a lamp to our feet and a light to our path of life in Christ for today and forever.

Again, *it is written* that we are not to *tempt* the Lord, our God. In the Reformation context we are reminded that we cannot, must not, dare not play “fast and loose” with his word and doctrine.

Let us not become guilty of doing this very thing, as some are doing, as they question the truthfulness of God by asking: “Were Adam and Eve real people?”; “Was Jonah actually swallowed by a big fish?”; “Did Jesus really change water into wine at Cana, physical rise from the dead on the third day?”

It is written, said Jesus. So say we!

It is written that we are to worship the Lord our God and him only shall we serve. We must never permit our God to be elbowed aside by human opinions, man-made speculations or conjectures. And our service to him must always be the singular driving force behind everything we do in our lives.

The word of God not councils

In Luther’s day God’s word finished a distant third behind pronouncements of clerics and judgments of councils. Luther changed that to, *Thus saith the Lord*, first, last and always. For followers of the Lamb today, this same attitude must be duplicated.

Why it is so important is also recorded. “But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name” (John 20:31).

Reformation observances are more than ritualistic celebrations of an event of long ago. They are also more than a dusting off of a historical relic or a casual over-the-shoulder glance at things which are dead, buried and nine-tenths forgotten. Rather, they are thankful celebrations of life, the abundant life in Christ as it has been written, “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.” □



Kurt Koeplin is pastor of Atonement, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Whose standards are our standards?

The pope's American tour was not without uncomfortable moments. His U. S. flock did obeisance to him as the vicar of Christ, but among them were a number who challenged his teachings. Some even picketed him.

They didn't challenge his claim to be the vicar of Christ or the visible head of their church, but they did dispute his position on behavioral and doctrinal matters. A Yankelovich poll reported that 78 percent of U. S. Catholics maintained that they have the right to "make up their own minds" on such moral issues as birth control and abortion. Only 14 percent agreed with their church's teaching that abortion is wrong in all cases. Fifty-two percent favored permitting women priests; 32 percent rejected the pope's position that homosexuality is morally wrong; only 29 percent thought that premarital sex was always wrong.

What has gone wrong in the U. S. for the pope and his teachings? The moral standards of many Catholics in our country are being shaped by public attitudes. Many Catholic lay people, and to an alarming extent also their priests and even their bishops, have absorbed amoral and immoral attitudes of American radio and television, of America's stage and screen, of its books and newspapers and periodicals. In increasing numbers they have gone to American colleges and have been infected by the secular humanism rampant there. As one Catholic put it: "I feel that as you become intellectually and educationally developed, you become less resigned to the restrictions of the church. They have less validity for you."

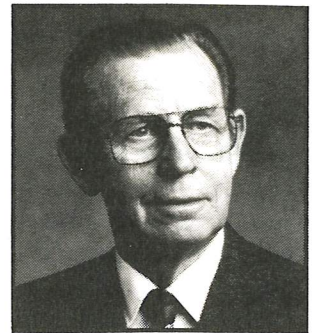
Pope John Paul struggled to counter this moral and doctrinal breakdown by underscoring the teachings of the church, by asserting his authority as the head of the church and by exerting the force of his own personality. Seldom did he simply rest his case on the declarations of the real Head of the church as they are found in Holy Scripture.

What about the WELS? Could our synod be experiencing a similar breakdown in moral and doctrinal standards? What would a Yankelovich poll of the attitudes of WELS people reveal about their opinions on abortion, premarital sex, divorce, birth control, homosexuality, women clergy? Would WELS moral and doctrinal standards register higher than those of many of their Catholic neighbors?

We have good reason to believe that they would. Our people have learned that it is not the human head of a church who is the authority in moral issues. It is not a church body, not a synod, certainly not the general public; it is the word of God, the inspired Scriptures. That "Constitution," not personal opinion, decides what is right and what is wrong. What *God* says in Genesis 19 and Romans 1 determines whether homosexuality is immoral. 1 Corinthians 11 and 14 and 1 Timothy 2 limit ordination. Premarital sex is forbidden by 1 Corinthians 6 and 7 and Ephesians 5. Psalms 51 and 139 and Luke 1 settle the abortion issue.

As long as we respect that word and the God who speaks it, and, above all, as long as we love and cherish that word because it brings us Jesus Christ and our life and salvation, our synod can be grateful for the light and the salt we still represent for the decaying society in which we live.

Carleton Toppe



Carleton Toppe is the retired president of Northwestern College, Watertown, Wisconsin.

Could our synod be experiencing a similar breakdown in moral and doctrinal standards?

“Light”

by Fredric E. Piepenbrink

The first spoken words of God recorded in Scripture are found in Genesis 1:3, “God said, ‘Let there be light,’ and there was light.” The spirit-life of God did not need light itself, for God had existed quite well from eternity without it, but light became of paramount importance at the anticipation of material-life and its hope for survival. Without light plant life dies, and animal and human life soon starves. If you wish to be an alarmist, prophesy the destruction of the sun.

In addition, purists are quick to point out that vision is not really “seeing” a tree or a chair or a book as such, only the light which reflects off these objects. If you question that, turn the light off while reading. The book is still there, but all that your eye perceives is darkness. So light is what makes the sense of vision possible.

It is not surprising then that something so basic to human existence and adding so much to the quality of life should be borrowed from its ordinary realm of operation and personified to describe the unique life of Jesus.

In John’s prologue to his Gospel (1:1-18), he has already called Jesus the “word” (1:1) and “life” (1:4a) and asked us to ponder the entire Gospel to discover what he meant by them. But in the second part of verse four he asks us to do the same with yet another picture-word. That word is “light” (1:4b), a label he attaches to Jesus and then fills it with significant meaning in the chapters which follow.

“Light” in the sense of “enlightened”

In Christian art a supernatural light is often pictured emanating from the body (usually the head) of Jesus. But the addition must be attributed more to the zealous reverence of the painter than to any condition of reality as supported by the Scriptures. Except for the transfiguration no radiant glow existed, nor can John’s picture-word for Jesus be used to support such a notion. When John called Jesus’ life a “light” he was not talking about a physical light that can be detected by the eye, but the light of knowledge and faith which is received and accepted by the heart and mind.

Jesus himself is the “light,” for John writes, “In him [i.e. Jesus] was life, and that life was the light of men” (1:4). More specifically, John quotes the words of Jesus himself, “I am the light of the world” (9:5). But it is the very nature of light to shine. So Jesus’ life as an emanating light also leads to a life-giving, qual-

ity-enhancing enlightenment in others. Jesus is a “light” because those who hear his words, see his miracles, and accept his teachings are those who come to the enlightened knowledge of truth concerning him and God. They have seen the light in the sense that they have believed in him and have stepped out of the spiritual darkness of unbelief into the light of truth.

John’s Gospel vividly depicts the challenge which confronts every person to walk in the light of faith in Christ Jesus, as opposed to remaining in the darkness of unbelief. How few there are who see the light! How bright their world becomes when they do so!

Alive in “The Word”

John relates numerous accounts of Jesus acting as a “light” to the world and how others received or rejected that light. In the next two weeks read these sections of John’s Gospel and let Christ’s grace make him a brighter “light” in your life.

2:23-3:21 Nicodemus is enlightened in faith.

5:31-47 The Jews did not walk in the light even though the Scriptures, John the Baptist and the Father himself pointed the way.

6:60-71 Even some of Jesus’ own disciples struggled in darkness.

7:1-13 Different people in Judea viewed the light in different ways.

7:45-52 Most of the Jewish leaders lived in the staunch darkness of unbelief.

8:12-30 Jesus as the light of the world has the Father’s testimony to back him.

9:1-41 Even Jesus’ healing of the blind man does not cure the Pharisees of their spiritual blindness.

10:22-42 Judean darkness is contrasted with trans-Jordan enlightenment, based on the miracles of Jesus.

11:45-54 Sanhedrin unbelief results in a plotting of Jesus’ death.

12:37-50 Although most Jews continued in their unbelief some saw the “light” and came out of the darkness. □

Next time: “Witness”



Fredric Piepenbrink is pastor of Atonement, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The reformation that almost was

*One hundred years
after Luther,
Jansen tried one
and failed*

by James G. Kiecker

A young doctor of theology fed up with the teachings of his church. A powerful writing which arouses a whole nation. The choosing of sides and the taking of uncompromising positions. Papal bulls of condemnation.

Sounds like it could be Wittenberg, Germany, in 1517.

But it wasn't. The country was France, and the time was a hundred years later, the mid-1600s.

In this season of the year, when we celebrate the Reformation of the church touched off by Martin Luther — a reformation which very definitely succeeded — it might be worthwhile to pause and consider another reformation which never made it — the reformation that almost was.

It all began with a Dutchman born in 1585, Cornelius Jansen. While studying theology he became interested in the teachings of St. Augustine, who lived from 354 to 430, reading all of Augustine's voluminous writings ten times. However, he was especially intrigued with Augustine's explanation of God's grace, reading these works (he claimed) thirty times so he wouldn't miss anything.

Basically Augustine, following St. Paul, believed that when Adam fell into sin, the whole human race fell completely into sin with Adam. Man could no longer of his own free will choose to be or to do good, since by the fall into sin man's free will was totally corrupted. Man could only be saved by God's sheer graciousness.

Augustine had taken this position — salvation by grace alone, without the efforts of man's will — in response to a monk named Pelagius who took the opposite view: Man had not fallen completely, man still had a will which could freely choose to obey God's law and so gain salvation. There really was no need for God's grace in such a system.

Jansen quickly realized that there were many people in the French Catholic church of the 1600s who believed almost, if not exactly, like Pelagius. For example, the Dominicans said that God bestowed grace on man, but not enough to save man. Man had to exercise his will to be saved, at which point God added enough grace to man's efforts to bring salvation. Salvation was not by God's grace alone, but by cooperation between God's grace and man's will.

Then there were the Jesuits. Their idea was that God bestowed his grace on man, man's will freely and immediately cooperated, no additional grace was necessary and so man could move right along to salvation. Once again, no matter how you sliced it, salvation was not by God's grace alone, but by cooperation between God's grace and man's will.

Convinced that Augustine was on the right track, and that the Dominicans and the Jesuits were wrong, Jansen began writing a book about 1616 which he finished shortly before his death in 1638. Entitled *Augustinus*, it championed Augustine's teaching on grace and condemned all other views. It was published in 1640 and became the central writing of the movement known as Jansenism.

It should be pointed out right here that Jansenism was not Lutheranism. Jansen, who rose to the office of bishop, considered himself a Catholic to his dying day. While his writings were intended to straighten out Catholic thinking on grace, they were also intended to be an effective bulwark against the Lutheran "heresy."

One prominent difference between Jansen and Luther was in the matter of God's election. Here Jansen followed Augustine: If a person was saved, it meant God had picked him out and given him grace which he couldn't resist. If a person was lost, it meant that God hadn't picked him out and given him grace.

This teaching, known as double predestination to heaven or to hell, seemed logical, but was wide of the Bible. Here Luther departed from Augustine and followed only St. Paul: If a person was saved, it meant God had chosen him and given him grace. If a person was lost, it meant that he had resisted God's grace (Romans 8:29,30).

Because the teaching of Jansen sounded like that of the reformer Calvin, Jansenists were accused of being "Calvinists who go to mass" — a charge that Jansenists denied, but a charge that seems to have come close to the mark.

Jansenism produced a large cast of interesting, not to say eccentric, characters. There was, for example, Jansen's close associate, Hauranne (pronounced ho-RAN), whose theology has been described as "damnation for the unfortunate many, and gloom for the fortunate few." Man's chance of salvation was slim. In large families perhaps only one would make it. Those who thought themselves among the elect had best avoid dancing, gambling and the theater. Characteristically, Hauranne preferred autumn with its hint of death to spring; his favorite church season was Lent.

Several members of the wealthy Arnauld family got caught up in the movement. One was Agnes, who became head of a convent at age five, thus barely edging out her sister Jacqueline, who didn't achieve this distinction until age seven. At eleven Jacqueline began a thorough revival of her nunnery located at Port Royal a few miles outside Paris. Here she fell under the sway of the gloomy Hauranne.

A retreat house for men, also called Port Royal, was established, and this attracted the brilliant mathematician Pascal, whose name has been attached to a modern computer language. His *Provincial Letters* were written in defense of Jansenism.

Early on the Jansenists ran afoul of the authorities. With Jansen and Hauranne in mind, the French cardinal and statesman Richelieu (pronounced rish-el-YOU) remarked: "If Luther and Calvin had been clapped into jail the moment they opened their mouths, the world would have been spared a lot of grief." Already in 1642 the pope issued a bull forbidding the reading of *Augustinus* since its publication hadn't been cleared with Rome.

The downfall of the Jansenists really began in 1643 when another member of the Arnauld family, Antoine, published *On Frequent Communion*. This book criticized priests who permitted moral laxity, as long as people quickly (and insincerely) confessed their sin and received communion frequently. Rather, said the author, people should show their sorrow for sin by communing less often.

The Jesuits, sensing the book was against them, retaliated. They went over the *Augustinus* with a fine tooth comb and found five teachings which they got the pope to condemn in 1653. The Jansenists were now heretics. Not satisfied, the Jesuits had a form drawn up condemning Jansenist teachings, which all Jansenists were supposed to sign. Not until 1669 did most Jansenists sign, and then usually with their fingers crossed behind their backs. Meanwhile, many among the French clergy and laity became sympathetic to Jansenism.

The issue might have rested there with no clear victory for either side if the Jansenists hadn't gotten themselves in trouble with the king. It seems that Louis XIV, no great thinker, had trouble understanding Jansenist theology, but one point got through: Jansenists were critical of his practice of inviting ladies of the court to bed with him, then dismissing them in time for him to get to morning mass. Besides, Louis was on the outs with the pope, and hoped to make up by performing some service.

So on October 29, 1709, a police squad with a dozen wagons arrived at the door of Port Royal and carted off the nuns to other convents. The next year demolition crews leveled the building. In 1715, two weeks before he died, Louis XIV saw to the publication of a final papal bull against the Jansenists.

What if the French church had swung towards a "grace alone" theology?

Though a few Jansenists remain to this day in Europe, the movement is effectively dead. Still, one can't help but wonder "what if." Granted, it departed from Scripture in the matter of predestination. But what if it had succeeded? What if the French church had swung towards a "grace alone" theology? Would France today be mostly Protestant instead of Catholic? And if such a large church went Protestant, would this have caused a ripple effect in other Catholic countries?

We'll never know. But perhaps by reflecting on this reformation that almost was, we'll be led to appreciate more fully that reformation which God permitted to succeed, and which, by his grace alone, is ours. □



James Kiecker teaches history at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

World War I and the National Lutheran Council

by Victor H. Prange

The year 1917 marked the 400th anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation. It was also the year when America went to war with Germany. World War I was both a difficult and significant time for Lutherans in America. Churches which used the German language in worship and instruction (and there were many) found themselves accused of being anti-American and supporting the government of the hated Kaiser.

Some nasty incidents were reported which show the tenor of the times. There were localities which forbade the use of the German language at any time. In Campbell Hill, Illinois a man was fined \$50 for having spoken to his father in German. This warning note appeared on the door of a Lutheran church in Missouri: "NOTICE. This notice is to notify you as pastor of this church not to teach German in the church, or preach German in the church. Comply with notice at once before a committee waits on you. Notice No. 1."

The 1847 constitution of the Missouri Synod had made the use of German mandatory at the synodical conventions. The official name of that synod included the word "German" till 1917 when it was dropped. As a result of the war with Germany the introduction of the English language in church and school was sharply accelerated among Lutherans.

The most English of the Lutherans were those living in the eastern and southern states. They were largely the heirs of Henry Muhlenberg. At the time of the Civil War the Muhlenberg line had broken into three streams: General Synod, General Synod South and General Council. In part to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the Reformation and after years of closely working together, the three streams merged to form the United Lutheran Church in America (ULCA). A midwestern church, the Augustana Synod (Swedish), had been a member of the General Council but declined to be included in the merged ULCA.

The Norwegian Lutheran Church of America (later named the Evangelical Lutheran Church) also came into existence during World War I. This was a merger of a number of smaller Norwegian groups including Hauge's Synod and the Norwegian Synod which had once belonged to the Synodical Conference. A number of congregations which refused to join this merger for doctrinal reasons organized the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) and joined the Synodical Conference.

The years 1917 and 1919 brought about the complete merger of the synods of Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin. The Joint Synod of Wisconsin took the name of the state where the majority of its congregations were located.

In 1918 two midwestern synods, Ohio and Iowa, agreed to pulpit and altar fellowship. Ohio at one time had been a member of the Synodical Conference; Iowa was originally formed by pastors sent to America by William Loehe. Iowa had never officially joined the General Council but did regularly send delegates to the meetings of that body. With the formation of the ULCA, Iowa moved to strengthen her ties with Ohio.

World War I brought with it a concern on the part of the Lutherans to serve members called into the armed forces of our country. To better carry out this work and several other humanitarian efforts, the National Lutheran Council (NLC) came into being in 1918. The ULCA, the Norwegian Lutheran Church, the Ohio, Iowa and Augustana Synods all became members of the NLC. The Wisconsin and Missouri Synods did not.

It soon became evident that the bodies which made up the National Lutheran Council were not in complete doctrinal agreement. The ULCA took the position that adherence to the Augsburg Confession was a sufficient basis for church fellowship. The midwestern Lutherans generally believed that additional doctrinal statements were necessary which spelled out more fully the confession of the church on some subjects. One such subject was the doctrine of inspiration.

There was no agreement either as to the kind of projects which the NLC should undertake. The ULCA was ready to involve the Council in supporting the preaching of the word of God in the war-torn areas of Europe. The midwestern synods wished to limit the work of the NLC to activities which could be considered purely humanitarian or administrative. Despite the disagreements the National Lutheran Council lived on as the catalyst for the eventual formation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in 1987. □



Victor Prange is pastor of Peace, Janesville, Wisconsin.

Growth on the Hong Kong mission field

by Roger W. Plath

Mission outreach in Hong Kong is developing rapidly. In the last year two new study centers and preaching stations have opened their doors. Three existing congregations pay most of the operating expenses. Two new evangelists man the study centers.

A study center is simply a quiet place where students are invited to study. In Hong Kong most people live in crowded conditions. Very often families of four to eight people live in one-room houses. Sixty or more of these homes fill each floor of multi-storied buildings. Needless to say, the conditions are crowded and noisy. For much of the year 90 degree heat and 90 percent humidity add to the problem. This is a difficult environment for serious students who want to excel in homework and the all-important examinations.

To assist the students, your WELS mission has opened study centers. These are quiet, air-conditioned rooms on the ground floor of the mammoth housing blocks. Tables and chairs provide basic furnishings. Hundreds of students use the study room facilities. During recent spring exams, scores of students lined up before the time of opening to get in; many stayed from 10:00 a.m. until 10:00 p.m. each day.

But more important than a quiet room, study centers are a place where students can hear the gospel. Besides maintaining order, the study center attendant also shares his faith with students. Students may attend Bible studies and Christian youth fellowship groups. On weekends the study room becomes a church for both students and the community at large.

Without using study centers, it would be difficult to start a new church in Hong Kong's populous housing estates. (An "estate," in Hong Kong terminology, is a group of multi-storied residential buildings.) Space cannot be bought or rented here. Sometimes, however, the Hong Kong government grants permission to an outside agency to operate certain community services. After remodeling the premises, the cost of maintenance is low. Our three self-supporting mission churches cover most of the manpower costs by supporting evangelists at the centers. These evangelists themselves study at South Asian Lutheran Bible Institute and Seminary, the WELS theological schools in Hong Kong.

Lai King Lutheran study center is located in Lai King Estate in west Kowloon. Lai King is home to

21,000 residents. They live in seven buildings on a mountainside above Hong Kong's busy seafreight container terminal. Missionary Mark Sprengeler and Evangelist Tse Tat Chiu together man this center. To date 70 percent of the 600 study center members have individually heard about God's love for them. Twenty students have joined Bible classes and attended Saturday afternoon youth groups. Only five percent of the students already belong to Christian churches. No other churches work in Lai King Estate.

On the shores of the South China Sea in the west of Hong Kong's New Territories lies Sam Shing Estate. Sam Shing is home to 8000 people in three buildings. Sam Shing Lutheran study center and church are on the ground floor of one of these buildings. "Sam Shing" means "three holy's" in Chinese. It is a good name for a church confessing the Trinity. But to a foreign missionary's point of view, the name seems inappropriate for a community which is only one percent Christian and whose biggest annual celebration is the birthday of Tin Hau. Tin Hau is the goddess of the sea and the protector of fishermen. For this reason Sam Shing Lutheran study center witnesses to the Triune God and the Savior of all people. Two hundred thirty-five students have heard about this Savior individually. Many are taking Bible classes.



Evangelist Shing with students at the study center.

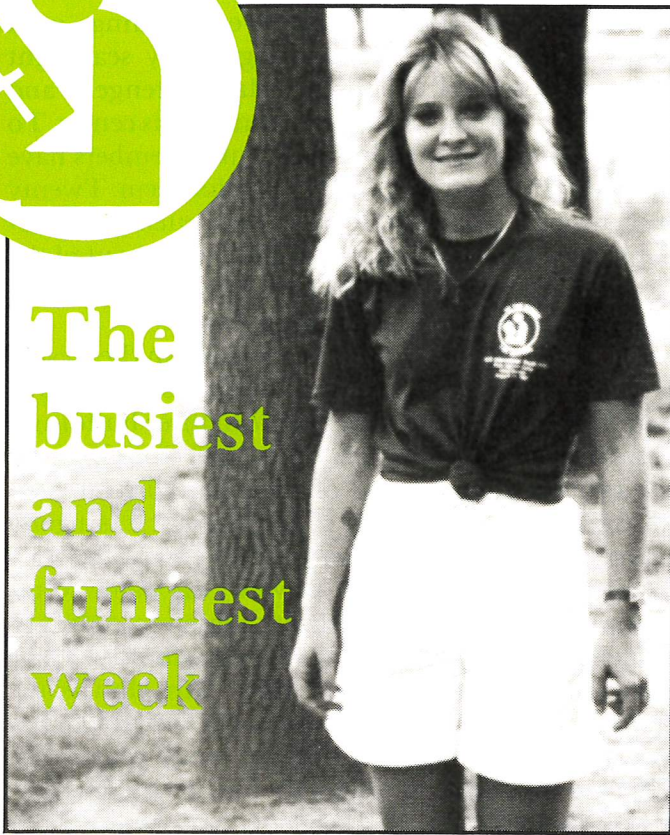
But all has not gone smoothly. Some people resent the Christian message. They claim that it is too foreign to traditional Chinese beliefs. Some parents forbid their teenage children to even use the study room facilities. The Holy Spirit, prayer and a positive and patient approach often overcome these fears. Missionary James Krause and Evangelist Yeung Wai Shing share the ministry in Sam Shing. □



Roger Plath is director of mission outreach in Hong Kong.



The busiest and funnest week



Tresa Buz

by Anne M. Gohlke

August 14 marked the end of one of the busiest and funnest weeks of my life and August 10 marked the beginning of it. Some of you might have already guessed why. It was the week I went to the 1987 WELS International Youth Rally down in Georgia.

When I got there, I knew I would love it. We were at Camp Rock Eagle, not too far from Atlanta. We stayed in cottages, had access to the camp's two pools and were allowed to use the many camp buildings as rooms for our classes.

I thought I was especially lucky (even though the paint on my cottage floor was peeling, there was only one fan and one bathroom — that wasn't exactly the greatest) because I was in a lake-front cabin. *Yeah!*

Even though there was a lake, we were told to stay out of it because of some "things," like snakes, that were in it. But wouldn't you say that the camp was pretty nice? Oooops, I forgot about the fire ants, but they really didn't bother me or any of my friends at all. By the way, you make a lot of those too; I couldn't believe how friendly everyone was.

Those of you who didn't go probably are wondering if you missed out on any good food. Don't worry! In this way the camp was like any other camp.

The camp wasn't all Bible study either. They took us to Six Flags Over Georgia (an amusement park) on

Wednesday. It took 24 buses to cart all 1124 of us to the park. The bus and truck drivers who passed us on the highway couldn't imagine what was going on. We all wore our blue rally shirts to Six Flags so everywhere a person went you could see some blue shirts and hear people yelling "hey blue" or "yo smurf!" We didn't realize what we were doing by wearing our blue shirts, but the large number of well-mannered and enthusiastic teenagers seems to have gotten at least one person, who was also visiting the park, interested in our church. The Holy Spirit surely works in wondrous and unusual ways.

During the week we were also treated to a few concerts (the organizers thought of everything, didn't they?). On Tuesday, "Saints Alive," a group from St. Paul, Minnesota and Tresa Buz each put on a concert. Tresa also wrote our rally theme song called, "He has spoken . . . I am listening." It is a beautiful song. Thanks Tresa! On Thursday night the PTO presented a concert; they showed that Christian rock is good and there's no need to listen to "unchristian" rock.

We had classroom study and discussion groups on Tuesday and Thursday. What happened is that each of us was given a list of the subjects to be studied and asked to select five. The classes were all interesting as they concerned topics and questions teenagers frequently have. The answers offered were all based on what the Bible teaches and helped us to better understand that the Bible does have *the* answer to even today's concerns and problems.

Then, just as we were becoming used to the busy schedule (going to bed about 1:00 a.m. and waking up around 6:00 a.m. and getting about three hours of free time every day), Thursday sneaked up on us and we had to leave. *Boo-hoo!* We were all exchanging addresses, hugs, kisses and good-byes until the bus drivers practically had to pull us onto the buses. Most of us were promising to meet again at next year's rally.

I was having such a good time, I wished that it wouldn't end. I'd like to thank *everyone* who made the rally into what it was. Believe me, it was one unforgettable experience. I can't wait until next year. Be sure to watch for information on the regional rallies to be held next summer, too.

Oh, yes, one more thing. As Paster Ewings told us in his sermon at the closing service, we should tell our parents, "We saw cockroaches t-h-i-s big, but we also learned about Jesus!"

Bye y'all! □

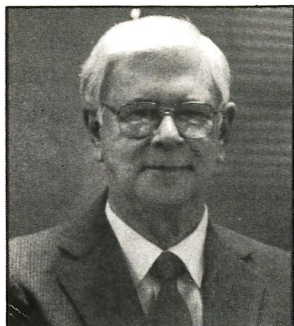


Anne Gohlke is a member of Grace, Falls Church, Virginia and a freshman at Martin Luther Preparatory School, Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin.

Spiritual renewal in perspective

The 1987 convention assigned a high priority to the matter of spiritual renewal.

The delegates were decisive in their analysis that "spiritual renewal is a major continuing need of our synod which needs to be addressed at this time." They authorized the Board for Parish Services "to plan, initiate and coordinate an intensive and extensive nurturing program which will encourage a spiritual renewal of our synod's membership, raising our sights to the Lord's abundant blessings upon us and to the mission opportunities he has placed before us." And they instructed the Coordinating Council and the Board of Trustees to "give high priority to the funding of this resolution."



In a subsequent resolution the Board for Parish Services was authorized "to create the position (temporary) of Project Director for Spiritual Renewal." It was the only request for immediate staff assistance approved by this convention. In response to the convention directive the Coordinating Council has since funded the position, also the only budget addition granted by the council at this time.

The convention defined spiritual renewal as "a re-emphasis on the centrality of the cross of Christ in the Christian's entire life, on the power of the Holy Spirit to change lives and cause spiritual growth through the means of grace on the discipleship and ministry of every believer." Since this involves nourishing believers through the word, the resolution coincides perfectly with one of the primary objectives of each of our congregations, "to strengthen believers in faith and sanctification through the means of grace."

But I trust we will not embark on a vigorous nurturing emphasis on the assumption that the spiritual level of all of our members is at base zero. Sadly there are those in every congregation whose neglect of the means of grace has resulted in a low level of spirituality. This is an ongoing problem that needs to be addressed in an ongoing manner.

This dare not keep us from recognizing, however, that a substantial number of our members are already highly motivated by the gospel proclaimed regularly in our churches and taught in our schools. They dearly love their Lord and are eager to serve him. I trust that we will not fail these by neglecting to help them answer the question, "What does this mean for me?"

I hope that our emphasis on renewal will not cause us to put everything else on hold. I hope it will not become an excuse to avoid mentioning money as though the two were mutually exclusive. I hope we will proclaim the whole counsel of God, a God who loved us so much that he gave his life to redeem us, but who also gave us some instruction in our response to that love. We need to continue the clear proclamation that we are justified before God, but also provide equally clear instruction on what the Scriptures teach about our life of sanctification.

Otherwise we will look in vain for a substantial change in our hearts and lives.

Carl H. Muschke

WELS Singles Retreat

On September 11-13, the Yahara Center near Madison, Wis., was the site of the 1987 WELS Singles Retreat. For those of us who were able to attend, it was agreed that it was a well-worthwhile weekend worth repeating on an annual basis.

It was a most enriching experience to come together with fellow singles from our own circles to discuss and share things of importance to us as Christian singles.

For being a first-time occurrence, it was very well planned and excellently carried out. The organizers and initiators of the weekend are to be commended. I hope the retreat becomes an annual event of the future.

*Jason R. Muench
Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin*

Thank you for the "1987 Singles Retreat" at the Yahara Center. I had the time of my life!

I met so many nice Christian people who shared their thoughts and feelings. The speakers were great and the group discussions were helpful.

I will always remember that special weekend. It gave me a new outlook on life, Christ's way. Thanks again.

*Nancy Williams
Oshkosh, Wisconsin*

Donation appreciated

During the summer I received a donation for inner-city vacation Bible school, with an accompanying letter explaining that the donation was from the Sunday school students of Grace Lutheran Church, signed by Jo Ann Lutze. Unfortunately there was no indication in the letter as to which Grace Lutheran Church this was, and the envelope was discarded. I'm hoping you'll print this letter so that Jo Ann and the Sunday school students will be informed that their donation was received and appreciated.

I don't have any statistics on hand, but I don't think it's any exaggeration to say that hundreds of residents of our inner city have been baptized and joined our congregations as a result of these vacation Bible schools. So on behalf of the Milwaukee inner city

congregations, I want to thank Jo Ann Lutze and the Grace Lutheran Sunday School, wherever they may be.

*Philip Merten
Milwaukee, Wisconsin*

An interesting magazine

I think it's high time I'm writing to tell you what I think about our new Northwestern Lutheran. It has really come alive.

I'm so happy about the July issue with Roland Cap Ehlke's beautiful and timely poem, "O America," printed on a lovely background on front and back covers. I have suggested that it be printed on a folder which would be welcomed in many homes and sent out to friends or given out at church.

Thank you for your interesting editorials and the fine inspirational and informative messages by the very able writers.

Do you find that there are so many people who do not take the time to read? What a pity!

I wish each member would be a subscriber — rather, that each home would have this helpful, interesting magazine, to be read and enjoyed to their edification.

*Mrs. Leona I. Burmeister
Winona, Minnesota*

I am glad I receive each issue of The Northwestern Lutheran. In the world today where religion has become the laughing stock because of false doctrine and corruption, my heart is relieved to find the true "law and gospel" in your magazine. Thanks.

Please keep distributing your magazine nationwide for Jesus.

*Roger Pankow
Chicksands, England*

Change the name?

I can understand how the name Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod creates the need for explanation to those across the country and around the world who are not familiar with us and what we stand for. However, is the name Wisconsin so

abhorrent that it turns mission prospects away? Does it actually serve as a deterrent or only as an item for conversation?

To change the name from Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod to something else would take a great toll. Every sign on every Wisconsin Synod church across the country would have to be changed. All the evangelism tracts and mass media material, letterheads, the synod logo and every other place that bears the name would also have to be replaced. Much time and effort would be spent finding a new name, agreeing on a new name, designing logos and the like, and finally promoting a new name to people who still think of themselves as members of the Wisconsin Synod. The cost could easily run into the hundreds of thousands.

The name Wisconsin Synod is a reflection of our origin. If it truly turns souls away from Christ, let it be gone. If not, why change it? Perhaps a better way of reflecting our goal would be to add to our name: "The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod: Bringing the Gospel of Christ to Every Nation."

*Linda Biebert
Beaver Dam, Wisconsin*

The two choices for a synod name change do not suit this writer, for the following reasons. The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Christ sounds Mormon. The Lutheran Church International — any time you use the words America, universal, international, etc., it denotes liberal.

Since it is one thing to disagree, it is another to suggest. My suggestion: The Lutheran Church. By keeping it simple it will always be used in its entirety.

*Gene Juergens
Cedarburg, Wisconsin*

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.

Pope John Paul II: Dissent and confrontation unacceptable . . .

In response to reports from U.S. bishops on widespread challenges to Roman Catholic teachings within the church, Pope John Paul II instructed them to "show the unacceptability of dissent and confrontation as a policy and method in church teaching." The pope's defense was made in Los Angeles during his U.S. tour. He declared that "theological discussion takes place within the framework of faith. Dissent from church doctrine remains what it is: dissent. . . . It may not be proposed or received on an equal footing with the church's authentic teaching." He told the 300 bishops gathered there that "it is sometimes claimed that dissent . . . is totally compatible with being a 'good Catholic' and poses no obstacle to the reception of the sacraments. That is a grave error that challenges the teaching office of the bishops of the United States and elsewhere."

Singers condemned . . . *At its August convention the Assemblies of God voted to express concern and disapproval of some Christian rock musicians. "If you put the name Jesus on whiskey, it would still make you drunk. Putting the label 'Jesus' on rock music doesn't change the essential nature of it. . . . It is still just as bad as before," said the Rev. Joseph Pyott. Pyott said that Christian rock artist Amy Grant's performances are very suggestive sexually, and that the group Stryper dresses like devils in Spandex costumes and contradicts everything the gospel stands for.*

German survey of religious opinion . . . Forty-six percent of the people in West Germany consider religion obsolete, according to a survey by the Institute of Public Opinion Research in Allensbach. A report of the survey said that only one-third of those polled believe that religion has an answer for the problems of today. Two-thirds of the people said they believe in God. Fifty-seven percent said they rarely or never attend worship. Concerning the Bible, 37 percent said they don't believe everything in it but regard it as the basis for their faith.

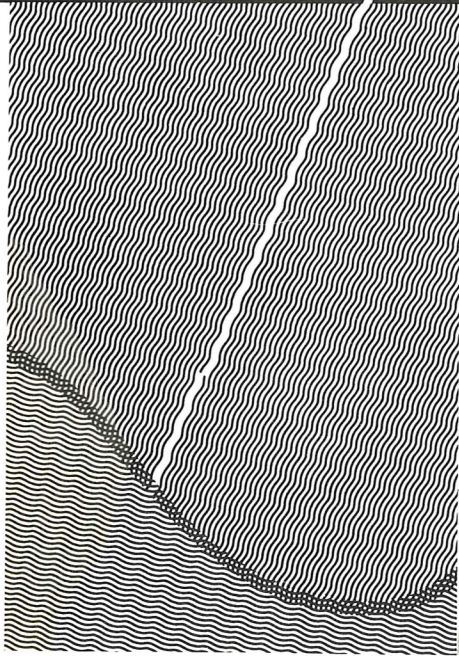
New printing presses in China rolling . . . *Testing has begun at the newly installed Scripture printing presses located at the Amity Foundation's headquarters in Nanjing, China. The ultra-sophisticated presses, supplied by the United Bible Societies at a cost reputed to be in excess of eight million dollars, have the capacity to print four million books annually. Dr. Chan Choi, Regional Secretary of the Asia Pacific Center of the Bible Society, said he hoped to see the first Bibles come off the presses in November, only a few months behind schedule.*

Two-way traffic in mission . . . A first long-term Indian missionary is to be sent to Denmark from the Arcot Lutheran Church in South India. The missionary will spend the first four months of his stay getting to know a Danish congregation, and also spending some time in Aarhus University to study new religious movements in depth. He will be focusing his activities on three different areas: People who are outside of the church; the area where new religious movements are vigorously active among the Danes; and the Asians who have migrated to Denmark, especially the Sri Lankan refugees. It is the beginning of a "two-way traffic in mission," said Arcot Lutheran Church Bishop Moses Samuel.

Lutheran head does not attend service with the pope . . . *When the nation's top religious leaders met with the pope in Columbia S. C., Dr. Ralph Bohlmann, president of the Missouri Synod, attended the dialogue session but not the worship service following. "I don't want to embarrass the event or my church," he said, "but joint worship services like this are not in keeping with the position of our church body. . . . We have to be doubly sensitive in this case because of the historic teaching of the Lutheran Confessions that the pope is the anti-Christ." Dr. Bohlmann said he recognizes that the teaching "sounds harsh to the 20th century Christians." But he added that the Catholic Church still teaches that the pope is the vicar of Christ on earth, whose teachings under certain conditions are infallible.*

"Holy war" in Mexico . . . Recent reports in the Mexican press have stated that the Catholic Church has undertaken a "holy war" in its new campaign to "combat the sects." Those targeted include not only the Mormons and Jehovah's Witnesses, but the Bible Society, the Salvation Army, and other Evangelical and Protestant denominations, according to a list published on the front page of *Ovaciones*, a Mexico City daily newspaper. According to the reports, Roman Catholics are being taught special courses in house-to-house outreach, with the "obligation" of winning back a minimum of ten ex-Catholics who have been converted by the "sects." While not surprised, Evangelical leaders say they are disturbed by the reference to "sects" to respected Protestant groups, many of which have been active in Mexico for at least 125 years.

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.



“All the pieces into one . . .”

A singles retreat

“You just take all of the pieces, throw them up in the air, and let the Lord put them together.” Sounds like the Christian secret to living a serene life in a disorganized world.



Edie Siemers, Betty Brassow and Jeff Scheibe, all of Milwaukee, served on the steering committee.

What it really is is a singles retreat organizer's way of handling bits and pieces of the business at hand — publicity, registration, program, numbers, speakers, relaxation, activities, meals. After all, how can you know the unknown; how do you even know if anyone will come? You begin with an idea, if you will . . . the nagging feeling that out there somewhere, in our congregations and in the innermost hearts of people, there is an unmet need. It is the need of people who are not necessarily lonely or alone — but who are single, widowed, unmarried, divorced, whatever.

There is the need to accept, and be accepted as is; to serve and be served, to minister and be ministered to.

One hundred fifty singles came to Madison, Wisconsin in early fall 1987 for the singles retreat — “Especially Single” they called it. More than the pieces of business at hand were thrown up in the air that weekend. One hundred fifty human pieces were thrown — of sizes and ages and interests and backgrounds; pieces from Washington and Nebraska and Michigan; pieces to be leaders of discussion groups and worship formats and recreation activities. I think you

know what happened; if you didn't believe God's promise about the invisible church when you arrived, you'd believe it when you left. If you thought you were single/alone when you came, you knew that when you went home, you'd be single together.

Because the Lord took the 150 pieces and when they came down they were together. Someone said it was all a foretaste of heaven, and this editorialist might even call the whole weekend retreat an act of worship. One hundred fifty pieces were one body of Christ in a celebration of faith and life.

Jeremiah 29:11 — “For I know the plans I have for you” declares the Lord, “plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.” Those words served as more than a theme for the retreat; they came alive in fulfillment for those three days, and were taken home as a living message upon which to build a meaningful life.

There is a challenge in this message — 150 set the way and offered themselves to an unknown program. Who will take them up on their offer? How will we accept their joy, their desire to be the active church? Will a ministry, not just to singles, but of singles, be adopted in our circles?

This first-ever singles retreat was co-sponsored by the Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service and Wisconsin Lutheran College. Assistance for registrants and program was provided by a generous fraternal benevolence grant from the members of AAL. Cassette tapes of the formal presentations are available: Tape 1 — “Especially Single” (R. Stadler) and “Confidentially Single” (Lisa Adamski); Tape 2 — “Socially Single” (Linda Evenson) and “Spiritually Single” (Joy Chasty). Write: WELS Singles, P.O. Box 26963, Wauwatosa, WI 53226 and enclose \$4.00 per tape desired.

— WLCFS reporter

Reaching out in the Middle East

At a recent meeting the Central Asia Radio Committee, which broadcasts a weekly religious program to two million Germans in Soviet Central Asia, authorized the development of a Persian language program to be beamed at "the twenty million women and children of Iran."

The pilot program, the committee said, would be "along the lines of a women's Bible class, including brief readings from the Old and New Testaments, appropriate applications, musical interludes and an invitation to respond."

The speaker on the program is a

layperson of the WELS who is presently living in the Milwaukee area. A convert from Islam, she was born and reared in Iran and has an intimate familiarity with the culture of her native land, according to the committee. For security reasons she will identify herself to her listeners simply as "Mary."

Although the program is intended for the women and children of Iran, the committee said, "we would not object to eavesdropping by the remaining 60 million Persian-speaking inhabitants of Iran, Iraq and Afghanistan."

The committee plans to use the shortwave transmitter of the Far East Broadcasting Association located on the island republic of Seychelles, off the coast of Kenya. No date is available for the first broadcast.

Deep in thought? That was the idea at Kid's Kreative Korner this past summer at Wisconsin Lutheran College under the direction of Deb Heermans, art instructor at the college. Alana Ashford of Atonement Lutheran in Milwaukee not only studied Greek art but Egyptian, Gothic, Roman, Renaissance and modern as well. Ashford is in seventh grade. The fourth annual event had a record enrollment of 27 this year.



Northern Wisconsin District

Christ Lutheran of Eagle River dedicated its classroom addition and multi-purpose area on May 17. On May 16 there was an open house and a gathering of graduates of former years. This celebration also marked the 30th anniversary of the school. Pastor Eugene Ahlswede serves the congregation along with a vicar. The principal is Greg Miller. Pastor Marvin Radtke was guest speaker for the celebration. . . . **Mt. Calvary of Kimberly** celebrated its 50th anniversary on September 20. President Carl Voss of the Northern Wisconsin District was the festival preacher. In its 50-year history Mt. Calvary has had eight pastors. Frederick Toppe has served the 500-member congregation since 1976. Four teachers serve in its Christian day school. This congregation has two daughter congregations: St. Luke of Little Chute, begun in 1966, and Mt. Calvary of Redding Calif., begun by members

employed by Kimberly-Clark who were transferred west. . . . **Fox Valley Lutheran High School, Appleton**, supported by a federation of 34 congregations in the Fox Valley, opened its doors for the new school year on August 24 with

an enrollment of 532, a slight decrease over the previous school year. Seminary graduate Joel Nitz is the newest addition to the 36-member faculty.

— Jan Eggert



At Camp Basic stunt night Lynette (left) plays her pretend violin. In its eighth year, this camp for the mentally retarded had a record 37 campers with 37 counselors. The camp, sponsored by the Special Ministries Board of the Western Wisconsin District, uses the camping facilities of Wyalusing State Park at Prairie du Chien and is directed by Ken Pahnke.

THE BIBLE IN 365 READINGS

Continuing our program of reading through the complete Bible in one year, we list the sixth month of readings beginning November 16 and ending December 15.

- November 16** Ecclesiastes 7:23 — 12:6
- 17 1 Kings 12 — 14:18
- 18 1 Kgs 14:19 — 16:34
- 19 1 Kgs 17 — 19:18
- 20 1 Kgs 19:19 — 21:29
- 21 1 Kgs 22:53/
2 Kings 1 — 2:18
- 22 2 Kgs 2:19 — 4:44
- 23 2 Kgs 5 — 8:6
- 24 2 Kgs 8:7 — 10:31
- 25 2 Kgs 10:32 — 14:14
- 26 2 Kgs 14:15 — 17:23
- 27 2 Kgs 17:24 — 18:37
/Psalms 59, 6
- 28 2 Kgs 19/
Ps 29, 120, 140, 27
- 29 2 Kgs 20 — 23:27
- 30 2 Kgs 23:28 — 25:30
Daniel 1
- December 1** Dn 2 — 3:30
- 2 Dn 4 — 6:23
- 3 Dn 6:24 — 9:27
- 4 Dn 10 — 12:13
- 5 Ezra 1 — 3:7
- 6 Ez 3:8 — 7:10
- 7 Ez 7:11 — 10:24
- 8 Ez 10:25 — 10:44/
Nehemiah 1 — 3:32
- 9 Neh 4 — 7:38
- 10 Neh 7:39-73/
Ps 127, 33, 13, 85
- 11 Neh 8 — 9:38/
Ps 144, 99
- 12 Neh 10 — 11:9/
Haggai
- 13 Neh 11:10 — 13:31
- 14 Zechariah 1 — 6:15
- 15 Zch 7 — 11:17

New chairmen elected

At fall meetings of various boards, commissions and committees a number of new chairmen were elected. The synod's Bylaws require such agencies to reorganize themselves after every convention.

Among the new chairmen elected were Dr. Daniel Schmeling of Milwaukee, principal of Wisconsin Lutheran High School, to head the Special Ministries Board; Pastor Victor Prange of Janesville, Wis., to head the Commission on Worship; and Prof. Wilbert Gawrisch of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary to head the Commission on Inter-Church Relations.

Also elected were Pastor Alan Siggelkow of Milwaukee as chairman of the Board of Control of Northwestern College and Preparatory School; and Pastor Philip Koelpin of Flagstaff, Ariz., as chairman of the Executive Committee for the Lutheran Apache Mission.

Also welcomed to their new posts were Pastor Joel Schroeder of Overland Park, Kans., as chairman of the Board of Trustees and Pastor Douglas Engelbrecht of Neenah, Wis., as chairman of the Board for Worker Training. Both were elected to their positions by the August convention.



How Carlos and Lucy Gomez joined our congregation in Medellin, Colombia was featured in an article in the issue of last November 15. It ended on the sad note that Lucy lost twins in a miscarriage. We are happy to report that there is joy in the Gomez family. On March 22 Diana Carolina Gomez was baptized by our pastor, Omar Ortiz.

The lighter side

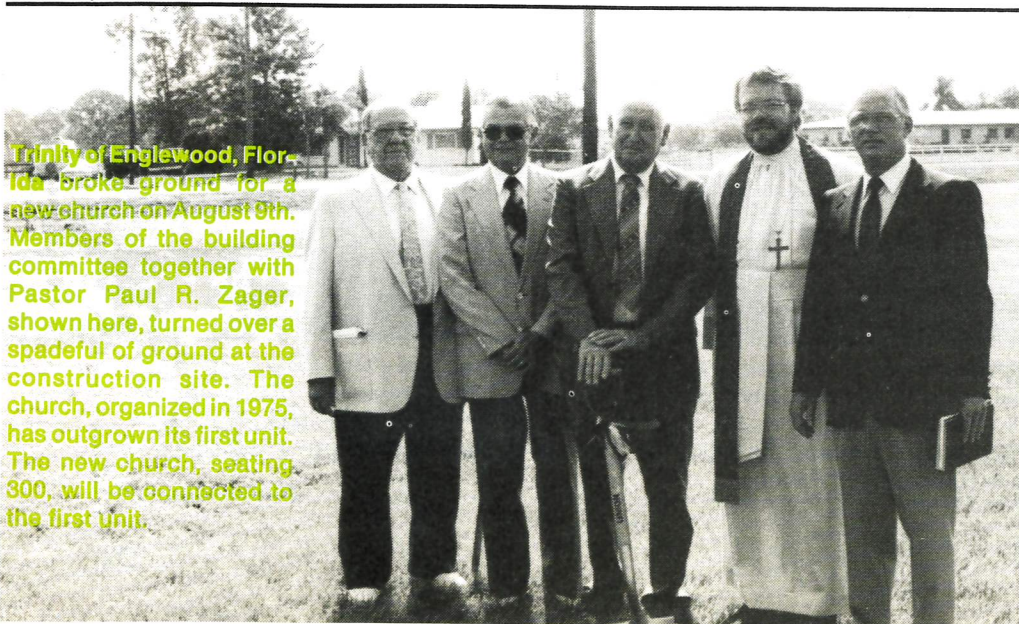
All humorous events recorded in another language limp, but anyway the story goes something like this:

Missioners from the U.S. and national Colombians were together in a missioner's home for a social gathering. Pastor Ernst Zimdars, a good German name, was among them.

Guard dogs are always good pets in Colombia. The missioner in whose home the group was together had advertised in the Spanish newspaper that he had a German Shepherd pup for sale. In Spanish that is *Aleman* (German) *Pastor* (shepherd).

The phone rang. In Spanish the caller asked the Colombian, who had answered the phone, "Is this the place that has an *Aleman Pastor*?" Not knowing about the newspaper ad, he answered in Spanish, "Just a minute, I'll call him."

Imagine the caller's surprise when the "German Shepherd," Pastor Ernst Zimdars, came to the phone and said, "Hello!"



Trinity of Englewood, Florida broke ground for a new church on August 9th. Members of the building committee together with Pastor Paul R. Zager, shown here, turned over a spadeful of ground at the construction site. The church, organized in 1975, has outgrown its first unit. The new church, seating 300, will be connected to the first unit.

NOTICES

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

NOMINATIONS ADMINISTRATOR BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The following were nominated for the office of administrator (executive secretary) for the Board of Trustees:

Rev. Donald R. Buch	Marshfield, WI
Teacher Owen A. Dorn	Muskego, WI
Rev. William R. Gabb	Watertown, WI
Rev. Thomas C. Fischer	Milwaukee, WI
Rev. Ronald F. Freier	St. Joseph, MI
Rev. Alan R. Klessig	Abrams, WI
Rev. Prof. John C. Lawrenz	Saginaw, MI
Rev. Charles L. Learman	Friendswood, TX
Rev. Mark L. Liesener	Bloomington, MN
Rev. Jon M. Mahnke	San Jose, CA
Mr. Norbert M. Manthe	Wauwatosa, WI
Mr. John Marten	Fond du Lac, WI
Rev. Robert H. Michel	Germantown, WI
Mr. Clair Ochs	White Marsh, MD
Mr. Calvin A. Patterson	New Berlin, WI
Mr. Timothy Pipkorn	Tampa, FL
Rev. Norman E. Pommeranz	Tampa, FL
Mr. Robert P. Raasch	Fort Ripley, MN
Rev. Marvin A. Radtke	Altamonte Springs, FL
Rev. Ralph E. Scharf	West Allis, WI
Mr. Jerald Schochenmaier	Hancock, MN
Rev. Gary V. Schroeder	Hong Kong
Rev. Joel B. Schroeder	Overland Park, KS
Rev. Keith N. Schroeder	Bay City, MI
Rev. Lynn A. Schroeder	Saginaw, MI
Rev. Neal D. Schroeder	Renton, WA
Mr. Donald F. Schuppe	Memphis, TN
Mr. Arvid W. Schwartz	Edina, MN
Rev. John C. Seifert	Midland, MI
Rev. Robert C. VanNorstrand	Temple, TX
Rev. Myrl E. Wagenknecht	Fort Worth, TX
Dr. David Williams	Flagstaff, AZ
Mr. Gene H. Williams	Milwaukee, WI

Information pertaining to any of these candidates is solicited from the synod's constituency and should be in the hands of the undersigned by November 13, 1987 for consideration by the Board of Trustees in its November 16-18 meeting.

Rev. Ralph E. Scharf, Secretary
Board of Trustees
1215 South 100th Street
West Allis, WI 53214

REQUEST FOR NOMINATIONS

With the authorization of the 1987 synod convention and the funding approval of the Coordinating Council, the Board for Parish Services requests the nomination of candidates for the position of "Project Director for Spiritual Renewal." The project director will be asked to "coordinate an intensive spiritual renewal effort that will focus on Christian discipleship and ministry among WELS members." The position requires at least ten years of pastoral experience in the WELS and a commitment to renewing members for spiritual growth and equipping them in lay ministry, stewardship and evangelism. The candidate should possess skills in the areas of research and analysis, program planning, administration, communication and motivation. This is a limited call in that the position is authorized for a period of three years. Nominations are to be submitted to the undersigned by November 5, 1987.

Prof. Allen Zahn, Secretary
613 South 12th Street
Watertown, WI 53094

DISTRICT NEWS SCHEDULE

November 1: Northern Wisconsin, Pacific Northwest, South Atlantic

November 15: South Central, Southeastern Wisconsin, Western Wisconsin

December 15: Arizona-California, Dakota-Montana, Michigan

January 1: Minnesota, Nebraska, North Atlantic

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

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS MARTIN LUTHER PREPARATORY SCHOOL Dean of Students — Latin

Since Professor Dennis Hayes, dean of students at Martin Luther Preparatory School, has accepted a call into the parish ministry, the Board of Control of MLPS, with the concurrence of the Board for Worker Training, herewith petitions the voting membership of the synod to nominate theologically trained male candidates for the professorship of dean of students and Latin I.

Letters of nomination with as much pertinent information as possible should be in the hands of the secretary of the board no later than November 6, 1987.

Secretary of the Board
Dale Markgraf
20 S. Jefferson
New Ulm, MN 56073

CHORALE CONCERT

The Lutheran Choral, directed by Pastor Kurt Eggert, will present a sacred concert of traditional and contemporary Advent and Christmas music on Sunday, November 29, 3:30 and 7:30 p.m. at Atonement, 4500 N. Sherman Blvd., Milwaukee. Assisted by organ and strings, the cantata "Every Word and Thought" by Dietrich Buxtehude will be featured to commemorate the 350th anniversary of his birth. Free will donation.

CONFERENCES

Minnesota District, New Ulm Conference, November 3 at St. Paul, New Ulm.

Nebraska/Colorado Missionaries' Conference, November 3-4 at Good Shepherd, Kearney, Nebr. Agenda: Workshop on Developing Your Congregational Outreach; HMB/Evangelism (Hagedorn-Kelm).

Southeastern Wisconsin District, Southern Conference, November 10 at First Lutheran, Elkhorn. Agenda: Exegesis: 1 John 2:18-27 (Martin); Involving Youth in our Church (campus speaker).

CHANGES IN MINISTRY

PASTORS:

Hayes, Dennis A., from Martin Luther Preparatory School, Prairie du Chien, Wis., to St. Martin, Watertown, S. Dak.
Kiecker, Peter E., from Cross of Glory, Baton Rouge, La., to St. Luke, Grand Rapids, Minn.
Kipfmiller, David A., from Eastside, Madison, Wis., to St. John-St. James, Reedsville, Wis.
Krueger, Edward H. em., from Our Savior, Monte Vista, Colo., to retirement.

"OUR FAVORITE HYMNS"

These audio-cassettes are again available. The three sets contain 58 hymns sung by mixed and male choirs. Cost for each cassette is \$5.00 post-paid. Send orders to Martin Albrecht, 315 Highland Dr., Grafton, WI 53024.

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NAMES REQUESTED

A group of WELS Lutherans in the Tallahassee, Florida area has begun meeting for a worship service on the last Sunday of the month. Names of WELS members living in the area or students attending Florida State University should be sent to Pastor Lynn Wiedmann, 4618 NW 41st St., Gainesville, FL 32606, or call him at 904/372-5509.

CHANGE OF TIME

Divine Savior, Indianapolis, Indiana. New time schedule for services: 10:00 a.m.; SS/Bible class 8:45 a.m. Pastor Daniel Kelm, 7315 E. 75th St., Indianapolis, IN 46256.

MIMEOGRAPH

A 550 A.B. Dick mimeograph is offered to any congregation for cost of shipping by Faith Lutheran, West Newton, PA. Contact Pastor Terry Yahr, R.D. 2, Box 117-D, West Newton, PA 15089; 412/872-9710.

1988 WELS HANDBELL FESTIVAL

The weekend after Easter, April 9-10, will bring the 9th annual WELS Handbell Festival to Wisconsin Lutheran High School, Milwaukee. All known WELS handbell choirs have received information, but if there have arisen choirs of which we are unaware, please write: 1988 WELS Handbell Festival, c/o Wisconsin Lutheran College, 8830 W. Bluemound Rd. Milwaukee, WI 53226.

NOTICE

On May 1, 1987 in an article entitled "A Courageous Remnant in the Land of Luther," the problem facing the Leipzig Seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church in the German Democratic Republic (East Germany) was described. The statement, "If funds would be provided, permission to construct its own building has been promised," has moved a number of people to inquire how gifts can be given for this worthy purpose. The contact person who will deposit such gifts in the bank account in Germany for the benefit of the Leipzig Seminary is Pastor Michael Loescher, 5026-19th Ave., Kenosha, WI 53140.

A. Schuetze, Chairman
Commission on Inter-Church Relations

ANNIVERSARIES

Milwaukee, Wisconsin — Salem (140th-10th); November 8, 8:15 and 10:30 (10th anniversary of church building); December 13, 8:15 and 10:30 (140th anniversary of organization). For further information contact Pastor Winfred Nommensen, 6814 N. 107th. Milwaukee, WI 53224; 414/353-8141.

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Tourists in Europe: For time and place of services call the chaplains or WELS Special Ministries Board, 414/771-9357, USA.

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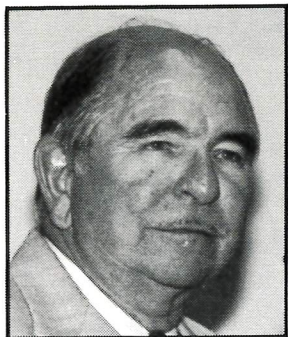
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The ten-day tour of the U.S. by Pope John Paul II is over. Mostly the tour was a splendid success. Its pageantry and the person of the pope, warm and amicable, commended it to the media.

Shortly after his arrival, 27 religious leaders of American churches met with the pope at Columbia, South Carolina, the heart of TV evangelist territory. Among those meeting with the pope were the leaders of 95 percent of America's Lutherans: the heads of the Lutheran Church in America, the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod.

President Ralph A. Bohlmann of the Missouri Synod attended the "dialogue" period with the pope but excused himself from the ecumenical worship service which followed. "Because participation in such a joint worship service is contrary to the position of our church body, as well as my own theological convictions," explained Dr. Bohlmann, "I declined to participate in that service."

The reasons for such non-participation, said Bohlmann, are found in the Reformation. "Our confessional writings from that period, still the official position of our church body today, address the papacy with unmistakable clarity and vigor. Perhaps the clearest statement is in Luther's Smalcald Articles: 'The pope is the real anti-Christ who has raised himself over and set himself against Christ.'"

These words, said Bohlmann, "may sound harsh to modern ears . . . but the fact remains that the official Roman Catholic concept has not changed." In a series of four articles in 1980, following the first visit of Pope John Paul to the U.S., The Northwestern Lutheran affirmed the same theological position.

In another corner of the non-Catholic world, some southern Baptists were "mad as fire" because one of their executives, Rev. Harold Bennett, president-treasurer of the body's Executive Committee, attended the meeting without conferring with the Executive Committee. Adding fuel to the offense was the refusal, earlier this year, of the president of the Southern Baptist Convention, Adrian Rogers, to attend the meeting. The absence was no small matter. The 14.3 million-member Southern Baptist Convention is the largest Protestant church body in the U.S.

But it was not only the pope's charisma that was attractive. Cindy Walters pointed out another side, according to an AP news item. Walters had boycotted the pope in favor of handing out Bible tracts outside the University of South Carolina's Williams-Brice Stadium where the ecumenical worship service was held. "The funny thing about us old-line Baptists here in Carolina," said Walters, "is that we're more on his side than the Catholics. We agree with him on abortion, homosexuality and the need for strong moral values in the home and school."

Yet nothing has changed. The basic issues of the Reformation remain. The Bible and tradition — a dagger in the heart of *Scripture alone* — remain the twin repositories for Roman Catholic doctrine. The doctrine of justification — as contained in a joint statement on justification by Lutheran and Catholic theologians in 1983 — leaves the issues as unresolved as they were in Luther's day. "In the statement," writes Dr. John F. Brug of our seminary, "Catholics maintain that good works are a part of justification and not a result." Precisely what Luther denounced as a fatal perversion.

Nothing has changed.

James P. Schaefer

Take the phone off the hook

by Eric S. Hartzell

The telephone plays by nasty rules. But we stand for it.

What else would we allow to barge in on a special steak dinner with our wife at 9:00 in the evening after we have put the kids to bed? What else would we allow to interrupt an intense conversation with our best friend? The phone rings and we drop everything including our line of thought.

We stand in line for half an hour at the auto parts place to get an oil filter. Just before our turn, some imposter dials our clerk and we cool our heels for another ten minutes. But we take it . . . we have to take it. You can't even watch a movie without a handwritten message jerking its ugly words across the bottom of the screen for all to see . . . Dr. Kiljoy, please call your answering service.

It even invades a pastor's study. Right in the middle of writing a sermon it does. And the pastor finds himself being assured that if the light bulb breaks or doesn't work for seven years from the date of purchase, the Wonder Bulb will be replaced free. (He doesn't even have to send in the faulty bulb.)

Maybe these are reasons why we take the phone off the hook. Maybe this is our way of saying that there is a point beyond which we will not go in a telephone dominated life.

There are probably some who question the ethics of taking your phone off the hook. When someone calls and gets a busy signal and you are really taking a nap, aren't you lying?

The question is whether we ever take the phone off the hook in our religious and devotional lives. Or do we allow the mundane, silly, little cares and concerns to ring off the wall 24 hours a day, even when we are invited company in the presence of God?

There is a place where you can take the phone of life off the hook for a while. In fact, in this place you should take it off the hook. When you go through the



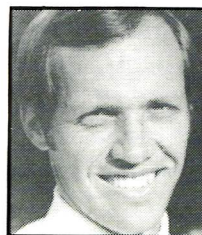
*You
have to get tough
with phones*

front doors of your church, make an effort to do just this. Say to yourself, "All of the little worries and the big worries, all of the concerns I have . . . all must stay here. I am not going to allow anything to disturb this next hour's time with my Savior."

Wasn't the Lord even telling his disciples to take the phone off the hook for a while when he said to them, "Let's go away to a quiet place and pray?"

Maybe you can't justify muzzling your phone for your nap (or maybe you can). But there are some things, in fact all things, that are just not as important as spending some quiet, uninterrupted time with your Savior.

Phones and things that demand our instant attention play by nasty rules. You have to get tough with them. Make it impossible for them to disturb your devotion with your God. Take the phone off the hook. □



Eric Hartzell is missionary to the Apaches in East Fork, Arizona.