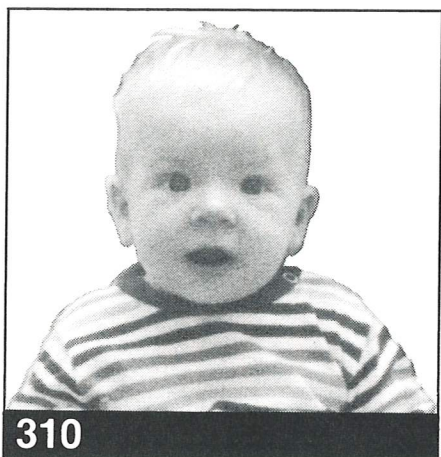
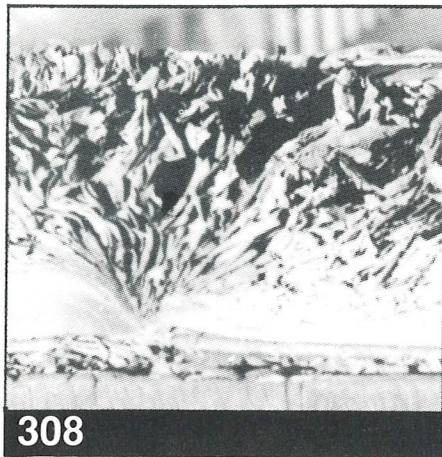


September 15, 1988

# the Northwestern Lutheran

A photograph of a woman with short brown hair, smiling warmly while holding a baby. They are sitting in a yellow hammock with a patterned border and tassels. The woman is wearing a light blue and pink striped polo shirt and a dark blue, textured skirt. The baby is wearing a colorful striped long-sleeved shirt and light blue pants. The background consists of a red brick wall with dark brown shutters and some green foliage.

*Settling in . . . in Brazil*



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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# They're not all alike

by Kurt F. Koeplin

*"Let the prophet who has a dream tell his dream, but let the one who has my word speak it faithfully. For what has straw to do with grain?" declares the Lord (Jeremiah 23:28).*

**T**he count is not really accurate. But it is estimated that there are — at least — 256 different religious bodies functioning in the United States. This does not include the churches that have formed around the magnetic personalities of one man and his family such as the Armstrongs, the Hubbards, the Roberts, *et al*, not to mention the lesser lights. This says nothing of the Moons, the Suns or the ecclesiastical stars from other points of the compass.

There have got to be times when people in honest bewilderment throw up their hands and echo the ancient words of Pilate, "What is truth?" How can a person tell who is or is not the preacher of light?

## All claim divine revelation

They all claim divine revelation. They all claim to be messengers of truth and knowledge. Not one will stand up and say: "Follow me people" — ("but I don't know where I'm going"); "Follow me folks" — ("but I'm lost too"); "Listen to my words" — ("but these are my words and not God's"). None are that foolish. All claim to be lovers of verity, veracity and moral rectitude.

Back to square one. How can we distinguish the gold of God's word from the brass of man's nerve? Read this portion of Jeremiah who is quoting God. Note the divine imperative to the church to speak God's word faithfully, remembering that it is *his* word and that it alone does the job.

The opening words of this text remind us that this is God speaking, the Sovereign Lord of heaven and earth. Not only does he fill the universe, this powerful all seeing, all knowing God, but he is in us and near us. He says, "In him we live and move and have our being." Repeatedly he tells us that we are "in Christ," — that "Christ is in us." He also uses such terms as "the Holy Spirit in us" testifying and witnessing to us that "we are the children of God."

## It is in the word

Is this speculation, guesswork, happy talk? Where do we get this information? A dream? A vision? A revelation while walking deep in the woods looking for a lost golf ball? No! From his word! We have that word. God does not hide himself from us. He reveals himself to us especially through his Son.

Jesus Christ strode through the pages of our history. The dust was real. The food he ate was real. The people whom he met were real. His death, his resurrection, his triumph — all real.

And we can read all about it, the years of preparation for his entrance into our world, the Old Testament and the fulfillment of his redemptive mission, the New Testament. It's all here for us. Read it. Know it. Recognize it as God's merciful revelation of himself to us.

Why? Because it's the only thing that does the job. Remember, God sets up the comparisons; what have straw and wheat in common? One is food for humans, the other fodder for livestock. God's word is like fire which heats and warms. It is not like a wet match which goes "pfft."

## The word is a hammer

God's word is like a hammer. It breaks the strong rock of pride. His word makes us see ourselves honestly. It's the only thing which peels away the veneer of our self-righteousness. It helps us to see and say, "God, be merciful to me, a sinner." It brings us to our knees, but it does not leave us ground into the dust.

It heals and raises us up. It comforts and shows us his mercy, love and compassion. It shows us Jesus, our Savior and our brother. It inspires us to work, to give, to pray, to live the exultant Christian life.

It also helps us to make the distinctions between his truth and man's trash. Read it; ransack it; search it; know it and as we proclaim it to the salvation of souls, God help us to speak it faithfully. □



Kurt Koeplin is pastor of Atonement, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

## Universal contempt: "The Last Temptation of Christ"

**"T**he Last Temptation of Christ" is the title of a movie Universal Studios plan to release in October. The controversial movie has touched off a storm of debate and protest. (The film is still being edited and the final version may differ somewhat from the version in circulation now.)

Protestors contend that the movie blasphemously misrepresents Christ. Joseph Reilly, a spokesman for Morality in Media, told an NBC news audience (July 28) that "the script portrays Jesus as a wimp, a weak and unstable man."

According to the script Jesus marries Mary Magdalene and then gives his guardian angel permission to watch them engage in sex because the angel is lonely. Later Jesus tells Mary, "I've done a lot of wrong things. I'm going to the desert to be cleansed. The worst things I've done are to you. Forgive me."

He also tells a group of people who are sick and ask for healing, "Get away, you sicken me. You're selfish and full of hate. God won't help you." After Mary Magdalene is killed, Jesus moves in with Mary and Martha and fathers children with both of them.

A spokesman for the movie industry, Jack Valenti, has offered a three-point defense of "The Last Temptation of Christ." In an NBC news interview, he suggested that Universal Studios are simply exercising their rights under the First Amendment, that censorship is unAmerican and that the movie is simply an attempt "to present the human side of Christ."

The issue here is not a question of rights under the First Amendment. Of course Universal has the right to distribute the movie. But to have the right is not a license to exercise that right. The real issue has to do with the protocol of common decency in a religiously pluralistic society.

The script tells blatant lies about a religious figure whom millions of Americans revere as the Son of God. That's what all decent people ought to protest, whether they are Christians or not. It is one thing to disagree with the religious convictions of others. It's quite another thing to caricature, pillory, falsify and misrepresent those convictions. In a healthy society people do not trample wantonly on the religious sensitivities of others for the sake of big bucks at the box office.

Universal says that its purpose in filming "The Last Temptation" was to undo the distortion caused by those who overemphasize the divine side of Christ at the expense of the human side. Really? The manger in Bethlehem portrays the human side of Christ. And the agony in Gethsemane portrays the last temptation. The film is nothing but a vehicle for blasphemy. It is the grossest distortion imaginable.

For comparison's sake, imagine the hue and cry of protest that would be raised in Hollywood if Universal Studios produced a film portraying Hannukah hero, Judas Maccabeus, as a moral reprobate who proved to be untrue to his own convictions.

The author of the epistle to the Hebrews has a pertinent word to say about the producers and defenders of "The Last Temptation of Christ." "They are crucifying the Son of God all over again and subjecting him to public disgrace" (6:6).

It's been said, "There's no honor among thieves." That appears to be true also of some film producers.



*Joel Gerlach  
is pastor  
of Our Redeemer,  
Santa Barbara,  
California.*

Joel C. Gerlach

# Sharing the Savior

by James A. Aderman

**T**he gospel enjoyed great success in Thessalonica. When Paul was forced to leave, he left behind a congregation of “many” members (Acts 17:4,8-10). Like Paul, we Christians are concerned about sharing our Savior with the unbelieving people God has placed in our lives. First and Second Thessalonians have three important gospel sharing principles to teach us.

## The initial principle

Time is running short and Christians constantly need to redouble their efforts to prepare people for the judgment. Faith in Jesus is the preparation people need. Paul pleaded that the Thessalonians urge on the gospel with their prayers (2 Thessalonians 3:1). He highlighted the need for the gospel to conquer souls as he repeatedly reminded them of judgment’s proximity and the consequences of facing the judge without forgiveness (1 Thessalonians 1:10, 2:16; 2 Thessalonians 1:8,9).

## The second principle

Our life-styles are important to effective witnessing. The Spirit frequently helps people grasp God’s unconditional love by offering them a living example of that love — a Christian’s loving life-style.

Paul made a conscious effort to show the Thessalonians that love. “We loved you so much that we were delighted to share with you not only the gospel of God but our lives as well . . .” (1 Thessalonians 2:8). Compelled by God’s love and at great personal sacrifice Paul supported himself while in Thessalonica so that the gospel might spread faster (1 Thessalonians 2:7,9). He compared his love to a mother’s nurturing, sheltering love and a father’s firm, prodding love (1 Thessalonians 2:7,11). He reminded them of the impact of godly living on the unbelieving (1 Thessalonians 4:12).

As Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, it was apparent that his love for them was for “the long haul.” “Out of our intense longing we made every effort to see you . . .” (1 Thessalonians 2:17-20). Paul even

“sent Timothy . . . to strengthen and encourage you in your faith” (1 Thessalonians 3:2) at a time in his ministry when he could have used Timothy’s strengthening and encouragement himself (1 Thessalonians 3:7).

Are we willing, along with Paul, to put ourselves out so others might hear the gospel? Do we love “for the long haul” or do we get discouraged and give up when we are rebuffed in our attempts to show and share God’s message of forgiveness?

## The third principle

Showing love for others is not enough. People need to know the story of God’s grace. They need to know that our unconditional love for them is a grateful response to God’s unconditional love for us — and not, perhaps, a subtle way of manipulating them.

Paul made it plain that he shared the gospel with the Thessalonians in order to thank his Savior for rescuing him for all eternity (“taught by God to love” 1 Thessalonians 4:10) — not for personal gain (1 Thessalonians 2:3,10).

To do his sharing Paul used no gimmicks or tricks. He simply spoke God’s word; the Spirit did the rest. “When you received the word of God . . . you accepted it . . . as it actually is, the word of God, which is at work in you who believe” (1 Thessalonians 2:13). Unless people are told about God’s unbreakable promises of life and forgiveness, the Spirit’s faith-generating power won’t be set to work on their hearts. That’s why Paul commanded, “Hold to the teachings we passed on to you. . . .” (2 Thessalonians 2:15).

Until our Savior returns, the daily commission of us Christians who are living with one foot in glory is witnessing — witnessing with our lives and our lips. □



*James Aderman is pastor of Fairview, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.*

# Thy kingdom come

by Wayne A. Laitinen

**D**ear Father in heaven, we've been sitting on these church pews for some years now. We realize that the entry of our names into the church membership book is not the same as the entry of our names into the book of life. Your beloved once said: "My kingdom is not of this world," and "the kingdom of God is within you."

We thank you, Father, for giving us simple faith in our Savior already at the time we were baptized. That is when you laid the cornerstone of the kingdom in our hearts. Since then you have been building the walls of the kingdom with promises of forgiveness and the confidence of heaven. Thank you for our baptism, our Bible and holy communion!

Sometimes we tremble, Lord, when we see so many people who had the same kingdom we have, but lost it. We fear that we too might mistake the head knowledge of a few Bible trivia facts for saving faith. Do not let our neglect or disobedience turn your kingdom into mere scaffolding and forms.

Send your Holy Spirit into our hearts so that we may read your word with eagerness. When we attend church each week, help us to walk away warmed by your Son's forgiveness. Do not let a single sermon go by without impressing upon us at least one truth that you want us to know. Help us to roll it over in our



minds as the most precious jewel and mount it in the setting of our lives.

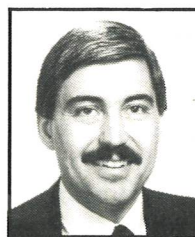
When we approach the communion table, remind us of our sins and need for forgiveness. At the same time, give us confidence that Jesus' body and blood which are present in this sacrament were given for us. Then we shall walk away from the altar with joy to meet another week

of challenges as cleansed and strengthened children of God.

Reign in our hearts eternally. May there be no end to this joy!

Finally, Father, we can think of cousins, uncles and co-workers with whom we would like to share this kingdom. Provide openings for us to talk to them about your kingdom. Give us courage to overcome our timidity when the time comes to speak up about our Savior. Open the hearts of the kingdomless to receive our words with eagerness.

Father, let your kingdom come to us and *through* us! □



Wayne Laitinen is pastor of Arlington Avenue Lutheran, Toledo, Ohio.

# Something shocking

by Eric S. Hartzell

Something shocking happened at our district convention in Phoenix. The opening service took an hour and forty minutes from start to finish!

There was some mild grumbling about this in the ranks. (And by the way, the service was terrific. It was specially written for the occasion with much singing and responsive reading. The Arizona Lutheran Academy Choir sang. The pastors banded together and sang a number or two. The organ brought in for the occasion was brilliantly played by a gifted young man who is making music his life at Arizona State University.)

Still . . . there was grumbling. There is, after all, just so much you can expect. An hour and forty minutes??!!

I must admit that I caught myself looking at my watch too. It was a furtive snatch at my suit coat. The sleeve came up just enough to catch a glimpse of the watch's sober face. An hour and forty minutes!

I think it was when the sleeve of my suit coat swallowed my watch that the thought came to me.

What am I doing? I am in an air conditioned building, sitting in a comfortable chair, hearing a stirring sermon and beautiful music, seeing hundreds of fellow believers and joining with them in praising my Lord, in company with people who are sympathetic to my work, healthy, able to hear and see . . . and I am looking at my wrist watch and noticing that an hour and forty minutes have gone by. What's wrong?

Something is wrong. Something is wrong with me and I suspect with the majority of readers of this article. It is something shocking.

Our world is full of too many express lanes and quick, slick packaged deals. We bridle at the Lord asking us . . . inviting us . . . to spend an hour and forty minutes with him. We like a drive-through service with a neatly packaged sermon of twenty minutes, a dash of liturgy and we have our money ready to pay at the window. A quick bite and we are good for another week . . . or another year.

Nehemiah's people show us that something is wrong. We hear of them, "All the people assembled as one man in the square before the Water Gate . . . Ezra the priest brought the law before the assembly, which was made up of men and women and all who were

able to understand. He read it aloud from daybreak till noon as he faced the square before the Water Gate in the presence of the men, women and others who could understand. And all the people listened attentively to the Book of the Law" (Nehemiah 8:1-4).

Our Lutheran church needs a revival. And last year in the synod's convention the leaders of our church realized that. That is why they made it a recommendation to the convention. Granted, it wasn't called a revival. (That smacks of tents and things.) They instead pledged us toward an attempt at renewal, spiritual renewal. Renewal is revival Lutheran style.

It has to begin with each of us . . . pastor and parishioner alike. It has to begin so we aren't so likely to reach for our suit sleeve or yawn or grumble or fidget or shuffle our feet when we have the chance to listen to the word of our Lord. So we ask like David did, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and *renew* a right spirit within me." And then renew my church too.

We are renewed through this word — through *the* word — from our God. There is no easy way. It must come from hearing the words and reflecting on the words. It must come from a right understanding of the words. It must be with the appetite of Jeremiah, "When your words came, I ate them; they were my joy and my heart's delight" (15:16).

It would really be shocking if we would not desire to be renewed. But we do. Run down is miserable; renewed is joyful and happy. It is as simple and necessary as that.

"Then all the people went away to eat and drink, to send portions of food and to celebrate with great joy, because they now understood the words that had been made known to them" (Nehemiah 8:12). That was the result of the convention held by Nehemiah's people . . . the convention that convened with a six-hour text

to the sermon (and the people listened attentively!).

May our conventions be so blessed. □



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

# Energized by lightning — energized by grace

by  
Mike and Dee  
Froncek

Our warmest memories of Redeemer Lutheran in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin are scenes from Christmas Eves gone by. We'd visit, hoping to catch glimpses of our niece and nephews reciting verses and singing hymns. The worship atmosphere under the tall peaked roof of the church was alive with Christmas excitement. All but the twinkling Christmas tree lights would be dimmed. The white glow from behind the huge wooden cross above the altar illuminated the teal green curtain behind it. We sang "Hark the herald angels." "Glory to the newborn King, peace on earth and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"

Now it's a morning in mid-July. The atmosphere has changed. We've come to Redeemer to view the \$250,000 damage done by a roaring fire. A few days earlier, on Friday, July 15, that huge wooden cross (and the electrical transformer mounted behind it) became the target for a bolt of lightning which struck and energized the transformer. Moments later, cross, curtain and church were enveloped in flames.

Destruction surged through the church's network of electrical wiring, discharging an explosion of sparks and flames in the secretary's office. In the thirty minutes before the fire was discovered, heavy smoke and blistering heat exceeding 2000 degrees transformed Redeemer Lutheran from a place of peace to a place in pieces.

"So many times we take things for granted until they're gone," congregation president Tom Schweiger confided. "Maybe that's what we did here." Sift-



The pulpit Bible

ing through the ashes in the sanctuary, Schweiger was reflective. "Sunday after Sunday we came to church and we didn't even think about it. Now it's gone."

Long-time member Herb Fenske was stunned. "I joined this church in 1956. I was here when they cut the ribbon. I never dreamed this would happen to it."

For days a steady stream of church members came to see the damage for themselves. For most the destruction was silencing. They stepped through the rubble quietly, shaking their heads.

"I'd always felt very safe here," Paula Bonno said, "and it wasn't only the building that made it that way, but now part of that safeness has been taken away."

Teenager Shawno Solid said, "This church is so much a part of my life, just to think of it being gone really hurts."

"This is the time for us to stick together," said Tom Aird. "I feel bad about the church building being gone but it's not going to rip the congregation apart. In fact, I think this is going to draw us closer together than ever."

The fire that had left the church building a charred and blistered shell also left a thankful congregation in its wake. Members see the loving hand of the Lord even amidst burnt Bibles and blackened pews.



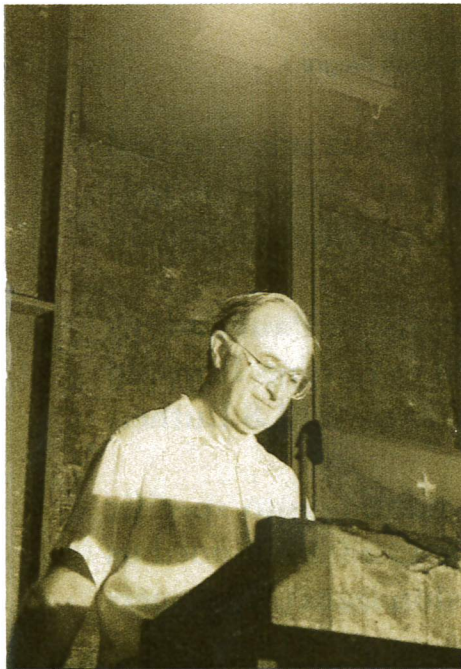
"Thankfully, lives were spared as no one was in the church when the fire began," Pastor Marvin Putz explained. "All the people who might have been here were not. So many things about this fire are amazing to me," Putz continued. "I don't know which man or men to compliment for prodding us to get such complete insurance coverage. But we're awfully thankful for it now. And you ask yourself, why were those three wooden drawers which hold all the church records preserved, while the rest of the church office was completely destroyed? Our communion ware was left untouched as well!"

"Our lay people have been tremendous," Pastor Putz said. "Right now they're putting in an incredible number of hours cleaning up the smoke and water damage in our day school so that it'll be ready when school begins in fall."

Harold Warning, who dropped by church the night before the blaze, never imagined he was carrying home the only copy of the Sunday bulletin that would survive the fire. From that one original hundreds of copies were made so worshipers could have bulletins.

Then there was an outpouring of love that sprang forth from faith. "The people from Faith Lutheran must have ridden the fire trucks over here," Tom Schweiger said with a smile. "That's how quickly they responded. They said they would set up chairs for us in their gymnasium so we would have a place to worship on Sunday morning. That was a wonderful offer." Then came a cross and candelabra. Then an organ and a public address system. Members from other WELS congregations and from churches of other

Pastor Marvin Putz viewing the pulpit Bible.



denominations called or stopped by to offer their encouragement and support.

Two days after the fire, on Sunday, July 17, Redeemer's family of believers filled Faith's gymnasium for worship. Surrounded by basketball hoops and bleachers they heard their pastor place things into perspective by recalling the trials of Job.

"When all of Job's property was taken from him, what did he do? Job said, 'The Lord gave and the Lord has

taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord!' The Lord had given us this nice church and it is his privilege to take it from us. And so we too say, blessed be the name of the Lord! We don't turn against him or rebel or question his wisdom. This church was his from the beginning and we want to acknowledge that."

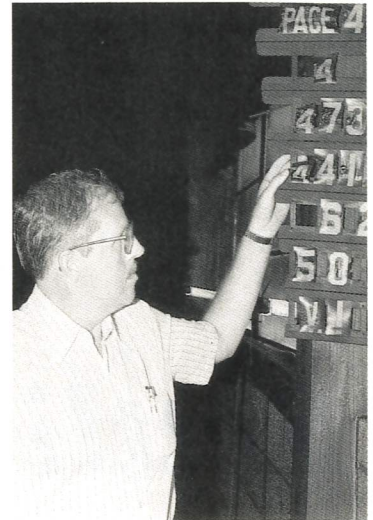
Many in the congregation know that this fire is but one more incident in a string of crushing personal blows for Putz and his family.

When asked about this, he responded, "Sure, we've thought about that, but finally, isn't that life? We're sinful people living in a sinful world. And the Lord says that those I love I'm going to chasten. And the Lord says, I'm going to use that chastening to keep you close to me. One thing after another. We don't turn against him, we thank him for the blessings we have."

"It's a strengthening of faith," Putz said. "It always is. Finally, God has the perfect will — not I. The big thing is to recognize that. We need to see that we are bound to his will and not to say, 'Hey, Lord, you're not doing things right!' We don't question that. It would be better to say, 'Lord, help me to see your will more clearly. Let me examine my will and see if I can't bring it closer to your will.'"

Energized, renewed and strengthened through the powerful workings of God's grace, members begin to rebuild. We ask for your prayers that our loving Redeemer would comfort the pastor and families of our sister congregation and bless the rebuilding process so that it might be completed in time for a special celebration. That time when all but the twinkling tree lights will be dimmed. When once again the white glow from behind the huge wooden cross above the altar will illuminate the curtain behind it. And once again the families of Redeemer will sing together,

"Glory to the newborn King,  
peace on earth and mercy mild,  
God and sinners reconciled!" □



President Tom Schweiger



Mike and Dee Froncek are members of Woodlawn, West Allis, Wisconsin.

# Settling in . . . in Brazil



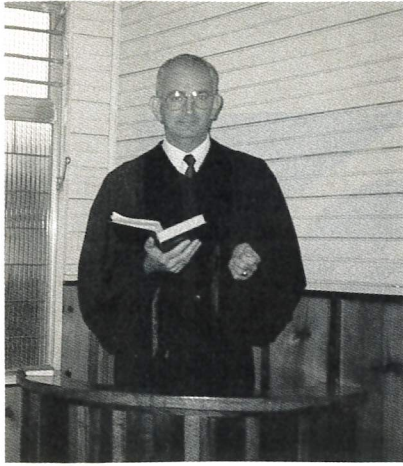
Left to right: The Starrs, a language teacher and the Marggrafs in front of their language school in Porto Alegre.

by Bruce J. Marggraf

“**D**uring the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, ‘Come over to Macedonia and help us’ ” (Acts 16:9). It was a significant event in Paul’s life. It meant a complete change in plans for his second missionary journey.

It was also a significant event in our history. Through this vision Paul and his mission team decided it was time to begin preaching the gospel in Europe. It would be Europe that would one day send the gospel to America and to us WELS Lutherans.

Our Lord still guides his church in its discipling of all nations into specific nations at specific points in history. It’s happened again. The Lord has guided us into a new country, Brazil. After some months now, your mission team (Missioners



Missioner Flunker preaching in the Gravatai chapel.

Starr, Flunker and Marggraf) can sum up its reaction to the work here in one sentence: What a wonderful Lord we have!

### Entrance not so difficult

Yes, what a wonderful Lord we have. We give credit to the Lord for making our entry into Brazil much easier than

we anticipated. Although in some countries Christian missionaries wait over a year and even up to several years to be granted permission to enter and work, in Brazil's case we waited only a matter of months.

The Brazilian government wanted a certified copy of each of the missioner's seminary diplomas and information about our families. These documents needed to be sent to the government by our sponsor church in Brazil, *A Igreja Luterana Ortodoxa Brasileira Da Consolacao* (The Brazilian Orthodox Lutheran Church of Comfort), along with other documents showing that our sponsor church was already recognized by the government. The president of the church at the time, Sr. Luiz Rauter, and another member who is a lawyer, Dr. Paul Oserow, helped us with this important job.

Brazil's Department of Foreign Relations and Department of Labor took over from there. In Brasilia, Brazil's capital, these departments gave the okay so that temporary business visas might be sent to the United States to be picked up by the missioners at the nearest Brazilian consulate.

Next, moving arrangements were quickly finalized. And then came the big day, the day a new church entered a new country. During the first week in October 1987, WELS missioners and their families stepped onto Brazilian soil after long, uneventful plane rides. What a wonderful Lord we have!

### Getting settled

Thanks above all to the Lord for providing us with so much help from the Rauter family in getting settled here in our new country. Whether it was greeting us at the airport or helping us find a handyman for work around the house, the Rauter family has always been available to help when needed.

And have they ever been needed. Settling into a new

country without any previous experience is no easy task. There have been many obstacles to overcome. One of the first was obtaining a CIC number, needed by each missioner for any major purchase inside the country. Without our CIC numbers we couldn't own cars or rent homes today.



Mr. and Mrs. Luiz Rauter of Gravatai.

Ronald Rauter, now president of our sponsor church and son of Luiz, led us through the maze of government bureaucracy to receive these precious numbers. In fact, Ronald spent the better part of our first several weeks here helping us find homes to rent, bank accounts and cars to buy and just plain making us feel welcome. That's dedication to the Lord from a man who has his own petro-chemical business to run.

But settling in a new country can be humorous at times too. You've heard the saying, "they even took the kitchen sink." Here in Brazil your missioners have seen that saying come true. It's a custom in Brazil for previous renters or owners of a house to take everything from the house with them when they move out. "Everything" includes light fixtures, light bulbs, kitchen cupboards, and in the house the Marggraf family rented, "even the kitchen sink." Can you imagine our surprise when we moved in?

There have been many such surprises. But after several months we are beginning to feel comfortable in our new country. What a wonderful Lord we have!

### Language study

And we'll bless the Lord for what we trust he will grant our missioners here: proficiency in the language of Brazil, Portuguese. Besides getting our families settled, learning the language is our most important job during our first year here. It's not hard to explain why. Few would argue that the best way to deliver the gospel to people is by speaking in their own language.

For your Brazilian missioners and their families that means the fascinating and challenging task of learning to speak and to read and write all over again. It's fascinating to begin to understand a little more fully what really happened on that day many years ago when the Lord confused the world's language at Babel. But it's certainly a challenge, too, to try to talk



Dr. and Mrs. Paul Oserow of Dourados.

with sounds you've never used before and then to memorize a whole new vocabulary.

The Lord, though, is blessing our language study. The Lutheran Women's Missionary Society has provided us with needed funding for our schooling. It's helped. We have seen progress. Mis-

sioner Flunker, who had previous experience in the Spanish language in Puerto Rico, is already preaching. And we are all eagerly looking forward to the day when the whole mission team has the privilege to preach the gospel in this rich, Romance language, Portuguese. What a wonderful Lord we have!

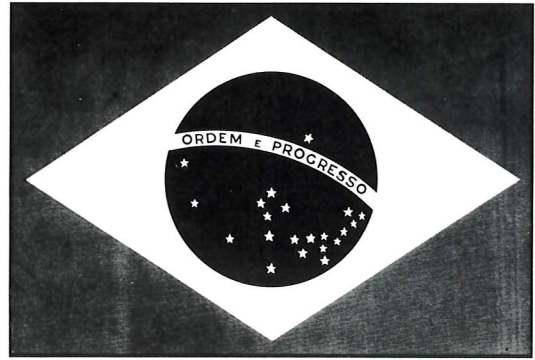
### Opportunities ahead

And how gracious the Lord has been to us to have already opened so many doors into so many hearts that desire his message of forgiveness.

In a suburb of the Porto Alegre area, Gravatai, we have a chapel built and a small congregation that worships weekly. These people long for the day when they can have a full-time servant of the word.

A second opportunity awaits us 800 miles to the northwest, in the city of Dourados. Here live Dr. Oserow and a little group of 20 souls who are anxious to gather around the word whenever a minister can serve them. This little group isn't content with just hearing the gospel message. These people have already been active in spreading it to others. And that without a pastor. What joy will fill their hearts when the Lord provides more workers so that they may receive the preaching of the gospel on a more regular basis.

Our third major opportunity at this time is located 1200 miles to the northeast of our Porto Alegre base, in the city of Vitoria and its surrounding area. There a group



The flag of Brazil.

of 30 souls has already requested that we send them a missionary to work full time. Presently a retired Brazilian pastor who has joined our fellowship, Pastor Emilio Schmidt, serves these people with the gospel.

But Pastor Schmidt is 80 years old and only the Lord knows how long he will permit Pastor Schmidt to work so faithfully. We hopefully pray that the Lord grants these people patience until we have the resources to grant them the minister they seek.

The number of opportunities we already have stretches the mind. We haven't even finished our language training and "officially" begun the work and people are pleading with us for the gospel. The harvest is already overflowing.

### Even more blessings

And as if all these blessings weren't enough, add this one to the list: On November 3, 1987, after less than a month in their new country, Missioner Richard and his wife Laurie Starr were blessed with their first son, Richard David. Even though Laurie couldn't

understand the nurses at the hospital and they couldn't understand her, everything turned out fine.

With so many blessings in such a short period of time, can you wonder why your Brazilian missionaries and their families would say: What a wonderful Lord we have! □

## A few surprises

- Cost of milk in Brazil: about 25¢ a quart.
- Pastor Flunker, in order to get a Brazilian driver's license, needed to take a "sanity test." He passed.
- Brazil's minimum wage: \$50 per month.
- Laurie Starr's hospital room in the maternity ward came complete with her own balcony and refrigerator.
- Average January temperatures about 85 degrees; your winter is our summer.
- First time Pastor Marggraf tried making popcorn he noticed it burning in the bottom of the pan, only to find out he had bought chicken feed by mistake!
- Inflation in Brazil: after six months, prices more than doubled (but the dollar kept pace).
- Cost of a maid per nine-hour day: \$4.50 (sound nice, housekeepers?)
- The constellation Orion can be seen in Brazil's night sky, but on Brazilian spring nights Orion stands on his head.

### A problem to be faced

As a battered child myself, I read with interest the editorial "Domestic violence" (May 1). The statistics are not new to me, nor do they shock me. What shocks me is the WELS attitude toward this, as well as other problems. The synod seems to turn a blind eye toward the social problems we Christians face today.

I thank Pastor Prange for pointing out the problem but am disappointed that he offered no solutions. As I struggle every day not to repeat the violence I witnessed and received, I wonder why the synod does not offer parenting classes at every church. Not a once-in-awhile lecture from the pulpit but regular classes where we can learn to be effective, loving, Christian parents.

We need help, not talk. We know what Scripture tells us, but don't know how to apply it. We also have 18 years of programing that wars within us. Let's create programs not only for the abusers but for the abused and the constant witnesses (children) as well so they will not become the abusers or victims in the future. Let's open the closet door, admit we have a problem and face it.

We need Christian parenting classes. My efforts as a mere, lone member have been ignored, just as the synod ignored my plea — and my pastor's plea — 13 years ago when I was the abused.

*Name withheld*

### Wait for our own hymnal

The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod has selected a committee to make a search of materials for a new book of hymns and worship service. It should not be too much for these members to expect our help and certainly our patience while they conduct their search and evaluation. They certainly should not be short circuited and eliminated from their posts by people impatient to adopt materials provided by others who differ in faith with WELS (Letters, June 1).

Our hymns and worship service should reflect our faith. If someone teaches something but does not be-

lieve it or if that person confesses something and does not practice it, there is a strong possibility that Jesus had that person in mind when in Matthew 15:8 he said: "These people honor me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me."

*Jacob H. Kunstmann  
St. Louis, Missouri*

### Letter criticized

In the Letters column (July), Joel C. Gerlach, Santa Barbara, California, voices his objection to Ray Groth's criticism of the appointing of a synodical committee to study the reasons people leave the church. We should not have to be reminded that the visible church exists for one reason only: to spread his word. If we do our job, the Spirit does the rest.

This committee's objectives seem to be saying that it is a congregation's responsibility to "retain and/or reclaim inactive persons" through means other than preaching the word. Hopefully it is not suggesting the Spirit works through any other means. Hopefully our church is not overly concerned about statistical growth patterns as reported in some annual reports. If we preach the word, the Spirit will make it effective (Isaiah 55:11).

What we need more than this synodical committee at this point is the prayers of all Christians asking the Lord to bless the preaching of his word so that straying sheep and lost coins may be reached and reclaimed for the Lord.

*Dave Luetke  
Onalaska, Wisconsin*

### Preaching and teaching the word

The most important thing in a church is the preaching and teaching of the truth from the inerrant Scriptures.

When a faithful pastor accepts a call after a good number of years of service to the same congregation, it is with mixed feelings that one sees him move on to serve elsewhere.

God has showered his Spirit in a generous way on the training of WELS

pastors so its congregations can be assured of another pastor who will preach and teach the word of God.

When one has held membership in a number of different synod churches, the consistency of the preaching and teaching message can be appreciated as it is found in WELS churches.

*Theodora Schroeder  
Austin, Minnesota*

### VBS material appreciated

Having just finished an uplifting week of vacation Bible school, I'm moved to express my appreciation to the staff of the Board for Parish Education who produced this year's material, "Come, Lord Jesus."

With the story selections, the well-written music, the seat work and the cover artwork, one could certainly teach to the glory of God. Our prayer every day and with every lesson was for God to come into our hearts. What a great theme for summer when church attendance often dwindles.

My thanks to these workers for their efforts and the use of their talents to the glory of God.

*Melody Brigowatz  
West Chicago, Illinois*

### Gratitude to the NL

I am writing this letter to express my gratitude to all the people who make possible the Northwestern Lutheran. I know that there is a lot of hard work that goes into this publication, especially considering that it is published semimonthly.

We hear of so much bad news in the world today and then along comes the Northwestern Lutheran to cheer us up with the good news of Christ and his people.

I find it interesting, informative, uplifting and very well done.

*Norman L. Walker  
Sarasota, Florida*

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.

**Ohio newspaper publisher fired . . .** An Ohio newspaper publisher has been fired for refusing to accept advertising from homosexual organizations. Dennis Shere, a Christian who believes he has an "obligation to provide moral leadership" in his job, was fired by the Cox newspaper chain for his advertising policy that rejected ads for sexually-oriented businesses such as escort services, massage parlors and a homosexual "health lecture series." According to a story in *World* magazine, 425 subscribers canceled their subscriptions on the day Shere's dismissal was reported.

**Religious belief growing in the U.S. . . .** While religious belief among Americans is strong and growing stronger, churches have made no progress in bringing believers into the organized church community, according to a new study by the Gallup organization. The survey reveals strong criticism of religious institutions, with 59 percent saying that "most churches . . . today are too concerned with organizational, as opposed to theological or spiritual issues," up from 51 percent a decade ago. The study also found an increase in the number of children receiving religious training — 69 percent today compared to 60 percent in 1978.

**Christians persecuted in Ethiopia . . .** According to News Network International a new wave of arrests has once again hit the Ethiopian Christian community, with over one thousand arrests since April. Among those recently detained was highly respected church elder Woizero Bizunesh. Although Christian worship has been banned in most towns, meetings continue to be held in private house churches.

**Ad offended Jews . . .** A Denver car agency said it will never repeat an advertisement that appeared in a local newspaper in July because it offended Jews. The two-page, red and black ad read, "It's Hanukkah in July. At Performance Chrysler Plymouth you don't have to be Jewish to get values like these. For another sale like this, you should live so long." The car agency and the Rocky Mountain office of the Anti-defamation League got several calls, some of them irate, complaining about the ad, which ran in the Rocky Mountain News. "There was absolutely no intention to offend anyone," said Mile Malin, general manager of the car agency, who is Jewish. "We were just trying to do a take-off on the idea of a 'Christmas in July' sale."

**Guidelines for church political activity . . .** Labeling a political candidate as "pro-abortion" or "anti-peace" may cost a religious organization its tax exemption, according to a memorandum distributed to officers of U. S. Catholic dioceses and state Catholic conferences by Mark E. Chopko, general counsel of the U. S. Catholic Conference. "During an election campaign, exempt organizations remain free to address issues of concern to them and to their membership, even when such issues are relevant to the campaign," Chopko's memo states. "However, such discourse must focus on issues and not personalities." Chopko notes that tax exempt organizations are barred from making statements "supporting or opposing any candidate for public office."

**Wesley's conversion celebrated . . .** In May, London celebrated the 250th anniversary of the conversion of John Wesley which launched the Methodist movement. Centerpiece of the celebration was a service at St. Paul's. An estimated 2500 people from 60 nations were present in Christopher Wren's famed cathedral which figured so prominently in Wesley's experience. He had attended evensong at St. Paul's the afternoon before his conversion at the meeting in Aldersgate where, as he heard a reading of Luther's introduction to Romans, he felt his heart "strangely warmed." From that day, the Anglican priest went on to lay the foundations of the Methodist Church.

**Islamic growth in Egypt . . .** Earlier this year, according to NNI news service, a clash between Islamic fundamentalists and participants in a Western-style music concert raised concern over the increasing pervasive influence of Islamic fundamentalism in Upper Egypt. Church officials say they are frustrated by preferential treatment given to mosques and harsh retaliatory action for minor building code infractions directed against Christian churches.

**Jimmy Swaggert no longer number one . . .** Jimmy Swaggert, former ratings leader among the nation's television evangelists, has dropped to number three, according to the Arbitron ratings. Swaggert had been on the top since 1984 when he was seen in two million homes. Since he admitted to "moral failure" involving a prostitute, that figure has dropped to 923,000 homes. Robert Schuller's "Hour of Power" is the new ratings leader with 1.4 million households. □

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.

## Nurse commissioned for medical mission

A desire and wish were fulfilled on June 12, 1988. During her life Marianne Peterson felt a strong desire to serve the Lord in some special way. The opportunity presented itself when she volunteered her professional nursing skills to the Central Africa Medical Mission.

A graduate of the Milwaukee Hospital School of Nursing, she received specialized training in the International Health Course at Seneca College, Toronto, Canada. She had previously spent most of her nursing career in Janesville, Wis.

On June 12 at her home church, St. Matthew, Janesville, she was commissioned by Pastor Daniel Westendorf, chairman of the Executive Committee of the Lutheran Church of Central Africa. Her pastor, David Sievert, preached the sermon.

Peterson arrived on July 8 at the



Left to right: Pastor Sievert, Nurse Peterson and Pastor Westendorf.

Mwembezi Lutheran Dispensary near Lusaka, Zambia. In addition to this dispensary the Central Africa Medical Mission maintains a mobile clinic in Malawi. In 1987 each of the clinics served about 26,000 patients. Much of the time at the clinics is spent on preventive health care.

There is always a great need for nurses to staff these two stations. Registered nurses with a minimum three-year RN program who are willing to serve our mission in Africa are urged to contact the secretary of the medical mission committee, Mrs. Sandra Hahm, 1607 N. Pine St., Grafton, WI 53024.

## Church giving falling behind researchers say

"Although Americans are richer than ever before," say John and Sylvia Ronsvalle, "church members are finding places other than church to spend their money." The Ronsvalles have analyzed church giving data from 1968 to 1985 by 31 denominations including the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

In 1968, according to the researchers, members in the 31 denominations gave an average of 3.05 percent of their total per capita disposable income to the church. In 1985 the average percentage was 2.79. Disposable income was defined as "after taxes"

income adjusted for inflation ("constant dollars").

In 1985, according to the data, the average American had \$2,511 more to spend, after taxes and inflation, than in 1968. In the same period, the 31 denominations' church giving increased an average of \$49, just 2 percent of the new disposable income. In the same period the giving of the Wisconsin Synod increased \$47.23.

While giving for local purposes *increased* in this period in synod congregations by \$51.45, giving for purposes outside the congregation *decreased* by \$4.22

"This means," said Charles

Skeels, acting administrator of the synod's Stewardship Board, "that during these inflationary years the church has lost ground. And second, while congregations show a modest increase in offerings, the synod today is operating with less money than it had available in 1968.

"I would suggest that we seriously reflect on these figures and prayerfully hope that God will open the hearts of our people to share more generously of their treasure for the work of the kingdom, both in the congregation and outside the congregation."

## ELS expands mission in Peru

Delegates to the annual convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod meeting in June at Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Minn., heard of the expansion of their mission field in Peru at the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the mission.

Extra-budgetary contributions have made possible the calling of a fourth missionary. To further strengthen the field, the delegates were told of a \$1 million gift from Schwan Sales Enterprises of Marshall, Minn. The gift will be used to endow the chair of a seminary professor and other seminary needs in Peru to provide for the theological training of national pastors.

The convention authorized Bethany College to begin construction of a \$2.5 million fine arts center. The center was made possible by a \$2 million gift from Schwan's.

Delegates also considered the split in the Lutheran Confessional Church (Sweden, Norway and Finland). Pastor Lars Engquist is the president of one group; Pastor Per Jonsson is president of the other group. The ELS resolved to continue fellowship with the Engquist group. The synod's Doctrine Committee and synodical officials were directed to continue attempts to restore the bond of fellowship.

President Carl Mischke of the WELS brought greetings to the convention.

### Northern Wisconsin District

St. Paul of Green Bay recently celebrated the 30th anniversary in the teaching ministry, and 25 years at St. Paul, of **Mrs. Carol Schultz**. Mrs. Schultz will retire at the close of the school year. Prior to accepting the call to St. Paul, she taught



The sixth annual international vacation Bible school was conducted by the Wisconsin Lutheran Chapel and Student Center at the University of Wisconsin — Madison with 93 children enrolled from 14 countries and a staff of 20 volunteers. In attendance were (left to right) Hannah Mahuta of Malaysia, Joyce Chen of China and Yau-Jiun Chen of South Korea. Other countries represented were Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Costa Rica, Egypt, Guyana, Mexico, Nepal, Nigeria, Puerto Rico and the USA. Campus Pastor Thomas Trapp said that it was "a foretaste of Revelation 7:9" — "a multitude from every nation . . . standing before the throne and in front of the lamb." Of the 93, Trapp said, "some 10 will continue in our Sunday school in the fall."

at St. John, Maribel, Wis. In a newspaper article a few years ago she said, "I encourage the children to use the gifts God has given them to the best of their abilities." Not only has she told them how to do it but she has shown them how to do it.

— Jan Eggert

### Pacific Northwest District

**Redeemer of Yakima, Wash.**, celebrated its 40th anniversary on July 24. Pastor George Frey of Tacoma, Redeemer's first resident pastor, serving the congregation from 1948 to 1958, was guest speaker. Redeemer was organized in 1948 by a group of members of Grace Lutheran in Yakima. These 17 families, under the leadership of Pastor T. R. Adascheck, volunteered to become the nucleus of a new mission congregation on the west side of Yakima. When the church was dedicated in 1952, after thousands of hours of volunteer labor by the members, Pastor Frey

wrote: "It is our dedicated task to use our church solely for the work of bringing the gospel of salvation to souls lost in sin. May the truth of God's word sound forth at all times from our pulpit." To this task and this truth the members of Redeemer are still firmly dedicated. The congregation has been served since 1985 by its fifth pastor, James Oldfield.

— James Oldfield

### South Atlantic District

**Trinity of Englewood, Fla.**, dedicated its new chapel on April 17 in a special 4:00 p.m. service. Pastor Marvin Radtke, mission counselor of the South Atlantic District, was guest speaker. The present multipurpose building was completed in 1980 and will now become the fellowship hall which will include Sunday school, adult Bible classes and other functions. Pastor Paul Zager presently serves the congregation.

— Fred Hemmrich



## NOTICES

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

### NOMINATIONS

#### ADMINISTRATOR, BOARD FOR EVANGELISM

The following were nominated for the office of administrator for the Board for Evangelism:

Rev. James A. Aderman	Milwaukee, WI
Rev. Forrest L. Bivens	Saginaw, MI
Rev. Prof. Mark E. Braun	Milwaukee, WI
Rev. Dennis L. Broehm	Martinez, GA
Rev. Steven C. Degner	Tucson, AZ
Rev. Andrew R. Domson	Sauk Rapids, MN
Rev. Wayne L. Fischer	West Allis, WI
Rev. Thomas B. Franzmann	Fair Oaks, CA
Rev. Joel C. Gerlach	Santa Barbara, CA
Rev. Robert C. Hartman	Madison, WI
Rev. James R. Huebner	Wauwatosa, WI
Rev. Alan R. Klessig	Abrams, WI
Rev. Robert J. Koester	Missoula, MT
Rev. Jon M. Mahnke	San Jose, CA
Rev. James J. Radloff	Austin, TX
Rev. David N. Rutschow	Downers Grove, IL
Rev. Edward P. Schuppe	Orange Park, FL
Rev. Paul S. Soukup	Madison, WI
Rev. Burton E. Stensberg	Schofield, WI
Rev. Prof. David Valleskey	Mequon, WI
Rev. Verne N. Voss	Minneapolis, MN

Information pertaining to any of these candidates is requested of the synod's constituency and should be in the hands of the undersigned by September 17, 1988.

Mr. Kent A. Raabe, Secretary  
Board for Evangelism  
1080 Hawthorne Ridge Drive  
Waukesha, WI 53186

## NOTICE OF NONDISCRIMINATORY POLICY AS TO STUDENTS

Since God has not restricted the ministry of his church to people of any one race, color, national or ethnic origin; and since one of the stated purposes of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod is to share the gospel of Jesus Christ with all people; and since the purpose of our synodical schools is to educate students for the preaching and teaching ministry of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, these schools cannot and do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national, and ethnic origin in administration of their educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school-administered programs.

The training schools of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod are:

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary  
Mequon, Wisconsin  
Northwestern College  
Watertown, Wisconsin  
Dr. Martin Luther College  
New Ulm, Minnesota  
Martin Luther Preparatory School  
Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin  
Michigan Lutheran Seminary  
Saginaw, Michigan  
Northwestern Preparatory School  
Watertown, Wisconsin

## INSTALLATION

Pastor Paul E. Kelm, who recently accepted the call to serve as project director for spiritual renewal, will be installed into this office on Monday, September 26 at St. John, Wauwatosa, beginning at 7:30 p.m. All are cordially invited to attend the service and encouraged to keep Pastor Kelm and his new labors in their prayers, that this emphasis be and remain evangelical and edifying among us and that God be glorified among his people.

## NORTHWESTERN HOMECOMING

Alumni and friends of Northwestern are invited to attend the homecoming activities on Saturday, October 15. The schedule for the day is as follows:

8:30-11:30	Brunch in the cafeteria at a nominal cost
10:00	College soccer vs. Maranatha Baptist
11:30	College football vs. Northwestern Roseville
2:30	Prep football vs. St. John's Military
2:30- 6:30	Luncheon in the cafeteria at a nominal cost

## INDIA FUND

The Board for World Missions has assigned responsibility for India outreach to its Committee for Interim Missions. A brief exploratory/contact visit was made to India in May by CIM representatives. The CIM suggests that all support from WELS members for individuals and/or outreach work in India be channeled through the Board for World Missions "India Fund" so that good order and accountability can be followed. Anyone wishing to share information with the BWM regarding outreach possibilities and contacts in India may send information to CIM Chairman, Pastor Daniel Koelpin, 1607 Cottonwood Dr., Waukesha, WI 53186 or to the BWM office, 2929 N. Mayfair Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53222.

## CONFERENCES

**Michigan District**, Teachers' Conference, October 5-7 at St. Paul, Stevensville. Agenda: Instruments of Spiritual Renewal in the Congregation (Kolander); Our Own Spiritual Renewal (Schwartz).

**Minnesota District**, Mankato Conference, October 4 at St. Paul, Jordan. Agenda: Isagogical Study of the Song of Solomon (Neumann); Formula of Concord, of the Third Use of the Law (Hanke).

**Western Wisconsin District**, Wisillowa Conference, October 3-4 at St. Paul, Moline, Ill. Agenda: Understanding the Prescriptive and Descriptive Nature of the Scriptures (Tolfson); Suggestions for Improving our Bible Classes (Olsen); Update on the Sampler Liturgies (Krueger); Exegesis of Hebrews 4 (Agenten); Isagogical Study of Hosea (Baumann).

## CHANGES IN MINISTRY

### PASTORS:

**Baur, Ralph N.**, from Salem, Edmonds, Wash., to retirement.  
**Belter, Dennis W.**, from Gloria Dei, Grand Blanc, Mich., to Riverview, Appleton, Wis.  
**Blitter, Bruce A.**, from Our Savior, Arlington, Tex., to Holy Word, Austin, Tex.  
**Hahm, Marlin R.**, from St. Luke, Kenosha, Wis., to Exploratory, Abilene, Tex.  
**Kuske, Norman C.**, from Gethsemane, Davenport, Ia., to St. Paul, Bloomer, Wis.  
**Van Norstrand, Robert C.**, from Trinity, Temple, Tex., to Administrator, WELS Board of Trustees.

### TEACHERS:

**Borchert, Katherine**, from inactive to Holy Trinity, Kent, Wash.  
**Gresens, Daniel L.**, from Salem, Milwaukee, Wis., to St. Peter, Appleton, Wis.  
**Hengst, Linda**, from inactive to Lord of Life, Friendswood, Tex.  
**Jones, Mary**, to Mt. Olive, Overland Park, Kans.  
**Noite, Carl**, from inactive to First German, Manitowoc, Wis.  
**Rittlerodt, John J.**, from Living Word, Mission Viejo, Calif., to St. Paul, Riverside, Calif.  
**Runke, Eleanor**, from inactive to St. John, Wrightstown, Wis.  
**Schallert, Kelley**, from inactive to St. John, Minneapolis, Minn.

## ADDRESSES

### PASTORS:

**Adams, Brian J.**, P.O. Box 125, Keystone Heights, FL 32856; 907/473-4261.  
**Ahlers, Bruce E.**, JL Bunga Mawar 10, Cipete Selatan, Jakarta Selatan 12410, Indonesia; 21-765-121.  
**Anderson, Mark W.**, 76 Witchwood Ln., Lindenhurst, IL 60046.  
**Bartz, James S.**, 19214 Hwy XX, Kiel, WI 53042; 414/894-3737.  
**Fleischmann, Robert R.**, N52 W15417 El Rio Dr., Menomonee Falls, WI 53051; 414/781-8544.  
**Gurgel, Robert J.**, 3773 S. 2nd St., Milwaukee, WI 53207; 414/481-9082.  
**Guse, John R.**, 5100 Ravenwood Dr., Marietta, GA 30066; 404/928-3507.  
**Haar, Thomas W.**, 87 Randall Ave., Markham, ONT L3S 1C1, CAN.  
**Hirsch, Philip C.**, 2788 Jay Rd., Boulder, CO 80302; 303/444-4174.  
**Hughes, Randall R.**, R. 2, Box 183, Janesville, MN 56048; 507/234-5353.  
**Humann, James E.**, NW 1410 State St., Pullman, WA 99163; 509/334-5616.  
**Hussman, David C.**, 4750 N. 90th St., Milwaukee, WI 53222; 414/463-0735.  
**Iblisch, Paul A.**, 28704 Park Ct., Madison Heights, MI 48071; 313/544-3982.  
**Jahnke, Kenneth R.**, 32948 Truman, Rockwood, MI 48173; 313/379-9000.  
**Klatt, Dennis C.**, R. 1, Box 100 Darwin, MN 55324; 612/275-2965.  
**Krohn, Jud A.**, P.O. Box 160, Hadar, NE 68738; 402/371-6939.  
**Lindhorst, Paul D.**, 184 Crestview Dr., Burlington, IA 52601; 319/752-5778.  
**Loux, Randy B.**, 4911 Brauer Rd., Sturgeon Bay, WI 54235; 414/743-5343.  
**Priestap, Douglas**, 41 Raleigh Crescent, Unionville, ONT L3R 4W4, CAN; 416/470-9351.  
**Raasch, Charles A.**, 613 W. 1st St., Janesville, MN 56048; 507/234-5510.  
**Ruege, John A. Jr.**, 2325 Bardwell Dr. NW, Bemidji, MN 56601; 218/715-6334.  
**Spriggs, Martin A.**, W163 N11460 Windsor Ct., Germantown, WI 53022; 414/251-4051.  
**Tetzlaff, Allen R.**, 4345 Kiefer, Warren, MI 48091.

### TEACHERS:

**Bauer, Karl G.**, P.O. Box 61, Jenera, OH 45841.  
**Hirsch, Mark A.**, 500 Nutmeg, Stanton, NE 68779; 402/439-5360.  
**Wagner, Wayne L.**, 2300 Arapahoe #241, Boulder, CO 80302.

## YOUTH MINISTRY WORKSHOP

A workshop for those working with high school age youth groups will be held September 30 to October 2 at the Yahara Center near Madison, Wis., beginning Friday evening and concluding at 1:00 p.m. on Sunday.

There will be two tracks: one for those who have not previously attended and one for returning participants. The workshop, sponsored by the WELS Commission on Youth Ministry, is intended for pastors, Christian day school teachers and lay people interested in building their skills in ministering to teens.

For further information or to register, contact Prof. Allen Zahn, 613 S. Twelfth, Watertown, WI 53095; 414/261-0301.

## REFORMATION LECTURES

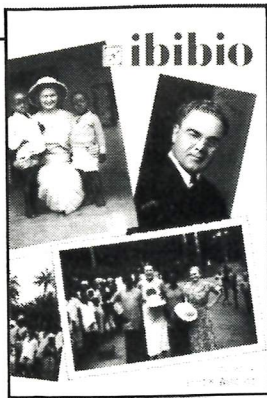
Bethany Lutheran College and Theological Seminary will again sponsor the annual Reformation Lectures on October 26-27. The speaker will be Pastor Kurt Eggert and his topic will be "Luther, the Musician." Three areas will be explored: 1) The Musical Life and Times of Martin Luther; 2) Luther and Worship, Liturgy and Hymnody; and 3) The Ghost of Luther, the Musician. For detailed information on fees, housing, etc., write to Reformation Lectures, Bethany Seminary, 734 Marsh St., Mankato, MN 56001. Pastors, teachers, organists and choir directors will find these lectures of interest.

## MLPS AUXILIARY

The Martin Luther Preparatory School Auxiliary will hold its annual meeting on Saturday, October 1 at 10:30 a.m. in the small chapel of the administration building on the campus of MLPS in Prairie du Chien, Wis.

## ORGAN — MIMEO

Available to any congregation: Electronic Wur-litzer organ, series 45, in good condition; AB Dick #530 electric mimeo machine. Contact Salem Lutheran, 2400 N. Cramer St., Milwaukee, WI 53222; 414/964-7036.



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## CHANGE OF TIME OR PLACE OF WORSHIP

in the following exploratory areas or  
 mission congregations.

**LAFAYETTE, INDIANA** — Good Shepherd, 993 S. Creasy Lane, Lafayette. 10:00 a.m.; SS/Bible class 9:30 a.m. Pastor James Pankow, 3728 Novarre Ct., Lafayette, IN 47905; 317/448-6848.

## ANNIVERSARIES

**Belmont, California** — Gloria Dei (25th), October 16, 4:00 p.m. (dinner to follow). Contact Harold Wartenbee, 2621 Cirpriani, Belmont, CA 94002; 415/592-1327.

**Fort Wayne, Indiana** — Beautiful Savior (20th), October 9, 10:00 a.m.; organ recital 3:30; dinner 5:00. Contact Pastor Harry Bartels, 11228 Coldwater Rd., Fort Wayne, IN 46845; 219/637-5164.

**Marshall, Wisconsin** — St. Paul (100th), August 28, evening band/vocal concert; September 25 (confirming reunion); November 6. Contact Pastor David Plocher, 216 Deerfield Rd., Marshall, WI 53559; 608/655-3691.

**Milwaukee, Wisconsin** — St. John (125th), November 13, 10:00 a.m. (noon dinner). Contact Pastor David Seager, 3829 W. Clinton Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53209; 414/352-2727.

**Milwaukee, Wisconsin** — St. John, Vliet St. (140th), September 26, 3:00 p.m. Pastor Kevin R. Hastings, 804 W. Vliet St., Milwaukee, WI 53205; 414/449-2314.

## NURSES NEEDED

Registered nurses of the WELS are urgently needed to serve the Lord in the Central Africa Medical Mission. African government regulations require that they have a minimum three-year RN program. If you would like to use your professional talents in a mission setting we urge you to contact the secretary of the Central Africa Medical Mission, Mrs. Sandra Hahm, 1607 N. Pine St., Grafton, WI 53024 for further details, or call her at 414/375-1845.

## NAMES WANTED

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

**BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS** — Pastor Thomas Fox, Pinewood Lutheran (Evangelical Lutheran Synod), 24 Wilmington Rd., Burlington, MA 01803.

## 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 53222-9357

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

Arizona .....	Gilbert*
	Prescott Valley*
California .....	Bakersfield*
Colorado .....	Colorado Springs (East)*
Florida .....	Miami (Hispanic)*
Illinois .....	Buffalo Grove
	Cherry Valley*
	Lindenhurst/Gurnee*
	Streamwood*
Indiana .....	LaFayette*
Michigan .....	Cadillac*
	Houghton/Hancock*
Minnesota .....	Shoreview*
New Mexico .....	Roswell*
	Santa Fe*
New York .....	Manhattan*
Oklahoma .....	Owasso*
Pennsylvania .....	Bucks County*
Texas .....	Abilene*
	Atascocita*
Virginia .....	Loudon County*
Washington .....	Everett*
	Spokane Valley*
	Woodinville/Bothell*
Wisconsin .....	Green Bay (Southwest)*
	Madison (Hispanic)*
	Waunakee*
Ontario, Canada .....	Markham*

\*Denotes exploratory services.

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*If leading theologians cannot tell us who Christ is, why should we expect director Martin Scorsese to do so?*

The editorial by Pastor Joel Gerlach in this issue is a sharply critical review of the film, *The Last Temptation of Christ*. Since the editorial was written, events have moved forward.

On the day these lines are being written, the film is opening in half a dozen or so cities across the country. Its premier was accompanied by a mass demonstration of 25,000 singing, chanting people in front of the gates of Universal Studios protesting the film's release.

The importance of the film on the American landscape can be gauged by its appearance on the cover of *Time* magazine, a placement which even the media elite do not lightly dismiss.

Among the milder criticisms of the film locally was that of Father Virgil Blum of the Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights, a national group based in Milwaukee. "This movie is an example of Christian bashing," he said. "It portrays Christ as a sinner, a liar, a hypocrite, a fornicator, a weak and despised man who was called crazy even by his own mother."

The Rev. Donald Wildmon of Tupelo, Miss., a Methodist minister, who heads the American Family Association, and most vocal opponent of the film on a national level, has been accused of anti-Semitism because of his opposition.

In a sample bulletin insert prepared for churches Wildmon writes: "The film follows years of practice by the major studios in Hollywood of depicting Christians in negative stereotypes in movies and television productions. Universal's decision-making body is composed primarily of non-Christians. Universal would never ever release a film so offensive to blacks, Jews or even homosexuals. But they have no reservation about releasing a film so offensive to the overwhelming majority of Christians."

Of course, censorship is not the answer. Under the First Amendment as it is interpreted by the courts, it is difficult to imagine anything that could possibly be banned.

I want to make two observations, and then I'll let it rest. The first has to do with what I hope our reaction will be to it. Joining in protest is a way of life in America. Perhaps the 25,000 at the gates of Universal Studios will be heard. Perhaps. If the media can ignore 250,000 anti-abortionists marching in Washington D.C., I don't think they will have any problem with 25,000 protesting a caricature of their Savior.

But there is also another way and an effective witness: Don't go to see it. Just don't go. Discourage others from seeing it, even though critics have called it a "work of art." Such works I can do without.

The second observation. What did we expect? If leading theologians of the church cannot tell us who Christ is, why should we expect director Martin Scorsese (or for that matter author Nikos Kazantzakis) to do so? The apostasy of the leading Protestant theologians — with a few notable exceptions — from the classic Christian faith of 19 centuries is the theological scandal of the 20th century.

The only authoritative source we have for the Christian faith is the Scripture, and by their use of the historical critical method the theologians have torn it to shreds, an act of unbelief, the consequences of which are carefully shielded from the people. Forsake the Bible and the result is Scorsese's film, praised with faint damns by contemporary theologians. What could they say? His interpretation is as good as theirs.

It will be a good day when Christians make the decision not to see this film, just another fallout of a bankrupt theology.

*James P. Schaefer*

# Go '87 — a gathering of gems

by Reuel J. Schulz

**F**ollowing the example of a mass media-assisted evangelism effort in the Twin Cities, most of the WELS congregations in the Greater Milwaukee area sought out the unchurched around them in the fall of 1987.

The program, dubbed Gospel Outreach or GO '87, utilized radio and T.V. advertising, billboards and bumper stickers, yard signs, saturation mailings, door hangers and door-to-door canvassing to reach out to the unchurched, inviting them to come to the WELS to hear and learn the gospel of our Lord Jesus.

Consider how GO '87 changed the lives of the Mueller family of West Allis, Wisconsin. Craig and Linda Mueller had had no association with a church for 12 years. Their children, seventh grader Andrew and fourth grader Megan, were not baptized.

Then came the GO '87 mailing and a subsequent door hanger invitation to the Wisconsin Synod congregation, Woodlawn Lutheran Church and School, only three blocks from their home. They had passed by that church thousands of times. You couldn't miss noticing it on busy Lincoln Avenue, adjacent to the I-894 freeway ramp.

But it never occurred to the Muellers that Woodlawn could be and very much wanted to be their church home until the God-pleasing machinery of GO '87 gained momentum and made contact with them.

These four souls are priceless gems bought by the blood of the Lamb, our gracious God is determined to gather into his treasure house where they will be forever safe from the seductive siren song of Satan and from eternal suffering in hell.

God used a number of his disciples to gather his gems. Members of the GO '87 evangelism committee at Woodlawn supervised the initial mailing. Students of Woodlawn school went through the neighborhood



Robert Kolander (right) greeting the Mueller family.

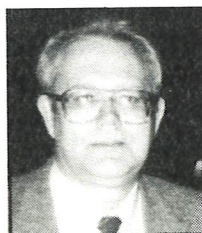
distributing door hangers. Vicar Paul Henning and volunteer canvasser Al Kasulke made some preliminary contacts with the Muellers, paving the way for an in-depth "Talk about the Savior" home visit by Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary student Roger Carter, who assisted Robert Kolander, a 40 year veteran WELS teacher, former principal of Woodlawn and an enthusiastic evangelist.

Once these gems were uncovered, thanks to GO

'87, the Lord brought forth the following immediate and abundant fruits through the power of the gospel: The Muellers have become weekly church-goers at Woodlawn; they regularly attend the Sunday Bible study hour; Megan is a Sunday school student; Andrew has finished his first year of confirmation instructions; Megan and Andrew were baptized on November 21, 1987; Craig and Linda, after faithfully attending the congregation's weekly Bible information course for six months, were welcomed as communicant members of Woodlawn and the WELS on May 10, 1988.

Certainly there are priceless gems like the Muellers scattered around all of the 1200 congregations in the WELS. It is our calling and our privilege as individual Christians and as a church body to seek out and to gather in more and more gems like these, for whom Christ suffered and died.

Without GO '87, the Muellers might still be waiting to be discovered by the Holy Spirit. How many gems are waiting to be unearthed by your personal witnessing or by the evangelism efforts of your congregation? □



Reuel Schulz is pastor of Woodlawn, West Allis, Wisconsin.