

November 15, 1990

the
Northwestern
Lutheran



FEATURES

THE WORD FOR TODAY
This isn't the end by Kurt F. Koeplin.....383

THE BEATITUDES
Blessed are the merciful by Fredric E. Piepenbrink.....385

SCIENCE AND THE BIBLE
The value of modern creation science by Bruce Holman III.....386

Winds of change in Africa by Ernst H. Wendland388

Russia: a nation in change by Morton A. Schroeder390

WHEN BAD THINGS HAPPEN TO GOD'S PEOPLE
The rest of the story by Mark E. Braun.....393

COLUMNS

EDITORIAL COMMENT
Love and respect in Ephesians 5 by Carleton Toppe.....384

LETTERS.....396

I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW by Paul E. Kelm397

FROM THIS CORNER by the editor.....399

SPEAKING MY MIND
It's time to grow up by Gregory D. Gibbons.....400

NEWS

WELS CARES forum held • Lots of licking and sticking • Builders for Christ starts up • Conference has international flavor • Lift High the Cross gifts reach \$3.7 million • Arizona-California and Michigan Districts news394

PREFACE

- Just a reminder that in December there will only be one issue of the *Northwestern Lutheran* scheduled Dec. 15, our Christmas issue.
- Veteran African missionary Ernst H. Wendland reminds us that the locale of mission work in Africa is changing as the continent becomes more urbanized. "One of the most urbanized countries on the African continent," he writes on page 388 "is Zambia," where ten percent of the country's population lives in its capital, Lusaka.
- We accompany Prof. Morton Schroeder to the USSR for a visit as he assesses the WELS opportunities for the mission work (p. 390). It was a trip which "made us grateful we live in the USA and not the USSR."
- Two authors conclude their series, both on a high note. Prof. Braun closes his series on Job and the problem of suffering (p. 393). Dr. Holman ends his series on science and the Bible (p. 386).
- Is singing religious songs in a community chorus religious unionism? Paul Kelm says no, though circumstances may change that answer (p. 397).

JPS

*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 15, 1990/VOL.77, NO. 20

Editorial office

Rev. James P. Schaefer, Editor
The Northwestern Lutheran
2929 N. Mayfair Road
Milwaukee, WI 53222-4398
Phone 414/771-9357 FAX 414/771-3708

Dorothy J. Sonntag, Assistant Editor

Contributing editors

R. D. Balge, T. B. Franzmann, I. G. Frey, J. C. Gerlach, R. H. Hochmuth, P. E. Kelm, R. E. Lauersdorf, F. E. Piepenbrink, V. H. Prange, C. Toppe.

District correspondents

K. H. Pasch (Arizona), H. K. John (California), R. L. Kruse (Dakota-Montana), J. L. Langebartels (Michigan), R. M. Edwards (Minnesota), T. W. Bauer (Nebraska), D. A. Kehl (North Atlantic), J. C. Eggert (Northern Wisconsin), J. S. Blum (Pacific Northwest), F. W. Hemmrich (South Atlantic), C. L. Learman (South Central), R. A. Sievert (Southeastern Wisconsin), E. C. Stroh (Western Wisconsin).

Production

Production services of Northwestern Publishing House: Production coordinator, Clifford Koeller; Design and page make-up, Kurt Adams, Duane Weaver; Subscription manager, Suzanne Giese.

Subscriber service

For subscription service, write: Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N. 113th St., P.O. Box 26975, Milwaukee, WI 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, \$8.50; two years, \$17.00; three years, \$22.50. Twenty-five or more unaddressed copies sent in a bundle to one address at \$5.50 per subscription. Every home mailing plan at \$6.00 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, MN 55107.

THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN (ISSN 0029-3512) is published *semimonthly, except monthly in July, August and December*, by Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N. 113th St., Milwaukee, WI 53226. Second class postage paid at Milwaukee, Wisconsin and additional mailing offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to *The Northwestern Lutheran*, c/o Northwestern Publishing House, P.O. Box 26975, Milwaukee, WI 53226-0975 ©1990 by *The Northwestern Lutheran*, magazine of the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod.

This isn't the end

by Kurt F. Koeplin

"I am the resurrection and the life . . . Do you believe this?" "Yes Lord, . . . I believe that you are the Christ . . ." (John 11:25-27).

On December 2 a new church year begins. In a little over three weeks we will prepare our hearts for the coming of the Christ-Child.

It's all quite different from what the world deems important. The world nervously eyes the drama of the Gulf crisis, while still pondering the astonishing events in Eastern Europe and the USSR. Who would have predicted that the wall would come tumbling down; that we would see the day that the ex-"Evil Empire" would be working in consort with the United States to reign in/check/destabilize or bring down an adventuresome mid-eastern despot?

In the meantime, Christians close another church year. There's none of the occurrences and trappings which normally accompany the calendar passage between December 31st and January 1st.

On the contrary. That which characterizes the end of another year of grace are Bible readings which deal with the end of the world, death, the judgment, and the description of heaven, the home of all believers in Christ. Do you think the world cares a fig about these things?

To many these are distasteful subjects; morbid, dreadful, depressing. In polite company, one does not speak of death. Judgment day is only spoken of in terms of mocking humor.

This is the area that the division between the unbelieving world and the Christian is discerned. The worldly shut out thoughts of the end of life. Often they will say, "When you're dead, you're dead! Concentrate on now. Don't worry, be happy."

We respond, "Who is worried? I am happy—not because I am a vacuous bubblehead who pretends that time can be stopped and youth preserved—but by knowing that in Christ, this isn't the end."

That's what this text is about. It's a part of the marvelous miracle recorded not only to verify

Christ's divinity, but also to strengthen and comfort us when we face our last enemy, death.

People long have wondered: "Is there life after death?" Some say without equivocation, "No! We're born; we live; we die. Period."

Others are more aggressive. "Grow up!" "In an earlier era, a less enlightened time, some of the unsophisticated believed this religious 'mumbo-jumbo' about the afterlife. But we've outgrown superstition."

Some of this comes from the same highly sophisticated generation that stick funny stuff up their noses, sniff glue pots, experiment with LSD, shoot heroin between their toes, record alien beings in space buggies, and have spotted Elvis in supermarkets from Alaska to Pago Pago. Indeed, we've "progressed."

If this text were the only word in all of Scripture on this subject, it would be enough to give us a magnificent lesson on hope and life beyond now.

Hear "Pastor Jesus" as he deals with his grieving parishioner who has suffered the trauma of separation from her dear brother. Listen as the living Savior assures her that this isn't the end, but the beginning of life that knows no death, no "downers," no disappointments.

The parishioner responds: "I know that you are the Son of God." The implication is as clear as his promise. In effect, Martha is saying: "Whatever you say, even though it boggles the mind and staggers the imagination—because you say it, I believe it."

Today, in spite of the trauma of thick clouds of uncertainty, may we be empowered to say: "I'm but a stranger here . . . looking forward to more and better; the ultimate homecoming."



Kurt Koeplin is pastor of Atonement, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Love and respect in Ephesians 5

Christianity Today, the largest evangelical Protestant periodical in our country, recently conducted a major survey of 1,250 subscribers who were chosen at random. Close to 750 subscribers and/or their spouses (divided almost equally between the sexes) completed questionnaires on male and female roles in the home, church, and society.

Nearly nine out of ten agreed with the statement, "The Bible affirms the principle of male headship in the family." Apparently, most subscribers understood and accepted 1 Corinthians 11, Ephesians 5, and 1 Peter 3 as they were written.

But only about six out of ten agreed with the statement, "The husband holds ultimate responsibility for all major decisions in the family and the home."

There would seem to be a discrepancy here. One would think that male headship in the family would be the same as the husband holding ultimate responsibility for all major decisions in the family and the home. Does the variation mean that 90 percent of the subscribers approved of male headship in theory, but only 60 percent approved of it in practice? Has "head of the family" become more of a traditional empty title than a working relationship?

An old proverb comes to mind: "Handsome is as handsome does." What we say must be proved by what we do. It is not enough to say that we agree with a statement; the way we live must make it evident that we agree with it. Agreeing that God has established the man as the head of the family should be demonstrated by granting the husband ultimate responsibility for all major decisions in the family and the home. (Carrying out this responsibility, however, does not mean that the husband will not consult with his wife.)

Ever since the fall of Adam and Eve into sin, such respect on the part of the wife has not been natural or easy. It is especially difficult to maintain in today's equal rights climate.

Ephesians 5:22-33, however, shows us how the God-ordained husband-wife relationship in marriage is made easier to carry out. A wife's love for her husband, like a Christian's love for the Lord, makes her willing to accept his headship. (Incidentally, Paul does not even have to tell the Christian wife who accepts her husband's headship that she must also love her husband. Her willing submission to her husband proves that she loves him.)

The husband, on the other hand, is reminded at least four times by the apostle that he should love his wife. He must care for her; he must be concerned about her. He must not abuse his headship and his authority over her. But then the wife, in turn, is not to take advantage of the love her husband shows her. She must respect her husband. (God calls for this special respect in marriage.) Headship still stands.

In the God-ordained marriage relationship the husband's love for his wife makes it easier for her to respect him, and her respect for him makes it easier for him to love her. The husband responds to his wife's respect for him; the wife responds to her husband's love for her.

When both carry out their special obligations in Christ, God's special blessings rest on their marriage.

Carleton Toppe



*Carleton Toppe,
retired president
of Northwestern College,
lives in
Watertown, Wisconsin*

Someone asked an old and wise member of the church, "Are you a Christian?" to which he answered, "In spots." He wasn't referring to the condition of his faith or his hope of salvation, but to his life of sanctification.

We could say the same. At times our faith shines through in acts of love and kindness. At other times we wonder how we can act a certain way and still call ourselves "Christian." One "spot" that when lacking especially causes distress, as well it should, is the act of being merciful.

Merciful

The fifth beatitude reads, "Blessed are the merciful." Mercy is one of those great words of Scripture like love and grace that is used to describe God and his action. Mercy carries with it the idea of fulfilling a desperate need. Sinners desperately need forgiveness; God forgives in Christ Jesus; therefore, God is merciful.

The man who fell to robbers desperately needed physical help; a Samaritan came and provided all he needed and more; that is why the good Samaritan was really the merciful Samaritan. Mercy is not just an emotion of pity or sympathy, but an action that results in the alleviation of a need. The supreme demonstration of God's mercy began with the incarnation.

Christians are merciful when they are kindly in their judgments of others, forgiving, refusing to nurse a grudge, willing to meet a spiritual or physical need of others.

Mercy has been described as the ability to get right into the other person's skin until we can see with his eyes, think with his mind, and feel with his heart. This is what Christ did when he looked at a friend or foe, outcast or sufferer.

But we not only have Christ as our example for showing mercy, we may also speak from personal experience since we remember our own need for mercy and how it was filled by Jesus. Jesus is not

Blessed are the merciful

by Fredric E. Piepenbrink

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

speaking in this beatitude of a generic type of mercy that may be found even in the non-Christian, but a mercy for others that is based on Christ's mercy for us. It is his mercy for us that becomes the blessing in this beatitude—"they will be shown mercy."

Shown mercy

We dare not turn this beatitude into a legalistic doctrine as if the only way to obtain

God's mercy for ourselves is to show mercy to others. Jesus is not teaching some kind of merit theology—a tit for tat, God will do this if I do that. Mercy, like grace, cannot be conditional, or it ceases to be mercy. Rather, Jesus is pointing to a specific fruit of faith and attaching spiritual blessing to it, rather than to the faith which lays claim to the blessing.

Mercy is given to the believer purely by the grace of God through faith in Christ Jesus. But it is also a foregone conclusion that Christians will be merciful. Therefore in a very real sense those who are merciful will be shown mercy. With mercy comes mercy.

The negative is not stated here, but it bears mentioning. When mercy is not shown to others, when forgiveness is not offered, then we have the strong warning from Scripture (as in the "Unmerciful Servant") to reexamine faith to determine whether it is really present. The person who is unwilling to be merciful has at best not understood, or at worse rejected, the mercy which God has shown to him. More than likely that person has a self-righteous understanding of salvation rather than by grace alone.

Yes, we will be blessed with mercy when we are merciful, always remembering that ". . . because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved" (Ephesians 2:4-5).

Fredric Piepenbrink is pastor of Atonement, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

The value of modern creation science

by Bruce Holman III

Today creation science is much more than one side of a debate, and Lutherans can appreciate and use it in a much broader way than in years past. At a time when much of science seeks to obscure the hand of God, there are many Christians who attempt to better discover and describe God's creating and sustaining work in his physical universe. We can use their work to develop an appreciation for the wisdom and power of our gracious Father, to strengthen our resistance and response to those who would accuse Scripture of presenting a myth that does not correspond with the physical world, and to help give ears to hear the gospel to people troubled by the claims and theories of secular science.

This article is meant to encourage greater interest in modern creation science by all WELS Christians but especially among teachers in our Christian schools. When we teach creation science the way it should be taught, not to prove the Bible right, but to show the marks of the creator's hand, we foster a biblical and realistic view of the individual's position in and relationship to his environment, we portray the glory of God, and we have opportunity to preach both law and gospel.

Scientific creationism has matured greatly since the modern movement began in the early 1960s. In the early days, many of its adherents were not well trained and the "research" was not typical scientific experimentation but scholarship designed to develop polemical arguments against the theory of evolution. The creation-evolution debates of those days were a feeble attempt to defend the Bible, and some brash and unsophisticated creationists turned off even some Christians. But the few well-qualified ones inspired a new generation of Bible-believing scientists.

Today there are many examples of first-rate creation-science research into questions such as: What residues of the six day creation are observable today? How were the various rocks and geologic formations formed? What is the connection between the flood and the ice age that followed and how did they affect the geologic structure of the earth? How were the various animal and plant species spread through the earth after the flood? What biochemical factors limit the variation of a species from one generation to another? Many of these scientists have endured persecution and economic hardship to continue their work in the name of the Savior. As Christians we should do what we can to encourage them, especially with our prayers.

Many aspects of modern creation-science models and arguments are not complicated concepts or tenuous suppositions, and would be suitable to be taught in science classes of our schools. Even children in primary grades can understand that it is not possible for an animal to successfully mate with or give birth to animals of a different kind as evolution requires, but that there are striking similarities between parents and their children.

Investigations of individual animals can focus on the characteristics that seem to have been built into the creature by a wise and loving God. Discussions of fossils can point out that no examples of animals halfway between one kind and another have been found, but that each type of animal appears in the fossil record fully formed with all the attributes of its species.

High school chemistry courses can include the fact that many carbon compounds, particularly most biologically important ones, have an aspect of their struc-

*We can truly appreciate and understand science
only when we can view it with the knowledge
that God has entered his creation
to show his love for us and save us.*

ture called chirality or optical activity which makes it impossible for them to be produced, isolated, and used in even the most primitive biological processes apart from the action of pre-existent life forms or the intervention of willful intelligent activity.

Some more complicated research is so noteworthy that we may want to make an extra effort to explain it to students who are old enough to understand it. Undoubtedly we describe vaguely how the flood could have caused the formation of coal, but we can also describe how examination of the effects of recent catastrophes, such as the Mount St. Helens eruption, have convinced geologists that many geologic formations required the same kind of conditions that the biblical flood describes. Creationist Steve Austin has received distinguished recognition even among non-creationists for his geologic research in this area.

Most public school chemistry students know in a general way how radioactive elements are used to date rocks and artifacts. Robert Gentry has discovered patterns in rocks formed by radioactive elements that no one can explain with any current theory about the origin of the earth except by a miraculous rapid creation like the one the Bible presents. His work received government support and was published in respected scientific journals until its full implications became known.

Information about creation science can be obtained from many sources. Books carried by our Northwestern Publishing House are a good place to start. The WELS has an organization known as the Lutheran Science Institute that promotes a greater understanding of science and scientific issues in the WELS. Membership information and/or a copy of the quarterly newsletter can be obtained from Warren

Krug, 638 E. Dover St., Milwaukee, WI 53207.

The Creation Research Society is affiliated with the Institute for Creation Research in El Cajon, California, and publishes a journal of technical research in creation science. In many areas of the country there are local creation science societies and churches that sponsor lectures by scientists and knowledgeable laymen. Adult enrichment classes in creation science have been offered at Wisconsin Lutheran College.

Whether we learn about creation science for ourselves or for our students, we will be humbled and awed by the greatness of our God. Such discoveries will make it difficult to ignore that God is in control of his universe and he knows exactly what he is doing and what we are doing.

When we encounter the mysteries raised and described by creation science, we must remember what Paul calls "the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but is now disclosed to the saints" (Colossians 1:26). These are the truths that are only revealed in the God-Man Jesus Christ. He shows us the true nature of God and his saving activity that transcends any creating or sustaining activity he shows us in science.

We can truly appreciate and understand science only when we can view it with the knowledge that God has entered his creation to show his love for us and save us. We owe a debt to tell each other and the next generation the great things our God has shown to us.



*Dr. Holman teaches chemistry
at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee.*

Winds of change in

by Ernst H. Wendland

If Missionary Bill Scheppe, the first WELS missionary to Africa, had been pictured some fifty years ago without a pith helmet on his head and a grass hut in the background, the scene would not have seemed quite right. African missionary work was invariably associated with villages somewhere out in the bush. At that time urban centers were occupied chiefly by short-term expatriates rather than by Africa nationals.

"Be sure to take lots of pictures of village men with pangas in their hands and women with water pots on their heads," fellow missionaries advised even 25 years ago. "That's what the folks at home like to see."

Winds of nationalism

Although there is still considerable bush activity associated with mission work in Africa—and rightly so—the time has come to look at this erstwhile "Dark Continent" with a different kind of missionary vision.

The "winds of change" have swept over Africa with inexorable force. When Britain's Prime Minister Harold Macmillan used this metaphor in his historic speech thirty years ago, he was describing a political phenomenon taking place in Africa just as significant as that in eastern Europe today.

Macmillan was referring to the new spirit of African nationalism. Following Ghana's gaining of independence in 1956, no less than 20 countries became free of colonial rule in the next decade.

Changes in social life

The political change has had a whirlwind effect on African social

life. In most countries there has been a rush to the cities in a search for a better life. For some this has unfortunately ended in a shanty town. For others it has led to a lifestyle formerly enjoyed only by colonialists. Some kind of urbanism has become the lifestyle of most Africans today.

One of the most urbanized countries on the African continent is Zambia. Its capital, Lusaka, is now home to one in ten of the country's population. "Zambia is suffering a massive urban influx from the countryside," says a recent book on Zambia. "The result has been a ring of shantytowns around the larger cities where unemployment is high and violence is never far beneath the surface."

Changes in mission strategy

The rush to the cities needs to be seriously considered when doing mission work. "Never before," says a recent periodical, "have so many people made the city their home—and never has urban outreach played such a crucial role in world evangelization. Ministering in the city requires strategic planning: a



A fast-food restaurant in downtown Lusaka.

DUANE TOMHAVE PHOTOS

Africa



An urban housing development in Lusaka.

thorough understanding of the metropolitan mission field and a clear vision of the social, physical, and spiritual needs of the people who live there.”

But is this really all that new? The apostle Paul followed a similar strategy nearly two thousand years ago. “Paul seized strategic points because he had a strategy,” pointed out Roland Allen already in 1922. “He was led as God opened the door; but wherever he was led he always found a center, and seizing upon that center he made it a center of Christian life.”

Missionary problems

This change toward urban living makes problems. Mission work is more expensive and more competitive. We can hardly begin in a city area with a mud and thatch structure, especially when other church bodies begin with substantial buildings.

We also need a strategy. As in any stateside housing area, beginning a new mission means planning, publicizing, canvassing and following up, instructing, encouraging—the lot. We must develop materials which fit the urban situation for Sunday school, Bible class, instruction classes, evangelism and youth work.

Years ago someone coined the phrase “A changeless Christ for a changing world.” True—the basic message must never change. But it must be brought in a way that reaches the hearts of those who hear it.

Missionary advantages

Change may bring problems, but it also brings new opportunities. In Lusaka, for example, we built

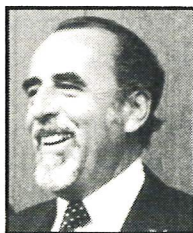
a church some thirty years ago in a housing area occupied mostly by Europeans. Their interest in our church was practically nil. Most of them had come from state churches in Europe to which almost everybody belonged but few ever went.

Today this same area is occupied by nationals who are far more open to evangelism. The place is alive with children anxious to come to Sunday school or vacation Bible school. English is the language used in school, in business, at work in the city. Thus a previously dead area has become excitingly alive.

Missionary goals

Our Lord has told us to “go out to the roads and country lanes.” But he has also told us to “go out quickly to the streets and alleys of the town . . . and make them come in.” The latter work may be less picturesque, less exotic, less appealing, perhaps, than penetrating some jungle area for the first time or bringing the gospel to some previously unreached tribe.

The rural setting with its mud-brick chapel with thatch roof may have a greater audience appeal than a structure made out of cement blocks and sheets of corrugated zinc. But wherever the people are, that’s where we need to be, with the message everybody needs, and with the manpower and methods to fit the ever-changing situation.



Prof. Ernst H. Wendland teaches at the seminary at Lusaka, Zambia.

Russia

by Morton A. Schroeder

Many people carry around a bag of dreams. They hope they'll realize one or more before time cancels their plans. My wife and I too carry around dreams. One was our hope to visit Russia. We dreamed of walking on Red Square, that forbidding place where the Red Army flexes its muscles every May Day. We dreamed of penetrating the impenetrable: the Kremlin.

We realized our dream recently. Each day was novel and exciting, and each brought new insights into what was—and possibly still is—an ominous land for many Americans. Yet in this era of *glasnost* and *perestroika*, it is not inconceivable that one day the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod will “lift high the cross” near the Kremlin.

From Chicago we flew to Finland, and then via Finnair to Leningrad and Moscow. Finland's national airline provides many of the amenities people enjoy when they fly American airlines. Not so with the Russian national airline, Aeroflot. Even at major terminals passengers board in the open air, regardless of the weather. In theory seats are assigned; in practice, passengers sit where they will. On one flight there were no cabin attendants.

The terminal in Leningrad is dark, dreary, drab. Starkly primitive, it needs fundamental and cosmetic improvements. The Moscow terminal is more modern. Arrivals, departures, gates,

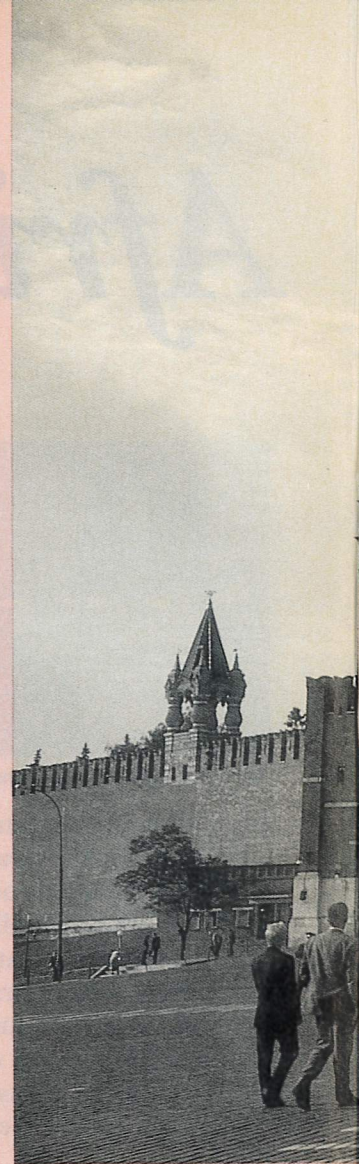
are given in Russian and English. Because we saw no French, German, or even Scandinavian, we drew the only conclusion we could. That conclusion, if valid, will in the fulness of time help us spread the gospel in Russia.

We stayed in Intourist hotels, run by the government. Security was evident and obvious. In Moscow an armed soldier checked visitors' papers. In both cities the key for our room, when we were absent, was kept by the concierge. When we wanted to enter the room, we traded our hotel ID for our key.

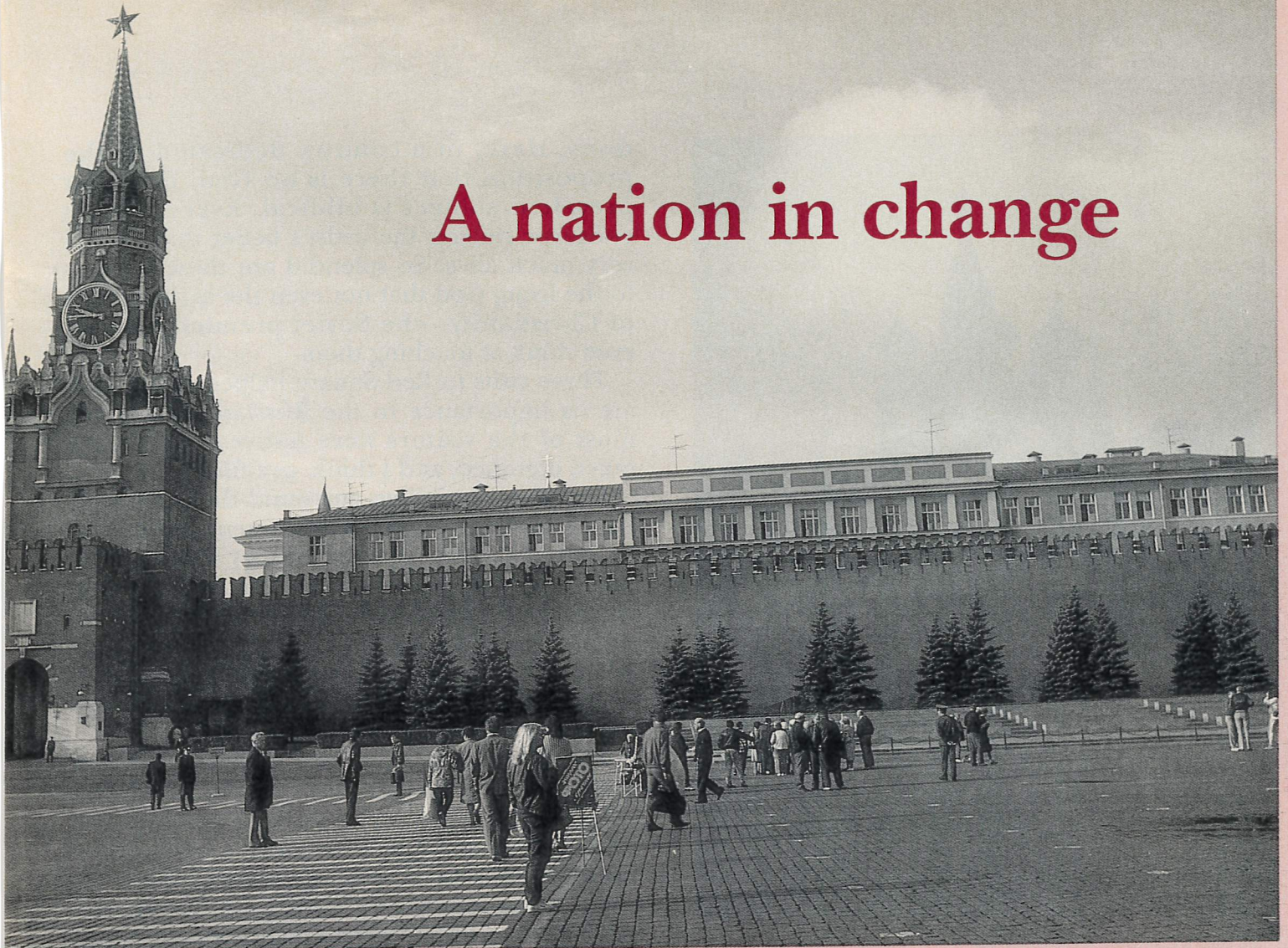
Our rooms were slightly smaller than an average mid-priced American motel room. The views from our rooms were stimulating. In Leningrad we were poised over the massive war memorial which commemorates the Russian victory in the siege of the city during World War II.

The never-ending movement of people amazed us. From our vantage point the faceless, shuffling masses resembled ants going about their business. Although we do not know, we believe these people are unfamiliar with their Savior. They are another field ripe for harvest.

Our view in Moscow overlooked a spectacular monument to the space age: a steel obelisk



A nation in change



ROGER C. HUEBNER PHOTOS

A wall separates Red Square from the Kremlin.

sheathed in polished titanium plates. Pointing skyward, it has a sputnik-like object at its apex some 315 feet above the ground. We enjoyed looking at the Russian salute to their space achievements, especially when the sun turned it into a saber-like mirror.

Beyond this monument lies a complex of buildings dedicated to Russian economic achievements. Built in a flurry of self-congratulations, these buildings cover 534 acres. Although the oldest date only from the 1960s, many are falling into disrepair, shabby victims of the grim realities of the Soviet system.

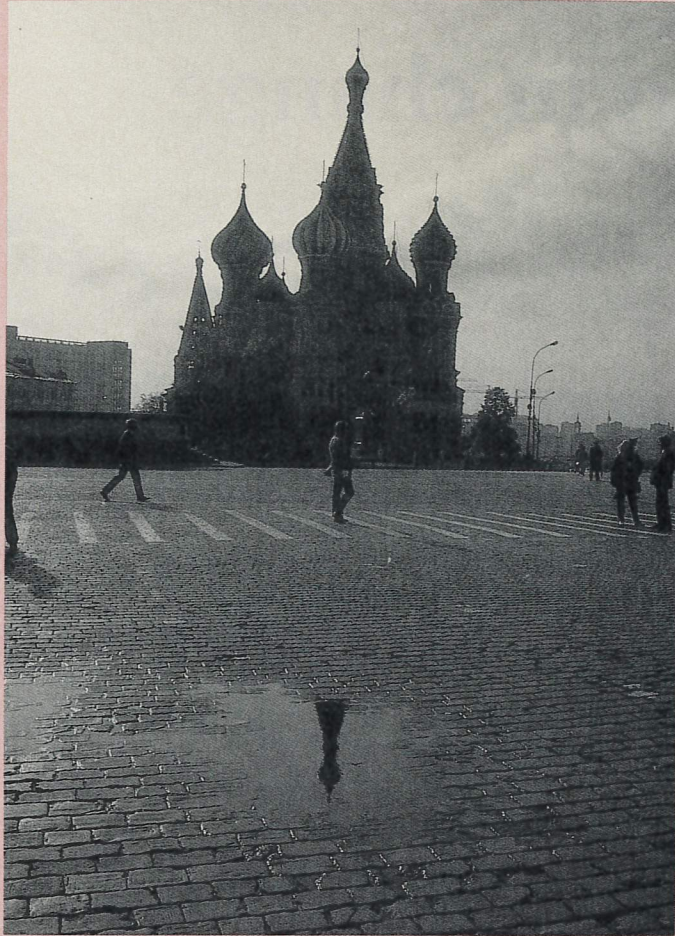
Our first Russian dinner was good, but it was not a sign of things to come. Russian cuisine relies heavily on cabbage, and we were served it in every color, form, and texture. The cuisine also relies heavily on fish. We were not sure it was always fresh. Russian cuisine is an experience; it is an acquired taste.

Two foods were instant favorites. The breads are fresh, brown, crisp. Ice cream is flavorful and creamy. We were not surprised to see local folks eat it while snow drifted down on them as they queued for life's needs.

Queuing is a fact of Russian life. The average housewife spends two hours a day standing in lines. Supermarkets as we know them are alien to Russia. Each kind of food must be got at the store that sells that kind of food. And so the poor marketgoer patiently trudges from store to store. If she's fortunate, she'll get to the stores before they run out of her needs.

One kind of queuing is especially saddening: that which has alcoholic beverages as its goal. The liquor stores open at 2 p.m., but the lines begin to form long before that. And they are longer than the lines at any other business establishment. Most of the liquor lines queuers are men.

(continued on next page)



St. Basil's Cathedral on Red Square.

Shopping difficulties are not restricted to food. One afternoon we walked along *Mir Prospekt* (Peace Avenue) in Moscow. One store had spread out on its bare shelves a few radios, clocks, lamps, framed pictures, and miscellaneous bric-a-brac. The inventory had an ancient, tired, and despondent air about it, a mirror image of the futility written on the would-be buyers' faces. This picture was repeated in furniture marts, toy stores, soft drink counters.

The colorless, wintry days did not rob Leningrad of its intrinsic beauty. Like Venice, it is crisscrossed with rivers and canals. Like Venice, it is a city of bridges, some very elaborate in design and structure. Each is unique.

Our Russian dream included visiting the Hermitage, at one time one of the winter palaces of the czars. Today it is the most splendid of Leningrad's many fine museums. We were struck by the irony of the most elaborate exhibi-

tions. Here, in a country dedicated to the proposition that there is no God, the most prevalent subject is biblical. Every artistic endeavor reflects the artist's belief that God is very much alive. So splendid are these tributes to the living God that not even the archenemies of Christianity—the Soviet premiers—dared even think of touching them.

Three visits to Red Square helped us appreciate its importance to the Russian people, for most of the visitors were natives. They were quiet, dignified, and I think, awe-filled.

Impressive buildings surround the square: St. Basil's Cathedral, State Department Store (also known as GUM), and the history museum. St. Basil's, no longer used as a church, is a spectacular piece of architecture. Silhouetted against the sky are two gothic-style spires and five Muscovite gilded and painted onion-shaped domes. Eight ornate towers sit astride the wall which separates Red Square from the Kremlin.

The Kremlin is a crowded complex of more than 40 buildings, statues, towers, churches, palaces, gateways, squares, and government offices. Visitors are able to wander freely about the area, but several buildings are off limits. The major attractions were crowded the day we visited; I think, weather permitting, they are always crowded.

We saw both sides of the Russian entertainment coin. The performances of the Bolshoi Theater and the Moscow Circus remain unforgettable, each in its own way. But more unforgettable are the Jekyll and Hyde aspects of the Russian milieu. On the one hand are empty shelves; on the other, spectacular architecture and superb artistic and cultural achievements.

The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is a massive land. It spans 17 of the world's 24 time zones. The sun never sets on it. Visiting only two cities in only one republic for little more than a week gave us only a fleeting glance of Russian life. It was a glance which enriched us and makes us grateful we live in the USA and not the USSR.



Morton Schroeder, retired from teaching at Dr. Martin Luther College, lives in Appleton, Wisconsin.

The rest of the story

by Mark E. Braun

Alfred Lord Tennyson called Job "the greatest poem of ancient or modern times." Thomas Carlyle considered Job's story "one of the grandest things ever written with the pen."

That's not to say, however, that the book is easily understood. The church father Jerome compared it with an eel: the more tightly one holds on to it, the faster it glides away. The story emphasizes that God deals with his suffering people according to three vital principles: justice, chastening love, and sovereignty.

Yet Job doesn't report everything God has revealed about suffering. The New Testament tells us the rest of the story.

Job's three friends wanted to blame his troubles on a specific sin. Jesus' disciples posed a similar question when they met a man blind from birth: "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents, that he was born blind?" Jesus refused to assign blame. "This happened," he said, "so that the work of God might be displayed in his life" (John 9:2,3). When bad things happen to us, the important question is not, "Lord, why did you let this happen?" but, "Lord, how will you use this to bring glory to yourself and blessings to others?"

Paul explained how a gracious Lord can use trouble to strengthen us: "We also rejoice in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; perseverance, character; and character, hope. And hope does not disappoint us" (Romans 5:3-5).

James wrote, "The testing of your faith develops perseverance. Perseverance must finish its work so that you may be mature and complete, not lacking anything" (James 1:3,4). Paul and James aren't saying there's something enjoyable or meritorious in suffering; God uses it to shape us more into the kind of men and women he wants us to be.

A favorite verse for many of God's people is: "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him" (Romans 8:28). All things—even tragic accident or deadly illness, stubborn sin or foolish choices. Jesus turned the most horrible defeat into victory when he died as our substitute. The cross has become the symbol of God's love and forgiveness. The empty grave reversed death. God can turn tragedy to triumph, tears to joy.

Paul also told the Romans: "I consider our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that

will be revealed in us" (Romans 8:18). If you could place all the miseries of life onto one side of a balance scale, and all the great things God gives us through Jesus onto the other, the glory would so outweigh the miseries that they ought not even be placed side by side.

While we live here, the strength we've received from our Savior makes us uniquely able to help others: "Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God" (2 Corinthians 1:3,4). God has designed us to be conduits, conveying to others the blessings we've received.

The most remarkable New Testament word on suffering is in the letter to the Hebrews. When we suffer, isn't it easy to think God doesn't love us? In fact, suffering demonstrates that God *does* love us, that we *are* his children. "The Lord disciplines those he loves, and he punishes every one he accepts as a son." A father who loves his children disciplines them. It's true, of course, that "no discipline seems pleasant at the time, but painful. Later on, however, it produces a harvest of righteousness and peace for those who have been trained by it" (Hebrews 12:5-11). As the hymnwriter put it: "Now I may know both joy and woe;/ Someday I shall see clearly/ That he hath loved me dearly."

A time will come when all the bad things that have happened to God's people will be distant memories. After a life of service and suffering, Jesus gave the apostle John a stunning vision of the "new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride beautifully dressed for her husband." He heard a voice say: "Now the dwelling of God is with men, and he will live with them. They will be his people, and God himself will be with them and be their God. He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away" (Revelation 21:3,4).

No more bad things. Everything that happens to God's people from then on will be good.

Mark Braun is director of spiritual life programming and instructor of theology at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

WELS CARES forum held

Mutual encouragement and fellowship were the primary goals when 47 representatives of 21 organizations met for the fourth WELS CARES (Concerned Agencies Rendering Evangelical Service) forum in Madison, Wis., Oct. 12-13. Participants were agencies which work alongside the WELS but which receive no funds from the synod's budget.

Topics of practical concern were on the agenda. Speakers offered advice on methods of gaining financial support, producing newsletters, working with volunteers, and using slide presentations effectively.

Of equal value were "the private conversations, over breakfast and after hours," said institutional chaplain Steve Stern. "We shared our mutual problems—recruiting volunteers, getting financial support. And we shared our joys. We're all doing our own special ministry, but we're all serving one Lord."

Synod President Carl Mischke addressed the group. "I understand your concern about volunteers," he said. "I'm the leader of an organization of volunteers—420,000 of them."

In a more serious vein, Mischke urged the participants to "remember the big picture. We may have a love for and interest in a specific area of kingdom work, but we need to carry out our objectives within the larger framework of the church's total mission."

Organizations at the conference included Alpha counseling centers, Arizona Lutheran Retirement Center, area Lutheran high schools, the Central African medical mission, and the Lutheran Association for Church Extension. The Lutheran Home, Lutheran Pioneers and Girl Pioneers, and Madison Institutional Ministry, Inc.

sent representatives.

In addition, delegates were present from Martin Luther Memorial Home, WELS Historical Institute, WELS Kingdom Workers, and WELS Lutherans for Life. Also represented were Wisconsin Lutheran Child and



Vicki Hartig (right) gives Thomas Klusmeyer (left) and Robert Michel advice on producing newsletters.

Family Services, Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Ministry, and the WLIM Lay Ministry.

—Dorothy J. Sonntag

Lots of licking and sticking

Sometime in December of 1989 a Church Extension Fund savings stamp order was filled that included the three and one half millionth stamp issued.

WELS schools across the country are familiar with the CEF savings stamps. Since April 1972, students have been purchasing stamps and licking and sticking them in their stamp album. When the album is full (75 stamps worth \$18.75), it is forwarded to the synod treasurer's office. In return the investor receives a CEF certificate that will be worth about \$25 in five years and ten months.

The savings stamp program is one of several options that provide a cash flow for the Church Extension Fund. Total dollars invested by members in the member loan program exceed \$33 million.

The stamp program, together with gifts and mission loan repayments, provides the financial strength with which the synod establishes new churches nation-wide. Currently over 115 mission congregations are enjoying the benefit of CEF loans.

For information concerning the CEF savings stamp program, contact the Member Loan Counselor, 2929 N. Mayfair Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53222.

—Ronald Meier

Builders for Christ starts up

The Builders for Christ program, reports home missions administrator Harold Hagedorn, "is up and running." The two year program is designed to make use of the talents of WELS workers and volunteers to help construct worship facilities for synod congregations.

The initial project is the erection of a new chapel for Peace, Hayward, Wis. Construction began at the end of June and should be completed by the time you read these lines.

The director of Builders for Christ is Pastor Marvin Radtke, who is in the process of gathering names of WELS members who might be interested in offering their services. For more information write: Builders for Christ, Pastor Marvin Radtke, Route 7, Box 7841, Hayward, WI 54843.

Conference has international flavor

Pastors T. Yoshida (Japan), S. Hachibamba (Zambia), D. Mabedi (Malawi), B. Njume (Cameroon), and Evangelist Tse Tat Chiu (Hong Kong) brought a truly international flavor to the eighth World Mission Seminary Conference held at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in Mequon August 7-10. This was the first time that overseas nationals had participated.

Representatives from Mequon and our 14 world mission fields considered the topic "The pastor as seminary product" from the scriptural, supracultural viewpoint common to all cultures and from the historical, traditional, and cul-

tural viewpoint. Papers by Professors Richard Balge and Armin Panning of the seminary opened the two viewpoints to discussion. Dr. Ernst R. Wendland of Zambia presented the topic "The three worlds of the third world seminary student." Updates were given on the pastoral training work in each field.

Also unique to this conference was the inclusion of an ELS representative from Peru and of our oldest WELS field, Apacheland, where a new worker-training program is being developed, a change after 97 years during which there was only one seminary graduate.

The conference underscored the need for regular exchange of ideas and for progress reports among our world fields in the vital area of pastoral training. Each field will conduct a self-study of its worker training program and report at the next conference, scheduled for 1994.

Conference delegates urged the Board for World Missions to continue the conferences on a more assured basis through a combination of budgeting and special gifts, and expressed thanks for the WELS groups and individuals whose gifts made the gathering possible.

—John Kurth

Lift High the Cross gifts reach \$3.7 million

In his September "Lift High the Cross Update" Pastor Ronald Roth, national director of the offering, reports that as of August 17 the congregational receipts come to over a million dollars. This is with 65 percent of the congregations reporting.

Pastor Lee Vaccarella, special giving counselor, reports that two thirds of a million dollars has been received in commitments and gifts in the Southeastern Wisconsin District. There are still well over 200 calls to be made. In the Western Wisconsin District Special Giving Counselor Paul Soukup continues to receive nominations and now has well over 1000.

Pastor Carl Leyrer, serving as temporary special giving counselor, is completing the nomination process and enlisting the top leadership in the Northern Wisconsin District. In early September Vaccarella began work in the Minnesota District where the nominating and organizing phase is going on.

In the Michigan District, the organizing phase is taking place in August, September, and October.

As of September 4, statistics for the offering look like this: 2848 nominations; gifts and commitments for the gift trust fund are

\$3.4 million; and gifts and commitments for the mission expansion endowment fund are \$261,000.



Then and now—The 1940 confirmation class of Trinity, Neenah, Wis., pictured (top) with Pastor Edmond Reim, had its first reunion in 50 years. Seventeen of the 29 members with their spouses were present. "It was an enjoyable occasion," said Alfrieda Hintz Meiers. "I would encourage other confirmation classes to have reunions."

Arizona-California District news

Mt. Olive, Las Vegas, Nev., celebrated its 15th anniversary June 3. In the fall of 1989 a sister congregation was spun off to form a new mission in Henderson, southeast of Las Vegas. In October of this year Pastor Jerome McWaters began work to establish another congregation on the far west side of Las Vegas. . . . **Apostles, San Jose, Calif.**, celebrated the 25th anniversary in the ministry of their pastor, **Jon Mahnke**, on Sept. 9. . . . **Beautiful Savior, Carlsbad, and St. Stephen, Fallbrook**, joined to celebrate the 50th wedding anniversary of retired **Pastor and Mrs. Sam Kugler** on Oct. 7. . . . **California LHS** moved from Garden Grove to a new site in Huntington Beach,

about 10 miles from Garden Grove. The new site offers a better setting at a lower rental price. **CLHS** began the school year with 58 students and a full staff of teachers. Boarding student accommodations are currently inadequate and a waiting list exists. A buyer has not yet been found for the 54-acre Temecula property.

—*Hermann K. John*

Michigan District news

Mrs. Lilly Gehm, widow of John B. Gehm who taught at Zion in Toledo for 30 years, died July 31 at the age of 88. She is survived by two children, Lois and John; three sisters and a brother; four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. . . . **Michigan LHS, St. Joseph**, welcomes three new teachers: Daniel

Hosbach, Janice Kant, and Andrew Pappenfuss. . . . **Huron Valley LHS, Westland**, is implementing a new program designed to give students increased opportunities for service in their congregations. So that young people may have a better working knowledge of how a congregation carries out its ministries, the seniors will work with the Tallahassee, Fla., mission during spring break. . . . **Michigan Lutheran Seminary** helped the Saginaw Choral Society host the well-known boys choir of Harlem while the choir was in Saginaw Oct. 25. The choir stayed in the MLS dormitory and ate some of their meals in the school's cafeteria. While they were on campus, the choir members visited classes, attended a basketball game, and performed a concert for the MLS student body.

—*James L. Langebartels*

LETTERS

Lutherans in politics

For a long time US Lutherans have been at least as numerous as Presbyterians and Episcopalians combined. But the two aforementioned liberal leaning denominations count far more leading politicians among their flocks even in such Lutheran strongholds such as Wisconsin and Missouri. Has there ever been a US senator or a governor belonging to the WELS?

Whatever reasons might be given for this lack of power, more confessional Lutherans should strive for a senior office in politics. There is hardly any better way to protect freedom, help the poor, and keep society in a stable condition.

Imagine what politicians can do for the unborn children, or what the general introduction of a voucher system in education would mean for our denominational schools and colleges.

*Ulrich Motte
Munich, Germany*

The new liturgy

When the Sampler was first introduced, it was to be used for a trial basis. Many congregations have continued to use the Sampler, but others instead have prepared their own liturgy. I have seen some of them and attended services where they are being used and I find them to be excellent. Perhaps the liturgy committee should look into these before making a final liturgy.

When the hymnal is completed one has to wonder if it will be received with the same negative reception as was the Sampler. If so, will pastors continue to prepare their own liturgy? If so, did we waste time, talent, and money? We hope and pray such will not be the case.

*W.P. John
Battle Creek, Michigan*

Thanks to Sunday school teachers

I was impressed with the enthusiasm, interest, and genuine, concerned communication among the participants at the recent Sunday school convention. We should be thankful for such a faithful force of Sunday school teachers. Though thanks isn't always expressed to them here on earth, their importance in the work of the church and their faithfulness to God's word will be rewarded one day.

*Jason R. Muench
Mishicot, Wisconsin*

Letters between 100 and 200 words are preferred. In the interest of conciseness, letters are subject to editing. Full name, address and daytime 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 53222-4398.

by Paul E. Kelm

I enjoy singing in our community chorus; but I've been told that it may be contrary to Scripture's teaching on church fellowship to sing Handel's Messiah with the community chorus. Is it?

Much of the post-Renaissance art and music that has shaped classical western culture is Christian in nature and origin. With the secularizing of American society that Christian intent to glorify God with the arts has been lost. Typically, the community chorus is not religious in essence or intent. Its purpose is neither to proclaim the Christian gospel nor to express religious unity. It merely performs the great works of choral heritage.

Where this is the case, your participation in a performance of Handel's *Messiah* (or Bach's *Mass in B Minor* for that matter) is not religious unionism—the false fellowship of disparate faiths. Similarly, a confessional Christian is not expressing false religious fellowship when he joins in singing *God Bless America* at a ball game.

For you, of course, singing the *Messiah* is much more than art. You are glorifying God and testifying to his grace. That's the point of 1 Corinthians 10:31, "Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."

The context of that verse provides an appropriate parallel. For some in Corinth, eating meat that had once been dedicated to pagan deities was an offense. For others, it was just meat. Paul was among the latter, who judged correctly that this was no religious compromise or false fellowship. His inspired counsel is that those whose conscience is sensitive on such matters should not violate their conscience by participating (compare Romans 14:14 and 23), but should refrain from passing judgment on those whose mature faith distinguished false fellowship from social interaction. If you are unsure on this issue, don't sing.

The words immediately following 1 Corinthians 10:31 are also instructive. "Do not cause anyone to stumble." If some in your congregation are overly sensitive in this matter (Paul calls them "weak brothers"), Christian love may dictate that you refrain from exercising your Christian freedom to sing until the issue has been studied to biblical conclusion in your midst (read Romans 14). Love submits as long as there is no "tyranny of conscience" imposed by people who've gone beyond sensitivity to extra-biblical legalism.

Finally, if some in the community chorus want to make the singing of the *Messiah* an expression of religious oneness, your confessional response must be to withdraw. Paul describes that situation in verses 27-29 of 1 Corinthians 10.

I have friends who believe in reincarnation. Is it possible to be a Christian and believe in reincarnation?

Reincarnation is a Hindu doctrine which directly contradicts the Bible's teaching about life, death, resurrection, and salvation. Its popularization in America by the New Age Movement is in support of demonic "channeling" and the denial of God's personal existence.

The clearest rejection of reincarnation is Hebrews 9:27, "Man is destined to die once, and after that to face judgment." But it's important to address the faith-denying corollaries of reincarnation as well.

Reincarnation denies the special creation of God that each of us is (cf. Psalm 139), defining us instead as composite products of some mystical evolution. That robs God of his power and us of his promise.

Reincarnation denies the resurrection of the body (cf. John 5:28-29), eliminating any significance to physical identity or accountability. The central truth of Christ's death and resurrection is not-so-subtly negated, as is the Christian hope of a resurrected body patterned after Christ (cf. 1 Corinthians 15).

Scripture speaks clearly of what happens after death. "Then man goes to his eternal home. . . . The dust returns to the ground it came from, and the spirit returns to God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:5-7). In Jesus' account of the rich man and Lazarus (Luke 16:19-31), we're told: "The rich man also died and was buried. In hell, where he was in torment. . . ." Paul expresses the Christian's confidence in the face of death when he says: "I desire to depart and be with Christ" (Philippians 1:23). In 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, the apostle comforts Christians with the assurance that those who have "fallen asleep" in Christ will be raised at his second coming. And Job seems almost to argue against reincarnation specifically when he says of the resurrection: "Yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another" (Job 19:26-27). Every statement of Scripture about life after death is a direct refutation of reincarnation.

Above all, reincarnation denies the gospel of Christ's life and death to save us from sin, for eternal life with him. The notion of returning in subsequent life forms is predicated on some need to pay off "karmic debt"—a purification process of one's own doing over several lifetimes. A million such reincarnations could not atone for sin; and the very idea is a rejection of the sacrifice Christ made, once for all. Humankind's *one* death in Hebrews 9:27 is connected with Christ's *one* death for sin in Hebrews 9:28.

It is not possible to be a Christian and believe in reincarnation.

Paul E. Kelm is director of the synod's spiritual renewal program.

NOTICES

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

SYNOD NOMINATING COMMITTEE

The Synod Nominating Committee will meet at 9:00 a.m. on Jan. 17, 1991, at the synod administration building. The committee is to propose a slate of three candidates for the following offices:

- Executive committees for the Board for World Missions: Apache (pastor); Central Africa (layman); Japan (pastor); Latin America (layman); Southeast Asia (layman).

- Board for Parish Education: two pastors; one elementary school teacher; one layman.

- Northwestern Publishing House Board of Directors: one Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary professor; two laymen.

- Board for Stewardship: one pastor; one layman.
- Board for Youth Ministry: one pastor; one layman.
- Board for Evangelism: one pastor; one layman.
- Special Ministries Board: one pastor; one teacher; one layman.
- Coordinating Council: two laymen.
- Board for Worker Training: one layman.
- Division chairmen (all pastors) for: Home Missions; World Missions; Board of Trustees; Worker Training; Parish Services.

The list of candidates nominated will be published in spring 1991. The synod will elect one of the candidates on each slate at the convention in New Ulm, Minn., Aug. 5-9, 1991.

Any board, committee, or member of synod is invited to suggest nominations for these offices. Please send names with appropriate information by Dec. 31 to Pastor David Worgull, WELS Secretary, 1270 N. Dobson Rd., Chandler, AZ 85224-9217.

ROCHESTER HOSPITAL CHAPLAIN

Pastor LeRoy Lothert is now serving as our chaplain in the Rochester, Minn., hospitals. If you are hospitalized in Rochester, contact him at 208 18th St. SW, Apt. 2, Rochester, MN 55902; 507/288-9097.

ITEMS NEEDED

STATUE OF JESUS, 3-5 feet. Contact Roger Heins, PO Box 108, Sutton, NE 68979; 402/773-5256.

SUBSCRIBER SERVICE

NEW SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL
For new subscription print name and address below. Allow 4 weeks for delivery of first copy. For subscription *renewal* include current mailing label to insure prompt and proper extension.

GIFT SUBSCRIPTION
Print name and address below of recipient and donor. If you wish, we will send a gift card mentioning that this magazine subscription is from you.
Name to be given on gift card:

Make check or money order payable to Northwestern Publishing House.

Recipient of gift

Name (please print) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

If mailing label is not available, print OLD address in this space.

Donor of gift

Name (please print) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

REQUEST FOR NOMINATIONS Martin Luther Preparatory School

Voting members of the synod are invited to submit nominations for a vacant professorship at MLPS. The nominees will form a new list of candidates to replace the present list which is outdated. Teaching responsibilities are in algebra and geometry with coaching duties in football and track.

Nominations and pertinent information should be submitted by Nov. 21 to Mr. John Schultz, Rt. 3 Box 96, Goodhue, MN 55027.

CALL FOR REPLACEMENT AT WLS DECLINED

As indicated in the Northwestern Lutheran (October 15), Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary was authorized to request nominations to replace Prof. Wayne Mueller. The actual extension of a call was subject to review by the Board for Worker Training. Review of the current financial situation prompted the BWT to decline the extension of a call at this time.

REQUEST FOR COLLOQUY

Thomas Frei, Camp Douglas, Wis., a pastor in the Evangelical Free Church, has requested a colloquy for the purpose of enrolling at the seminary and entering the pastoral ministry of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Correspondence relative to the request should be addressed to President Karl R. Gurgel, 306 Madison St., Lake Mills, WI 53551.

VISITORS TO BULLHEAD CITY, ARIZONA

Family of God Lutheran Church (ELS) worships Sundays at 9 a.m. just south of Bullhead City. Sunday school and Bible class are at 10 a.m. Call Pastor Mike Smith, 602/768-3438.

LUTHERAN CHORALE CONCERT

The Lutheran Chorale of Milwaukee will present its annual Prelude to Christmas concert on Dec. 2 at 3:00 and 7:00 at Atonement, 4500 N. Sherman Blvd. The program will include choral and instrumental music. Featured will be Elaine Stindt, harpist; Kurt Eggert, director; and Lynn Kozlowski, accompanist. Free will donation.

CHANGE OF TIME OR PLACE OF WORSHIP

SUMMERVILLE, SOUTH CAROLINA—Beautiful Savior, 720 Old Trolley Rd. Worship 9:30 a.m., Bible class/Sunday school, 10:50 a.m. Pastor Martin Spriggs, 803/873-5522.

Subscription Rates (payable in advance)
 1 year \$8.50 2 year \$17.00 3 year \$22.50
Save by subscribing for 2 or 3 years.
Please write for foreign rates.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS
Allow 4 weeks for change. Attach current mailing label and enter your new address below.

QUESTION OR INQUIRY
Include your mailing label when writing to us about your subscription.

Mail to: **THE NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN**
c/o Northwestern Publishing House
P.O. Box 26975
Milwaukee, WI 53226-0975
Phone 414/ 475-6600

CHANGES IN MINISTRY

PASTORS:

Cooper, David R., from Shepherd of the Palms, Jupiter, Fla., to Christ the Lord, Clearwater, Fla.
Ehlert, Ronald J., from Our Redeemer, Madison, Wis., to The Lutheran Home, River Falls, Wis.
Kuster, Thomas A., from Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., to Bethany Lutheran College and Seminary, Mankato, Minn.
Schuppe, Edward P., from Good Shepherd, Jacksonville, Fla., to Sola Fide, Lawrenceville, Ga.
Stern, Paul H., from Bethlehem, Oshkosh, Wis., to St. John, Sturgis, Mich.
Zimdars, Ernest H., from Christ, Lodi, Calif., to missionary to Mexico.

ADDRESSES

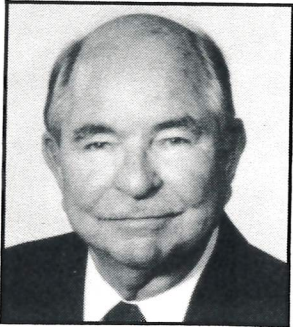
PASTORS:

Balge, Jonathan R., 524 W. Stewart St., Owosso, MI 48867; 517/725-9227
Bauer, Timothy W., 281 N. Lake St., PO Box 392, Hustisford, WI 53034; 414/349-3046
Cordes, Chris A., 336 Bentley Pl., Buffalo Grove, IL 60089
Dunham, James A., 906 W. Second St. #105; Cle Elum, WA 98922; 509/674-4156
Ellwein, Henry, em., 401 Clemmens Lane Apt. U, Fallbrook, CA 92028
Feuerstahler, Michael T., 2700 70 St. E., Inver Grove Heights, MN 55075; 612/451-3637
Ibisch, Paul A., 111 Grant Rd., Marquette Hts., IL 61554; 309/382-2670
Kuehl, David M., S66 W14055 Janesville Rd., Muskego, WI 53150; 414/427-0635
Lindquist, Daniel L., 1032 Leith St., Maumee, OH 43537; 419/893-9328
Lothert, LeRoy H., 208 18 St. SW #2, Rochester, MN 55902; 507/288-9097
Mueller, Wayne D., S26 W 26940 MacArthur Rd., Waukesha, WI 53188; 414/542-4440
Schulz, Gregory P., 3865 Fiebrantz Dr., Brookfield, WI 53005; 414/781-1066
Schwanke, Larry R., 1551 Sandy Lane, Aurora, IL 60506; 708/859-1642
Siverly, Keith H., 120 S. Fifth St., Sebawaing, MI 48759; 517/883-2062
Spaude, Joel R., Box 511180, Chipata, Zambia, Africa; 011/260-62-21753
Strobel, Nathan J., 206 S. Mountain St., Bay City, MI 48706; 517/684-2478
Sullivan, John J., Zur alten Schmiede 8, 6239 Eppstein/Vockenhausen, Germany; 011-49-6198-9447
Tackmier, Bill J., 705 S. Washington St., Owosso, MI 48867; 517/723-7563
Witte, David A., 305 Oakbrook Ct., Bartlett, IL 60103

TEACHERS:

Bakken, James A., 1121 N. Washington St., St. Peter, MN 56082; 507/931-9190
Biedenbender, Steven W., 1103 87 Ave. #6, Kenosha, WI 53144; 414/859-3136
Bruss, Amy R., 4645 N. 79 St., Milwaukee, WI 53218; 414/464-3048
Hosbach, Daniel J., 2260 W. John Beers Rd., Stevensville, MI 49127; 616/429-6130
Janke, Steven J., 1464 Blossom Lane, St. Paul Park, MN 55071; 612/458-8888
Keibel, John A., 4344 Carmelo Dr. #102, Annandale, VA 22003; 703/914-0116
Lemke, Carl M., 8825 Ravenswood Circle, Wauwatosa, WI 53226; 414/453-8113
Lindemann, Jonathan B., 253 S. Ridge St. #5, PO Box 205, Hustisford, WI 53034; 414/349-3813
Marquardt, Dale M., 509 Highview Dr., Slinger, WI 53086; 414/644-6751
Pappenfuss, Andrew J., 2175 W. John Beers Rd., Stevensville, MI 49127; 616/429-5720
Plamann, William K., 6310 N. Joyce Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53225; 414/353-4893
Siegler, Richard R., 3288 73 St. E., Inver Grove Heights, MN 55076; 612/457-0755
West, Gregory S., 3029A S. Ninth Pl., Milwaukee, WI 53215; 414/482-4807

ATTACH LABEL HERE



This column is dedicated to an Anonymous Christian, of which there are so many. Christians, unheralded, who go about living their Christianity quietly. As deeds go, her deed was a small one, but not the consequences, related 15 years later. It makes a touching story.

The incident is an excerpt from an ethnographic interview scheduled for publication this fall in the *WELS Historical Institute Journal*. An ethnographic interview, between representatives of different cultures, is designed to anecdotally expose similar and different features of the two cultures. The interview was conducted recently by Pastor E. Allen Sorum of Garden Homes, Milwaukee, with Mr. Tommy Burress, an African-American and longtime member of Garden Homes.

Mr. Burress refers to the time he attended his first service at Garden Homes. "We were scared to death," Mr. Burress remembers. "We were always a beat behind everybody else. They would be sitting, and we would be standing. I remember talking to my wife and saying that the most frightening thing in the Lutheran church was that everybody was sitting in the pew as though they were mummies. They would not look to the right; they would not look to the left. . . .

"The message was good, but I was not at ease because of all these—I guess—self-imposed restrictions that I thought were the way you had to be in that church."

But Mr. Burress is no quitter. He found, as he calls it, "an escape hatch"—the church's balcony. (In so doing, Mr. Burress did not know he was joining a host of Lutherans who also have fled to the balcony for not unrelated reasons.) In the balcony "they were friendly, they spoke, they would look around and talk to you."

And there he discovered our Anonymous Christian. "I'm ashamed because I don't remember this lady's name, but I will always remember that this lady, this white lady, saw I was struggling with the program, and she took me by the hand that Sunday morning and made sure that I knew everything that was going on. Every time I was supposed to stand, why I was supposed to stand: she explained it all. I think she missed the whole service explaining to me what was going on."

Now listen, fifteen years later, to Mr. Burress' commentary on that act of kindness. "She made a difference in my attitude toward the whole church because she took the time just one Sunday to look and see that I was having trouble. So she took and she helped me through that and gave me warmth, some friendliness, that has stayed with me ever since I have been a member of Garden Homes." She made a difference!

"And Jesus said, 'Go, and do thou likewise.'"

James P. Schaefer

It's time to grow up

*I don't wanna grow up.
Sorry, God, you'll have to wait. Come and see me later
Like in 1998.*

by Gregory D. Gibbons

A couple of weeks ago I picked up a videotape of Peter Pan for my children to watch. My 3-year-old really enjoys it. She walks around the house singing "I don't wanna grow up."

Unfortunately, many of us seem to settle for Peter Pan performance, especially when our churches get into stewardship programs and budgeting for the coming year. We're satisfied with the way things are. We don't want to change. We don't want to do more than the bare minimum in our spiritual lives. If we were to sing the song from Peter Pan, it might go something like this. Feel free to sing along:

I don't wanna grow up.
I don't wanna give my time.
I don't wanna give my service.
I don't wanna give a dime.

I don't wanna grow up.
I don't care how much you preach.
I know everything already.
I don't wanna hear you teach.

I don't wanna grow up.
Once a month is good for me.
I am really much too busy
To commit to family.

I don't wanna grow up.
Sorry, God, you'll have to wait.
Come and see me sometime later
Like in 1998.

We may well be satisfied with a Peter Pan performance, but our Lord deserves much better.

The Scriptures talk about growing up. Peter tells us, "Grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (2 Peter 3:18). Again he

says, "Like newborn babies, crave pure spiritual milk, so that by it you may grow up in your salvation" (1 Peter 2:2).

We need to grow up as congregations. What are our priorities? What proportion of our offerings are we using for reaching the unchurched? Sad to say, many of our congregations give less than five percent of their total offerings for gospel outreach. Where is your congregation? Paul says, "Our hope is that, as your faith continues to grow, our area of activity among you will greatly expand, so that we can preach the gospel in the regions beyond you" (2 Corinthians 10:15,16).

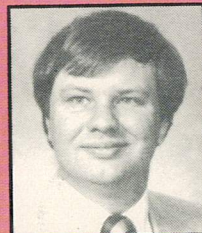
Think of the open doors God is placing before us as a synod. The Berlin wall has come down. People are free to travel. There are even opportunities in the Soviet Union. Do we want to grow up?

We need to grow up personally. We need to study God's word in Bible classes and on our own. We all have responsibilities God has given to us. God tells me to be a faithful husband, a loving father. He tells me to be a good friend and a caring pastor. As God's redeemed people we want to do his will.

We are all part of the body of Christ, and we need to "no longer be infants. . . . Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ" (Ephesians 4:14,15).

Our Lord Jesus was never satisfied with bare minimums. To buy us back from sin, death, and Satan, he gave everything he had. On the cross of Calvary he stretched out his arms and died.

How do we respond? With Peter Pan performance? Maybe it's time to grow up. With God's help we will.



Greg Gibbons is pastor of Mt. Zion, Kenosha, Wis.