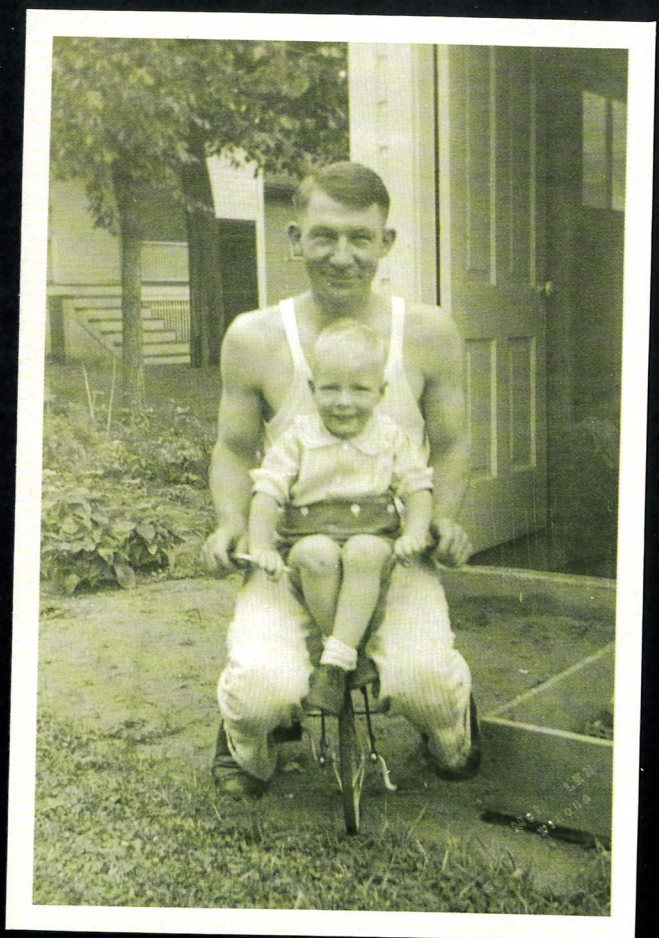


June 15, 1991

the Northwestern Lutheran



Thanks again, Dad
PAGE 224

This is not our permanent address

by Richard D. Balge

Now we know that if the earthly tent we live in is destroyed, we have a building from God, an eternal house in heaven, not built by human hands. Meanwhile we groan, longing to be clothed with our heavenly dwelling. . . . Now it is God who has made us for this very purpose and has given us the Spirit as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come. . . . We live by faith, not by sight. . . . So we make it our goal to please him, whether we are at home, in the body, or away from it (2 Corinthians 5:1,2,5,7,9).

There was a tent-making poet named Omar Khayyam who wrote, "We'll take the cash and let the credit go." Life is short, eternity is long, we ought to enjoy life to the full because we don't know what eternity will bring.

There was a tent-making apostle named Paul. He used the imagery of tents to express the truth that we are temporary residents on this earth, people on our way to heaven.

We have an eternal house in heaven

It doesn't really matter what happens to this "earthly tent," the temporary dwelling in which we live now. God has something better in store for us. Our Savior has bought that eternal house by living and dying for us. He is risen and prepares a place for us there. He has given us clear title.

What we have now is imperfect, rude, temporary — this earthly life. What God has in store for us is perfect, finished, permanent — eternal life.

We look forward to living there

We try to do what is pleasing to God and so often



fail. We want to be loving to those around us, and we so often say hateful things instead. We want to be witnesses to the Lord who bought us, and we are so often tongue-tied. We are frustrated in our work. Friends and loved ones die, plans go awry, we get sick.

All of that reminds us this is not our permanent address. That does not mean we are looking for a way out, that we never enjoy life on this earth, that life is nothing but "groaning." It means when we enjoy life we also remember there is more to come, that when life is not much fun, we do not grow bitter or despair.

We can be sure of getting there

Not only has God prepared a place for us; he has also prepared us for that place. In and through the gospel he has given us his Spirit to make sure we get there. In and through the gospel the Spirit has given us faith to trust the Savior and hope in the eternal inheritance. He has given us these so that he does not lose us whom Christ has redeemed and so that we do not lose that eternal house he is preparing for us.

Meanwhile, "We live by faith, not by sight." Now we believe it. Then we will see it. Now we say, "It is written and God does not lie." Then we will say, "Here we are; God did not lie." So we make it our goal to please him.



Richard Balge is dean of students and teaches church history and homiletics at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin.

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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FEATURES

Thanks again, Dad by Arlyn W. Boll	224
MUCH FRUIT	
Don't be stupid by Thomas H. Schnick	226
The touch of death by Ramona Czer	227
Running the race by Angie Hafemeister	228
Words I have trouble saying by Dorothy J. Sonntag	229
Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary graduates	230
Self-pity is a lonesome stretch by Eric S. Hartzell	240

NEWS

Spanning the generations • 25 years of broadcasting • Lutheran Brotherhood challenge grant program • Committee on Relief reports grants • Nebraska District news • The Bible in 365 readings	233
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DEPARTMENTS

A THOUGHT FOR TODAY	
This is not our permanent address by Richard D. Balge	222
PARABLES OF THE KINGDOM	
The sower by Mark E. Braun	235
EDITORIAL COMMENT	
About being a father by Victor H. Prange	236
I WOULD LIKE TO KNOW by Paul E. Kelm.....	237
FROM THIS CORNER by the editor	239

FORWARD

■ With this issue we say "Thanks, Dad." Arlyn Boll (who's on the cover — in his younger years — with his father, Irwin) says to his father: "I remember you as a model Christian gentleman, attending church regularly, supporting many programs with your offerings, volunteering your help at church and school. . . ." Ramona Czer writes on page 227, "Dad, you showed us so much about what our priorities should be. You loved your Lord in a quiet, daily way." And in "Running the race" Angie Hafemeister says her father/coach, who urged her to fin-

ish every race, taught her to run the most important race: the race of Christian faith. "And the finish line," she says, "is eternal life with my Savior." Finally, Victor Prange reminds us in his editorial, "since it's Father's Day, we do well to contemplate what a blessing it is that we have been fathered." And a blessing it is. To all fathers — and those grandfathers, uncles, brothers, friends, and teachers who have taken on the role of fathers — happy Father's Day, and thanks.

DJS



Thanks again, Dad

by Arlyn W. Boll

For some time I've wanted to share my thoughts with you. There are a few things I want you to know, so I'll try to find the right words to tell you what they are.

As a child I don't think I really appreciated your importance in our family. Though you lived in the same house, ate meals at the same table, and were available for important discipline times, you were a somewhat distant



Arlyn Boll is held by his dad, Irwin.

figure. So much of my sister's and my childhood was in Mom's capable hands.

I knew you worked hard every day, because about 5:30 each afternoon you'd appear, tired and dirty, ready to get cleaned up for a big supper. Only as I grew older did I understand that our family's existence was made possible by your work on people's furnaces.

During the last years of the 1930s depression and through the anxious days of World War II, our family was always provided for. At the time this didn't mean too much, but adult perspective places it into a new light.

Dad, while you weren't always around, your influence was felt. Not until I became a father myself did I

really begin to understand. By then you were close to retirement, your work had become easier, and we had more time to talk and get to know one another better. Even then, there was so much that remained unsaid.

Thanks, Dad, for building our house in 1936 just five blocks from the Lutheran school and church. Now I know that you wanted both church and school within easy walking distance so Christian education and regular worship would be a vital part of our lives.

Thanks, too, for those years when you were away from home in the evenings to be at a school board or church council meeting. I now realize how much you cared about serving the Lord. Today my sister and I still follow your example of involvement in church activities.

When I chose to study for the teaching ministry, you gave encouragement and support. Through 19 years of my ministry you were there in ways too subtle to realize at the time, providing cheerfulness when I was feeling down, handing me a few extra dollars of your savings so my family could pay its bills. I remember you then as a model Christian gentleman, attending church regularly, supporting many programs with your offerings, volunteering your help at church and school, and just being a good guy.

Dad, in your later years, and mine, I learned much about a father. I learned to appreciate you in ways I couldn't have begun to understand as a child.

Some of your influences were not sensed when they occurred. Working with my hands, understanding mechanics, being able to do lots of work around the house, loving to putter with almost anything, and a joy with life itself are all part of your legacy to me. Often when I'm working on a project, you are in my thoughts.

It's been 15 years, and I still miss you. Yes, I realize you are enjoying God's eternal reward, that the Savior you taught me to love now holds you close to himself.

Thanks again, Dad, for all that you were. Because of you and Mom, I know the day will come when we'll have an eternity to enjoy each other in the presence of our Lord Jesus.

Oh yes, Dad, I'd like to say once more that I love you very much.



Arlyn Boll is marketing coordinator at Bethesda Lutheran Home, Watertown, Wisconsin.

Don't be stupid

by Thomas H. Schnick

“He, O men, is the wisest, who, like Socrates, knows that his wisdom is in truth worth nothing” (Plato’s *Apology*).

When Socrates was on trial for his life, he explained to the people of Athens that the crowd hated him. They hated him because of his unique method for finding Athen’s wisest man. Socrates searched for a person who was wiser than he was. His method was to go around talking to individuals.

So Socrates would come upon a man, whose name was — let’s say — Bruno. When he began to talk to Bruno, Socrates could not help thinking Bruno was not really very wise, although many thought he was wise, and Bruno himself thought he was wiser still.

When Socrates tried to explain that Bruno thought himself wise but was not really wise, Bruno hated Socrates. And all Bruno’s friends hated Socrates. This is how Socrates, in search of wisdom, made a city full of enemies.

It is quite possible that Socrates’ method of seeking wisdom was entirely wrong. Dead wrong. Instead of cultivating wisdom, Socrates would have been better off if he had concentrated on what makes people stupid and how to eliminate it. This is a novel method for philosophers, but they could borrow it from the professions. Think about it.

Medical doctors are people who deal with wellness, right? Not exactly. Doctors concentrate on the elimination of illness. Their procedures, their instruments, their methods are all focused on sickness. Doctors diagnose sickness, and make people well. They are sickness experts.

The same could be said of lawyers. Whether a prosecuting or defense attorney, lawyers are not primarily concerned about wisdom, or justice, or good citizenship. They are troubled by injustice, violence,



The fruit of wisdom

and, in general, bad citizenship. They study crime and fraud, not beneficence and philanthropy.

Why couldn’t the philosophers have taken a lesson from the professions? Instead of studying what makes someone wise — a person of knowledge — perhaps they should have investigated stupidity.

The apostle Paul has words to say about stupid behavior and proposes a remedy for stupidity in 1 Corinthians 1-4. Paul denounces the world’s wisdom as stupidity before

God. Humankind’s ways of seeking wisdom are futile and fruitless in God’s sight. Instead, God has prepared the ultimate wisdom for people to understand. Paul’s wisdom — God’s wisdom, really — is Christ crucified, the power and wisdom of God for all who believe. “For it is written: ‘I will destroy the wisdom of the wise; the intelligence of the intelligent I will frustrate.’ For the foolishness of God is wiser than man’s wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man’s strength” (1 Corinthians 1:19-21; 25).

Yes, the writer of Proverbs is right. “He who trusts in himself is a fool, but he who walks in wisdom is kept safe” (28:26). “Know also that wisdom is sweet to your soul; if you find it, there is a future hope for you, and your hope will not be cut off” (24:14).

The Biblical point of view is that wisdom comes from God. “If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him” (James 1:5). Don’t be stupid, then. Walk with Christ crucified, the power and wisdom of God. Sit with him, talk to him, and be blessed.

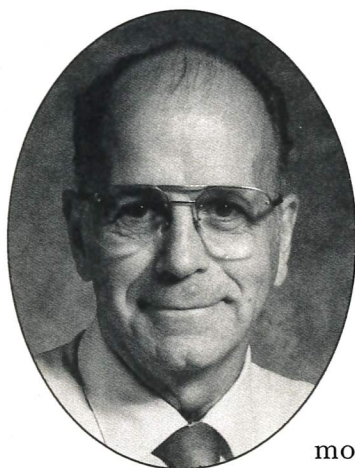


Thomas Schnick is pastor at Wisconsin Lutheran Chapel and Student Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. This series is adapted from a series of sermons delivered at the chapel.

We like to believe we will never die

The touch of death

by Ramona Czer



Richard B. Owens, the author's dad

For the first time, death has touched my intimate circle — real death. Not the kind that haunts other people's dreams, that snatches away their loved ones. That death is a distant cousin to this death that has invaded our family.

Where is my father? Just last month I got a letter about sewer problems and such. He told about having to carry buckets and buckets of water up the basement stairs because the plumber couldn't get there until after the weekend. Of course he didn't let Mom help, because she shouldn't have to do such things. He'd also sent along a puzzle for me to enjoy. He's always thinking up ways to amuse and teach me after all these years, I remember thinking.

Now I look up at the stars and wonder if they smile and groan at his jokes. Where is he? Where is this heaven he inhabits, which I believe in but can't comprehend?

As we watch the casket go into the ground, I feel almost nothing. That isn't my father in there. It's just some mannequin dressed up in Dad's new suit (bought only last month). I make myself touch his cheek — that soft, talcum-smelling skin crinkled from years of smiling — and I shudder at the plastic feel of it. That's not something God-made anymore; it's chemicals and funeral-parlor artistry. It is not my dad. When he left, he took the essence of his body with him.

My mind understands this, but my heart yearns to talk to him again. I wish I could share musings, jokes, and puzzles. He loved God's world so much and was intensely curious. Are you exploring paradise right now, Dad, binoculars in hand?

I've been telling people about his death. "Did you know he was only 60, he wasn't a pound overweight, and he played racquetball twice a week?" They pale. They glance down, as if they don't want to hear anymore. Of course we don't want to hear it. We want to believe we will not die, at least not soon, surely not until age 80 or until we have lived richly and accomplished many glorious things for God.

I keep telling them, even when they don't want to hear, because we must admit our days are numbered. We must begin to look at each day differently, hold our children more tenderly, teach them more diligently about God's ways. We must treat our spouses and our friends as if tomorrow they may pass beyond. We must reach out to people as if we have very little time left to make a difference.

Each day I speak of it to fewer people. But I hope I never forget. I hope I remember all this is temporary. I will not wait to seek first the important things, to speak to others of my Father's plans, to be his witness who is only passing through this world.

Dad, you showed us so much about what our priorities should be. You loved your Lord in a quiet, daily way that meant you were never afraid to be honest or helpful even when it wasn't comfortable or convenient. I remember. I'm trying to live like that, too.

So, Lord, keep me following in the steps of both of my fathers, my dear earthly one and you, my dearer eternal one. Take my hand and help me learn daily how to live for you, and how to neither fear death nor ignore it. Death is coming for me, too, but with you as my guide, we will walk together to that far shore, where there is weeping no more.



Ramona Czer is a member of Timothy, St. Louis Park, Minn. This article is an excerpt from *The Tablet of My Heart*, to be published in August by Northwestern Publishing House. See ad on page 238.

Running the race

by Angie Hafemeister

My dad was always my coach. I'd prepare for cross country meets, and he'd always be there to encourage me. Maybe he didn't know a lot about the mechanics of running, but he sure knew a lot about attitude.

I remember once before a race, one which was to be the longest distance I ever attempted, he sat me down and said, "Kiddo, I want you to look at these results from last year's races." He proceeded to point out the various times of the top runners and the training relative to their results.

"There's something I want you to notice in particular," he said. "Some of these runners don't even have times behind their names. They have the letters DNF. Do you see that? It means 'Did Not Finish.' You don't want those letters behind your name, do ya, Kiddo?"

And so Dad pushed, and pushed, and his fears of my not finishing the race and having my name associated with the letters DNF became my fears. Sometimes I smile even today as I recall Dad's voice pushing his "kiddo" to success.

My years of running cross country are behind me, but I am still running a kind of race. Now in college I am struggling to keep the Christian values of my home life in proper focus ahead of me.

My parents call to ask me if I made it to church on Sunday, or how I dealt with that evolutionist teaching in Geology 101. Sometimes I wince when I hear their voices on the other end of the line, checking that I'm taking care of myself.

But you see, there is a more important race they want me to finish — a finish line more important than one on a paved track. It's the race of Christian faith. And the finish line is eternal life with my Savior, the ultimate example of a winner.

My parents know they can't judge me. They cannot see into my heart, or be sure I'm feeding my faith the proper diet and exercising it. For sure they cannot run the race for me, but they do have the



hope of seeing me at the finish line. There my running time will not be important, so long as the letters DNF do not appear behind my name.

I know that is all they desire for me — to finish. I am grateful for my parents, who love me enough to encourage me to finish the race and receive the best crown an athlete can win — the crown of life.



Angie Hafemeister is a member of Bethany, Hustisford, Wisconsin, and a student at Marquette University, Milwaukee.

I was wrong

I'm sorry

Thank you

You did a good job

I love you

Words I have trouble saying

by Dorothy J. Sonntag

Antidisestablishmentarianism. Among the kids on our block, being able to pronounce that word was a status symbol. Some authority had decreed it was the longest word in the dictionary. I practiced saying the word until it rolled off my tongue. I had no idea what it meant (I'm still not sure) and never used it except for smugly announcing I knew how to say it.

I've learned some other tongue twisters since then, mostly scholarly jargon from college textbooks, so I now possess a whole vocabulary of multi-syllabic words which I can easily pronounce but never use in conversation.

I have trouble saying some other words, however, and not because they're lengthy or difficult. They just get stuck in my throat. Let me tell you some of them.

Right at the top of the list are "I was wrong." It's tough to get those words out. Admitting guilt is hard to do. I can pronounce "antidisestablishmentarianism" faster than I can say "I was wrong."

"I'm sorry" is another troublesome phrase. I can't say it without adding "but." "But I couldn't. . . . But you didn't. . . . But you always. . . ." Just plain "I'm sorry" with no excuses — I have trouble with that short phrase.

I have problems, too, saying "thank you." The words aren't so hard to get out, but I don't bother with them. Why thank someone for what he or she is

supposed to do? And I'm quicker to voice appreciation to a stranger than to my own family. I'll thank a waitress who fills my water glass in a restaurant, but not my husband who pours me a cup of coffee at home.

"You did a good job" is another thing I rarely say. I'm quick enough to complain when something doesn't meet my standards, but I'm slow to offer a compliment for a job well done. I'll criticize my daughter's messy bedroom, but the best I can tell her when it's clean is, "It's about time."

I don't praise colleagues at work often enough, either. And when was the last time I told the pastor I appreciated his sermon, or complimented the organist or choir director?

Finally, the words I don't say nearly often enough are "I love you." After all, my family knows I love them. I don't have to tell them. And I'd be embarrassed to talk about love to my friends.

Being able to say "antidisestablishmentarianism" never served much purpose. But practicing those other words would do a world of good. Maybe it's time to improve my vocabulary.



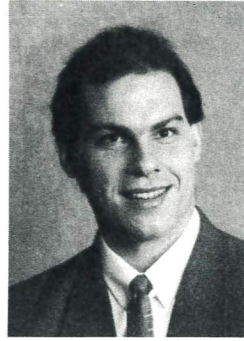
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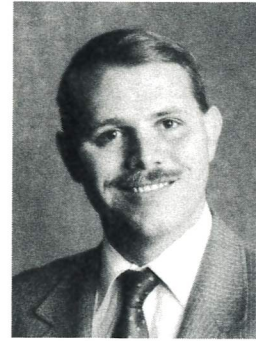
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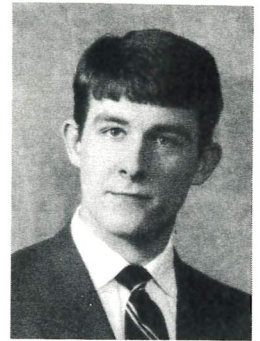
At the seminary graduation service on May 31, forty-three graduates received their Master of Divinity degrees. Call assignments will appear in the July issue.



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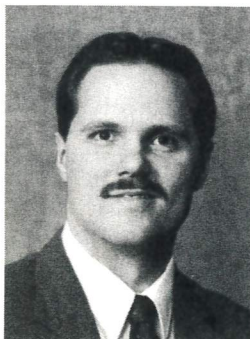
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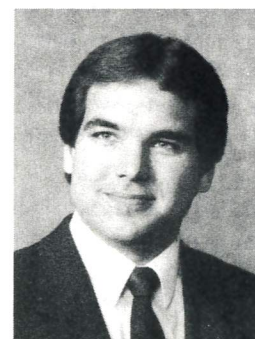
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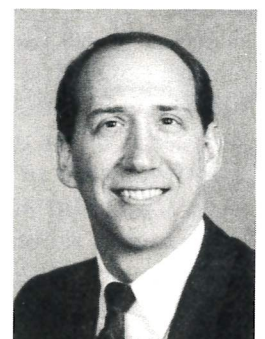
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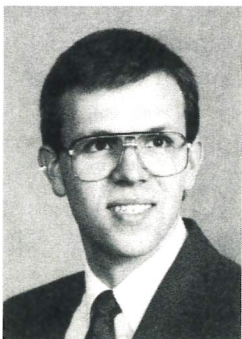
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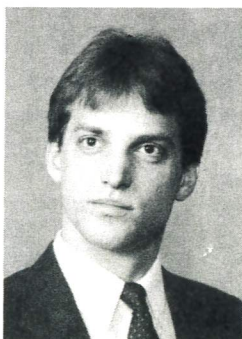
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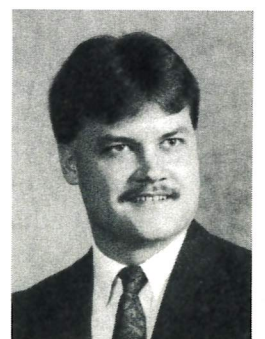
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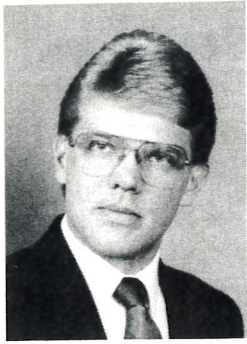
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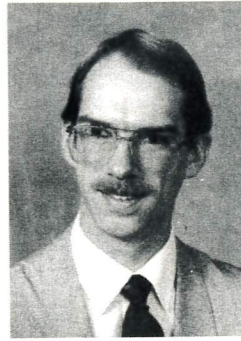
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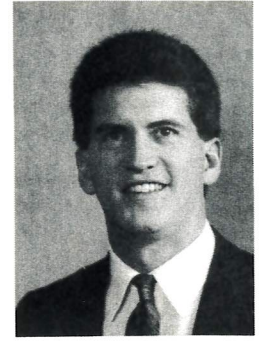
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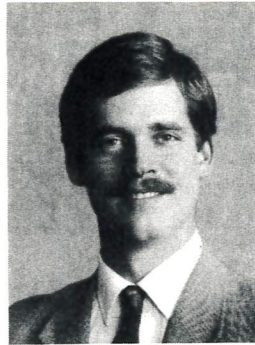
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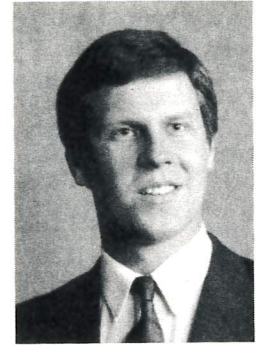
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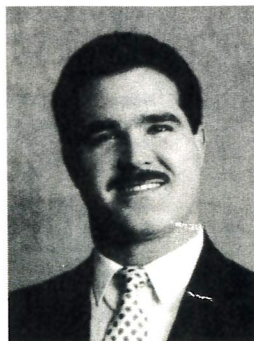
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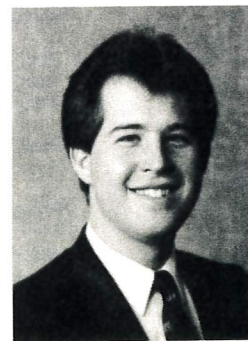
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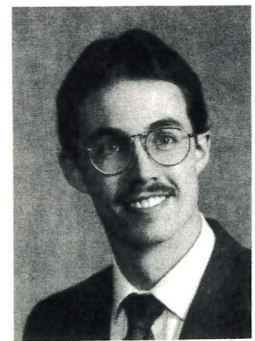
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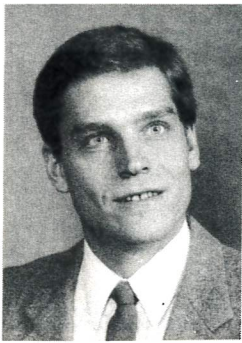
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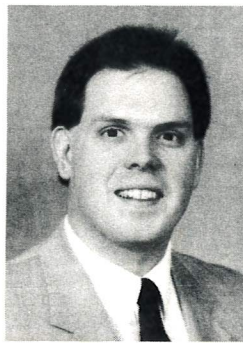
John A. Vieths
Rochester, Minn.



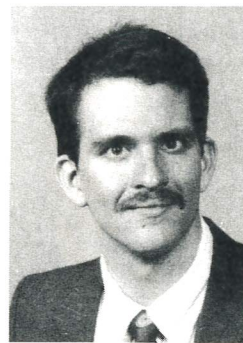
Paul D. Voss
Libertyville, Ill.



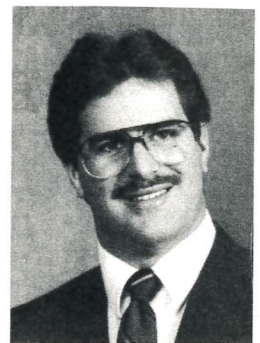
Martin R. Weigand
Milwaukee, Wis.



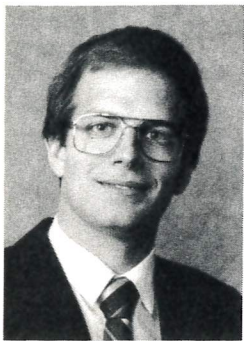
Keith C. Wessel
New Ulm, Minn.



David D. Wierschke
Green Bay, Wis.



James H. Winterstein
Monroe, Wis.



Bradley P. Wright
Manistee, Wis.



Michael J. Zuberbier
Milwaukee, Wis.

Seminary graduates in Africa

This spring at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary's sister seminary in Chelston (Lusaka), Zambia, 10 students were graduated to serve in the Lutheran Church of Central Africa. We wish them God's richest blessings in their ministry as servants of our Lord Jesus Christ:

Ackim E. Daile
Kamangadazi Village
Mzimba, Malawi

H. B. Katambo
Ngolowindo Village
Salima, Malawi

S. M. Kawiliza
Lusaka, Zambia

B. B. Linwonde
Kambalame Village
Chiradzulu, Malawi

J. L. Meja
Khanyepa Village
Chiradzulu, Malawi

G. K. Moyo
Mulimba Village
Mumbwa, Zambia

**N. J. Chimombo
Phiri**
Magalasi Village
Zomba, Malawi

J. C. Shakauma
Shinjanji Village
Mumbwa, Zambia

L. R. Wowa
Chimunyama Village
Mzimba, Malawi

P. N. Zombe
Mkwaila Village
Salima, Malawi

Assignments of previous graduates

1990 graduates

James A. Dunham, Cle Elum, Wash.
Good Faith, South Cle Elum, Wash.

Paul J. Lidtke, Saginaw, Mich.
Our Savior, Freeport, Ill.

Marc A. Von Deylen, Garden Grove, Cal.
Assistant, King of Kings, Garden Grove, Cal.

1989 graduates

David C. Maertz, Prairie du Chien, Wis.
Faith, Reedsburg, Wis.

Timothy J. Satorius, Waco, Neb.
Latin American Missions, Puerto Rico

Ross A. Steljes, Watertown, Wis.
Zion, Hokah, Minn.
Immanuel, La Crescent, Minn.

Peter L. Unnasch, New Ulm, Minn.
Exploratory, Ogden, Utah

Reassigned for one year to their present call

John C. Boeder
Tutor, Martin Luther Preparatory School
Prairie du Chien, Wis.

Kenneth A. Brokmeier
Recruiter, Martin Luther Preparatory School
Prairie du Chien, Wis.

James C. Danell Jr.
Graduate Assistant to the President
of the Northern Wisconsin District
Green Bay, Wis.

Daniel E. Haag
Shared time/continued, St. Peter, Globe, Ariz.

Paul A. Hirsch
Tutor, Northwestern Preparatory School
Watertown, Wis.

Paul E. Koelpin
Tutor, Northwestern College, Watertown, Wis.

Philip D. Malchow
Tutor, Northwestern Preparatory School
Watertown, Wis.

Michael J. Quandt
Instructor, West Lutheran High School
Hopkins, Minn.

Duane A. Rodewald
Acting Dean, Michigan Lutheran Seminary
Saginaw, Mich.

William M. Sebald
Tutor, Michigan Lutheran Seminary
Saginaw, Mich.

Snowden G. Sims
Acting Dean, Northwestern Preparatory School
Watertown, Wis.

Bill J. Tackmier
Graduate Assistant to the President
of the Michigan District
Owosso, Mich.

Mark S. Voss
Graduate Assistant to the President
of the Southeastern Wisconsin District
Milwaukee, Wis.

Richard A. Waldschmidt
Graduate Assistant to the President
of the Western Wisconsin District
Lake Mills, Wis.

William W. Werth
Graduate Assistant to the President
of the Minnesota District
Litchfield, Minn.

Matthew F. Wobeck
Assistant Pastor, Antigua, West Indies

Spanning the generations

It was a moving moment back in 1951 when a young pastor, Norman W. Berg of Redeemer, Tucson, Ariz., baptized 84-year-old Grandpa Weinstein, son of a Jewish rabbi in Czechoslovakia.

Grandpa Weinstein had married a German Lutheran woman many years before, but had retained his Jewish faith. He retired, a widower, and left Cleveland to live with his son, Walter, a member of Redeemer.

He soon got involved with the new pastor at his son's church, lent a hand with the building of a new church, and agreed to enter an adult membership class. Subsequently he was baptized and confirmed in the Lutheran church.

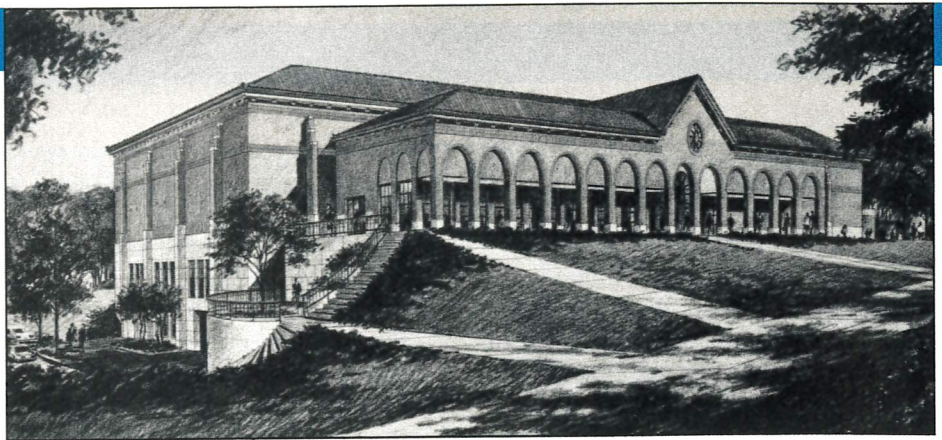
Pastor Berg accepted a call back to the midwest and learned later that Grandpa Weinstein had been killed at the age of 92 while stepping off a bus returning home from work in downtown Tucson.

The scene shifts again. Pastor Berg, now retired, is serving as interim pastor at King of Kings, Kennewick, Wash.

He called on a shut-in of the congregation, Dorothy Ruff. As they got acquainted, it suddenly dawned on her that she was speaking with the pastor who confirmed her, Dorothy Weinstein, back in Tucson, and that she had served as baby-sitter for the Berg children.

During the interim pastorate, Dorothy's son, Andy, and his wife had a son, Nicholas, who was baptized on Easter Sunday by Pastor Berg shortly before he returned to his home in Milwaukee.

And so it happened that a great-great-grandfather and a great-great-grandson were baptized by the same pastor, Norman W. Berg, 71.



Ground was broken May 17 for a new recreation center on the campus of Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee. It is a three-level building. The lower level will be used for underground parking. The middle level will house several fitness rooms, lockers, meeting and classrooms, and a large conference room. The upper level—ground level—will house three full size basketball courts and a large front lobby suitable for receptions. If there are no hitches, estimated construction time is one year for the \$5.5 million building including site improvements.

25 years of broadcasting

On February 24 "The Lutheran Chapel of the Air" celebrated its 25th year of broadcasting. The first broadcast was aired on February 27, 1966, the result of six months of planning by 13 congregations of the Jefferson County area and Lake Mills Lutheran High School.

The purpose of the program was to provide worship services for the sick and shut-ins and to reach out to the unchurched of the area. The Sunday message is provided by one of the pastors from the association member congregations or from Lakeside Lutheran High School.

The service is recorded at the Lakeside Lutheran High School's recording studio. Teacher James Wade, who is music director and teacher at the high school, serves as liturgist and recording coordinator. Wade also directs the musical

portion of the service using the high school choir, local area choirs, and recorded music from the synod's two colleges and seminary.

Cost of the program is carried by local area congregations and by gifts from individuals. Present association members are St. John, Ixonia; St. John, Cold Spring; St. James, Cambridge; St. Paul and Bethany, Fort Atkinson; St. John, Whitewater; St. John, Jefferson; St. Peter, Helenville; Immanuel, Farmington; Christus, Richmond; St. John, Newville; Immanuel, Deerfield; St. John, Milton; St. Paul, Lake Mills; and Lakeside Lutheran High School.

Mrs. Sharon Yanggen is in charge of publicity and handles the typing, and the high school is responsible for the printing.

Lutheran Brotherhood challenge grant program

Lutheran Brotherhood has announced a challenge grant program through which \$13.4 million will be provided to 49 Lutheran colleges, universities, and Bible schools in amounts ranging from \$5,200 to \$800,000, to support the institutions' long-term capital or endowment needs.

At a recent meeting of the

synod's Board for Worker Training, the board encouraged Northwestern College and Dr. Martin Luther College "to proceed with utilizing such matching gifts, since these would fall within existing guidelines." Also benefiting from the challenge grant program will be Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee.

Committee on Relief reports grants

In the past few months the relief committee has made a number of emergency grants. Among them are a \$10,000 grant to aid families in the floods of the state of Washington and \$15,000 to aid victims of a devastating tornado in Plainfield, Ill. (last year).

Overseas a grant of \$25,000 was sent to our confessional church in former East Germany to aid

them in this difficult economic adjustment period. A nurses' station and an orphanage in India, damaged by a cyclone, were reconstructed with a grant of \$25,000. To earthquake victims in the Philippines a grant of \$10,000 was made. Refugees from Kuwait received \$10,000. A grant of \$7,000 went to African hunger relief and \$4,700 of aid to our

world mission stations.

These gifts were made possible by the continued support of the WELS members, since all funds of the relief committee come from gifts, not from the budget.

Gifts may be sent to the WELS Administration Building or to Pastor Kenneth W. Strack, 308 N. Maumee St., Tecumseh, MI 49286.

Nebraska District news

Travel/Canvass/Witness teams were active this past spring in Lee's Summit, Mo.; Norton, Kan.; Thornton, Col.; Cheyenne, Wyo.; and Salt Lake City, Utah. The teams visited several thousand homes and added the names of many unchurched families to the prospect lists of our congregations. . . . **St. Paul, Columbus, Neb.**, has purchased a former Baptist church located one mile east of their present location . . . The Colorado

Conference is attempting to **locate and contact WELS members** living in the small mountain towns of the Rocky Mountain region, with the hope that an ongoing ministry may be constructed for them . . . Pastor Kevin Raddatz of Ft. Morgan, Col., is **writing a history** of the Colorado Conference's first 50 years. . . . May 9 was the 20th anniversary of **Trinity, McCook, Nebraska**. . . . **Grace, Pueblo, Col.**, will celebrate its 50th anniversary June 23.

— *Theodore L. Wendt*

Obituaries

Raymond A. Brei 1912-1991

Prof. Raymond A. Brei was born Jan. 7, 1912, in Hanover, Kansas. He died March 10 in New Ulm, Minn.

He was a graduate of Concordia College, Seward, Neb. He served in Lutheran elementary schools in Nebraska, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Minnesota. He taught at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., from 1960 to his retirement in 1978.

He is survived by his wife, Lucille, nee King; daughters Joan (Ron) May, Janice (Wayne) Hebb, Judith (John) Francis, and Joyce Garrett; son Richard (Janelle); 13 grandchildren and five great

grandchildren.

Services were held March 14 at St. John, New Ulm.

Esther C. Fritz 1902-1991

Former teacher Esther Clara Fritz was born Dec. 18, 1902, in Boyd, Minn. She died March 10, 1991, in Elmwood, Wis.

She attended Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., and taught 27 years at Emmanuel, Fairfax, Minn.

She is survived by nieces and nephews.

Services were held at St. John, Spring Valley, Wis., with burial at New Ulm, Minn.

THE BIBLE IN 365 READINGS

Continuing our program of reading through the complete Bible in one year, we list the seventh month of readings beginning July 1 and ending July 31.

July	1	Nehemiah 11:10 — 13:31
	2	Zechariah 1 — 6
	3	Zch 7 — 11
	4	Zch 12 — 14; Luke 1:1-38
	5	Lk 1:39 — 2
	6	Lk 3 — 4
	7	Lk 5 — 6
	8	Lk 7 — 8:39
	9	Lk 8:40 — 10:16
	10	Lk 10:17 — 11:54
	11	Lk 12 — 13
	12	Lk 14 — 16:18
	13	Lk 16:19 — 18:34
	14	Lk 18:35 — 20:26
	15	Lk 20:27 — 22:23
	16	Lk 22:24 — 23:31
	17	Lk 23:32 — 24:53
	18	Acts 1 — 2
	19	Ac 3 — 5:16
	20	Ac 5:17 — 7:60
	21	Ac 8 — 9
	22	Ac 10-11
	23	Ac 12 — 14:7
	24	Ac 14:8 — 16:15
	25	Ac 16:16 — 18:28
	26	Ac 19 — 20
	27	Ac 21 — 23 :11
	28	Ac 23:12 — 25:27
	29	Ac 26 — 28:16
	30	Ac 28:17-30; Psalm 74; Titus
	31	1 Thessalonians

The sower

Matthew 13:3-9,18-23

by Mark E. Braun

Scholars divide our Lord's ministry into three roughly equal portions: a year of inauguration, a year of popularity, and a year of opposition.

During the year of popularity, great crowds were drawn to him as he passed through Galilee. He healed the sick and raised Jairus' daughter. He commissioned the twelve, then the seventy, to go on his behalf.

But during the year of popularity, a wave of disapproval began to form that swelled during the year of opposition. Pharisees objected when he healed on the Sabbath. They demanded that he provide a "sign" to confirm his words. In stubborn resistance, they charged that the real source of his strength lay not in God but in Satan.

It is at this time and under these circumstances that Jesus began to teach in parables. The parable of the sower shows there will be some who will not hear, or who hear but will not believe.

It is a simple story. Along the pathway the seed had no chance to germinate, and hungry birds devoured it. In rocky places, it sprouted early but withered because it had no root. Among thorns, weeds grew faster than the seed and choked it out. But in good soil the seed ripened into a rich harvest.

But is this story as simple as it seems? Three-fourths of the parable is about failure. Wasn't the farmer haphazard about where he scattered his seed? Wasn't he enraged to watch the birds and the heat and the thorns devastate the crop? Isn't this a feeble, senseless way to plant the seed?

When Jesus explains the parable, our frustration is hardly relieved. The seed is the word of God, and we see the failures of the word all too often: Satan steals it away before it ever takes root in human hearts; the world overwhelms people and their shallow faith dies; worries and wealth strangle the word.

Isn't it discouraging to see what Satan does to the seed? Isn't it disappointing to see how the world treats the word? The hardened heart, the shallow



JAMES L. TISSOT

heart, the cluttered heart — why does God let things go on like this? Why doesn't he miraculously intervene? Isn't this a weak, unimpressive way to plant the kingdom?

But, wait! Wait! "The one who received the seed that fell on good soil is the man who hears the word and understands it. He produces a crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown." What a miracle crop! What a surprising harvest!

Even now, God's real power is hidden in weak-looking seed. Even now, the seed takes root and grows. God plants his kingdom in people's hearts through the foolishness of what is preached. He will make it grow, beyond our wildest expectations.

Jesus is the sower, but he's made us sowers too. Can we expect failure and frustration? Undoubtedly. Yet we plant; the harvest is his business. Martin Franzmann has captured the message of the sower in a lesser known but mighty hymn:

Preach you the Word and plant it home
To men who like or like it not,
The Word that shall endure and stand
When flow'rs and men shall be forgot.

Though some be snatched and some
be scorched
And some be choked and matted flat,
The sower sows; his heart cries out,
"Oh what of that, and what of that?"

Preach you the Word and plant it home
And never faint; the Harvest Lord
Who gave the sower seed to sow
Will watch and tend his planted Word.

Next: The weeds.

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

About being a father

People who decide to read the Bible from beginning to end will often stumble when they come to “all those names.” For example take the list in Genesis 11: “Shem . . . became the father of Arphaxad. . . became the father of Shelah . . . became the father of Eber . . . became the father of Peleg. . . .” The list of fathers goes on and on.

Reading this list, either silently or aloud, can become rather monotonous. Yet something very significant is being said here. With name after name there is narrated the act of fathering. The old English word for fathering was “begat.” We have a form of that word in the Nicene Creed when it is said of Jesus Christ that he was “begotten not made.” He was fathered by the Father and born of the Virgin Mary.

That’s happened to every person in our world: each of us has been fathered. We are not made like a computer or pillow case is made, we have been fathered. We all are linked to that original father, Adam, who was fashioned by the creative hand of the Father. What glory there is in being a father! What glory there is in being fathered!

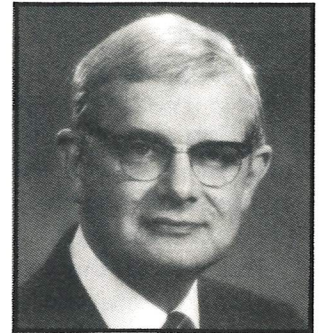
And what responsibility! Recall Paul’s words to the Ephesian church: “Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.” The precedent for such encouragement harks back to the Proverbs: “Listen, my son, to your father’s instruction.” Fathers are chosen by God to provide leadership in forming the character of their children.

Shakespeare knew well what fathers mean to children. He has the line in one of his plays: “Cowards father cowards, and base things sire base.” We have the expression: “a chip off the old block.” Fathering is more than a biological fact of life. Fathering helps to shape or spoil the precious life begotten.

The act of fathering obligates a man to do all in his power to insure that the child begotten is given the chance for life. Too often when a child is aborted, the onus for ending life falls on a woman. How many times doesn’t she take this step because there is no loving support and commitment from the one who fathered that child. Fathering is a glorious, creative act; but it carries with it great responsibilities.

God knows very much about being a father because he took the name Father for himself. That’s not saying that he knows nothing about mothering. He knows all about that just as well. But since it’s Father’s Day, we do well to contemplate what a blessing it is that we have been fathered — and what a responsibility it is to be a father.

Victor H. Prange



Victor Prange is pastor of Peace, Janesville, Wisconsin.

by Paul E. Kelm

What should our attitude be toward religious broadcasting and speakers like Chuck Swindoll? Is there anything wrong with encouraging my friends to listen to his messages?

Evangelical religious broadcasting has made Christianity "popular" by offering contemporary music and relevant messages that touch the hurts and needs of people. The discerning Lutheran may hear practical principles for marriage enrichment, problem solving, friendship witnessing, and a host of other life-related issues. The discerning Lutheran will also hear a wide range of theological errors. On one extreme are the "success and happiness" promises Jesus never made. On the other are political positions and millennial predictions that warp Scripture to fit a fundamentalist agenda. In between is the diminishing of God's grace that characterizes evangelical (Reformed) theology . . . a denial of the sacraments, an emphasis on human will and decision rather than word and Spirit for faith's origin and certainty, a preoccupation with Christian living (Christ in us) that overshadows the forgiveness of sin (Christ for us).

The spiritually mature may be able to "test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). The spiritually undiscerning may be misled to focus on religious "how-tos" of personal commitment rather than on the Savior who was for us what we could never be and suffered for us what our sin required. Even the "good Lutheran" who listens to a steady diet of religious broadcasting tends to become less discerning. When so much that is good and biblical is said, we don't notice or don't want to criticize the not-so-good-or-biblical.

And it isn't what is wrong, but what is missing that is the major fault with evangelical programming.

What is often missing is the clear gospel of unconditional grace, completed forgiveness, and absolute reconciliation to God that is ours in Christ. Paul warned against a law-oriented spotlight on the religious self and his or her "discipleship" commitments, spiritual feelings, and moral life-style: "A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough" (Galatians 5:9).

Chuck Swindoll is among the best of evangelical speakers and authors. His respect for the Scriptures and commitment to Christ are laudable. His applications of Scripture to the issues and situations of life are engaging. Those who are "rooted and built up in Christ, strengthened in the faith as you were taught" (Colossians 2:7) can glean biblical insights from Chuck Swindoll. They will add gospel and subtract the errors that separate Reformed from Lutheran theology. But recommending Chuck Swindoll, or religious broadcasting in general, makes me responsible for some compromised teaching and its impact on the faith of a friend. I can't do that.

Some may argue that listening to religious broadcasting is better than tuning in trash talk shows and randy rock. And that may be true, although Christians filter the secular more easily than the religious. I just won't buy the argument that one of those two choices is necessary or that better equals good. Before walking away from this question in smug orthodoxy, however, confessional Lutherans ought to seek ways to address the issues and needs of contemporary life with authentic law and gospel in the media available to us. For example, "tape ministry" doesn't have to mean merely sermons for shut-ins.

Send your questions to *QUESTIONS, Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N. Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, WI 53222-4389*. Questions of general interest are preferred. Questions will be answered, however, only through this column.

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

NOTICES

ANNIVERSARY

Shepherd of the Hills, Duluth, Minn., 25th anniversary; June 30, 9:00 a.m. service.

NORTHWESTERN PUBLISHING HOUSE Summer Store Hours

The summer hours for the NPH store from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend are as follows: Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.; Saturday, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. The hours for the office are the same as before: Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 a.m.

Vacationers are welcome to browse at the Northwestern Publishing House store, 1250 N. 113th Street (one block north of Watertown Plank Road on 113th St.), Milwaukee, Wis.; 414/475-6600.

NOMINATIONS

Dr. Martin Luther College

The following have been nominated for the field of English at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.

Eugene M. Baer	Waukesha, Wis.
Orville W. Breikreutz	Jackson, Wis.
Lawrence J. Czer	Hopkins, Minn.
Jerry L. Gronholz	Appleton, Wis.
Thomas N. Hunter	Lake Mills, Wis.
Clarence W. Jenkins	Wauwatosa, Wis.
Daniel B. Kirk	Prairie du Chien, Wis.
Phillip M. Leyrer	Lake Mills, Wis.
Martin A. Moldenhauer	Watertown, Wis.

Fredric E. Piepenbrink	Milwaukee, Wis.
Jeffrey L. Schallert	Montrose, Mich.
Greg R. Schmill	Altamonte Springs, Fla.
Neal D. Schroeder	Renton, Wash.
Timothy J. Schroeder	Fond du Lac, Wis.
Dennis R. Schultz	Manitowoc, Wis.
Paul W. Schumacher	Racine, Wis.
Kenneth D. Taylor	Watertown, Wis.
Glen L. Thompson	New York, N.Y.
Steven W. Zellmer	Fort Collins, Col.

Please send any correspondence regarding these nominees by June 28 to the secretary, Robert A. Bitter, P.O. Box 277, Oakfield, WI 53065.

Financial report WISCONSIN EV. LUTHERAN SYNOD

SYNOD MISSION SUBSCRIPTION PERFORMANCE

Three Months ended 31 March 1991

	Communicants	Subscription Amount for 1991	3/12 of Annual Subscription	Offerings Received		
				Three Months Offerings	Percent of Subscription	Ave. Per Communicant
Arizona-California	16,470	\$ 929,116	\$ 232,279	\$ 161,554	69.6	\$ 9.81
Dakota-Montana	9,186	419,376	104,844	69,320	66.1	7.55
Michigan	37,783	2,173,271	543,318	286,070	52.7	7.57
Minnesota	46,217	2,480,978	620,244	393,967	63.5	8.52
Nebraska	9,780	513,549	128,387	86,006	67.0	8.79
North Atlantic	3,416	337,936	84,484	57,859	68.5	16.94
Northern Wisconsin	62,476	2,474,689	618,672	351,120	56.8	5.60
Pacific Northwest	4,368	263,235	65,809	41,916	63.7	9.00
South Atlantic	5,746	385,448	96,362	77,028	79.9	13.41
South Central	3,547	228,096	57,024	55,475	97.3	15.64
Southeastern Wisconsin	57,695	3,188,772	797,193	470,101	59.0	8.15
Western Wisconsin	61,036	2,833,699	708,425	392,595	55.4	6.43
Total—This Year	317,720	\$16,228,165	\$ 4,057,041	\$ 2,443,011	60.2	\$ 7.69
Total—Last Year	317,914	\$16,151,038	\$ 4,037,760	\$ 2,507,147	62.1	\$ 7.89

BUDGETARY FUND

Statement of Changes in Fund Balance Fiscal Year To Date

Nine Months ended 31 March

	1991 Actual	1990 Actual	1991 Budget
Revenues:			
Synod Mission Offerings	\$11,735,477	\$11,561,316	\$11,985,000
Gifts and Memorials	265,941	327,193	368,000
Bequest Income	129,804	321,797	263,000
Other Income	60,989	78,411	83,000
Transfers—Endowment/Trust Earnings	171,200	163,820	156,000
Transfers—Gift Trust	2,493,554	1,249,000	2,625,000
Transfers—Continuing Programs	661,795	432,036	664,000
Transfers—Other	113,955	290,427	114,000
Total Revenues	\$15,632,715	\$14,424,000	\$16,258,000
Expenditures:			
Administration Division	\$ 1,375,680	\$ 1,136,473	\$ 1,359,000
Home Missions Division	4,012,585	3,643,968	4,202,000
World Missions Division	3,629,228	3,348,319	3,702,000
Worker Training Division	5,226,314	5,113,949	5,286,000
Parish Services Division	696,490	610,329	711,000
Fiscal Services Division	1,049,599	976,053	999,000
Total Expenditures	\$15,989,896	\$14,829,091	\$16,259,000
Net Change for the Period	\$ (357,181)	\$ (405,091)	
Fund Balance—Beginning of year	\$ 6,980	\$ 197,199	
Fund Balance—End of period	\$ (350,201)	\$ (207,892)	

Norbert M. Manthe
Controller

WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD CONVENTION

The fifty-first biennial convention of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod will be held, God willing, August 5-9, 1991, at Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota.

The opening communion service in the Academic Center will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Monday, August 5. Professor Donald Sellnow, of Northwestern College, will preach the sermon. The closing service will be held immediately after the last session on Friday, August 9. The preacher will be Pastor Robert Mueller, president of the Michigan District.

The opening session of the convention will be held immediately following the opening service. Delegates are asked to arrive early to register in the lobby of the Luther Memorial Union either on Sunday or before the opening service.

The convention theme is "LIFT HIGH THE CROSS." The essay, "The Doctrine of Church and Ministry in the Life of the Church Today," will be presented by Professor Wilbert Gawrisch of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary.

Housing will be provided for all delegates and meals will be served in the school cafeteria. Each delegate will receive a letter from the synod secretary before May 31, certifying him as a delegate to the convention and informing him whether he is to serve on a floor committee. Detailed instructions regarding travel and housing will be mailed by the school to each delegate in the middle of June.

Mail sent to delegates during the convention should be addressed in care of Dr. Martin Luther College, 1884 College Heights, New Ulm, MN 56073. Delegates may be reached by phone at 507/354-8221.

David Worgull, Secretary
Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

144 pages paperback \$7.95



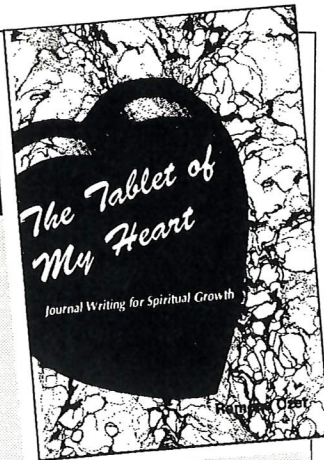
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Journal Writing for Spiritual Growth
by Ramona Czer



Proverbs 3:3 states: "Let love and faithfulness never leave you; bind them around your neck, write them on the tablet of your heart." This describes a remarkable new book we're very excited to introduce to you, *The Tablet of My Heart*. The book is a guide to developing a spiritual journal and, in the process, help you to become a better writer. There are several good journal writing books on the market presently; but, none of them with the dimensions of *The Tablet of My Heart*. First of all, this book is written by a woman for women. Many journal writers, or would-be ones, are women, and though other books are well-researched and personable, they don't quite speak the heart language of women.

The author, Ramona Czer, a Christian day school teacher, has been keeping journals, letter journals, gift journals, mother's journals, travel journals and others, for more than twenty years. She believes that journal writing is an intimate skill and that Jesus wants our intimate moments. The author believes that we need to quiet and slow down, to learn how to seek first His kingdom. Journal writing helps us to consider our words, actions and attitudes, the little things that speak volumes. When we write these things down, we are at peace with life and our faith.

The author invites you to journey with her down the road to spiritual fulfillment. Keeping a spiritual journal will help you to practice speaking your beliefs by first writing them down in a spiritual journal. This spiritual adventure will help you to range further and deeper into your thoughts than you ever thought possible. (For an excerpt from this book see page 327.)

In these asides to our readers, I do not often root around in deep stuff. I try to keep this corner on the brighter, lighter side. After 18 pages of heavy stuff, readers are entitled to some relief. But once in a while I am provoked to depart from this scheme. This time it was triggered by a commercial on TV. There's this little five-year old on the playground. "My mother told me," he announces, "that I could be anything I wanted to be." That, of course, was maternal psychology in full bloom.

But what if Junior really believed that exhortation? What if it were planted so deep that even experience in a cold, hard world could not purge the nonsense? There must be a multitude of mothers who say it, and multitudes will prove mother wrong.

Of course, the counsel invades godly households also. And there it runs headlong into the Christian Way of Life, as illuminated by Jesus: the Way of Service to One Another. In other words — as Luther so carefully pointed out — the secular world is under law, but the church, the body of Christ, the kingdom of God, is under the gospel. As the Christian launches out into the world, it would be helpful to carry along a little of this Christian baggage to regulate relationships. Fellow workers — not to speak of the boss — may rise up in wonder.

Leonard Bernstein was asked what was the hardest section of the orchestra to fill. "The second violin section," he replied. "No one wants to play second violin." The trouble is that both in the world and in the church the second violin section is the largest class in the organization.

In the church we are constantly being derailed by the way the world does things. Just days before Holy Week the disciples got in a hot dispute: In the new order of things which of them would be nearest the head of things, right there alongside the chief himself. Salome, mother of two of the disciples, precipitated the fracas by asking that her sons be nearest the chief in the coming kingdom.

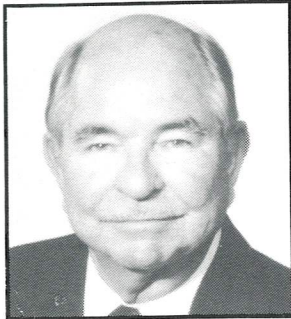
Jesus gently corrected the ambitious mother. In this kingdom, Jesus says, there is a no-no: "The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them. . . . But you are not to be like that." What, among sinful folks, is the alternative? If one can't order people around, chaos is the result. We have a better way, Jesus indicates, "Whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave." How about that lettered over the doors of the church: "All ye who enter here: You are servants and slaves!"

Jesus was not finished with his lecture. He not only talked the talk, but he also walked the walk. In the middle of the passover meal (Maundy Thursday) Jesus rose from his place and, one by one, washed his disciples' feet. (For those who have not walked the streets of Jerusalem, those feet were a mess.) "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked. "I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. . . . You will be blessed."

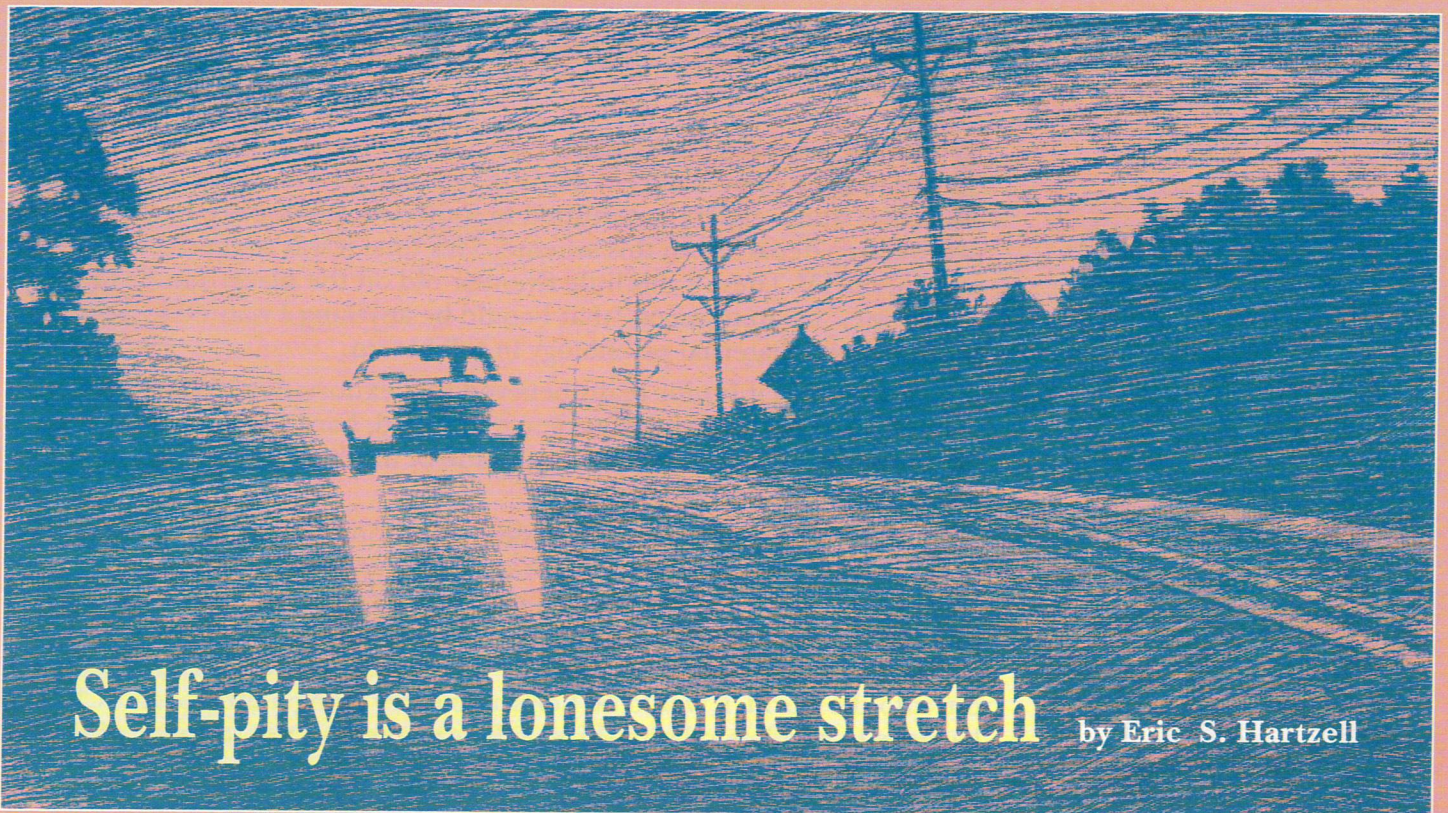
I don't know what will become of the laddie in the commercial, but I pray his mother teaches him, among other things, the Way of Jesus.

It takes more grace than I can tell
To play the second fiddle well.

James P. Schaffer



*No one
wants to play
second violin*



Self-pity is a lonesome stretch by Eric S. Hartzell

The fastest car in the world and the most powerful truck both have a reverse gear. Regardless of the ability for speed or power in going forward, a vehicle is useless unless it can back up.

Elijah's spiritual car had R for reverse on the steering column, but Elijah wasn't using it.

He had steered himself deep into the wilderness of self-pity. In fact, he had parked under the miserable shade of a broom tree and wished to die. He left Mt. Carmel and 450 dead prophets of the opposition and rain in buckets after three and a half years of drought.

As he drove drearily along he hummed to himself the little ditty with the words: "Nobody likes me, everybody hates me, guess I'll go eat worms."

Only the real lyrics went like this: "I have been very zealous for the Lord God Almighty. The Israelites have rejected your covenant, broken down your altars, and put your prophets to death with the sword. I am the only one left, and now they are trying to kill me too" (1 Kings 19:10).

Try backing up, Elijah.

Twice the Lord had wanted Elijah to at least check the rearview mirror with the question "What are you doing here, Elijah?" It makes sense that when you have lost your way and are casting about hopelessly in the wilderness of self-pity that you at least think of backing up — going back. But the Lord has to be blunt. "Go back the way you came," he finally had to tell Elijah.

Sometimes before we can go forward we have to go backward. How did I get here? Where did I make the wrong turn? Where did I leave Jesus? When did my work start feeling like a hopeless and thankless chore? When did I forget my labor for him is not in vain? When did I start suspecting that I was the only one left who was sincere about being a Christian?

Going back. It is a safe bet. If we have to, we can go all the way back to our conversion, to the time when the Lord tapped us on the shoulder and rearranged our lives with the words, "Go forward now, with me and for me."

Self-pity is a lonesome stretch. We get off it by going back the way we came, retracing our steps back to the 7000 fellow travelers (the Biblical number for completeness times 1000). The Lord said it this way: "I reserve seven thousand in Israel — all whose knees have not bowed down to Baal and all whose mouths have not kissed him" (1 Kings 19:18).

Even if we are making good time on the road to self-pity, it is not where we want to be — and not where our God wants us to be. Let's join Elijah and listen when the Lord says, "Go back the way you came."



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