

September 15, 1991

the Northwestern Lutheran

WELS Convention
highlights



*A mobile
healing
ministry*

PAGE 308

Whose responsibility is it?

by Kurt F. Koeplin

A priest . . . passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite . . . passed by on the other side (Luke 10:30-37).

“It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done.”

This is the tag line of a story concerning the buck-passing antics of four generic types of congregational members. It reminds one of the familiar story related by our Lord, the one we know as the Good Samaritan.

Jesus said that a traveler on his way to Jericho from Jerusalem was beaten, robbed, and left by the roadside. At intervals three others, traveling the same road, saw the victim. The first two — a priest and a Levite — looked, assessed the situation, and beat a hasty retreat. The third traveler, a member of a group despised by the Hebrews, stopped, helped, transported him to an inn, and paid for his care.

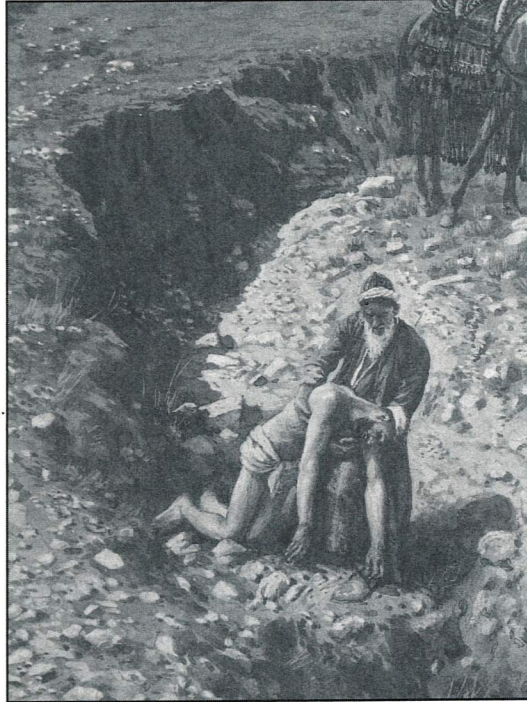
Now neither the priest nor the Levite are reported to have said, “He’s not my responsibility.” Nothing of what they said or thought is recorded. But their actions shouted, “That poor, bloody guy is not my responsibility.” They hurried on, minding their own business.

In all candor, it’s a stretch to say that a congregation is like that man who was mugged and abandoned by the roadside.

However, God’s gathered people in geographical locales are on life’s journey traveling as pilgrims who have no continuing city here, but who are seeking an eternal city, our heavenly home. The pilgrims, gathered into a congregational family, could look upon their place of worship as a “rest stop.”

Here we pause at regular intervals to refresh our souls through word and sacrament.

Here we pause to refuel our spiritual tanks so that we can go on our way a little farther down life’s road.



JAMES J. TISSOT

Here we cluster, in a convoy, to recheck our road maps to make certain that we are on the heavenly road.

Here we stop, take time out of our frequently hectic lives, and focus upon our Savior to see again what is important, lasting, and worthwhile in our lives.

Here we come together to hear from that One who has set us on “the Way”; to hear from Jesus words of forgiveness, peace, comfort, and strength. And yes, when we’ve strayed, we want to hear words of admonition, correction, and guidance.

But then we know that life is not a new, smooth, unimpeded, superhighway. We do encounter spiritual bandits who try to

assault our faith in Jesus; spiritual thieves who try to steal our hope of heaven from us.

Then what? We all can say, that’s not my problem; not my responsibility. Anybody can handle this; Somebody always has in the past. Jesus doesn’t call the Samaritan anything. He’s not the “good”; the “magnificent”; the “super” Samaritan. He’s the anonymous one who saw a need and responded.

That humble attitude of heart must be cultivated by every one of us. We, the redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, must learn anew to say; “It’s my responsibility. If my congregation has problems, I’ve got problems which I, under God’s grace, will do my level best to solve.”

We know that there is no such thing as a problem-free Christian congregation. But not to worry. Maybe Nobody was aware of it and now that Everybody knows it, Somebody will come through and we can get on with the Lord’s work as before. None of us can afford the luxury of passing by on the other side.



Kurt Koeplin is pastor of Atonement, Milwaukee.

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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FORWARD

■ Most people read a magazine from front to back. Others reverse the order and read from back to front. You might want to try a third method with this issue and read the middle section first, where you'll find the news of the synod convention, beginning on page 315. Many of the issues voted on will have a major impact on the future of the WELS.

■ On the cover is a scene from the African medical mission in Malawi. The work there, in its twenty-first year, is entirely supported by donations. Missionary Mark Rieke (p. 308) describes the work of the medical team who bring healing of body and soul to the African people.

DJS



The queue of bags marks each person's place in line while waiting for this Lutheran Mobile Clinic in Malawi to open.

A mobile healing ministry

It serves more people in three years than most nurses do in a lifetime

by Mark W. Rieke

Perhaps some wonder if it is necessary or even proper for our synod to sponsor medical mission activity. But one glance at the Lutheran Mobile Clinic in Malawi proves otherwise. Our 21-year-old medical mission meets Malawians' physical needs by helping to prevent and heal sicknesses. Our medical mission meets Malawians' spiritual needs by providing the good news of Jesus Christ.

Malawi was not the first location where our synod chose to do medical mission work. In 1961, two years before the WELS even sent missionaries to Malawi, the Mwembeshi Lutheran Dispensary opened its doors fifty miles west of Lusaka, Zambia's capital. In 1971 Lake Malawi was the setting for our synod's second medical mission. Twelve years later the rising waters of the lake forced the medical mission to relocate to Lilongwe, Malawi's capital.

Our medical mission in Malawi is called the Lutheran Mobile Clinic. The name is fitting. The resident American nurses (normally two) together with African health workers travel to distant clinics in a van packed full of medicines.

The typical clinic day actually starts the night before, when all the medical supply boxes are replenished and packed in the van. The nurses are off at 6:30 in the morning, picking up their staff of

five African nurses, one health worker, and one nutritionist on the way. If it hasn't rained, they can usually reach the clinic by 8:30 a.m. By the time they arrive, 200 to 300 people are already in line, some having walked for two hours or more.

What happens next is a beehive of activity that must be seen to be fully appreciated. The medicines and medical equipment are unloaded and the 20' x 40' building is divided into stations — vaccinations and

drugs along one wall, examinations along another, record keeping and a simple laboratory tucked into two corners. Then it's time for opening devotion.

Finally it's time for the actual clinic work to begin. Children under five years of age and pregnant women come first. Each child has a health card which keeps track of vaccinations, weight gain, and medical history. The nurses prescribe vaccinations, medicines, and vitamin supplements to those who need them. After that, the nurses care for the other sick and injured adults and children.

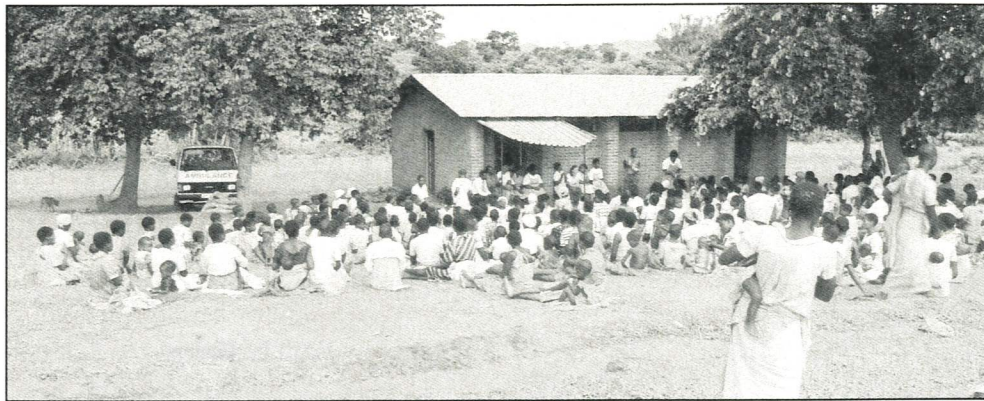
On an average day, the work ends about 2:00 p.m. Then it's time to clean up, pack up, and head back to Lilongwe.

Every health care facility tries to cure sickness. But the Lutheran Mobile Clinic makes a special point of trying to prevent sickness as well. Half an hour of every clinic day is taken up by health classes. Monitoring the development of young children and pregnant women helps stop problems before they occur.

Of course, the spiritual needs of the people are of infinitely greater importance than their physical needs. The medical mission work done in Zambia and Malawi provides an opportunity to serve both.

Through the medical mission work the Lutheran Church of Central Africa has been able to establish a congregation at each clinic location. And people who don't attend church hear a devotion before the clinic begins. In this way the medical mission serves the physical and the spiritual needs of the Malawians.

It is important to note that neither Malawi's Lutheran Mobile Clinic nor Zambia's Mwembezi Lutheran Dispensary receive a single dollar from the WELS budget. The funding comes primarily from

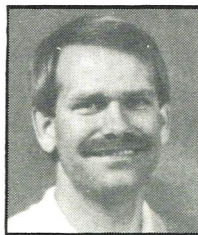


Africans wait for medical care outside the mobile clinic at Msambo.

the gifts of love of women's mission groups. And no one can say there is any fat on either medical mission's budget. The cost of running the Lutheran Mobile Clinic — medicines, transportation costs, training and the salaries of two American nurses, and of African health workers — is less than \$70,000 a year. With that budget, the Mobile Clinic treated more than 25,000 people last year.

Neither medical mission could operate without the American nurses to serve it. After an intensive six-month course in tropical and third world medicine at Seneca College in Toronto, Ontario, they serve in the field for a three-year term. During those three years they endure more hardships and see more patients than most nurses do in a lifetime. But in three years they also get to help more people and touch more lives than most nurses do in a lifetime. At the present time, the nurses of the Lutheran Mobile Clinic are Cindy Hains and Kim Kortje. In Zambia they are Marianne Peterson and Linda Phillips.

The Lutheran Mobile Clinic is one way we can let the gospel light shine in Malawi. And people do notice it. Recently a member of parliament asked the Malawi parliament if the Lutheran Mobile Clinic could supervise all the government clinics and hospitals in his constituency. To do so would be impossible, but the request shows how highly people regard the Lutheran Mobile Clinic. They realize it offers the best care available. That care is possible because of the support of loving Christians far away.



Mark Rieke serves the Lutheran Church of Central Africa. Contributions to the medical mission can be sent to the Central Africa Medical Mission, care of Mrs. Margaret Kujath, 3749 N. 88th St. #302, Milwaukee WI 53222.

Reviving our spiritual metabolism

by Paul E. Kelm

Stephanie has been in denial for several months. She'll bite your head off if you even raise the issue. "Marriage is just a piece of paper formalizing hypocrisy. We're honest with each other about our love. Why can't you accept the fact that times have changed?"

Each of those sentences is the theme for a short essay on why there's nothing wrong with living together unmarried.

Contemporary culture has moved from moral relativism to do-it-yourself theology. The worst *faux pas* is to suggest that someone else is wrong. Still, Stephanie sounds awfully defensive.

Ralph sees himself as your average church member. He goes to church a couple of times a month and "pays his dues," as he likes to say with a chuckle. Ralph views his relationship with God as pretty traditional. "None of this fanatical Bible-totin', prayer-meetin', in-your-face evangelizing stuff" is how he put it once. Ralph has an "arrangement" with God. He shows up to pay his respects and support the church.

God does his part by looking out for Ralph. Ralph likes his minister, so long as his preaching doesn't get too personal — you know, telling people how to live their lives. Guilt isn't something Ralph thinks about much. "That's what we pay the minister for," he jokes.

Stephanie and Ralph represent two diverse examples of the same spiritual malaise. There is no repentance in their life. People like Ralph simply don't take sin seriously. Years of stonewalling God's law have resulted in an insensitive conscience and an institutional faith.

People like Stephanie still know somewhere deep inside that what they're doing is wrong; but because they can't bring themselves to give up their sin, they'll rationalize it instead.

There is something wrong with a lot of people's spiritual metabolism. Just as breathing is both inhal-

ing and exhaling, so spiritual life is both taking in God's truth and evacuating sins. Failure to repent is like holding your breath.

Minimalizing God's demands and rationalizing our sins make spiritual life sluggish, then sick, and finally comatose. Reviving our spiritual metabolism may begin with a good look at Psalm 51.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassion blot out my transgressions (v. 1). Christians repent because they know their God as a merciful and forgiving Father, for Jesus' sake. Just as children won't volunteer what they've done wrong if they expect only anger and punishment from their father, so people won't confess their sins to a God they know only as a demanding judge. Instead they will cover up, act innocent, blame others, and make excuses.

But from the Garden of Eden to the Garden of Gethsemane, God's love was unfailing. From the trials and temptations he endured to the price of forgiveness he paid, Jesus' compassion is great. The more you get to know your God in his word, the easier it is to talk to him about where you've messed up. You can repent to the God who loves you.

For I know my transgressions and my sin is always before me (v. 3). Being honest with yourself is where confession begins. Not slip-ups or mistakes in judgment or little white whatever's, but transgressions that are sin weigh heavy on the heart until admitted.

Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge (v. 4). "As long as nobody gets hurt" or "we're all adults" or "no-fault what-have-you" won't wash. Before God we are accountable and guilty. Bare your heart and bury your face in your hands as you plead only God's grace.

Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me (v. 5). Sinning is the fatal character defect of human nature. Sins aren't acci-

Stephanie barks: *“Marriage is just a piece of paper formalizing hypocrisy. . . . Why can’t you accept the fact that times have changed?”*

Ralph has an “arrangement” with God; Ralph shows up to pay his respects. . . .
“None of this fanatical Bible-totin’, prayer-meetin’, in-your-face evangelizing stuff.”

dental. We are sinners! Admit it. Agonize over it. Then get it off your chest to God in confession. Yes, God knows this is the umpteenth time. And still he forgives.

Cleanse me with hyssop and I will be clean; wash me and I will be whiter than snow (v. 7). Without faith, confession would be only a suicide note. Without Jesus there would be nothing to believe. But because Jesus got life right as our stand-in, then suffered sin’s sentence as our substitute, forgiveness is a finished fact. Because Jesus beat death and ascended to audit the books of life, faith is for sure.

Faith in forgiveness must accompany confession of sin to be repentance. You get faith at the same place God got your forgiveness: at the cross and empty tomb of Jesus Christ.

Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me (v. 12). Forgiveness from sin means also freedom from everything sin did to enslave your life. Sin, you see, is a joy-robber. It cheapens and demeans life. It fuels fears and envies and suspicions and worries. God doesn’t just take away your sin. He takes away your gloom. He restores your joy in Jesus.

And with that joy you get your strength back. The gospel gives you the backbone to say “no” to sin and the spirit to say “yes” to God. Grace reconstructs your will so that you see things God’s way, want things God wills, and do things God wants. Repentance means that God gives you back your life.

Then I will teach transgressors your ways . . . and my tongue will sing of your righteousness (vv. 13-14). When God has forgiven us, restored our joy, and redirected our will, then our life becomes a song of thanksgiving and a mission of service. Good things happen to life with repentance.

A revived spiritual metabolism expels in confession the attitudes and feelings binding life with sin, then drinks in all the forgiving grace, the godly wis-

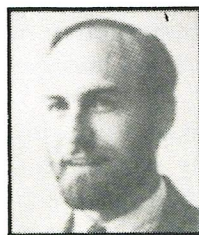
dom, and the gospel power that God has for us in his word.

Regular repentance is a daily constitutional. Sure, you can say “I’m sorry” to God while you’re falling asleep; but fitting God in is one step away from leaving him out. Take regular time to off-load the ill will and misdeeds of your day. Call sin what it is and get it out of your system.

You’ll discover it’s easier to confess to God if you’ve spent several minutes listening to him. Read some Scripture to get your head straight and your heart warmed. Focus in on Jesus so you’re sure your sins won’t keep coming back to haunt you. Do a little planning with God for putting his truth and love to work in your life. Hum a hymn or just say thanks. Then breathe deeply, to remind yourself that confession exhaled sin and its evil spores while faith has inhaled forgiveness, joy, and strength.

Oh, and don’t forget to be regular at the Lord’s Supper. The solemnity of the service and the company of fellow sinners make confession before God a little easier. The physical evidence of your pardon, Christ’s body and blood given in connection with bread and wine, makes the certainty of forgiveness especially meaningful. And getting both encouragement and direction from the spoken word will send you back into life with a purpose.

Maybe you’ve been denying some sin or refusing to let your Lord govern some area of your life, and you have no peace or joy because of it. Or maybe your spiritual life seems dull, unsatisfying ritual and irrelevant dogma. Chances are that your spiritual metabolism needs reviving. Repentance is the Christian’s metabolism, regular confession of sin and forgiveness in the gospel.



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

The publishing house today

by Roland Cap Ehlke

“Jesus did many other miraculous signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not recorded in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”

These words toward the end of John's gospel (20:30,31) remind us of the importance of the written word. From the time the Holy Spirit inspired the first books of the Old Testament, our gracious God has revealed himself through the written word.

The purpose of God's inerrant word — the Bible — and Christian literature based on that word is to point to the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. As John indicates, “these are written” that we might come to know and believe in the Savior.

For 100 years Northwestern Publishing House (NPH) has been carrying out this work for the Wisconsin Synod. Today the work goes on through Northwestern's organization, through its products, and through its dedicated employees.

NPH organization

The publishing house is organized into four divisions:

1. *Editorial.* The four pastors who serve as editors spend their time planning and editing NPH publications. Publications are sought from individuals or organizations within WELS. The editors review many other unsolicited manuscripts for possible publication.

Another part of their work is reviewing products from other Christian publishers. Each year about 1000 books as well as hundreds of audio and video tapes come in for review. In addition to the NPH editorial staff, reviewers throughout the WELS carefully screen materials in their specialized fields. Less than ten percent of these outside publications are recommended for sale in the NPH catalog and retail store.

The editorial division also includes the staff for the new WELS hymnal, scheduled for completion in 1993. A video production department is yet another unit of this division.

2. *Production.* Until 1984 NPH did its own printing and binding. Because of the highly specialized nature of these functions, it is now much more economical to have this done on the outside. For exam-

ple, some printers specialize in magazines, others in hardcover books.

Northwestern's production department deals with about 25 printers. The production department receives bids on new projects in order to keep products competitively priced.

A new electronic publishing system aids in preparing and designing manuscripts for publication.

3. *Finance.* This division does much more than account for the publishing house's financial well-being. It also oversees periodical subscriptions, mailing lists, audiovisual services, the order department, and the warehouse.

NPH is self-supporting and does not depend on the synod budget for any income. This past fiscal year saw the publishing house hit the \$4 million mark for the first time in its 100-year history. Profits go back into the development of more products.

As for the warehouse, it takes up half of the 40,000 square feet in the Northwestern building. Last year close to 30,000 orders were shipped out from the warehouse. The rest of the building contains offices and the retail store.

4. *Sales and marketing.* In addition to the advertising department, the retail store is in this division. Many WELS church and school groups visiting Milwaukee from out of town make a point of stopping at the store. It has an excellent selection of books, pictures, plaques, gift items, church furnishings, and school supplies.

Although NPH's first obligation is to the Wisconsin Synod, its market extends beyond. In an age of much fluff in Christian publishing, the solid theology of Northwestern publications could have a wide and deep influence. The marketing department works toward this goal.

NPH is governed by a board of directors. Its members are elected by the synod in convention. For the past ten years Pastor Gordon Snyder of West Allis, Wisconsin, has served as chairman of the board.

NPH products

Many products offered by NPH come from other publishers. For example, although the publishing house offers a wide selection of Bibles, it has yet to publish one of its own.



Ed Fenske with his son Dan



Minnie Peacock, editorial secretary



Jerry Loeffel, NPH president

Recent years have seen an increase in Northwestern-produced materials. The 1980s were by far the most productive decade in NPH history, with well over 250 new titles rolling off the presses. The publishing house hopes to continue at that pace and, God willing, even increase it.

Northwestern publications include Bible study materials, professional books for pastors and teachers, home reading books for adults and children, special Christmas and Easter worship services, and tracts. The publishing house also publishes various synod periodicals. (To clear up an oft-confused point here: the *Northwestern Lutheran* is published by NPH. But its editor, Pastor James Schaefer, works out of the synod office and is directly responsible to his calling body, the Conference of Presidents, not to the NPH board of directors or staff.)

Two ongoing Northwestern staples are the Sunday bulletin series and *Meditations*. This daily devotional booklet is now in its thirty-fourth year and enjoying some 90,000 subscriptions, making it one of the larger devotional publications in the United States.

The People's Bible commentary series has been a very popular venture. As the name implies, it is for lay people, not just for Bible scholars. It includes the complete text of Holy Scriptures in the New International Version. The commentary following the Scripture sections contains personal applications as well as explanations of the text and illustrations. To date, twenty-one of the forty volumes in this set have been published.

A number of NPH publications are available on tape and in foreign languages, especially Spanish.

NPH employees

Working in his or her special area, each employee is dedicated not just to a job, but to the mission of Northwestern Publishing House.

Ed Fenske is the "granddaddy" at NPH, having

been there since 1947. Most of those years were spent as manager of the warehouse, where his son Dan now works. Ed is currently inventory supervisor. "I think NPH is a great company and it's doing its job," is Ed's way of summing up his feelings about Northwestern.

Editorial secretary Minnie Peacock is a relative newcomer. She's been at NPH since 1989. "I enjoy my job. The people are very friendly," says the former Bostonian, who now resides with her family in Big Bend, Wisconsin. "It's interesting because I get to read a lot of manuscripts and learn more about the Bible."

Jerry Loeffel has been with Northwestern since 1978. Since March 1991 he's been president of the company. Jerry works hard to make the publishing house a place where employees and customers find satisfaction. He aims for excellence not only in what is produced, but also in how people are served. He puts it this way, "We have many dedicated employees here at NPH, who continually strive to provide Christ-centered materials and services."

These three employees represent the commitment of Northwestern's entire staff of 54 men and women.

For 100 years the publishing house has been more than a business. As the WELS bylaws describe it, NPH is a part of "the synod's gospel ministry." The employees at NPH want to keep that focus on commitment to Christ.

We invite you to join us in thanking God for 100 years of ministry through the printed word. And we ask for your prayers that God may continue to bless this work for the salvation of many souls. After all, that's why "these are written. . . ."



Roland Cap Ehlke is an editor at Northwestern Publishing House.

Like a clear mountain stream

by Thomas H. Schnick

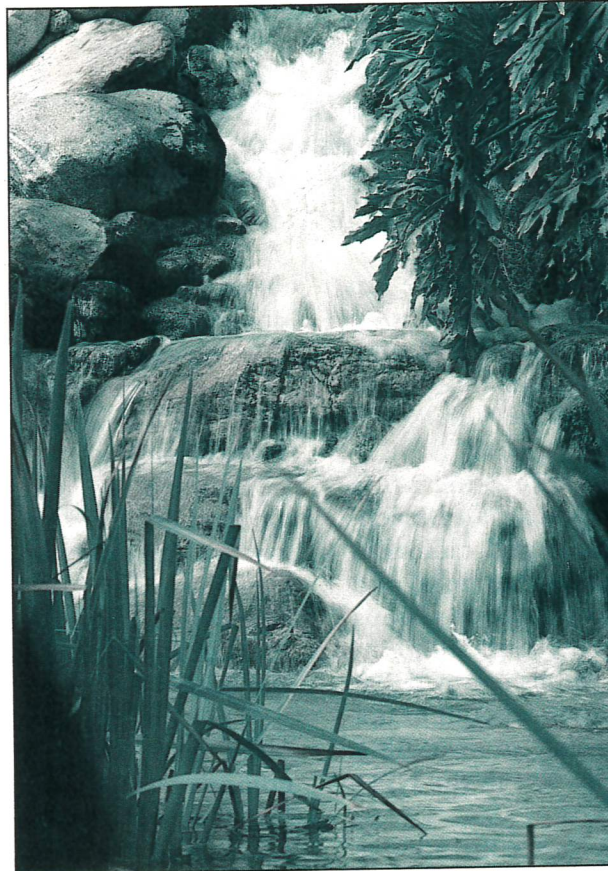
There is a particular pitfall for Christians who live in a bad environment, a pitfall for all who seem to resist the obvious temptations around them. That pitfall is the pride of thinking that you have designed a lifestyle of greater purity than the godless world around you.

After all, you say, I am a good Christian. I have not done all the wicked things that are happening around me.

There is a great problem with this way of thinking. It is just what the Pharisees said and thought.

Unfortunately, there's a bit of the Pharisee's attitude in every one of us. We have a problem with purity. Perhaps we could compare our purity problem with the picture of a mountain stream. There is nothing quite so clear as a clear blue mountain stream. But don't drink the water; it's not pure. Even in the most remote wilderness areas of the high mountain country, the clear, cold water is unclean, filled with bacteria these days. The impurity is called giardia, Giardia will flush out your intestines and sap your strength; it will leave you exhausted.

To fight against giardia, some backpackers carry along a little bottle called Polar Pure. When they add this solution of iodine to the water, it kills the impurities. The only problem is that the water tastes bad and you don't want to drink it anymore. An alternative to the iodine solution is a water filter. If you can afford a filter and are planning a trek into a wilderness area, you're going to want to carry one along with you. Water filters don't change the chemical composition of the water; they just filter out what's



MRS. KEVIN SCHEIBEL

unclean. What is left is water that is really and truly pure, not tainted with chemicals. Filters are better — but they are more costly.

We need to learn the same lesson about the impurities in our hearts. It's cheap to disguise our sinful thoughts inside and to live with them — cheaper than it is to filter them out. Holding in our sins and refusing to confess them costs us nothing. A filter is better, but it's far more costly. Purity is costly, not cheap.

David sang, "Who may ascend the hill of the Lord? Who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart" (Psalm 24:3). The Bible tells us people are born in sin. No one is pure. But we acquire purity when God washes our sins away. He

does so with the clean, pure water of baptism, a washing that renews us, causes us to be literally born again. God purifies us from the inside out.

But you can certainly ruin the chemical balance of your heart if you don't live your baptism daily. Christian purity is a battle won when we as Christians put a costly filter on our hearts, when we daily and hourly strive to live in repentance. Put a filter of repentance on your heart and you will find in faith that living for Christ is costly, not cheap. Choose your filter wisely. Go for the costly one, the filter of repentance.



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

The fruit of purity

CONVENTION PHOTOS BY DOROTHY SONNTAG



Delegates set synod's course for next two years

The theme of the 51st biennial convention of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod was "Lift High the Cross." The convention was held August 5-9 at Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota.

Synod officials reelected

Pastor Carl H. Mischke of Milwaukee was reelected as president for a seventh consecutive two-year term.

Mischke, 68, began his ministerial career in 1947 at First Lutheran, La Crosse, Wis. He also served at St. John, Goodhue, Minn. and St. John, Juneau, Wis. He was the synod's second vice-president and first vice-president before becoming president in 1979. The synod presidency is a full-time position.

The two vice-presidents of the synod were reelected to two-year terms. Their positions are part time.

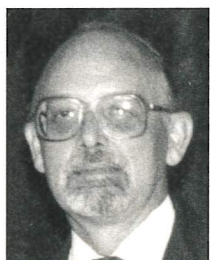
Richard E. Lauersdorf, 57, pastor of St. John, Jefferson, Wis., was elected to his third term as first



Mischke



Lauersdorf



Zink



Worgull

vice-president. He previously served in Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, Canada, and in Ontario and Kendall, Wis.

Robert J. Zink, 56, pastor of St. Paul, Muskego, Wis., second vice-president, is also serving his third

term. He previously served parishes in Raymond and Clark, S. Dak.

Pastor David Worgull, 63, of Calvary, Chandler, Ariz., was reelected to his fifth two-year term as the synod's secretary. His position is also part time.

464 delegates at convention

Describing the attendance at the convention "exceptional," the credentials committee reported 464 delegates in attendance: 367 voting delegates and 97 advisory delegates. A number of guests were also present.

Absenteeism peaked on Thursday, August 8, when 11 voting and four advisory delegates asked to be excused, full or part time.

Some attributed the unusually high attendance to the weather, which throughout the week was on the cool side. This made the Dr. Martin Luther College gymnasium, which served as the convention hall, pleasant and comfortable.



Education issues head the agenda

President Mischke in his report to the convention noted that the synodical school question will occupy "a great deal of convention floor time." Before the issue was settled on the convention floor, delegates had consumed two hours and forty minutes of convention time — over an hour longer than any other issue debated by the delegates.

Because of declining enrollments and diminishing financial support the synod's ministerial education system has been experiencing increasing difficulties. The system includes three prep schools, two colleges, and a theological seminary. The combined budget for the six schools for the 1991-92 school year is a net of \$6.5 million — after tuition and other charges are subtracted.

The Board for Worker Training had warned the synod's districts in 1990 of an impending fiscal crisis.

When synod support showed no appreciable gain, the Coordinating Council, the budgeting agency of the synod, recommended that Martin Luther Preparatory School,

the most expensive of the prep schools, be merged with Northwestern Prep, Watertown, Wis., and the Michigan District share in the funding of the synod's third prep school, Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw.

Already in 1989 a prep school study committee appointed by the worker training board recommended consolidation of the ministerial school system — the merging of Martin Luther Preparatory School

with Northwestern Preparatory School and Northwestern College with Dr. Martin Luther College on the DMLC campus at New Ulm, Minnesota.

After hours of study and an open hearing, the convention endorsed

The convention endorsed the need for a strong, growing, and viable preparatory school system.

"the need for a strong, growing, and viable preparatory school system in our synod."

Eight resolutions were adopted to shape the system in the coming years. The resolutions recommend that the *status quo* be maintained for the time being while an independent committee reviews the 1989 prep school study committee's recommendation in order to determine its feasibility, including when and how this new structure may

begin to function.

The independent study committee is to be appointed by the Conference of Presidents and is instructed to report to the 1992 district conventions. Its final report is to be submitted to the 1993 synod convention. When the plan is adopted, the Martin Luther Preparatory School campus is to be sold. The convention adopted the nine resolutions with only a scattering of no votes.

In another major move the convention voted to appoint a commission to study the restructuring of the Board for Worker Training and that in restructuring the board, the commission consider that members with direct administrative ties to the schools serve the board only in an advisory capacity. Presently the board is dominated by the six schools' presidents and five schools' board of control chairmen. The commission is to report to the 1992 district conventions and submit its final report to the 1993 convention.

In other action the convention:

1) Changed the calling process for professors, eliminating the necessity for printing the names of nominees for professorships in the Northwestern Lutheran;

2) Declined to authorize the building of a new library at Northwestern College;

3) Recognized the need for the worker training board and the parish education board to work closely with the Association for Lutheran High Schools in promoting Christian secondary education;

4) Urged that Dr. Martin Luther College continue to pursue the goal of becoming a Minnesota state certified teacher training institution to facilitate the certification of its graduates in other states;

5) Declined to approve an early childhood education program at DMLC due to lack of funding.

Male teachers to be ordained

It will be good news for men teachers who have struggled with the Internal Revenue Service in defending their designation as ministers of the gospel, and thus eligible for tax exemptions open to the clergy, that the convention voted to ordain all male teachers of the synod. The exact title is "ordination into the teaching ministry."

The delegates pointed out that "ordination" terminology is extremely important in applying many civil laws to the church's male teachers. As general usage in the WELS, ordination into the teaching ministry "would eliminate the difficulties in communicating to civil authorities the nature of our teaching ministry."

"Civil authorities," according to the resolution, "view ordained full-time ministers as leaders who have the ability to perform sacerdotal functions, that is, conduct worship services or administer the sacraments when called upon by the church to do so."

The resolution also pointed out that women "teaching in Christian schools under a call are serving in the public ministry, but God's word restricts their service to situations in which they will not exercise authority over men."

The Conference of Presidents is to develop or choose the formal rite for the ordination of male teachers.

In other action the delegates authorized a program of continuing education for WELS pastors. A survey has shown overwhelming approval for such a program.

A committee to be appointed will be in charge of the program and assigning, if desired, continuing education credits to the pastor's record. Congregations were urged to provide the necessary time and support for pastors to pursue a personal program of growth.



Above: **Pastor Kirby Spevacek**, shown with his wife Audrey, was commissioned at the convention as mission coordinator for the USSR and eastern Europe.

Left: **Pam Merten**, an adult convert, addressed the delegates in a moving testimony of faith.

Role of man and woman defined

Delegates at the synod convention voted to adopt the statement "Scriptural principles of man and woman roles" as a correct exposition of scriptural teachings. The document represents little change from the historical teaching of the WELS.

The statement affirms the principle that God made man the head of woman and made woman to be submissive to man. "In church assemblies the headship principle means that only men will cast votes which exercise authority over men. Only men will do work that involves authority over men," according to the statement, and "women must refrain from participating in meetings in any way which would exercise authority over men."

Congregations, circuits, and conferences were urged to give immediate, careful, and prayerful study to the statement and forward any suggestions for refinement in wording of the statement to the Conference of Presidents.

The Conference of Presidents has authorized the production of

study materials to use in studying the biblical principles.

Delegates authorize four new ministries for churches

Four new staff ministries were created by the convention: evangelism, family and youth, administration, and deaconess. These were designed to supplement the pastoral and teaching ministries present in many WELS congregations. Several of these are already found in congregations.

The resolution pointed out that "there is an increasing need for specialized help to enhance the total ministry of a growing number of congregations." A survey indicated that many congregations would be interested in such ministries.

Dr. Martin Luther College was designated as the site for the staff ministry training programs. The convention pointed out that DMLC has the appropriate baccalaureate programs to facilitate the training and certification of the staff ministers.

No date was set for the beginning of the program at DMLC but presumably the start of the program is at least a year away.



Parish Services Division restructured

A proposal to restructure the Division of Parish Services was adopted by the convention after half an hour debate. The proposal had been reviewed favorably by the districts meeting in the summer of 1990.

The division is responsible for offering services and materials to synod congregations to help them in their ministries of nurture, outreach, worship, and service. The restructuring takes effect immediately.

It was argued that the restructuring would permit the division to carry out its assignments more effectively and the restructuring does not add any more administrators to the division.

As reorganized, the division will have six commissions: Evangelism, Adult Discipleship, Youth Discipleship, Parish Schools, Worship, and Special Ministries. With the exception of the Commission on Worship each commission has an administrator as does the Board for Parish Services, which coordinates the programs and budgets of the division.

Since the proposed bylaw changes to implement the restructuring were printed in the *Book of Reports and Memorials* of the convention, the changes could be immediately implemented.

Two special programs merged

Acting on financial matters, the convention merged the planned giving and special giving ministries, effective July 1, 1992. Delegates were told that the six planned giving counselors have already been making visits for Lift High the Cross, and that counselors should be qualified for both special giving and planned giving visits.

In the last five years, the delegates were told, deferred gifts totaling \$37.7 million through wills and estate plans were secured by the planned giving counselors.

Merging special gifts and planned giving will result in nine counselors, only two of whom are funded through the synod's operating budget. The rest are supported through special gifts and Lift High



Prof. Wilbert Gawrisch of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary presented his essay on the doctrine of church and ministry in the life of the church.

the Cross offerings, together with allocations of up to ten percent from bequests. The merger was approved subject to a continuation of the current method of funding the nine positions.



Pages — When they weren't handing out reports and notices to the delegates, the pages relaxed in the DMLC student union snack bar.

WELS and other church bodies

In the opening hours of the convention delegates adopted a number of resolutions relating to the synod's relationship with other church bodies. The delegates noted with gratitude the unity of faith and practice which the Lord has created through the word with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod. They urged the continuation of the Lutheran Confessional Forum, an annual meeting of various departments of the two synods.

The convention also urged the Commission on Inter-Church Relations to continue to plan for a new international synodical conference, made up of church bodies throughout the world with whom the synod is in fellowship.

The delegates urged that the planning committee "consider and address the needs and concerns of



Two presidents of sister church bodies were guests at the convention: President George M. Orvick (left) of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod and President Gerhard Wilde of the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Germany.

mission fields and young national churches."

Continued support was also resolved for the Lutheran Confessional Church-Scandinavia and the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Germany.

The commission was encouraged to continue its efforts "under God

to resolve past differences" between the synod and the Church of the Lutheran Confession. The CLC was formed in 1960 when a group of pastors broke away from the Wisconsin Synod, charging that the break with the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod was being unscripturally delayed.

Election results

President: Carl H. Mischke

1st Vice-President: Richard E. Lauersdorf

2nd Vice-President: Robert J. Zink

Secretary: David P. Worgull

Executive Committees

Board for World Missions — Apache: Pastor Philip Koelpin; Central Africa: Mr. Lloyd Anderson; Japan: Pastor William Bernhardt; Latin America: Mr. Robert Grebe; Southeast Asia: Mr. James Haag

Miscellaneous Boards

Northwestern Publishing House: Prof. LeRoy Dobberstein, Mr. Duane Kuehl, Mr. Elmer Wohlers

Board for Parish Services: Teacher Jason Nelson, Mr. Roger Frey, Mr. Victor Manion

Coordinating Council: Mr. Marc Frey, Mr. Don Schuppe

Board for Worker Training: Mr. Peter Westra

Board of Trustees: Mr. David Williams, Pastor John Seifert, Mr. Michael Jacobson, Mr. Robert Bartz

Chairmen

Board for Parish Services: Pastor Forrest Bivens

Commission on Parish Schools: Teacher David Fehlauer

Commission on Youth Discipleship: Pastor Allen Zahn

Commission on Adult Discipleship: Prof. David Valleskey

Commission on Evangelism: Pastor James Huebner

Commission on Special Ministries: Mr. Richard Raabe

Commission on Worship: Pastor Victor Prange

Board for Worker Training: Pastor Douglas Engelbrecht

Board for Home Missions: Pastor Kenneth Gast

Board for World Missions: Pastor William Meier

Board of Trustees: Pastor William Gabb

Boards of Control

Northwestern College and Northwestern Preparatory School: Mr. Arnold Schumann, Mr. Ormal Kiessling, Mr. Gary Baumgarten

Michigan Lutheran Seminary: Pastor Kenneth Strack, Mr. Thomas Arras

Dr. Martin Luther College: Pastor Roger Woller, Mr. Robert Hinnenthal

Martin Luther Preparatory School: Pastor Roland Zimmermann, Teacher Bruce Fehlauer, Mr. David Lindemann

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary: Pastor Paul Kolander, Mr. Franklin Woldt

The mustard seed and the yeast

Matthew 13:31-33

by Mark E. Braun

If you had ventured a guess about the future of Jesus' kingdom two-thirds of the way through his ministry, how optimistic would you have been?

He grew up in a despised province of the Roman empire. He was born before his mother's marriage had become official. He did not appear publicly until he was thirty years old, and then he spent most of his ministry time in the commercialized and more heathen northern Israel, away from the religious power center in Jerusalem. After two years he'd gathered a dozen unimpressive disciples and gained a few converts, mostly among the poor and the unlearned. During the last year of his public life he generated such passionate opposition from both the moneyed aristocracy and from religious fundamentalists that they joined forces — an unlikely alliance! — to have him painfully, shamefully executed.

Who would ever predict that from such bleak beginnings a great kingdom would grow?

Jesus did. "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and planted in his field. Though it is the smallest of all your seeds, yet when it grows, it is the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and perch in its branches."

A man reaches into a seed packet with two fingertips and takes out one seed, a seed so tiny that it takes hundreds of them to make a gram. If one's eyes are poor, one needs glasses even to see it. But when it is put in the earth it grows into a great shrub, and a fat sparrow, who has picked hundreds of these tiny seeds for his breakfast, can teeter on its branches.

The prophet Ezekiel compared Assyria with a giant cedar tree that "towered higher than all the trees of the field" (Ezekiel 31:5). Nebuchadnezzar pictured Babylon as a tree in the middle of the land, whose "top touched the sky, it was visible to the ends of the earth," and "the birds of the air lived in its branches" (Daniel 4:11,12).

How optimistic would you have been about Jesus' ministry?

But who would ever suppose the Nazarene's kingdom would grow so great, so vast, so strong?

Man makes noisy beginnings — like the tower of Babel — only to achieve disappointing results. God starts small and builds grand. "God creates out of nothing," Martin Luther said once. "Therefore until a man is nothing, God can make nothing out of him."

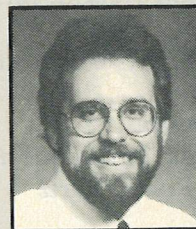
Jesus' kingdom grows on the outside, where eyes can see, but it also grows inside, in hearts. "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed into a large amount of flour, until it worked all through the dough." Yeast is frequently used in the Bible as a symbol for sin; when Paul warned, "A little yeast works through the whole batch of dough" (1 Corinthians 5:6), he was referring to the invasive, lethal force of unchecked sin.

But Jesus here is talking about good growth. As yeast warms and penetrates all the dough, so the Holy Spirit works through and through a person and brings the kingdom — the gracious rule of Jesus — into all the flesh and fibers of one's being.

Jesus said the yeast would work "all through the dough." The kingdom will work its way through all of a person, and ultimately to every person. Paul made a prediction, equally unlikely, about how Jesus' kingdom would finally triumph. "At the name of Jesus every knee [will] bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue [will] confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:10,11).

If it is living, it is growing. The parables of the mustard seed and the yeast teach us we can expect Jesus' kingdom to grow.

Next: The hidden treasure and the pearl



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

“Fun and games” in the church

Two respected authors have expressed serious concerns about a new virus infecting us as a nation. It's called amusement dependency.

Malcolm Muggeridge, the British journalist and TV personality, said in an interview shortly before his death that he saw the end of western civilization looming on the horizon. His interviewer asked him on what grounds he had come to that conclusion. He offered a number of reasons. One of them was the excessive need for excitement, “vicarious excitement which television provides for our population.” In conclusion he noted, “Above all, there is this truly terrible thing which afflicts materialist societies — boredom, an excessive boredom which I note on every hand.”

Similarly, author Frank Peretti (*This Present Darkness*) has expressed concern about a triple threat we face in America today. One is a “dependency on amusement and a deficient attention span.” A second threat is a “movement away from language to image,” and the third is a “reduction of thinking and discussion.”

Peretti believes that America was once a much more literate society than it is today. People shared ideas through the written word. Language and the specific meaning of words were important. But we're losing that. In America today, Peretti observed, “there's no business but show business.” People want to be entertained, and they get bored quickly if they aren't constantly entertained. It's as though people are saying: don't make me think; make me laugh.

The virus of amusement dependency also poses a threat to the church. A growing number of churchgoers are opting for church services which promise to entertain rather than to glorify God and to edify his people. For them the medium is more important than the message.

The number of churches willing to sacrifice their heritage to accommodate those who want to be entertained is growing steadily. They close their eyes to the fact that the proper focus of worship is God, not man. Their agenda for worship is determined by what the audience wants rather than by what pleases the Lord. They advertise their services as a time for fun and excitement.

Admittedly, worship forms are not prescribed in the Scriptures. But anyone who truly knows God in Christ ought to know that he doesn't invite us to worship so that we can be entertained. The directive to “worship God in the beauty of holiness” hardly seems like a rubric for finding ways to make worship another opportunity for fun and games.

Joel C. Gerlach



Joel Gerlach
is pastor of St. John,
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.

Call us

My family drives over 18 miles to worship, often in two or more cars. We generally pass within a half mile of the downtown hotels and motels and can pass others by taking alternate routes. Others drive further. I'm convinced the same applies to many congregations.

I feel secure in speaking for my congregation and the majority of congregations in the hinterlands. Let us help you whenever you are in our town or anywhere fairly close. Call us. We'll gladly pick you up and take you back and you won't be imposing a bit. Come to think of it, why not try it in the "interlands"?

*William Katzinski
Louisville, Kentucky*

Don't become complacent

The article on the church growth movement by David Valleskey (May 15) was excellent and timely. *US News and World Report* in the June 10 issue ran an article on the gospel and sex. This article quotes Rev. Todd Wetzel of Shaker Heights, Ohio, that to accept homosexual acts "would mean we have ignored the Bible and that the church is deciding to leave people in their sin." A wise commentary from a secular magazine.

Valleskey states, "Take away the offence — the message of sin and sal-

vation, law and gospel — and you have taken away Christianity." This applies not only to new members and the unchurched. We Christians also need to be admonished and nurtured; yes, even Wisconsin Synod members need this. God grant us pastors and teachers who do not let us become complacent in our sins. As Valleskey states, we do not want a creed of never having to say no to yourself.

Thanks for the good article.

*Bill Hanson
LaCrosse, Wisconsin*

THE BIBLE IN 365 READINGS

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

- Oct. 1** Isaiah 46 — 48:22; Psalm 118
2 Is 49 — 53:12
3 Is 54 — 57:21; Psalm 145
4 Is 58 — 62:12
5 Is 63 — 66:24
6 Jonah; Nahum
7 Obadiah; Zephaniah
8 Jeremiah 1 — 4:4
9 Jer 4:5 — 6:30
10 Jer 7 — 9:26
11 Jer 10 — 13:27
12 Jer 14 — 17:27
13 Jer 18 — 21:14
14 Jer 22 — 24:10
15 Jer 25 — 27:22
16 Jer 28 — 31:2
17 Jer 31:3 — 33
18 Jer 34 — 36
19 Jer 37 — 41:3
20 Jer 41:4 — 45:5
21 Jer 46 — 48:47
22 Jer 49 — 50:46
23 Jer 51 — 52:34
24 Lamentations 1 — 3:39
25 Lm 3:40 — 5:22; Ps 79
26 Ps 25; Ezekial 1 — 3:27
27 Eze 4 — 7:27; Ps 88
28 Eze 8 — 11:25
29 Eze 12 — 15:8
30 Eze 16 — 17:24
31 Eze 18 — 20:44

NOTICES**REQUEST FOR COLLOQUY**

David T. Sweet, Prescott Valley, Ariz., formerly a pastor of the Church of the Lutheran Confession, desires to re-enter the pastoral ministry of the WELS by colloquy. Correspondence relative to the request for colloquy should be addressed to President Marcus C. Nitz, 13741 Newhope St., Garden Grove CA 92643.

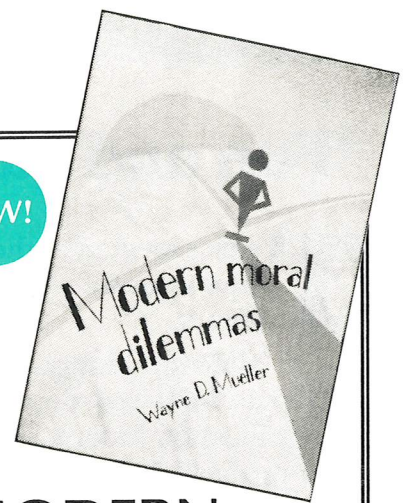
ANNIVERSARIES

DAVENPORT, IOWA — Gethsemane (25th). Gathering November 9, 5:30-8:00 p.m. Services November 10, 10:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Snacks after 10:30 service, dinner after 4:00 p.m. service. Contact Anniversary Committee, 2410 E. 32 St., Davenport IA 52807.

ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO — Shepherd (25th); September 29. Services at 8:15 and 10:30 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Please send addresses of former members to T. A. Schulz, 3905 General Bradley NE, Albuquerque NM 87111.

MANITOWOC, WISCONSIN — St. John (140th) Oct. 27, 9:30 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. Luncheon between services. 7531 English Lake Road, Manitowoc WI 54220; 414/758-2201.

NEENAH, WISCONSIN — Martin Luther Church (50th) November 17. Services at 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. Banquet at 12:00 noon at Valley Inn, 105 Walnut Street, Neenah. Contact church office at 414/725-1330 or Mel Salle 414/725-9190.

NEW!**MODERN MORAL DILEMMAS**

By Wayne D. Mueller

Modern Moral Dilemmas is a reprint of another popular series of articles that appeared in the *Northwestern Lutheran* under the title "Contemporary Moral Issues." Pastor Mueller treats over a dozen commonly faced issues including human sexuality, pre-marital relationships, family planning, the environment, drug abuse, and single life in a manner which is easy to understand and which is based on the truths of Scripture. He shows that the Bible is relevant to the common affairs of life. These short studies on contemporary moral issues are designed to meet the challenges of today's living. They remind us that nothing good happens in the life of the Christian without the power and motive of the cross of Christ. 72 pages. Paperback.

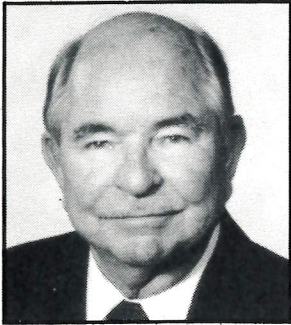
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*I am proposing
the next twelve
months as a
Jubilee year.*

Thanks to a father who was active in synodical affairs, I have attended 52 years of synod conventions. I was a lad of 17 when I tagged along with my dad to the first one in 1939. Since then I have missed only one convention in its entirety. On the basis of such credentials, I suppose, one could claim some modest authority status on WELS conventions.

Running through all these conventions there were several characteristics which I have isolated. First of all, they were very solemn affairs. Not unexpected, at all: Teutons are not noted for their humor. I recently read a remark about that long-standing characteristic from James Jackson, *Time's* Bonn bureau chief. "Perhaps Germans," Jackson observed, "are not meant to be happy people. I want to tell my German friends, 'Lighten up, Mensch, count your blessings.'"

A second characteristic. Most conventions were crisis-driven. Conventions were repeatedly faced with crises which hung like doomsday over the delegates. The 1991 convention had its own brace of crises: the merging of the prep school system and the synod's declining mission offerings. This customary ratcheting of issues to crisis levels is done presumably to capture the attention of the delegates and to transform them — upon their return home — into passionate messengers of impending disaster *unless*. . . .

The crisis technique has not been proven effective. Unless something extraordinary intervened, it was business as usual when the delegates returned to their home turf. Most delegates considered their tour of duty over when they had attended the convention, listened to the debates, and voted their common sense.

Based on this 52 years of experience, I am proposing a new turn. Conceding that I am two years late, I offer the next twelve months — October 1, 1991, to September 30, 1992 — as a Jubilee year. Based on Old Testament precedents (Leviticus 25), the year will be a year of rejoicing in the goodness of the Lord. Every day of it. Every minute of it. Not for one hour will we forget the theme of this Jubilee year: *If God be for us, who can be against us.*

I further propose that each day, every day, none excluded, is to begin with a liturgy of thanksgiving: *This is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it* (Psalm 118:24). Let us join the noble company of Luther who said, "This is my psalm which I love. . . . For it has delivered me from many a sore affliction when neither the emperor nor kings nor the wise nor the cunning nor the saints were able or willing to help me."

So let's lift our attention from crises, and in this Jubilee year let the goodness of God soak into our bones. With God at our side we are never losers, never, always winners, no matter who is keeping score. And let the words of *Time's* Bonn bureau chief echo in our Germanic heads: "Lighten up, Mensch, count your blessings."

James P. Schaefer



Mission society meets in Toledo

by Nancy Wollenweber Sheets

Missionaries from Taiwan, Puerto Rico, and Canada were the featured speakers at the 28th annual national convention of the Lutheran Women's Missionary Society (LWMS).

Over 800 women from across the United States attended the convention in Toledo, Ohio, on June 28-30.

The purpose of LWMS is to increase interest and support for the mission work of our 420,000 member synod. Since its organization in 1964, the LWMS has donated over \$600,000 for mission work.

A highlight of the Friday evening service was a choir of over 100 voices directed by Dorcus Hantula, which sang an original composition written for the convention by Hilda Schuster.

Following the opening service, LWMS president Jean Rindal accepted a \$40,000 check from Aid Association for Lutherans. The money will help congregations and circuits develop programs to promote missions, membership, and interest in LWMS.

On Saturday morning, Pastor Jerome Spaude, who was called to a one-year ministry in Alberta, Canada, and his wife, Lily, explained how they helped St. Paul, Calgary, with its mission outreach.

Missionary John Strackbein from Puerto Rico said the people of San Juan are religious, but don't know Jesus is their only way to heaven. "Catholicism is part of their culture," Strackbein said. "If they join the Lutheran church, they are considered breaking out of their culture which they love so much."

Missionary Ralph Jones of Taiwan said religion is an important part of life to the Taiwan people, with Buddhism the main religion. "It is a religion based on fear. They are afraid of being punished if they don't worship their gods," Jones said. Joining the

Jones family in their work in Taipei is lay worker LeAnn Eyer- man and Missionary Siirila and family.

The LWMS donated \$24,929.53 for the synod's home mission information outreach fund. Another \$24,929.52 was given to the world mission language fund. Projects chosen for 1991 are the world mission Latin American vicar program and church planters workshops.

The offerings received at the Friday evening worship service totaled over \$4,300. The campus ministry project fund, and the world mission film and publicity fund equally shared the offerings.

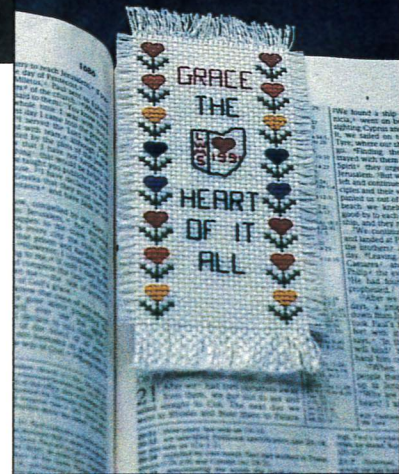
During the business meeting, President Jean Rindal passed the gavel to the new president, Karen Bauer. Elaine Otterstatter, is president-elect and Betty Kloha was elected spiritual growth laywoman.

Beverly Pankow was reelected treasurer and Pastor John Gawrisch was reelected spiritual growth pastor.

Next year's convention will be held in Orlando, Fla.



Nancy Wollenweber Sheets is a free-lance writer and a member of Arlington Ave. Church, Toledo, Ohio.



Top: LWMS convention delegates and visitors viewed mission displays.

Lower: Each convention participant received a cross-stitched bookmark. Designed by Cheryl Kretz of Jenera, Ohio, the bookmark featured the convention theme. Women from four states stitched the keepsakes.