

Why don't we stop calling ourselves Lutheran? p.6

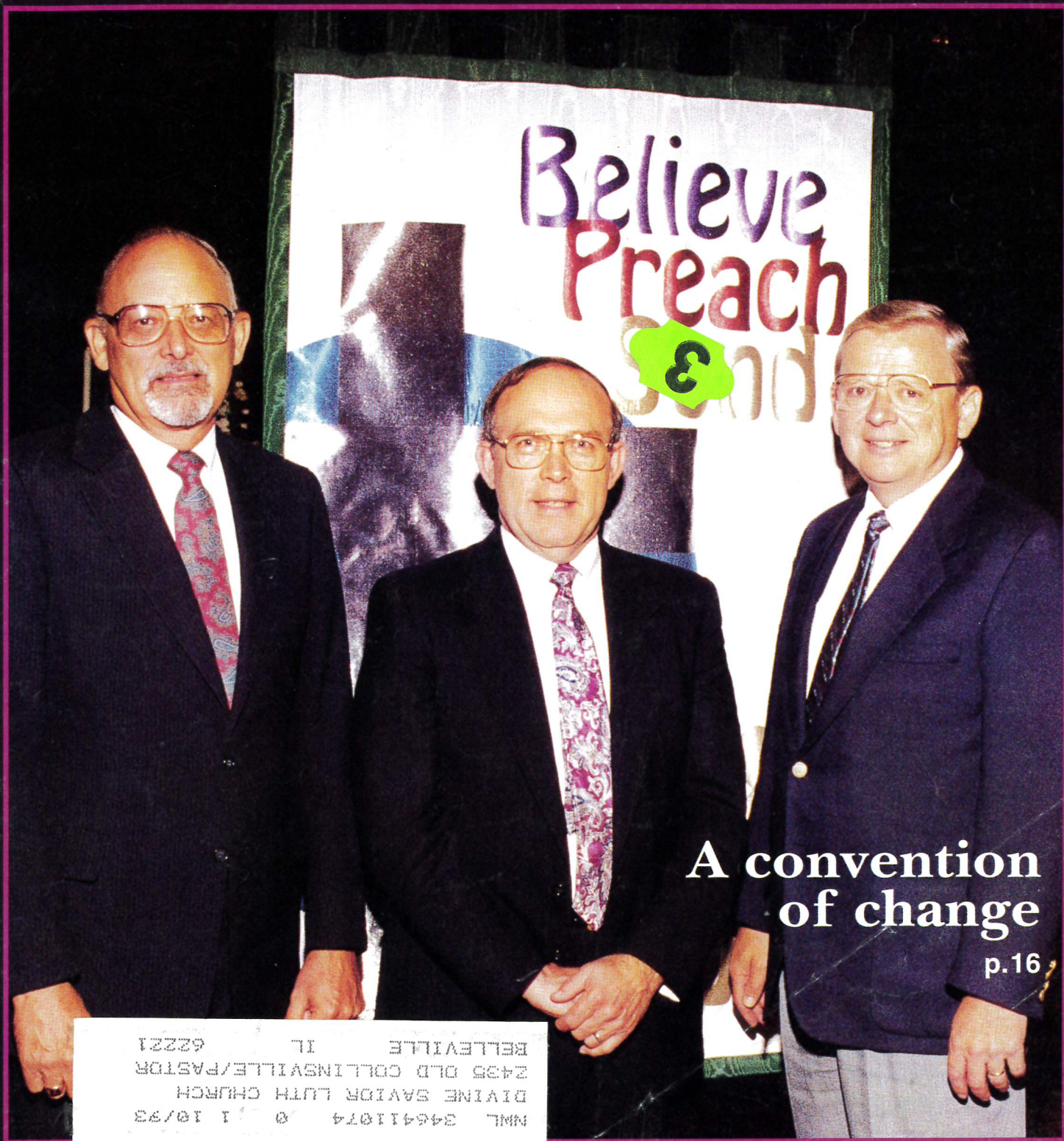
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NORTHWESTERN

October 1993

# LUTHERAN



A convention of change

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**1** The Lord is my shepherd,  
I shall not be in want.  
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he leads me beside quiet waters,  
he restores my soul.  
He guides me in paths of righteousness  
for his name's sake.

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To be confident of being a partner with the one who is unalterably holy and who unswervingly requires righteousness in his ranks need not be presumptuous.

To qualify us for such a significant role, he brought our race into existence reflecting his image, his holy nature. We are not the result of fluke animation of proteins in a universe of chaos and chance. Everyone who inhabits the Creator's planet is a work of his craftsmanship with a purpose to fulfill as components in his design.

A role, it is acknowledged, we have forfeited in a bid to give ourselves space to implement our own warped values. But astoundingly, a role for which he restored us by assigning his eternal Son to cancel our ineligibility through his own perfect record and total atonement.

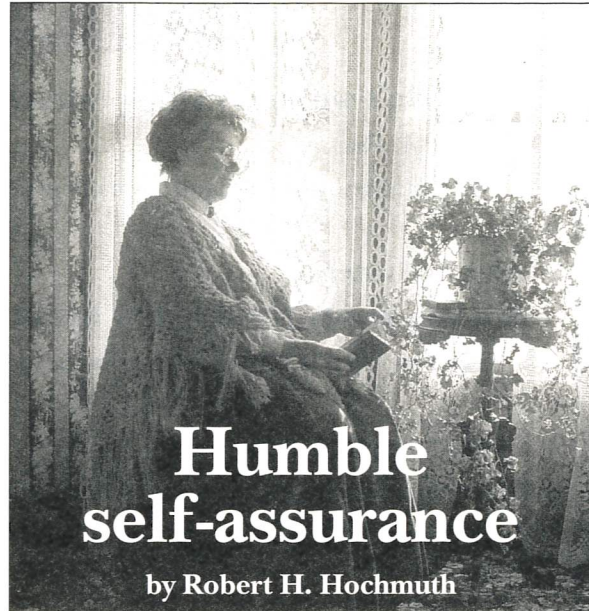
Under a precise Maker's design and a flawless Redeemer's success each one of us is invited to recognize a genuine self-regard. It's not in how I evaluate myself, or how I compare with others; it is in what my Creator and Savior has achieved and credited to my account. It is in what he has designated me: forgiven and restored. I am his.

### Humble

But the way I think and act often contradicts what my God recruited me for. In his sight I will never be able to claim any worth or merit on the basis of my record. And the conflict is deeper than just what I do; it's a matter of what my inherited nature still is: self-centered, self-seeking, self-indulgent—nudging what pleases me ahead of what pleases God.

Consequently, any genuine assurance I enjoy about my worth in his world surfaces out of a deeply humble heart. To be more precise, not just humble; rather, nothing less than penitent. That means admitting my offenses offend; owning up to what is at odds with what my Savior desires, and then turning back to him for real, not theoretical, forgiveness.

The apparent paradox is that acknowledging our faults before God, rather than excusing or concealing



MRS. KEVIN SCHEBEL PHOTOGRAPHY

## Humble self-assurance

by Robert H. Hochmuth

*Walk humbly with your God  
(Micah 6:8).*

them, is good for genuine self-regard. It opens our minds to the fact that we need to rely anew on the testimony of his enduring mercy which restores convicts and traitors and lifts nobodies to the status of somebodies and heirs in his presence.

There is humility in genuine self-assurance not solely in view of God's just norm of perfect righteousness which we all lack on our own, but also in view of his conclusive verdict of certified righteousness being credited to us as a gift on the basis of what Jesus has done in our place. On that sure footing we can stand with the chief of sinners who made his "boast in the Lord" and penned the humble, but notable asser-

tion: by the grace of God I am what I am.

### Assured

I don't have to guess. His inspired word tells me what he thinks of me, and he invites me to draw close and to get more familiar with him, with his voice, and with his ways. He does not just tolerate us; the prophet's words intimate the Lord of the universe welcomes each of us to call him, "my God," and to walk with him. John likewise bids us revel in the love God has lavished on us, designating us the children of God.

What an incentive for worshipping our majestic and merciful Father, and for devotion to his will. I don't have to try to find self-worth in performing for people's expectations. I have it in the dignity God confers, and genuine satisfaction springs from doing whatever I do as I remember I am his beloved. What a spark for igniting my best efforts, without any anxiety about trying to earn his favor. I have it. The most valid self-assurance arises not primarily from public attention to what I perform, but from his private assurance about who I am.



Robert Hochmuth is pastor of St. Andrew, Sacramento, California.

May the Lord our God be with us  
as he was with our fathers;  
may he never leave us  
nor forsake us. 1 Kings 8:57

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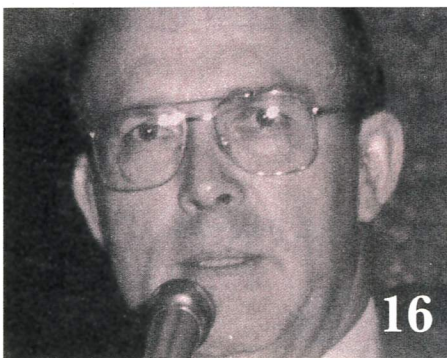
■ This issue contains a summary of the 1993 synod convention (see page 16). The minutes and reports describe the business carried on; what they don't tell are the Christian fellowship and fun, the pleasure of seeing old friends and meeting new ones, the joy and inspiration of worship—all blessings of a church convention. Nor do the minutes report on the hard work of those behind the scenes, especially the staff at Michigan Lutheran Seminary (the site of the convention), who put in long hours before and during the convention to make their guests feel welcome.

■ We can no longer think of multicultural mission work as something only world missionaries need to be concerned with as America, especially its urban areas, increasingly becomes a multi-ethnic country, says Prof. John Brug. In the first of a series of articles on multicultural ministry, Brug discusses why we need to be ready to change some of our traditions so that we can share the gospel with those of other cultures. His article begins on page 10. For this and more—forward.

Dorothy Sonntag



Sharing the gospel with other cultures.



Karl R. Gurgel is elected as the new WELS president.



Honoring Luther's faith and confession.

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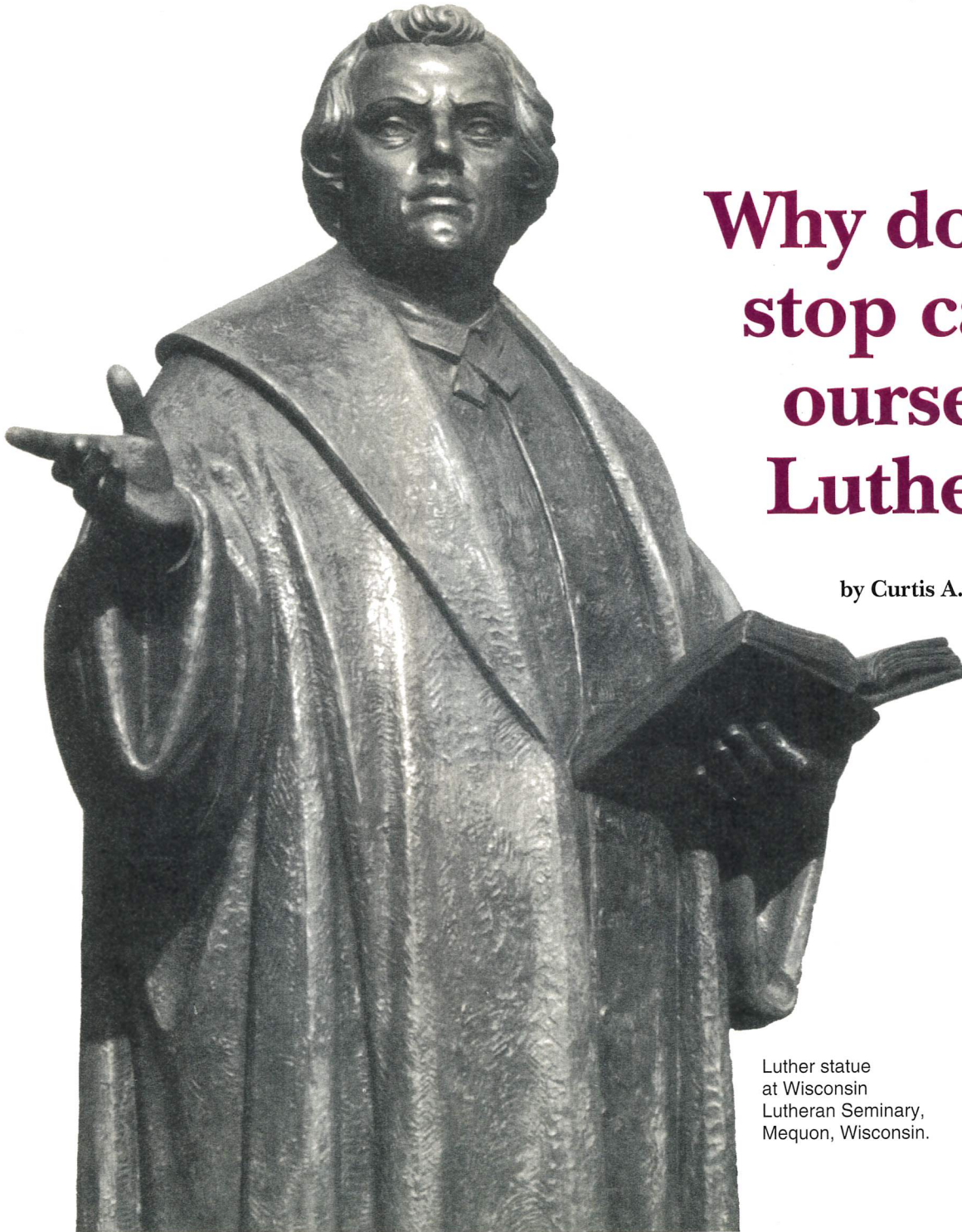
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# Why don't we stop calling ourselves Lutheran?

by Curtis A. Peterson

Luther statue  
at Wisconsin  
Lutheran Seminary,  
Mequon, Wisconsin.

**I**n an effort to reach the unchurched, some Lutherans are opting to avoid labeling themselves as Lutheran when starting new churches. In one midwestern community a Lutheran mission took the name "Family of Faith Christian Church." Others call themselves community churches

or take some other non-denominational name.

## **There is a reason for the name**

When you think of it, no other mainline church body bears a person's name. Some names designate a form of church government—Presbyterian,

Congregational, Episcopal. Others focus on a distinctive doctrine—Baptist, Holiness, Pentecostal. Many fast growing congregations adopt generic names such as Faith Fellowship, Grace Community, Fellowship Bible Church, or are named after the community (Elmbrook, Willow Creek Community Church).

Some denominational names—Church of Christ, Church of God, Nazarene, the Holy Catholic Apostolic Roman Church, or even Jehovah's Witnesses—claim too much, implying that they are the one true church on earth. One is tempted to say there is an inverse ratio between the universality of the name and the sectarian nature of the theology.

For better or worse, we bear the name of Martin Luther. Yet Paul warned against a party spirit which follows mere men. "One of you says, 'I follow Paul'; another, 'I follow Apollos'; another, 'I follow Cephas'; still another, 'I follow Christ.' Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Were you baptized into the name of Paul?" (1 Corinthians 1:12-13).

After his enemies hurled the epithet "Lutheran" at his followers, Luther insisted, "I ask that men make no reference to my name and call themselves, not Lutherans, but Christians. What is Luther? After all, the doctrine is not mine, nor have I been crucified for anyone. Paul, in 1 Corinthians 3, would not allow Christians to call themselves Pauline or Petrine, but Christian. How then should I—poor stinking maggot-fodder that I am—come to have men call the children of Christ by my wretched name? Not so, my dear friends; let us abolish all party names and call ourselves Christians, after him whose teachings we hold."

### Few alternatives

If we don't call ourselves Lutheran, what shall we use instead? The early members of the church of the Augsburg Confession preferred the name "Evangelical," but conservative Reformed Christians have preempted this term in our day. We want a name which describes our theology and confesses our faith, without claiming to be the only church that offers salvation (as names like "Christian," "Church of Christ," and even "Catholic" might imply).

Denominational names are necessary for the same reason denominations are necessary: there are many false prophets and false teachers and we are required to distinguish the false from the true. These names become banners of faith.

The errors of our age require us to tell the world what we believe in an unambiguous manner. Luther himself warned us that repudiating the name Lutheran could imply repudiation of his doctrine.

"Certainly," he wrote, "you should confess yourself a Christian. But if you are convinced that Luther's teaching is in accord with the gospel and that the pope's is not, then you should not discard Luther so completely, lest you discard also his teaching, which you nevertheless recognize as Christ's teaching."

Although one would be hard pressed to say that using a name other than Lutheran is unbiblical, the refusal to this title could involve deception and may involve a denial of Luther's scriptural doctrine. What is the motivation behind it? In an age where denominational loyalties mean less and less, can we shed our name without implying that we are ashamed of sound Lutheran doctrine?

Frankly, there are times when we are embarrassed by this name because of the errors some have taught under this banner. Sadly, many Lutherans have denied the existence of hell, the personal reality of Satan, and even that Jesus is the only way to heaven. According to many Lutherans, the Bible contains myths, legends, and even doctrinal errors. Lutherans here and in Europe have cast doubt on the virgin birth, the miracles of the Bible, and even the resurrection. Unfortunately, the name on the church sign does not guarantee that the doctrine confessed is that of the Bible or the Lutheran Confessions.

### We are not ashamed of the name

If we no longer hold the doctrines of Luther we should certainly no longer call ourselves Lutherans. Those who confess Lutheran doctrine, however, proudly call themselves Lutherans for the sake of the doctrine he proclaimed. Hebrews 13:7 reminds us to "Remember your leaders, who spoke the word of God to you. Consider the outcome of their way of life and imitate their faith." We realize Luther sinned and deserved God's anger as we all do, but our name honors his faith and confession.

Paul exhorted Timothy to "not be ashamed to testify about our Lord, or ashamed of me his prisoner. But join with me in suffering for the gospel, by the power of God, who has saved us and called us to a holy life—not because of anything we have done but because of his own purpose and grace" (2 Timothy 1:8-9).

Likewise we are not ashamed of Luther, and for the sake of the gospel and the truth of God's word we joyfully and enthusiastically call ourselves Lutheran.



*Curtis Peterson is pastor of Resurrection, Milwaukee.*

**I**t was one mountain-top worship experience after another. First came the synod convention, where our new WELS hymnal, *Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal* was formally presented to the synod's president and used for all the convention worship.

Right after the convention, about 120 WELS pastors, teachers, and church musicians from all parts of the United States met in Milwaukee for two and one-half days to prepare to introduce the new hymnal to the synod.

#### The hymnal is here

We examined new features, such as orders for baptism, marriage, and funerals. We sang many of the new hymns. We explored and experienced the role of the organ and choir in worship. We acquainted ourselves with the five orders of worship in *Christian Worship*.

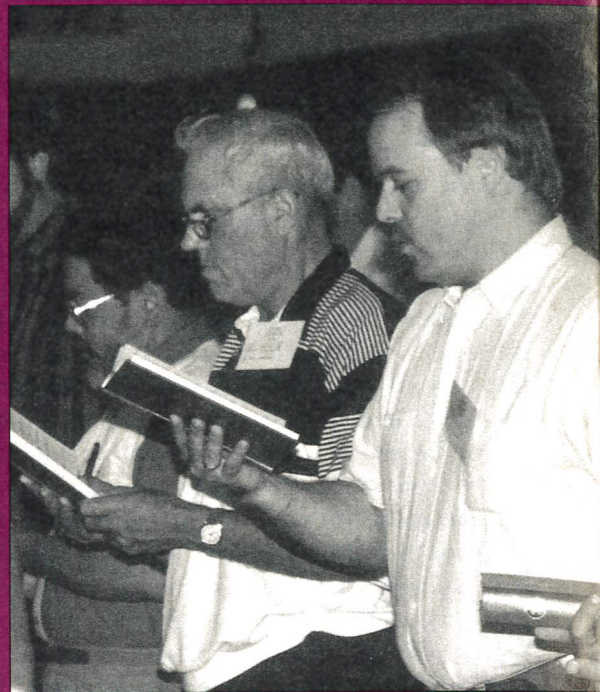
But we didn't just talk about the hymnal; we used it. We didn't just discuss worship; we worshipped. We came away enthusiastic. The synod's Joint Hymnal Committee succeeded in producing a hymnal that will more than adequately carry us into the 21st century, a hymnal that succeeds in being contemporary while maintaining historical ties with the church's worship over the centuries.

The hymnal is here. It's ready to be used. It has been shipped to many congregations. The delegates to the synod convention and the participants at the Milwaukee meeting, along with many others, are eagerly anticipating its use.

#### What if we're not ready?

Most likely, not all members of the WELS are awaiting the arrival of *Christian Worship* with such enthusiasm. Some congregations, some individuals, may have reservations and apprehensions. Some tend to be uneasy about anything new. Some feel they don't know enough about the hymnal to make a decision about replacing *The Lutheran Hymnal* with it. Others perhaps, who may have had negative experiences in the past, tend to equate change with decay.

A single *Northwestern Lutheran* article can hardly



## Are you ready for

by David J. Valleskey

hope to allay all misgivings. Two things can be stated with confidence, however.

For one thing, the committee was committed to producing a doctrinally sound hymnal. If a new hymn or liturgical song's message was not scriptural and in keeping with evangelical Lutheran teaching, the committee looked elsewhere.

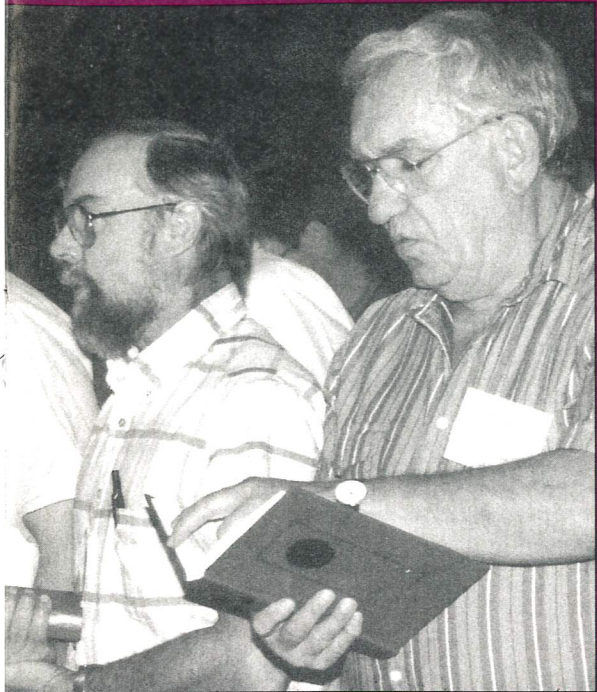
Second, the committee made a concerted effort to follow the synod's directive that the new hymnal be a revised hymnal. *Christian Worship* is not new in the sense that the old has been thrown out. More than two thirds of the hymns in *Christian Worship* were taken from *The Lutheran Hymnal*. In some cases the language has been modernized, but the message has remained the same.

#### Using the new hymnal

The best way to alleviate concerns, however, is not to read about the new hymnal, but to use it. To that end I'd like to offer a few suggestions:

- The participants in the Milwaukee meeting are conducting one-day *Introduction to Christian Worship* meetings in all the circuits of the synod. Most of the





## the new hymnal?

meetings will be held on Saturdays during October. One purpose of the meetings is to give undecided people and congregations an opportunity to experience the hymnal firsthand. Ask your pastor about the location of the circuit meeting closest to you.

- Second, the Hymnal Introduction Committee has produced a booklet, *Christian Worship: An Introduction*, which will be used at the circuit meetings. Several copies will be given to each congregation.

Congregations not ready to purchase *Christian Worship* immediately might form a worship committee to plan for the hymnal's eventual use. The committee may want to make use of the introductory booklet and gradually introduce some of the elements of *Christian Worship* into the Sunday services. In that way the congregation can be prepared little by little for the day when *The Lutheran Hymnal* is replaced with *Christian Worship*.

### What Luther says about worship

Not all congregations need to use the same hymnal. Luther, with his keen understanding and appreciation of the freedom in which the Christian lives,

writes regarding the order of service he devised to be used along with the traditional Latin Mass:

I would kindly and for God's sake request all those who see this order of service or desire to follow it: Do not make it a rigid law to bind or entangle anyone's conscience, but use it in Christian liberty, as long, when, where, and how you find it to be practical and useful.

On another occasion Luther wrote:

Even if different people make use of different rites, let no one judge or despise the other, but every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.

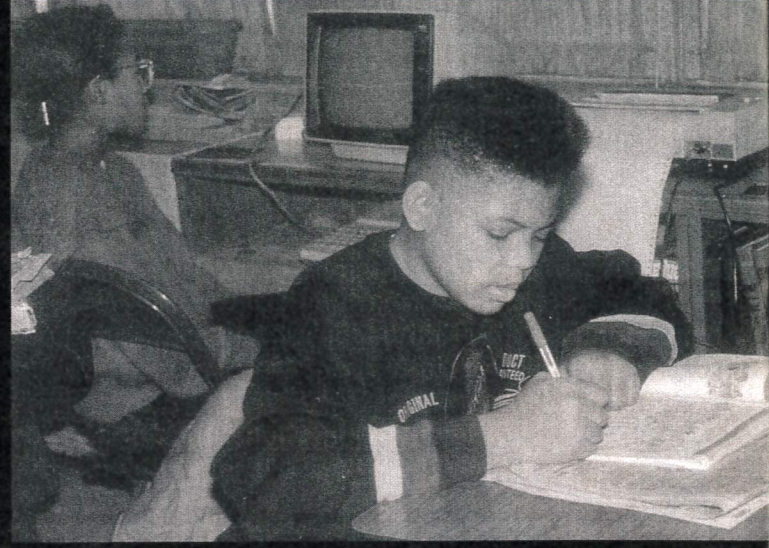
Yet Luther also wisely cautioned against a misuse of Christian freedom through a proliferation of worship forms which result in confusing God's people:

Some have the best intentions, but others have no more than an itch to produce something novel so that they might shine before men as leading lights, rather than being ordinary teachers—as is always the case with Christian liberty: very few use it for the glory of God and the good of the neighbor; most use it for their own advantage and pleasure. . . . We must make sure that freedom shall be and remain a servant of love and of our fellow-man. Where the people are perplexed and offended by differences in liturgical usage, we are certainly bound to forego our freedom. . . . As far as possible we should observe the same rites and ceremonies, just as all Christians have the same baptism and the same sacrament.

The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod has chosen *Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal*. May all our congregations come to recognize the worth of *Christian Worship* and find it to be a real asset to worship.



David Valleskey teaches pastoral theology and New Testament at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin, and is chairman of the hymnal introduction committee.



## SHARING THE GOSPEL

**C**ommunicating the gospel creates tension. The proclamation of free forgiveness clashes with the work-righteous spirit natural to all people. The Bible's uncompromising verdict against sin offends the moral sensibilities of people everywhere. God's law and gospel arouse opposition whenever and wherever they confront human culture.

This unavoidable conflict between God's culture and human culture becomes entangled with other sources of tension whenever we share the gospel with members of a different culture. Differences in language create misunderstandings. Different customs and life styles result in disagreements. Sinful pride in the assumed superiority of one's own culture or scorn and prejudice toward people of "inferior" cultures increase the tension.

### **Bridging the cultural divide**

Tensions between different cultures will never be entirely eliminated as long as this earth remains. Nevertheless, the tension can be lessened by learning to understand and appreciate other ethnic groups. Strife can be resolved through self-examination, repentance, and reconciliation. This requires effort, patience, and forgiveness by those on both sides of the cultural divide.

The relationship of Christianity to culture is complex. Christianity is always contracultural; it condemns some features of every human culture. This

was no less true for an Israelite of the 6th century BC than it is for a European today.

Christianity is also multicultural; it is intended for people of every race, language, nation, and tribe. When people become Christian, they remain members of their own ethnic group and wish to express their Christianity in ways which are natural to their own culture.

However, Christianity is also unicultural. It breaks down barriers that separate peoples and unites them in one church.

All Christian worship is cross-cultural, since Christians everywhere share a treasury of creeds and forms of worship. This was true for 1st century Greeks and 6th century German barbarians. It remains true for 20th century Americans, Asians, and Africans.

Keeping these four types of contact between Christianity and culture in balance is the challenge for people who are sharing the gospel across cultural boundaries.

### **Translating the message without changing the meaning**

Every effort to communicate the gospel across cultural lines involves communication between the culture of the biblical writer, of today's messenger, and of those who hear the message; and the Christian culture which all of them share. Although the teachings and moral standards from God's word are the same for all four cultures, the messenger must be careful to



PHOTO BY MRS. KEVIN SCHEIBEL PHOTOGRAPHY



PHOTO BY LOREN STEELE

# ACROSS CULTURES by John F. Brug

correctly “translate” the message from one culture to another without changing the meaning which God originally intended.

To do this, cross-cultural witnesses must understand the language and culture of the biblical writer well enough so that they can distinguish the message itself from features of the ancient writer’s background which may have been used in expressing it. They also need to recognize that their own traditions have shaped the way they express and celebrate their faith. They must then “translate” the unchanging message from the biblical culture into that of their hearers, without attaching unnecessary or inappropriate elements from their own culture.

Christian witnesses must be able to distinguish the unchangeable message from culturally conditioned ways of expressing faith and devotion. The message must always be the same. Different ways of expressing faith may or may not be shared across cultural lines, depending on whether they are edifying and meaningful.

## Sharing the gospel in America

To successfully translate the gospel across ethnic boundaries, Christians should observe the following principles:

- Above all else, be sure that the message is not changed as it is passed from one culture to another.
- Recognize that to keep that message clear, different vocabulary and different ways of expressing the

same truth may be necessary in different ethnic groups.

- People of different cultures may celebrate their joy in the gospel with very different styles of worship and devotion. We may be able to learn edifying new forms of devotion from others, just as they may learn from us.

- We should help Christians from other nationalities recognize particular areas in which their culture clashes with God’s will, but we should also be ready to learn from them, since they may recognize more clearly than we can the ways in which our culture leads us to compromise our faith.

We used to think of keeping all these concerns in balance as a problem for world missionaries, but it is becoming increasingly important for sharing the gospel here in America. The challenge of communicating the gospel between cultures becomes even more difficult when two or more ethnic groups are together in one congregation.

In a series of articles, our synod’s Multicultural Ministry Committee will address some of the issues raised by sharing the gospel across cultures. May the Lord increase our zeal to seize the opportunities and confront the challenges.



*John Brug teaches theology and Old Testament at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin.*



# The Gospels and Acts

## The good news and how it spread

by Roland Cap Ehlke

**T**he life of Jesus Christ is the focal point of history. In fulfillment of ancient prophecies, the long-awaited Savior had come to suffer, die, and rise again. He had come to destroy the power of sin, of death, and of this world's prince, the devil. He had come to win forgiveness and eternal life for our fallen race. Having accomplished all this, he left with the promise, "I shall return."

The Gospels, the first four books of the New Testament, recount these momentous events. The word gospel means "good news," and the writers of these books bear the title evangelist, a Greek word meaning "one who brings good news." The book of Acts relates how the good news spread during the first generation of Christians.

The first three Gospels are called "synoptic." The term refers to the fact that their approach is similar in many respects and they often record the same events. Yet within that similarity, each has his own distinct emphasis. All four Gospels emphasize Christ's suffering and death. As one theologian put it, they are "passion narratives with extended introductions."

While none of these books names its author, from earliest times Christians have known who the sacred writers were.

### Matthew—evangelist to the Jews

Matthew, also called Levi, had been a tax collector before he became one of Jesus' twelve disciples. Although he was not prominent among the twelve, he and John were the two disciples given the honor of recording for posterity the events of salvation history.

The Gospel of Matthew was originally aimed at a Jewish readership. This is evident from the fact that he frequently cites Old Testament prophecies (35 times), emphasizes Jesus' Jewish genealogy, and never bothers to explain Jewish practices or the geography of Palestine. Evidently his first readers were quite familiar with such information.

Matthew records the full Sermon on the Mount, devoting three entire chapters to that discourse (5—7).

### Mark—short and to the point

Unlike Matthew, Mark was not one of the original disciples. He became a close companion of Peter, and it's generally agreed that he received much of his

information about Jesus from Peter. Incidentally, the fact that the Bible writers did research and used human sources for their material in no way detracts from their inspiration. The Holy Spirit guided them to insure that what they did record was without error.

It's interesting that of the evangelists, Mark most boldly calls attention to Peter's weaknesses and sins, as when he denied Jesus. No doubt in true humility Peter approved of this.

Mark's is the shortest of the Gospels. The book's crisp, fast-moving style originally appealed to his intended readers, the action-minded Romans, just as it does to modern on-the-go readers. He frequently explains Jewish customs, such as the ceremonial washing of hands (7:1-4), for his non-Jewish readers. Only once does he quote from the Old Testament.

### Luke—detailed historian

Luke also was not one of the first disciples. Rather, he received his information from "those who from the first were eyewitnesses" (1:2). He was a doctor by trade and traveled with the Apostle Paul on some of his missionary journeys.

In order to "write an orderly account," Luke "carefully investigated everything" (1:3). His care for historical details is evident throughout the book, as when he specifically points out in his famous Christmas account, "In those days Caesar Augustus issued a decree. . . . (This was while Quirinius was governor of Syria)."

Like Mark, Luke wrote for an audience unfamiliar with the Old Testament. He first wrote his Gospel and the book of Acts to a man named Theophilus.

Jesus' stories of the good Samaritan, the prodigal son, and the Pharisee and the tax collector are unique to Luke. Toward the end of his Gospel, Luke records a couple of dramatic events not found in the other Gospels. One is the risen Savior's appearance to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus; the other is Jesus' ascension, although Mark mentions it in passing.

### John—"the disciple whom Jesus loved"

While never referring to himself by name, the author of the last Gospel speaks of himself a half dozen times as "the disciple whom Jesus loved."

Along with Peter and James, John formed an inner circle within the twelve. These three witnessed the raising of Jairus' daughter and the transfiguration. They were closest to Jesus during his suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane. And from the cross, Jesus entrusted the care of his mother Mary to John.

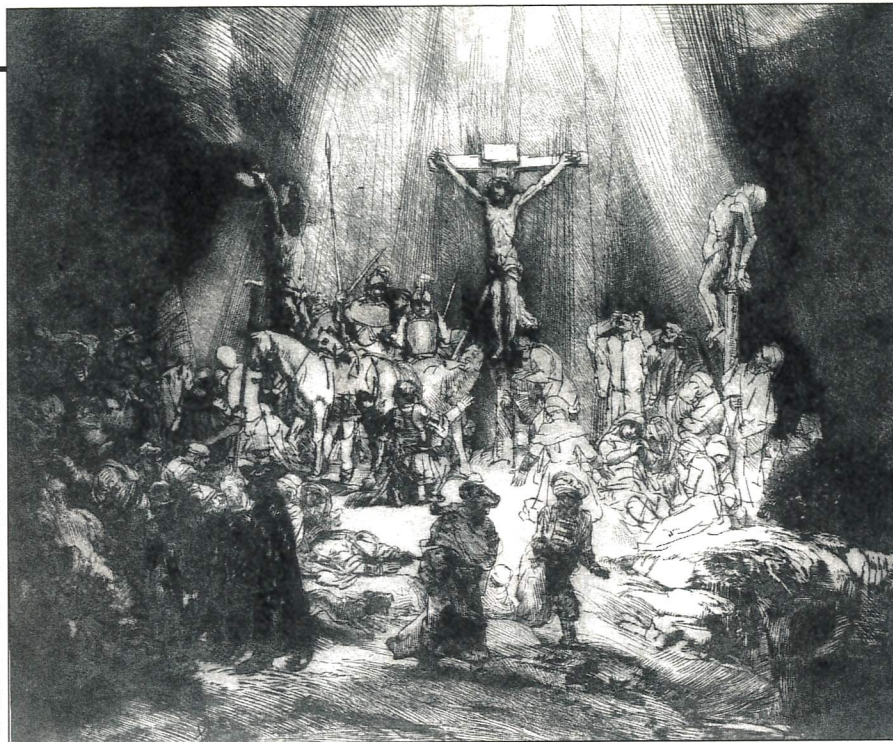
John probably wrote his Gospel toward the end of the first century, two or three decades after the other evangelists. He does not include much of the material they cover. Instead, he treats the ministry of Christ from a more theological viewpoint. The majestic introductory section, in which he describes Jesus as the eternal Word, is evidence of this: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (1:1). John emphasizes the divinity of Jesus.

John 3:16 is the gospel in a nutshell, "God so loved the world. . . ." In summarizing the purpose of his Gospel, John sums up the purpose of the entire Bible, "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" (20:31).

### Acts—to the ends of the earth

The Acts of the Apostles takes up where the Gospels leave off. Written by Luke, this book recounts the history of the early church. In its opening chapter, we see the risen Savior ascend into heaven. But before he does, he declares to his disciples, "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (1:8).

The rest of Acts describes the movement of the gospel out from Jerusalem. Like ripples from a stone cast into the water, we see the good news going out



Christ crucified is the focal point of the Gospels and, indeed, of all Scripture.

in ever-widening circles. By the book's final chapter, it has reached Rome, the world's capital and, in those days, its greatest city.

In a way, the book's title (which is not in the book itself) is a misnomer. Acts really isn't the story of

all the apostles. Rather, it focuses on the two towering leaders of the early church: chapters 1—12 on Peter, chapters 13—28 on Paul. The book covers the years from A.D. 30 to 62.

Acts contains many examples of Luke's eye for details. His description of the storm at sea and shipwreck is high drama (27). Along with Paul, Luke himself was on that exciting journey. When you read the book of Acts, look for the places where the author says that "we" did this or that. These sections describe those times in Paul's missionary journeys when Luke was along.

The early missionaries spread the good news with such enthusiasm that their enemies accused them of "causing trouble all over the world" (Acts 17:6).

Today God has entrusted the gospel of salvation to us. We need constantly to be renewed with this message. And then, as the first Christians did, we need to share the good news with the world.

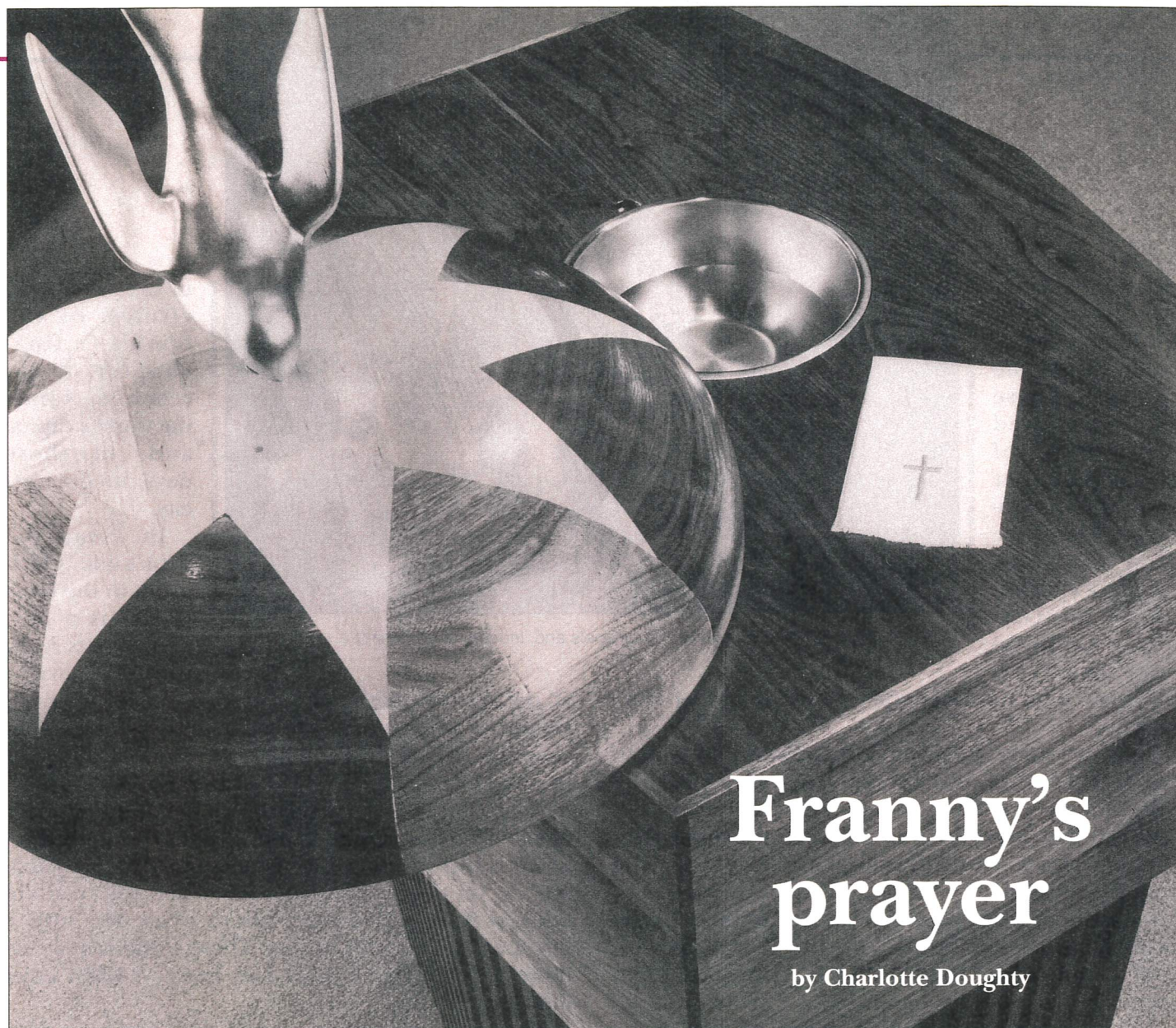
*Next:* The letters of Paul.

*(More information is available in The People's Bible commentary series, published by Northwestern Publishing House.*

*The Gospel volumes available are Mark and Luke. The Historic volume of Acts is also available. Books may be ordered by calling 1-800-662-6022; in the Milwaukee area call 475-6600.)*



Roland Cap Ehlke is an editor at Northwestern Publishing House.



# Franny's prayer

by Charlotte Doughty

“There are two things I’d like to see before I die,” the elderly lady muttered as I held her frail hand.

“What are those?” I asked.

“The dedication of the church and my darling Al baptized,” she said as tears rolled down her cheeks.

This was her prayer every day.

I first met Al and Frances when I visited them with our vicar. As we sat in the living room, Al went to get his wife. She sat in a chair beside us and smiled in our direction.

Frances was 81 years old. She was almost blind from glaucoma, was very hard of hearing, and had osteoporosis. She was in constant pain. She spent a great deal

of time in bed but would occasionally sit in a chair when she had company or when she ate. She loved to eat, but weighed only 83 pounds.

I was impressed by Franny's strong faith. She wasn't sure why she was still alive but knew there was a reason. She loved hearing about her Lord and listened attentively to devotions.

Her husband was not a Christian, but he loved company. When the pastor or vicar visited, he treated them with respect and was very cordial.

### Unanswered questions

Al was 79 and had never been to church except to marry Franny. When the vicar and pastor first started visiting them in 1986, Al would leave the room during the devotions.

When I first met them, Al was starting to listen even though he did not believe. He thought of the Bible as a history book and he was very interested in history.

"I don't believe everything I read in books," was his answer when I asked if he believed the Bible.

He started to ask questions about the Bible and about God—but the answers did not make sense to him, and he dismissed what he heard.

He could not understand why certain things happen in this world. Why were there starving children? If there was a God, children wouldn't starve.

He could not understand what sin was. He was a good man and, therefore, did not sin. After all, he took care of his first wife until she died and now he was taking care of Franny. And she took a lot of his time.

While Al was asking questions, Franny would quietly pray and hope that Al would understand and be baptized.

### A reason to live

That year Franny came to the dedication of our church and stayed for the potluck dinner. Even her pain and wheelchair did not prevent her. Al came also, because Franny wanted to go and she could not go without him.

For the next four years our pastor and vicars visited them and so did I. A special friendship developed between us. Sometimes we would have dinner together. Franny always managed to get to the table.

As the years progressed her condition grew worse. She came to the table in her wheelchair when she could not use her walker anymore. After a while, she was confined to bed. Every time I visited her she said the same thing.

"Please pray for my Al. He has never been baptized."

Al's answer was, "I am not going to get baptized just

because my wife wants me to. First, prove to me that there is a God. When I have that proof, then we'll talk about baptism."

In 1989 he finally agreed to have Bible studies with the vicar and myself. Every week for months we talked with Al. It was very discouraging, but we hoped that someday something would get through.

By this time Franny felt there was no hope for Al. She was in so much pain she wanted to die.

"Why does the good Lord keep me here? I want to go home with him." She would cry every time I saw her.

We told her God had a reason for keeping her on earth. She had a purpose in life. "Maybe it is to help Al," we told her.

Al finally hired a housekeeper to help care for his wife. Then he fell and broke his hip.

### Answered prayers

I'll never forget what happened when I visited them a week after he came home from the hospital.

Franny was asleep, so I talked to Al. He asked me to wake Franny up, because she would be upset if she heard later that I had been there.

Her housekeeper and I could not wake her. Al called the doctor, who cited the sleeping pills he had prescribed and said the best thing would be to let her sleep.

The next day the paramedics rushed her to the hospital. She was in a coma. At 87 years old and 63 pounds, Franny died. Al went to her funeral in a wheelchair. The following Monday he was to have surgery.

I visited Al in the hospital and what he said surprised me and thrilled me. "Charlotte, after I get out of the hospital, I want to be baptized."

At 85 years, Al was baptized. How touching it was to see this man stand in front of the congregation and confess he was a sinner. He believed that Jesus Christ was his Savior.

It was clear why Franny had to suffer all those years. Al is now a member of the Lord's family.

"When I saw them take Franny out of the house, she looked so peaceful," Al told me. "Everything came together for me then. I knew there was a God. I knew I was a sinner and I had a Savior—Jesus Christ."

Franny, your prayer was answered.



*Charlotte Doughty is a member of Beautiful Savior, Marietta, Georgia.*

# A convention of change

by Robert A. Sievert

In his final report to the synod, President Carl Mischke reminded the 490 voting and advisory delegates at the 52nd biennial convention of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod in Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich., August 2-6, "The names and faces keep on changing. The word alone endures. Let God in all things be glorified. That's what matters. That's all that matters." Mischke, 70, retired after serving as president for 14 years. He is succeeded by Pastor Karl R. Gurgel, 51, Lake Mills, Wis., who was elected on the fourth ballot. Gurgel was serving as president of the Western Wisconsin district.

## Schools to merge

After a two hour hearing on Monday evening, three hours of debate on the convention floor on Thursday, and over an hour on Friday, the convention resolved to merge Martin Luther Preparatory School, Prairie du Chien, Wis., and Northwestern Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis., on the Watertown campus under a new name.

Another resolution called for the amalgamation of Northwestern College, Watertown, Wis., the synod's

pastor training college and its teacher training college, Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., on the Minnesota campus. Under one name, each school would maintain its distinct and separate curriculum.

A new board of control for each school appointed by the Conference of Presidents in September will be responsible for all matters pertaining to the school including calling a new president in January 1994 and key administrative positions.

The convention set August 1995 as the target date for the opening of the new schools. The convention instructed the Board of Trustees to sell the MLPS campus when the prep school merger is effected. A minority report calling for more study was introduced by seven members of the 37-member convention committee but was decisively defeated by a vote of 257 to 85.

The convention requested the Board for Worker Training to present a plan to the 1995 synod convention for operation and implementation of some area Lutheran high schools as regional prep training centers. In a separate resolution the delegates directed Dr. Martin Luther College to offer an early childhood education track as



"I accept the office of president of the synod to which you have elected me." President Karl R. Gurgel addresses the convention immediately after the vote was announced.

a five year program.

The convention also changed the name of the Board for Worker Training, which is responsible for the synod's pastor-teacher education system, to Board for Ministerial Education, clarifying its purpose. Voting membership of the new BME will consist of nine men elected by the synod, made up of a chairman (parish pastor), a parish pastor, a teacher from the upper midwest districts, a teacher from the other districts, an area Lutheran high school representative, and four laymen, at least one of whom shall be from a district other than the upper midwest, plus the chairmen of the boards of control of the synod's ministerial education schools.

## Visitors

Visitors to the convention included President and Mrs. Gerhard

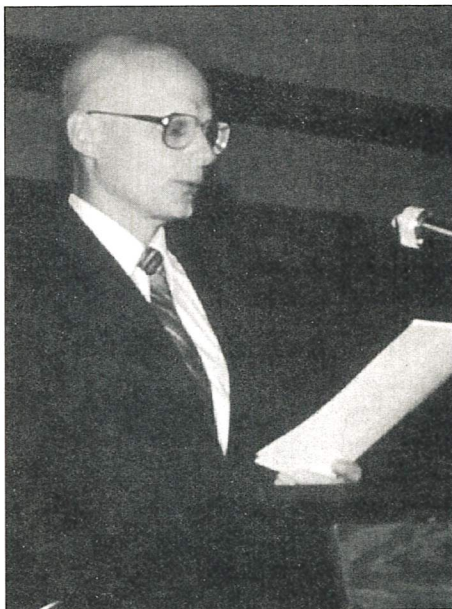


A standing ovation by the 490 voting and advisory delegates followed President Carl Mischke's eighth and last presidential report to a Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod convention. Mischke, 70, declined to run for another two-year term.





The Michigan Lutheran Seminary gymnasium comfortably seated 390 registered voting delegates and 100 advisory delegates.



Pastor Jonathan Schultz, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, was chairman of the 37-member convention committee which recommended the merger of the synod's two colleges and also two of the synod's prep schools. The convention debated the issue for six hours before adopting the committee's proposal by a standing vote of 195-176. The approximately 100 advisory delegates had no vote.

Wilde, from the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church in Germany; President and Mrs. George Orvick, of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod which is celebrating its 75th anniversary; Pastor and Mrs. Gaylin Schmeling, chairman of ELS Doctrine Committee; and 11 world missionaries from the Apache reservation, Mexico, Taiwan, Zambia,

Puerto Rico, Japan, and Bulgaria. Pastor Daniel Schroeder of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Australia sent greetings to the convention.

### Conference of Presidents

The convention directed the Conference of Presidents to establish an ad hoc committee to restudy,



The presidents of the merged schools are (left to right) Mark G. Schroeder (Northwestern Prep), Theodore B. Olsen (Martin Luther Prep), John A. Braun (Northwestern College), and John C. Lawrenz (Dr. Martin Luther College). Presidents for the two merged schools will be called early next year by new boards of control.



Ten world missionaries were present at the convention either as delegates or visitors. Pictured are (left to right), Curtis Goltm, Zambia; Mark Rieke, Malawi; Jeffrey Gunn, Zambia; John Strackbein, Puerto Rico; Joseph Dietrich, Zambia; Ernest Zimdars, Mexico. Not shown are Kirby Spevacek, Bulgaria; John Hering, Japan; Ralph Jones, Taiwan; and Arthur Guenther, Apache Reservation, Arizona.



President Gerhard Wilde of the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church in Germany and his wife, Ingeborg, attended the entire convention. President Wilde conveyed to the convention the greetings and thanks of his church body for WELS confessional support.



President George Orvick of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod congratulates Pastor Karl R. Gurgel on his election to the WELS presidency.

in consultation with legal counsel, the use of the term "ordination" in regard to male teachers, which was authorized by the 1991 convention. Delegates also resolved to change the convention date to the last complete Monday through Friday week

in July in odd numbered years. Northwestern College and Preparatory School will host the 1995 convention. The 12 districts received a mission statement and five objectives for the WELS to study at their 1994 conventions.

### Coordinating Council directives

Voters established the position of Human Resources Coordinator, accountable to the Coordinating Council. As suggested by the

## Election results

**President:** Rev. Karl R. Gurgel  
**1st Vice-President:** Rev. Richard E. Lauersdorf  
**2nd Vice-President:** Rev. Robert J. Zink  
**Secretary:** Rev. Douglas L. Bode

### Executive Committees

*Board for World Missions*—Apache: Dr. Duane Backhaus; Central Africa: Rev. Daniel Westendorf; Japan, Europe, and Asia: Mr. Lawrence Marquardt; Latin America: Rev. Gregory Lenz; Southeast Asia: Rev. David Dolan

### Miscellaneous Boards

*Northwestern Publishing House:* Rev. Gordon Snyder, Teacher John Kolander, Mr. Richard Krueger  
*Coordinating Council:* Mr. Peter Dorn, Mr. Ronald Rathke  
*Board for Ministerial Education:* Teacher Frederick Luehring

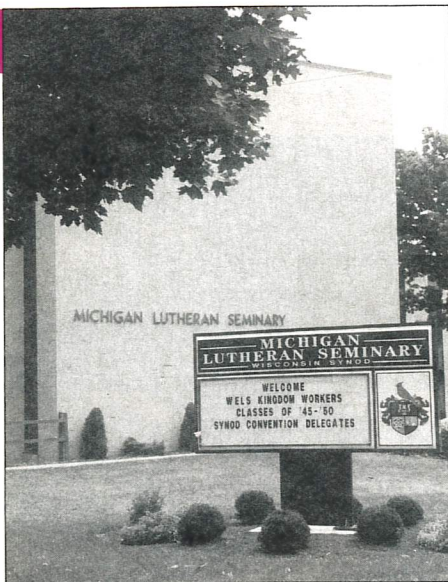
### Board for Parish Services:

Division Chairman: Rev. Thomas Zarling  
 Commission on Worship Chairman: Rev. Victor Prange  
 Commission on Special Ministries: Mr. Richard Raabe  
 Member-at-Large: Mr. Victor Manian

*Board of Trustees:* Mr. Dale Anderson, Rev. John Henning, Mr. Clifford Broehm, Mr. Gerhardt Lambrecht, Mr. Charles Faught

### Boards of Control

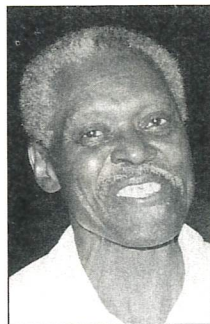
*Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary:* Rev. Paul Manthey, Mr. Martin Metzger  
*Dr. Martin Luther College:* Teacher Arnold Nommenson, Mr. John Schwertfeger  
*Northwestern College and Preparatory School:* Rev. Harold Sturm, Rev. David Waege, Teacher Carl Bartels  
*Martin Luther Preparatory School:* Rev. William Runke, Rev. Richard Pankow, Mr. David Zahn  
*Michigan Lutheran Seminary:* Rev. Alois Schmitzer, Mr. Ralph Klockziem



Michigan Lutheran Seminary, a synod prep school in Saginaw, was a busy place this summer as it hosted the Kingdom Workers annual convention, several reunions of graduates, and the synod convention. Architecturally MLS is an exceptional well-designed building, housing classrooms, a dining hall, gymnasium, library, administrative offices, women's dormitory, and a men's dormitory under one roof on a small campus.



Newly elected secretary of the synod is Pastor Douglas L. Bode of Grace, Prairie du Chien, Wis.



Sam Strickling, lay delegate from St. Philip, Milwaukee, enjoyed his first synod convention and said so with a smile.

Committee on Program Review they directed the Coordinating Council to

- establish a ceiling of 59.5 full-time budgetary paid positions at

the synod office building by January 1, 1998;

- conduct a thorough review of all staff positions in the synodical office—with the possibility of termination—as scheduled in the CPR report, subject to position renewal by the Conference of Presidents;

- approve all non-budgetary positions;

- evaluate at least one administrative division per biennium;

- establish a Communication Services Commission (CSC) chaired by the synod's second vice-president with four additional members appointed by the Conference of Presidents (COP);

- merge *Northwestern Lutheran* editor position with the Director of Communications, established in the 1985 convention. He shall then serve as administrative staff person



Morning chapel services were conducted in the chapel using the new hymnal, *Christian Worship*.

for the CSC;

- direct the COP to study and make recommendations to the 1995 synod convention regarding a complete restructuring of the synod's corporate administration;
- direct all boards, committees and commissions to review their nature, purpose, and make-up for consideration of downsizing their membership.

**Roles of men and women**

Convention delegates adopted the revised *Scriptural Principles of Man and Woman Roles* as an improved and correct statement of scriptural principles. They directed the COP to produce a brief companion pamphlet marked by a positive tone. They also encouraged a congregation concerned about the statement to restudy with its district presidium some of the pertinent passages.

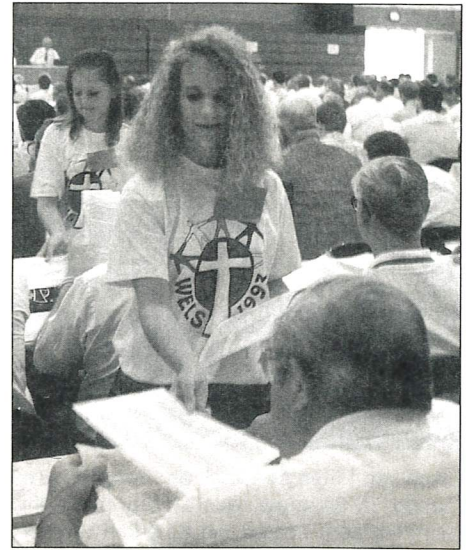
**Board of Trustees**

The convention endorsed the action of the Board of Trustees in creating a separate corporation for



Mrs. Kurt J. (Ruth) Eggert received a copy of the new hymnal from Pastor Victor Prange. Her husband, who died in June, was project director for *Christian Worship*.

the Church Extension Fund. Borrowing limits for the Board of Trustees was increased to \$65 million of which \$60 million may be borrowed from the Church Extension Fund. Regarding pension benefits for non-called workers, the convention urged WELS sponsoring organizations to review

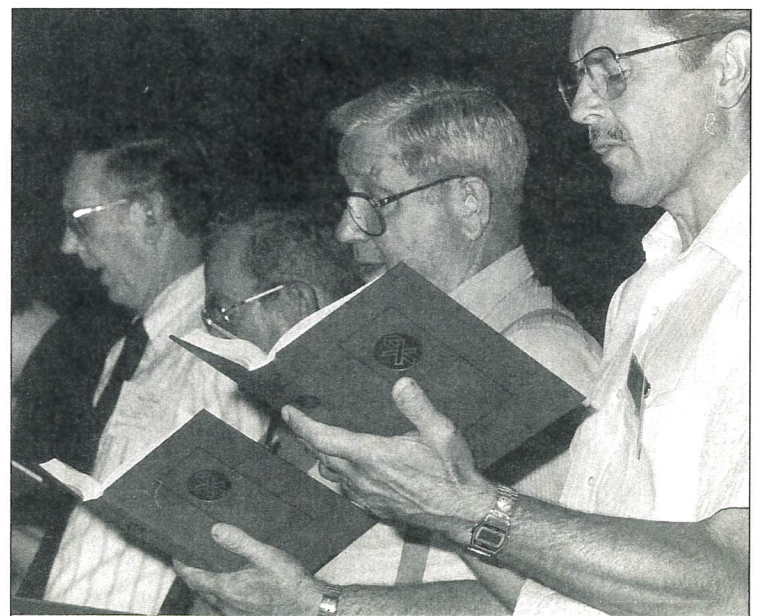


Pages, working at top efficiency, kept convention paper work flowing to the delegates.

their existing retirement benefits for "fair and equitable treatment of called and non-called workers." They also requested the WELS Pension Commission to study the feasibility of establishing a separate plan for non-called workers. Encouragement was also given for congregations to consider the need



President Carl Mischke received his copy of the new hymnal from Pastor Victor Prange of Janesville, Wis., chairman of the Joint Hymnal Committee which produced the hymnal, and chairman of the Commission on Worship.



Throughout the days of the convention, the synod's new hymnal—*Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal*—was used in all convention devotions. The new hymnal was formally introduced to the synod at the convention.

On the evening before the convention, retired Northwestern Prep president William Zell emceed a recognition dinner for President and Mrs. Mischke, hosted by Aid Association for Lutherans and arranged by synod administrators. Present also were other synodical officials and friends.



President Carl Mischke takes the first cut at a gigantic retirement cake—sufficient for the entire convention—as the delegates took time off Thursday evening to recognize Mischke's years of service. Supervising the president's technique is his wife, Gladys.

for retirement housing in their total compensation package.

### Constitutional matters

A resolution was adopted requiring the makeup of voting delegates at future conventions to be 50 percent laymen and 50 percent called workers without diminishing the number of delegates from outlying districts. Eligible voting delegates this year included 154 laymen, 142 pastors, and 98 teachers. Another change in the bylaws will be required as delegates resolved that no synod salaried person shall be eligible for membership on the

Board of Trustees, to eliminate any possible conflict of interest. Delegates also voted to require a 60 day time frame for lay persons who have been disciplined to file appeals with the district. That restriction has already been applied in the bylaws to appeals by pastors and teachers. The names of persons nominated for full-time called administrators and ministeri-

al school presidents will again be published in *Northwestern Lutheran* before the calling takes place.

### Presentations

Pastor Victor Prange, chairman of the Commission on Worship, presented the first hymnal, *Christian Worship—A Lutheran Hymnal*, to President Mischke prior to Tuesday morning's opening service. Prange replaced project director of the new hymnal, Pastor Kurt J. Eggert, who died in June. Copies of the new hymnal were given to all delegates compliments of Northwestern Publishing House. On Wednesday afternoon Pastor Robert Zink, second vice-president of WELS presented a plaque to Pastor Ronald Roth in appreciation for his work on behalf of Lift High the Cross.

### Reception

Following the close of sessions on Thursday evening delegates were invited to extend their greetings to President Mischke at a

### Touch of laughter

*A delegate to the 1993 WELS convention called to share this:*

After the convention, where *Christian Worship* was introduced, he was talking with Robert Timm from Ripon, Wis., who bought the first new hymnal sold by NPH. Timm said that he came to the convention seeing no need for a new hymnal, but when he saw it, it was like meeting his wife—"love at first sight."

Teens at the WELS International Youth Rally, Estes Park, Col., were often overheard using the newest "pick-up" line, recommended by Lake Mills LHS principal Jason Nelson: "So, what do you think of the new hymnal?"



Lay delegate Robert Timm (left), member of Mt. Zion, Ripon, Wis., purchased the first copy of the new hymnal, *Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal*, sold by Northwestern Publishing House. Waiting on Timm is Tom Kuehl of the publishing house.

reception for his retirement. Pastor William Gabb, chairman of the Board of Trustees, presented a monetary gift to President Mischke from all the members of the synod. A video on the life of President Mischke was shown to the delegates. President and Mrs. Mischke shared the first piece of a cake large enough to serve all 490 delegates.

### Essayists

Professor Forrest Bivens, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, presented the first essay "How can they call on the One they have not believed in?" On Wednesday delegates heard Pastor Wayne Borgwardt's essay "How can they hear without someone preaching to them?" The final essay, "How can they preach unless they are sent?" was presented by Pastor Philip Koelpin, Tucson, Ariz.

### Other action

In other action eleven new congregations were accepted into membership. Delegates adopted a budget for 1993-94 of \$33,040,000 and for 1994-95 of \$33,950,800. The new hymnal *Christian Worship—A Lutheran Hymnal* was accepted and commended to the synod's membership for use. It was reported that the Committee on Relief aided flood victims in the Midwest with a total of \$127,000. Board for Parish Services was authorized to call an administrator for the Commission on Worship. Delegates accepted the resolution to dissolve the Europe Asia Radio Committee and transfer the work to the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church in Germany.

### Visual presentations

The delegates viewed two video presentations. Pastor Duane Tomhave, Administrator for World Missions, presented "100 Years of WELS World Missions," and Mr.



Daniel Victor, lay delegate from the Apache Conference of the Arizona-California District, celebrated the 100th anniversary of the synod's mission work among the Apaches with the convention.



In a symbolic gesture, President Mischke hands over the rarely-used convention gavel to President-elect Gurgel, whose term of office began at his installation as president during the convention's closing service.

Kenneth Kremer, family devotional editor, presented *WellSpring*, highlighting the new family devotion magazine from Northwestern Publishing House.

### Home missions

During the last biennium 22 mission stations were opened. The Board for Home Missions plans to organize 300 "congregated groups" served by 200 pastors by the year 2003. The vision 2003+ statement seeks to establish 10 new cross-cultural missions in urban centers throughout the United States. In the Travel Canvass Witness program 190 students served 43 congregations.

### World missions

Delegates urged the Board for World Missions and the Board for Home Missions to cooperate in establishing a series of convocations to address cross-cultural ministries. The second objective of the Vision 2003+ statement encourages the Board for World Missions "to expand its world outreach by increasing the overseas mission corps to 70 seminary trained missionaries and 30 mission workers."

### Adjournment

At the convention's close, president-elect Karl Gurgel addressed the delegates, asking for their patience and support. In the debate on the synodical school structure President Gurgel spoke in favor of the two mergers even though he was president of the district where Northwestern College was located. He referred to that speech in his closing remarks.

"Some of you," he told the convention, "may have felt that I should not have spoken on this issue, but I did so for two reasons. First, because I believe this is the best course of action for our synod. Secondly, because I wanted you to know where I stood. And that is how I want to serve as your president. I will let you know where I stand, and I want you to let me know where you stand. Then we will discuss it and decide what is best for the Lord's work."

Adjournment followed and over 400 delegates—tired delegates—headed for home having met for over 50 hours and passed a total of 114 motions and resolutions, defeated 5, amended 15, and called for a standing vote on 10 decisions.

## Lutheran Women's Missionary Society convenes in Sioux City



New LWMS president Elaine Otterstatter (left) with outgoing president Karen Bauer.

Representatives from across the nation and such places as Malawi, Taiwan, Puerto Rico, and Brazil were among the over 1000 guests that gathered in Sioux City, Iowa, June 25-27 for the 30th annual convention of the Lutheran Women's Missionary Society.

Speakers included missionaries John Hartwig of Malawi and Robert Meister of Taiwan. At the close of the convention Hartwig and Meister were commissioned to serve in Thailand, the synod's newest world mission post.

Representing the synod's home missions were Pastor and Mrs. Wayne Schultz, who explained the mission counselor program, and

Pastor and Mrs. William Goehring, who described their ministry among the Mormons.

Offerings collected during the past year came to nearly \$48,000. The convention voted to donate equal amounts for home mission canvasses and surveys and for world missionary family retreats.

Convention worship service offerings of almost \$11,500 were designated for multicultural ministry and Apache lay worker training.

President for 1993-94 is Elaine Otterstatter, Eagle River, Wis. Elected to office were president-elect Ruth Kemerley, Arlington, Ohio; treasurer, LaVon Schultz, Normal, Ill.; spiritual growth lay-

woman, Carolyn Wehmeyer, Maitland, Fla.; and spiritual growth pastor, Mark Haefner, Decatur, Ga.

The 1994 convention will be held at Wisconsin Lutheran College in Milwaukee.

LWMS members represent 920 congregations. In addition to the annual national convention, area circuits host spring and fall mission rallies. The national organization sponsors a "befriend a missionary" project and produces a booklet about the synod's mission work and a calendar that features missionary families. A recently produced video highlighting the organization's activities is available from LWMS, 8420 W Beloit Rd, West Allis WI 53227.

## Four schools in three states have the same teacher

Students in four schools in three different states have the same Latin instructor this year. Besides his students at Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, where he is a professor, Glen Thompson is teaching at Arizona Lutheran Academy, Phoenix; Huron Valley Lutheran High, Westland, Mich., and Fox Valley Lutheran High, Appleton, Wis. He teaches at the three area Lutheran high schools with the help of television and telephone.

Distance learning, as the process is called, requires a VCR, fax machine, and telephone with a speaker. Thompson videotapes the lessons ahead of time. Using video

allows him to use a variety of visual aids.

At class time students view the tape and then discuss the lesson with Thompson via a teleconference call. A teacher's aide—who needs no knowledge of Latin—supervises the classroom and faxes the students' homework to Thompson, who can immediately help them with any problems.

Cost of the equipment is about \$20,000, Thompson said. An interactive video system, which would allow students and teacher to see as well as hear each other, would raise the expense to about \$50,000.

Besides the three area Lutheran

high schools, two home-schooling families are using the program.

Thompson hopes the system will be used for other purposes. Teachers and pastors could also make use of distance learning for continuing education courses. "Think of the time and travel we could save," he said.

Students may not appreciate one advantage of distance learning. Class need not be canceled if Thompson is away from his MLS classroom. "All I need is a telephone and I can conduct class anywhere," he said. "I'm hoping that just once I can do it from 30,000 feet in an airplane."

—Dorothy J. Sonntag

## Study shows attitudes toward Lutheran schools

Concern about how to prevent a decline in enrollment led the synod's Commission on Parish Schools (CPS) to take part in a joint study conducted by WELS and the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod to determine attitudes about Lutheran schools.

"We saw what happened to the Catholic school system," noted Daniel Schmeling, administrator for the CPS. "Over a period of 20 years, they had a 50 percent decline in enrollment. Now they're working just to bring enrollment back up. We want to stop that before it starts."



Dr. Schmeling

Lutheran elementary school enrollment has increased in the past few years. Students are less likely to remain for all eight grades, however.

### Support for Lutheran schools

Those parents, principals, and pastors who were part of the survey showed they believe in and support the mission of Lutheran schools. "Our parochial school is really the basis for our church," said one. "These are the men and women of tomorrow who fill our pews."

While a high level of support still exists for the Lutheran schools, a growing number of adults without

children do not have strong ties to schools and may have a lower commitment level.

### Priorities of Lutheran schools

Congregation members felt that quality education, Christian nurture, and counteracting unchristian values were the three most important purposes for a school. One parent stated, "I want my children to have a religious foundation because I don't think it's possible to learn to get along in life without one."

Those surveyed believe Lutheran schools offer quality education. They acknowledged that Lutheran schools can't compete with public schools if quality is defined by technology and programs.

Pastors surveyed believe Christian nurture, counteracting unchristian values, and evangelism opportunities are the most important reasons to operate the schools. One pastor believes in the importance of quality education but felt "the whole point is that we want to bring Christ to our children and make him real in their lives for the rest of their lives."

### Financial considerations

Schools can be a financial burden for parents and congregations. Some congregations dedicate as much as 80 percent of their budget to their school. Many parents sacrifice to provide a Christian education for their children.

The study indicated that WELS members believe congregations should provide about half of the cost for elementary schools; parents, one-third; and the rest should come from gifts. For high schools, parents are expected to contribute half the cost with the remainder from congregations and gifts.

### Recommendations for action

Dr. Schmeling believes that "Lutheran schools will remain an integral part of the church's ministry. They are an important part of the mission of the church." He suggested that congregations can provide for the future of the schools by:

- Re-emphasizing the mission of the Lutheran school—making disciples of young people.
- Improving communication with parents and congregation members to show the blessings of schools.
- Improving educational quality through staff development and curriculum improvements.
- Addressing financial issues in light of higher educational costs and other needs within the ministry.

Parents and congregation members will determine the future of Lutheran schools. Is Christian education worth the time, sacrifice, and money? "Yes," one mother replied. "You are educating for eternity."

—Linda R. Baacke

**The women of the Zambia mission field** headed into the African bush last February for a retreat of several days. Enjoying Christian friendship were Carol Dietrich, Lori Lawrenz, Brenda Spaude, Kathie Wendland, Gretchen Zoldan, Julie Gunn, Leslie Mohlke, Sue Birner, Lisa Sargent, Nancy Lucke, Linda Phillips, and Karen Kroll.





## Growth/decline of WELS churches

The WELS evangelism office recently completed a study of WELS churches made to determine the percentage of churches which are growing, plateaued, or declining in their communicant growth rate between the years 1980 and 1992. The churches were divided into three classifications: small, 1-100 in worship attendance; medi-

um, 101-250; and large, over 250.

Between 1980 and 1990, the WELS grew nationally in the number of communicants by 3.6 percent. It has been estimated that between 65 percent and 85 percent of all Protestant churches are either plateaued or declining in either membership or worship attendance or both.

**WELS CHURCHES:  
GROWING, PLATEAUED, DECLINING IN MEMBERSHIP  
1980-1992 Growth rate in number and percentage  
(Total churches in report: 1092)**

<i>Size of church</i>	<i>Growing</i>	<i>Plateaued</i>	<i>Declining</i>
Small (under 100)	190 —37%	118 —23%	212 —40%
Medium (101-250)	159 —45%	78 —22%	118 —33%
Large (over 250)	87 —40%	49 —23%	81 —37%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>436 —40%</b>	<b>245 —22%</b>	<b>411 —38%</b>



LINDA BAUCKE

**EvCon '93**—Over 200 people from eleven states, Puerto Rico, and Malawi, attended EvCon '93 at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, an evangelism convocation designed to help congregations throughout the world spread the gospel more effectively.

### Dakota-Montana District

- Recently the **Black Hills Lutheran Women's Missionary Society** circuit held its annual meeting at St. Paul, Rapid City, South Dakota. Fifty-five women attended and seven congregations were represented. Banners made by the women were on display. Irene Brug spoke on the Central African Medical Mission in Malawi.

- The following **appointments** were ratified at the pastor-delegate conference of the Rocky Mountain conference: **Ronald Kruse** as circuit pastor of the Yellowstone circuit, and **Thomas Rawerts** as chairman of the Rocky Mountain conference and circuit pastor of the Glacier circuit.

—Ronald L. Kruse

### Minnesota District

- Redeemer, St. Croix Falls, Wis.**, celebrated its 50th anniversary on June 27. Fifty years ago, on the very day, **Pastor Frederic Tabbert** was ordained and installed at Redeemer and 25 years ago **Pastor LeRoy Kaminski** was ordained and installed there.

- On June 29, **St. Paul, North Mankato**, voted for a major addition to the present structure. The addition will feature a four-stop elevator, handicap restrooms, fire-side room, four offices, four classrooms, and a multi-purpose room. Phase two of the project will feature five additional classrooms, completion of the multi-purpose room, and a complete renovation of the present church building.

—Robert M. Edwards

### North Atlantic District

- Prince of Peace, Fairport, N.Y.**, dedicated its newly-built church on August 8. There were 140 members and visitors in attendance.

- Messiah, South Windsor, Conn.**, celebrated its 25th anniversary on August 15. Messiah was the first WELS church in the New England area.

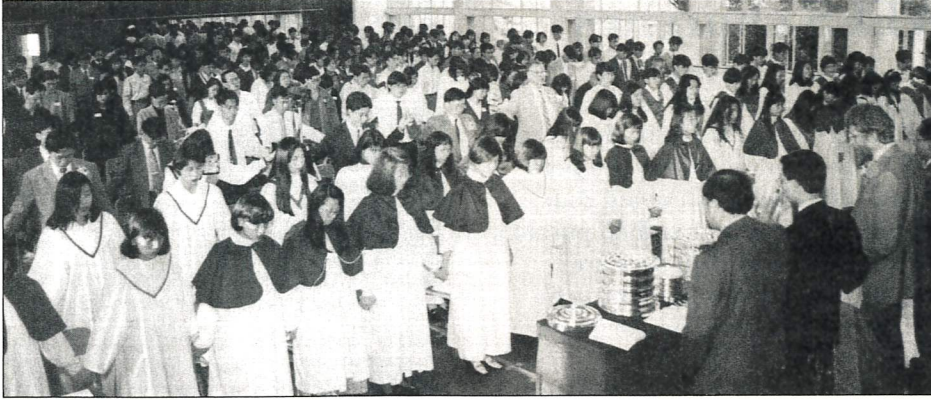
—Jon R. Bitter

### Northern Wisconsin District

- St. John, Kaukauna**, celebrated its 125th anniversary, Sept. 12.

- On June 6, **Immanuel, Manitowoc**, observed the 50th anniversary of Sunday school teacher **Louise Wilsmann Zigmund**, who began teaching in 1943. She taught without interruption for 50 years.

—Jan C. Eggert



**SALEM—Southeast Asia Lutheran Evangelical Mission—** in Hong Kong celebrated its 15th anniversary in April. Over 500 attended the service at Immanuel Lutheran College. Salem has eight member churches.

## Correction

In the August issue the numbers were not correct in the cutline of the picture of the graduating class from the Lutheran Seminary in Chelston, Zambia. As is clear from the picture, there were six graduates, not five. The seventh person is Pastor Samuel Kawaliza (in a business suit), a previous graduate, who was assigned to the congregation in Chelston.

## WELS capsule news

- The synod recently received a grant of \$65,000 from Lutheran Brotherhood to support its **Parish Assistance Project**. The project helps individual congregations "focus on their means of grace ministry of outreach and nurture." This funding will cover the costs of the parish planner, Pastor Ron Heins, for the 1994-95 fiscal year and provide support for training individuals to continue this work after the initial three-year phase. The parish assistance project is one of the services provided by the division for parish services. For more information call the parish planner office, 414/771-1235.

- The WELS civilian chaplains in Europe, Pastors **Dan Balge** and **Dennis Smith**, are still busy. Although American military facilities in Europe have consolidated or even closed, the worship service schedule has been adapted to meet the needs of more than 500 WELS members and friends who remain in Europe—down from 800-plus two years ago. Since spring 1992, four of the eleven regular service locations have been adjusted. "Despite the shifting scene," writes Chaplain Balge, "not

one of the WELS adjustments means we can neglect a former area of activity. Some specific service sites have changed, but from St. Andrews, Scotland, to Naples, Italy, the regions we serve have not."

- Forty-seven campers attended **Camp Basic**, a summer camp for developmentally disabled and sponsored by the Special Ministries Commission of the Western Wisconsin district. The camp, held in the Prairie du Chien, Wis., is the only summer camp of its kind in the Wisconsin Synod and has grown in popularity through the years. Jim Bell of Winona, Minn., served as director for 27 campers the first week, and Pastor Mark Brunner of Belleville, Ill., for 20 campers the second week. LeRoy Robbert, district special ministries coordinator, said, "Once again God blessed our camp with very energetic, hard-working, and dedicated young people (and a few not so young) to serve as counselors for the camp."

- Fond du Lac, Wis., was shocked in mid-August by an automobile accident which killed four young men, two of whom were members of WELS churches in Fond du Lac. The four, all members of the cross-country team of

the local high school, were on their way home from Great America amusement park in Illinois. According to police on the scene no alcohol was involved. It is believed that the driver fell asleep at the wheel. Of the four, **Josh Huey** was a member of Faith and **Daniel Schneider** of Redeemer. Over 700 people mourned with the families at a joint funeral service for Huey and Schneider.

- Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Ministry, Milwaukee, expanded its ministry by the addition of a deaconess on the staff. **Sarah L. Owens** is the first deaconess to be called under the 1991 synod resolution which authorized the position of deaconess as a part of a staff ministry program.



Deaconess Owens

Owens, a 1993 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran College and a member of Gloria Dei-Bethesda, Milwaukee, will be working primarily with institutionalized young girls and women who have been abused, as well as developing and coordinating a student volunteer program.

# Pastor drives home a point

by Amy Roth

Remember the one about the little old lady who only drove her car to church on Sundays?

Pastor Philip Schupmann of Resurrection Lutheran Church, Aurora, Illinois, drives to church—a lot.

And he has the miles on his 1974 Buick LeSabre convertible to prove it. In fact, he's made so many trips to and from church that he won a trip to Mexico for himself and his wife.

The pastor was the winner in a Jiffy Lube contest to find a car with more miles on the odometer than that little old lady has gray hairs.

"I was in Jiffy Lube one day, and the gal there said they were running a contest for the car with the most miles in the Chicagoland area," Schupmann said.

He entered the contest. Then, without so much as a quick prayer, he forgot all about it.

Not too long after, his hopes were accelerated when he got the news that he was definitely in the running. Soon it was official. He had won—with 340,000 miles.

So how, you ask, did the good pastor put all those miles on a car that has had five paint jobs, four tops, eight water pumps, and 49 mufflers?

Back when he lived in Bloomington, Ill., Schupmann, was a modern-day "circuit rider," who traveled to churches in downstate Illinois. At 8 a.m., he preached in Bloomington. Then it was on to Champaign for a 10 a.m. service; Decatur at 2 p.m.; Effingham at 4 p.m.; and then back to Normal for a Sunday night service.

As a pastor, though, Schupmann would rather have a rusty car than rusty sermons. That's why he waxes

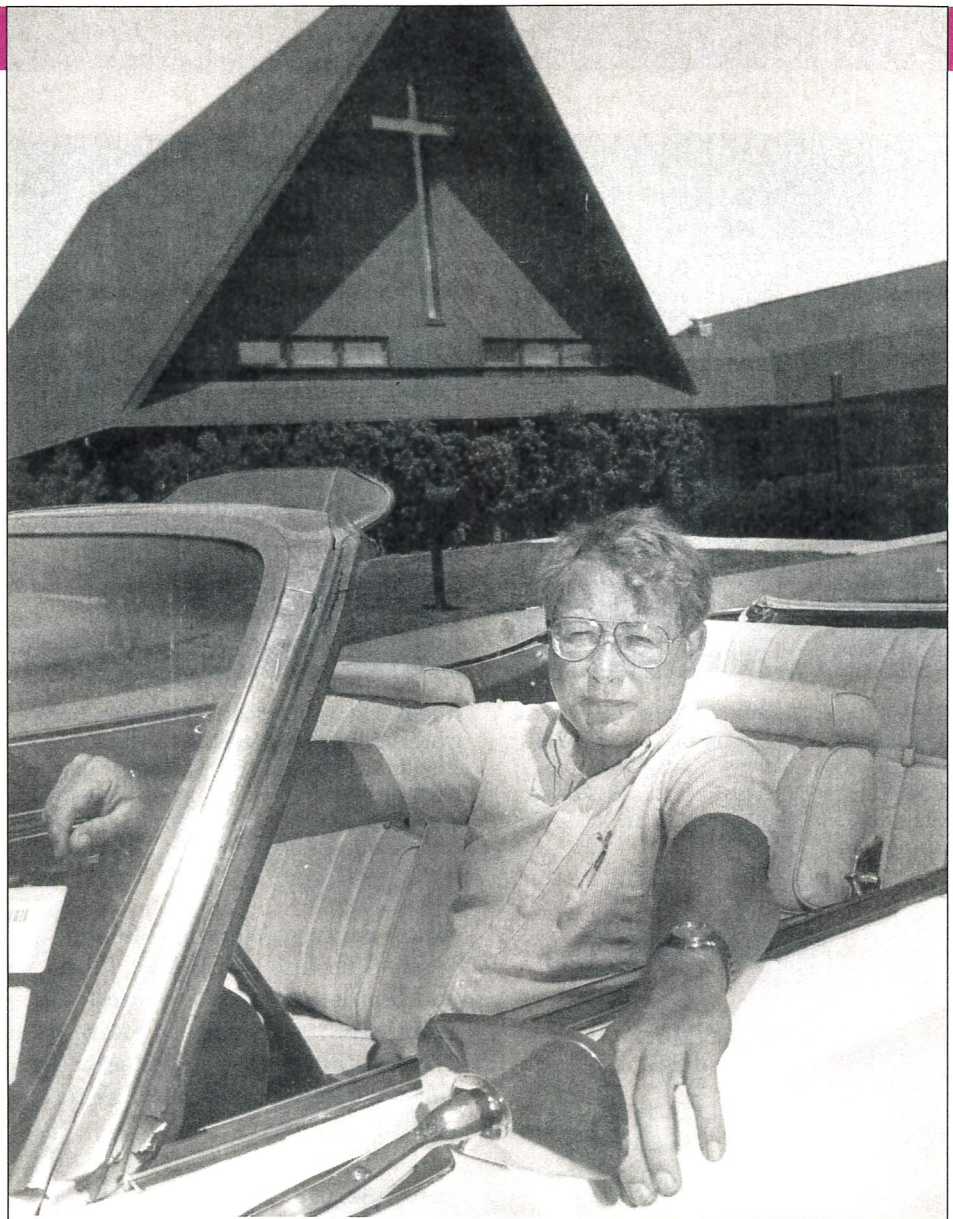


PHOTO BY DONNELL COLLINS/THE BEACON NEWS

Pastor Philip Schupmann in his 1974 Buick LeSabre with Resurrection Lutheran Church, Aurora, Ill., in the background.

nostalgic when he tells the story of "The Parishioner and the Visitor."

It seems a church member brought a guest one Sunday morning. The guest took a long look at the "old, beat-up" car parked right out in front. The guest was silent for a moment, but then revealed his thoughts to his friend. "Well," he said, "at least they're in church."

Schupmann laughs. "For nine years, someone in my congregation has been telling me to sell my car."

For now, Schupmann has no plans to sell.

"But I did get a couple of offers when people found out I might win

a trip because of it," he says.

Schupmann's secret is good, clean living (for his car, that is).

"I change the oil every 1500 to 2000 miles," he says. "Changing fluids means a lot to a car."

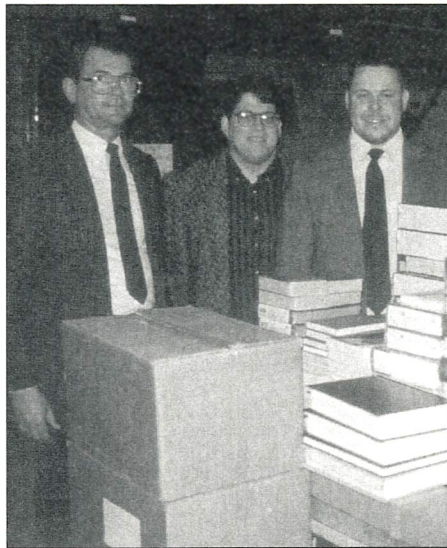
Schupmann and wife Sara have a lot to be thankful for—six children, a good congregation, and a car that won them a trip to Cancun.

The irony behind the man who is Chicagoland's king of mileage? He's been to Milwaukee about 40 times in the past 18 months. But he's been south of Missouri only once.

*Reprinted with permission from Beacon News, Aurora, Ill.*



**Elsie Prosek Stetzer** has spent 58 years as an organist. She began playing in 1935 in Bangor, Wis., after her graduation from Dr. Martin Luther College. For the past 25 years she has been an organist at St. Mark, Eau Claire, Wis.



About 4,000 Bibles and Christian books were sent by the WELS to Russia and Bulgaria. Pictured are Thomas Kuehl of Northwestern Publishing House, who made the arrangements, with eastern Europe missionaries Joel Rakos and Philip Malchow.

## NPH offers books on cassette

Northwestern Publishing House has introduced a new line: audio books—books on 60-minute stereo cassettes. You can now listen to a book as you travel, do housework, work out, or commute.

The first audiocassettes are two popular devotional titles: *Make My Life an Alleluia* and *For Such a Time as This*. The two books are interspersed with Christian choral and instrumental music.

To order the cassettes, call 1-800-662-6022; Milwaukee area, call 414/475-6600. Phone weekdays between 8:00 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

## Obituaries

### Kurt J. Eggert 1923-1993

Kurt John Eggert died June 22, 1993, in Milwaukee, Wis. He was born May 8, 1923, in Wausau, Wis.

A 1947 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, he taught in Mankato, Minn., Saginaw, Mich., and Milwaukee, Wis., and was pastor of congregations in Valley City, N. Dak., Farmington, Wis., and Gethsemane and Atonement in Milwaukee, Wis. Since 1984 he served as project director for the WELS hymnal, *Christian Worship*.

He served on the synod's Board for Parish Education, Commission on Worship, Coordinating Council, and as chairman of Commission on Higher Education. He directed the Lutheran Chorale of Milwaukee for 36 years and was director of Lutheran Guideposts, a Milwaukee television program.

He is survived by his wife, Ruth; children John (JoAnn), Margaret

(Max) Schram, William (Michelle), Mark, Christine (Jon) Kent, Linda, and Jennifer (Alan) Uher; and ten grandchildren. He is also survived by sisters Ruth (James) Schaefer, Dr. Gertrude Eggert, and Hildegard (Ralph) Fischer.

### Arnold L. Mennicke 1906-1993

Arthur L. Mennicke was born Nov. 6, 1906, in Edford Township, Ill., and died June 27, 1993, in Winona, Minnesota.

A graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, he served parishes in Doylestown, Fountain Prairie, and Fall River, Wis., and Winona, Minn., and was chairman of the Western Wisconsin District mission board and the synod's Board for World Missions. He was instrumental in the organization of the Lutheran Women's Missionary Society.

Survivors include a daughter, Marie (William) Gebhard, and two grandsons, Mark and David Gebhard.

### Richard C. Stiemke 1912-1993

Richard C. Stiemke was born December 14, 1912, in Watertown, Wisconsin, and died July 19, 1993, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

A 1937 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, he served a dual parish in Mission and White River, South Dakota; Grace, La Crosse, Wisconsin; and Parkside in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

He was instrumental in starting Bethany Lutheran Convalescent Home, Milwaukee, where he served as part-time administrator and chaplain. He was the first administrator and chaplain of Wisconsin Lutheran Convalescent Home, now Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service.

He is survived by his wife, Grace; a son Philip (Rosemarie); a daughter, Barbara (Alan) Haefner; five grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

**Religious intensity makes the difference . . .**

Those who are conservative in their religious practice are far more likely to embrace the anti-abortion cause than liberals. But a Gallup Poll survey indicates intensity of religious belief, rather than affiliation with a particular type of church or denomination, has the greatest effect on attitudes. Opposition to abortion is significantly higher among those who say religion is very important in their lives. This factor holds true across denominational lines and among those saying they are born-again Christians.

**Publisher dies . . .** Peter John Zondervan, 84, co-founder of Zondervan Publishing Company, died recently. In 1931 he co-founded the international religious publishing and retailing company in Grandville, Mich., with his brother who died in 1966. Later, the company moved to its present location in Grand Rapids, Mich. Today a division of HarperCollins Publishers, the company is considered one of the largest English-language religious publishing concerns in the world with 1,400 employees and 6,000 independent Christian bookstores. It now distributes Bibles and books, some of which find their way into WELS church libraries, computer software, audio and video productions, specialty items, and music.

**Church crime mounts . . .** The International Bulletin of Missionary Research estimates that ecclesiastical crime last year cost Christians around the world \$1.2 billion, compared to \$5 million only 23 years ago. It projects that ecclesiastical crime will cost \$2 billion by the year 2000. The bulletin also calculates the worldwide personal income last year of all church members was \$10.1 trillion of which \$175 billion—less than 2 percent—was given to Christian causes.

**Colson's book honored . . .** Charles Colson, former Nixon aide who spent time in prison, recently received the 1993 Christian Book of the Year award from the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association for his book *The Body: Being Light in Darkness*, a treatise on the identity of the contemporary church. More than 400 books were nominated by Christian bookstore owners and managers.

**Lutheran church reports membership loss . . .**

After two years of increases in membership, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America experienced a decrease of 10,609 baptized members in 1992. This represents a decline of 0.2 percent. With a total membership for 1992 of 5,234,568, the ELCA remains the fourth largest Protestant denomination in the United States, behind the Southern Baptist Convention, United Methodist Church, and National Baptist Convention.

**Church membership statistics . . .** The annual Gallup poll of church membership reports that 70 percent of Americans belong to a church or synagogue, the highest percentage in seven years. More women than men are church members (76 percent vs. 64 percent), and people who live in the country are more likely to belong to a church than those who reside in the city or suburbs (77 percent vs. 66 percent). Minorities have a higher rate of church membership (78 percent) than whites do (69 percent). Not surprisingly, 95 percent of those who attended church within the previous week were church members.

**Restore Lord to hymnal . . .** Writers of a new hymnal for the United Church of Christ are cleansing hymns of patriarchal language, including words like "Father" and "King." But if delegates to the church's General Synod have their way, the word "Lord" will be kept. Delegates to its recent convention voted to ask the church's Board for Homeland Ministries, which is editing the hymnbook, to restore all deleted references to Jesus as "Lord." Those who object say it means "oppressive master." The vote is not binding on the board, but the board promised that it will "take to heart" the convention request.

**Chaplains in the workplace . . .** In the annals of collective bargaining, chaplains have never ranked up there with salary increases and more vacation time. But now employees and their managers are increasingly seeing chaplains as a bottom-line benefit.

By increasing its force of industrial chaplains, corporate America is taking an unusual step to improve productivity among employees, according to several experts involved in training and supplying chaplains.

Chaplains are proving themselves extremely valuable in factories and office buildings—offering immediate counseling in the face of bad news, seeing employees through marital or family disputes and, in at least one case, disarming a worker who planned to shoot his line manager.

General Motors, Carolina Telephone and Telegraph, and the shipping company Allied Systems are three of more than 50 corporations now employing full-time chaplains. In addition, the United Auto Workers Union now sponsors at least part-time chaplains in every plant where its members are employed, even where the corporation isn't paying for one. And hundreds of other companies use part-time or volunteer chaplains as well.

Rev. Rodney Brown at R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Co. said the greatest stresses hitting employees are marriages and family issues, followed by alcohol and drug addiction.

News reported in this section is derived principally from Religious News Service, but use is also made of the Ecumenical Press Service, Evangelical Press Service, and Lutheran World Information.

## NOTICES

The deadline for submitting notices is six weeks before publication date.

### CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

At the 1993 convention, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod resolved to amalgamate Dr. Martin Luther College and Northwestern College as a new college at New Ulm, Minn., and to combine Martin Luther Preparatory School and Northwestern Preparatory School into a new preparatory school at Watertown, Wis.

On behalf of the boards of control for each new school, the Board for Ministerial Education invites members of the synod to submit nominations for the president of the new college and for the president of the new preparatory school. The call will be issued by the board of control for each school, appointed by the Conference of Presidents.

Nominations should be sent by October 21 to Douglas Engelbrecht, Chairman, Board for Ministerial Education, 249 E Franklin Ave, Neenah WI 54756.

### CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

#### Administrator, Commission on Worship

The Board for Parish Services asks the voting members of the synod to submit names of candidates for administrator of the Commission on Worship, a position which was approved by the 1993 synod convention. The administrator will work with the Commission on Worship in carrying out its constitutional assignment (5.25): "(c) The commission shall concern itself with the worship life of the congregations, agencies and institutions of the synod and shall prepare and promote materials which encourage worship that gives glory to God and proclaims his grace; (d) The commission shall have an interest in the style, the forms and the setting of worship; in preaching; in liturgical orders and rites; in church music for the congregation, choir, soloists, and instruments; in architecture and the ecclesiastical arts."

Nominees should possess sound theological judgment, a demonstrated competence in the area of worship, possess Christian relational skills, and ability in planning, leadership, administration, and communication.

All nominations and pertinent information should be submitted by October 21 to Pastor Allen Zahn, secretary WELS BPS, 7315 E 75 St, Indianapolis IN 46256.

### ANNIVERSARIES

**ALEXANDRIA, MINNESOTA**—St. Paul (25). Oct. 10. 9 a.m. worship, 10:30 program, dinner following. Call 612/763-4232 or 612/762-1644.

**LE SUEUR, MINNESOTA**—Grace (50). Oct. 3. 10:30 a.m. festival service, dinner following, 2 p.m. anniversary service, refreshments following. Reservations required. Call 612/665-2194.

**VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA**—Resurrection (25). November 28. 4:30 p.m. festival service. For more information call 804/420-9652.

**GREEN BAY, WISCONSIN**—St. Paul (110). Nov. 7. 8 and 10:30 a.m. service, noon-potluck. Call 414/435-8468.

### ITEMS AVAILABLE

**ELECTRIC ORGAN**—1948 Hammond with two speakers. Free for cost of transportation. Contact Peace, Shenandoah IA, 712/328-0157 or 712/246-3182.

**OAK ALTAR**—72" long, 40" wide. Contact Our Savior, Hart, Mich., 616/873-5955.

**THERMOFAX**—Free for cost of shipping. Contact Neil Neumann, 616/651-3240.

### ITEMS NEEDED

**CHURCH FURNITURE/FIXTURES**—Altar, pulpit, communion rails, candlesticks, light fixtures, and other equipment. For more information call 313/242-2200.

**HYMNALS, MEDITATIONS**—*The Lutheran Hymnal and Meditations* prior to 1978 needed for mission congregation. Contact Pastor Douglas Priestap, Cross of Life, Oakville, Ontario, Canada; 416/857-7486.

**MUSIC**—Vol. 1-3 of Preludes for Hymns for the Lutheran Hymnal by Karl Haase. Contact Ted Huseby, Rt 1 Box 28B, Belview MN 56214; 507/938-4258.

### WOMEN'S RETREAT

A women's retreat will be held in Rochester, Minn., from March 18-20. For more information call 507/931-1866.

### ORGAN RECITAL

A custom-built mechanical action organ was recently installed at Immanuel, Medford, Wis. Immanuel's organ committee invites you to the following organ recitals: Dec. 9, 7 p.m. Organists: Gretchen Stelljes, Gary Waldhart, Tim Jari; Immanuel senior choir. March 13, 1994, 3 p.m. Organist: Shanda Radtke. May 15, 1994, 3 p.m. Recital with American Guild of Organists.

### LETTER EXCHANGE

K-3 teacher and students in Albuquerque, N. M., want to exchange letters with other WELS students in other areas of the country. Contact Kristy Yarbrough, Shepherd Lutheran School, 3900 Wyoming Blvd NE, Albuquerque NM 87111.

### DISTANCE EDUCATION SEMINAR

A seminar for WELS educators interested in distance education will be held December 10-11 at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee. The seminar will provide training in educational communication techniques for television and will offer practice in lesson preparation and presentation via television.

Registration fee is \$50 and seating is limited to 50. The seminar is sponsored by the BME/CPS Joint Committee on Telecommunications/Technology in Education. For information contact Kris Ellenberger, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398; 414/256-3276; FAX 414/256-3899.

### KIDS' PRAYER CALENDAR

The Lutheran Women's Missionary Society has produced a calendar with the emphasis on WELS world missionary families. Each month features pictures and letters from children of world mission families. Birthdays of family members are noted on the appropriate day. A directory of addresses is included. The calendar runs from September '93 to August '94. It is available for \$2.00 from LWMS, 8420 W Beloit Rd, West Allis WI 53227.

### CHANGE OF MINISTRY

#### PASTORS:

**Ahlers, Bruce E.**, from Mission Coordinator, Indonesia, to St. Luke, Jackson, Mich.

**Knepprath, Roger H.**, from Zion, Bristol, Wis., to St. Paul, Ottawa, Ontario, Canada.

**Mattek, Floyd W.**, to St. Stephen, Adrian, Mich.

**Schoemann, Randal W.**, from Good Shepherd, Plymouth, Mich., to Immanuel, Kewaunee, Wis.

**Siegler, Paul L.**, from St. Stephen, Fallbrook, Cal., to Our Savior, Sun City, Ariz.

**Zell, Edward G.**, from Lola Park, Redford, Mich., to retirement.

#### TEACHERS:

**Dorn, Ann E.**, to Peace, Sun Prairie, Wis.

**Ewald, Cheryl**, to Good Shepherd, Burton, Mich.

**Freese, John R.**, from Redeemer, Tucson, Ariz., to St. Martin, Watertown, S.D.

**Gentele, Vernon R.**, from Salem, Milwaukee, Wis., to St. James, Milwaukee, Wis.

**Habben, Dawn**, to Jerusalem, Morton Grove, Ill.

**Hinds, Mark A.**, from Crown of Life, Hubertus, Wis., to Calvary, Sheboygan, Wis.

**Jammer, Jean C.**, to St. Paul, Green Bay, Wis.

**Johnson, Jana L.**, to Epiphany, Racine, Wis.

**Johnson, Lance**, to Lakeside LHS, Lake Mills, Wis.

**Kempfert, Carol J.**, to Martin Luther, Neenah, Wis.

**Meyer, Douglas N.**, to Arizona Lutheran Academy, Phoenix, Ariz.

**Mueller, Helene J.**, to Gloria Dei, Grand Blanc, Mich.

**Pekrul, Peggy L.**, to Martin Luther, Neenah, Wis.

**Raasch, Jennifer L.**, to Shepherd of the Hills, Inver Grove Heights, Minn.

**Ring, Cynthia L.**, to Emanuel, New London, Wis.

**Schmal, Mary**, from St. Martin, Watertown, S.D., to St. Paul, Stevensville, Mich.

**Tess, Elizabeth C.**, from Immanuel, Manitowoc, Wis., to Bethany, Manitowoc, Wis.

**Thaens, Sarah C.**, to Hope, Markham, Ontario.

**Ut, Lois**, to Our Savior, San Antonio, Tex.

**Westendorf, Thomas B.**, from St. Paul, St. James, Minn., to Minnesota Valley LHS, New Ulm, Minn.

**Wollenzien, Sharon L.**, to St. Paul, East Troy, Wis.

**Zanto, Mary E.**, from St. John, Waterloo, Wis., to St. Paul, Fort Atkinson, Wis.

### NORTHWESTERN COLLEGE HOMECOMING

Alumni and friends of Northwestern are invited to attend the college homecoming activities on Oct. 3, 8:30 a.m. Brunch and lunch will be available. For more information call 414/261-4352.

### DMLC LADIES AUXILIARY

All women of the WELS are invited to the annual meeting of the Dr. Martin Luther College Ladies Auxiliary, New Ulm, Minn., on October 13. Registration/coffee hour: 9:00 a.m. at Luther Memorial Union. Opening service: 10:30 a.m. Baby-sitting provided for small children. For more information contact Lorie Enter, Rt 2 Box 198, Nicollet MN 56074.

### HANDBELL FESTIVAL

The 1994 National WELS Handbell Festival will be held at Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School, Jackson, Wis., April 16-17. For more information contact Cheryl Pasbrig at Wisconsin Lutheran College, 414/774-8620.

### CHANGE IN PLACE OF WORSHIP

**LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY**—Hope, 4200 Shenandoah Dr. One mile east of former location. Call 502/423-1211.

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**Filter, Herbert R.**, 2265 W Maplehurst Dr, Roscommon MI 48653-9606.

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**Lindemann, Michael A.**, 11 N 12th St, Oostburg WI 53070.

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**Zimdars, Thomas E.**, Box 334, Guayama PR 00785.

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**Bunde, Steven G.**, 1247 Donald Dr, Arbor Vitae WI 54568.

**Hossele, Mark J.**, W6090 Payne School Rd, Coleman WI 54112.

**Klindworth, Robert**, 773 W Broadway, Winona MN 55987.

**Lotito, Lawrence W.**, 429 Turner St, Wrightstown WI 54180.

**Miller, Jeffrey E.**, 401 W Main, Weyauwega WI 54983.

**Natzke, Carl and Joyce**, N83 W16409 Kenny Ln, Menomonee Falls WI 53051.

**Zunker, Timothy J.**, 793 E Division St #53, Fond du Lac WI 54935.

# Atonement— covered and reconciled

by Frederic E. Piepenbrink

Someone once claimed that in the New Testament alone, while there are some 290 references to the concept of God's love, there are more than 1,300 references to the concept of God's atonement. Without actually counting, suffice it to say the concept of the atonement is well-established in the Scriptures—both in the Old and New Testaments.

In the Old Testament the English word "atonement" in its various noun and verb forms appears some 115 times. One of the Hebrew root words that is most often translated "atonement," or its equivalent forms, is *kaphar*. Some scholars connect this root with the Arabic word that means "to cover." This meaning is obvious in Genesis 6:14 where a form of *kaphar* is translated "coat it with pitch inside and out." The Lord instructed Noah to cover the entire ark with pitch to make it watertight. So when atonement was made by God's people in the Old Testament, one way of understanding it is to envision the covering of their sins.

## Yom Kippur

God provided a beautiful symbol of his covering sin especially on one day of the year called the Day of Atonement. In Hebrew this day was called *Yom Kippur*. *Yom* means "day," and *kippur* is a word, again, taken from the root *kaphar*. On that day Israel's high priest went into the Holy of Holies and sprinkled blood from sacrificed animals on the cover of the Ark of the Covenant. That cover, in the Hebrew, was called the *kapporeth*, a word taken from the *kaphar* root. The blood of the animals was a picture or type of the blood which Jesus would shed on the cross, covering the sins of all people. Paul connects the two events when he writes in Romans 3:25, "God presented him (Jesus) as a sacrifice of atonement through faith in his blood."

Other scholars connect the same word, *kaphar*, with an Aramaic root that means "wash away." This meaning, too, fits the spiritual truth expressed in Romans 3:25.

## At one again

In the New Testament the word atonement in its various forms appears only five times. In each case the Greek word is some form of *hilaskomai*, which means "to propitiate," "to conciliate." But another Greek word that conveys a similar thought is *katallasso*, which means "to reconcile." Both words contain the basic concept of "atonement," and that concept in simple terms is this: a drawing together of parties previously separated. In other words, the separation between God and mankind when mankind fell into sin was potentially permanent. But God in his mercy and love would not allow that estrangement to continue. He propitiated, he reconciled, he made atonement with mankind through Christ Jesus by removing that wall of separation so that God and mankind are "at-one" again.

This New Testament concept of the atonement might be illustrated with the following modern day parable: A little girl's parents had a miserable marriage and were divorced. They had nothing more in common except their affection for their little child. One day as the girl was playing in the street she was knocked down by a bus and seriously injured. Both parents rushed to the hospital and were now standing on either side of her bed looking down helplessly at her. As they stood there, the child's eyes suddenly opened. Without saying a word, she struggled to grab her father's hand. Then she reached to grab her mother's hand, and with one final effort she drew them together and placed one within the other. At that moment in time the husband and wife put away their differences and were at one again.

Jesus put our hands in God's hand by covering our sins with his blood and making us at one again with him.



Frederic Piepenbrink is pastor of Atonement, Milwaukee.

## Technology vs. technolatriy

**V**irtual reality and telepresence are the brainchildren of modern technology. They were also the subject of the commencement address by Dr. R. Bowen Loftin at Wisconsin Lutheran College in May. Loftin, a WELS member, is a physics professor at Houston University and Principal Investigator for Advanced Training Technologies for NASA at the Johnson Space Center.

Dr. Loftin invited his audience to spend a part of a day with Guadalupe Schultz, a member of the class of 2028. He described the roles virtual reality and telepresence would play in her education at WLC.

Loftin defined virtual reality and telepresence as a collection of technologies that can provide the user with a sense of being where he or she is not. In the case of virtual reality, the user is immersed in a computer generated world while in the case of telepresence the user is “placed” in another location through the use of remote sensors and effectors. Loftin uses these technologies to train astronauts for operations in space. At WLC he spoke about their use in the service of the gospel and the church.

Not all scientists view technology through the eyes of faith as Dr. Loftin does. Egbert Schuurman, a prominent European scholar, says that “technology has become an idol.” New York University professor Neil Postman agrees. In his new book, *Technopoly*, he speaks about the “monopoly that technology has on our way of thinking.” He calls it “the deification of technology.”

Perhaps technolatriy is another appropriate way of identifying this modern phenomenon. Technolatriy is technology in the service of contemporary idolatry. For many, technology, not God, is the ultimate reality. Postman says, “Whatever else may be denied or compromised, it is clear that airplanes do fly, antibiotics do cure, radios do speak, and . . . computers do calculate and never make mistakes.” Technology is for real. God is just a myth. Technolatriy encourages autonomous man to stand in awe of the wisdom of research and the wonders of science rather than in awe of the majesty of God.

In a time when the temptation is real to employ technology to create gods out of men, it is refreshing to hear a scientist who works on the cutting edge of modern technology speak about harnessing science to serve the Creator. That’s what God intended science to do in the first place.

Joel C. Gerlach



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



by John F. Brug

*I am disturbed by ads in Northwestern Lutheran requesting services of a vacationing pastor. Generally the use of the parsonage is offered in exchange for preaching. The requesting congregation is usually in a popular vacation area. Isn't this tantamount to a pastor selling his services as a minister of God? Where does the doctrine of the call come in? Does the requesting congregation extend a formal call to the vacationing pastor?*

What should a congregation do when their pastor is going to be absent? They could arrange to have a councilman or perhaps the principal of the school conduct a worship service. In such circumstances the worship leader often reads a sermon provided by the pastor. Most congregations, however, prefer to arrange for another pastor to substitute in their pastor's absence. Normally, they do not formally call this person, but delegate the responsibility for obtaining a substitute to the pastor. The invitation extended by the pastor to his substitute, extended with the congregation's authorization, is a limited call on behalf of the congregation. The guest preacher is usually paid for his services.

In the Midwest where congregations are close together, neighboring pastors, professors, or seminary students are often available as substitutes. In other areas of the country, where churches are farther apart, obtaining a substitute is

not so easy. Some congregations find that inviting a vacationing pastor as a substitute is a workable and mutually beneficial arrangement.

The relationship between one who teaches the word and those who receive it is described in Scripture as a mutually beneficial exchange. The preacher shares his spiritual knowledge with the congregation. They share material blessings with him. The pastor also becomes acquainted with another congregation, which may be quite different than his. The host congregation continues services without interruption and has the parsonage taken care of in the pastor's absence. If you consider the benefits offered to the visiting pastor as wages for services rendered, there is nothing objectionable since Scripture clearly states, "The worker deserves his wages."

Scripture states that the worker deserves his wages and that no one should publicly preach in the church without being called. It leaves the church much freedom as to how it will carry out these principles in particular cases.

Send your questions to *QUESTIONS*, Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N Mayfair Road, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398. Questions of general

interest are preferred. Questions will be answered, however, only through this column.



*John Brug teaches theology and Old Testament at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin.*

## November '93

- 1. John 10:22-42
- 2. Jn. 11:1-27
- 3. Jn. 11:28-44
- 4. Jn. 11:45—12:19
- 5. Jn. 12:20-36
- 6. Jn. 12:37-50
- 7. 2 Kings 1, 2
- 8. 2 Kgs. 3:1—4:7
- 9. 2 Kgs. 4:8-44
- 10. 2 Kgs. 5:1—6:7
- 11. 2 Kgs. 6:8—7:20
- 12. 2 Kgs. 8, 9
- 13. 2 Kgs. 10
- 14. 2 Kgs. 11, 12
- 15. 2 Kgs. 13, 14
- 16. 2 Kgs. 15, 16
- 17. 2 Kgs. 17
- 18. 2 Kgs. 18:1—19:7
- 19. 2 Kgs. 19:8-37
- 20. 2 Kgs. 20, 21
- 21. 2 Kgs. 22, 23
- 22. 2 Kgs. 24, 25
- 23. John 13:1-20
- 24. Jn. 13:21-32
- 25. Jn. 13:33—14:14
- 26. Jn. 14:15-24
- 27. Jn. 14:25—15:8
- 28. Jn. 15:9-25
- 29. Jn. 15:26—16:15
- 30. Jn. 16:16-33

One of the marks of God's people is their love for his word. Many have said, "I will start at Genesis and read the Bible through to the end." But the project is soon abandoned. These proposed readings—5 to 10 minutes each day—will take you through the entire Bible systematically and with variety. The next month's readings will appear in the next issue.

THROUGH MY BIBLE IN THREE YEARS

THROUGH MY BIBLE IN THREE YEARS

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As I listened to the hours of debate at the synod convention on the school merger issue—most of it thoughtful and sensible by speakers on either side of the question—my mind wandered back to the 1989 inaugural address of President Bush. America, he had said, has “more will than wallet.” And in this case at Saginaw, the wallet—in terms of good stewardship—won out. Two conventions have now said that we cannot afford more than one Wisconsin-based prep school and one college. The 1991 convention, however, postponed the merger, pending a report from a “feasibility committee” authorized by the convention to determine the practicality of the merger.

During the two-year interval, the seven-member Feasibility Committee thoroughly studied the proposal. The committee was chaired by Pastor Herbert Prah, at the time first vice-president of the Western Wisconsin District, the site of two of the schools slated for merger in the 1991 resolution. The report of the committee found that “from the perspective of prudent stewardship of the Lord’s resources . . . we find the [1991] resolution compelling. . . . From the education perspective . . . we see advantages that outweigh disadvantages and make the [1991] resolution feasible.”

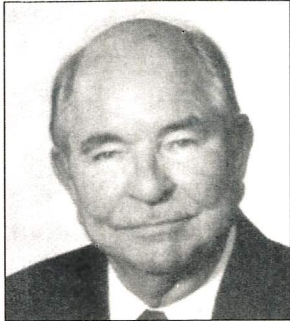
There was little joy over the decision. I spoke with a number of the delegates. None of the delegates was dancing on the grave of either of the schools that are merging. During the course of the six-hour debate delegates were reminded of the disruption of families and possibly careers affected by the decision. But the overarching stewardship factors carried the day.

When the voting was over, President John Braun of Northwestern College spoke to the convention. He closed with the words, “We are wounded, but we will heal. We are deeply hurt, but we will recover. We love our brothers; we love the fellowship; but most of all we love our Savior—and we will do what is right.” They were words of a Christian statesman. The words were echoed by Pastor Roland Zimmerman of Menomonee Falls, Wis., chairman of the Martin Luther Preparatory School board of control.

For convention veterans, closing schools in the synod’s ministerial education system was nothing new, though one never gets used to it. All are wrenching experiences. As the debate went on, I recalled the 1969 convention which merged Wisconsin Lutheran College in Milwaukee with Dr. Martin Luther College (the present Wisconsin Lutheran College is a rebirth). And the closing (“re-location”) of Martin Luther Academy in a 1978 special convention as Martin Luther Preparatory School was opened. The third closing took place at the 1979 convention when Northwestern Lutheran Academy, Mobridge, S. Dak., was closed (“discontinued”).

We have headlined our convention report in the news section of this issue “a convention of change.” Besides the dramatic new direction for our ministerial school system, the convention also elected a new president. Presidents have always occupied a special place in synodical history. Historians among us name “eras” after the presidents. Incumbent presidents—unless announcing their intention to retire—are reelected. The record for this century was held by President Naumann, serving for 26 years before his death in 1979 several months prior to the convention. Only once in this century has an incumbent president been defeated. The historic event took place in 1933 when President Bergemann of Fond du Lac was defeated by Pastor John W. Brenner of Milwaukee who served for 20 years. This year for the first time in 40 years, a president chose not to run for another term.

Elected was Karl R. Gurgel, 51, of Lake Mills, Wis., president of the Western Wisconsin District. Since no one received a majority of the votes cast, the voting went to four ballots. As I write these lines in the waning days of August, President Gurgel is still not in his office full time. So these words of introduction are brief. But I am sure that our readers will soon be hearing from him. In the meantime, *Mr. President—God bless!*



James P. Schufes

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*None of the delegates was dancing on the grave of either of the schools that are merging.*

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# Charitable Gift Annuity

*A gift to the Lord you didn't think possible*

Does your love for Christ prompt you to make an extra gift for some especially dear work of your congregation and synod but you can't find the dollars to spare?

Perhaps a charitable gift annuity will enable you to fulfill your faith's desire.

**What is a charitable gift annuity?**

A gift annuity is an agreement by which you make a gift of cash or marketable securities (stocks, bonds, mutual funds, etc.) in exchange for a guaranteed life income.

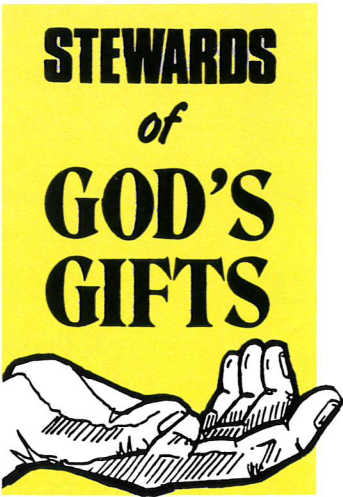
After the death of the income recipient(s) the remainder of the gift will be used by your congregation and synod as you specified.

**What are examples of gift annuity rates?**

One Life Agreements		Two Life Agreements	
Age	Return Rate	Age	Return Rate
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65	7.3%	65/65	6.8%
70	7.8%	70/65	6.9%
75	8.5%	70/70	7.1%
80	9.6%	80/75	7.9%

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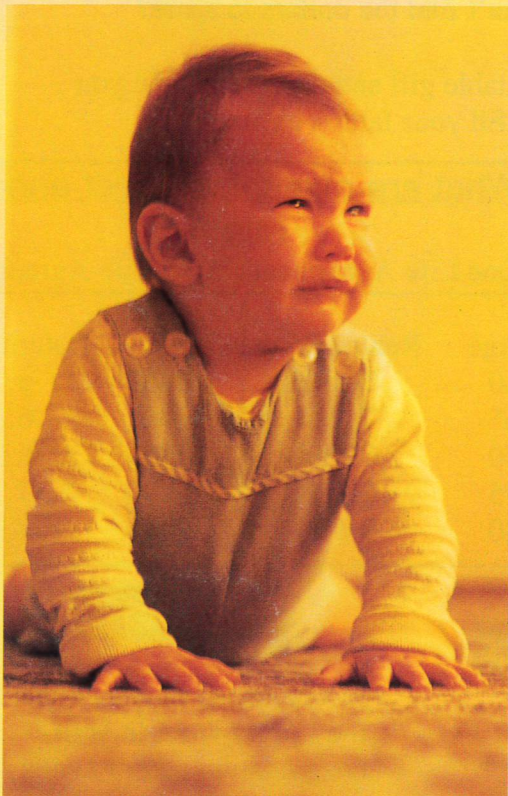
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***Interested? How can I receive more information?***

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 2929 N. Mayfair Road  
 Milwaukee, WI 53222

1-800-827-5482 or 414-771-0697

MRS. KEVIN SCHEIBEL, PHOTOGRAPHY



## Top ten reasons why life isn't looking up

by Paul E. Kelm

*Paul Kelm is campus pastor  
at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee.*

10. People are getting too much daily news, not nearly enough of the GOOD NEWS.
9. People play tug-o'-war with God, praying problems into his hands and then taking them back to worry about them again.
8. People keep looking for what's wrong with their life and those who share it, missing what's right with God and life in him.
7. People have confused being miserable with being religious, perhaps trying to pay with their unhappiness for debts Jesus already canceled with his blood.
6. People are competing on the treadmill of success when they could be sharing the path of life.
5. People have expectations of this sin-cursed world that are way too high and expectations of the world to come that are way too low.
4. People have intellectualized the power out of truth and ritualized God's love out of religion, distancing faith from life.
3. People are waiting for heroes of faith to do what God is calling them out of their comfort zone to attempt.
2. People keep wanting to be what they are not, failing to appreciate who—in Christ—they are.
1. People have too much Christian conscience to enjoy their sinning, but not enough spiritual maturity to enjoy their Christianity.

**Still, in Jesus, life is looking up!**