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NORTHWESTERN

March 1994

LUTHERAN



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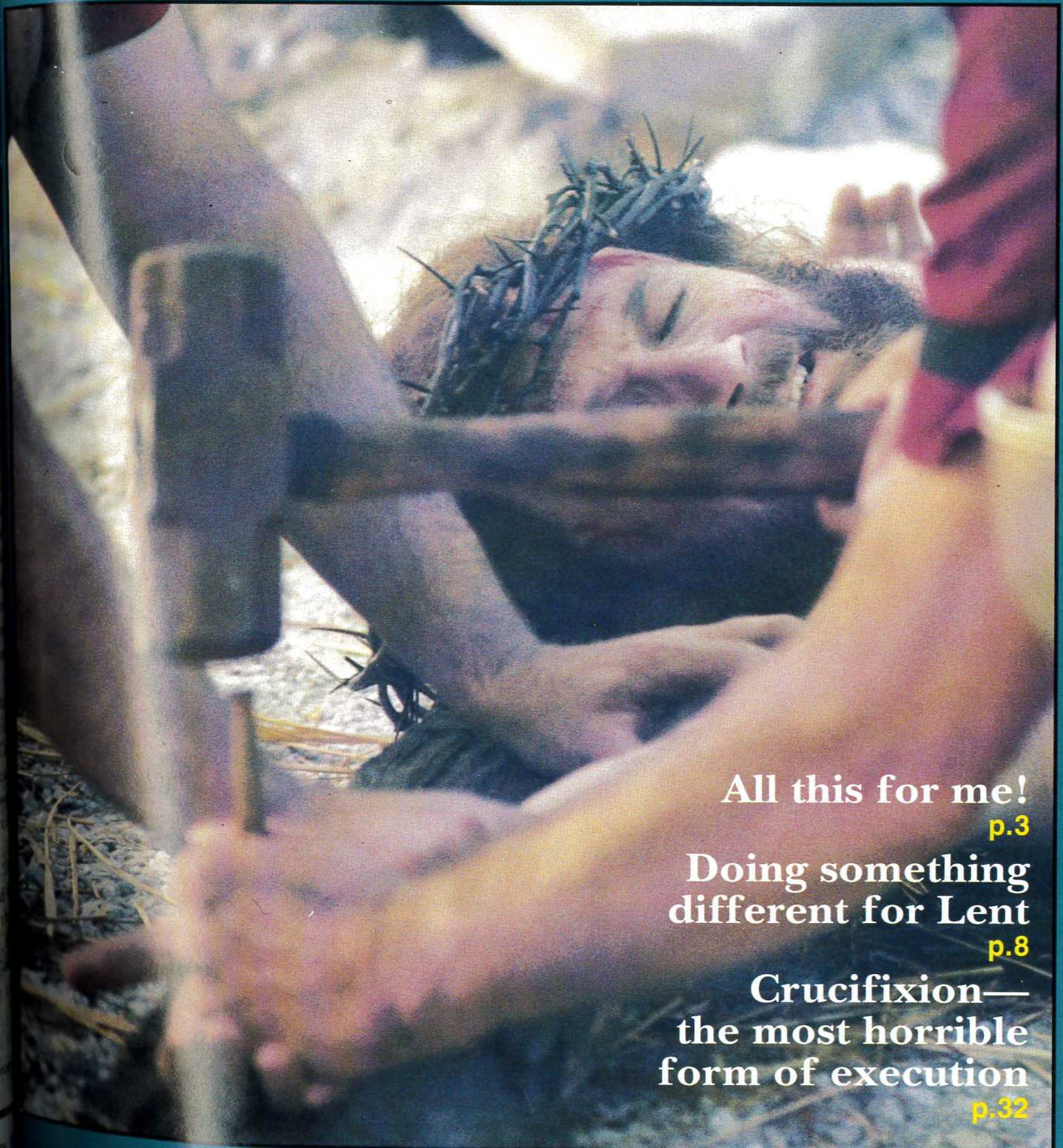
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“For me!” exclaims the young wife opening the present she had hardly dared hope for. “For me,” marvels the worker receiving the unexpected promotion. Few are the times in life that we receive something unexpected or undeserved and can use those words.

Yet during Lent, as we stand in spirit beneath Jesus’ cross on Calvary, that expression belongs in our hearts and on our lips. For me! All this the Savior did for me, all unworthy though I be.

Crucified

What held Jesus to that horrible tree? Not strands of hemp put on his hands in Gethsemane’s shadows nor the hatred of the mob howling for his blood. Not even Pilate’s unjust command or the nails that skewered Christ’s flesh. It was the power of his love. In eternity, divine love had decreed that God’s Lamb be sacrificed on that rough altar. Now at Calvary it was done. Divine love, amazing love, unbelievable love bound Jesus to that cross fashioned by our sins.

All this for me! His holy hands were pierced in payment for the sins I daily commit. His perfect feet were scarred because of the many times my feet have not walked in the way of God’s commands. His sinless head was marred by thorns in ransom for my wayward, selfish, often senseless thoughts that blemish my days. It was “for crimes that I had done he groaned upon the tree. Amazing pity, grace unknown, and love beyond degree” (CW 129:2).

Died

Though 20th century people live longer than their grandparents, the ultimate statistic remains the same. One out of one dies. Death still waits patiently to claim each one of us with his cold arms.

Then what? Then comes the unthinkable, not just being erased from the land of the living but from the sight of a gracious God in a never-ending hell. That’s not what God wanted for us. He wanted us to live forever in perfect peace and harmony with him. But sin



All this for me!
Jesus means me, too, when he asserts, “Whoever lives and believes in me will never die.”

by Richard E. Lauersdorf

[He] loved me and gave himself for me.
 Galatians 2:20

death still buzzes like some bee around me all my days, it cannot harm me because Jesus has removed its sting. His death is my death; his payment for sin covers also me. He means me, too, when he asserts, “Whoever lives and believes in me will never die” (John 11:26).

And was buried

What a gloomy scene—a handful of heartbroken followers laying his lifeless clay to rest in Joseph’s tomb. Little did they know! On the third day, Joseph’s grave would again be empty; their Savior gloriously alive, and their future stretching into eternity. That tomb in which the Savior was buried was the setting for the wondrous Easter victory.

All this for me! Some day I’ll fill that rectangular spot in some cemetery, but I need not be afraid. “I know that my Redeemer lives” is the triumphant shout ever since Joseph’s borrowed tomb was emptied that first Easter day. By God’s grace each believer can say, “When from the dust of death I rise to claim my mansion in the skies, e’en then this shall be all my plea: Jesus has lived and died—for me” (CW 376:5).



Richard Lauersdorf is pastor of St. John, Jefferson, Wisconsin, and the synod’s first vice-president.

ruined it all, and ever since, the wages of sin have been death.

Why did Jesus have to die? “The soul who sins is the one who will die,” a just God had warned (Ezekiel 18:20). Jesus had no sin. Yet he died, with a death so frightful it caused him to cry out, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” The full fury of God’s righteous anger and the full force of hell’s pain washed over him as he hung on that cross in the noonday darkness.

With his death came the world’s redemption. “It is finished,” he could say of sin’s payment even as he laid his sinless soul into the hands of his heavenly Father.

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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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Editorial office

Rev. Gary P. Baumler, Editor
Dorothy J. Sonntag, Assistant Editor
Linda R. Baacke, Editorial Assistant

Northwestern Lutheran
2929 N Mayfair Road
Milwaukee WI 53222-4398
Phone 414/256-3888 FAX 414/256-3899

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Prof. Richard D. Balge (chairman), Mr. John
Barber, Prof. John A. Braun, Mr. Mark C. Brunner,
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(Pacific Northwest), P. E. Zell (South Atlantic), C.
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Wisconsin).

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How you changed people's lives through your Lift High the Cross offering

Doing something different for Lent by *Mark E. Braun*
Lent doesn't mean you do something for God.

Another kind of minister by *Lawrence O. Olson*
There's a lot to do in a church, and a staff minister can do a lot of it.

CROSS-CULTURAL MINISTRY

**Negotiating in love—How our church is learning
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This multicultural parish had to change more than its worship style.

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• Olsen and Schroeder named new school presidents
• WELS growth slows in last decade
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• A missionary in Thailand—the first months
• Rescue
• After 50 years, brother and sister reunited
• Ariz.-Calif., Mich., Southeastern and Western Wis. District news

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• Native pastor ordained in Hong Kong

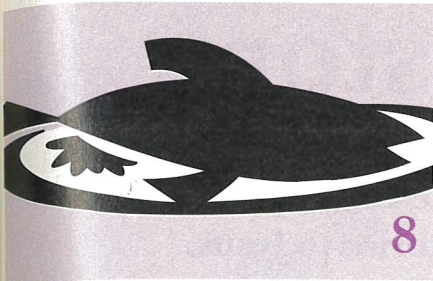
Around the world

BITS & PIECES

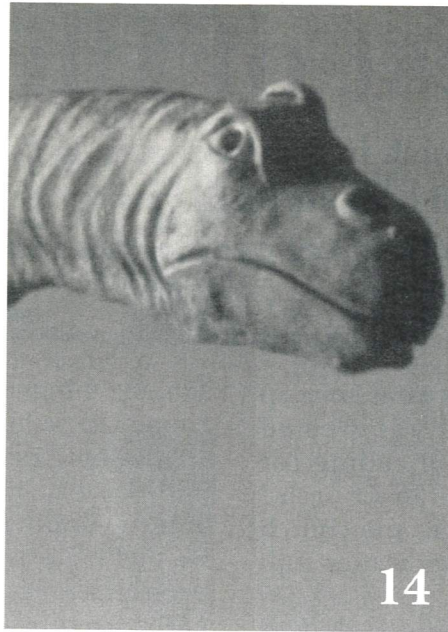
■ If you're interested in numbers, you'll want to know that through Lift High the Cross, the special offering begun in 1989, you raised over \$19 million and gave 24 home missions a start. If you're equally interested in people, you'll want to hear about the souls won because of your offerings: Maria DeHerrera, whose introduction to her Savior began with a phone call. Larry Myers, baptized at 77. Andy and Joanne Jackson, who met Jesus in a funeral home. Mark Stump, who wanted more from life than a perfect lawn. Their stories—and others'—are in "The rest of the story" (p. 6).

■ We tend to define ministers as parish pastors or teachers in Lutheran schools, since that's what most WELS ministers are. In this issue, you'll meet some people whose ministry is out of the ordinary: Larry Olson describes staff ministry (p. 9); Daniel Balge talks about the civilian chaplaincy in Europe (p. 16); and Wayne Schulz tells what a mission counselor does (p. 18).

Dorothy Sonntag



Doing something different for Lent



Dinosaurmania



Home mission counselors

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The rest of the story

Statistics tell how much money you gave to Lift High the Cross, but they don't tell how, through your gifts, the Holy Spirit used the Word to bring real people with real stories to Jesus.

by Linda R. Baacke

Maria DeHerrera, waking up from her nap to answer the telephone, was greeted with a cheery, "Hello. I'm calling for Light of the Valley Lutheran Church." She agreed to receive information about the church in Utah—anything to get the conversation over with so she could get back to her nap.

She started receiving information every week. And every week it went to the same place—the garbage. After a few weeks, however, the mailing was an invitation to a special Sunday service. Thinking this was maybe what she was looking for, Maria went to the service, went back for other services, and took Bible information classes. She is now an active member of Light of the Valley, Layton, Utah.

Light of the Valley is an exploratory church funded by Lift High the Cross. And Maria is typical of someone who came to know Jesus as the Savior through the work of Lift High the Cross.

Although we can count the number of missions or synod projects funded by Lift High the Cross, we can't count the number of souls brought to Jesus. The church has used money donated to Lift High the Cross to spread God's Word. The Holy Spirit has used the Word to bring real people with real stories to Jesus—who gives them real salvation.

The story in the states

Pastor Ed Ungemach of Bethlehem, Carmel, Indiana, commented, "Some of the people we touched honestly weren't headed to heaven two years

ago. Big things are happening in people's lives and we happen to be hitting them at the right time."

For some people, the right time may not occur until later in life. Although most churches baptize mostly babies, the first member baptized at Bethlehem was 77-year-old Larry Myers. Myers has been active in other churches in his life, but has never been asked if he was baptized. Seeing Myers baptized was "the kind of thing you never forget," said Ungemach.

Across the country in Redmond, Washington, Mark Stump was sitting in his yard, admiring his grass and

thinking, "There must be more to life than having a perfect lawn," when Todd Goldschmidt, pastor of Living Hope, showed up. Neither Mark nor his wife Debbie had gone to church since they were children. Mark and Debbie took information classes and joined the exploratory mission. Mark is now the chairman of the evangelism committee.

Back in Utah, service at Light of the Valley was held in a mortuary. Hearing that, Andy Jackson said, "I'm going there soon enough, I don't want to go any sooner." He had not been a member of a church anywhere for most of his adult life. His wife Joanne started attending and persuaded him to go. They both took classes at the church, Andy was baptized, and, according to Pastor Unnasch, they "are excited for the Word. They can't read the Bible enough."

While the mission work and poverty and friendliness is obvious to Paul, Calgary member minister and confirmation classes. The for the lay people Ray Whittle from his home Sunday—a two started in C

The story around the world

Across the world, seven men are studying

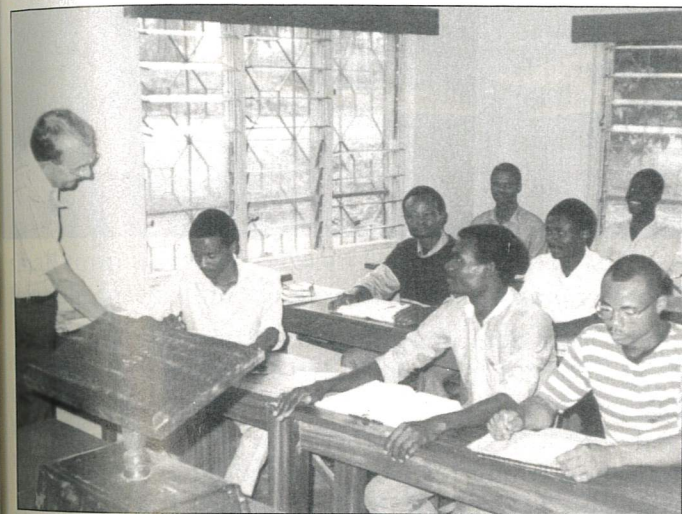
The story: \$19 million

Lift High the Cross, a special offering authorized by the 1989 synod convention, is designed to help support missions and the general operating budget. As of February 4, \$19,613,197 has been committed in addition to deferred giving.

Surpassing the original goal of \$15 million, Lift High the Cross has funded 24 home mission openings. Pastor Ron Roth, director of ministry of planned giving said, "In fact, without Lift High the Cross there would have been hardly any home and world mission expansion by our synod in the past three years."



Layton, Utah—Food and fellowship at Light of the Valley's ministry center.



Nigeria—Prof. Harold Johne helps men study for the ministry.

become pastors. Larry Schlomer and Harold Johne went to Nigeria to help these men study for the ministry. These seven will join the other three pastors of Christ the King Lutheran Church to help spread the Word throughout Nigeria.

While there, Barbara Johne saw the blessings of mission work. In the midst of and in spite of hardship and poverty, she said, Nigerians "always seem joyful and friendly. There is an exuberance in their praise. It is obvious they derive their joy from the Lord."

In another country, Jonathan Schultz, pastor at St. Paul, Calgary, Alberta, Canada, is working with a member ministry program to help spread the Word more efficiently and effectively. He instructs baptized and confirmed members in how to teach the Bible. Lay ministers hold adult information classes and Bible classes. The pastor prepares lesson materials needed for the lay people to lead the discussions.

Ray Whitten, a lay minister, and his wife traveled from his home in Red Deer to Calgary every Sunday—a two hour drive. In 1991 a satellite program started in Carstairs—a 45 minute drive—where

Some results of Lift High the Cross offerings

Carmel, Indiana—Margaret and Aaron Brandau portrayed Mary and Jesus at the "Happy birthday, Jesus" party.



Alberta, Canada—Only the two couples in the center, Jonathan and Cheryl Schultz and Ray and Phyllis Whitten, have a Christian background. All the others are converts through our WELS-Canada ministry.

Whitten taught adult information classes. The Whittens brought friends from Red Deer. Soon four families organized a new mission in Red Deer and now these 13 people worship in their hometown.

Stories of the work of the Spirit

All the people and all their stories reflect the working of the Holy Spirit. Often in conversation with a new member, the pastor hears the comments, "How did you know this is what I needed?" or "This is what I was looking for."

The pastors reply, "By God's grace," or "I didn't. God did." Pastor Unnasch said, "Watching the Holy Spirit working—it's awesome, humbling, and joyful."



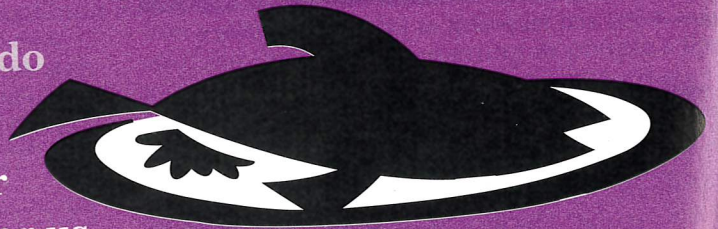
Because of generous donations to Lift High the Cross, people like Mark find out that there is more to life than a perfect lawn, or, like Andy, realize that true life can be found in a mortuary.

Linda Baacke is editorial assistant for Northwestern Lutheran.

Doing something different for Lent

We don't need to do anything different.

We need to hear what God has done for us.



by Mark E. Braun

Count on it. You will hear, if you haven't already, how people are doing something different for Lent.

One pastor now asks members of his church to consider working at a food pantry for the homeless or tutoring the illiterate. "Giving up something can be rather self-centered," he observed.

One homemaker admitted that what they used to do "was kind of superficial." She and her family still abstain from eating meat on Fridays during Lent, but they also "try to give things to people—our time, ourselves, and just being kinder and overall more thoughtful."

Another household began a tradition of selecting "pixies"—picking the name of a family member out of a jar and doing secret acts of kindness for that person, maybe making a bed or doing a chore. "The most fun part is not letting them know who did it."

What are you doing for Lent?

Most revealing is the title of a newspaper article on this subject: "What are you doing for Lent? It's all up to you."

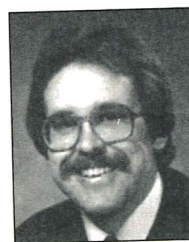
St. Paul allowed that one person may consider one day more sacred than another, while a second person may regard every day alike. One may eat meat while another refrains, if it's done "to the Lord." It's not forbidden to do something for Lent. But at least one of Paul's baby churches was much too absorbed with special days and months and seasons. He worried out loud "that somehow I have wasted my efforts on you."

There's nothing really different about it

The most damning thing to say about doing something different for Lent is that there's nothing really different about it. It still fixes on what people do for God, and with it comes the appealing notion that by doing something for God, one should get something from him as a reward. Such thinking grows naturally in sinful hearts, and it knows no season.

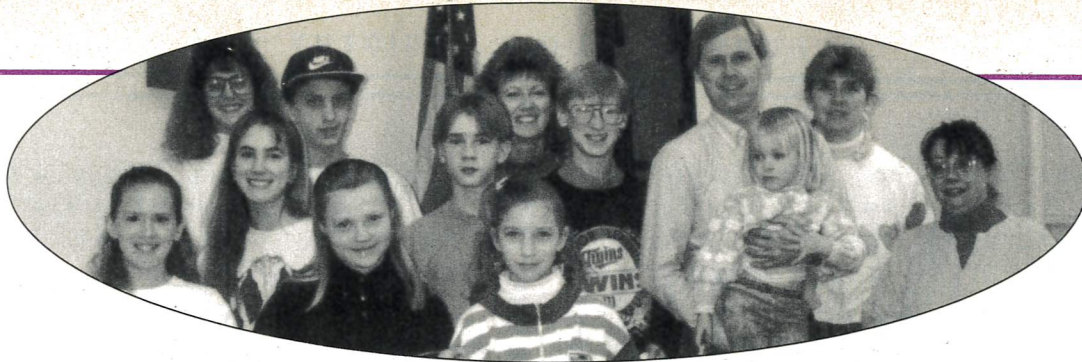
The basic message of Christianity is not, "This did but "This happened!" What we need to hear, over and over, most of all in Lent, is not what we can do for God but what he has done for us. Jesus didn't redeem us by giving us a good example to follow; he redeemed us by trading places with us under God's justice. He offered his Father a life of willing obedience we've never given him. He endured the painful punishment his Father said sin deserves.

He suffered shame and scorn
And wretched, dire disgrace;
Forsaken and forlorn,
He hung there in our place.
But all who would from sin be free
Look to his cross for victory. (CW 107:2)



Here's hoping there's nothing different about your Lent.

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



Working with young people is just part of what Fritz Horn (third from right, holding Sarah) does as staff minister at Grace.

Another kind of minister

There's a lot to do in a church,
and a staff minister can do a lot of it

by Lawrence O. Olson

You are in your late 30s, and have almost 15 years of experience as a Lutheran elementary school teacher and principal. You are married, and the oldest of your three children is getting close to the high school years. The small town where you live and work is a friendly, comfortable place.

Then you get a call from an urban congregation to serve in a radically different kind of ministry, one with responsibilities in congregational fellowship, family ministry, adult education, and the coordination of volunteers. What would you do?

When Frederick Horn faced that situation, the Holy Spirit moved him to accept the call, and for the last few years he has served as the Minister of Discipleship for Grace Lutheran in downtown Milwaukee.

A new kind of public ministry

Horn's position puts him into a small but growing category of church workers: staff ministers. The Wisconsin Synod currently trains people for pastoral ministry and teaching ministry, but is preparing now to add a formal program for staff ministry.

Staff ministers are called into the public ministry of the church, and they serve in focused areas of ministry such as adult Christian education, evangelism, administration, youth work, family ministry, and the like. They work under the direction of the pastor, and with the pastor and the members, carry out the responsibilities the congregation delegates to them.

"What I am doing now is what I have done throughout my ministry," Horn says. "I teach the gospel." His current context is quite different from his former classroom, but the essence of his work is the same—to use the Word God has given us to call people to faith and to equip them to lead faith-filled lives.

Training staff ministers

After about a decade of careful study, the 1991 synod convention authorized a program to train and certify staff ministers. That program will be launched this summer at Dr. Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota, and will be one of the tracks in the amalgamated college that will be formed in New Ulm in 1995.

The program will serve men and women who fit into the traditional age group for college students, and also older or second-career students. The goal is to provide academic integrity, professional competence, and structural flexibility to meet the needs of a varied group of candidates who will bring a broad range of gifts and experience into the service of the Lord and his church.

A partnership in ministry

Fritz Horn did not quite know what to expect when he moved to Milwaukee, since he was accepting a brand new position. He had the advantage of coming to a congregation overwhelmingly in favor of his position. Its members recognized that their pastor had many demands on his time and needed support. Horn also is thankful for the time and energy his pastor, James Huebner, has spent working with him as they have forged a true partnership in ministry.

What would Horn want someone to understand about staff ministry? "First, that it is a God-pleasing form of public ministry, and second, that there's a lot to do in a church, and a staff minister can do a lot of it."



Lawrence Olson is director of the staff ministry program at Dr. Martin Luther College. You can contact him at DMLC, 1884 College Heights, New Ulm MN 56073-3300.

Negotiating in love

How our church is learning to celebrate cultural diversity

We need to recognize and celebrate cultural diversity, because the "all nations" that Jesus commissioned us to evangelize have moved into our churches' neighborhoods.

by E. Allen Sorum

One of the best tips I got, back in 1983, was to start off my ministry at Garden Homes Lutheran Church with an every-member visit. The one-on-one meetings allowed the members and me to get to know each other a little. More important, however, the visits established the immediate agenda for our partnership in the gospel.

First, we had to build with the gospel on the obvious commitment that the members had for our church and its neighborhood. Second, we had to discuss ways to make worship more satisfying for our members.

That second item turned out to be much more challenging than the first. We are still tussling with it ten years later. The challenge was to offer opportunity for worship that celebrated and communicated our confessional and liturgical Lutheran heritage. At the same time, we wanted a service that celebrated and recognized the cultural diversity of our Anglo-African-American membership. What to do?

Negotiables and non-negotiables

The first thing we did was to look to God's Word

for guidance. The Bible told us that certain things about worship were not negotiable. We will all submit to the authority of Scripture. We will all acknowledge Jesus to be our only Savior. We will all come with a humble heart, a head eager for instruction, and a voice willing to sing praises to God.

Other aspects of our worship, however, were negotiable. For example, how many times must one stand up and sit down in one service to be a true Lutheran? Would worship be any less pleasing to God if we turned our heads once we were seated? Did the choir help the worship by performing in the balcony behind the congregation? Would the congregation suffer if the preacher expressed greater excitement and the church members responded with enthusiasm about the gospel that he was preaching? Could we find gospel songs that would complement the music from the hymnal?

The negotiation process was not easy. In fact, some members could not endure it and transferred out of our congregation. The majority, however, recognized that if Garden Homes was going to reach and serve people from a different culture, we would have

work toward a worship life and style that incorporated meaningful aspects of that culture.

Do you want the truth? Many more Anglo than African-American members commented on how much they appreciated the gospel hymns.

Changing more than worship style

Our multicultural family of believers had to discuss more than worship style. Sermons and Bible study classes had to address more than one culture.

Again, certain things cannot be changed in any Christian sermon or Bible class, regardless of the cultural diversity of the audience. The Bible is always inspired and inerrant. Justification by grace through faith is the only foundation of the church and the chief message in every sermon. God's Word, not culture, is the only source for doctrine.

However, because we are a multicultural family of believers, that authoritative, inspired, and inerrant Bible had to address concerns and attitudes and questions and sins that I, as an Anglo preacher, and many Anglo members had not considered. We had a whole new list of questions and needs and sins to address because a whole new cultural audience was sitting out in front.

African-American teachers

The African-American people of Garden Homes have equipped me to preach to a multicultural congregation. Men like Gervis teach me sermon illustrations when they stand up in front of our congregation and say, "The teaching of Jesus Christ is like the bass in rap music. Without the bass in rap, there is no rap; there is no music. There is no dance to rap if there is no bass in rap. A person who hears the words of Jesus and doesn't put them into practice is like rap without bass."

Men like Ed teach me that I have Bible study to do—and then do it with me—when they ask questions like this: "Pastor, why do I have to go to work and face,

every single day, the same kind of racism and insults and racial hatred? Why hasn't anything changed in our country since the civil rights battles? Why does God continue to allow this to go on, even in the church?"

Young people, like those who participated in our neighborhood youth outreach program, teach me that the starting point of my Christian witness must be different when I am telling people who are from a different culture about Jesus.

I asked them to share with me some common criticisms about the Christian faith. One youth answered, "Jesus was white." Another quickly responded, "No way, man. Jesus was black!" For generations, our church body was busy preaching Christ in a culture we were familiar and comfortable with, because it was our culture.

All nations—in our neighborhood

Things are different now, aren't they? And the situation in America will only get more different. Many of our churches are surrounded by

new neighbors, in some cases immigrants, whose culture is vastly different from ours. The "all nations" that Jesus commissioned us to evangelize have moved into our back yards and into our churches' neighborhoods.

Churches throughout North America are facing the same challenges as Garden Homes. Yes, it can be a little uncomfortable at times. But the joys far outweigh the discomfort.

Among what I consider the greatest joys is seeing so clearly the power of God's Word. It is seeing Christian love in action between people who know that they'll be spending eternity together. It is seeing Christians who submit to what God says is necessary and negotiate in love on all the rest.



Allen Sorum is pastor of Garden Homes, Milwaukee.



Future leaders at Garden Homes reflect the congregation's cultural diversity.

How to talk about problems instead of fighting about them

by Thomas B. Franzmann



Dinner is almost finished, and the family is attempting to talk through a problem. Jim sneaks a glance at his watch. Rebecca is anxious because she knows family discussions are important. Kevin, a high school junior, is upset because he's afraid he won't get his way. Jennifer, an eighth grader, is eager to talk with anyone about anything. And little Jamie just wants to go and play.

The pressing problem

Rebecca says, "We have to talk about this; it isn't going to go away."

"But I'm late for my meeting at church, and I'm the chairman of the committee," Jim replies. "I agree this is important, but so is the work our committee is doing. The quarterly meeting is this Thursday, and if we don't get our proposal in, we'll have to wait three full months."

"It's true, this did come up without much prior warning," Rebecca responds. "Kevin, we can't always give you answers right away. Let's all think about this, then discuss it after dinner tomorrow."

Relieved, Jim asks, "Is that okay with everyone? Good. Remember, we're a Christian family, and we want to follow our Savior's guidelines for communicating in our family."

Guidelines for discussions

In the intervening 24 hours, each member of the family thinks about the next day's discussion. They have mixed feelings, but are still confident.

It's a pattern they have followed for several years. Jim and Rebecca had gone through a difficult time in

their marriage. They sought help from a Christian counselor, who taught them some simple "rules" for good communication that helped them in their relationship. They had instituted similar guidelines when they included other members of the family.

The rules were simple. One set came from the principles taught in Ephesians 4:

- ◇ Always speak the truth.
- ◇ No name calling.
- ◇ Control your anger.
- ◇ Speak and act in love.
- ◇ Always remember the grace and forgiveness we have received from Christ, and treat others in the family accordingly.

Other guidelines their counselor had gleaned from several sources:

- ◇ You can only discuss one issue at a time, so limit your discussion to one.
- ◇ Exercise self-discipline. If anyone gets out of control, stop the discussion and continue it after a cooling-off period.
- ◇ Reach a decision.
- ◇ Write the decision down.
- ◇ Act on the decision without procrastination.

Every member of the family knew these "rules." In lighter moments they sometimes joked about them. Even Jamie could repeat some of them.

The family forum

The next day they finish dinner. They close with family devotion. Jamie is excused. He has been included in some of the family talks. He doesn't understand much of what they say, but the way they

say it makes an impression on his little heart. His family does not always agree, but they love one another and find ways to work around their disagreements. They always ask Jesus to help.

As Jamie leaves, Jennifer wants to know whether she should stay. After a nod from both parents and a shrug from Kevin, which is about as close as he'll ever come to granting permission, she stays. After all, she will probably face similar family conferences within the next few years. She can't imagine she'll ever be as stubborn as her older brother, but she likes these discussions, so she's glad to be allowed to stay.

The Christian attitude

Kevin's attitude is somewhat different from the day before. He is "testing his wings" and has a strong need to have his ideas and desires respected. But he has a sincere love for Christ and has witnessed a number of incidents when the Savior's teachings were helpful for him or members of his family.

He still has vivid memories of that time when his parents had come close to separating. Now, after a day to think about his concern, he realizes he likes getting his way, but other things are important, too.

Jim feels good about the upcoming discussion. He has spent time in prayer, asking the Lord for wisdom and patience. He knows the thoughts he wants to include in a prayer he plans to use to begin the session.

There was a time in Jim's life, including his own teenage years, when Jesus was not very important to Jim. Most of the time, he hadn't known or cared what Jesus would want for him. But that has changed. Regular worship, Bible reading, and fairly frequent devotions with Rebecca or the family have given him a different outlook.

Jim smiles inside as he thinks how his gracious Lord has guided his life. He is sure that grace will provide the underpinning for this time together.

Rebecca has similar thoughts. She, too, has prayed. For many years her prayers had been shallow—always requesting, even demanding, things of God.

She hadn't always been selfish. As often as not, the prayers were for her family, not just herself. But during the last few years she has noticed a change in her prayer life.

Now, instead of trying to impose her will on God, she spends more time thinking about God's will for her and her family. Her prayers ask whether a family action will please God, whether or not it leads where they think they should go.

Now she always brings her well-worn Bible to the family meetings, with her own private petition that the Holy Spirit will lead her to find the right passages at the right time.

The beginning of discussion

Jim begins, "Lord God, our gracious and merciful Father in heaven, we are your children. We are

weak, sinful human beings who need you so much. But you have purchased and won us through the blood of Jesus. In his name we come to you this evening asking your blessing on our thoughts, words, and decisions. We all love you. We trust that you will guide us along paths that. . . ."

Ten guidelines for communication

- ◇ *Always speak the truth.*
- ◇ *No name calling.*
- ◇ *Control your anger.*
- ◇ *Speak and act in love.*
- ◇ *Always remember the grace and forgiveness we have received from Christ, and treat others in the family accordingly.*
- ◇ *You can only discuss one issue at a time, so limit your discussion to one.*
- ◇ *Exercise self-discipline. If anyone gets out of control, stop the discussion and continue it after a cooling-off period.*
- ◇ *Reach a decision.*
- ◇ *Write the decision down.*
- ◇ *Act on the decision without procrastination.*



Wellspring, a family devotional magazine, is available from Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N 113th St, Milwaukee WI 53226-3284.

In this series, we want to cover topics that might be discussed at your family table. Please send your suggestions to **FAMILY TABLE**, Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.

Tom Franzmann is pastor of Our Redeemer, Santa Barbara, California.

A large, grey dinosaur model with a long neck and head, positioned on the left side of the page. In the background, there is a park-like setting with a palm tree, a fence, and mountains under a clear sky. Several people, including children and adults, are visible in the distance, some looking towards the dinosaur.

Dinosaurmania

Dinosaurs are “in” these days, so now is a good time to teach children about these amazing members of God’s creation

by Kevin Peil

Dinosaurmania has struck again. The release of “Jurassic Park” brought dinosaur excitement to a fever pitch. Also fueling the fire is television’s “Barney and Friends.”

Because the amount of Bible-centered dinosaur information is rare, we Christians often don’t know what

to say about dinosaurs. However, because nonbiblical speculations abound, we need to become informed and to correct most of the information our children receive about dinosaurs. We need to present these creatures to them as the amazing members of God's creation they once were.

Does the Bible speak of dinosaurs?

The word "dinosaur" is never used in the Bible (the word was coined by Richard Owen of the British Museum around 1830) but the description of these large creatures seems to be there.

In Job 41, God describes a sea creature he calls "leviathan." The creature had fearsome teeth and scales, which no weapon could pierce. In the previous chapter, God describes a large land creature he calls "behemoth." The creature was impossible to capture and had a tail that "sways like a cedar." Were leviathan and behemoth dinosaurs?

The creature "leviathan" is a close description of an extinct sea-dwelling dinosaur referred to today as a Plesiosaur. The "behemoth" could very well have been the largest species of dinosaur: the Brontosaurus. A visit to any large natural history museum will reveal abundant evidence that these dinosaurs did exist. The fossilized reconstructions are the actual bones of these creatures.

Were there dinosaurs on Noah's ark?

The Bible tells us that before the flood came, God sent two of every kind of animal to live on the ark with Noah and his family. Since the Bible is clear on this fact, dinosaurs must have also entered the ark. Some of us question this conclusion, however, because we know that dinosaurs were very large; they would never have fit on the ark. This line of thinking has flaws.

First, only a few of the dinosaurs were very large (such as Brontosaurus and Tyrannosaurus). For example, one (*Struthiomimus*) was only as big as an ostrich and another (*Compsognathus*) as big as a rooster. God could have chosen the smaller species of dinosaurs as representative of the dinosaur kinds.

Second, God may not have sent fully grown, mature adult creatures on the ark. When these animals came off the ark, they would repopulate the earth, so they needed to be in or just entering the prime of their reproductive lives. For this reason, God may have sent young (hence smaller) creatures to live on the ark.

What happened to the dinosaurs?

If there really were dinosaurs at one time, what happened to them?

First, the dinosaurs that were not on the ark were destroyed in the flood waters. Most likely these are the creatures we find on display in museums today.

Second, the world the dinosaurs entered as they emerged from the ark differed markedly from the pre-flood world. The vapor canopy that covered the earth was gone. The earth's surface was no longer a uniform temperature.

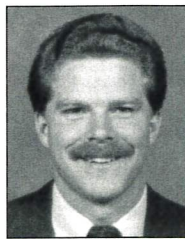
Dinosaurs likely had difficulty adjusting to the change. A dinosaur could have lived quite happily before the flood, but after the flood with fluctuating temperatures, its chances of survival would have diminished. Evolutionists themselves support the notion of a universally warmer climate when the dinosaurs lived, with increased global cooling possibly leading to their extinction.

Dinosaurs may have lived for several hundred to several thousand years after the flood, finally becoming extinct in the Middle Ages. The Anglo-Saxon and Celtic people of Europe have passed down descriptions of creatures that may have been dinosaurs. A Welsh account from 336 BC describes King Morvidus as having been killed by a giant reptile that "gulped down the body of Morvidus as a big fish swallows a little one."

Dozens more accounts exist, including one from 1405 where a giant reptile at Bures in Suffolk, England, was described as "vast in body, with a crested head, teeth like a saw, and a tail extending to enormous length," which was troubling the folks of the countryside because it had "slaughtered the shepherd of a flock" and "devoured many sheep."

There are even claims today that dinosaurs still exist in the middle of Congo jungles and around the Loch Ness, Scotland, area.

Now is the perfect time to teach our children the truth about dinosaurs. They did live at one time, they are apparently described in the Bible, they were on Noah's ark, and they are reported to have lived side by side with man only a few thousand years ago.



Kevin Peil, a chemical engineer, is a member of Good Shepherd, Midland, Michigan.

Worshippers gather in
Tambach-Dietharz, Germany,
at a retreat led by WELS
civilian chaplains in Europe.

Civilian chaplains: modern day circuit riders

by Daniel N. Balge



On the last weekend in October, 65 WELS members and friends gathered for a Reformation retreat in tiny Tambach-Dietharz, a small town in Germany's Thuringian forest. Participants came from the Czech Republic, England, Germany, and the United States. They represented WELS, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, the Lutheran Church in Central Africa, and the Australian Lutheran Church.

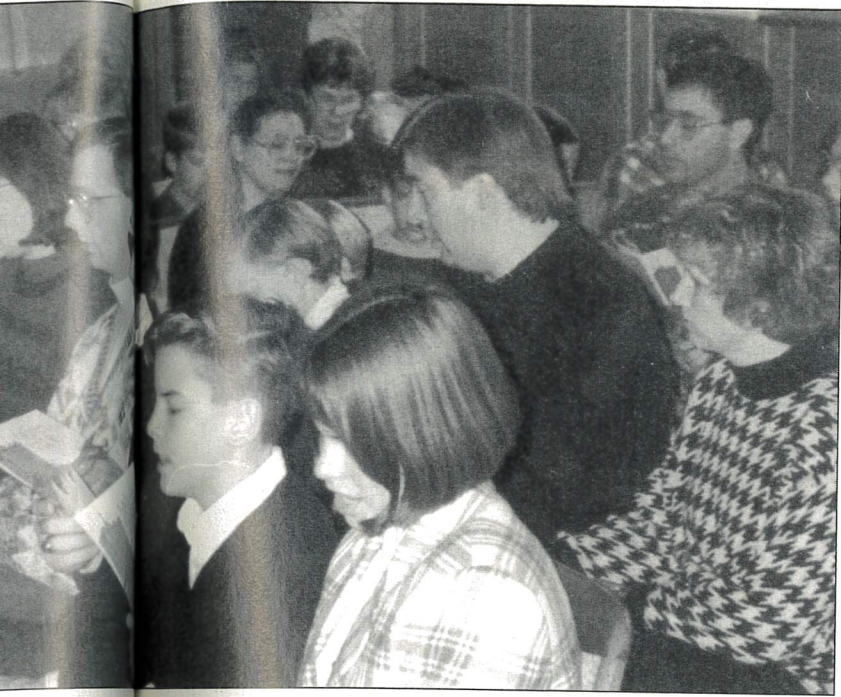
WELS members in Europe

The retreat was part of the ongoing kingdom activity of the WELS Commission on Special Ministries. Two pastors, Dennis Smith and I, serve as civilian chaplains. We make our homes in Mainz, Germany, and serve WELS Americans living in Europe, most of whom are connected with the American military.

Including military, business people, students, and their families, about 500 WELS members and friends live in western Europe. The end of the Cold War has reduced the number of American military in Europe, and also WELS numbers—down from over 800 in 1990. Yet the territory we cover (northern Scotland to southern Italy, western Wales to eastern Australia) remains the same. It's the rough equivalent of being based in Milwaukee and serving a flock scattered between Winnipeg and Orlando, Bismarck and Pittsburgh.

Modern day circuit riders

The largest concentrations of WELS members are in southern Germany and southern England, about



Christmas in Germany

Pastor Daniel Balge conducted six services in three days in Germany. A highlight of those days was the “not-too-long-ago-converted-to-WELS” family who traveled four and one-half hours to attend the services. While there, the family’s two teenagers met with Balge for an instruction class.

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Mainz as Illinois and Minnesota are to Milwaukee. By a neat twist of history, a synod founded by traveling preachers who ministered to German immigrants in the American Midwest now supports chaplains who ride a circuit in western Europe, holding services for American expatriates.

WELS members gather for monthly services at seven locations in southern Germany, one in Belgium, and two in England. A weekly service near Mainz in suburban Frankfurt rounds out the fixed schedule. We try to reach WELS members and others who live far from a service circuit by making regular trips to Scotland, Italy, France, the Netherlands, Austria, Switzerland, and northern Germany. We have also vis-

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WELS chaplains in Germany

DAN AND BETH BALGE
 Am Jungstueck 17
 55130 Mainz-Laubenheim
 Phone: 011-49-6131-882721

DENNIS AND DEB SMITH
 Kastanien Strasse 11
 55270 Klein Winternheim
 Phone: 011-49-6131-88965

ited Spain, Iceland, Greece, and Turkey, though not on a regular basis. With instruction classes, counseling, other calls and visits, we travel about 50,000 miles a year, mostly by car.

Civilian chaplains

The WELS civilian chaplaincy has been in Europe for more than twenty years. It sprouted from the ministry of civilian chaplains in Vietnam. Even earlier, chaplains served German prisoners of war held in the

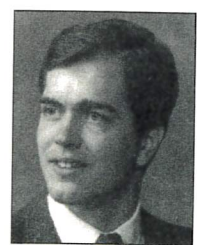
US during World War II.

In the early years of this century and between the world wars, pastors of local congregations often functioned as camp pastors at military installations. Today more than 100 pastors fulfill similar responsibilities at stateside bases and posts, serving WELS members stationed away from their home churches. A similar arrangement in Japan reaches WELS members living in the Far East.

Ministry to those away from home

The Commission on Special Ministries (CSM) also carries out a program of devotional and informational mailings for WELS members and friends who are unable to attend a local congregation, whether they are in the military, business, school, or prison.

Most often CSM receives names and addresses from home congregations. In fact, this effort to help fellow Christians stay close to the gospel depends on congregations’ sending names. Not long ago, CSM had Timbuktu, Bali, and western Africa on its mailing list. Indeed, wherever souls are in special circumstances, Special Ministries strives to meet their spiritual needs with the gospel, in Timbuktu—and in Tambach, too.



Please send names and addresses of those away from home to WELS Commission on Special Ministries, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.

Dan Balge is a civilian chaplain in Europe.

From the heartland to the high land

Across the USA, home mission counselors advise and encourage new congregations

by Wayne I. Schulz

“You’re a what? A mission counselor? What’s that?” These questions come from strangers and acquaintances alike. My colleagues and I hear them often. Let me tell you what we do.

Field men

The Board for Home Missions (BHM) serves over 200 groups and congregations. The members of the board are pastors and laymen with full-time jobs. They can’t spend much-needed time with missions and missionaries located sometimes hundreds of miles away. That is why the synod authorized the calling of “field men,” mission counselors.

The four of us give spiritual encouragement and guidance to new missions and new missionaries. We had a combined service of about 100 years in the parish ministry before accepting calls as mission counselors.

The field

I work with the missions, missionaries, and mission boards of four districts: Northern Wisconsin, Western Wisconsin, Minnesota, and Dakota-Montana. I travel from the heartland shores of Lakes Michigan and Superior, across the many tributaries that empty into the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, to the splendid vistas of the Rocky Mountains, through nine states and two Canadian provinces.

The areas I visit are new frontiers for the Spirit’s working through the means of grace. There are core groups in growing regions of the WELS heartland where the synod is well-known, such as the Fox River Valley area, metro-Madison, and the Twin Cities. And there are core groups in areas where WELS is not well known, such as metro-St. Louis, Mo.; West Des Moines, Iowa; Saskatoon, Sask.; Calgary, Edmonton,

and Red Deer, Alberta.

I spend much of my time in person-to-person encouragement visits, telephone calls, and reports to the 50-some missionaries in my region. It matters little if the missionary is a new seminary graduate or a veteran pastor. Each is totally committed to his special calling.

Together, we go through an eight-page orientation form to assist the missionary in gospel motivation, ministry planning, time management, scheduling work, and outreach ideas. All of this is gathered into a report that is shared with those who have an interest in the new mission. The report helps to build rapport

between the missionary, mission counselor, mission group, mission board, and BHM staff.

The people in the field

I remember well my first visit with a new group of people in Saskatoon. They gathered in a circle and explained what it meant to be reached by the gospel, what went through their minds

they gathered for worship for the first time, what their fears were as they considered some of their new-found responsibilities in organizing themselves into a functioning church. That group was initially formed with no WELS people.

One WELS couple, however, was excited about the opportunity to drive three hours to the first worship service in Saskatchewan. The wife arose early the Easter morning to travel alone with the joy of salvation in her heart. Her husband, a police officer, was on duty and could not go with her. Enroute, she swerved to avoid a rabbit and was killed as the car rolled over. Later, her husband was the officer on the scene.

This was a tremendous jolt to the new mission. It has been invigorating to return to Saskatoon, to

We easily fall into the trap of equating property and buildings with “church.” In reality, the church is people who have been reached by the gospel and who go out to others with the gospel.



Missionary Thomas Unke looks at the growing mission field in West Des Moines, Iowa.



Sunday school at Lord of Love in DeForest, Wis.

how the members have grown in faith and in numbers, to hear them sing familiar hymns, and to witness the development of the congregation's leadership team.

The missionaries bring them the good news of Jesus as Savior. We serve them further by training them in friendship evangelism, by assisting them in planning, by giving them guidance in leadership, outreach, education, worship, stewardship, and fellowship.

Reaching out in the field

Giving that kind of assistance helps us to keep focused on what's important. We easily fall into the trap of equating property and buildings with "church." In reality, the church is people who have been reached by the gospel and who go out to others with the gospel.

Church is people reaching out to people like Betty, whose name was retrieved from an "uninterested prospect list" thrown into a wastebasket. Betty became a member of our WELS mission and has brought an additional eleven souls to the Bible information classes.

Church is people reaching out to people like Jacob and Aida, Palestinians from Jerusalem, now members of a WELS mission.

Church is people reaching out to people like the 18-year-old twins who were driven out of their broken home. They were welcomed in one of our missions

Mission counselors work with these people:

- ◆ **Core groups**—people interested in planting God's Word in their community with the prayer that God will cause it to produce a congregation
- ◆ **Outreach explorers**—missionaries without an organized congregation
- ◆ **Organized mission congregations**
- ◆ **Missionaries** who serve those congregations

where "we finally found a place where we belong."

Church is people reaching out to people like the head of a large business whose work could not satisfy his internal restlessness. The gospel brought him the peace his business success could not provide.



From the lakes to the mountains, the seed of the message of Jesus Christ as Savior is being planted. And, the Lord, as he promised, is nurturing those tender growing plants.

Wayne Schulz is mission counselor for the following WELS districts: Dakota-Montana, Minnesota, Northern Wisconsin, and Western Wisconsin.

How WELS serves its young people

Do you have questions about the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod—how it functions, how decisions are made and carried out? Synod administrators will provide some answers.

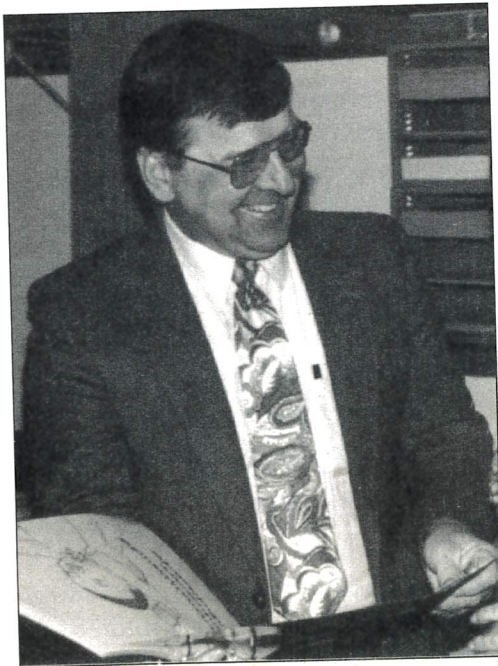
This month Gerald F. Kastens, administrator for the Commission on Youth Discipleship, answers questions about resources and services for youth ministry.

What's happening with the new Sunday school curriculum?

The new curriculum, *Christ-Light*, is not just for Sunday school, but also for Lutheran elementary and high schools and for parents to use at home.

We don't know exactly when the curriculum will be ready. Over 100 people are writing the curricu-

Jerry Kastens is a 1970 graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College and taught in Lutheran schools until he became administrator for youth discipleship in 1991. His wife, Sandra, teaches at St. Paul, Lake Mills, Wis. They are the parents of Heather, 19, and Aaron, 17. Jerry likes hunting, fishing, and the Minnesota Vikings.



lum. They have finished approximately one third, and should turn in another third by the end of this year.

Congregations want the new youth curriculum "yesterday," but this is a plan of some magnitude. We need to make final decisions on format and artwork. The timetable also depends upon what busy pastors and teachers, who are writing as many as 26 lessons each, are able to complete.

Editing, formatting, and layout will be no small

task. Mr. Owen Dorn recently accepted a call to serve as curriculum editor. He began working on the curriculum in January.

How does the Commission on Youth Discipleship (CYD) differ from the Commission on Parish Schools (CPS)?

Though the synod created both commissions to serve young people and their families, CPS serves Lutheran elementary and high schools. CYD's focus is Sunday school, vacation Bible school, mid-week class, confirmation class, teen Bible class, and cradle roll.

Though the new curriculum has been a major focus, we're also looking at other issues relating to youth and children's ministry. CYD is concerned about the following trends:

- Thirty percent of the children who are baptized in WELS congregations are not being confirmed.
- An additional 40 percent drop away during the early high school years.
- Only 20 percent of WELS teenagers participate in any formal Bible study.

What besides the Christ-Light curriculum does the commission offer for the church's youth?

We offer Christ-centered opportunities and resources for worship, education, service, fellowship, and recreation. CYD also equips members for ministry to children and youth. We provide resources and Bible studies for Sunday school, vacation Bible school, and youth ministry leaders and teachers.

We have several things planned:

- A national Sunday school teachers' convention for July 7-9, 1995, in Milwaukee. That convention will be a springboard for future regional and local resources for Sunday school teachers.
- A program to promote Sunday school and vacation Bible school, with four big books for use with small children, a computer game, a children's manual, and a witness comic book.
- Resources and activities to offer teens the opportunity to become involved in ministry.
- Regional and annual international youth rallies.

Please send your questions about the synod administration to OPEN DOORS, Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.

WELS congregations ride out California earthquake

"We experienced a 3.8 [on the Richter scale] just an hour and a half ago," explained Shelah Found of Thousand Oaks, California, about 28 hours after the earthquake. People were still feeling the aftershocks and will certainly feel the aftereffects for a long time to come.

The quake rocked at least six WELS congregations. Although it was still too early to assess all the damage, no one knew of personal injuries to its members. No church sustained major structural damage either, although the stained-glass window in one was "half out" and the chandeliers in another had smashed against the ceiling in a six-foot arc.

Some WELS families lost treasured possessions and suffered serious structural damage to their homes. Most have to deal with severely damaged roads. Mary

To help earthquake victims, send your gift to the Committee on Relief, WELS Administration Building, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.

Palmquist, Panorama City, mused how their closest WELS neighbor church, 20 minutes away two days before, now is six hours away.

Valerie Weindorf, Sylmar, said their family was without water,

"everything" in the house was "tipped over," and they had no electric power. The floor was split and their walls cracked. Said Valerie, "It's a beautiful day in southern California here. The sun is shining and it's warm."

Her voice revealed a warm, Christ-won confidence.

President Karl Gurgel visited the congregations affected by the earthquake. "Our churches did not sustain extensive damage," he reported. "There were no serious injuries among WELS members, but nearly everyone has suffered loss." Gurgel presented \$200,000 as an initial gift from the WELS Committee on Relief.

Olsen and Schroeder named new school presidents

"It's a whole new adventure, breaking new ground," says Pastor Theodore B. Olsen about the challenge of his new position as president of the amalgamated college to open in New Ulm, Minn., in 1995. Olsen accepted the call on January 16, and will move from the presi-

- The board of control needs to complete the administrative team, adding a vice president each for the school of education and the school of theology.

- Curriculum and facilities will command the most attention immediately.

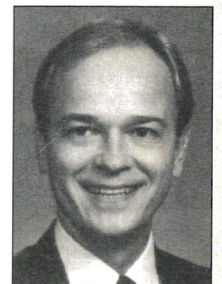
- The faculties need to merge into one effective team.

Olsen speaks of preserving the integrity of the two ministerial programs, while promoting cooperation and shared effort. He sees himself as part of the team that will get the job done. Reflecting on the enormity of the task ahead, Olsen simply affirms, "The Lord will provide."

Pastor Mark G. Schroeder has accepted the call as president of the combined preparatory school in Watertown, Wis. Schroeder is now president of Northwestern Preparatory School there, which will merge with Martin Luther Preparatory School. Schroeder says he plans to keep the best from both schools, and strengthen the program that leads students to study



Theodore Olsen,
college
president



Mark Schroeder,
preparatory school
president

"The possibilities are limitless and the challenges new. This move is historic in WELS annals."

dency of Martin Luther Preparatory School in Prairie du Chien, Wis., to the college, formed by combining Dr. Martin Luther College and Northwestern College. "The possibilities are limitless and the challenges new," he added. "This move is historic in WELS annals."

Olsen speaks of the following priorities as he assumes his new position:

further for the public ministry.

Schroeder's priorities:

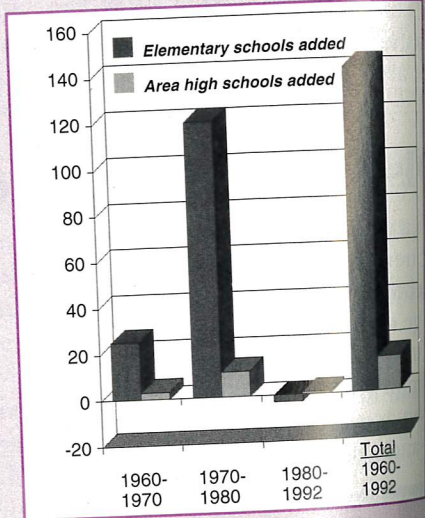
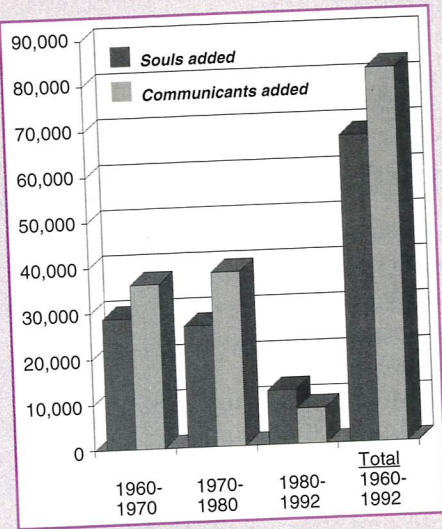
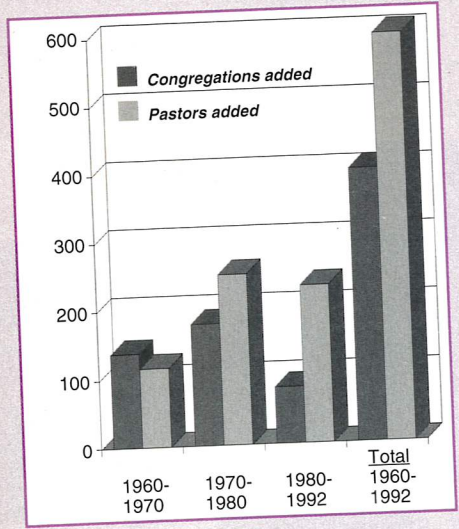
- Establish the new faculty, curriculum, and facilities.
- Develop the new school's policies and establish its identity.
- Reach parents and others in the church.
- Maintain a sense of continuity for the combining schools.

Schroeder looks forward to working to preserve and strengthen the purpose of the prep school to train teens for ministry. To that end, he asks, "Please keep us all in your prayers."

WELS growth slows in last decade

The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod has added 400 congregations and 82,000 communicants since 1960, but most of that growth occurred before 1980, according to the synod's statistical report. Similarly, the number of new elementary and high schools was greatest during the '70s. More elementary schools closed than opened between 1980 and 1992.

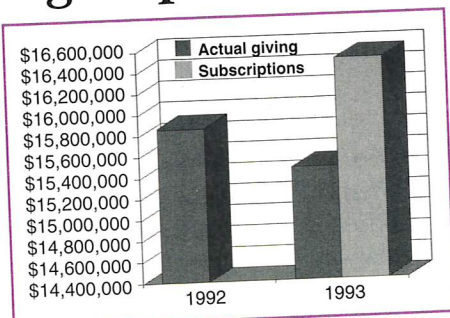
Time period	1960-1970	1970-1980	1980-1992	Total added 1960-1992	Grand total as of 1/1/94
Congregations added	138	179	83	400	1,229
Pastors added	116	250	231	597	1,214
Souls added	28,758	26,666	11,952	67,376	419,939
Communicants added	36,044	38,225	7,746	82,015	317,088
Elementary schools added	25	120	-3	142	363
Area high schools added	3	11	1	15	20



Synod mission offerings dip in 1993

WELS churches gave \$15,471,890 in mission offerings for 1993, leaving the synod with an approximate \$300,000 shortfall from this source. Congregations actually subscribed to give \$16,498,781—a subscription shortfall of \$1,026,891. The synod anticipated some of the shortfall in budgeting. Churches gave \$285,256 less than in 1992. That figure represents the cost of more than five new mission starts. It is the biggest drop in offerings in Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod history.

Asked what the decreased giving



Congregational mission offerings

means, Pastor Daniel Malchow, administrator of the Commission on Communication for Financial Support, cited a trend of little or no

increase in mission giving for five years or more. "It reflects some serious financial problems in our home churches," he said. "It's a problem in almost all parts of the synod. We see it repeated also in other church bodies."

One ray of light in the dark picture is the Lift High the Cross offering (see story on p. 6) and the hope that we will increase our mission giving when the offering ends this year. In addition, we can thank our gracious God for the \$15 million plus received in 1993.

A missionary in Thailand—the first months

Picture a country about the size of Texas with 55 million people. It has recently joined the ranks of the newly industrialized countries. Almost everyone is engaged in some sort of commerce. About 90 percent of the population is literate. The economy is booming, and the way of life is changing.

You are picturing Thailand today. Newly arrived missionary, John Hartwig, reports: "Things are changing for the Thais, and these social and economic changes are tending to break down barriers. More than 99 percent of the people in Thailand are not Christians. And that is why we are here, to share the gospel. Ours is an exploratory mission."

However, much happened before the actual exploratory work began. Hartwig highlights some of the early behind-the-scenes goings on.

Language: "It's fun, but frustrating. Thai is a tonal language. It has five tones—high, mid, low, rising, falling. One word, for example 'mai,' can be pronounced with four different tones. So you can have a sentence like 'Mai mai mai mai, mai?' (pronounced with the following tones: rising-low-falling-falling-high) Translation: New silk doesn't burn, right? That is an extraordinary example, but you get the point."

Housing: "Late afternoon Helen and I looked at four more houses. We've now seen 10 places and there is one that is a possibility. Lots of the places are simply beyond our budget, or else they are very far away from the schools (and driving across town during rush hour can take a long time), or they are real dumps."

"In this search for a house, we'll see a sign in front of a house. But we don't know if it says 'For sale' or 'For rent' or 'Eggs for sale' or



A common form of transportation in Thailand is the songthaew—a pickup truck with two benches in the back.

'Keep out' or 'Quarantine: Bubonic plague.'"

Transportation: "Transportation isn't all that bad. There are the *tuk-tuks*—three-wheeled motorcycles with bench seat in the back. They are even fun at first. You have to barter for the price. With the heat, noise and fumes of the busy streets, it is impossible not to end up with a massive headache after traveling around town in *tuk-tuks* all day.

"The other alternative are the *songthaews*—pickup trucks with two benches down the sides in back. They don't drive any particular routes. They cruise the streets and you flag them down if you want a ride.

"Nobody pays any attention to lanes. Turn right from the far left lane, why not? Drive down the middle of the street? Sure. Drive your motorcycle on the wrong side of the street against traffic. Intersections are crazy whether the stoplight is working or not."

Shopping: "Bought school clothes for the kids at the local market. All manner of clothing is

to be had at reasonable prices, if you can find it in the piles and piles of stuff down all the narrow aisles. I suspect—no, I know—we are paying more than the locals."

Visas and work permits: "We had already made seven copies of our birth certificates, marriage license, inoculation records, diplomas, and passports. Everything was in order except for one small detail. They didn't need photocopies of just the front page and visa page in our passports, they needed photocopies of every single page in every single passport and every page had to be signed.

"When the visa is issued, we can start applying for the work permit, which entails the same kind of paperwork. By the time the work permit is issued it is time to start applying all over again since both the visa and the work permit are issued retroactively to the time you first arrived in the country."

Amid all this and more, the exploratory work has also begun. Pray for our missionaries in Thailand.

Rescue

Everyone at St. Stephen, Beaver Dam, Wisconsin, was talking about a rescue of a child last summer—because the child and his mother, and the police officer and the emergency medical technician who rescued them, all are members of St. Stephen.

Wian Taber, a police officer of 27 years, was only eight blocks from the scene when the emergency call came last July 29. A parked car had rolled free and plunged into Beaver Dam Lake, with a two-year-old boy trapped inside.

The day was windy, and high waves were on the lake. When

*“Jesus was in
the back seat
with John,
holding him,
Jesus held up
the car,
and Jesus pulled
the car door
open.”*

Taber arrived, the car's front end was mostly under water. He pulled off his gun belt and jumped into the lake. The water was up to the windows and he was unable to get

a door open.

The boy, John Kock, was standing on the back seat with water up to his waist. Taber called to him to stay where he was, that they would get him out soon. “The little guy was great,” said Taber. “He wasn't crying or getting excited.”

Taber grabbed the bumper so the car couldn't sink further or be pulled out into the lake by the waves.

Within minutes of Taber's arrival, the Beaver Dam rescue unit arrived. Emergency medical technician Doug Sackett immediately jumped into the water. On his second attempt he opened the door, grabbed John, and got him to shore.

John was transported to the hospital, still holding the change his mother had given him to spend at the store before his unexpected ride. He came home with a few bumps and bruises.

Cited for heroism, officer Taber modestly shuns the attention. To those who ask, however, he is quick to say, “Jesus was in the back seat with John, holding him, Jesus held up the car, and Jesus pulled the car door open for Doug.”

Touch of laughter

Rachel was five years old when she attended the funeral of a family friend. That night as I tucked her into bed she asked, “Mommy, what is heaven like?”

“In heaven you are always very

happy and you never want to leave,” I replied.

“I know—heaven is like staying at Grandma's,” answered Rachel.

*Ruth Burfeind
Lewiston, Minnesota*

Justin, age 4, and his father were listening to a mocking bird. His

Obituaries

Alma W. Ihlenfeldt 1908-1993

Alma W. Ihlenfeldt was born July 9, 1908, in Morrison, Wisconsin. She died December 12, 1993, in Green Bay, Wisconsin.

She was a graduate of Milwaukee Lutheran High School and attended Concordia Teachers College, River Forest, Ill. She taught in Lutheran elementary schools in Oakwood, LaCrosse, Maribel, and Morrison, Wisconsin. She retired in 1979.

Four brothers preceded her in death. Survivors are two sisters-in-law and nieces and nephews.

William E. Woltmann 1904-1993

William Erdman Woltmann was born June 4, 1904, in Dodge County, Wis. He died October 12, 1993, in Weyauwega, Wis.

A 1929 graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, and later of Central Michigan University, he taught in congregations in Michigan at Tawas City, Bay City, Owosso, and Flint. He also was principal, organist, and choir director.

He is survived by his wife, Meta; daughters Wanda (David) Venske and Wilma Johnson; seven grandchildren; brother, Arthur (Shirley) and sister, Anita (Harold) Kurth; three stepsons; and eleven step-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Erna.

dad told him mocking birds imitate sounds they hear. “Daddy,” said Justin, “make it sing ‘Jesus Loves Me.’”

*Andy
Austin, Tex*

Contributions are welcome. Please send them to
LAUGHTER, Northwestern Lutheran, 2920
Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.

After 50 years, brother and sister reunited

Nearly 50 years ago, a brother and sister praised God together at the baptism of the woman's daughter. Then World War II intervened. The woman, Vera Papins, whose husband died in the war, fled her native Latvia with her daughter Aija. Her brother Janis Dumpis fought in the Latvian army and was eventually captured by the Russians. Vera emigrated to Canada where she is a member of Divine Word Lutheran Church in Nepean (near Ottawa). After his release, Janis remained in Latvia.

In an attempt to find his sister, in

1992 Janis placed an ad in LAIKS, a newspaper for Latvian emigrés in North America. It worked. In

In spite of 50 years of communism, Janis never lost his faith.

August 1992 he and Vera had a tearful telephone reunion. Then, in July 1993, Janis came to Canada for a month-long visit.

Vera's pastor, Allen Lindke, reports that Janis was overwhelmed

by the abundance of food and other goods in Ottawa. "He refused to toast his bread," said Lindke. "After decades of stale, often hard bread, it baffled him that anyone would deliberately dry it out."

Most of all, Janis and Vera were thankful to God for the reunion. During the years of communist oppression, Lindke reported, "Janis never lost his faith and his love for God's Word. So he said, when the difficult time came to depart, 'We may not see each other again here, but we will see each other forever in heaven.'"

Arizona-California District

New start in El Paso . . . Fifty-five people attended the first service of Victory in Christ, El Paso, Texas, December 5. Pastor Daniel Baumler reports that the previous Sunday seven children, ages 2 to 15, were baptized. The opening service was held in the church's own building, since an earlier WELS mission had served there until its closing in May 1992.

Michigan District

MLHS expects enrollment increase . . . Michigan Lutheran High School, St. Joseph, is developing a five-year plan in anticipation of a sizable enrollment increase. Acting principal Daniel Schmal reports that enrollment is expected to grow by over 20 percent. The estimate is based on a survey of elementary students who plan to attend MLHS.

—James L. Langebartels

Southeastern Wisconsin District

Wisco helps food pantry . . . Wisconsin Lutheran High School, Milwaukee, students and faculty members collected over \$2000 and 25 shopping carts of food for the St. Marcus Food Pantry, which provides groceries for families in need. The school's student council organized the drive.

—Robert A. Sievert

Western Wisconsin District

Mass media outreach . . . Good Shepherd, Beloit, New Life, Rockford, Ill., and Peace, Loves Park, Ill., have joined in a mass-media effort representing the WELS churches of the "state-line area." The congregations are sponsoring *LifeTalk*, a series of two-minute radio devotions, for ten weeks. The churches are also inviting the public to a marriage enrichment workshop and Easter worship services.

Newborn "daughter" . . . Five

"mother" congregations in the Wausau area have pledged \$5,000 each to assist Mountain of the Lord, an exploratory mission in Rib Mountain. Daniel Solofra was assigned as the mission's first pastor.

Workshops for church leaders . . . The Board for Parish Services conducted workshops for district church leaders at Madison and Tomah in early February. "Servitude of Leadership" was the theme.

First chapel in Ladysmith . . . Last July 25 Our Redeemer, Ladysmith, dedicated its first chapel. The 41 members, with the help of Pastor Jeffrey Seelow from Cornell, have been operating without any subsidy from the synod. They received a \$40,000 Church Extension Fund loan for the chapel.

New parsonage . . . In October, Faith, Reedsburg, dedicated a new parsonage located in the subdivision adjoining the church property. Faith is served by Pastor David Maertz.

—Elton C. Stroh

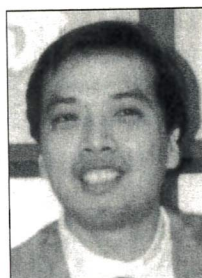
Native pastor ordained in Hong Kong

Evangelist Tse Tat Chiv was ordained at Salem-Lai King church in Hong Kong October 31. Lai King is one of the congregations that make up the South Asian Evangelical Lutheran Mission (SALEM).

Tse, 35, was baptized and confirmed at Salem-Grace church in 1980. He had been active in lay ministry when he was called as evange-

list to establish a congregation in Lai King estate. He later graduated from Salem's Bible Institute and eventually from its seminary.

The Lai King church became



Tse Tat Chiv

self-supporting within three years. Its average Sunday worship attendance is 135. Tse, who continues to serve Lai King, also serves as vice-chairman of SALEM.

—Gary Schroeder

News reported in this section is about the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference, an international federation of which WELS is a member.

NEWS AROUND THE WORLD

America no longer Christian . . .

Western Christendom now lives in the post-Constantinian era, according to *The Religion & Society Report*, published by the Rockford Institute of Rockford, Illinois. No longer do we necessarily enjoy the guaranteed toleration for Christians that Emperor Constantine decreed in the Edict of Milan in AD 313. Instead there has been "the growing estrangement of Western culture from its Christian roots." The "terms 'Christian civilization' and 'Christendom' have become increasingly less applicable." The report concludes that "one may no longer speak in any really meaningful sense of 'Christian America.'"

Culture war . . . A book, *One Nation Under God: Religion in Contemporary American Society*, reveals new insights into the religious climate of the United States today. Based on a survey of 113,000 Americans, the authors identify 86.2 percent of Americans as "Christian," but go on to note: ". . . the thoughts and values of the average churchgoer are less often derived from religious sources than from secular ones." The study identifies a "culture war" going on in America, not a battle between liberals and conservatives but rather a generational war, one in which the baby-boomers (Americans born between 1946 and

1964) are being collectively pried loose from their parents' traditional religious moorings as they seek their own spiritual identities. Many young Americans may identify with traditional religious groups, but they are radically re-shaping those labels to fit their unique needs.

A child's view . . . A poll by the religion-based, politically conservative Family Research Council leads to the conclusion that it might help all of us to look at the "family" issues of today from the perspective of children. When people were asked to look at issues from a child's viewpoint, 93 percent of Americans said children suffer when their parents divorce; 83 percent said it is better for a child to be born into a two-parent family; 87 percent said they believe it is better for a child to be cared for by his or her mother than by day care; and 84 percent thought children are harmed by the presence of sexually explicit material and adult entertainment in society.

Dead Sea Scrolls available . . .

After more than 40 years, the Dead Sea Scrolls are now available for all to see and study. Until recently, only the scholarly team appointed by the Israeli Antiquities Authority to edit and translate the scrolls and text fragments had full access to them. It took a bitter two-year battle between

the official team and other scholars but now "there is total and open access to the scrolls," and the field of Dead Sea Scrolls research has "entered into a Golden Age."

The scrolls, generally written during a period from 200 years before Christ to 68 years after his birth and including some of the earliest manuscripts of biblical books, have provided immense amounts of information about the formation of rabbinic Judaism and early Christianity.

Norman Vincent Peale dies . . .

After more than 50 years of preaching, world-renowned Rev. Norman Vincent Peale died on Christmas Eve at age 95. Peale was best known for his 1952 self-help classic *The Power of Positive Thinking*, which has sold more than 15 million copies in 33 languages.

Baptisms decrease . . .

The Southern Baptist Convention, the nation's largest Protestant denomination, has announced that the number of baptisms in the church has dropped for the second year in a row. The estimated number of baptisms for 1993 was 350,000, down 5 percent from the 367,000 baptisms in 1992. The years of declines followed four years of increased baptisms, peaking in 1989 at 397,000.

Episcopalians face their second major staff reduction in the 1990s . . .

Citing an anticipated \$4-\$5 million shortfall in 1995, Presiding Bishop Edmond Browning warned of impending layoffs. At the center of the denomination's finan-

cial difficulties is the growing tendency among parishes to keep higher percentages of offerings for use at the local level, rather than sending funds on to regional and national church bureaucracies. Just two years ago the church eliminated about

one-fifth of the staff positions at national headquarters, also because of budgetary shortfalls.

News reported in this section is derived from Religious News Service, Ecumenical Press Service, Evangelical Press Service, and Lutheran World Information.

Top ten religion stories of 1993

When Religious News Service listed the top religion stories of 1993, *Northwestern Lutheran* wondered

about the "religiousness" of most of them. We offer the following:

RNS news

1. The Israel-Palestine Liberation Organization accord. Relations among Jews, Christians, and Muslims were permanently changed because of the handshake between Yitzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat.

2. The Branch Davidian tragedy. David Koresh and his group illustrated how diabolical cult leaders manipulate people.

3. The sex abuse scandals involving Catholic clergy.

4. The heightened search for spirituality. The search has often bypassed traditional religions for such groups as the "New Age."

5. Islamic extremism. The World Trade Center bombing was one stark reminder of this.

6. The Religious Right. Groups like Pat Robertson's "Christian Coalition" remained highly active in the political arena.

7. Interreligious warfare. The bitter Hindu-Muslim conflict in India intensified. Orthodox Serbs, Roman Catholic Croats, and Islamic Bosnians were caught up in horrendous national-religious warfare.

8. World Youth Day in Denver. Pope John Paul II addressed nearly 300,000 young Catholics from many parts of the world. He used Denver as a giant pulpit to express his moral teachings on many issues, including the sanctity of life.

9. Bioethics. Cloning of human embryos and physician-assisted suicides challenged the status quo.

10. The Parliament of the World's Religions. Thousands of participants came to Chicago from many faith communities ranging from Judaism and Christianity to neo-pagans and modern-day witches.

God's news

John 14:27: Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.

John 8:12: I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.

1 Timothy 3:2: Now the overseer must be above reproach, the husband of but one wife, temperate, self-controlled, respectable. . . .

John 8:31,32: If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.

Psalms 5:4: You are not a God who takes pleasure in evil; with you the wicked cannot dwell.

Matthew 28:19,20: Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

2 Corinthians 10:3,4: Though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world.

John 10:10: I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.

Isaiah 29:16: You turn things upside down, as if the potter were thought to be like the clay!

John 14:6: Jesus answered: "I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me."

NOTICES

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

MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS

The Medical Clinic on Wheels, a medical mission of Thoughts of Faith (a church-related organization of the ELS), seeks a medical director to coordinate the medical program based in Ternopil, Ukraine. Qualifications include MD licensure, ability to travel to Ukraine three to four times a year, a high degree of medical and personal ethics, and strong devotion to conservative Lutheranism. The clinic also seeks doctors and dentists to volunteer 10-14 days or more in Ternopil.

For more information, contact Ed Meier, PO Box 37, Stoughton WI 53589; 608/873-5099; Fax 608/873-1630.

REQUEST FOR COLLOQUY

James F. Esmeier, formerly a teacher in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, has requested a colloquy for the purpose of becoming a member of the teacher roster of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod. Correspondence relative to this request should be addressed to the president of the Southeastern Wisconsin District: Pastor David N. Rutschow, 527 Sixty-third Street, Downers Grove IL 60516.

CHURCH LIBRARIANS

WECLO, the WELS church librarians organization, will meet April 9 at Salem, 2400 N Cramer, Milwaukee. Registration begins at 9 a.m., meeting at 9:30. Registration fee is \$7.00.

Program will include a panel discussion on criteria to use when choosing books for church libraries, book exchange, book display, and question and answer period. Lunch will be provided.

For more information, write WECLO, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398 or call 414/256-3222 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

AREA CODE CHANGE

In the Michigan area, if you dial area code 810 and you receive a message such as "Your call cannot be completed as entered," try dialing area code 313. You should be able to get through to the correct telephone number. Some of the 810 area codes listed in the 1994 Yearbook are in error.

WELS Connection videotapes

March topics

- Rural churches
- WELS Kingdom Workers

April topics

- Child Care
- Easter message from President Gurgel

For more information, contact *CCFS, WELS Administration Building, 2929 N Mayfair Road, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398*. Cost of a year's subscription is \$54.

ITEMS AVAILABLE

HYMNALS—30 blue and red, for cost of shipping. Our Redeemer, W8715 Port Arthur, Ladysmith WI 54848; 715/532-5382.

ORGAN—Kimball, electric, partial pedal. Free for cost of shipping. Contact Joel Zabel; 612/972-2283.

ANNIVERSARY

WEST ALLIS, WISCONSIN—Jordan (100). Music Sunday, April 17. Christian Education Sunday, May 22. Festival Sunday, Sept. 11. All services at 8 and 10:15 a.m. Festival dinner, Sept. 11. Former choir members are invited to join the festival choir. Former teachers are asked to call the church office. For more information call 414/327-2030.

WISCONSIN LUTHERAN SEMINARY Mequon, Wisconsin CHORUS TOUR 1994

Mar. 23	7:00 pm	Grace	Milwaukee WI
Mar. 30	7:30 pm	St. John	Baraboo WI
Mar. 31	7:30 pm	Mt. Olive	Overland Park KS
Apr. 1	7:30 pm	Immanuel	N Richland Hills TX
Apr. 2	7:30 pm	Christ the Lord	Houston TX
Apr. 3	10:15 am	Lord of Life	Friendswood TX
Apr. 3	7:30 pm	Gethsemane	Corpus Christi TX
Apr. 4	7:30 pm	Abiding Savior	Weslaco TX
Apr. 5	7:00 pm	Our Savior	San Antonio TX
Apr. 6	7:30 pm	Risen Savior	Austin TX
Apr. 7	7:30 pm	Calvary	Dallas TX
Apr. 8	7:30 pm	St. Paul	Plymouth NE
Apr. 9	7:30 pm	St. Peter	Balaton MN
Apr. 10	10:30 am	St. Paul	N Mankato MN
Apr. 10	3:30 pm	Trinity	Nicollet MN

DR. MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE New Ulm, Minnesota CHOIR TOUR 1994

Mar. 27	7:00 pm	St. Croix LHS	St. Paul MN
Mar. 28	7:00 pm	Trinity	Neenah WI
Mar. 29	7:00 pm	Wis. Luth. Seminary	Mequon WI
Mar. 30	7:00 pm	Friedens	Kenosha WI
Mar. 31	6:30 pm	St. Mark	Green Bay WI
Apr. 1	1:30 pm	Trinity	Brillion WI
Apr. 1	7:00 pm	Bethany	Mantowoc WI
Apr. 2	6:30 pm	St. Matthew	Appleton WI
Apr. 3	9:30 am	Eternal Love	Appleton WI
Apr. 3	7:00 pm	St. Matthew	Winona MN
Apr. 10	7:30 pm	St. Paul	New Ulm MN

MARTIN LUTHER PREPARATORY SCHOOL Prairie du Chien, Wisconsin CHOIR TOUR 1994

Mar. 24	7:30 pm	St. Paul	Norfolk NE
Mar. 27	9:30 am	Shepherd of the Mountains	Reno NV
Mar. 27	7:00 pm	St. Mark	Citrus Heights CA
Mar. 28	7:00 pm	Apostles	San Jose CA
Mar. 29	7:30 pm	St. Paul First	N. Hollywood CA
Mar. 30	7:30 pm	King of Kings	Garden Grove CA
Mar. 31	7:30 pm	Living Word	Mission Viejo CA
Apr. 1	7:30 pm	Beautiful Savior	Carlsbad CA
Apr. 3	7:00 am	Reformation	San Diego CA
Apr. 3	10:00 am	Shepherd of the Hills	La Mesa CA
Apr. 4	7:30 pm	Pilgrim	Mesa AZ
Apr. 5	7:30 pm	Mt. Calvary	Flagstaff AZ
Apr. 6	7:30 pm	Peace	Rio Rancho NM
Apr. 7	7:30 pm	Gethsemane	Oklahoma City OK

CHANGES IN MINISTRY

PASTORS:

- Kahrs, Steven R.**, from Zion, Mission, S. Dak., to St. Paul, Las Animas/Christ Our Savior, Ordway, Col.
- Kruschel, Herbert R.**, from Our Savior, Daytona Beach, Fla., to retirement
- Lindemann, Carl A.**, from St. Peter, Eldorado, Wis., to Our Savior, Bismarck, N. Dak.
- Olsen, Theodore B.**, from Martin Luther Preparatory School, Prairie du Chien, Wis., to combined college, New Ulm, Minn.
- Sauer, Stephen B.**, from Martin Luther, Oshkosh, Wis., to Emanuel, Denmark/exploratory, Green Bay, Wis.
- Scheele, Martin J.**, from Faith, Sussex, Wis., to exploratory, Ft. Walton Beach, Fla.
- Schroeder, Mark G.**, from Northwestern Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis., to combined preparatory school, Watertown, Wis.
- Schulz, Thomas A.**, from Shepherd, Albuquerque, N. Mex., to Salem, Scottsdale, Ariz.
- Unnasch, John F.**, from Our Redeemer, Wabasha, Minn., to Trinity, Nicollet, Minn.

TEACHERS:

- Bartsch, Anna L.**, to St. John, Juneau, Wis.
- Cross, Julia C.**, to St. John, Newark, Del.
- Esmay, Stephanie**, to Salem, Ososno, Mich.
- Petersen, Alvira M.**, from St. Paul, Green Bay, Wis., to retirement
- Plitzuweit, James A.**, from Fox Valley LHS, Appleton, Wis., to Arizona Lutheran Academy, Phoenix, Ariz.
- Schmidt, Bobbi Jo**, to Shepherd of the Mountains, Reno, Nev.
- Weiss, Monica L.**, from Divine Grace, Lake Orion, Mich., to Zion, Monroe, Mich.
- Wels, Ronald M.**, from Illinois LHS, Crete, Ill., to Minnesota Valley LHS, New Ulm, Minn.

WOMEN'S RETREAT

Retreat for women at Minocqua, Wis., April 23, 8:30 a.m.-3 p.m. at the Pointe. Speakers are Pastor Anthony Schulz and Mrs. Charlene Lauersdorf. For further information call Judy Ehlke; 715/356-1310. Send registration fee of \$15 per person by April 15 to Sue Bowman, 9020 Hwy J, Woodruff WI 54568.

MUSIC CAMP FOR TEENS

Dr. Martin Luther College invites young people who are completing the 10th or 11th grade to a music camp July 11-14. It will include private lessons in voice or instrument, ensemble participation, worship, library projects, and recreation. Cost is \$140 and enrollment is limited to 24. Write or call Summer Camps, DMLC, 1884 College Heights, New Ulm MN 56073-3300; 1-800-686-4142.

CHURCH MUSIC WORKSHOPS

Dr. Martin Luther College offers one-day, noncredit workshops for church organists, handbell choirs, or church choir directors. For further information on the workshops and how to make arrangements for them, contact your district Board for Parish Services worship coordinator, or contact Special Services, DMLC, 1884 College Heights, New Ulm MN 56073-3300; 1-800-686-4142.

OVERSEAS LAY WORKERS NEEDED

WELS Kingdom Workers seeks college graduates to work in the Far East in any of these areas: teach English, establish or teach computer courses, or establish businesses. Individuals should be experienced in cross-cultural work and willing to commit two years or more overseas. Housing and other resources are provided.

Contact Dale Mueller, WELS Kingdom Workers, 2401 N Mayfair Rd, Suite 204, Wauwatosa WI 53226; 414/771-6848; or toll-free 1-800-466-9357; FAX 414/771-6130.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR CANADA

WELS Kingdom Workers seeks volunteers for an evangelism program in the Toronto area in the spring. Duties will include mailings, phone canvassing, and door-to-door evangelism. Time commitment can be one to two weeks. Contact Dale Mueller, WELS Kingdom Workers, 2401 N Mayfair Rd, Suite 204, Wauwatosa WI 53226; toll-free 1-800-466-9357; FAX 414/771-6130.

RN OR EMT VOLUNTEERS

Camp Phillip seeks registered nurses or EMTs to volunteer as health care director for one-week and half-week sessions at Son Shine camp this summer. Contact Steve Huhn, Camp Phillip, Rt 3 Box 190, Wautoma WI 54982; 414/787-1085.

SUMMER JOBS AVAILABLE

Camp Phillip, a ministry of the Milwaukee Federation of WELS churches, needs applicants for the following positions for May 31-Aug. 17: Counselors, water sports director, lifeguards, adventure coordinator, head drama coordinator, junior staff director. Applicants must be WELS Christians experienced and motivated to work with children. Positions provide room and board and \$1325-\$2000.

For application packets and more information, contact Steve Huhn, Camp Phillip, Rt 3 Box 190, Wautoma WI 54982; 414/787-1085.



Mission of the WELS

As men, women, and children united in faith and worship by the word of God, the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod exists to make disciples throughout the world for time and for eternity, using the gospel to win the lost for Christ and to nurture believers for lives of Christian service, all to the glory of God.

How the atonement changes us

The atonement isn't just an abstract doctrine. It changes the way we think and live.

by Fredric E. Piepenbrink

The atonement isn't only a doctrine of the Bible, something to talk about or think about. It's also something we live from the time we get up in the morning to the time we lie down again.

Simple faith in the atonement gives us all the blessings that Jesus accomplished on the cross, not the least of which is heaven, and it also changes us.

It changes how we think about others

One thing the atonement changes is the way we think about other people. Paul experienced this change of thinking in his life after he was converted to Christianity and had a clear understanding of the atonement. He wrote, "So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view" (2 Corinthians 5:16). With the Holy Spirit working in us, we don't think of other people as the world does. The world looks at outward appearances—looks, ethnic background, actions—as though those are most important.

We don't do that. We see others according to God's value system. That system is simply this: Christ died for them too. Their life is worth something. Indeed, it is worth everything, because it cost the Father in heaven everything. It cost him his Son. All human life, no matter how depraved, becomes infinitely valuable once we have gained a greater appreciation of the atonement.

It changes how we think about Christ

The atonement also changes our thinking about Christ. Paul goes on, "Though we once regarded Christ in this way, we do so no longer." A worldly point of view regarding Christ is that he is only a leader of the Christian faith; but after I study the atonement, he becomes my leader.

The worldly point of view regarding Christ is that he simply suffered and died on the cross. In my study of the atonement, the Holy Spirit convinces me that he suffered and died on the cross for me. He is my

Lord, my Savior, my Redeemer. He is precious to me. I don't have a better friend than Jesus.

It changes our actions

Knowing that Jesus is my best friend also changes my actions. Paul said, "Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" (2 Corinthians 5:17). We, who by God's grace believe in the atonement, have gone through a death process. We have died to sin, just as surely as Jesus died to death on the cross. And when you are dead to sin, you are alive in Christ. Christ's atonement becomes our reason for living, our motivation for doing good. His love for us compels our love for him.

It changes our calling

Finally, we live the atonement every day in our Christian witness. Paul concludes, "We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us" (2 Corinthians 5:20). The definition of an ambassador is one whose personal interests are overshadowed by his office. He puts his own interests aside and he represents the interest of his nation.

As a people who understand the atonement, our calling is that of being Christ's ambassadors. God makes his interests known through us. And Christ's interest is that all human creatures know their sins have been covered and they can enjoy a close, loving, confident relationship with the Father.

As Christ's ambassadors, our mission is to bring to others a sense of God's desire to win them as his friend. We are to be a Christ to them, as though through us Jesus was walking up to them personally and inviting them to faith. When they see us, they should see Christ. That is living the atonement.



Fredric Piepenbrink is pastor of Atonement, Milwaukee.

vis., April 23, 8:30
Pastor Anthony
For further infor-
Send registration
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TEACHERS NEEDED

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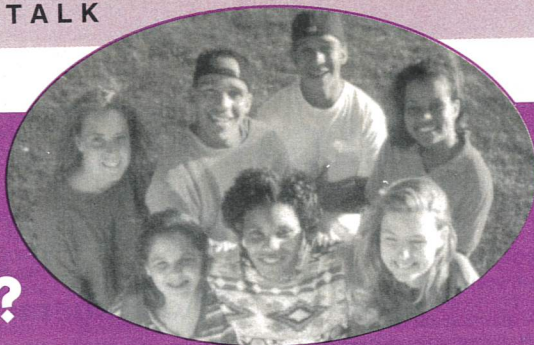
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Mission of the WELS

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If you had only one year to live, what would you do?



MRS. KEVIN SCHIBEL PHOTO

A Mankato, Minnesota, newspaper survey asked young people, "If you had only one year to live, what would you do?"

Pastor Thomas Zahn of St. Mark in Mankato asked his confirmation class the same question.

"What a difference Christianity makes!" says Zahn. "Thank God for Christian education, which prepares young people for this life and the next."

If you had only one year to live, what would you do? How would you answer that question?

Answers from teens in newspaper survey

- "I would do all the things I dreamed of doing, like going on the Wheel of Fortune and driving a sports car, going to Hawaii and Europe."
- "I would have a big party and invite all my friends."
- "I would want to own a red or maybe black convertible and drive it to a Michael Jackson concert and meet him in person."
- "I would get my head shaved, because I've always wanted to get my hair cut that way, and my favorite athlete, Michael Jordan, has it cut that way."
- "Since I am going to die, it would probably not matter what my health is. Then what I would do is eat all the junk food I want."

• "Me die? This can't be happening! I know I haven't been feeling well lately, but die? Why me? Why do I have to die in a year?"

- "I would try to do more daring things; sky diving sounds like something I would like to do."
- "Going to Disney World before I die would be a great pleasure."
- "I would spend more time with my family. I would want to have fond memories of the laughs we shared to take to my grave."
- "I would become a nun and try to get on his good side before the big day."

Answers from teens in confirmation class

- "If I had only one year to live, I would do three things. First, I would go to Brazil and tell rain-forest Indians about Jesus. They are so isolated that no one ever goes to see them. Second, I would visit everyone I care about and make sure they know I love them very much. Finally, I would spend as much time as I could with my family. And NO doctors, hospitals, or medicines."
- "I would devote my whole life to God, meaning I will try not to sin and I would go all over teaching God's Word."
- "I would live my normal life but I would go to church and really listen to what the pastor is trying to say. I would go to confirmation class and study it well. I would read the Bible and explain everything to other people. I am going to do this so that everybody will believe and have faith."

• "I would study the Bible regularly and attend church like always. I would also just live my normal life and do the same things I normally do, because I wouldn't have to worry about eternal death."

- "I would spread God's Word as much as I can for a year."
- "I would devote my life to God and preach to others, and learn all I can about Jesus."
- "I would repent, see Jesus' birthplace, pick out a casket and prepare my funeral and pick out my stone, adopt a child, and try to get my aunt and her family to go to church."
- "I would make sure I believe, had strong faith, and ask for forgiveness."

Please send brief articles, artwork, photos, or news on teen activities to TEENTALK, Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N Mayfair Road, Milwaukee 53222-4398.

Violence and the tongue

The numbers profiling violence in America are shocking. An authority on the subject recites the grim statistics: "We have a homicide rate for young men four times higher than the next most violent country in the world, Scotland, and a rate 70 times that of Austria. The FBI estimates that 1.8 million Americans are victims of violence each year, and that number excludes most family violence. Each month about 420 children die from gunshot injuries. Each year we spend about \$64 billion paying for the costs associated with violence. Each day we become more fearful of violence."

What's to be done? Some suggest building more jails and giving longer sentences. Yet in the past decade we have doubled our prison population. Tougher gun control laws are not likely initially to retard the slaughter of the innocent, considering that half of all homes already possess deadly weapons. Some advocate putting more police officers on city streets.

Blame for violence in America is placed on judges, schools, church, and home. Loads of criticism is heaped on television. And there's no doubt that television deserves its share of blame. What people view repeatedly on television cannot help but affect their actions.

In fact, television may foster violence in ways not always fully appreciated. The 1993 autumn issue of the *Wilson Quarterly* includes three pieces on television and American culture. One of these makes the point that television has replaced church, family, and workplace in shaping behavior and has speeded changes in how we talk and act.

The author, Todd Gitlin, scores

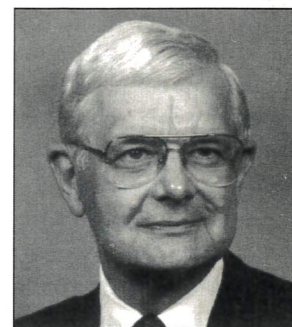
television sitcoms and talk shows for encouraging in many people a tendency toward conversation which prizes quickness over knowledge. He points out that Americans increasingly adopt the "one-liner." Mockery and snide comebacks have become part of a national style that manifests hostility toward almost everything and everyone. A "knowingly snide attitude" derisive of all authority has become so prevalent, he concludes, it deserves the tag of "hipness unto death."

Violence begins in the sinful heart, and long before it breaks out in hostile action, is likely to express itself with the tongue. To attack with words is a first step to attacking with a fist or gun or blade. Here is where one must make a first assault on violence: guard your tongue that it speak no evil.

A famous writing from the 15th century, *The Imitation of Christ*, cites the misuse of the tongue as a characteristic of the person who is not at peace: "The man who is at peace is not suspicious of others, but the discontented, restless man is harried by suspicion. He often says what ought not to be said, and fails to do what he should; he is intent on the duty of others and neglects his own."

Whoever is able to bridle the tongue will be able to control the whole body. To check violence, check first the tongue.

Victor H. Prange



Victor Prange is pastor of Peace, Janesville, Wisconsin.

Long before it breaks out in hostile action, violence is likely to express itself with the tongue. To attack with words is the first step toward attacking with a fist.

by John F. Brug

My husband, a regular church-goer, is abusive. He points to articles about the completeness of forgiveness of sins as proof that he can act any way he wants and still be forgiven. Is he right?

We should be careful to distinguish true guilt from feelings of guilt. Guilt is the condition of being subject to punishment because of unforgiven sin. Every unrepentant sinner is guilty. He will be punished by God.

Feelings of guilt are as necessary to our spiritual well-being as a sense of pain is to our physical well-being. Without pain we would have no warning against dangers such as a hot stove burning our hand. When we have broken God's law, feelings of guilt warn us against the deadly danger of sin.

When sin is forgiven, no guilt remains. We should reassure troubled consciences by pointing them to the complete payment Christ made for every sin.

Feeling guilty when God has declared you innocent is unhealthy. Using God's grace and forgiveness as an excuse to think lightly of sin is, however, just as unhealthy. Even though the Father has declared the whole world forgiven, if we despise the forgiveness

*The Bible warns
very strongly
against
deliberately
continuing in sin.*

Christ won for us and become indifferent to sin, our guilt remains upon us and we have no forgiveness.

The Bible warns very strongly against deliberately continuing in sin. "If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God" (Hebrews 10:26-27). True repentance involves more than walking into church and mouthing the words of the confession of sins. Where there is true repentance, there will also be the intention, with the help of God, to correct our sinful life, to repair as much as possible the harm our sins have caused, and to struggle against repeating the same sins.

What do we know about the method of Jesus' crucifixion? There are conflicting accounts of how crucifixion was done and the kinds of crosses used.

There was no set method for crucifixion, the most horrible form of execution in the ancient world. The sadistic imagination of the executioners determined the torments and forms of mockery.

The cross could be anything from a plank to a pole, a T-shaped cross, or the cross familiar as a Christian symbol. Normally the victim carried only the cross

*Crucifixion—the most
horrible form of execution.*

beam to the execution site. He was tied or nailed to the beam, and it was raised up to a pole. A peg under his crotch supported his body weight to keep him from dying too quickly of suffocation. Crucifixion was designed to be a slow death.

The descriptions of Jesus' crucifixion make it clear that he was nailed to the cross through his hands and feet. The title above his head makes it likely his cross was in the traditional form. It is likely that the arms were nailed to the cross through the wrist to better support his weight. This does not contradict the gospels, since the Greek word for "hand" includes the lower arm.

Certainly the people of Jesus' day needed no description of the horrible nature of crucifixion. Perhaps today, when the cross has become a beautiful symbol, we need to remember its real nature.

Yet the gospels do not dwell on the cruel details of that death. They rather matter-of-factly record its reality and point us to its meaning. Scripture directs our attention to the love of the victim, rather than to the cruelty of the executioners.

It is not so much how Jesus died that should seize our attention. The important truth about Jesus' crucifixion is that his death was for me.



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, through this column.

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

Neanderthal man

It was good that Prof. Toppe informed us (Nov.) that radiometric dating of bones found in Israel showed that Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon man once lived in the same place at the same time. I find it impossible to believe, however, that these people could have been contemporaries of Abraham, David, or Jeremiah.

In the archeological sites in and around Israel, one finds a flint technology in the lowest levels of human occupation. Above these are the Bronze Age layers from before and after the time of Abraham. Higher yet are Iron Age occupation levels in which things from the time of David and Jeremiah are found.

Evolutionary theory will always be a blind alley. All Christians who want to

persuade evolutionists that this is so should do everything possible to inform themselves on issues relating to the Bible and natural history.

*Gerhold Lemke
Cedar Rapids, Iowa*

Keep church and state separate

Re: "Religion threatened by public secularism, writer charges" (Dec.). As I am devoted to the Lutheran idea of the separation of church and state, I reject religious motives and rationales in public debate, just as secularists do.

In the interest of conciseness, letters are subject to editing. Full name, address and daytime phone number should accompany each letter. Names will be withheld only under unusual circumstances. Letters cannot be acknowledged, nor can all letters be used. Address your letters to *READERS FORUM, Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N Mayfair Road, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.*

Equality under the law and liberty for all kinds of beliefs and lifestyles is what we should ask for—no more, no less. The biblical basis for my opinion is found in 2 Corinthians 10:3-4. Our weapon is to be the preaching of the Word of God, not the law of the country.

*Ulrich Motte
Munich, Germany*

April '94

- 1. Matthew 22:1-14
- 2. Matt. 22:15-46
- 3. Matt. 23:1-22
- 4. Matt. 23:23-39
- 5. Matt. 24:1-31
- 6. Matt. 24:32—25:13
- 7. Matt. 25:14-46
- 8. Matt. 26:1-16
- 9. Matt. 26:17-29
- 10. Matt. 26:30-56
- 11. Matt. 26:57-75
- 12. Matt. 27:1-14
- 13. Matt. 27:15-31
- 14. Matt. 27:32-50
- 15. Matt. 27:51-66
- 16. Matt. 28:1-20
- 17. Jeremiah 26
- 18. Jer. 27, 28
- 19. Jer. 29
- 20. Jer. 30:1—31:26
- 21. Jer. 31:27-40
- 22. Jer. 32, 33
- 23. Jer. 34
- 24. Jer. 35
- 25. Jer. 36
- 26. Jer. 37, 38
- 27. Jer. 39—41
- 28. Jer. 42, 43
- 29. Jer. 44, 45
- 30. Jer. 46, 47

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.

SPEAKING MY MIND: Christians should be politically active

Many Christians seem to be unable to distinguish between their duties as Christian witnesses and as Christian citizens. They criticize politically active Christians.

Those well-meaning Christians who criticize politically active brothers and sisters are mixing apples and oranges—using the definition of the spiritual mission of the church to criticize Christians who exercise their political rights.

America's government is a representative democracy, a system established in order to allow the governed to express their will and influence the political process. Simply put, we are the government.

God gave us this political system. Through it, he allows his people the opportunity to influence the political process. If we as Christian citizens are to give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, we should participate. We also have a responsibility to act on our Christian principles.

We should not be content to treat political responsibility as though it were separate from faith. We are the light of the world. Is it proper for us,

therefore, to stand silently by and watch those living in blindness steer themselves—and us and our children—into destruction? I feel very strongly that we will be held accountable for our continued silence.

We have the same political freedom as unbelievers. We have the same opportunity to stand up for and vote for legislation that represents our values. We have as much right to work for legislation to restrict evil as our opponents do to propagate it.

Civil law may never reform the heart of the pervert, but it can stop the public sale of pornography, and the casual exposure of our children to it in the markets. Civil law may never stop homosexuality, but it can protect our children from it in the schools. Civil law may never stop lovelessness and selfishness in the human heart, but it can stop the murder of the babies—more than 30 million since Roe v Wade!

The apostle Paul used his civil rights. Why shouldn't we?

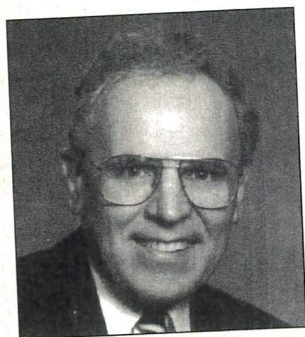
*John Neish
Pepperell, Massachusetts*

THROUGH MY BIBLE IN THREE YEARS THROUGH MY BIBLE IN THREE YEARS

Christian response

The writer was talking about "response-ability." It wasn't a spiritual message at all. But his words left me thinking in spiritual terms. "There is a gap between stimulus and response," he wrote. In other words, we are able to think before we act, and so should act responsibly.

Good advice for anyone. But look at it from a Christian point of view. What fills the gap between stimulus and response is all important. If I am left to myself to fill the gap, my response will serve self, not God. To illustrate:



What a perfect place to keep Christ crucified, in that gap between stimulus and response.

<u>Stimulus</u>	<u>Gap</u>	<u>Response</u>
Someone makes a mistake.	Self	Put that person in his place.
Someone hurts me.	Self	Get even.
I'm running late.	Self	Speed.
I'm caught in a sin.	Self	Rationalize, minimize, deny.

Do you get the point? I shudder to think of all the things I have been responsible for. How many times my responses are less than godly—that is, sinful!

Thank God, my Savior did not think the way I often do. Had he known selfish interests, he would have shunned the cross. He would have escaped Gethsemane. He would have foiled Judas' plot. And Lent would be a bottomless pit.

Instead, he willingly endured the suffering that I have deserved, and I

have forgiveness in Christ crucified.

Now fill that gap with Christ crucified instead of self and see the difference.

<u>Stimulus</u>	<u>Gap</u>	<u>Response</u>
Someone makes a mistake.	Christ crucified	"There but for the grace of God go I."
Someone hurts me.	Christ crucified	Forgive as I am forgiven.
I'm running late.	Christ crucified	Don't break any laws.
I'm caught in a sin.	Christ crucified	Repent and believe.

When the apostle Paul came to the Corinthians, he pointed out, "I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified." That knowledge determined Paul's message and his manner. When we emulate him, it can do wonders. It attracts new people to the gospel truth. It resolves congregational disputes. It cements Christian friendships. It unites church bodies.

What a perfect place to keep Christ crucified, in that gap between stimulus and response.

Gary J. Baumber

YOUTH COUNSELOR'S WORKSHOP

SEPTEMBER 30 - OCTOBER 2, 1994

A workshop for pastors, teachers, and lay men and women who are interested and involved in ministry to teenagers.



TIMES HAVE CHANGED. SATAN SEEMS TO BE HAVING HIS WAY.
Is growing up riskier business than it was before? It really doesn't matter. What matters is that there are too many casualties, too many wounded, too much at stake. As the body of Christ we should mobilize our collective energy, commitment and ingenuity to minister to each and every teenager with the healing and saving Gospel of Jesus Christ.

PLANNING A BALANCED YOUTH PROGRAM

- ✓ WORSHIP
- ✓ EDUCATION
- ✓ FELLOWSHIP
- ✓ RECREATION
- ✓ SERVICE

SPONSORED BY/CONTACT: Commission on Youth Discipleship (414-256-3274)
LOCATION: Wonderland Camp and Conference Center - Lake Geneva, WI
COST: \$95 (includes meals, materials, housing)

The visit

by Joel W. Prange

A look
at what
makes a
person
a "giant"

He was always a giant of a man in our eyes. His long strides carried him quickly between the house and the barn, a milk bucket swinging effortlessly from each hand. While he walked he whistled the hymns he loved. He was full of energy and vitality.

But now it is an effort for him to sit on the edge of his nursing home bed. "Help me up," he whispers when it is time to go to the "mess hall" for dinner. His tiny steps are a fraction of what they used to be. Instead of heavy milk buckets, his hands now grip the metal walker he needs to balance his bent frame.

We talk about times past. We look at pictures. We speak of my father, who was his brother—10 years older and 10 years departed. Maybe they



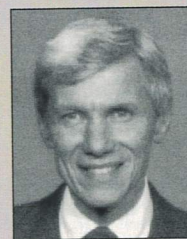
will be together soon.

"Shall I read your devotions before I go?" He's already read them earlier in the day, but there is no hesitation. "Please do; the Bible and the book are over there."

I read the Scripture portion first. "Thank you," he says, thinking that perhaps I am finished. Then I read a page from the little book. "Thank you," he says again. I read the special prayer for that day. "Thank you."

We close by singing familiar words from memory, "Now the light has gone away. . . ." He sings along as

best he can. Now we really are finished. "Thank you," he says again.



He isn't just being polite. These words of Scripture, meditation, and song go deep into his soul. They continue to nourish the faith that made him what he was and that will make him so again.

He is still a giant of a man.
Joel Prange is pastor of Mt. Calvary, Redding, California.