

I'm not
politically correct p.6

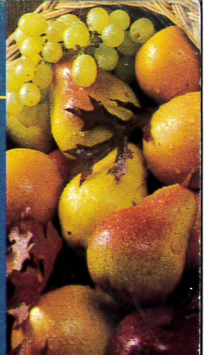
When a pastor
needs advice p.10

Thank God
we're rich! p.3

NORTHWESTERN

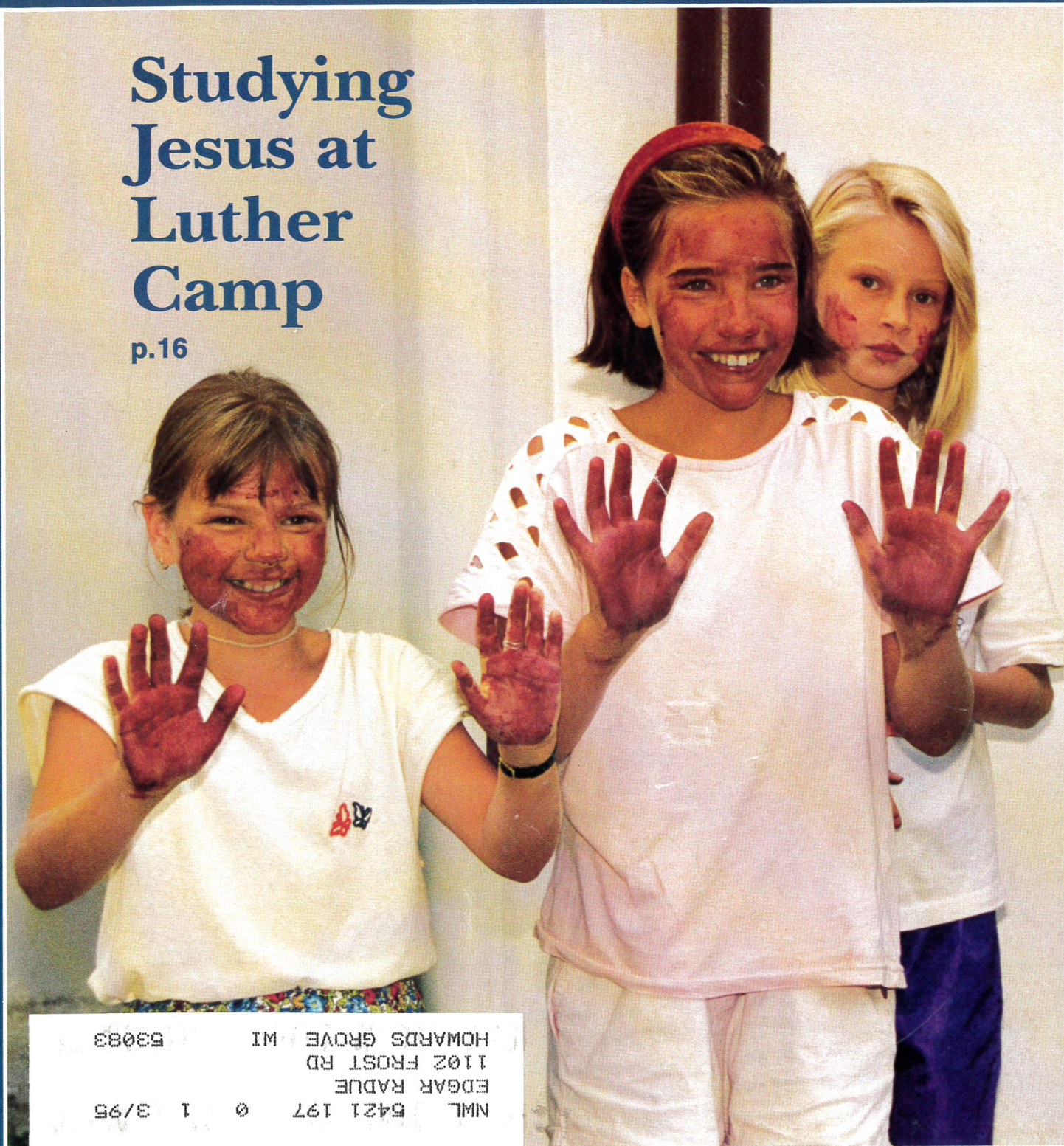
November 1994

LUTHERAN



Studying Jesus at Luther Camp

p.16



NML 5421 197 0 1 3/95
EDGAR RADUE
1102 FROST RD
HOWARDS GROVE MI 53083

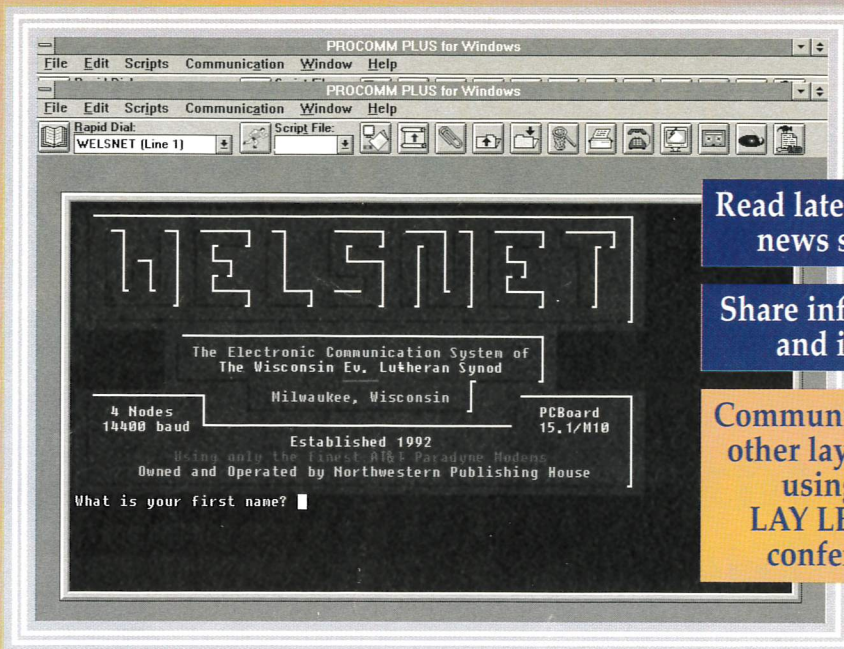
Stay in touch through WELSNET

WELSNET is a computer bulletin board operated within WELS and for the benefit of all WELS Lutherans. Although not a new concept, WELSNET is unique. It is a simple, clear, and easy-to-understand communications tool that will allow you to share information at a touch.

You can communicate with pastors, teachers, and laity across WELS, obtain the weekly Call Report of

pastors and teachers, read book reviews from Northwestern Publishing House, download back issues of the *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* and the *Lutheran Educator*, access resource materials by downloading and uploading files, discover exciting shareware, and learn the latest news before it's dated.

Join WELSNET today with an annual membership fee of \$20.00 for 60 minutes of access each day.



Read late-breaking news stories!

Share information and ideas!

Communicate with other lay leaders, using the LAY LEADER conference.

What do you need to use WELSNET?

1. A PC, PC compatible, or MAC computer. (Apple II's, Ataris, and Commodores will work.)

2. A modem* (minimum 1,200 bps to a maximum 14,400 bps).

*Your modem should come with communications software. If not, we recommend PROCOMM for PC's and ZTERM for MAC's.

Only \$20 for a full year!



For more information or to start your WELSNET membership call Northwestern Publishing House at 1-800-662-6093 ext. 119; ask for Melinda Sims. In the Milwaukee area call (414) 475-6600 ext. 119. Or, call WELSNET at (414) 475-7514 and fill out the on-line subscription form.

New forum for Lay Leaders!

Have you ever had a problem you just wanted to share with another congregation chairman or treasurer?

Do you ever have questions about budgeting, stewardship, running effective meetings, recruiting volunteers, teaching leadership, or simply putting together a balance sheet?

Have you ever wanted to contact someone at synod who might be able to help you?

Well, now there is a way, via WELSNET! We've set up a conference for you to communicate with other lay leaders. It's called "LAY LEADER."

Here's a sampling of Lay Leader Resource files (available for downloading)

- Handbook for church officers and boards
- Guidelines for starting a satellite congregation
- Tips on understanding Christian stewardship
- Guidelines for using fund raisers as a tool
- How to build a church archives
- Accounting guidebook for Lutheran congregations
- How to establish when tuition is right for your school

On the fourth Thursday this month, turkeys will roast in ovens and football fans will roost in front of TVs. It's thanksgiving time.

For some it'll be a "flashbulb" thanksgiving. They'll be content with a small flash of gratitude for how good they have it, but then it's back to life as usual. For others it'll be a "wrench-it-out-of-me" observance. Thanksgiving comes slowly for those who don't have all they want and who worry about how long they can hang on to what they have. For others it'll be a self-congratulatory day to consider what they have done and how hard they have worked. Such givers of thanks want to send a card of praise—to their own address.

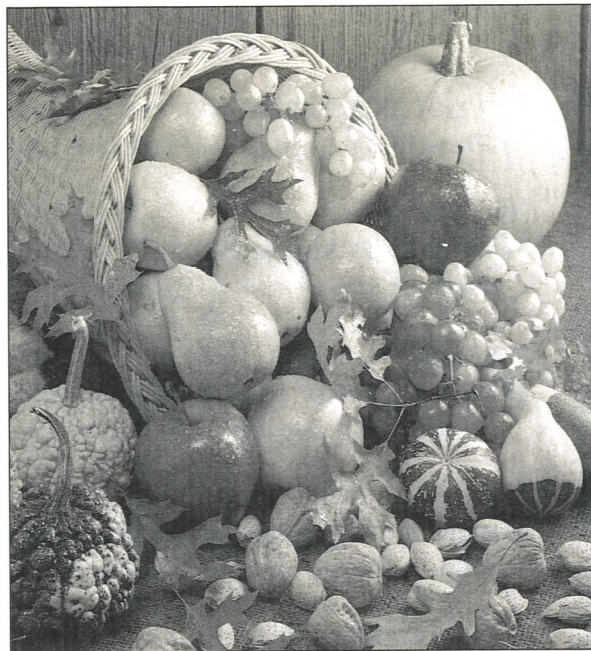
And you and I? What will our thanksgiving be? If we could send a card to God, what might it say? Paul's words suggest the combination "We're rich! Thank God!"

An account that's full

Someone said, "A Christian is one who does not have to consult his bank account to see how rich he is." How true! Every heartbeat and every breath; the water we drink and the food we eat (including the 15 quarts of ice cream and the 35 pounds of potato chips the average citizen consumes yearly); the homes we inhabit and the loved ones we hold dear; the freedoms we take for granted and the country we often complain about—all this comes from God.

God gives us even more and even better. The Bibles we read and the prayers we offer; the churches we attend and the pure Word we hear; the days he grants us and the opportunities for service; the sins he forgives and the graves he will open because of Jesus—all this and more has come from God.

Would you believe there's still more? Sickness that



GERALD KOSER PHOTOGRAPHY

Thank God we're rich!

by Richard E. Lauersdorf

*Always giving thanks to God
the Father for everything,
in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Ephesians 5:20*

hits us and pains that don't go away; the bad weather that damaged and the crops that weren't quite right; the paychecks that didn't quite stretch and the friends that didn't last; the person we couldn't date and the spouse we hoped for but didn't find—all this and more has come from God. "Give thanks . . . for everything," Paul wrote, including those "disagreeable" events that come from a loving God. They serve our good or he wouldn't allow them.

This Thanksgiving, as we check our accounts, are we ready to say, "We're rich! Thank God?"

A check that doesn't bounce

A proper thanksgiving doesn't end with an inventory. If it does, it's like a check that comes back marked "insufficient funds." If we don't put money behind our written check or deeds behind our thanksgiving, what's it worth?

Get the point? We need people of God who go down life's street and practice their thanksgiving to a gracious God; husbands who love their wives and wives who submit to their husbands; parents who work hard at raising children in the Lord and children who honor such parents; church members who bring their offerings and use their talents for the tasks the Lord gives them.

For thoughtful Christians there'll be more than turkey and football this Thanksgiving. After examining their account, they'll exclaim, "We're rich," and then write—with their lives—a "thank you" check to God.



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

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

NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN

OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE
WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD

NOVEMBER 1994 / VOL. 81, NO. 11

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

Editorial Commission

Prof. Richard D. Balge (chairman), Mr. John
Barber, Rev. John A. Braun, Mr. Mark C. Brunner,
Rev. Victor H. Prange.

Contributing editors

R. D. Balge, W. F. Beckmann, M. E. Braun, J. F.
Brug, T. B. Franzmann, J. C. Gerlach, R. H.
Hochmuth, R. E. Lauersdorf, F. E. Piepenbrink,
V. H. Prange.

District correspondents

K. H. Pasch (Arizona), H. K. John (California), R.
L. Kruse (Dakota-Montana), J. L. Langebartels
(Michigan), B. J. Pearson (Minnesota), K. E.
Petersen (Nebraska), J. R. Bitter (North Atlantic),
J. C. Eggert (Northern Wisconsin), D. H. Birsching
(Pacific Northwest), M. A. Spriggs (South
Atlantic), C. L. Learman (South Central), G. A.
Ferch (Southeastern Wisconsin), E. C. Stroh
(Western Wisconsin).

Production

Production services of Northwestern Publishing
House. Production, layout: Clifford Koeller.
Proofreader: Roland W. Ehlke. Subscription:
Suzanne Giese (manager), Sandy Arndt.

Subscriber service

For subscription service, write: Northwestern
Publishing House, 1250 N 113th Street,
Milwaukee WI 53226-3284. Allow **four weeks** for
a new subscription, subscription renewal or
change of address. (If you have a question on
your subscription phone 1-800-662-6093, ext. 8;
Milwaukee area phone 414/475-6600, ext. 5.)

Subscription rates (payable in advance)

U.S.A. and Canada—**One year, \$8.50; two
years, \$17.00; three years, \$22.50.** Twenty-five
or more unaddressed copies sent in a bundle to
one address at \$5.50 per subscription. Every
home mailing plan at \$6.00 per subscription. All
prices include postage.

All other countries—Air Mail, \$35.50 for one year.
Surface Mail, \$23.50 for one year. Prices include
postage.

Northwestern Lutheran is available on **cassette**
for the visually handicapped. For information,
write: Workshop for the Visually Handicapped,
559 Humboldt Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55107.

NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN (ISSN 0029-
3512) is published monthly by Northwestern
Publishing House, 1250 N 113th Street, Milwau-
kee WI 53226-3284. Second class postage paid
at Milwaukee, Wisconsin and additional mailing
offices. **POSTMASTER:** Send address changes to
Northwestern Lutheran, c/o Northwestern
Publishing House, 1250 N 113th Street, Milwau-
kee WI 53226-3284. ©1994 by Northwestern
Lutheran, magazine of the Wisconsin Evangelical
Lutheran Synod (WELS). Printed in the USA.

FEATURES

I'm not politically correct by Paul E. Kelm6
Thoughts on political correctness and ecclesiastical correctitude.

ROCKY, TOO
"Out of my sight, Satan!" by Gary P. Baumler8
Peter meant well—but he didn't listen to Jesus.

THE FAMILY TABLE
When a pastor needs advice by Thomas B. Franzmann10
Talking—and listening—can help resolve parish conflicts.

THE MEANING OF MINISTRY
Ministry originates with the gospel by Wayne D. Mueller12
Ministry is what, for Jesus' sake, we want to do, not what we have to do.

HELP FOR HOMOSEXUALS
Sarah's struggle by Dorothy J. Sonntag14
Her husband's sin threatened her faith.

Studying Jesus at Luther Camp by Gary P. Baumler16
Teens travel to the Czech Republic to share their Savior.

Mission festivals are for always by Mildred O. Meyer20
Memories of mission festivals.

That's gratitude for you! by Paul O. Wendland36
The plain fact is: you can't command someone to be grateful.

NEWS

Around the WELS22

- Wisconsin Lutheran College receives \$25 million
- How to be a world missionary at home
- "Let the children come"
- Planned Giving reports deferred gifts of \$27 million
- Miracle Sunday brings a miracle
- A world mission at home
- Top teacher
- Youth news
- Ads draw WELS members together in Okinawa
- Arizona-California, Western Wisconsin Districts

Around the CELC25

- Visitors save Japanese missions \$40,000
- German church extends interchurch relations

Around the world27



"Out of my sight, Satan!"



Sarah's struggle



Studying Jesus at Luther Camp

DEPARTMENTS

THOUGHT FOR TODAY
Thank God we're rich! *by Richard E. Lauersdorf*3

OPEN DOORS
The synod's real estate21
 Keeping an eye on \$100 million of property.

NOTICES29

PARABLES OF JUDGMENT
Wise and wicked servants *by Mark E. Braun*30

EDITORIAL COMMENT
Role models, super heroes, and hypogrammos
by Walter F. Beckmann31

YOUR QUESTION, PLEASE *by John F. Brug*32
 • The natural knowledge of God • Education choices

READERS FORUM33

THE EDITOR'S PEN
One person's freedom *by Gary P. Baumler*34
 The results of freedom from religion.

BITS & PIECES

- Kids will be kids, and so they ended a berry-picking expedition by painting their hands and faces with juice. The youngsters on the cover were among the children who attended Camp Luther, in the Czech Republic, for a week of Bible lessons. You can meet them in "Studying Jesus at Luther Camp" on page 16.
- Being politically correct can mean being sensitive to other people's feelings. It can also mean avoiding guilt, says Paul Kelm (p.6). "Call sin something else," he says, "and that's what it becomes." Kelm points out that we should be equally concerned about "ecclesiastical correctitude"—being "intolerant of people who are different instead of doctrine that is wrong."
- "When a pastor needs advice" (p.10) gives pastors and parishioners some thoughts to mull over. The article ends the "Family table" series. Our thanks to author Tom Franzmann.
- Thanksgiving approaches. We at NL are grateful for a special blessing—you, our readers. We value your encouragement, your prayers, and your comments (even when you disagree with us). We thank you, and we thank God for you.

Dorothy Sonntag

TO ORDER
Northwestern Lutheran
 A subscription in U.S.A. or Canada
 for 1 year at \$8.50
 for 2 years at \$17.00
 for 3 years at \$22.50

Send this coupon with check or money order to: Northwestern Publishing House
 1250 N 113th Street
 Milwaukee WI 53226-3284

Name (print) _____
 Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____

(Note: You can also subscribe to *Northwestern Lutheran* by calling toll-free 1-800-662-6093, ext. 8. In the Milwaukee area call 414/475-6600, ext. 5. Phone weekdays between 8:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m.)

I'm not politically correct

by Paul E. Kelm

Heightism:
Discrimination
against the
vertically
challenged.

Incomplete success:
Failure.

It was funny to discover that I am “hair-disadvantaged” and “optically challenged,” when all along I thought I was just getting old. I stopped laughing, though, when being a white male labeled me an “oppressor.” Rush Limbaugh can laugh off environmental extremists as “tree huggers.” But there’s nothing funny about a movement that has more apparent concern for baby seals than aborted and abused babies. My friend and I can laugh about whether he is black, African-American, or a “person of color.” But I’m weary of Kevin Costner movies that exalt Native American animism or add a Muslim super-hero to the Robin Hood legend while reducing Friar Tuck to a drunken idiot. I guess I’m not politically correct.

It’s ironic that in the name of tolerance and in the absence of absolutes, the politically correct can be so intolerant of Christian values and so dogmatic about the worldview they’ve manufactured. But it’s not funny. Evolutionary explanations for life and new age worship of nature have conspired to paint Christianity as unenlightened oppression, associated with every capitalistic evil of western culture. And Christians have trouble fighting back, because you can’t debate labels or movements or “the way it is.” Here’s another irony. Political correctness has the appearance of offending no one while it blasphemes God and vexes those who still believe he is and that he has revealed real truth.

*Political correctness is an agenda
cloaked in a vocabulary.*

*The agenda is the eradication of
guilt and responsibility. . . .*

*Ecclesiastical correctitude makes
being right more important
than being righteous in Christ.*

Look out for a hidden agenda

Political correctness is an agenda cloaked in a vocabulary. The agenda is the eradication of guilt and responsibility. No one is responsible for what’s wrong except those who want to make people responsible for their wrong. People aren’t sinners; they’re victims of everything from parental abuse to cultural oppression, from social ills to psychological divergence. Call homosexuality an alternative lifestyle or a genetic predisposition, and there’s nothing to feel guilty about. Looting becomes economic reparations for the underclass and violence the inescapable acting out of

Vertically challenged:
Shorter or taller
than average.

Terminally inconvenienced:
Dead.

Negative attention getting:
Misbehavior.

Snow person:
A gender-fair
replacement
for snowman.

Differently sized:
Obese.

Nonliving person:
A culturally sensitive
synonym for "corpse."

(From *The Official Politically Correct Dictionary and Handbook*
by Henry Beard and Christopher Cerf, Villard Books, New York, 1992)

youths trapped in the cycle of urban despair. Call sin something else, and that's what it becomes. Satan has become the ultimate spin doctor.

In Romans 12 Paul urges: "Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Political correctness is just the latest pattern of this world to pressure people to conform. Its subtle half-truths are its attractiveness. Its pervasiveness is its power. People don't realize how thoroughly they've been influenced, how far they've been moved. Jesus Christ doesn't pressure us with propaganda to conform. He transforms us, by convincing us with his truth, by overwhelming us with his love, by indwelling us with his presence. Get into his Word and you get your head straight.

The apostle teaches us how to respond to the philosophies of this world like political correctness. "The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ" (2 Corinthians 10:4, 5).

Beware of ecclesiastical correctitude

If we condemn political correctness, however, we should also cleanse ourselves of "ecclesiastical correctitude." Let me explain. Heirs of orthodox theology can become smug, intolerant of people who are dif-

ferent instead of doctrine that is wrong. Ecclesiastical correctitude is a contentious attitude that makes being right more important than being righteous in Christ. It's about belonging to the right church instead of growing through Scripture to know our God aright. It's conforming to a way of seeing things and doing things—beyond what God's Word prescribes—rather than being transformed by the gospel. And it is a vocabulary of "correct" terminology that inhibits listening to people and searching Scripture.

At a recent district convention, a loyal Lutheran delegate objected to the expression "come to Jesus" in the convention essay, because that is how the Reformed speak. The essayist explained that he was merely using the words of 1 Peter 2:4, the primary Scriptural basis for his essay. Precise wording and clear meaning are hallmarks of confessional Christianity. Some words are worth fighting over. But ecclesiastical correctitude can shrink Scripture and write off (or "right" off) people with a tyranny of terminology that makes our way of saying it more significant than what God said.

Lord, preserve us from the wrong thinking of political correctness and from the wrong attitude of ecclesiastical correctitude!

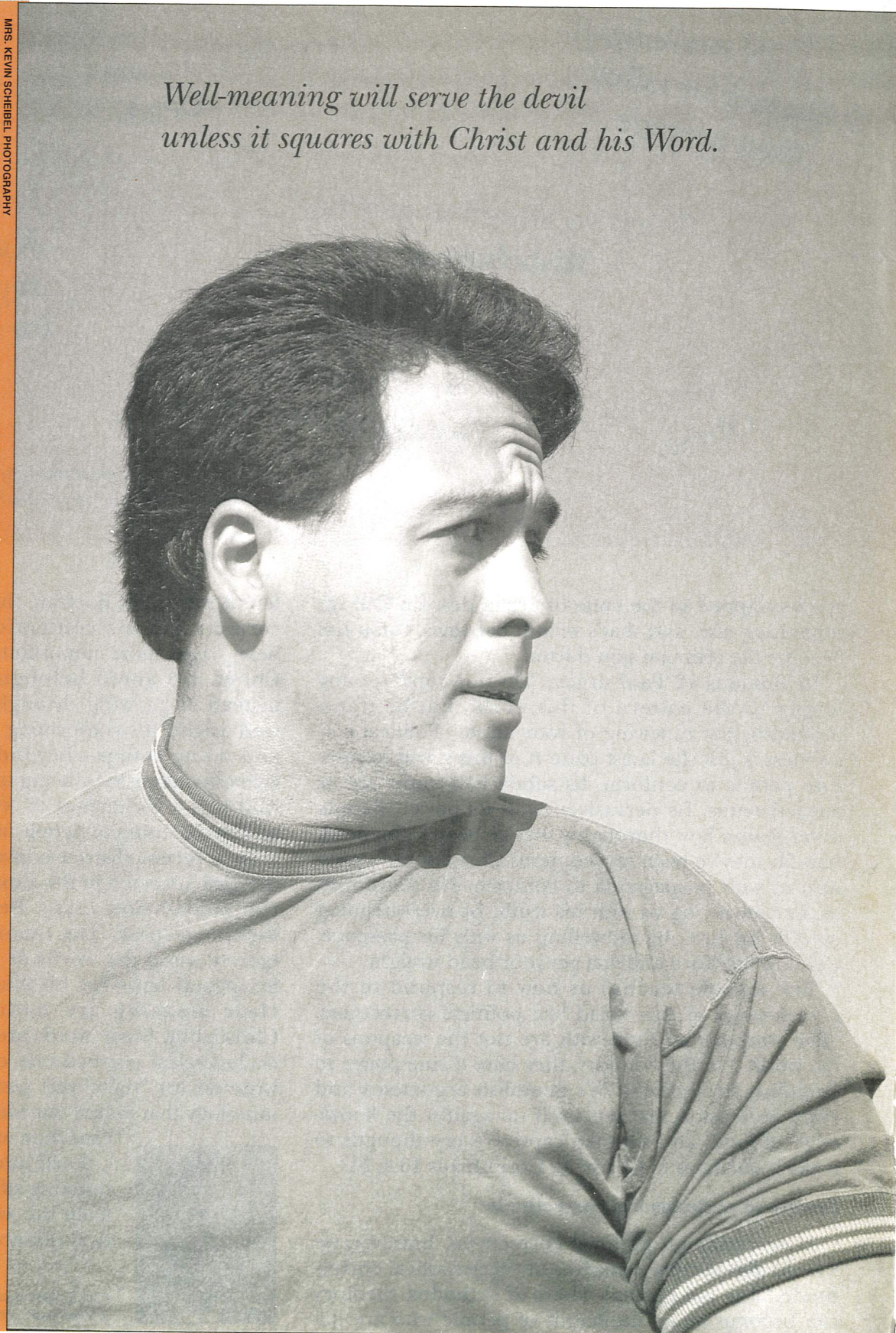


*Paul E. Kelm is campus pastor
at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee.*

MRS. KEVIN SCHEIBEL PHOTOGRAPHY

*Well-meaning will serve the devil
unless it squares with Christ and his Word.*

Jesus turned
and said to Peter,
“Out of my sight,
Satan! You are a
stumbling block to
me; you do not
have in mind the
things of God, but
the things of men.”
MATTHEW 16:23



“Out of my sight, Satan!”

by Gary P. Baumler

A number of years ago a popular comedian made a hit with the catch phrase: “The devil made me do it.” It quickly caught on so that whenever someone did something wrong or mischievous, he or she could pass it off with a laugh and “the devil made me do it.” It made a good comic line, but unfortunately it also made light of a serious truth.

Here, for example, we see how the devil could mislead even a rocklike person like Simon Peter and how, the moment Peter followed Satan’s lead, he became Satan’s agent for evil. Yes, the devil made him do it, and for it Peter received the devil’s due. It’s hard to figure, but the same Jesus who on two occasions especially noted that Simon was Peter, the Rock, said here to Peter: “Out of my sight, Satan!”

What made the difference?

What made the difference? When Peter was the most rocklike, he was confessing that Jesus was “the Christ, the Son of the living God.” He was identifying with the Savior. Peter, however, identified with Satan when he contradicted Jesus, when he failed to listen to Jesus’ words, and even unwittingly tempted Jesus not to go through with his work of redemption. Jesus had just predicted “that he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.”

Peter responded, “Never, Lord! This shall never happen to you!”

Then Jesus said, “Out of my sight, Satan!”

What was wrong with Peter’s well-meant words?

Look at what made Peter’s actions here satanic, and see yourself also in the picture. Notice, for example, that Peter definitely meant well by rebuking Jesus. Peter had no evil intent whatsoever. Still he did Satan’s will, not God’s.

Well-meaning does not always result in well doing. Well-meaning is not always well conceived. Well-meaning will serve the devil unless it squares with Christ and his Word. “He meant well” is used to cover a multitude of sins. Even mercy killings get favorable press

because the murderers meant well.

So, look further at some of the satanic elements in Peter’s well-meaning words to Jesus.

✓ **First: Evidently Peter did not listen to all of Jesus’ words.** He heard Jesus say he “must be killed” and reacted to that without hearing the part about being raised in three days. Satan has his way when we listen only to parts of God’s Word. A common failing today, for example, is people hearing God tell women to be subject to their husbands but not hearing him tell husbands to love and honor their wives, or hearing the part about children obeying their parents but not the part about parents training and guiding their children.

✓ **Second: Peter could not believe that Jesus really meant what he said.** Similarly, whenever we think we know better than the Lord, we serve Satan, whether we’re doubting that he will really condemn unbelievers to hell or that he really wants us to clean up our lives no matter what age we are.

✓ **Third: Peter didn’t want to hear the gospel as yet.** Jesus must die, and did. Jesus must rise, and did. Silence that truth and Satan will rule. For without the death and resurrection of Jesus, we have no forgiveness and salvation. Without that simple gospel truth, we miss the only real comfort God’s Word has to give us.

Perhaps you can begin to see how Satan was having his way with Peter and sometimes likewise has his way with us. Jesus helps us understand the satanic problem still further when he says to Peter, “. . . you do not have in mind the things of God, but the things of men.” Beware of “the things of men.”

What saved Peter in the end was that he turned back to the things of God. May God help us also to listen to his Word and keep in mind his things.

Gary Baumler is editor of Northwestern Lutheran and WELS Director of Communications.

JIM WHITMER PHOTOGRAPHY



When a pastor needs advice

by Thomas B. Franzmann

“Thanks for seeing me on such short notice,” the pastor said. “I’ve never done this before, and I’m not sure it’s the right thing to do.”

That opener piqued Jim and Rebecca’s interest even further. Just a

few hours before, their pastor had called and asked if he could stop by. “There’s something I need to bounce off you,” he had said. He hadn’t said what he wanted to talk about. Now that he was here, he even expressed doubt about the wisdom of coming. They waited to hear what he had to say.

“This has to do with the problem we’re having at church,” the pastor began. “I know you’re not in the

middle of it. That’s one of the reasons I chose to talk to you, and because I respect your Christian commitment and judgment. Also, I think you can be unbiased since you’re moving away soon.”

The pastor was right. They weren’t caught up in the problem. One or two members tried to influence them and line them up on their side. But Rebecca and Jim had politely declined to listen to any one-sided presentations.

"I don't know how much you know about what's going on," their pastor continued. "I'm happy to say it hasn't gotten to be a huge problem. But it has the potential. I've been at this job for almost a dozen years now, and I've learned a few things about how to handle conflict in the church. But, you know, there are always self-doubts.

"I'm not here to poison your minds about anyone. I'm really more interested in getting your opinions on the way I'm handling the situation. It's pretty lonely in my position sometimes. Both my wife and I would like the input of two people whom we respect."

"Pastor," said Jim, "we're happy to help in any way we can." He liked the pastor's attitude. Jim believed that too many people don't consider whether they might be part of a problem. Or, if they are part of the problem, they try to hide or excuse it.

"As you know," the pastor continued, "our church isn't very large. We're big enough to need extra staff, but not big enough to provide it. At least not with the level of support we've been getting. But some of our members are expressing more and more dissatisfaction with our church. They want more programs and activities.

"So far, I've taken comfort that these people aren't finding fault with the way God's Word is presented. I put a lot of work into my sermons and classes. Most people aren't aware of the hours that go into that every week. But if they'd think about it, they'd be able to tell that well-planned sermons and worship services don't just fall out of a hat.

"See, I'm starting to sound defensive. That's not why I came. Whether or not people are conscious of the work that goes into the regular services and classes is not the issue. Let me get back on track. The real issue, as I see it, is: How do we help people treasure what they have in our church, and spend less time longing for things that we can't provide?"

"Pastor," said Rebecca, "I think you're on the right

track. It wasn't too many years ago that I would have joined the complainers. There were, and still are, a lot of things our church isn't doing for its members—and potential members. But the Lord changed me. Now I'm so grateful for the gospel that I don't worry nearly as much about other things.

"Every Sunday you deliver a sermon that brings God's Word to us. When Jim and I were having trouble, you were there with God's promises. When our baby was so sick, you were there with God's comfort and

hope. You taught us how to worship at a family table. You helped us work through our decision to move by focusing our minds on biblical principles. My point is, you're doing what any faithful pastor would do. If you were more of a backslappin' type, maybe some of

the critics would be happier. Maybe. But you aren't."

Jim added, "I think you've hit the nail on the head. And, Pastor, you're doing the right thing. You're listening. And you're willing to consider change. But whatever you do, if you find it necessary to change directions in your ministry style, or in our congregation's approach, don't change our message of law and gospel to satisfy people who don't treasure it as they should. And for what it's worth, we think you've served our own family as faithfully as any human being can. When we move, we'd be happy if our new pastor is just like you."

When the pastor left, Jim and Rebecca noticed he seemed more tired than usual. But they knew he would keep being faithful in his ministry. They also knew he would not let their compliments keep him from listening to all the members of the flock. They were grateful that he had sought their help.

At their family table they spent more time than usual on prayers for their pastor, his wife, and for the congregation through which God had blessed them.



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

"I'm interested in getting your opinions on the way I'm handling the situation. It's pretty lonely in my position sometimes."

Ministry originates with the gospel

Ministry is what, for Jesus' sake, we want to do, not what we have to do

by Wayne D. Mueller

Some people hide their riches. That's what bank vaults, mattresses, and treasure chests are for. But, by its very nature, the world's greatest treasure is meant to be shared. If you believe that "God so loved the world," you won't be able to keep the good news of his Son a secret.

In every believer's heart, alongside faith in Jesus, God plants the urge to share the treasure of forgiveness. In Genesis 3:15 God promised that the Savior would come. The result? Genesis 4:26—"At that time men began to call on the name of the Lord"—could well be translated: "At that time men began to proclaim the name of the Lord."

Of course they proclaimed! How could they do anything else? They were like the apostles who said, "We cannot help speaking about what we have seen and heard" (Acts 4:20).

If my heart overflows with the good news of justification by faith, my mouth will carry on gospel ministry. Heart and mouth go hand in hand. Paul explains: "'The word is near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart,' that is, the word of faith we are proclaiming: That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved" (Romans 10:8-10).

Ministry is not a legal institution

God commands us to serve by sharing the gospel: "Go and make disciples" (Matthew 28:19). "Go into all the world and preach . . ." (Mark 16:15). "Preach this message: 'The kingdom of heaven is near'" (Matthew 10:7). "Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason

for the hope that you have" (1 Peter 3:15).

Yet God's commands for ministry are not laws like the Ten Commandments. "For the law was given through Moses," the evangelist John explains, "grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). Moral laws apply to all people, but God commands only believers to share the good news.

Both the desire and activity of sharing Christ come from the gospel itself. Gospel ministry is a privilege—the unique expression of Christian faith.

God always speaks to believers when he urges gospel ministry. Jesus urged the Twelve to be fearless in proclaiming his message: "What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the housetops. Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul" (Matthew 10:27,28). Peter charged only God's chosen people to "declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light" (1 Peter 2:9). Jesus' calls to evangelize, to teach, to baptize, and to commemorate the Lord's Supper—all were given to believers.

Ministry is from God

Ministry originates with God. Gospel means good news. The word itself denotes a message meant to be broadcast. As faith connects the mouth to the heart, so gospel ministry goes hand in hand with the gospel. "All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Corinthians 5:18). The author of the gospel makes us his good newscasters.

Paul points to this underlying truth, recorded in Old Testament times as the basis for his New Testament ministry: "It is written, 'I believed; therefore I have spoken.' With that same spirit of faith we

also believe and therefore speak" (2 Corinthians 4:13).

We pledge to share the gospel in the same breath that we pray for faith: "Restore to me the joy of your salvation. . . . Then I will teach transgressors your ways. . . . O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth will declare your praise" (Psalm 51:12-15).

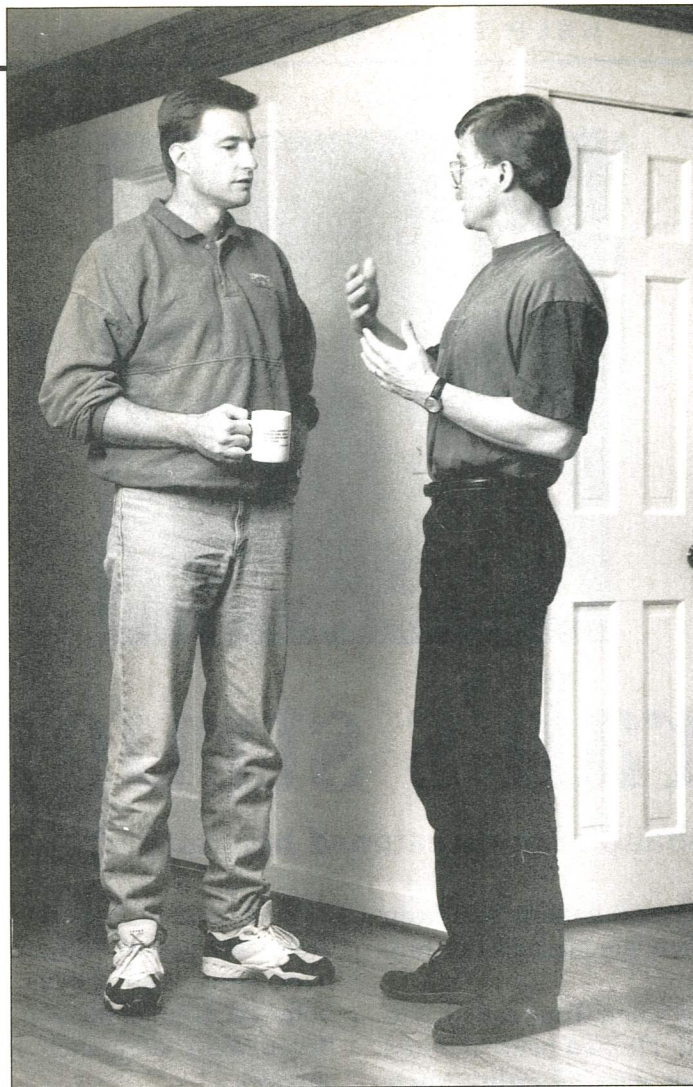
The Bible leaves no doubt that ministry comes from God. As surely as God loves the world, bringing the gospel to the world is his will. Jesus promised to stand behind our evangelizing: "Surely I will be with you always" (Matthew 28:20). Eternal glory awaits "those who lead many to righteousness" (Daniel 12:3).

The Spirit of ministry

How we view ministry will determine the spirit in which we carry it out. If we see spreading the gospel as a legal requirement, we will speak of our Savior grudgingly or not at all. God wants us to see gospel service not as a demand, but as a privilege. Not a burdensome law, ministry is the will of our loving God.

That is not a contradiction. The difference between God's gracious will and his moral demands is the difference between heaven and hell.

God's moral law demands a perfect obedience we are unable to give. God's loving will in the gospel, however, not only directs our action; it provides the strength to carry it out. "It is God who works in you to will and to act according to his good purpose"



JIM WHITTER PHOTOGRAPHY

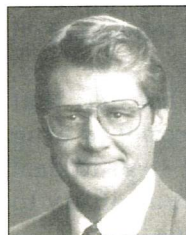
(Philippians 2:13).

When Jesus invited us to evangelize, he was inviting us to share a privilege. When Jesus sends his Holy Spirit to bring us to faith, he is also providing the spirit in which we share our gospel treasure. If we view the work of sharing the gospel as a law, we will never find joy in sharing it. But if the

Spirit leads us to see it as a way to "give the reason for the hope that you have," we will look forward to every opportunity. Ministry is what, for Jesus' sake, we want to do, not what we have to do.

The command to share the good news and our ability to carry it out come from God. "Our competence comes from God," Paul wrote. "He has made us competent as ministers of a new covenant—not of the letter but of the Spirit; for the letter kills, but the Spirit gives life" (2 Corinthians 3:5,6).

We share Paul's "Spirit" as we share our treasure with the world. If ministry were a job, our old Adam would resent the work. But since ministry is a privilege God gives along with the gift of faith, our new man counts it all joy. We wake to each new day the Lord gives us with heart and mouth working hand in hand.



Wayne Mueller is administrator for WELS Parish Services.

MRS. KEVIN SCHEIBEL PHOTOGRAPHY



Sarah's struggle

Her husband's sin threatened her faith

by Dorothy J. Sonntag

Sarah and Tom (not their real names) had been married for 11 years when she learned her husband was homosexual.

"The first I knew was when Tom called, saying he was in jail," she recalled. He had been arrested for soliciting sex from another man. "I didn't know what to do. I kept hoping it was a bad dream."

Sarah's first call was to her pastor. "He came over immediately, in the wee hours of the morning," she recalled. He helped Sarah raise Tom's bail and arranged for temporary care for their children. "He immediately got us in to see a Christian counselor, and he counseled with us, too," she added.

It couldn't happen

If Tom showed signs of his sinful lifestyle, Sarah didn't recognize them. "All I knew about homosexuality was what I had heard from the media," she remembered.

One thing she did know. It couldn't happen to them. They were Christians. Tom taught in a Lutheran school. "He had 'one-night stands' when he said he was going to school to work," she explained. "I believed him."

Through counseling, Sarah says, "I learned that homosexuality is addiction, similar to alcohol or drug addiction, and you use the same kind of steps to deal with it. Ideas like, 'Gays can't change. You can try to change them, but it won't work' aren't true."

Even so, she had to decide whether to stay with Tom. "My pastor told me, 'God can change your husband—but your husband has to want to change.' I believed Tom wanted to, so I stayed," she explained. Seven years later, their marriage, although troubled, survives.

An ongoing struggle

Sarah's and Tom's problems aren't over. "It's easy to say, 'Tell Jesus you're sorry and go on with your life.' It isn't that simple," sighed Sarah. "It's a lifestyle he's lived for half his life. He couldn't change overnight." He continues to battle his temptations.

While Tom struggles with addiction, Sarah fights depression, guilt, and anger. "I was suicidal at times," she admitted, "although I never would have completed the act. It was my way of saying, 'I need help. Listen to me.'"

At other times, she said, "I would run away, so to speak. I'd drive until midnight or one o'clock and come home and go to bed—and hope the world would end before I woke up."

Sarah also struggles to keep her faith. "My faith wavered a lot. There were times I would say, 'I don't think there's a God up there.'"

Sources of help

She sought her pastor's help. "I'm in the pastor's office nearly every week," she confided. "Sometimes

Coping with a loved one's addiction

Advice from Sarah's pastor

Q. *I've learned that someone I love is an addict. How should I react?*

A. Don't turn away. Accepting the sinner doesn't mean accepting the sin. How you treat him may depend on whether he's facing his problems. If he's not dealing with the issues that led him to sin, he's not recovering; he's just non-practicing.

Q. *I've begun to wonder whether God cares what is happening to me. How can I keep my troubles from harming my faith?*

A. Do two things: Stay in touch with the Word, because the Word is what always picks you up. And remember that God gave his Son because he wants you in heaven. No matter what you're going through now, he's not going to let anything get in the way of your being with him there.

Q. *I am angry that God let this happen. How do I get rid of my anger?*

A. Don't deny your anger. God can handle it. God understands why you feel angry. And don't run away from God. That's what people do if they think they shouldn't feel angry.

Q. *How do I find a counselor who won't undermine my faith?*

A. The first time you speak to a counselor, say, "My faith is a very important foundation in my life. Are you willing to work with that?" If he or she isn't, find another counselor.

Q. *Is homosexuality as common as drug and alcohol addiction?*

A. It isn't, because it hasn't been as acceptable. Homosexuality is going to become a bigger problem, because society is accepting it.

every day."

"She was asking, 'How could God let this happen?'" her pastor recalled. "She felt God hadn't answered her prayers. God had let her down."

She also struggled with how to forgive so great a sin. "God has forgiven me," she witnessed, "so I could forgive my husband."

Her pastor encouraged Sarah to see a psychiatrist. "The doctor sent me a note, told me what she had prescribed, and encouraged me to keep in touch," he said. "If I refer someone to a counselor, I stay in touch. The majority of counselors I've talked to value that."

He also encouraged Sarah to confide in friends. "I've urged her to build relationships with people I consider to be good Christians, so I know I'm not the only person helping her."

A strengthened faith

All those sources of help have strengthened Sarah's faith. "Sometimes you can't just say, 'Okay, God, it happened, but I'll go on.' You need help," she emphasized. "Whether it's a pastor, a Christian counselor, or a good friend, God is putting those people in your path to help you. God put very dear people in my life. Had they not been there, I don't know what I would have done."

Thanks to those people and God's promises, Sarah said, "My faith has grown. I believe God has a purpose

*"Sometimes you can't just say,
'OK God, it happened, but I'll go on.'
You need help. Whether it's a pastor,
a Christian counselor, or a good friend,
God is putting those people
in your path to help you."*

in this." One purpose, she is sure, is to help others in a similar crisis.

Troubled by doubt and depression, Sarah continues her struggle. "God loves me, I know that," she says, "although sometimes I wonder where he is. But I've got this picture in my mind: when I get to heaven, God's going to tell me, 'I know it was tough, Sarah,' and he'll put his arms around me."

Then Sarah's struggle will be over.

You can contact "Sarah" through Pastor Phil Merten, 6320 N 103 St, Milwaukee WI 53225; 414/353-7337.

Dorothy Sonntag is assistant editor for Northwestern Lutheran.



Studying Jesus

by Gary P. Baumler

The tears flowed freely. Kirstie cried (she was one of the first). Nancy cried. Both Lenkas cried. Even Martin (the big kid who took the lead and liked to goof off) cried. Everyone felt a strong surge of emotion because it was time for good-byes at the end of camp.

Camp? Not just any camp, mind you! This was Luther Camp in the Czech Republic, and the people leaving were ten students of Project Timothy.

The teenagers, from Northwestern and Martin Luther preparatory schools, had traveled all the way to Eastern Europe to gain experience in teaching, to reinforce the English skills of the Czech children at the camp, to spread the gospel, to clarify their own feelings about studying to be pastors and teachers. For one magical week, they did all that and more.

They've never heard the stories

Some of the students had taught vacation Bible school or Sunday school before, but they'd never experienced anything quite like this camp. These Czech children had not grown up learning Bible sto-

PHOTOS BY GARY BAUMLER



Marty Miller offers help at Luther Camp in the Czech Republic.

ries as their American counterparts had. Some had not heard of God before.

"It's just here—this is the first time they're hearing

"You are living on an idea"

Shortly after Jennifer Harper arrived in Plzen, Czech Republic, she met two Germans eager to practice their English.

Jen explained that she came to Plzen (PILZEN) to tell the Czechs about Jesus. The Germans thought she was crazy to want to stay in Plzen and away from the US for a year. "You are living on an idea," they scoffed.

Jen isn't crazy, but she, along with teachers Paul H. Kelm and Martin Miller, will agree that they are living on an idea, the idea worked by God's Holy Spirit that their one-year calls to Dr. Martin Luther School in Plzen will make a difference.

In their first month, they aren't disappointed, but they are realistic. As Jen put it, "I pray the Holy Spirit can use me in whatever I do, because I won't



(Left to right) Jennifer Harper was assigned to Plzen for one year following her graduation from Dr. Martin Luther College. Paul H. Kelm is an experienced Lutheran elementary school, and teacher Martin Miller has a degree in education from Wisconsin Lutheran College.

at Luther Camp

God's Word," explained Elisabeth Loftin. "They're hearing it the first time in this school in kindergarten, some of them in fifth grade. . . ." She confessed she'd like to have stayed right there to help teach them.

Jenna Manske observed, "We're teaching the second graders stories they've never heard before, so that seems unrealistic to us because we've had them since before we could even understand.

"Over here it puts a whole different perspective on telling others the Word," she continued, "because you know they don't really know it, so then you really have to share it with them."

The kids listen to their Bible stories

What the children lacked in background, they made up for in enthusiasm, and God's Spirit worked through his Word. "It was really amazing to me," mused Joseph Kolbow, "to see how people who had never heard about God before could just start believing."

Of course, they didn't just start believing, but they eagerly learned the Word that worked the faith.

"They're all eager to learn," noted Ryan Stangl, "and it's made working with them a lot easier."

"They just absorbed it like a sponge," added Elisabeth.

Before they came, the Project Timothy people wondered and even worried about the different language and the different culture they would encounter. How would they relate to these children? To a person, they discovered that "kids are kids"; they're much the same whether in the Czech Republic or in the United States.

And although that also meant they could get wild and be inattentive, Christa Augustine's experience was typical. "When we go through the Bible lessons with the kids, it's amazing how well they listen and how they just watch you and how much they actually pick up on. They pick up on everything. Later on around the campfire, they'll totally tell you the story right back. They heard every word you said."

It just makes you want to teach

"I like it how we came so far," explained Bethany

know how I'm affecting the people."

Each of them spoke of Jan (YAHN), an older student at Luther Camp who has learned of God for the first time. Marty explained how after being taught under communism that God was evil, people like Jan are very confused. "Jan said, 'I believe some of the Bible stories, but I don't believe other stories.' Just to have faith and accept something without proof is difficult. They haven't been able to trust people in the past."

Jan is interested in learning, however, added Paul. "He's really wondering what this is all about. What is this God and this Son of God and forgive-



Jan (right, with Paul H. Kelm) learned of God for the first time.

ness? He wants to know some answers, but he seems reluctant to believe what you give him because it's too good to be true."

The second graders Jen works with "seem to be more accepting." However, they too struggle with what their new faith means. "When we are praying, a lot of them say, 'Please help my brother to believe in God,' or different members of the family."

The year has just begun for the trio, but they know it has challenges and rewards awaiting and will go all too fast. Meanwhile, as Marty said it, "The power is God's, but the work is ours to tell the Word."

That's an idea worth staying in Plzen for.

Nelson, "and we found people who believe the same thing we do, and being able to help the little kids and to teach them about their Savior."

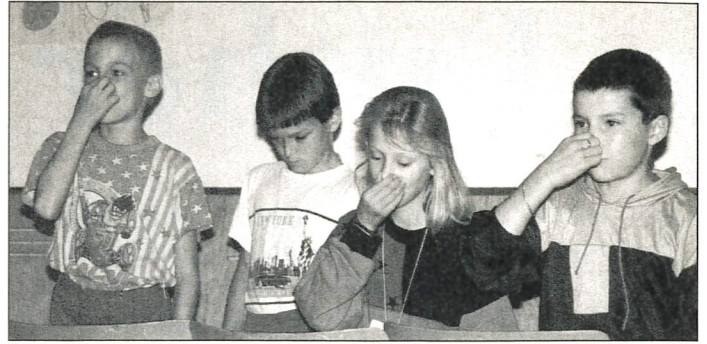
The trip had its desired effect on these young people. All of them have a more positive feeling about becoming teachers or pastors in God's church. "It's really made me realize what the rest of the world is like, and I really want to spread the Word," said Christa. "It just makes you want to teach. It makes you want to, just the look on their faces. . . . I was having doubts for a while, and this totally cleared everything up and made me realize this is exactly what I want to do."

"I had some doubts before," allowed Piet Van Kampen. "I know now. I want to be a pastor. It doesn't really matter where or to whom." When pressed to explain what specifically he had gained, he emphasized the "experience in dealing with people."

"When you're a pastor," he said, "you have to know how human nature works, how people think, and what people do in certain situations." Luther camp helped him learn that.

Lisa Valleskey shared the sentiment. "I learned how to work with children more and relate to them more and understand them. . . . Relating to people definitely has changed me for the better, I'm sure."

For Kirstie Lange, too, the kids made all the differ-



Skit night at camp.

ence. "Seeing all these kids wanting to learn so much makes you think that you could do something because there are lots of little children that need to learn, especially about Christ, and you know that you're needed."

I'll always be thankful for what I have

In one week, these young people had learned lessons for a lifetime. "It has put things into a lot better perspective for my life," observed Jenna, "because these people aren't poor, but they're definitely not as well off as a lot of people in the United States. But they're still happy and they still need to hear God's Word, and that's what's important ultimately."

Seeing some of the material differences, Piet exclaimed, "I'll always be thankful for what I have."

"They have so much less than we do in the States," added Christa, "the materialistic thing, which isn't important. But that had an effect on me, and how thankful they are and how grateful they are and how eager they are."

Or as Heather Stuebs put it, "I'm impressed by how much we're spoiled—that they have a simpler lifestyle." But she spoke of more than material differences: "They don't have churches over here, as we do. I feel that we take a lot of things for granted. We have so many churches around us and so many chances to hear God's Word in America."

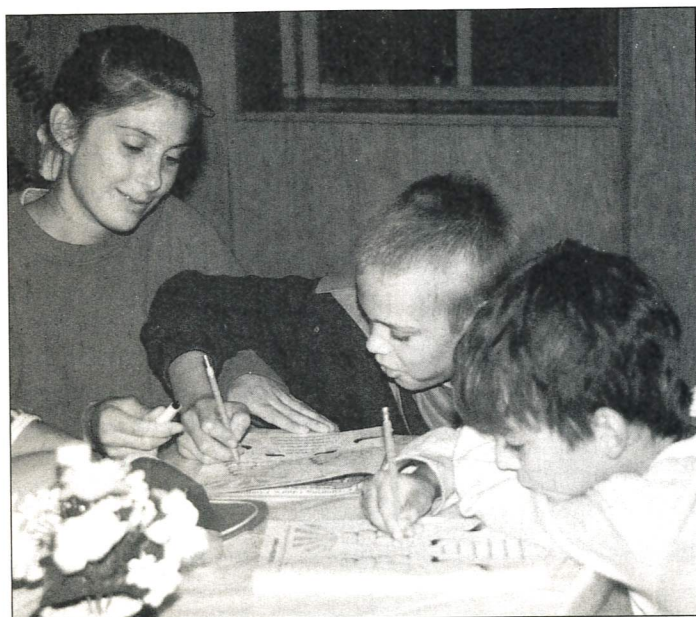
Yes, these young people thought often about those Czech children, and privileges, and God's Word. Kirstie summed it up: "I've had a lot of fun working with them, and I hope I can



Project Timothy volunteers—Front row: Elisabeth Loftin, Heather Stuebs, Lenka. Middle: Kirstie Lange, Christa Augustine, Lisa Valleskey, Jenna Manske, Sarah Luttmann. Back: Piet Van Kampen, Ryan Stangl, Joseph Kolbow, Bethany Nelson. Lenka is a Czech. Sarah's father is an ELS pastor in Plzen. The others are students from Northwestern and Martin Luther prep schools.



Elisabeth Loftin's group gets down to business.



Kirstie Lange gives students a hand.

see them again and they will still be studying Jesus and maybe someday they will be teaching."

Project Timothy in Czech Republic was funded in part by grants from WELS Kingdom Workers and Thoughts of Faith. The church and school in Czech Republic is a mission of Thoughts of Faith, an independent mission organization that is part of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.



Gary Baumler is editor of Northwestern Lutheran and WELS Director of Communications.



Jana Rezabova

A real story

What does it mean to be a child in a society where godlessness has ruled for years? Joyce Eisberg, teacher at Dr. Martin Luther School in Plzen, Czech Republic, learned when she asked her third-grade student Jana (YANNA) Rezabova to write about an imaginary or a real problem. Jana wrote:

I have a friend. She has name Barbora. She belive in God. But she has only one friend that belive in God. That friend I am. Her has one sily friend her don't believe in God and on one recess she yel on all class room God is ox. Barbora cried. She can fix this problem that her'll going to American Luteran school and then she can be baptice too. It's real story.

Today Jana is in the fifth grade and, says Miss Eisberg, "has grown in many ways. Her English is very good, and she has a deeper understanding of her Lord and Savior." Remember Jana and the other Czech children in your prayers.

Mission festivals are for always

by Mildred O. Meyer

We children especially anticipated our church's annual outdoor mission festival at Heink's grove. God's trees, not too closely spaced, raised their heads toward heaven. The early autumn sunshine brought warm comfort to the congregation. The only drawback was the squeamish behavior of some town-bred youngster who was panic-stricken at the sight of a spider or caterpillar.

We children gave no thought to the work involved. Who brought and set up the benches? Who assembled the stage and brought the pump organ from our basement school? Childhood could not be troubled by such trivia.

We used the regular liturgical service. Beads of perspiration rolled down Teacher Homeier's face as he presided at the pump organ. Our own dear Pastor Koehler preached the morning sermon in German.

I knew better than to let my mind wander because later at home we would discuss what we had heard. I thought about the responsibility and privilege of telling others how Jesus was their loving Savior.

After the sermon, Teacher Homeier gave a signal, and we children jostled our way onto the stage to sing our mission hymn—a cappella, in two voices. What we lacked in musicology, we compensated for in volume. Our director perspired more profusely than when he was playing the pump organ.

At the blessing—in the warmth of the sunshine at Heink's grove, with the murmur of the wind caressing the tips of the tall trees—we felt truly blessed. Shouldn't we be willing to share our peace of mind and this wonderful knowledge of a Savior with the unconverted?

At the mission festival meal, Mother would gaze lovingly at her brood and announce it took a lot of cooking to fill those long, skinny, empty legs. Two other families and ours always shared. Even though we kids had to sit on a blanket on the ground, it was a red-letter meal, with chicken and raspberry pie.

Pastor Koehler, a widower, usually joined our group. I suspect we had some of his favorite foods.

We had time to run around and play games before the afternoon service.

Pastor Koehler then introduced the guest preacher, who was home on furlough from a foreign station. The missionary transported us across the Atlantic to his field of labor. He stressed the need for workers and urged parents to encourage their sons and daughters to prepare for kingdom work. Yet the theme was the same as the morning's—share the gospel with the unchurched.

In time, our congregation no longer went to Heink's grove for mission festival. The children, especially, missed the outdoors. However, I feel sure Mr. Homeier was much more comfortable presiding at the pipe organ than at the pump instrument. A mixed choir now beautified the services, and the sermon was in English.

Yet, one thing did not change. Despite the language or location, the theme remained constant. We heard of the great need for mission work, of the responsibility and privilege of telling others that Jesus was also their loving Savior.



Mildred Meyer is a member of St. John, Jefferson, Wisconsin.

The synod's real estate

Keeping an eye on \$100 million of property

David Ames is real estate advisor to the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod's Board of Trustees, vice president of real estate for the WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc. (CEF), and is responsible for the sale, acquisition, and maintenance of synod property.

How much property does the synod have?

The synod owns about \$100 million worth of real estate. Besides two buildings that house the administration offices, we own five school campuses and properties used by world and home missions.

How do you work with home missions?

When a mission is in the exploratory stage, we might help its members purchase a parsonage with the title in the name of CEF. When the congregation gains mission status, title is transferred to the congregation. I also help with site acquisition and contractors for construction of a chapel.

We try to be responsive to critical issues. I've closed on a parsonage in a week from the time we signed the offer to purchase. When we purchase a home, we say, "Let us handle it." We can get the paper work done quickly and allow a smooth closing.

WELS-owned property

Synod-owned real estate includes:

- Synod administration buildings, Milwaukee, Wis.
- Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis.
- Northwestern College and Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis.
- Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.
- Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich.
- Martin Luther Preparatory School, Prairie du Chien, Wis.
- Apache Indian mission buildings, Arizona
- Residences (for synod administrators, campus ministry pastors, mission counselors, world missionary furlough houses, missionaries in Antigua and Puerto Rico)
- Campus ministry centers



Real estate staff: David Ames with Patti Behmke.

Which property requires most of your time and attention?

Recently I've spent a lot of time with the school amalgamation [combining two colleges on one campus, and two preparatory schools on another]. I assisted in determining what needs to be built and in selecting the architects, selecting the contractor, and negotiating contracts. I approve all the change orders. I'm, in effect, the field representative on the projects. I help insure that we build with quality, get top value for the dollar, and are fiscally responsible.

Can you give an example of what you have accomplished?

In New Ulm, the first bid came in at almost \$4 million, but we're going to build for slightly under \$2.8 million: same square footage, same building, same utility value. We were able to do some of what I would term "value engineering."

After amalgamation, what do you see as the most important real estate issues facing WELS?

Maintenance of buildings. We're trying to look ahead and set up reserves ahead of time for what needs to be done instead of trying to react to "fixit" things. One dollar not spent now on maintenance probably will cost five dollars for repairs down the road.

Do you have questions about the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod—how it functions, how decisions are made and carried out? Please send your questions to *OPEN DOORS*, Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.



Wisconsin Lutheran College receives \$25 million

Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, has received \$25 million from an anonymous donor. The gift, to be given over a period of five years, is the largest ever given to a Wisconsin college or university and among the largest ever bestowed upon an independent lib-

Dr. Gary Greenfield, Wisconsin Lutheran College president, announces at a news conference that the school has received \$25 million.

eral arts college.

The college will earmark the gift for scholarships, endowment, and a new Center for the Arts. Construction on that building is scheduled to begin in the spring.

Wisconsin Lutheran College's enrollment is 382, with students from 23 states and eight foreign countries. The college, which is affiliated with WELS, was established in 1973.

How to be a world missionary at home

You can share your faith by sharing your home with a Japanese student. Missionary John Hering, who matches students with American families, calls the program Homestay and describes it as "a wonderful opportunity to experience hands-on mission work."

Hering shared a letter from Mike and Cindy Ziebell of Redwood Falls, Minn., who hosted Ryoji Maki for a month.

"Communication didn't pose too much of a barrier," they wrote. "He had his handy little dictionary and we managed to get by pretty well. . . . Ryoji continues to correspond with us. We have many fond memories of his stay."

The Ziebells are enthusiastic about the Homestay program. "It offers a unique opportunity for mission work without having to leave home. It would be wonderful if more families could experience it. We're sure glad we had the opportunity."

For information about Homestay, write to John R. Hering, 4022-3 Ishikawa, 1-Chome Mito City, Ibaraki 310, Japan.



A song is part of a radio spot for "Let the children come," a program to help congregations promote their child-centered ministries.

"Let the children come"

The theme is "Let the children come," and so children—Noel Tanner, Jill Ziese, Kim Fenske, Scott Riege, and Colin Tanner—added their voices. They recorded a song that is part of a radio spot for "Let the children come," a program to help congregations promote their child-centered ministries. The radio spot is just one of several multimedia promotional materials in the program.

"It's a flexible resource for child-

oriented ministry," explained John Barber, director of the synod's mass media ministry. "It can be used to invite the unchurched to vacation Bible school, Sunday school—any child-nurturing program. And it can be used for years."

In January every congregation will receive a sample kit that includes a taped message from President Karl Gurgel and a recording of the song.

Planned Giving reports deferred gifts of \$27 million

The synod's Ministry of Planned Giving reported a record increase in gifts during the 1993-'94 fiscal year, according to its director, Pastor Ronald Roth. The total of deferred gifts was over \$27 million, an increase of more than \$10 million over the previous year.

Of that amount, the synod will receive nearly \$18 million; congregations, nearly \$7 million; and WELS agencies, over \$2 million.

"With the support and expertise of gift planning counselors, 422 families were able to complete wills, living trusts, and beneficiary designations that provide future financial support for their loved ones and for the work of the Lord," said Roth.

"In addition, through trusts and gift annuities, they were able to provide increased income for themselves. In many cases their planning also resulted in reduced taxes."

In addition to the \$27 million in deferred gifts, gift planning counselors helped WELS members find techniques to make current gifts of \$245,000.

Gift planning counselors are qualified to explain tax laws, estate

planning, and charitable gifts, although they are not legal advisors. They are "fellow Christians who are trained to help you to provide for your families and the work of the Lord," said Roth.

The Ministry of Planned Giving is supported by the operating budget of the synod, by allocations from bequests, and by gifts designated for the support of planned giving. Two of the nine counselor positions are funded by the synod's budget.

For information, or to request a meeting with a counselor, call 1-800-827-5482.

WELS Connection videotapes

November topics

- Sweden
- Commission on Communication for Financial Support

December topics

- Mission work in Spooner, Wisconsin
- President Gurgel's Christmas message

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

A world mission at home

Ndazona Holland of Malawi, Africa, was one of 83 children from twelve different countries who attended vacation Bible school at the University of Wisconsin-Madison. At the same time, eight adults attended an English as a Second Language (ESL) class, which studied the same Bible story as the children.



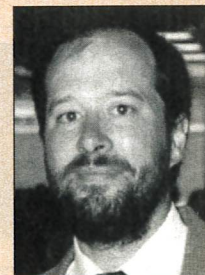
TOM TRAPP

Ndazona Holland

Members of Wisconsin Lutheran Chapel in Madison follow up with visits and invitations to their international Sunday school. During the last school year, a rented bus—paid for by synod mission offerings—transported 60 international children and 15 adults to the chapel's Sunday morning school and ESL classes. "This is a wonderful world mission—at home," says WELS campus pastor Thomas Trapp.

Top teacher

Matthew Schlawin, math teacher at Fox Valley Lutheran High School, Appleton, Wis., was one of 100 Wisconsin teachers who received awards for demonstrating superior ability to inspire love of learning. Schlawin and Fox Valley LHS each received \$1,000. The award was presented by the Herb Kohl Educational Foundation.



Matthew Schlawin

Miracle Sunday brings a miracle

When members of Abiding Word, Houston, Texas, needed funds to build a larger day-care center and a new sanctuary, they decided to have a "Miracle Sunday"—one day on which all 335 members would bring an offering for the building project. The goal was \$240,000. When the day came, they collected an unexpected \$400,000.

"We had a dinner," recalled Pastor Stephen Valleskey, "and counted the money during the meal. To everyone's surprise, we hit \$397,000. Then someone said, 'Let's

pass the hat and make it \$400,000.' They did, and we reached \$401,359.00."

In addition, Valleskey said, the members have pledged to give another \$360,000, so that "we hope to have our building paid for, lock stock, and barrel, within three years."

He is sure they'll raise that amount. "When people believe it's possible, they'll give." Abiding Word's members know anything is possible. They believe in miracles.

YOUTH NEWS

Please send photos or news on teen activities to **YOUTH NEWS**, Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.

Project Timothy in Antigua

Seven students from Northwestern and Martin Luther Preparatory Schools spent July 12-18 helping members of St. John, Antigua, West Indies, with their vacation Bible school.

Working with Pastor Mark Henrich and young people from St. John, the students taught 138 children ages 4 to 14. Prep students were Angie Scharf, Kimberly Ehlke, Tricia Wolter, Dan Lindner, Greg Mattek from Northwestern, and Sarah Bacus and Al Meihack from Martin



DENNIS NEEDHAM

Project Timothy in Antigua

Luther.

Besides teaching, the students canvassed the area and painted and cleaned at the church; but they also found time for recreation with their new friends from

St. John.

The trip was sponsored by WELS Kingdom Workers as part of Project Timothy, a program intended to introduce future ministers to mission work.

Russian teen teaches VBS in Milwaukee

The 45 teenagers who taught vacation Bible school at five inner city churches in Milwaukee last June came from Michigan, Minnesota, Illinois, and Wisconsin, but Valeria Stchetinina set the record for distance. She is from Russia.

A student at Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Valeria was

baptized and confirmed in May. "A lot of people helped bring Jesus into my life," she said, "so I wanted to help other people to find their Savior."

She is glad she volunteered. "The two weeks I spent teaching VBS are unforgettable. I met new people who are my friends now.

Stchetinina

We were like one big team spreading God's Word and having a lot of fun."

A total of 545 children attended classes at St. Marcus, Siloah, St. Philip, Salem East, and Zebaoth.



California Lutheran High School inaugurates new site

On June 4, California Lutheran High School's 10-member graduating class received diplomas under a circus tent set up on the school's new property in Wildomar, the first time the prop-

erty was used for a school function. Although they had never attended classes there, the graduates chose the site for the ceremony. Modular classrooms, an office, and a dormitory unit are on the property, where classes began in September.

California LHS graduate Theresa Bahn holds a local newspaper featuring her picture and a story about CLHS in Wildomar.

—Hermann H. John

No need to worry about keeping teens out of trouble, pastor learns

When Lakeside Lutheran High School Honor Society members offered to help with vacation Bible school at his exploratory mission in Rib Mountain, Wis., Pastor Dan Solofra wasn't sure he wanted to accept. Before they arrived last August, Solofra said, he was concerned about "how to find a way to keep 24 high school kids out of trouble for a whole week."

But the teens were too busy to get into trouble. "They taught their new young friends about their Savior," Solofra said. "They did door-to-door work. They visited the parents of their students. They did everything I asked them and more."

Solofra urges other congregations to enlist teens in mission



DAN SOLOFRA

Lakeside students too busy to get into trouble.

work. "They have tremendous ability, enthusiasm and confidence, and faith that can move mountains."

NEWS AROUND THE CELC

Visitors save Japanese missions \$40,000

When Walter and Ardelle Dehne, Harold and Valeria Schultz, and Ralph Pleuss and his daughter Diane Pleuss visited Japan last April, they spent their vacation painting, repairing, and building at the WELS mission churches there. Missionary John Hering, the Schultzes' son-in-law, estimates the group saved the congregations \$40,000. When they weren't wielding paint brushes or hammers, the group handed out tracts and put up posters inviting people to church.

The Japanese Christians welcomed the visitors and thanked



Walter Dehne, Ralph Pleuss, and Harold Schultz build a mausoleum in Mito City, Japan.

them with meals and gifts. "It was fun," said Valeria Schultz. "I'd do it again in a minute."



Evangelism in a rice paddy—Ralph Pleuss, visiting Japan, saw a woman in a rice paddy as an evangelism opportunity. He took off his shoes, rolled up his pants, and waded out to share the gospel with her.

German church extends interchurch relations

The Evangelical Lutheran Free Church of Germany (ELFC) held its 80th convention May 27-29 in Crimmitschau, Saxony, and adopted two resolutions of significance for interchurch relations. The first established formal fellowship with the Lutheran Confessional Church of Sweden and Norway. The second reaffirmed fellowship with the 12 partner churches—including

WELS—in the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference.

The convention re-elected President Gerhard Wilde, pastor of St. John in Zwickau-Planitz, to another four-year term. He has been president of ELFC since 1977. ELFC has 2080 souls served by 15 pastors and two vicars. The theological seminary in Leipzig has four students.

Representing WELS at the convention were Professors Armin Schuetze, Richard Strobel, and Wilbert Gawrisch, Pastor John Sullivan from Russia, and European civilian chaplain Daniel Balge.

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

Ads draw WELS members together in Okinawa

Thanks to advertising, a group of WELS members are worshipping together at Camp Foster in Okinawa.

Vicki Moran, who lives in Okinawa with her husband Tim, described how she got the group started: "I placed ads in the English weekly publications looking for other WELS members. By Christmas our family and two others were meeting in each others' homes. We

were able to conduct our own Christmas Eve candlelight service." As more families joined them, "we outgrew most of our living rooms." They now worship at a base chapel.

"We are up to seven families," Moran reported. "We use videotape services [from the synod's Special Ministries] and worship along with them. During the school year we had Sunday school and confirma-

tion classes. Missionaries from Japan have come three times."

The group also held vacation Bible school last summer. In October, missionaries from Taiwan started visiting members to conduct worship and Bible study and to offer communion.

"Even though we are an informal congregation," added Vicki Moran, "we have a name—New Hope."

Arizona-California District

Good Shepherd Bible Camp hosted 197 campers in grades 4-10 from California and Arizona in the Big Bear Mountains near San Bernardino July 17-24. A staff of 83 volunteers assisted camp director Pastor Lyle Sonntag. In the camp newsletter a counselor summarized the week: "We started out as a cabin of girls and ended up a family of sisters."

—*Hermann K. John*

Western Wisconsin District

On August 7, **Pastor Russell W. Kloehn** celebrated 25 years in the ministry. He serves St. Matthew, Stoddard, Wis. **Salem, Lowell**, celebrated its 125th anniversary on June 26. **St. Matthew, Warren**, celebrated its centennial on Oct. 9. **St. Paul School, Fort Atkinson**, celebrated its 125th anniversary April 17. On May 22 two teachers observed anniversaries. **Kenneth Ottenbacher** has served 25 years in ministry; **Arden Wentzel**, 40 years. **St. Matthew, Janesville**, dedicated a new pipe organ May 15. On Aug. 14 **Peace, Sun Prairie**, celebrated 50 years in ministry for **Pastor Ardin Laper**.

—*Elton Stroh*

Obituaries

Roger D. Dallmann 1941-1994

Roger D. Dallmann was born March 22, 1941, in New Ulm, Minn. He died July 10, 1994, in Milwaukee, Wis.

A graduate of Northwestern College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, he served parishes in Naper, Neb., Bonesteel, S. Dak., and La Crescent, Minn., before he resigned from the ministry for health reasons in 1969.

He is survived by his wife, Barbara; children, Lisa, Stacy, and Amy (Matt) Miskowski; parents, Leonhard and Eldora Dallmann; brother, Gary; and sister Ronda (Fritz) Hackbarth.

Clarence A. Koepsell 1919-1994

Clarence A. Koepsell was born Dec. 3, 1919, in Mayville, Wisconsin. He died Sept. 12, 1994, in Oshkosh, Wis.

He was a graduate of Winnebago Lutheran Academy, Northwestern College, and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, graduating in 1943. After one year of teaching at St. Peter, Fond du Lac, Wis., he served as pastor at Christ, Morristown, S. Dak.; St. Luke, Oakfield, Wis.; and Grace, Oshkosh. He retired in 1992.

He also served on the synod's

board for parish education and the Dr. Martin Luther College board, was first vice president of the Northern Wisconsin District, and a member of that district's board of education, stewardship board, and board of support.

He is survived by his wife, Ruby; daughters, Kay (Dan) Berry and Lynn (Charles) Waterman; sons, David (Ruth) and Steven (Susan); sister, Ruth Siegel; and nine grandchildren.

Louis E. Pingel 1916-1994

Louis E. Pingel was born April 18, 1916. He died Aug. 13, 1994.

A graduate of Northwestern College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, he served congregations in Beaver Dam, Wis.; Phoenix, Ariz.; Coleman and Clear Lake, Wis.; Roscoe, S. Dak.; and Lincoln, Mich. He retired in 1989.

He is survived by his wife, Maria; daughter, Marjorie Crozier; son, Gary; brother, Carl; and a grandson.

Give a gift of
Northwestern Lutheran

One size fits all, modest price, and you don't have to fight the crowds.

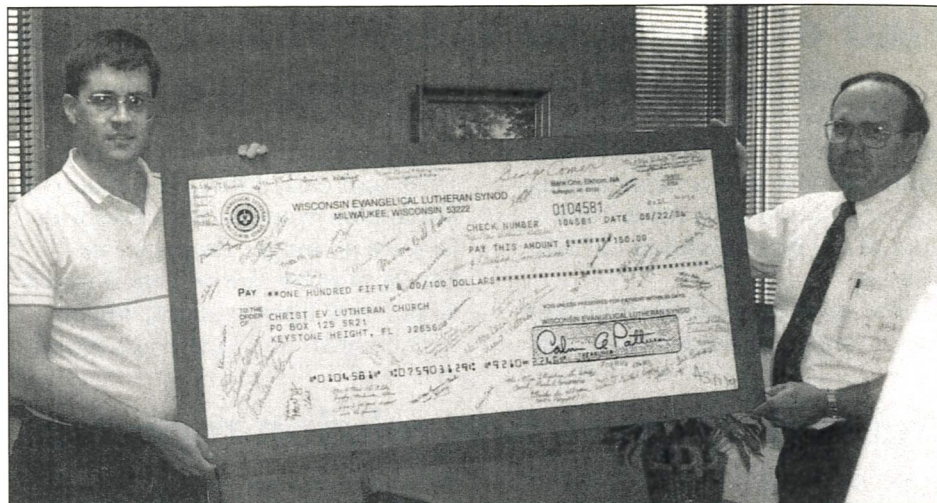
See the coupon on page 5.

District capsules

MINNESOTA: Christ, North Baxter, celebrated its 25th anniversary and dedicated a new church on June 12.

NORTHERN WISCONSIN: St. John, Wrightstown, celebrated its 125th anniversary Oct. 23.

SOUTHEASTERN WISCONSIN: St. Marcus, Milwaukee, honored Henry Frank for 40 years as church organist. Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School, Jackson, dedicated its remodeled and expanded facility on Aug. 28. The school has grown from 234 in 1990 to 317 in 1994. Principal Wayne Baxman expects enrollment to continue to increase because of the rapidly growing population in the area.



Members of Christ, Keystone Heights, Florida, were so delighted when their congregation no longer needed operating support from synod mission offerings that they enlarged a copy of their final subsidy check and asked every member to sign it. Pastor Brian Adams (left) then presented it with their thanks to WELS President Karl Gurgel. The congregation was organized in 1980.

NEWS AROUND THE WORLD

Conservative Christianity on decline, according to poll

Only seven percent of American adults hold "evangelical" beliefs and commitments, compared to nine percent last year and 12 percent in 1992, according to a new book by pollster George Barna. Barna uses eight standards to classify survey respondents as evangelical, one of them being the belief in an error-free Bible.

Although religion of some sort

remains "very important" to 62 percent of the U.S. population (up three percent from 1991), the proportion who strongly agree that the Bible is totally accurate in its teachings dropped from 47 percent three years ago to 38 percent this year, Barna said.

About 95 percent of Americans continue to say they believe in God or a universal force. But just 67 per-

cent of those polled agreed with a definition of God as "the all-powerful, all-knowing Creator of the universe who rules the world today," whereas 73 percent agreed with that definition in 1992.

Barna identifies 35 percent of respondents as "born-again Christians," who trust in Jesus as their Savior. About 40 percent were in this category in 1992.

Small groups thrive in United States

Four adults in 10 say they belong to at least one small group that meets regularly and provides caring support for those who participate in it, according to a 1991 Gallup poll, whose results are just being made public.

Princeton University sociologist Robert Wuthnow, who directed the study, estimates that there are about 800,000 adult Sunday school classes and 900,000 Bible study groups in the United States. In addition, there are an estimated

500,000 groups, both religious and secular, that could be directly classified as self-help groups. Added to these are an estimated 750,000 "special interest groups" covering a wide range of topics from politics to literary clubs to sports and hobby groups.

While encounter and crisis groups generate the publicity, most people say they join support groups for more general reasons such as personal growth (73 percent), being invited by a friend (60 percent),

seeking a more structured spiritual life (46 percent), or simply because it became known to them through their place of worship (43 percent). One member in three (33 percent) joined because of a previous rewarding experience in a similar group.

Fewer say they sought groups in quest of emotional support (28 percent), meeting a problem (18 percent) or crisis (17 percent) in their lives, or to combat feelings of loneliness or separation from the community (11 percent).

Half of American public abandon family's religion

In years past, church affiliation was passed down from generation to generation like a family heirloom, but as the 21st century approaches, only one of every two Americans cling to the denomination of their parents.

Only 43 percent of the American public remain in the religious body

they were born into, according to a recent study.

According to figures from the 1970s and early 1980s, 45 percent of worshipers brought up as Presbyterians are no longer Presbyterians. For Methodists, the defection rate is 40 percent; Episcopalians, 38 percent; Baptists and Lutherans, about

one quarter; Jews, 15 percent; Catholics, 17 percent.

This trend coincides largely with the increasing emphasis on ecumenism by the mainline churches. Since the differences between churches have been minimized, people see little reason not to change.

Network engages first religion reporter

Peggy Wehmeyer, a conservative Christian, is ABC's religion reporter—the only full-time religion correspondent in network television.

Studies indicate that, until now, the nation's newspapers and broadcasters have largely refused to take religion coverage seriously, although

a number of newspapers and local stations now have religion reporters.

Wehmeyer has joined the broadcasting team on ABC's "World News Tonight." In endorsing the position, anchorman Peter Jennings said "The role religion plays in today's society needs to be fully explored."

Poll: how religion can help prevent teen suicide

Half of America's teens believe that clergy can play an important role in helping prevent teen suicide, but only about a quarter report that churches in their communities are doing anything about it.

They say churches should put more effort into support groups, awareness activities, and counseling to aid potential victims.

About half the nation's teens (49 percent) suggest that, if a friend were considering suicide, he or she should seek help from a member of the clergy. Only one in four (26 percent) reports, however, that churches are doing anything to prevent teen suicide.

Six teens in ten (59 percent) say they know someone who has tried or succeeded in committing suicide. It should not be assumed that if young people go to church, they are not potential suicide victims. One in three (32 percent) teens known to have attempted suicide were judged by their peers to have been religious.

Drugs and alcohol abuse head the list of reasons young people feel can lead teens to consider suicide. Problems in growing up, peer pressures, and tension and arguments with parents also receive prominent mention as potential causes of suicidal behavior.

Suicide issue moves to courts

On May 3, a US District Court judge in Seattle struck down a state law that bans assisted suicide in a ruling that said terminally ill people have a "constitutionally guaranteed right" to hasten death.

On July 11, the US Catholic Conference appealed the decision, arguing that there is no

moral or legal tradition favoring suicide and that no federal court has ever held that suicide is a constitutional right. They claim the court erred in likening assisted suicide to a "personal decision relating to marriage, procreation, contraception, child rearing, and education."

Bible club on public school grounds

A Ladue, Mo., junior high school must allow a parent-led student Bible club to meet immediately after school, a federal appellate court has ruled. The Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that the Good News/Good Sports Club has a constitutional right to meet on the grounds of the school.

The ruling stated that Ladue school officials had previously granted access to other groups, such as the Boy Scouts, but refused access to Good News/Good Sports Club, an

after-school organization that focuses on character development from a Christian perspective.

The earlier denial of access violated the First Amendment's free speech clause, and concerns about the separation of church and state were unfounded, according to the court.

News reported in this section is derived from Religious News Service, Ecumenical Press Service, Evangelical Press Service, and Lutheran World Information. World news items do not necessarily reflect the views of WELS or *Northwestern Lutheran*.

Archdiocese threatens to close New York hospitals

If a health care reform legislation mandates abortion services, New York's Cardinal John O'Connor said he would shut down Catholic health care facilities in his archdiocese. The

archdiocese operates 16 hospitals.

At a press conference, O'Connor said that while he supports universal health care, "We are equally adamant in protesting the inclusion of abor-

tion in the health care package."

O'Connor also said he would go to jail, if necessary, rather than participate in abortion.

Cuba no longer welcomes Christian presence

Faced with increased internal dissent and a continuing US economic embargo, Cuba has warned American evangelical organizations

that they aren't welcome, claiming they are being used as a cover for anti-government activity.

Evangelicals say the government

of Fidel Castro has drawn up a list of American leaders no longer welcome in Cuba. The most prominent name on the list is that of Billy Graham.

NOTICES

The deadline for submitting notices is six weeks before publication date. To place a notice please call 414/256-3231.

CALL FOR NOMINATIONS MICHIGAN LUTHERAN SEMINARY

Voting members of the synod are invited to submit nominations for two positions at Michigan Lutheran Seminary.

Music

The person called to fill an impending vacant professorship following BME approval, will teach music, oversee the music curriculum and its choral and instrumental programs, direct the concert choir and band, and must have or attain synod and state certification.

Girls' physical education and mathematics

Teaching responsibilities are in girls' physical education, mathematics, and coaching, especially girls' sports. The person called must have or attain synod and state certification.

Please submit nominations with pertinent information by Nov. 30 to the secretary, Jerold Meier, 397 Auburn, Plymouth MI 48170. A list of the nominees will be available upon request from the secretary.

SPECIAL EDUCATION PERSONNEL

The Special Education Committee of the WELS Commission on Parish Schools requests the names of WELS members involved in special education (e.g., teachers, psychologists, speech pathologists, social workers, consultants) willing to be resource persons. Please send names to Daryl Hanneman, 1701 Southview Dr NW, Cedar Rapids IA 52405.

SONGS AND LOGO MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE

The students of Northwestern College and Dr. Martin Luther College who are working to develop student life at Martin Luther College request members of the WELS to submit music and/or lyrics for an MLC school song/alma mater and an athletic "fight song." Students are also seeking art that would depict the school mascot (Knights) and colors (red, white, and black) for purposes of student publicity. Send ideas before Dec. 31 to John Lawrenz, MLC Vice President for Student Life, 225 Highland, New Ulm MN 56073.

WANTED

CHURCH BELL—Contact Pastor Randy Ott, RR1 Box 112, Lake City MN 55041; 507/753-2567 or Earl Kitzman, RR1 Box 256, Elgin MN; 507/876-2745.

ORGANIST/CHOIR DIRECTOR—Christ, Pewaukee, Wis. Call Pastor Richard Krause, 414/691-0720.

PEWS—for mission church in Raleigh, N.C. Contact 919/847-0579 or 919/554-2555.

WLS ALUMNI BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary alumni are invited to the annual basketball tournament Nov. 11, 1:30 p.m. Call 414/238-9208.

WELS EXPO—"YOU AND YOUR CHURCH"

A series of expositions in each of the synod's twelve districts (two each year for six years) hosted by WELS Kingdom Workers will feature displays and presentations from WELS divisions and organizations. The schedule will include a question and answer period with synod officials. The first, WELS EXPO '95, is scheduled for March 25 in LaCrosse, Wis. Churches in the Western Wisconsin District will receive information soon.

DMLC PRESENTS MUSICAL

The drama club of Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., presents *Brigadoon*, a musical, on Nov. 11, 7:30 PM; Nov. 12, 7:30 PM; Nov. 13, 2 PM. Reserved ticket sales began Oct. 3. Call 507/359-1671, Mon.-Thurs., 4:30-9 PM.

COMMEMORATIVE NWC PLAQUE

Orders are being taken for a colored aerial view of the Northwestern College campus, mounted on a 10x13 wooden plaque. \$16 includes postage and handling. Call Northwestern College Recruitment Office; 414/261-4352.

WOMEN'S RETREATS

MICHIGAN—March 31-April 2, Waterfront Inn, Traverse City. Registration forms will be sent to Michigan District congregations. For information call 616/773-2380.

MINNESOTA—April 21-23, Radisson Downtown, Rochester. Theme: Spiritual Warfare. For information call Bev, 507/931-1866.

WISCONSIN—March 24-26, Country Inn Hotel, Waukesha. Christian Women Today. For information, call 414/781-1955.

ANNIVERSARY

PALATINE, ILLINOIS—Christ the King (25). Nov. 13. Worship at 8 and 10:30 a.m. Dinner at noon. 708/358-0230.

NAMES WANTED

Survey work preliminary to conducting exploratory services. People interested in WELS services, contact person noted.

PEACHTREE CITY / FAYETTEVILLE / NEWMAN / SHARPSBURG, GEORGIA—Pastor Tim Wempner, 154 Cobblestone Cove, Sharpsburg GA 30277; 404/253-0593.

ROWLETT, TEXAS—Divine Peace. Pastor Dan Voigt, 2519 Larkspur Ln, Rowlett TX 75088; 214/475-6389.

ITEMS AVAILABLE

THE BLACK & RED—literary magazine of Northwestern College. Subscriptions for the school year, 9 issues for \$4.00. Send name and address to *The Black & Red*, Northwestern College, 1300 Western Ave, Watertown WI 53094.

COMMUNION SET—In good condition, serves 150; 5 silver plated trays including base and cover. Free; you pay shipping. Pastor Tim Grams, 715/536-3404.

THE LUTHERAN HYMNAL—200 copies. Pastor Jim Bartz, 414/894-3737.

ORGAN—Gulbransen electronic theater organ. Two manuals, 25 pedals. 414/563-7002 after 6 p.m. CST.

ORGAN—Hammond Model M-103; percussion with reverb, drawbars, tone generator. Mint condition. French Provincial style. A. Jansen, 612 13th Ave SW, Onalaska WI 54650.

SUNDAY SCHOOL MATERIALS—for K-8. Free to mission church. Pastor Tim Grams, 15809 CTH FF, Merrill WI 54452; 715/536-3404.

CHANGES IN MINISTRY

PASTORS

Hein, Robert H., from St. Matthew, Appleton, Wis., to Apostles, San Jose, Cal.

Helwig, Daniel J., from St. Peter, Plymouth, Mich., to Faith, Pryor Lake, Minn.

Koelpin, Paul E., from Christ, Columbia, Md., to Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.

Mutterer, Timothy I., to St. Paul, Appleton, Wis.

Nass, Thomas P., from St. Lucas, Milwaukee, Wis., to Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.

Prange, Peter B., from St. Andrew, Elgin, Ill., to Maryborough, Australia (ELS).

Smith, Dennis D., from civilian chaplaincy, Germany, to Holy Redeemer, Port Huron, Mich.

Uhlhorn, Wayne R., from St. Paul, Valley City, N. Dak., to Atonement, Baltimore, Md.

TEACHERS

Bame, Marianne, from St. Peter, Milwaukee, Wis., to North Trinity, Milwaukee, Wis.

McKenney, Lois A., to Bethany, Manitowoc, Wis.

Vilski, William J., to Faith, Antioch, Ill.

Weimer, Pamela J., to Shepherd of the Valley, Westminster, Col.

NL SUBSCRIPTION INCREASE

Effective January 1, subscription rates for *Northwestern Lutheran* will increase from \$8.50 to \$9.00 for an individual subscription; from \$5.50 to \$5.75 for bundle subscriptions; from \$6.00 to \$6.25 for blanket subscriptions.

Wise and wicked servants

Matthew 2:45-51; Luke 12:42-46

by Mark E. Braun

The 114 scholars who signed the Humanist Manifesto II in 1973 rejected the link between believing in heaven and living a useful life now. "Promises of immortal salvation or fear of eternal damnation are both illusory and harmful," they said. "They distract humans from present concerns, from self-actualization, or from rectifying social injustices."

Others put it more simply: "Christians are so heavenly minded, they're no earthly good."

That's not how Jesus wants it. Just the opposite—because he said he's coming back, he wants us to live good lives as we wait for his coming.

Wise and wicked servants

A master put a trusted subordinate in charge of his household and went away, Jesus said. What would a faithful, sensible servant do? Because he loved his master and respected his wishes, he'd want to do his job well in the owner's absence. He wouldn't squander his time trying to calculate the moment his master would return.

Paul echoed our Lord's will in his letters to the Thessalonian church. To forsake job and loved ones, and to hole up in the hills scanning the sky, isn't faithful or wise. "We hear that some among you are idle," Paul wrote them. "Such people we command and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to settle down and earn the bread they eat."

Given the same chance, what would a wicked servant do? He'd beat his fellow servants and party and get drunk, first because he suspected and then because he hoped his master would never come back.

The flood gates of cruelty and unkindness would be opened wide because he was sure he wouldn't have to answer for how he lived.

What terror he'd feel when his master returned unannounced, but as promised.

Are we wise or wicked?

Could this be why our generation has grown numb to the joys and tasks of this life? Because we have so little regard for the next? "There ain't no Jesus gonna come from the sky," sang John Lennon. If that's so, why bother being good?

The certainty of his master's return, combined with the awareness of the grand trust he'd been given, compelled the wise and loyal servant

not to let his master down. The certainty of our Savior's return, and the glad prospect of seeing him in glory, stirs us to serve him by serving others, sensibly and faithfully.

"If you read history," observed C.S. Lewis, "you will find that the Christians who did most for the present world were just those who thought most of the next. It is since Christians have largely ceased to think of the other world that they have become so ineffective in this. Aim at heaven and you will get earth thrown in. Aim at earth and you'll get neither."

Next: The ten virgins.

*The certainty of
our Savior's return,
and the glad prospect of
seeing him in glory,
stirs us to serve him
by serving others,
sensibly and faithfully.*



Mark Braun teaches
at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee.

Role models, super heroes, and hypogrammos

OJ. Simpson's name has been in the news every day. His innocence or guilt is a matter for the courts to decide. But I would like to speak about a lament heard a number of times after his arrest—"How can we survive the loss of another role model?"

I wonder if we aren't too quick to proclaim someone a role model just because that person sold a lot of albums, made a lot of money, or set records in some sport. Shouldn't we also consider character? Maybe if we were more careful in choosing role models we wouldn't be let down by them.

Maybe, too, instead of choosing super heroes as role models, we ought to be more realistic. After all, how many people can gain 2000 yards in an NFL season? Is it really healthy to set a goal you can't possibly achieve? Isn't that more apt to cause you to give up in frustration than to strive to do your best?

As a boy I had a pretty good role model in my own home: my father. He never played any organized sports, recorded an album, or made a lot of money, but he always paid his bills and supported his family. During the depression, when he had no job, he took the back seat out of his old car and would drive out into the country until he found a fallen tree. He'd make a deal with the farmer to cut it up for fire wood if he could keep half. He found work when there was no work to be found. He was a role model.

He also taught me about role models. One story he shared with me was about a fellow who drove a steam roller. As he was repairing a street, with a rather steep incline, his brakes failed. Instead of jumping to safety, he guided his runaway machine past a group of children playing in the street. When he finally jumped, he broke his back. He was a role model.

The Book of Hebrews tells us that if we're looking for role models, we would do well to choose people like Noah, Abraham, Moses, and the martyrs who endured persecution and death for their faith. They had their sins and shortcomings, but they lived their faith. Those are the kind of role models we ought to choose.

And if we want a super hero, we can't find a better one than Jesus. The Bible tells us in 1 Peter 2:21 to take Christ as our example. The word translated "example" is *hypogrammos* in Greek. A hypogrammos was a stencil that children learning to write used to trace letters. Christ is our stencil, our role model. He lived a perfect life for our salvation and left that life as an example for us. He humbly served as our Savior. The humble attitude that was in Christ should also be in us.

In Christ we have the perfect role model. Furthermore, he lives in us and moves us to follow his lead. He never has, and never will, let us down. And although we can't follow his example perfectly, because we sin every day, his righteousness covers us. In Christ we ourselves become super heroes in the eyes of God.

Walter F. Beckmann



Walter Beckmann is pastor of Grace, Falls Church, Virginia, and president of the North Atlantic District.

Maybe if we were more careful in choosing role models we wouldn't be let down by them.

The natural knowledge of God

by John F. Brug

Does the Word of God in the first several verses of John's Gospel come from the natural knowledge of God?

John 1:1-18 conveys information about Jesus that is revealed only through the gospel. The Word (that is, Jesus) existed already in eternity with the Father. He was present at creation. He is the one through whom the world is saved. Nature cannot reveal this information. It is learned only through the revelation given by the Holy Spirit.

Two statements in these verses, however, might lead a reader to wonder whether the natural

*The Word existed
already in eternity.
Nature cannot reveal
this information.*

knowledge of God is in the picture here. Verse 4 says, "In him was life, and that life was the light of men." Verse 9 tells us, "The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world."

If Jesus was the light of men before he was born into the world, and if he gives light to all men, some might say that this must refer to the natural knowledge of

Correction: An error occurred in the October issue (p.32) in the sentence that says "In 1 Corinthians 2 Paul tells the women in Corinth to have a covering on their heads." The reference should be 1 Corinthians 11.

God, since "every man" receives the natural knowledge of God. Neither the gospel nor saving faith, however, are received by "every man."

Since Jesus is the Creator God, natural knowledge of God does come from Jesus. Such an interpretation, however, does not fit the context here. Jesus was the light of men, that is, the Savior for the whole world, also during Old Testament times. As the promised Savior he was revealed to the world at the time of Adam and again at the time of Noah, but the world did not want him. He gives light by winning salvation for us and offering salvation to us, but those who prefer to live in darkness reject this light.

These verses, therefore, are not talking about the natural knowledge of God, but about mankind's rejection of the revelation of salvation. "The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it" (v. 5). "His own did not receive him" (v. 11).

Damnation is not the result of God's hiding the light of salvation. It is the result of rejecting the light that is there for all. This is the message John emphasizes throughout his Gospel.

On the question of state school versus Christian school, doesn't Scripture command parents, not the state, to educate their children? Christian liberty allows us to hire a tutor, use a Christian day school, or educate our children at home.

Scripture repeatedly assigns responsibility for a child's spiritual and moral training to the parents (Ephesians 6:4, Deuteronomy 6:4-

9). Scripture does not directly address the question of whether a government may take a role in secular education. Scripture nowhere states that the government has a duty in education in the same way

*Scripture does not
directly address the
question of whether
a government
may take a role in
secular education.*

that it has a duty to punish evil and reward good. It does not forbid the state to have such a role, nor does it forbid Christians to use a non-Christian school or non-Christian teachers in some phase of the education of their children.

Your letter lists three permissible options for parents, but it does not mention use of a school supported by the state. Since Scripture does not forbid the use of public schools, this too is in the realm of Christian liberty, except in cases in which some other scriptural principle forbids participation.

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 only through this column.



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

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

Homosexuals' needs

Thank you for "Not all gays are happy" (August). The author has opened this Christian's eyes to the fact that not all gays choose their lifestyle. With large, vocal homosexual communities in Hollywood and San Francisco, it is easy for a Christian living in California to have a fixed, judgmental view. It is wonderful to learn that our synod is addressing the real needs of homosexuals by assuring them of the forgiveness and love of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*Al Hains
Marina del Rey, California*

Parents of a homosexual

Thank you for the article on homosexuality in the September issue. I would also like to thank the writer for stepping forward.

A few years ago my husband and I learned of our son's homosexuality. When I first found out, I called the hotline WELS Care Line. Since that time we have been reading, learning, and studying this subject. Now that we know about our son, we know there are others in our church with this same problem.

Our son feels he was born this way—as many gay people do. I think, therefore, they feel there is no way out and they are helpless. I'm sure they may not even feel they can go to the pastor for help, thinking it's such a terrible thing. The whole thing is another of Satan's great deceptions.

There is hope and help. If you find out your child is struggling with this problem, discuss the gravity of it with them, let them know what God thinks, and please continue to love them and try to help. And don't forget to pray for them.

Continue to encourage these people who have lost their way.

Name withheld by request

The WELS Care Line number is 1-800-422-7341; in the Milwaukee area, call 414/353-8621.

A misleading title

The writer of "Homosexuals can

be in heaven, too," (Sept.) rightly reminded us of Christ's pardon and power.

But the title, "Homosexuals can be in heaven, too," and the opening line which states, "I am addicted to the sin of homosexuality," are misleading in spite of any clarifications in the subtitle.

The *Apology of the Augsburg Confession* says that "those who are accounted righteous before God do not live in mortal sin" and that only the unscriptural adversaries "dream that faith can coexist with mortal sin." Walther reminded us that the Word is not rightly divided when the impression is given "that even true believers are under the spell of ruling sins."

Even taking our struggles with our sinful nature into account, it is confusing at best and a confounding of law and gospel at worst to describe a Christian as a "homosexual" and as "addicted to the sin." This does not square with Paul's words, emphasized later in the article by the writer himself: "And that is what some of you were" (1 Corinthians 6:11).

However much believers may struggle with the sin that still lives in them, the good news is too good to consign forgiven sinners to old labels and old masters (Romans 8:11). And the words of Paul are too clear to entitle an article, "Homosexuals can be in heaven, too." Let the trumpet give a more certain sound.

*Roy W. Hefti
Bangor, Wisconsin*

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; Fax 414/256-3899.*

December '94

- 1. 2 Peter 3:1-10
- 2. 2 Peter 3:11-18
- 3. Jude 1-16
- 4. Jude 17-25
- 5. Daniel 1
- 6. Dan. 2:1-30
- 7. Dan. 2:31-49
- 8. Dan. 3
- 9. Dan. 4
- 10. Dan. 5
- 11. Dan. 6
- 12. Dan. 7
- 13. Dan. 8
- 14. Dan. 9:1-19
- 15. Dan. 9:20-27
- 16. Dan. 10:1—11:1
- 17. Dan. 11:2-20
- 18. Dan. 11:21—12:13
- 19. Psalm 139
- 20. Ps. 140, 141
- 21. Ps. 142, 143
- 22. Ps. 144
- 23. Ps. 145
- 24. Ps. 146
- 25. Ps. 147
- 26. Ps. 148—150
- 27. Revelation 1:1-8
- 28. Rev. 1:9-20
- 29. Rev. 2:1-7
- 30. Rev. 2:8-17
- 31. Rev. 2:18-29

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

THROUGH MY BIBLE IN THREE YEARS

THROUGH MY BIBLE IN THREE YEARS

**Give a gift of
Northwestern Lutheran**

One size fits all, modest price, and you don't have to fight the crowds.

Call toll-free 1-800-662-6093, ext. 8; weekdays from 8 AM to 4 PM (In Milwaukee, call 414/475-6600, ext. 5).

Charge it—Discover Card, MasterCard, Visa—or bill it.

If you prefer, use the coupon on page 5.

One person's freedom

Anne Gaylor sees religion as “the root cause of the birth control and abortion issues.” So far we might agree with the woman named 1994 Feminist of the Year by Wisconsin’s National Organization for Women and featured in the September 4 *Milwaukee Journal*. Without our Christian consciousness and conscience, why would any of us care about those issues? Without the absolute moral standards of Christianity, what cogent reasons would we give to oppose abortion? Without Christ, what would we have to offer for hope to troubled women?

Although one might offer some reasons to oppose abortion without invoking religion, Mrs. Gaylor would not agree. She sees nothing positive in religion’s position. Instead, she established the Woman’s Medical Fund that helps women who otherwise cannot afford abortions. More to the point, she founded and heads the Freedom From Religion Foundation.

The issue for her, then, is not so much abortion as it is religion, and, it would seem, particularly Christianity. Why? What does she fear from Christianity? What is the freedom she covets? Why does Wisconsin’s National Organization for Women find her position so praiseworthy?

I’m afraid I have more questions than answers. But I offer these observations:

★ The honor bestowed on Mrs. Gaylor sends a loud message, until now not always so obvious or at least not so popular. Christians and Christian values are under attack in our society.

★ Those who want Gaylor’s kind of freedom want to hold religion captive. Godless ideas are to shape our society. God-fearing ideas must be silenced.

★ Freedom from religion by definition means freedom from all moral restraints. To insist on any morality is to give “religious” standing to it.

★ Such a position breeds anarchy and weakens the infrastructure of society.

★ Freedom from religion denies the reality of sin and sees no need for the Savior.

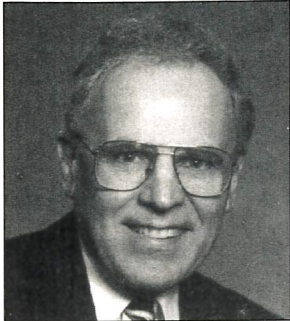
★ Freedom from religion is what the people of Noah’s day celebrated, what Sodom and Gomorrah knew, what Pharaoh championed against Moses—or so it would seem. But people still must answer to God.

★ Freedom from religion succumbs to the slavery of sin and cannot know the freedom to be found alone in Christ.

★ Those who will be free from religion have no ear for the Word of God, no eye for eternity, and no heart for heaven.

These thoughts are not directed to Mrs. Gaylor, not that she would care. They are meant for us to deal with the logical and spiritual end of the thinking she espouses. They are a cry for us to put on the whole armor of God and to stand against the enemies of God. They are a reminder that we carry a cross when we follow Jesus.

Gary J. Baumbach



Those who will be free from religion have no ear for the Word of God, no eye for eternity, and no heart for heaven.

Gifts of Love

Because God Gives, You Give!

Make a difference by . . .

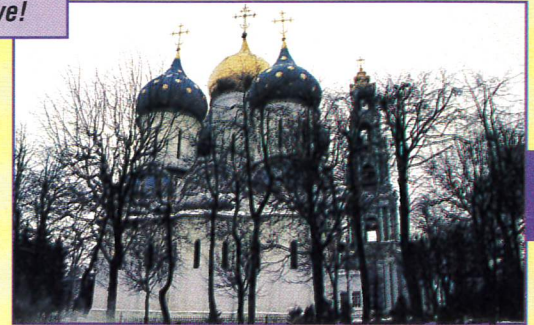


. . . planting new home missions

As God works in you a special love for His work,
Gifts of Love helps you to express that love!



. . . training and sending gospel workers worldwide



. . . planting new world missions



Photo courtesy of John Mallow

. . . serving people of all ages with the gospel



Photo courtesy of John Mallow

. . . revitalizing congregations

WHAT IS GIFTS OF LOVE?

Gifts of Love is a program that provides an opportunity for you to respond to the many extraordinary blessings the Lord gives to you.

- all contributions, large and small are welcome
- all donors receive regular updates about the work they support

For a full project description booklet, Gifts of Love, please contact:
WELS MINISTRY OF PLANNED GIVING
2929 N. MAYFAIR ROAD • MILWAUKEE, WI 53222-4398
1-800-827-5482 OR MILWAUKEE 771-0697

That's gratitude for you!

by Paul O. Wendland

“You should be grateful! After all we've done for you! I do declare, you are the most ungrateful child in the whole world!” So goes a standard scene in a sentimental novel. The speaker is usually a thin-lipped aunt who had to bring up her sister's orphan child. The recipient of this little homily is the child herself, who has known nothing but a hard, loveless existence ever since her dear parents died. We can well understand why the girl is not grateful. In fact, we burn with anger at the outrage of the aunt demanding something she has no right to ask for. What are scraps of food without the milk of human kindness?

Yet I imagine many will be faced with a similar problem this Thanksgiving. They will hear a list as long as their arm of all the things they should be grateful for—without feeling any gratitude at all. Oh, it's not that they won't try. Perhaps, for a few moments, they'll even feel a twinge of something. Guilt? Resentment? Then they'll call it a day at the ol' Gratitude Manufacturing Sweatshop. The plain fact is: you can't command someone to be grateful. The more you do, the more your words will have the opposite effect.

That's because we're fallen creatures by nature. And when you step up to a sinner and demand gratitude, you'll like as not get a snarl instead.

Like the child in the novel, I was an orphan until God, in Christ, took me in and made me a part of his family. Unlike the fabled aunt, he has



The plain fact is: you can't command someone to be grateful.

lavished his love on me both with his physical gifts and with his spiritual blessings. What more could he have given me? He gave me his Son, and in giving me Jesus, he gave me his heart.

Yet, cowlike, I often simply chew on my daily bread without a thought as to where it came from. Or worse: accept God's good gifts as if they were my due.

What's to be done with this wretched, thankless heart? You can't command it to be better. It can't be. You can only show it to itself, so that it gets a good look at how hard and stony it truly is. Then tell it: "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.' You were dead to him, but he loved you still. You did not want him, but he went to the cross for you. And though you have not been as grateful as you should be, he has never wavered in his love."

Only grace begets gratitude. Luther said truly, "It is impossible that any man who feels such fire of God's love should not be at least a little warmed and kindled by it."



Paul Wendland teaches at Northwestern College, Watertown, Wisconsin.

MRS. KEVIN SCHEIBEL, PHOTOGRAPHY