

NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN

May 1999

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men to
men of
God. 8

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godly sons

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to volunteer

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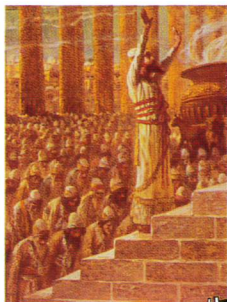
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The anchor of our souls

We have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure. It enters the inner sanctuary behind the curtain, where Jesus, who went before us, has entered on our behalf. (Hebrews 6:19,20)

Paul M. Janke

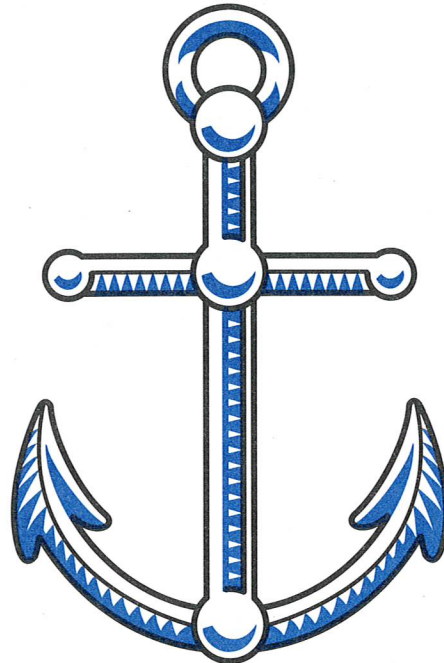
Ships need anchors. Without an anchor, a ship can't hold its position. The wind and tide will cause an anchorless ship to drift. If it drifts, it may collide with other vessels or run aground.

Souls need anchors, too. An anchorless soul is a soul beset by doubts and fears. It's a soul adrift, "blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming" (Ephesians 4:14). Paul wrote to Timothy about certain men who had "shipwrecked their faith." Once they lifted anchor from Christ they were at the mercy of this world's angry sea.

Anchored firmly

Anchors come in all shapes and sizes. Some are nothing more than a concrete block secured to the bow of a rowboat by a length of rope. The anchor of an ocean liner, on the other hand, may be made from forged steel and weigh thousands of pounds. Regardless of the anchor's size, its purpose is always the same: to dig into the underwater surface and keep a boat firmly moored.

There is in Christian symbolism something called the "anchor cross." It's a cross that has at its base the arms and flukes of an anchor. The anchor cross reminds us that the hope given to us through Jesus' atoning death on the cross is the anchor for our souls. All who believe in Jesus



are secure, firmly moored to the Savior and his promises.

Anchored in the presence of God

In the language of the letter to the Hebrews, our hope as Christians is anchored in the Holy of Holies. In Old Testament times, Israel's high priest entered the Holy of Holies once a year, on the Day of Atonement. As he passed beyond the curtain, he entered God's presence in the Holy of Holies. He carried with him the blood of a goat, which he sprinkled on the atonement cover of the Ark of the Covenant. In this way the priest made atonement before God for the uncleanness and rebellion of the Israelites.

The Day of Atonement ritual pointed ahead to a time when Jesus, the Son of God, would offer his own blood for the rebellion and uncleanness of all people. When Jesus died on Calvary, his atoning sacrifice became the basis for our hope. Because Jesus offered his life for sin, our future is the brightness of God's glory rather than the darkness of eternal torment. Jesus, ascended now to a place of glory and honor at his Father's right hand, has opened heaven to all believers. To this day he continues to intercede for us at the Father's side. There, at the throne of God, we Christians have dropped anchor.

Hopes are usually wispy, insubstantial things. But this hope is different.

It may seem strange to speak of hope as an anchor. Hopes are usually wispy, insubstantial things. But this hope is different. This hope is based on the promises of a God who can't lie. He's sworn that his purpose is to save us through Jesus Christ. That promise is our hope. That hope is our anchor. No anchor in the world holds more firmly.

NL

Paul M. Janke is pastor at St. Peter, Modesto, California.

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Editorial office

Northwestern Lutheran, WELS,
2929 N Mayfair Rd,
Milwaukee WI 53222-4398
FAX, 414/256-3899
<nl@sab.wels.net>

Editor

Rev. Gary P. Baumler, 414/256-3230
<garyb@sab.wels.net>

Senior Communications Assistant

Linda R. Baacke, 414/256-3232
<lindab@sab.wels.net>

Communications Assistant

Julie K. Tessmer, 414/256-3231
<juliet@sab.wels.net>

Communication Services Commission

R. D. Balge, J. M. Barber, W. F. Bernhardt,
M. D. Duncan, R. E. Lauersdorf, J. Sprecher

Contributing Editors

J. A. Aderman, W. F. Beckmann, J. F. Brug,
J. D. Buchholz, J. C. Gerlach, E. S. Hartzell,
R. K. Hunter, P. M. Janke, M. J. Lenz,
A. J. Panning, F. E. Piepenbrink, T. A. Westra

Art Director

Paul Burmeister

Graphic Designer

Paul Ehlke

Photographs and Illustrations

Bruce Bond, 3
Terry Herman, 8
courtesy of Jim Aderman, 12
Karen Spiegelberg, 14
Gerry Koser, 16
courtesy of Hans Zietlow, 18
Digital Stock, 20
Bill Frauhiger, 36

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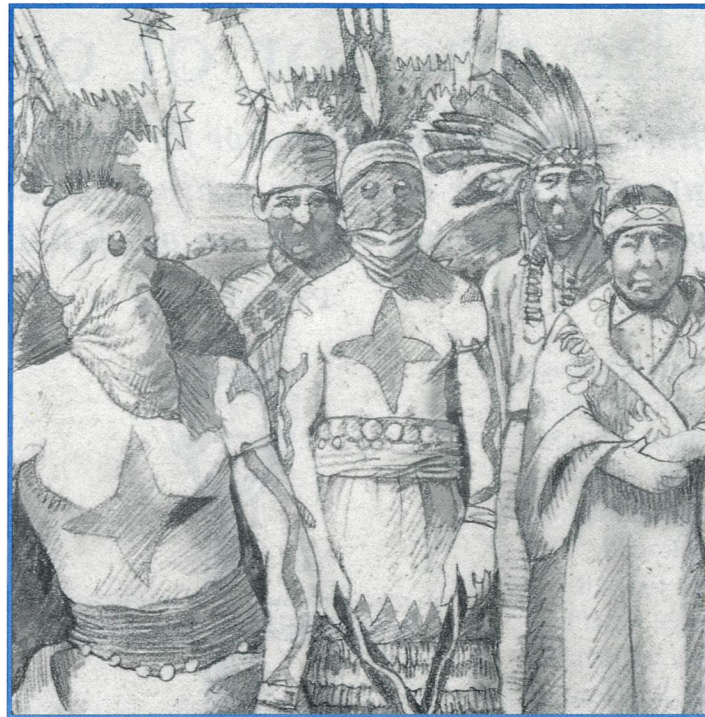
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Cover photo by Terry Herman

The Apache dancers, called mountain spirits or crown dancers, act as impersonators of the gods come down from heaven. Those pictured are participating in the still popular Sunrise Dance. Our missionaries have been reaching out to the Apaches since the 1890s.

8

bits & pieces



Ever wonder what other religions believe? Ever wonder what our world missionaries face? Well, get ready to find out! In our new series "Encountering other religions" you'll learn what world religions are teaching, and how our missionaries reach out with the true Word of God. The first article focuses on the oldest world mission in WELS—outreach to the Apaches. It's on page 8.



For a new perspective on Pentecost, don't miss "A tinkle of joy." You'll find it on page 20.



Be sure to read our back cover article. Readers with children will identify with the struggle and be encouraged to keep "training children in the way they should go." Readers who don't have children will gain a new understanding of the "terrors and trials" of worship with children.



The past three months, John Parlow has brought up questions that Lutheran congregations need to be asking—about balance, tradition, confirmation. His fourth and final topic addresses worship (p. 16). We thank him for the issues he's raised and the conversations he's started.



If you haven't seen the WELS Web site, be sure to stop by at <www.wels.net>. You'll find Bible studies, devotions, prayers, previous NL articles, Q&A, and all sorts of services you probably never even dreamed were available. It's an amazing site! Don't miss it.

—LRB

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Re: "Humanitarian Aid Committee developed" [Jan.] Hurray! It is exciting to see the synod move forward with this important effort. With guidelines in place, WELS can proceed with programs that will steer clear of social gospel, yet bring help to those who desperately need it. This should be the easy part.

What can be more difficult is to avoid unhealthy dependencies (see article, question 4). Oftentimes, good intentions turn out to increase dependency. One way to avert such pitfalls is through primary health care that is based on disease prevention and promotion of healthy living. Our favorite humanitarian efforts involve people in self-help projects. These projects can promote self-reliance, preserve dignity, and provide a means to break the endless cycle of dependency and continued poverty which, to date, is the "third world's" legacy.

 *Nick and Kerry Laper
Lutheran Mobile Clinic,
Malawi, Africa*


A heartfelt thank you to Pastor Kelm for all that he has written and all that I hope he will write in the future. I eagerly look forward to every article. He has such a way with words, such a grasp of our English language, such a way of hitting home with every thought he expresses. I thank God for giving him this incredible gift, and I thank him for sharing it with his fellow Christians. I hope he won't change a thing. May God continue to bless us with his eloquence for many years to come.

 *Rachel Cordes
Bogota, Colombia*

Re: "Science through God's eyes" [Feb.] I have believed for a long time that the worldwide existence of fossils was due mainly to the actions of the flood. What facts of modern geology argue against this?

What do you mean by "amateur

science"? Is this a smear? The folks proposing flood geology have accredited degrees in the applicable fields. The evolution folks would have us believe they are the only pros. Why not spend the article talking more about "nature's wonderful complexity" instead of smearing the Creationists.

*Rick Zimmerman
 Marion, Ohio*

I am writing in regard to Pastor Cherney's article "The principal scriptural principle," in which he so clearly laid down the scriptural principle. Either his critics read between the lines or they do not understand the scriptural principle he espouses. Let us be careful that we do not critique where critique is not warranted.

*F.C. Knuettel
Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin*



The cover of March brings tears of joy to my eyes.

Mom died last October and I look at the cover several times a day because I know that is where my mom is (safe in the arms of Jesus). I am an LCMS member and receive NL compliments of my daughter. I usually pass the magazine on to my pastors because they like to read it too, but I will keep the cover because that elderly woman is my mom. I like your magazine very much.


*June (Graff) Ashman
Murphysboro, Illinois*

The cover is now available as a print. See page 26. —ed

Re: "Tradition! Tradition?" [Mar.] I consider the article on traditions in the church to have lacked the evangelical balance that our Lutheran forefathers had in the Augsburg Confession: "Our churches


teach that those rites should be observed which can be observed without sin and which contribute to peace and good order in the church" (XV, 1). "The people are instructed that such outward forms of service do not make us righteous before God and that they are to be observed without burdening consciences, which is to say that it is not a sin to omit them if this is done without causing scandal" (XXVI, 41). Changing traditions can be disruptive to the peace of the church and may cause unnecessary offense.

I also think the impression was given, I trust unintentionally, that "the predominance of the gospel, the importance of the means of grace" in our services are to be viewed as Lutheran traditions. These things are more than traditions. They are means instituted by our Lord that bestow his gracious presence upon the church here on earth until he returns.

*Glenn Obenberger (ELS)
 Tacoma, Washington*

An important distinction: The means of grace and their use are not traditions. How we use them in our services is. —ed.

Some time ago you changed from a glossy paper to one that is dull because some folks had difficulty with the shine. I liked the new paper immediately and after several months, I can truthfully say, "I love it!" I read the NL propped up on the table in front of me at breakfast. It is really great not to have to adjust the tilt every couple of minutes to eliminate the glare. Thanks! I vote to keep this new dull paper.

 *Charlene L. Newby
Manitowoc, Wisconsin*

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Getting a second opinion

Walter F. Beckmann

If you've ever listened to Garrison Keillor's radio program, "A Prairie Home Companion," you know that the members of First Lutheran Church in Lake Wobegon, Minn., don't always accept everything their pastor tells them as the final word. They'll often go to the local Catholic priest for a second opinion.

Church members do shop around for second opinions. When a guest seeks me out at a wedding reception, or a conversation with a store clerk leads to the subject of my occupation, I'm often asked for my opinion on some moral or religious issue. Usually it has to do with something their church teaches with which they aren't sure they fully agree.

Some time ago a man and his wife were very upset that their church issued a doctrinal statement that condoned homosexuality. Their best friends in that church were also concerned. They wanted to know where our church stood. They were looking for a second opinion. When I said what we believe and teach, they were interested. They even wanted Bible-based literature on the subject. When I tried to get back to them later, they were no longer interested. Their best friends' son had just announced he was gay. What the Bible had to say didn't seem to matter anymore. It was no longer a doctrinal issue for them, but a personal one.

Sometimes friends or family put church members into situations where they feel they need a second opinion. Their child has decided to have a live-in. They've always agreed that this is wrong on the basis of Scripture. But now it's in their own family. They may begin to rationalize that if these two people are in love, it shouldn't matter. They may even start looking for a second opinion that is more compatible with their circumstances.

Members subscribe to our close communion practice as a stand taken on Scripture. But then some friend or relative, who left our church body for doctrinal reasons, comes to town on a communion Sunday. They begin to worry—what if that person attends our church service, wants to attend communion, and is refused. That could be unpleasant and embarrassing. They may even begin to wonder if it might be time to seek a second opinion, one that might seem to be more loving.

Pastors can sympathize with members whose friends and families put them into awkward situations. They're happy to meet with them and discuss concerns in a patient and caring way.

Then too, there's nothing wrong with re-examining your church's doctrine and practice to make sure it rests solidly on Scripture and that you thoroughly understand it. Seeking a second opinion might even help you get a clearer view of the big picture.

If you have to work through one of these heart-wrenching dilemmas, make sure you carefully distinguish between God's Word and human opinion. Where God's Word doesn't speak, one person's opinion is as good as another. But where God's Word has spoken and your church is clearly following his Word, there's no room for a second opinion, even if it might seem to offer an easy way out of an awkward situation. Love for that friend or relative will move us to do what's right according to God's Word and to urge them to do the same, rather than to try to change our doctrine and practice to accommodate spiritual or moral weakness.

Walter F. Beckmann is pastor at Grace, Falls Church, Virginia.

Where God's
Word has
spoken . . .
there's no
room for
a second
opinion.

Sharing the "white"

How the early missionaries reached



We've been asking the Apaches to "choose you this day whom you will serve" for 100 years. Here's how some early Apaches answered:

◆ Old Coyote, a medicine man, comes to Rev. Guenther's house, hands Guenther his elaborate medicine man's skull cap, and says, "Here Mr. Gunner, me Christian."

◆ Old Chief Alchesay stands before the congregation the day the church is dedicated, "This the only church I put my thumbprint on. Listen when the tall missionary speaks from the big Book."

◆ Jack Keys stands his ground and refuses to join the cult of medicine man P-1.

Here's how they answer today:

◆ Young couples stand before the altar as their firstborn is baptized "in the name of the Father . . ."

◆ 35 confirmands march down the aisle to stand before the altar.

◆ The 90-year-old squeezes your hand as you leave his hospital bed.

All these "answers" can be multiplied by hundreds of Apache Christians today.

In the fall of 1886, in a small canyon northeast of Douglas, Ariz., under some tall sycamore trees, the wily Apache Geronimo agreed to end hostilities with the white man. Seven years later, the first Lutheran missionaries arrived to bring the gospel to these people, often referred to as "savages" and "heathens."

The missionaries were in for a cultural shock: dark skin, long black hair, dark penetrating eyes, dressed in buckskin or cast off clothing, seemingly sullen, living in tepees covered with bear grass cacti, hides, and scraps of canvas. The Apaches had no alphabet or written language. These once free, roaming nomads who followed the seasons, flora, and fauna, were placed on reservations and under the military's control.

The first Lutheran missionaries included these "heathen savages" in Christ's call to "preach the gospel to every creature." But it wouldn't be easy. One thing became apparent immediately—the Apaches did not trust the "white eyes." For too many years, the Apaches had been hated, hunted, lied to, and mistreated. The early missionaries had to figure out the best way to do mission work among them. This would be trial-and-error, common-sense, ask-the-Holy-Spirit-for-guidance mission work.

The Apaches of yesterday

The nomadic newcomers to the deserts and mountains of the southwest were made up of small bands. A natural leader—the headman or chief—presided over each group.

The "medicine man," or shaman, was very powerful. He was the doctor, lawyer, social leader, and religious leader. He dictated the spiritual beliefs and practices of the clan. The early missionaries had to take a stand against this influential man, who often stood between success and failure.

The Apaches of yesterday were very religious. They were immersed in the songs, dances, ceremonies, stories, and superstitions of their religion and culture. Animals and people were perceived to possess supernatural powers. Christianity was foreign to them, and the white men's God was for the white man. Why should they listen to these white men who wore black suits, spoke a different language (German), and couldn't even ride a horse? Were they any different from the soldiers and government officials? Why trust them?

Trust. That word must have been foremost in the minds of the early missionaries. Before law and gospel, contrition, repentance, forgiveness, justification, and sanctification could be taught, trust must be established.

In trying to overcome the mistrust, our early missionaries had to struggle against superstitions. Superstition, fear, and ignorance played a great role in the Apache religious practices and songs. If an owl flew near a tepee, it was a sign that someone would die. If possible they would kill the owl. If a pregnant woman would walk across the track

man's" religion out to the Apaches.

Arthur A. Guenther

of a snake or touch its skin, she could give birth to a deformed child.

As with most superstitions or taboos, the missionary had to use Bible passages, tact, common sense, and patience to overcome these fears. Today, missionaries seldom face that problem. Education and God's Word overcame these evils.

The Apaches, in many ways, had a more positive religion than the Romans, Greeks, and many New Agers and Modernists today. When a man arose at dawn from his tepee, which faced east, he would raise his hands, assuming an attitude of prayer. From his lips would come words of praise, thanks, and supplication to the "Giver of All Life," *Bik'ehgo'ihidan*, the supreme mystical spirit-being who was the source of all things. Facing east and praying towards the morning sun did not mean praying to the sun. The sun represented the Giver of Life, for without the sun there would be no life.

The early missionaries were able to take this "heathen" practice and turn it into a object lesson for the doctrine of the First Person of the Trinity—God the Father, the Creator. Their belief in life after death also was used as an object lesson at the burial of an Apache.

The Apaches of today

History tells us that the success of the early men rested upon their sound, evangelical law and gospel preaching, coupled with true love and patience. This is the foundation upon which contemporary work must be built. Now the abuse of



Pastor Arthur Guenther holding Apache twins after a Christmas baptism. Out of superstition, the Apaches would kill one of a set of twins or any malformed child. The missionaries had to overcome this practice by using God's Word (the Fifth Commandment) and love. There have been no deaths of one twin in the past 30 years.

alcohol and drugs, and the permissive society are a great concern in Apacheland. Most movies, videos, and TV programs add fuel to the nationalism and identity crisis experienced by some younger Apaches.

Today the medicine men have been replaced by cunning "singers" and pseudo "healers." Some are looked upon as medicine men, and are called upon to offer advice, prayers, and guidance. They are not as powerful or influential. They are not chosen nor do they have the training of the old days. They only sing some of the old songs and lead the Sunrise Dance, the coming out ceremony for a young girl who has reached puberty. Some still turn to

the "singers" at a time of serious illness or if lightning has struck near a home or individual. These men have to be reckoned with.

But today Lutheran missionaries still have the love, respect, and trust of their members. Without these, our work would get nowhere. With them, the current problems can be faced. On Sunday mornings the Apaches can hear a clear presentation of law and gospel and realize that this is not the "white man's religion." It is theirs also.

With continued patient and thorough instruction, the Apaches will continue to grow in wisdom and understanding. They will, with the power of the Holy Spirit, stand up to false prophets who want to resurrect the religion of their forefathers and fight against the inroads of the white man's false prophets.

The early Lutheran missionaries and all the missionaries and teachers who followed encountered another religion. However, persistence and patience prevailed. The true Word of God was taught, and "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul."

*"Jesus Christ Bik'ehgo'ihinán
biYe' nliigo hoshdlą . . ."*

"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

"ndi bit gozhógo dahiyaa."

"... he went on his way rejoicing."

NL

Arthur Guenther, a retired pastor, served the Apaches for over 50 years.

Building plans around people

Ministry is organized better around people than around charts and bylaws. Paul E. Kelm

He was a newcomer, a stranger to Jerusalem. What did he know about the way things were, about the way things were done here? He came with rank and privilege. He couldn't possibly understand how reality looked to people who saw it from the underside. How much trust do you invest in an outsider, somebody who isn't like you?

Understanding diversity

Nehemiah had to bridge a gap in order to be a leader. Spiritual leaders today do too. The anti-institutional mood in our country, coupled with public betrayals of trust, has created a gap between leaders and members in the church. Voters' meetings are marked by a handful of regulars and a host of empty chairs. Surveys report that most members don't feel part of the decision-making process. Single parents and struggling families don't think that church leaders understand their situation. Young adults don't believe that the church's leaders represent them. Women feel that they're treated as second-class citizens. Even older Lutherans complain about how fiscally irresponsible "they" (elected leaders) are.

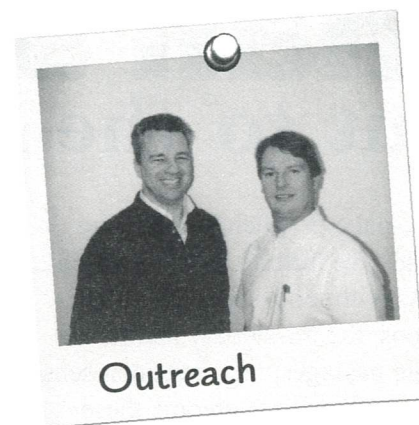
Can elected leaders understand members whose families are in trouble or whose attendance betrays a

flickering faith? Will they represent marginalized members and unchurched prospects when they plan programs? Whose assumptions guide their decisions? Whose needs are met, whose preferences approved when priorities are established?

The diversity that describes the church today makes leadership difficult. Levels of spiritual maturity and experience, differences in ethnic background and socio-economic status, generational distinctives, personality types, newcomers and long-timers, at least four kinds of singles, and many kinds of families—the list of things that distinguish, if not divide, us in this culture are endless.

When leaders listen to people, they discover what needs doing and who'll do it best.

Nehemiah could understand. Not everybody in Jerusalem was Jewish. Those who were came from different places and experiences in exile. There were serious tensions between nobles and peasants, rich and poor. The clergy and the merchants didn't always see eye-to-eye. You had to know the clans and how they were



interrelated if you wanted to get anything done. Some people were more religious than others. A whole bunch of farmers were about to be relocated to the city. And on the question of rebuilding the walls, well, there were people pro, con, and undecided.

Bridging the gap through listening

Nehemiah built his plans around people.

It doesn't make for interesting reading, but nearly everybody who moved stones gets mentioned in the book of Nehemiah. There's a careful record of the clans who returned from exile, as well as the priests and Levites who served them. Nehemiah understood that people are important.

One essential skill of spiritual leadership Nehemiah displayed is listening. Like Nehemiah, we earn trust and bridge gaps with our mouths shut. Sensitive listening produces understanding, and understanding leads to good decisions. Nehemiah didn't follow all the advice he got, but he listened to his critics as well as his friends, to the poor as well as the influential whose support he needed. Nehemiah knew what was going on because he listened to people.

Spiritual leaders today can be available after worship and open to ideas. They can seek out people they

don't know and ask probing questions. They can listen thoughtfully and bite their tongue when they don't like what they hear. They can have more open forums and fewer win/lose votes, as they work at building consensus. They may get other members to listen by their example. In that climate of listening, the voice of God will be better heard.

Emphasizing commonality in Christ

Nowhere is Nehemiah's leadership more apparent than in the organization of the wall restoration project. It would have been more efficient, I suppose, to create a chain of command and train people in the right way to build a wall. There could have been foremen and skilled laborers and hod carriers. But Nehemiah didn't create an organization, then try to fit people into it. He planned the project around the people. Here's the genius of his plan: People rebuilt the wall near their home or business.

Families worked together, and people from the same hometown. Craftsmen and merchants repaired near their shops. The priests rebuilt near the temple and, as you might expect, held a dedication rite for their section of the wall. The nobility from Tekoa skipped out on the heavy work, but the spirit and momentum of the people were so great that this offense was laughed off. Repeatedly in chapter three, alongside all the names, comes the refrain: "Each in front of his own house."

This may sound radical, but ministry is still organized better around people than around charts and bylaws. People who share common interests and concerns will plan a program of ministry dear to them better than will someone whose only

connection to the project is an election and a job description. People will work more effectively, with more enthusiasm and satisfaction, when what their church asks them to do matches their spiritual gifts, their passion, their personality, and their schedule. Small work groups with a specific task and a flexible structure will accomplish what too many committees only discuss.

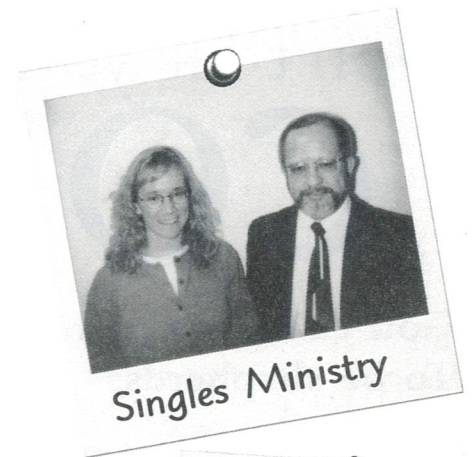
Like Nehemiah, we earn trust and bridge gaps with our mouths shut.

When leaders listen to people, they discover what needs doing and who'll do it best. When leaders respect people, they give them the freedom and assistance to get ministry accomplished. When leaders know Scripture, they appreciate how practical is the truth that we are the body of Christ, deliberately diverse in our gifts, yet united in faith's purpose and designed by our Lord to all serve according to how he made us.

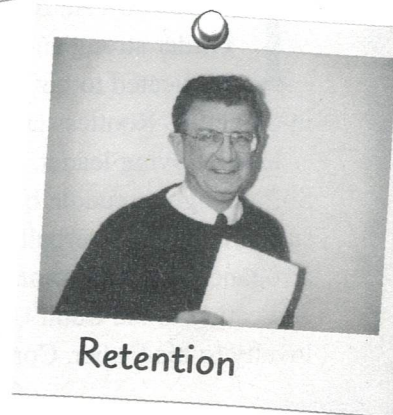
As much as leaders appreciate the many differences among members, more do they emphasize what Christians have in common. "One body and one Spirit . . . one hope . . . one Lord, one faith . . . one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all," St. Paul wrote as a preface to his direction that pastors and teachers "prepare God's people for works of service [ministry], so that the body of Christ may be built up" (Ephesians 4:12). This is what makes them spiritual leaders.

NL

Paul Kelm is a parish consultant for the Board for Parish Services.



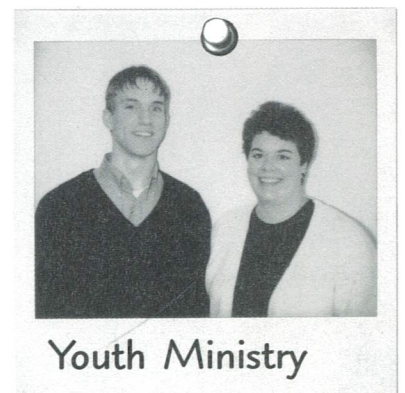
Singles Ministry



Retention



Communications



Youth Ministry

Don't let your sons grow up to be **Cowboys**

James A.
Aderman

**God calls sons to be Jesus' boys, to live and lead like Jesus.
To be shepherds.**

The cowboy. An American icon.
Girder strong and nail tough.
Dedicated to his job. At home
in the wilds. Rootless and alone.
Jesus. Loving leader. Servant.
Soft enough to cuddle babies,
strong enough to verbally cudgel
arrogance. Uncompromising
dedication to the truth. Unflinching
loyalty to his Father. Committed,

even in the face of hell, to his loved
ones. Shepherd.

Don't let your sons grow up to
be cowboys. Men who are so strong
and tough that they can't imagine
how to be soft and kind. Men who
are so dedicated to career that they
don't have time for family. Men who
can negotiate the wilds of work, but
are lost in the culture of their own

homes. Men who stand
alone, emotionally apart
from wives and children.
Men who don't live the
principles of Christlike
leadership.

God calls sons not to be
cowboys, but to be Jesus'
boys, to live and lead like
Jesus. To be shepherds.

"You are not to be like
that," Jesus explains to us
about world-style leader-
ship. Shepherds aren't
interested in using their
position to get their way or
to give orders to underlings
or to please themselves.
Leaders who come out of
Jesus' school of administra-
tion make their decisions
based on how they best
show love for others. They
are willing to take a back
seat to benefit those they
lead. Jesus' boys insist on

sacrificing their wants, foregoing
their needs, to provide for those
under their care. And when Christ-
like leaders mess up, they apologize:
openly, without hesitation, without
any "yes, buts" to deflect blame.

1. Model

Christ-style leadership is taught
in at least three ways. Modeling is
important for sons to grow into
Jesus' boys. In Bible study, children
learn about the Good Shepherd
gently dealing with infants, carefully
reaching out to the hopelessly sick,
lovingly confronting those who
opposed him. But, if a picture is
worth a thousand words, the gentle,
careful, loving actions of other
Christians provide sons with a
multimedia CD of material on
godly leadership.

What to model? I asked a number
of Christian parents what they want
their sons to take away from their
homes. They said, "I'd like them
to know showing affection is not a
sign of weakness." "I'd like them to
know that telling my grandchildren
about Jesus is a 24/7 job (24 hours
a day, seven days a week) that will
involve their actions as well as their
words." "I'd like them to know that
they can cook and clean as well as
any girl." "I'd like them to learn to
be patient and enduring."

Kids
spell love,
T-I-M-E.



A friend has taught me much about modeling for a son as I've watched him raise his grade-school age boy. He includes his son in his life wherever possible. The two of them are rebuilding an old tractor. Together they do odd jobs at church. His son is his partner, not a "go-fer."

Kids spell love, T-I-M-E. My friend shouts how much he loves his son by the time he spends with him. And the more time they spend together, the easier it is for his son to hit the target of Christian manhood. Dave Simmons, founder of "Dad, the Family Shepherd," says, "Error increases with distance." Here's a son who's standing next to the target. How can he miss?

2. Mentor

A grandfather wrote about the effect of mentoring in Lutheran Leader. His wife asked their seven-year-old grandson how he would spend his summer vacation. "Doing whatever God has planned for me," he replied. "That's what you and Grandpa always say."

Mentors model, but they also explain. Sons require a mentor, someone wiser and more experienced who will take a personal interest in them and share what they know. Ideally, of course, this is one's father, but other godly men also assist. Mentors actively and lovingly encourage, confront, and admonish. They capture teachable moments. They create learning labs out of everyday situations to share

lessons in honesty, courage, sensitivity, and faith. Some of the best lessons I've learned about creation and my role in it came while walking through forests with my father.

3. Motivate

Christlike leadership is taught in a home that motivates by the gospel. Where rewards and punishments shape behavior, the family environment pollutes Christlikeness. Christlike leaders are produced in a home where they are taught to gratefully respond to God's grace rather than to fear his punishment if they step out of line. The ability to lead like Christ grows best in the sweet, warm air of thankfulness for sins forgiven and adoption assured.

Shepherding skills, not to mention the assurance of heaven, are learned in households where the Chief Shepherd lives through his Word. It's only in Scripture that we find direction and power for life. That makes family and personal time in the Scriptures a must. And, of course, it's through Scripture that sons, not to mention daughters, are reminded that rejoicing in what Jesus has already done for us comes before asking, "What would Jesus do?"

Too many young men grow up to be cowboys. God's grace calls sons to a much higher position. He calls sons to be Jesus' boys. Christlike leaders. Shepherds.

Jim Aderman is pastor at Fairview, Milwaukee.

A father reflects

My wife of 30 years and I have three children. I was not a very good dad. Though I believed in Jesus, he never was a priority unless things were not going right. I always told the kids it was important that they love Jesus, but I never told them how. I insisted that they never use the name of the Lord in swearing or in any vain way. I also never did, but I did cuss using other words. And why did money matter so much to me? And buying a new car? Kids learn from all these things. And the sins of their earthly fathers are passed on to them.

If I had it to do over again, I would constantly tell them about Jesus. I would talk to them and read the Bible to them beginning when they were born. I honestly believe that, if I would have done this, my two boys would have been more like my daughter. Her face lights up at the mention of Jesus' name.

I used to blame the Lutheran Church that my boys did not have the same trust in Christ as my daughter. I said it was because there was no enthusiasm from its people. But now I know whose fault it was. Mine. I should have been telling my sons about Christ's teachings from an early age. When they were small, they were always big-eyed and interested in anything Dad had to say. Now it is much harder. Then, confirmation would have been a reinforcement of what they knew to be true and a sermon more than boring words.

Anonymous

Note: This is an abridged version of an e-mail post to the LIFT [Lutheran Internet Fellowship Talk] discussion group. Permission was granted to use these paragraphs.

NL



Volunteering—through all ages

One of the great things about volunteering is that anyone—no matter what age—can do it.

Jerry Kastens, administrator for the Commission on Youth Discipleship (CYD), lists five things that make up a balanced youth ministry: worship, Bible study, recreation, fellowship, and service.

“So often we provide information and facts about Bible truths, but we don’t give youth the opportunity or the encouragement to identify and use their gifts,” says Kastens.

He continues, “Involving youth in the ministry of a congregation is important. They need a place to fit in. If they don’t have that place, they’ll become inactive.”

Youth in Service grants, a new CYD initiative, are helping congregations provide that place. Eighteen WELS congregations received grants of up to \$750 to help fund youth service events. Youth will participate in projects such as canvassing in their neighborhood, helping WELS

missions with canvassing and VBS, conducting Easter for Kids programs, making Easter baskets for a local food shelf, and distributing flyers at a local fair booth.

Youth at Emmanuel, Tempe, Ariz., will be serving food and cleaning up at a local soup kitchen. But that’s not all. “They’ll also run into people they never would have met and have opportunities to witness,” says Gene Sims, pastor at Emmanuel.

The young aren’t the only ones getting involved. So are the young at heart. Seniors in the Organization of WELS Lutheran Seniors (OWLS) use phone banks to canvass areas requested by WELS missions and established congregations, work closely with the prison ministry program, and offer their time and talents to Lutheran grade schools. In 1998 the Commission on Adult Discipleship formed a senior ministry committee to plan programs that will help congregations make better use of their “senior” members.

Judy Eisenmann, director of volunteer services for Wisconsin Lutheran Care Center, Milwaukee, offers motivated Christians practical benefits of volunteering:

The MANY FACES of VOLUNTEERING

Julie K. Tessmer

To have a meaningful relationship with the church and God, you need to be involved.

When James Mattek, pastor at Immanuel, Findlay, Ohio, needed some help, he called member Julie Baker, who always was willing to lend a hand. He apologized for interrupting her day and asked for her assistance.

In a firm, but humble, tone, she replied, “You said ‘I’m sorry to bother you again. I know you’re busy.’ But you don’t ever need to apologize for asking Christians to

serve. It’s what we do.”

Serving is what we do. And no one is too busy to do it. “People aren’t overworked; they’re under-challenged,” said Bob Beach, vice-chairman at Immanuel, who finds time to attend two Bible studies a week while being a regional president of a bank.

Volunteering isn’t something we fit into our schedule if there’s room. It’s a privilege we should grab hold

of. A way of letting our light shine. A chance to show love and thanks to our Savior.

Read the examples to see how congregations and individuals are putting their faith into action in their church and community.

NL

Julie Tessmer is the communications assistant for Communication Services and Northwestern Lutheran.

Serving the church

Every believer is important to God—and to the church. “I look upon every person that comes to church as a gift to the church,” says Mattek.

But even if members are gifts to the church, they also need to give—and more than just money.

“To have a meaningful relationship with the church and God, you need to be involved,” continues Mattek. “We don’t want to see anyone with nothing to do. We want them all connected with the church.”

To get members involved, the pastors and lay leaders identify what needs to be done and then find a person who needs a task. Then they contact that person directly. “I’m big on asking. People need to be asked, person to person,” says Mattek.

The church also provides many opportunities for volunteering so members can see meaningful ways to serve their Lord.

These methods are working. In a congregation of 450 souls, 50 members sing in the choir. Their elders and board of stewardship visit new members. Teenagers and retirees work together on the long-range planning committee. Men even serve on the altar guild.

Mattek also tries to involve new members “wherever possible, as soon as possible.” He continues, “They need that definite connection, where relationships and friendships can be formed.”

But doing “jobs” isn’t all there is to volunteering.

“Involvement isn’t only task-oriented,” says Mattek. “Bible study is also a way to be involved.”

Mattek equates peoples’ willingness to serve at Immanuel with the fact that they are getting into their Bibles. About 180 members participate in at least one of the eight Bible studies offered weekly. Laypeople teach three of these classes. “The Word works,” says Mattek. So do the people.

- Gain new experiences
- Build your resumé
- Do something different than what you do at your job
- Explore different career options
- Use your hobbies in meaningful ways
- Make a difference in someone’s life

A family affair

Every summer since 1995, Jim and Karen Spiegelberg, members at Good Shepherd, West Allis, Wis., and their family have taken a summer vacation.

Except you might not call them vacations. One week out of the summer, the Spiegelbergs, volunteering through WELS Kingdom Workers, travel to mission congregations to teach vacation Bible school.

“Our work is inspired and fueled by the Lord’s command to ‘Go and make disciples of all nations . . .,’” says Karen.

She continues: “Not only are we able to share the gospel with those who may not have heard it, but we enjoy the opportunity to step outside the confines of our own congregation to serve the Lord in the mission field.”

Jim and Karen aren’t the only Spiegelbergs volunteering. Their children, ages 9, 6, and 3, help develop crafts and pick songs for VBS.

“Involving the children in our volunteer work is extremely important for us as Christian parents,” says Karen. “

We want to role model for our children and have volunteering become a natural part of their Christian lives.”

Volunteering is a big part of the Spiegelbergs’ lives.

Besides serving at their home congregation, they also volunteer for the Hope House homeless shelter in Milwaukee by picking up leftover food and delivering it to the shelter. At Christmas, their children and others make and sell crafts, using the proceeds to buy books for homeless children about the true meaning of Christmas.

“Our children now truly appreciate that every child, every person, is one of God’s own,” says Karen.

Volunteering also strengthens the Spiegelbergs’ faith and renews their spirit. Says Karen: “No matter how much we give of our time and talents, we seem to receive so much more in return—evidence for sure that we can never outgive the greatest giver of all!”



The Spiegelberg family.

did you ever wonder . . .

Lutheran worship?

John M. Parlow

Our worship service should not be Word-less entertainment, but neither should it perpetuate methods that no longer communicate clearly.

I'm a lot like you . . . and I've got some questions. I've been told that I'm part of the "unchurched," the "Chreasters" (Christmas and Easter worshippers), and even the "heathen." Labels are inevitable, I suppose. I like to think of people like me as "truth seekers" and "wandering skeptics." Regardless of what you call people like me, I too am searching for a God who makes sense. Like I said, I'm a lot like you . . . except I don't really attend church. I know I should, I guess, but there are so many to choose from. I know you go to the WELS church down the street. I'd like to know: "Why? What makes Lutheran worship so special?"

Lutherans believe the Word takes center stage

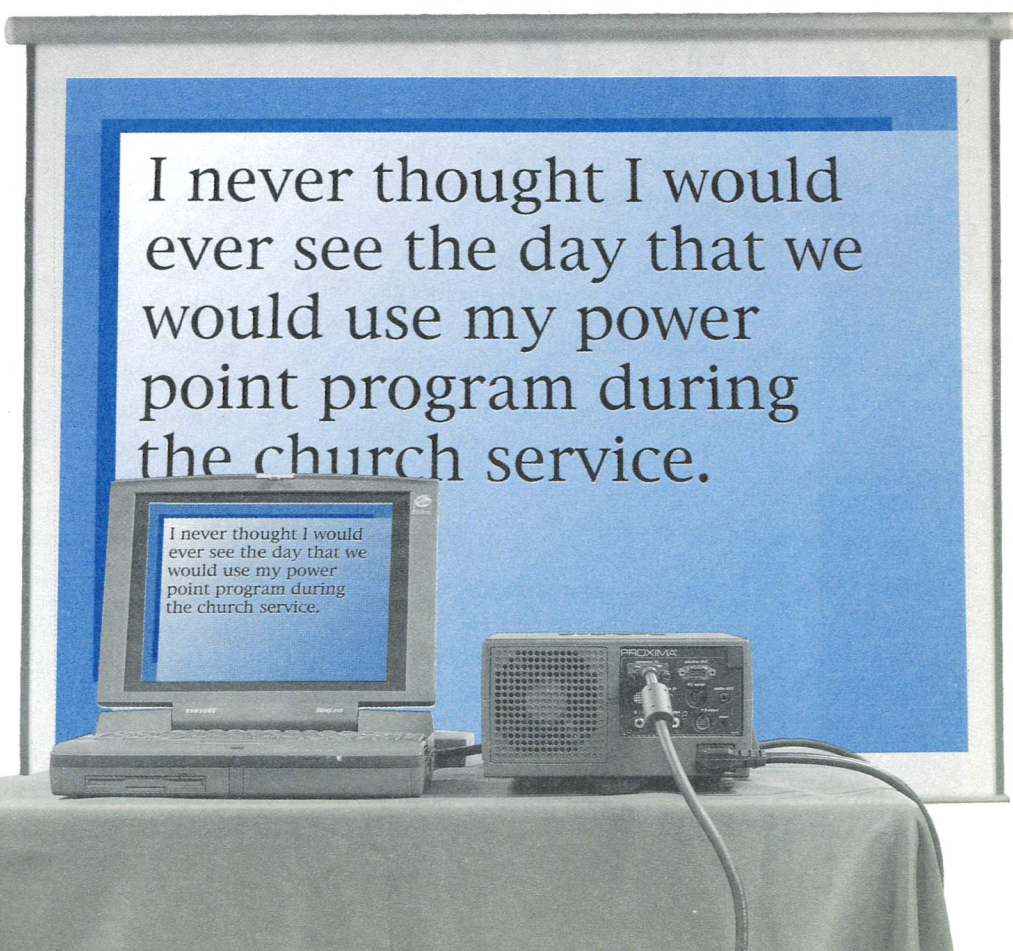
"I'm psyched that the congregation gave me the chance," Mike said to Cathy. "I never thought I would ever see the day that we would use my power point program during the church service."

"I really think it will be a lot easier for people to follow the Scripture readings on the overhead screens. Many of our members are new to the Bible and by the time they get to the Scripture reading, they listen, but they really don't hear," Cathy said, nodding in agreement.

"With it up on the screen," Mike continued, "it's hard to miss. I guess that's the point!"

The Word takes center stage. That's God's command, and that's why it is foundational in Lutheran worship. Since the good news of Jesus Christ is the only message that nurtures lifelong believers and wins skeptical seekers, it needs to be predominant in all our services. Martin Luther once wrote, "For among Christians, the whole service should center on Word and sacrament."

We Lutherans give the gospel predominance when our services include such elements as Scripture readings, responsive psalms, baptisms, hymns, sermons that rightly divide law and gospel, and the Lord's Supper. Perhaps even greater emphasis on the Word can be given by the introduction of pew Bibles, sermon notes, special liturgies, and yes, even children's sermonettes. (Admit it, you like them as much as your children.) Wouldn't it be great if every visitor left your



I never thought I would ever see the day that we would use my power point program during the church service.

service saying, "Now that's a church with some good news!"

Lutherans believe methods change

"When Pastor showed that picture of the Sea of Galilee, it made his sermon come alive," commented Jane, 25, graphic artist, new Lutheran.

"Yeah, I think the whole congregation appreciates the graphics and pictures he includes in the sermon," replied Tom, 36, manager of the local hardware store, third-generation Lutheran. "It's nice to see the congregation willing to use today's technology to communicate God's message."

Although our message must never change, for God's Word is truth (John 17:17), our methods of communicating that truth will and must even within the framework of liturgical worship. Scripture commands unity of doctrine in worship, not homogeneity of communication methods. We must adapt our communication style to our culture without adopting the sinful elements of it or abdicating to it.

Modern research tells us that the average listener retains only 10 percent of the sermon message that he hears, but that retention rate for the same message climbs to 40 percent when audio and visual aids are combined (pictures, drama, object lessons).

That should move any concerned Christian to ask, "Are we communicating God's truth in the best possible manner to strengthen the saved and save the lost?" Our worship service should not be Word-less entertainment, but neither should it be the practice of perpetuating methods that no longer communicate clearly or in the best possible manner to the people God has placed in our community.

We are increasingly becoming an image-oriented society. Therefore we need to ask some tough questions.

- Do we have the sanctified honesty to admit that in some cases we have held on to the comfortable communication methods of the past, at the risk of the future of souls?

- Can we incorporate drama, art, video, varied musical styles, dialogues, and other multi-sensory presentations? In some cases, many of these forms of communication will be happening at the same time.

Lutherans believe that the Word lives in daily lives.

- Do we have the ecclesiastical courage of the first century Christians to reach the unchurched of the 21st century in the best possible manner even if "we've never done it that way before?"

- Can our preaching be characterized by visitors as teaching timeless truth to today's people or boldly proclaiming orthodox jingles with a 1950s flare?

Tough questions are needed in these exciting times. Remember those are souls in the pews.

Lutherans believe the Word lives

"Props to Pastor Tim!" Stone said to the Michaels. "He's the first guy I can listen to for more than three minutes. The preacher I used to listen to would always speak in mundane generalities, saying over and over and over again, 'You are sinners who don't deserve anything but . . . Jesus died for you.' That's great! That's the message that saves. I believe that! I'm banking my soul on that. But I often wonder how that helps me while I'm still on this

earth? What does that mean for me at work on Monday or in my relationship with my girlfriend? Pastor Tim preaches like he's a good, honest friend sitting in my family room talking about the Bible. He hits you personally right between the eyes with the law and then picks you up with the gospel. He has a knack for applying the Bible to today."

"We thought you might like to come and check him out." Susan said. "Craig and I think he makes the Bible practical and helps us better understand what Jesus really did for us and what that means in our everyday lives."

Lutherans understand that biblical knowledge needs to be presented in terms of relevant issues. People long for applications of the Word to fears and feelings, self-image and relationships, nagging questions and recurring doubts. "How does this passage relate to my life right now in my community?" needs to be a question addressed in every one of our sermons. Lutherans believe that the Word lives in daily lives where it moves both the heart and the head. That is where it will be applied.

Lutherans worship

Our unchurched friends often seem to be a paradox because they display characteristics that appear to cancel each other out. Apathetic and yet deeply caring. Skeptical yet pragmatic. Relativistic and yet searching for truth. Labels are inevitable. Such people might well be described as lost and wandering. And you know, when you're lost, there's nothing better than being found. And a great place to be found is where Lutherans worship.

NL

John M. Parlow is pastor at St. Mark, Green Bay, Wisconsin.

Something's fishy here

The members of Christ, Juneau, Alaska, not only catch fish. They are fishers of men.



Zachery and Nicholas Bursell were baptized with their father after hearing the gospel on a fishing trip with Pastor Zietlow.

Gary P. Baumler

You can't get there from here—not by car. But if you sail or fly in anyway, you'll find the fishing is great at Christ, Juneau, Alaska.

It's called "Evanga-fishing"

At a church where rubber boots ("Juneau slippers") are common Sunday dress and the annual mid-August Golden North Salmon Derby has a place on the church calendar, you aren't surprised to see that almost everyone, the pastor included, is big on fishing. Similarly, in a church where they average 15-30 adult confirmands a year (they need that many just to keep up with the transient population), you're happy

to see a congregation devoted to fishing for souls.

The two kinds of fishing merge at Christ Lutheran. Most pastors whom I know go fishing strictly as a break from their work at church. Pastor Hans Zietlow (and his members) uses his fishing trips as a means to reach others for Christ. He even has a name for it: "Evanga-fishing."

About three years ago, for instance, Zietlow took a doctor, his wife, and two little boys fishing. In Zietlow's words, "Not only did the Bursells catch a lot of fish, they got hooked themselves by God himself." In Mrs. Bursell's words, "We met Pastor Zietlow on a fishing trip and came to know this church through him. We felt strongly that we were called to worship by God, through Hans Zietlow and an elder, Paul Berg." On Christmas Day that year, Mr. Bursell and the boys were baptized, and the whole family joined the church.

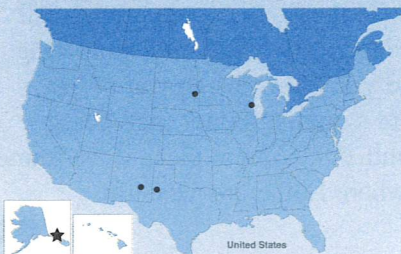
attracted eight people. The pastor of a bigger (then), liberal Lutheran church in town told Zietlow that a conservative church didn't stand a chance in liberal Juneau.

Then, for four years the congregation met in an unfinished room at the airport. They had to coordinate their services around the flight schedules, since "jets on the adjacent runway would drown anything out for several minutes." Zietlow arrived extra early every Sunday to "bus the tables, mop up the beer, and get the room ready for church." He even plowed snow (trading snow plowing at the hangar for free rent).

Still, while in that setting, attendance grew from eight to 100.

Christ Lutheran

Founded: 1991
Communicants: 140
Souls: 250
Pastor: Hans Zietlow
10300 Glacier Hwy, Juneau, Alaska



★ = featured congregation
• = congregations already featured

"We just teach the Bible"

You may wonder how a Lutheran church with Wisconsin in its parent body's name has made it in the Alaskan frontier, 900 miles from Seattle and 700 miles from Anchorage.

It wasn't easy.

The first service, held in 1991,



Christ Lutheran's first children's Christmas service in 1995. About 35 children sat up front, and not one of them had ever been in a children's Christmas service before.

It grew because Zietlow knew the right bait to use: the Bible. In fact, everyone who does not bring their Bible to church gets a Bible as they come in the door. When the other pastor asked how they managed to flourish so, Zietlow replied simply, "We just teach the Bible and are nice to people."

The people agree. Says one, "Been Catholic all my life—always been 'involved' in the parish, in service, etc. However, I've been missing something. That something was actually opening the Bible and focusing on the Word of God." He found the open Bible at Christ. Zietlow explains, thinking of their spartan, frontier beginnings, "Scrape away all the 'church luxuries,' remove all the 'traditions,' have no 'programs' to start with, and all a church has is the Word of God." Now that Christ has a beautiful church, the members "make a very conscious effort not to let luxuries like pews, an altar, and carpeting detract from what got [them] such a good start."

When the Bible reveals the way of salvation in Jesus, good things are bound to happen. Another member testifies to that: "My father went to this church. He died, and the first time I came here was for his service. I had a lot of questions I needed answered and didn't understand about death and what happens to a soul when you die. Plus, once I came a few times, it made a heavy load lift off my chest." One family was visited by the pastor after the kids went to the wrong church. Turns out it was actually the right

church. When the family visited, they "liked the focus on the Bible and stayed."

"Families come—even the husbands/dads"



Members of Christ Lutheran cleared away part of the woods when it came time to build their church.

The congregation is more laid back and informal than the typical WELS church, but they focus on what's most important. Says Zietlow, "It's the attitude that is everything. Keeping the priorities of message foremost and the mission of winning souls as the focus has always been central and visible in our congregation."

The church attracts many families. One member observes: "We're serious about growing in our Christian faith. I like this congregation because families come—even the husbands/dads." Even a single parent, who has difficulty fitting church into the schedule, insists, "In our home, church is not an option, but what we do."

Not only do many young families comprise Christ Lutheran but the congregation also is a close church family. For example, when it came time to build the church, they just rolled up their sleeves and went to work. Steve Branter drew up some rough pictures, they looked at their land, and decided to jump in. Zietlow remembers when "Al Risley, Duane Deorflinger, and I stepped into the woods with the chainsaws, and within a few weeks it was clear." Everyone pitched in to build—like family.

And like family, they care about each other. "This church stood by us," reports one member, "comforted us and supported us (our family) during some very trying times. People did not judge and condemn, but responded with love. We as a family, are exceedingly grateful."

Mostly, they are an active, growing family as God keeps leading them to more "fish in the pond" and keeps on increasing the catch.

NL

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

The fishing connection with evangelism began early for Pastor Hans Zietlow. He explains:

"One of the first families I baptized was the Risley family. They started attending in '91. Before I even knew them very well, I remember Al taking me out salmon fishing in front of his place on the water. Fishing starts at 4 AM. We fished for about three hours and got back, with a fish, about 7 AM. I'll never forget that on the way in, it was Al not me that brought up baptism. He said, 'You know all this water. It makes me think . . . you know I've never been baptized. I'd like to be

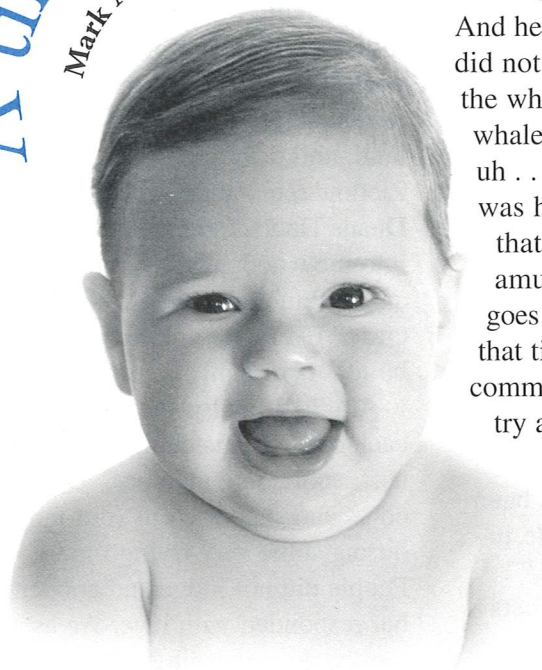
baptized and so would my family.'

"I don't think it was real easy for him to bring that up, but he did. Al, Rose, Sandi, Robert, and Kelli were all baptized in their home that week. We have shared great fellowship and work together in God's church.

"Al taught me a lesson: I sat in the boat with him for three hours and never brought up baptism. I should have—he did. I think I'll not wait so long again, not even a few hours, if the time is right to talk."

A tinkle of joy

Mark A. Paustian



The sorrow of repentance is meant to give way to a smile.

It may be to my father's deep dismay, but it makes the list of "My 10 favorite sermons Dad ever preached." It's his famous Pentecost 1974, "Tinkle of Joy" sermon. It went something like this: "We love Christmas and can't wait for the day to arrive. Easter has a joy all it's own. But how many of us wake up on the morning of Pentecost *with a tinkle of joy?*"

You'll agree, that's a particularly interesting choice of words! He has never quite lived it down. Later, when he heard from his children what he had said, and how we five benign critics in the back row interpreted, no one laughed louder than he. Pentecost has never been quite the same.

Dad's joy

And here's something you maybe did not know: "Jonah swallowed the whale . . . or rather . . . the whale was swallowed by Jonah . . . uh . . . *vice versa*." Hours later it was his mumbled "vice versa" that he found particularly amusing. Ever wonder what goes through a preacher's mind at that time? He gave us the running commentary at dinner: ". . . and so, try as I might, I just could NOT get that whale out of Jonah's mouth."

Again, I remember there being a "sound of great rejoicing" around the pot roast that day, entirely at my father's expense. No one enjoyed playfully embellishing these "great moments in preaching" more than he.

And if you'll pardon me, at holding the truth of God sacred and finding humor in just about everything else, he's still number one with me.

God's joy

So don't misunderstand. The truths of God are no laughing matter. But we are. That's what he taught me. Also, the sorrow of repentance is meant to give way to a smile.

Erma Bombeck had a point when, after watching a mother give her son a belt for "grinning" in church, she observed: "I wanted to grab this child with the tear-stained face close to me and tell him about my God. The happy God. The smiling God. Foolish woman, I thought. If he couldn't

smile in church, where was there left to go?" (*At Wits End!*)

Where indeed? The gospel calls us to have joy—exceeding great joy—at God's expense. It cost him. It cost the sending, sacrificing, and raising-to-life of his Son, so that in a world in tears we could "laugh to the measure we have faith" (Martin Luther). While Christ received only God's infinite favor, we were utterly condemned because of our sins . . . no . . . *vice versa*! That "vice versa" holds all the joy in the world.

The month of May remembers with a smile Jesus' ascension, the work of our salvation being, in an unmumbled word, "finished." May recalls disciples staring at the sky like tourists in Manhattan. May remembers tongues of flame dancing on their heads. May calls to mind 3,000 souls who put their faith in Jesus and came to know the "smiling God who washes your sins away," all in a single afternoon. Laugh at him? God forbid. Laugh near him? With him? Yes, yes, yes . . . to the measure of your faith. "Our mouths were filled with laughter, our tongues with songs of joy. Then it was said among the nations, 'The Lord has done great things for them'" (Psalm 126:2).

So, this Pentecost, as the sun rises on another birthday for this costly miracle known as the Christian Church, may it bring you a wave of peace, a stirring of love, and a . . . you know.

NL

Mark Paustian is pastor at New Life, Rockford, Illinois.



Inter-Act

"The Word of God is living and active."—Hebrews 4:12

Introduction

"We're like the moon. We all have a dark side." Mark Twain captured human nature with that simile. Martin Luther offered more biblical terms, "The Christian is, at the same time, both sinner and saint." Horns and haloes. How we handle that conflict shapes our lives. Jesus' encounter with a demon-possessed man makes the point. The man was in total bondage to Satan until Jesus changed everything for him. Jesus changes us, too. Forces of evil fight to control us every day. Every day we need the freedom Jesus gives.

I. Text

Read Mark 5:2-13

²When Jesus got out of the boat, a man with an evil spirit came from the tombs to meet him. ³This man lived in the tombs, and no one could bind him any more, not even with a chain. ⁴For he had often been chained hand and foot, but he tore the chains apart and broke the irons on his feet. No one was strong enough to subdue him. ⁵Night and day among the tombs and in the hills he would cry out and cut himself with stones.

⁶When he saw Jesus from a distance, he ran and fell on his knees in front of him. ⁷He shouted at the top of his voice, "What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? Swear to God that you won't torture me!" ⁸For Jesus was saying to him, "Come out of this man, you evil spirit!"

⁹Then Jesus asked him, "What is your name?"

"My name is Legion," he replied, "for we are many." ¹⁰And he begged Jesus again and again not to send them out of the area.

¹¹A large herd of pigs was feeding on the nearby hillside. ¹²The demons begged Jesus, "Send us among the pigs; allow us to go into them." ¹³He gave them permission, and the evil spirits came out and went into the pigs. The herd, about two thousand in number, rushed down the steep bank into the lake and were drowned.

IV. Prayer

Dear God, too often we feed the evil within us and the evil that comes from outside of us. It threatens to enslave us. But you acted to set us free. Christ lived. Christ died. Christ rose again. Satan lost. We won. Thank you for giving us new birth by the Spirit and feeding us with your Word. Thank you for setting us free. Amen.

Randy Hunter is pastor at St. Andrew, Middleton, Wisconsin.

II. Questions

1. People tried to help or restrain the man, but couldn't. What does that tell you about Satan?
2. The demons knew Jesus (v. 7). But when demons are in control, how does a person view Jesus?
3. The demons were tearing this man apart. It came down to a choice: the man or the pigs. Jesus chose to save the man and lose the pigs. What does that tell you about our Lord?
4. In the end (vs. 16-17), the people of the town begged Jesus to leave. He was a threat to their way of life. They loved their pigs more than the man. How might people today see Jesus as a threat to what they've grown to like?
5. To the man healed, Jesus was no threat. In fact, he wanted to travel with Jesus. But Jesus sent him home to tell his family "how much the Lord has done for you, and how he has had mercy on you." Why is it important for every Christian to see himself as radically transformed by Jesus?

III. Application

1. Many sins enslave people today. What differs between the best help our society can offer and the help Jesus can give?
2. After working with gangs and drugs for 15 years, a detective commented, "Nothing we do works. . . . The only thing I have seen work is the Word of God." How have you seen God's Word overcome sin's slavery for you or someone else?
3. Comment on this poem's meaning:
"Two natures beat within my breast;
One is foul, the other blest. The one I love, the one I hate; But the one I feed will dominate."
4. Paul wrote, "If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come." We fight Satan with the power of the One who has already defeated him—Jesus. That truth made the demon-possessed man want to get in the boat with Jesus. What does it make you want to do?

WELS 55th biennial convention

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NOMINATIONS BY THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE

These candidates (listed alphabetically) have been chosen by the Synod Nominating Committee to be presented to the delegates of the 55th WELS convention. The delegates will elect one for each position listed. Each candidate's district is in parentheses, and incumbents are noted by an asterisk (*).

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Special NL issue coming

The October issue of *Northwestern Lutheran* will include special, expanded coverage of the WELS convention in July. All congregations will receive this issue, which will replace the *WELS Herald*.

Congregations who do not subscribe to NL:

- You will receive this issue free.
- You will get the same number of issues you receive of *Mission Connection* unless you contact subscription services at Northwestern Publishing House by July 15.

Congregations who already subscribe to NL:

- You will receive any additional issues you need free.
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Contact subscription services at Northwestern Publishing House, 1-800-662-6093 ext. 8 (Milwaukee area 414/475-6600 ext. 5). Phone weekdays between 8 AM and 4 PM.



God's healing power—through nurses

Jesus forgave people's sins—and healed their diseases. Today, our congregations proclaim that same forgiveness, and are doing more with healing too.

Recognizing that God uses his power to heal through the medical field, churches are showing an increased interest in parish nursing. To help coordinate parish nursing ministry, WELS Lutherans for Life has a committee working on general guidelines for parish nurses and congregations. Each congregation will tailor the program to meet its own needs.

A few congregations are leading the way.

At St. Peter, Milwaukee, Lori Neumann was installed as a volunteer, offering prevention tips, education on issues, and spiritual support.

On the other side of Milwaukee, at St. Marcus, Linda Golembiewski and Pat Steliga were installed as parish nurses. Three other members were installed as active nursing partners and three more as helpers.

These nurses will work in the elementary school, teaching children and training faculty in health issues. They will also visit the elderly who live alone, to make sure that someone is not suffering with a treatable illness. And they will serve the con-

gregation by teaching healthy living through health fairs and health awareness—anti-smoking campaigns or a health mobile.

At Christ, Eden Prairie, Minn., Connie Sauer has been working as a parish nurse since 1992. She was called as a deaconess in 1993. In addition to the typical work of a parish nurse, Sauer also teaches weekly women's Bible classes and leads two evening meditations throughout the year.

"A major function of parish nursing is supporting people spiritually," says Sauer. "Otherwise, you're just a public health nurse serving in a church."

A resource center at the WELS Lutherans for Life national office is being developed for the parish nurses. It will provide a directory of health care resources, directory of Internet addresses related to parish nursing, an outline of how to start a program, and health-related articles for possible use in church newsletters.

For more information on the parish nurse program, contact WELS Lutherans for Life, 2949 N Mayfair Rd Ste 309, Milwaukee WI 53222-4304; 414/774-1331; 1-800-729-9535; FAX 414/774-1360; <welslutherans.forlife@wlfl.wels.net>; Web site <www.wels.net/wlfl>.

150th anniversary update

In the year 2000, WELS turns 150 years old. From the 1999 synod convention to the 2001 synod anniversary. Each month, we'll bring you a bit of news about how the anniversary planning is progressing.



Although each district, conference, circuit, and congregation will commemorate the anniversary on different days with different events, synodwide landmark dates include:

- **Oct. 31, 1999—Reformation Day.** Events surrounding this day will allow us to recall God's blessings in the past.
- **Dec. 31, 1999, and Jan. 1, 2000—New Year's Eve and the Name of Jesus.** These days bookend the beginning of the new millennium.
- **June 11, 2000—The day of Pentecost.** Although not the actual date of the signing of the first WELS Constitution, this official anniversary Sunday will allow us to focus on God's present blessings.
- **March/April 2001—Lent.** As we remember the Savior in his passion and see his victories over Satan, we will be encouraged to proclaim his name with greater enthusiasm in the future.

What are your ideas for celebrating our synod's anniversary? Share suggestions with Gerald Free, Forward in Christ, 954 Solar Parkway, Neenah WI 54956. Please note the new FIC e-mail address: <ficwicks@powercom.net>.

NL in large print

In July, *Northwestern Lutheran* will be available by subscription in large print. The large-print edition will cost \$2 an issue, or \$24 a year.

Children and grandchildren, give this as a gift to your parents or grandparents.

To subscribe, contact Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 N 113th St, Milwaukee WI 53226; 1-800-662-6093, ext. 8 (Milwaukee area, 414/475-6600, ext. 5).

At the heart of the matter

Some WELS members have been helped by the WELS Committee on Relief.

Many churches discuss wills, estate planning, and living wills.

All congregations have Bible study. But Redeemer, Pierre, S.D., wrapped all three together.

For four sessions, the congregation held a seminar using "A Christian View of Death," a Bible study kit available from Northwestern Publishing House. To make the study more complete, Jonathan Semro, pastor at Redeemer, enlisted help from some members.

After three of the Bible studies, member Ken Dierks spoke on estate planning and wills. Dierks is a new planned giving counselor for the Dakota-Montana District.

On the other night, member Chuck Schamens gave a presentation on organ donation. In April 1998, Chuck received a new heart, which he had needed for many months.

But Jan. 25 didn't turn out to be just a presentation from Schamens.



Chuck Schamens, Ken Dierks, and Pastor Jonathan Semro worked together on a Bible study series for members at Redeemer, Pierre, S.D. On the night of Schamens' presentation, he received a gift from the WELS Committee on Relief to offset some costs from his heart transplant.

It included a presentation to him—a \$2,000 presentation.

While planning the Bible study, Semro contacted the WELS Committee on Relief to see if they could do anything for Chuck and his wife, Phyllis. The Schamens still have money concerns with monthly travel to Minneapolis that insurance doesn't cover. The committee donated \$2,000.

"This Bible study involved a lay member, a planned giving counselor, the Committee on Relief, and an NPH Bible Study Kit, all combined into a unique presentation," says Semro. "The grace of God is at work among these people, leading one to serve as planned giving counselor, and another as a witness to God's mercy through a heart transplant."

Mass baptism brings smiles

Jasmine and Melanie Enriquez, Michael and Sean Newell, Ashly and David Stubbs, Keith and Eugene Acosta, Elizabeth Butler, Christopher

Gopaul, and John Witte all had two things in common that Sunday morning: they all were baptized and they all wore mile-long smiles.



Eleven children were baptized on one Sunday at Cutler Ridge, Miami, Fla. Pastor James Skorzewski and Aileen Newell, the mother of two of the children baptized, are also shown.

The congregation of Cutler Ridge, Miami, Fla., proudly witnessed the baptism of these 11 children on Jan. 17. This mass baptism consisted of children of all ages, now joined as Christians through Holy Baptism. After the service, a gathering in the church's fellowship hall allowed members and visitors to thank God for this wonderful opportunity to spread his Word.

James Skorzewski, pastor at Cutler Ridge, has been enthusiastic about this and other events since his arrival in June 1998.

This type of mass baptism was a first for the congregation in Miami, and by the grace of God there will be many more to come.

*Emily Byers
high school sophomore*

Send me! Send me!

Helping collect maize from homes in African villages for a harvest offering maybe wasn't exactly what Bill Meier had in mind when he volunteered to work in a mission field.

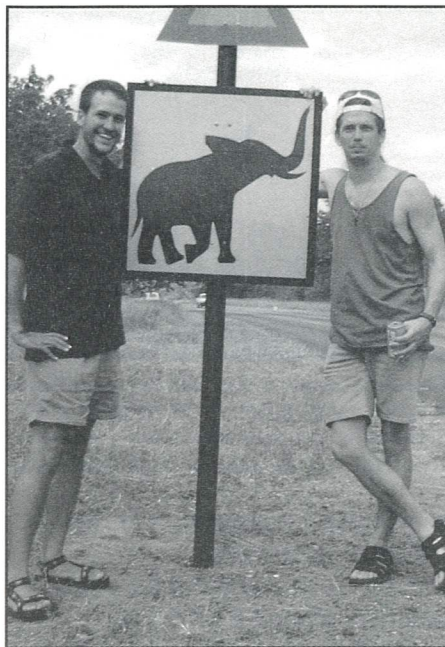
But even little things help.

"If I hadn't been there, he [Missionary Dan Kroll] couldn't have had worship services because he would have spent his time collecting the maize. Something simple that I could do really helped out," said Meier.

When Meier, who attends Faith, Antioch, Ill., graduated from Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, in 1997, he decided that now was the time for him to help out—before work, debts, or other obligations tied him down. He contacted WELS Kingdom Workers, and was on his way to Africa by August 1997.

Meier spent a year at Mwembezi, Zambia, doing repairs on the clinic, the missionaries' homes, and the national staffs' homes. His background—growing up on a farm and working as an electrician for six years in the Navy—helped prepare him for this work. He also was fixing up a home in Ndola for Missionary Tim Gerbing, who arrived in late November 1998.

Realizing that there was more to do than he could possibly get done,



Bill Meier and Bill Bragenzer. Both served in Africa as WELS Kingdom Workers volunteers in 1998. They went back to Africa in March 1999—Meier to Cameroon, and Bragenzer to Malawi.

Meier e-mailed Bill Bragenzer, his friend since the mid-1980s when they attended Shoreland Lutheran High School, that he needed help.

It wasn't a big surprise that Bragenzer decided to help. After all, how many times do you get to fix up homes in Africa with a high school friend?

Bragenzer, a member of Zion, Kenosha, Wis., took a three-month leave of absence and went to Africa in March 1998. Together they finished the projects.

After Meier finished volunteering in Zambia, he spent three months in Ligongwe, Malawi, filling in for the administrators of the Lutheran Mobile Clinic and helping renovate homes. He returned to the States in December 1998.

"I made friends I'll keep for the rest of my life," said Meier. "I was 'Uncle Bill' to all the kids."

He continues: "Now I have a stronger prayer life and take more time to read my Bible. I don't have to make time—reading the Bible and praying are just part of my life."

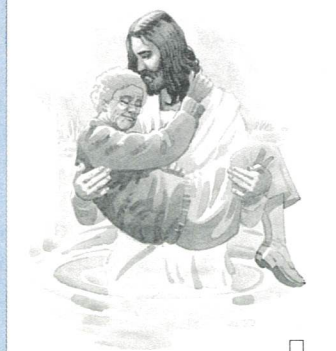
One taste of Africa and volunteering wasn't enough for Meier—or Bragenzer.

Both returned as volunteers to African missions in March—Meier to Cameroon and Bragenzer to Malawi.

And Bragenzer would go again, "anytime they need me."

Are you interested in volunteering for WELS missions? Contact John Wiederhold at WELS Kingdom Workers, 2401 N Mayfair Rd Ste 204, Wauwatosa WI 53226; 414/771-6848; <kingwork@wkw.wels.net>.

March 1999



cover a hit

You called, wrote, and e-mailed us to tell us you liked the cover. Here are some reactions:

"I showed this picture to the 97-year-old resident I have visited twice weekly for the past two years. She kissed the photo and seemed so comforted by it!"

"Beautiful!"

"So often you see children in Jesus' lap. We forget that the elderly are also in Jesus' arms. Thank you so much!"

Not only did you tell us how much you liked it, you also asked for copies of it. You asked. We listened.

An 8x10 color print of the cover is now available.

We are asking for a \$10 donation to help offset the purchase and all rights of the artwork, as well as printing and mailing costs. For a copy, contact us at *Northwestern Lutheran*, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222; 414/256-3210; <nls@sab.wels.net>.

ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

The apostle Paul gives us a glimpse of his mission heart with these words: "I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some" (1 Corinthians 9:22). Not only

was Paul willing to be shipwrecked, jailed, and stoned for the sake of the gospel, but he also used every possible place or method of evangelizing.

I have a new method that not even Paul used. It may not fit in every place or be adaptable to every situation, but it could be useful for your congregation. I call it *impact evangelism*.

As missionary to Puerto Rico and pastor of *Cordero de Dios* Lutheran Church in Humacao, I visited Julio and Esperanza, an elderly couple who have since been confirmed.

I left my car in an empty parking space in front of their apartment, unaware that the space was generally used by another resident, Laura Costa. As I was in Julio and Esperanza's apartment, Laura arrived and parked her car behind mine and went into her apartment.

When I had finished my visit, I jumped into my car to leave. Unfortunately (or fortunately, as it turned out) I didn't see her car and bumped into the front left headlight. Visibly upset, Laura came out and insisted that I pay for the damages on the spot. Though I couldn't pay her immediately, I promised to repair her light. Looking for a body shop, obtaining estimates, and ordering pieces gave us the opportunity to get to know each other better.

After repairing her car, I came back to visit Laura. Later I invited

her to visit our congregation, which meets in a chapel near her apartment. She visited for the first time on Good Friday 1998. During the last few months she has not missed a single service and is one of the members of our Christian family in Humacao. Shortly she will begin Bible information class.

Laura and I have talked (and even laughed) about the way the Lord gave us the opportunity to share God's precious Word and the good news of forgiveness given freely in Jesus.

You might want to consider this new evangelism method for your congregation. It may produce results. But first I would suggest obtaining a good car insurance policy.

*Missionary Timothy Satorius
St. John's, Antigua*

Thank you

God's people often show their faith spontaneously and without trumpet or fanfare. Students at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS), Mequon, have learned that truth firsthand.

For several years the WLS student body, married students in particular, have received a number of gifts from individuals and congregations. These gifts have been especially evident this year.

The gifts come in a variety of forms. Some people have "adopted" students by giving financial assistance or providing gifts for married student families. One congregation is paying all the educational costs of a student as part of their anniversary thankoffering. Other congregations have donated groceries and clothing. Some have sent Christmas gifts. One pastor and the congregation have arranged for surplus bakery products to be delivered regularly to married students. Another generous benefac-

tor has given each student money to be used for theological books from the seminary bookstore. All of these gifts are in addition to the generous support given to the seminary through regular congregational mission offerings and gifts to the Student Assistance Fund.

We're grateful to God for giving people such a deep appreciation of the pastoral ministry and sincere interest in the well-being of ministerial students. We're thankful that so many have shown their interest in such spontaneous and generous ways.

John M. Brenner

Correction:

An incorrect date was listed in "Science through God's eyes" [Feb., p. 6-7]. The discovery that viceroys taste bad was published in *Nature* in 1991, not 1998.

THROUGH MY BIBLE IN 3 YEARS

June 1999

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Jdg. 3:7-31 | 16. Jdg. 21 |
| 2. Jdg. 4 | 17. 1 Peter 1:1-12 |
| 3. Jdg. 5 | 18. 1 Pet. 1:13-2:3 |
| 4. Jdg. 6 | 19. 1 Pet. 2:4-17 |
| 5. Jdg. 7:1-23 | 20. 1 Pet. 2:18-25 |
| 6. Jdg. 7:24-8:35 | 21. 1 Pet. 3:1-12 |
| 7. Jdg. 9:1-10:5 | 22. 1 Pet. 3:13- |
| 8. Jdg. 10:6- | 4:6 |
| 11:28 | 23. 1 Pet. 4:7-19 |
| 9. Jdg. 11:29- | 24. 1 Pet. 5 |
| 12:15 | 25. Ruth 1, 2 |
| 10. Jdg. 13 | 26. Ruth 3, 4 |
| 11. Jdg. 14, 15 | 27. 1 Samuel 1 |
| 12. Jdg. 16 | 28. 1 Sam. 2:1-11 |
| 13. Jdg. 17, 18 | 29. 1 Sam. 2:12-36 |
| 14. Jdg. 19 | 30. 1 Sam. 3:1- |
| 15. Jdg. 20 | 3:41a |



District news

California

The Reformation Singers, a choir at Reformation, San Diego, Calif., participated in the American Choral Directors Association Choral Festival, held in Pasadena, Calif., in February. Over 400 singers from nine choirs from southern California participated.

Dakota-Montana

Our Savior, South Shore, S.D., honored **Ruth Meyer** at a Christmas dinner for serving as the congregation's choir director for 40 years. . . . **St. Martin's, Watertown, S.D.**, dedicated its new worship facility on Feb. 7. The facility includes a church, fellowship hall, offices, and classroom space.

South Central

What goes around . . . Eddie Greschel, who had been at Risen Savior, Austin, Tex., was commissioned several months ago to serve in Russia. Then, on Mar. 7, Roger Zehms, who had been in Russia, was installed at Risen Savior, Austin. . . . The "**Tri-City Teen Tour**" went into action on Feb. 20-21. Teens and young adults from Lubbock and Midland traveled to San Angelo, Tex., to assist Our Redeemer in a phone canvass. This project was organized by John Gillespie, the WELS Kingdom Workers evangelism coordinator for West Texas. . . . **David and Christa Pomeranke**, members of Bloomington Lutheran, Bloomington, Minn., spent February and March in College Station, Tex. As WELS Kingdom Workers volunteers, they helped Beautiful Savior find the lost souls of the Bryan/College Station area. They found more than 60 unchurched people through door-to-door and phone surveys. These people were sent "Thank you" cards, brochures with a brief law/gospel presentation, and information about the church. Later they were sent invitations for Easter services and fellowship.

Southeastern Wisconsin

On Feb. 25, Douglas Semenske, pastor at St. Andrew, Chicago, officiated at the funeral of **Harold Robish**. What's noteworthy is that Harold was chairman of St. Andrew for 42 years (1950-1992). Even more interesting is that each term was a one-year term—he stood for re-election 42 times!

Happy Anniversary

MN—On Jan. 19, The Lutheran Home Association celebrated the 25th anniversaries in the preaching ministry of **John Zeitler** and **Paul Werner**. . . . **West Lutheran High School, Plymouth, Minn.**, celebrated its 20th anniversary on May 1.

SEW—Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School observed **Ron Mehlberg's** 25th anniversary in the ministry on Feb. 28.

SC—**King of Kings, Alexandria, La.**, celebrated its 25th anniversary on April 11.

These are the reporters for this month's featured districts:

CA—Hermann John; DM—Jon W. Hadler; MN—Jeffrey Bovee; SC—Peter Snyder; SEW—Scott Oelhafen

Youth ministry—by the numbers

Percent of WELS children attending Sunday school	59%
Total enrollment of Sunday school	40,980
Number of Sunday schools	1,230
Total vacation Bible school enrollment	39,940
Percent of WELS churches with VBS	97%

* statistics provided by Gerald Kastens, administrator for youth discipleship

Obituaries

Ervin J. Humann 1907-1999

Ervin Humann was born Aug. 1, 1907, in Eureka, S.D. He died Feb. 13, 1999, in Jefferson, Wis.

A 1932 graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., Humann taught at St. Paul, Stevensville, Mich., and St. Matthew, Stoddard; St. Peter, Helenville; Our Savior, Wausau; Bethany, Hustisford; and St. Mark, Watertown, all in Wis.

He is survived by wife, Edna; one daughter; one son; 12 grandchildren; three great-grandchildren; two sisters; and one brother.

Karl A. Gurgel 1915-1999

Karl A. Gurgel was born Feb. 5, 1915, in Globe, Ariz. He died Feb. 16, 1999, in Fond du Lac, Wis.

A 1940 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Gurgel served First, La Crosse, Wis.; St. John, Caledonia, Minn.; and St. Peter, Fond du Lac, Wis. He had served as District President of the Northern Wisconsin District and as chairman of the board of Northwestern College.

He is survived by five sons, one daughter, 25 grandchildren, four great-grandchildren, two brothers, and three sisters.

Robert R. Hoenecke 1928-1999

Robert Hoenecke was born Dec. 8, 1928, in Detroit, Mich. He died Feb. 17, 1999, in Ft. Atkinson, Wis.

A 1954 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Hoenecke served St. John, Firth, Neb.; St. John, Cold Spring, Wis.; and Bethany, Ft. Atkinson, Wis.

He is survived by two sons, two daughters, five grandchildren, and three sisters.



Younger Catholics staying in church—In a study of Roman Catholics ages 20 to 39, researchers found that nine in 10 who were confirmed as adolescents have kept the faith of their youth, and three in four said they could not imagine belonging to any other church.

While the spirit is willing to identify itself as Catholic, the flesh is weak for many young Catholics when it comes to activities such as attending Mass on a weekly basis. Seven in 10 respondents said they attend church at least once a month, but only 31 percent reported attending weekly.

The study has a margin of error of ±6 percentage points.

Amish exempt from child-labor law—The House of Representatives voted to exempt the Amish from federal child-labor laws that prevent some teenagers from working in sawmills and woodworking shops.

Amish tradition forbids formal schooling beyond eighth grade, at which point young people enter apprenticeship programs, including woodworking. However, because of concerns about flying wood chips and other dangers, federal law prohibits anyone under 16 from working in sawmills and woodworking shops.

The exemption requires adults to supervise the teenagers, who would not be allowed to operate mechanical equipment on their own.

Spanish NIV published—The *Nueva Version Internacional* (NVI), a Spanish version of the popular New International Version (NIV) of the Bible, has been published by the International Bible Society.

The new volume is the result of 10 years of translation work by Latin American Bible scholars. The IBS intends to complete a Castilian, or European Spanish, version within two years.

Embryonic stem cells research funded—The National Institute of Health (NIH) will fund research on embryonic stem cells, a controversial decision because the cells are derived from aborted fetuses and “extra” embryos that were prepared for use in infertility treatments.

Although the government banned human embryo research, the NIH director says the research does not violate the ban because the cells don’t have the capacity to develop into a human. However, these cells can only be found and harvested in a healthy and viable embryo, which does have this potential.

Though scientists think the research could someday help people with heart disease, diabetes, Alzheimer’s disease, and Parkinson’s disease, the procedure costs human life in the embryonic stage. [WELS Lutherans for Life’s LifeWire]

Christian missionaries killed—In January in India, missionary Graham Stewart Staine, 58, and his two sons, Philip, 10, and Timothy, 8, were burned to death when the jeep they were sleeping in was doused with gasoline and set on fire. Witnesses report that a mob beat up anyone trying to rescue the missionaries.

Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee pledged that no mercy would be shown to the murderers. So far, 47 people have been arrested, and the state police have begun an intense manhunt for the person believed to have masterminded the murder.

Christians make up just over two percent of India’s population of nearly one billion people. Hindus make up 82 percent, Muslims 12 percent. Others include Buddhists, Sikhs, and Jains.

Roman Catholics passed one billion mark—The Vatican reported that as of Dec. 31, 1997, there were 1,005,000,000 Roman Catholics, making up 17.3 percent of the world’s population.

Regionally, Catholics are in the majority only in the Americas where they constitute 62.9 percent of the population, the Vatican said. Elsewhere, Catholics make up 41.4 percent of the population in Europe, 27.5 percent in Oceania, 14.9 percent in Africa, and three percent in Asia.

The information was contained in *Anuario Pontificio 1999*, the latest edition of the comprehensive Vatican yearbook.

Family films make money—

Results of a 10-year study that focused on the profits of films based on their MPAA (Motion Picture Association of America) rating were released in January.



Although Hollywood produced 17 times more R-rated than G-rated films between 1988 and 1997, the average G-rated film produced eight times more gross profit than the R-rated flicks. In addition, the average G-rated film produced 78 percent greater return on investment.

Since the MPAA began rating films in 1968, nearly 60 percent of all films released by Hollywood have been rated R. Studios falsely claim that these types of movies make the most money.

Persecution continues—Saudi Arabia still leads the world in persecution of Christians. It is closely followed by Sudan (South), Sudan (North), and Somalia. These are followed by Yemen, North Korea, Laos, Vietnam, and China. The tiny Islamic kingdom of Brunei is in 10th place.

The list comes from the Open Doors World Watch Persecution List for 1998. [Assist Communications, Jan. 29, 1999]

Most news reported in this section is derived from Religion News Service. Items do not necessarily reflect the views of WELS or Northwestern Lutheran.

Safe beneath the wings

God protects and rescues us.

James A. Aderman

A chicken. The seasoned believer who authored Psalm 91 says the Lord is like a chicken. **“He will cover you with his feathers, and under his wings you will find refuge”** (v. 4). An out-of-character picture of the Omnipotent One—but a picture of God as Savior nonetheless.

A chicken's protection

Everything I learned about chickens I learned on my grandparents' farm. Their chickens were especially attractive to us grandchildren when chicks ventured out with their mother. Sometimes Rover, the farm dog, would get too close. She'd cluck sternly, and her half dozen cheeping, yellow feather-balls would scurry for her skirts. She'd sit down on them, spreading her wings to hide every one.

I once had a run in with a mother hen. Grandma told me to stay away from those chicks, but she didn't warn me about their mother. Usually, the hens fluttered away

when I walked through the yard. They'd squawk, but never stood their ground. Except this day. When I reached for her delicate down-baby, that mother transformed into a steel-taloned eagle. She fluffed up her feathers, extended her wings, and muscled in between me and her chick. I changed my plans.

Our Savior's protection

“Surely he will save you,” the psalmist predicts. He uses the same Hebrew word for “save” as does Judges 6:9, when God reminds Israel, “I snatched you from the power of Egypt.” As almighty God devastated Egypt to rescue his people from slavery, God commits himself to save us.

He will also snatch us from the fowler's snare. Before guns, the best way to bag a feathered meal was to flush the bird from its hiding place and catch it in a net. When treachery entangles us, God promises to rescue us. He did it for his terrified disciples in Gethsemane. He'll do it for us.

And he'll snatch us **“from the deadly pestilence.”** In the psalmist's day, diseases spread rapidly. Before antibiotics and medicines, there seemed no defense against plague. But there was—and still is—one sure cure: our God. He saves us by healing us or, better, by taking us to a heaven never touched by dis-

ease. He is the “balm of Gilead” who “heals all our diseases,” starting with our soul-crippling, death-dealing sin.

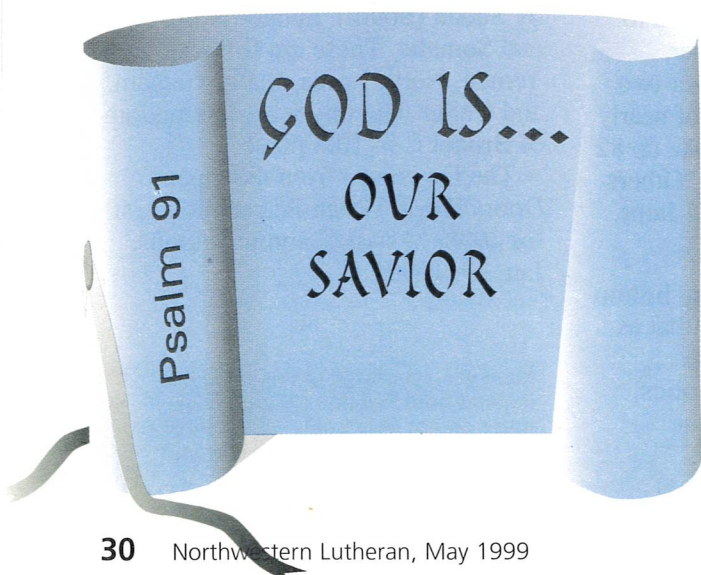
No matter what the enemy, the Lord “will be your shield and rampart.” Shields were important armor. They turned away arrows and deflected sword thrusts. Ramparts, steep embankments, protected cities.

Notice the guarantee of God's protection, **“His faithfulness will be your shield and rampart.”** Faithful describes God as sure, firm, immovable, reliable, and stable. Exactly what we'd expect from the God who in Jesus “is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

The church father Augustine asked, “If the hen defends her chickens beneath her wings, how much more will you be safe beneath the wings of God?”

As strange as it seems, there's comfort to know that our God is like a chicken.

James Aderman is pastor at Fairview, Milwaukee.



For further study

Jesus said of Jerusalem, “I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings, but you were not willing!” (Luke 13:34). How does Jesus gather us under his wings? How might we show we are “not willing”? How does Jesus' ascension prompt us to scurry to his protection?



CHANGES IN MINISTRY

Pastors

Backhaus, Curt S., to Emmanuel, Las Cruces, N.M.
Bartling, Mark F., to retirement
Cox, Raymond G., to retirement
Goeglein, Mark A., to MLC, New Ulm, Minn.
Koch, Henry T., to Faith, St. Petersburg, Fla.
Kolander, Mark D., to St. John, Montello/Emmanuel, Montello-4SE, Wis.
Kruschel, Herbert, to retirement
Lemke, Dennis R., to St. Peter, Weyauwega, Wis.
Micheel, Jonathan A., to St. Peter, Modesto, Calif.
Pasbrig, Robert W., to WLIM, Inc., Milwaukee
Schleis, Paul D., to First, Green Bay, Wis.
Schultz, Andrew C., to St. John, La Crosse, Wis.
Von Deylen, Marc A., to Lord of Life, Friendswood, Tex.
Wempner, Timothy D., to Our Savior's, East Brunswick, N.J.
Winter, Ronald L., to St. Paul, Hamburg-6SE, Wis.
Wordell, Bradley D., to Japan

Teachers

Adickers, Robert W., to retirement
Banaszak, Thomas J., to Morning Star, Jackson, Wis.
Biesterfeld, Brent T., to Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee
Biesterfeld, Laura A., to Good Shepherd, West Allis, Wis.
Brohn, James R., to St. John, Newburg, Wis.
Brutlag, Ronald D., to MLC, New Ulm, Minn.
Cohoon, Wade R. II, to Crown of Life, Hubertus, Wis.
Conrod, Stephanie, to St. John, Sturgis, Mich.
Cuff, Mary E., to retirement
Draper, Eileen M., to Shepherd of the Hills, La Mesa, Calif.
Enter, Diane K., to St. Paul, Appleton, Wis.
Gast, Guy G., to St. Peter, Fort Collins, Colo.
Groening, Steven F., to Gloria Dei-Bethesda, Milwaukee
Grosinske, Cheryl L., to St. John, Westland, Mich.
Hennig, Steven M., to Martin Luther, Oshkosh, Wis.
Herrian, Jean A., to retirement
Hill, Marlene A., to Thoughts of Faith, Inc., Plzen, Czech Republic
Hill, Robert A., to Thoughts of Faith, Inc., Plzen, Czech Republic
Hodges, Susan, to Gethsemane, Omaha, Neb.
Janke, Carol A., to St. Peter, Modesto, Calif.
Karow, Eileen K., to Eastside, Madison, Wis.
Kramer, Theresa, to Christ, Saginaw, Mich.
Krueger, Martha L., to Salem, Milwaukee
Loewen, Rick, to East Fork, Whiteriver, Ariz.
Miller, Martin M., to St. Andrew, Chicago
Nelson, Joel A., to CPS, Milwaukee
Petersen, Sally J., to Good Shepherd, Midland, Mich.
Pfeifer, Carrie F., to Minnesota Valley LHS, New Ulm, Minn.
Reimer, Annita M., to Faith, Fond du Lac, Wis.
Rodewald, Karen L., to Trinity, Bay City, Mich.
Schroeder, Dorothy D., to retirement
Tacke, Rachel A., to Holy Trinity, Des Moines, Wash.
Visaggio, Janis R., to Zion, Hartland, Wis.
Wierschke, Barry L., to Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee

Zarnstorff, Cindy S., to Faith, Anchorage, Alaska
Zeamer, Gerald G., to Kettle Moraine LHS, Jackson, Wis.

The synod administration building will close:
 May 31—Memorial Day. Callers may leave messages, 414/256-3888; FAX, 414/256-3899

REQUEST FOR COLLOQUY

Mr. David W. Lieder, Cottonwood, Ariz., formerly a teacher in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, has requested a colloquy for the purpose of serving in the staff ministry in WELS. Correspondence related to this request should be addressed to President Paul M. Janke, AZ-CA District, 3461 Merle Ave, Modesto CA 95355-9703.

ANNIVERSARIES

Normal, Ill.—St. Mark (25). May 9—Anniversary/dedication, 4 PM; meal follows. 309/454-4314.

Ixonia, Wis.—St. Paul (150). May 16—Anniversary worship emphasizing music, 7:45 & 10:15 AM; potluck follows. June 13—Anniversary worship emphasizing family, 7:45 & 9:30 AM; ice cream social follows. Ken Ewerdt, 920/261-3680.

Hemlock, Mich.—St. John (100). May 16—Youth discipleship Sunday, 8 & 10:30 AM; noon lunch. June 20—Special music worship services, 8 & 9:30 AM; coffee hour follows. Andrew Backus, 517/642-8757.

Wabeno, Wis.—Trinity (100). May 16—Anniversary worship, 10 AM; dedication of parish hall; noon meal; thanksgiving service, 2 PM. Craig Korth, 715/473-5633.

Waunakee, Wis.—Lord and Savior (10). May 23—Services, 9 AM & 3 PM; dinner follows afternoon service. Paul Lidtke, 608/849-8637.

Milwaukee—Grace (150). May 23—services, 8 & 10:30 AM; dinner at the Hyatt following 10:30 service. Reservation required. 414/271-3006.

Westminster, Colo.—Shepherd of the Valley (25). June 13—Special anniversary worship service, 4 PM; catered meal and program follows. Timothy J. Winkel, 303/424-1306.

Winthrop, Minn.—Zion (100). June 26—Confirmation commemorative service, 5 PM; light supper follows. June 27—Centennial celebration, 9:30 AM; dinner follows; mission service, 2:30 PM; refreshments follow. Lori Klockmann, 507/647-5582.

COMING EVENTS

Commencements—Martin Luther College, 10 AM, May 15; Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, 10 AM, May 19; Luther Prep School, 10 AM, May 26; Michigan Lutheran Seminary, 10:30 AM, May 29

Concert—Lutheran Chorale. May 2 at 3:30 & 7 PM. Grace, Milwaukee. Mary Prange, 414/873-9105.

Dedication—Lutheran Heritage Village, new skilled nursing home. May 23. 3:30 PM. 33600 Luther Ln, Livonia MI 48154; 517/694-6564.

OWLS convention—July 13-15; Willmar, Minn. 414/321-9977.

Reunion—of former Japan missionaries, board members, and teachers and students of Nozomi Lutheran School. June 27. La Crosse, Wis. Jackie Hieb, 23-27 Komatsu 3-chome Tsuchiura, Ibaraki, Japan 300-0823; or Vicki Behringer, 414/256-3243.

Alaska tour—hosted by OWLS. July 1-10. \$2,049. Harris Kaesmeyer, 517/652-8772.

WELS Kingdom Workers—sixth biennial convention. Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato,

Minn. July 23-24. Missionary and lay mission assistant presentations. 414/771-6848 or 1-800-466-9357.

Asian student rally—Sept. 10-12. Minneapolis/St. Paul, Minn. Free. Emphasis on Chinese but all Asians welcome. Joel Lintner, 612/378-1346; Leon Piepenbrink, 651/306-0645; Loren Steele, 651/222-2429.

NEEDED

Preacher—July 25 & Aug. 1. Prince of Peace, Thousand Oaks, Calif. 805/492-8943.

Preacher—Two nights free at Shady Rest Motel in exchange for conducting worship at Shepherd of the Hills, Custer S.D. 1-800-567-8259.

Preacher—August 5 & 8, 12 & 15 at Messiah, Olympia, Wash. Use parsonage in exchange for conducting services. Close to Mt. Rainier, Olympic and Gifford Pinchot National Forests, the Pacific Ocean, Seattle, and Portland. Joel Nitz, 360/923-1961.

Preacher—July 4, 11, 18 & Aug. 8 or any time after. Free use of parsonage in Trumbull, Conn., in exchange for preaching during vacancy. 1 hr from N.Y. City; 3 hrs. from Boston. Kieth Kuschel, 203/378-1270.

AVAILABLE

Altar—74" long, 23" wide, 39" high. Light wood. Good condition. Weighs 200-250 lbs. Free for cost of shipping. Mark Schoeneck, Ocean Drive, Pompano Beach, Fla.; 954/942-1216.

Paraments—free to mission congregation for cost of shipping. Shepherd of the Hills, Anchorage, Alaska. 907/345-6129; <fvoss@juno.com>.

NAMES WANTED

Kodiak, Alaska—Pastor Fred Voss, 907/345-6129; <fvoss@juno.com>.

Corona, Calif.—for Crown of Life exploratory. Pastor Rick Johnson, 909/279-5287; <pasturick@aol.com>.

Manhattan, Junction City, Ogden, Wamego, Ft. Riley, Kan.—for Hope exploratory, Manhattan, Kan. Phil Hirsch, 785/770-9656.

SERVICE TIMES

Manhattan, Kan.—Hope exploratory. Sunday school, 9:15 AM; worship, 10:30 AM. Best Western Convention Center. Phil Hirsch, 785/770-9656.

Spoooner, Wis.—Beginning May 2, service times for Beautiful Savior will be 8 & 10:30 AM. with Sunday school and Bible class at 9:15 AM. Mark Johnston, 715/635-7672.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Rhineland, Wis.—Zion, 160 N Brown St, Rhineland WI 54501.

1999 YEARBOOK CORRECTIONS

Pastor Ricky R. Johnson's home and office phone numbers are incorrect. His home phone number is 909/734-1625; office, 909/279-5287; FAX, 909/898-6789.

To place an announcement, call 414/256-3210; FAX, 414/256-3899; <karenb@sab.wels.net> Deadline is six weeks before publication date.

Sin and salvation

John F. Brug

What happens to infants not baptized and also people in remote parts of the earth that have not had the opportunity to learn about Jesus and, therefore, do not know or believe in Jesus?

Baptism is the only means God has given us for working faith in infant children, so we should use it immediately if there is any uncertainty about the infant's life. If a child dies suddenly without baptism, we must trust it to the just judgment of God. We know that every child is born sinful and needs God's grace that works faith. Yet, we have the special case of John the Baptist who was moved by the Holy Spirit even before his birth. Beyond these points that are revealed in Scripture we must trust such cases to the just mercy of God.

The section of Scripture that most thoroughly addresses your second question is Romans 1:18-2:15. Read especially 1:18-20 and 2:14, 15. Paul says that God will judge the Gentiles who did not have the written word on the basis of their sins against the natural knowledge of God, the natural knowledge of the law, and their own conscience. These sins will condemn them and leave them "without excuse."

Also read Luke 12:47,48. The person who has less knowledge of the law will be punished less severely for his violations than the person who had fuller knowledge. But he will be punished. Ignorance of the law does not excuse crime. Not knowing the speed limit does not excuse speeding. The driver has a

responsibility to know the traffic laws. It is his fault if he does not. The same principle applies here.

We should also remember why many countries do not have much preaching of the gospel. It is not because God did not give it to them, but because they did not want it. God has sent the gospel out into all the world on at least four occasions: through the promise to Adam and Eve, through Noah's three sons, through the apostles, and today. God sent the gospel to the world, but the world did not want it.

Paul says clearly that the Gentiles without Christ are without God and without hope.

Read also Ephesians 2:1-12. Note especially verses 3 and 12. Paul says clearly that the Gentiles without Christ are without God and without hope.

There are many other passages that teach the same truth. There is no scriptural basis for the belief that anyone can be saved without faith in Christ. God has bound himself to what he has revealed to us in his Word. He will not go back on either his promises or his threats. Our reason and our feelings rebel against what God says about this. But we must say, "How unsearchable his judgments, and his paths beyond tracing out! To him be glory forever." God's judgment will be fair.

I understand we are saved through faith and by the grace of God, but what if I'm sinning at the moment of my death?

We do not fall from faith with every sin of weakness. We often sin without even realizing it (Psalm 19:12). A person can fall from faith through willful sins that he clings to (Psalm 19:13).

We should not think of God's forgiving grace as a commodity that he divvies out to us a bit at a time whenever we ask for it. Grace is an attitude of God that he has toward his children all of the time. Grace is a condition in which we stand (Romans 5:1,2). It is not like taking a shower once a week, but like standing under the rain of grace all of the time.

We should never be indifferent to sin and should battle against it always. But we should not forget that God is a loving Father who is always forgiving us, not a heavenly Scrooge hoping to catch us with our account a penny short.

John Brug is a professor at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon. In February, he began a three-month sabbatical, teaching at the seminary in Novosibirsk, Russia.

Send questions to Your question, please, Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398; <nl@sab.wels.net>

Seen on an outdoor church sign:
 "If you are looking for a
 sign from God, this is it."

Fast fact

Earlier in this century, only 5% of the American adult population was single.

Today, 45% of adults have never married or are divorced, widowed, or separated. Also, 25% of adults remain never married.

Yet, single adults make up only about 15% of the average evangelical church.

Discipleship Journal, November/December 1998 quoted in *Current Thoughts & Trends*, January 1999.

You don't say . . .

"Turning my will over to God is a daily deal with me. When I do it early in the morning, my day is usually great. When I wait until noon or midday, my day usually stinks until I get alone somewhere with that God who did all the star-scattering and breath-giving and say, 'Okay, Father, forgive my arrogance. You can have your world back.'"

—Larry Gatlin, lead singer and songwriter for The Gatlin Brothers, in his book *All the Gold in California: And Other People, Places, & Things*.

Ideas

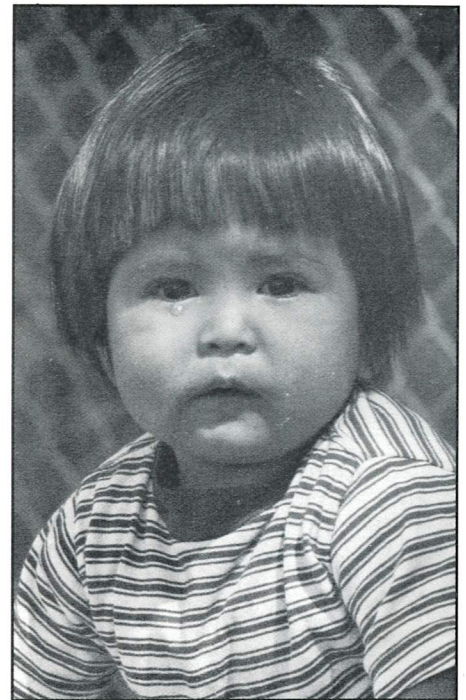
Here's some ideas to get more people involved in church.



Want to get more families serving? **Have families sing** in worship—husband, wife, and children.

Looking for someone to spearhead an anniversary celebration? **Enlist a team of singles**—not only will the different personalities come up with lots of creative ideas, it gives them an important job to do in the church.

Need someone to promote the new outreach effort? **Ask a husband and wife team**—they get to serve the Lord and still spend time together.



Picture this

This photo is of a little child at the East Fork Lutheran Nursery. "I love that photo!" commented Arthur Guenther. "That little child is alive today because of the love and care of the missionaries, WELS, and the people who support them."

East Fork was the first nursery in Arizona. It operated for 71 years and closed in 1993. Art Guenther was born and raised on the Apache reservation in Arizona. After becoming a pastor, he returned to the reservation and served for over 50 years. He and his wife, Gloria, still live there and are active in their retirement. For more pictures and information on outreach to the Apaches, turn to page 8.

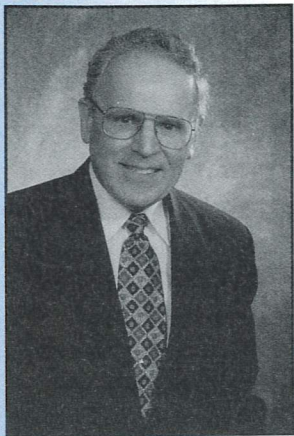
Please share your picture of Christian fellowship, worship, and faith. On a separate sheet, tell us why you took it, who is in it, what it means to you. Include your name, address, and phone number. Those whose photos get printed will receive a small gift.

Send photos and a self-addressed stamped envelope to *Northwestern Lutheran, Picture this*, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398. Questions? Contact us at <nl@sab.wels.net> or 414/256-3232.

Out of the mouths of babes

One evening my family and I were dressed in our "Sunday best" for an evening out. As the car pulled out of the garage my youngest son exclaimed: "Mom, you forgot your casserole!" (The little Lutheran!)

Gretchen Schulz
 Jackson, Wisconsin



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

The faceless believer

Just received some good news. Through our WELS Web site <www.wels.net>, a person in Anchorage, Alaska, asked for help in finding a church. Our pastor there contacted her, arranged for a ride to services, and now informs us she wants to join the congregation.

She's not alone. From Fort Wayne, Ind.: "On Christmas morning I became a member of Holy Scripture. . . . This wonderful morning came about because of discoveries I made here on this WELS site. . . ." Mexico: "Its [sic] beautiful this page and I am going to show my friends, because it's a way to know the name of our Lord." Plano, Tex.: "I have spent hours reading material that will be helpful to me in witnessing to others."

Yes, we spread the gospel via the Internet. Some experts even project that as early as 2010 perhaps 10% of Christians will be cyberspace believers. They will get all of their religion from the Internet.

What an opportunity! What a mixed blessing! What we presented on the Internet led to personal, face-to-face contact with prospects and believers. What is projected is a faceless electronic congregation that never gets involved, never makes a commitment in faith, never comes face to face in fellowship and worship.

Is that what the Lord had in mind for his church on earth? Doesn't he call us to come together in his name? We are to think of ourselves as parts of a body, each functioning close to the others and essential to the whole. We are to teach and admonish one another, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs (Colossians 3:16). We are not to give up meeting together, but to encourage one another (Hebrews 10:25).

We rejoice with the angels of heaven over every person who comes to faith. We rejoice more when we can see their faces in our congregations, when we can join

hearts and voices together in expressing that faith, when we can unite forces to reach still more people with the good news of Jesus. We welcome the opportunities to share burdens and joys, concerns and comforts—to wish each other peace in the Lord.

With our computers and the Internet, we have a remarkable tool for sharing God's Word. In some cases we reach people in remote areas of the world where they have no congregation to join. The computer screen with our images and messages is the only "face-to-face" Christianity they enjoy. We have reached people in about 90 different countries, several where Christianity is a small minority of the population. We have reached places and people that we could never expect to reach with a magazine like *Northwestern Lutheran*.

So, we have a powerful tool and a profound responsibility in ministry. We need to pray

. . . for wisdom, insight, and strength to keep our Web site a welcome place where visitors find Jesus;

. . . that more people around the world will find Jesus there and return often;

. . . that none of us will ever treat the Internet site, even if we go there daily for spiritual strengthening, as a permanent substitute for congregational fellowship and worship;

. . . that all who find a refuge with the Lord through our WELS Web pages will also seek ways to share their faith face to face with others;

. . . that through the use of this tool we will gain new faces to meet one day in heaven.

Gary P. Baumler

We rejoice
with the
angels of
heaven over
every person
who comes
to faith.
We rejoice
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can see their
faces in our
congregations.

TAKING

The 1999-2000 WELS STEWARDSHIP EMPHASIS PROGRAM

To order by phone, please call the WELS Adult Discipleship office at 1-800-567-8669.
In the Milwaukee area call 256-3278.

GOD AT

WELS Adult Discipleship – 2929 North Mayfair Road – Milwaukee WI 53222-4398
FAX: (414) 256-3899

HIS



WORD

Make choosing the right stewardship path easier in 2000!

Children in church: trial-by-diaper

One woman encourages those who brave the terrors of worship with children.

Rachel Mendell

I look around and count babies, and I feel a little envy. My youngest is four now.

I look around and see the young, fussy children struggling to stay still in church, and I am thankful. Not for being done with the trial-by-fire, but thankful that there are other parents besides myself that brave the terrors of worship with children. Those days for us are not so far behind, but they began over 13 years ago. (I count all the kicking in utero that made it impossible to sit through a sermon.)

Some Sundays were so difficult that I was sad when we weren't immediately congratulated upon entering the building.

I remember the frustration well. Nursing every two hours (in church it's every 10 minutes), teething (moaning always started 45 seconds after the sermon began), baby boredom, and potty training (no control on Sundays). I prayed for long naps during the sermon I could never remember. (I usually wasn't there.) I also felt hugely guilty and/or embarrassed for noisy or misbehaving children (during our trip to the communion rail).

Many Sundays I wanted to stay home. Some Sundays were so diffi-

cult that I was sad when we weren't immediately congratulated upon entering the building. Were we organized enough? Did we get up early enough? Is this all worth it?

I'm thankful God gave us at least one person who would encourage us. One wonderful person who made it a point to know the children's names, shake Dave's hand, and grab the one with the most chocolate on his face. (Mom's clothes equal napkins.)

Was all that work worth it? Yes! When I see my children follow the service in their hymnals, or sing a hymn they remember, or fold their

hands for the Lord's Prayer, or ask when do they get to go to communion, it's all worth it.

To all the blessed moms and dads with babies screaming God's praises in church we say, "Keep up the good work." Continue in God's trenches. Look to the future by watching (for two seconds) those of us who have survived the trial-by-diaper. We love the young noise, and we are praying for you.

NL

Rachel Mendell is a member of Shepherd of Peace, Columbus, Ohio.

