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# FORWARD IN CHRIST

April 2001

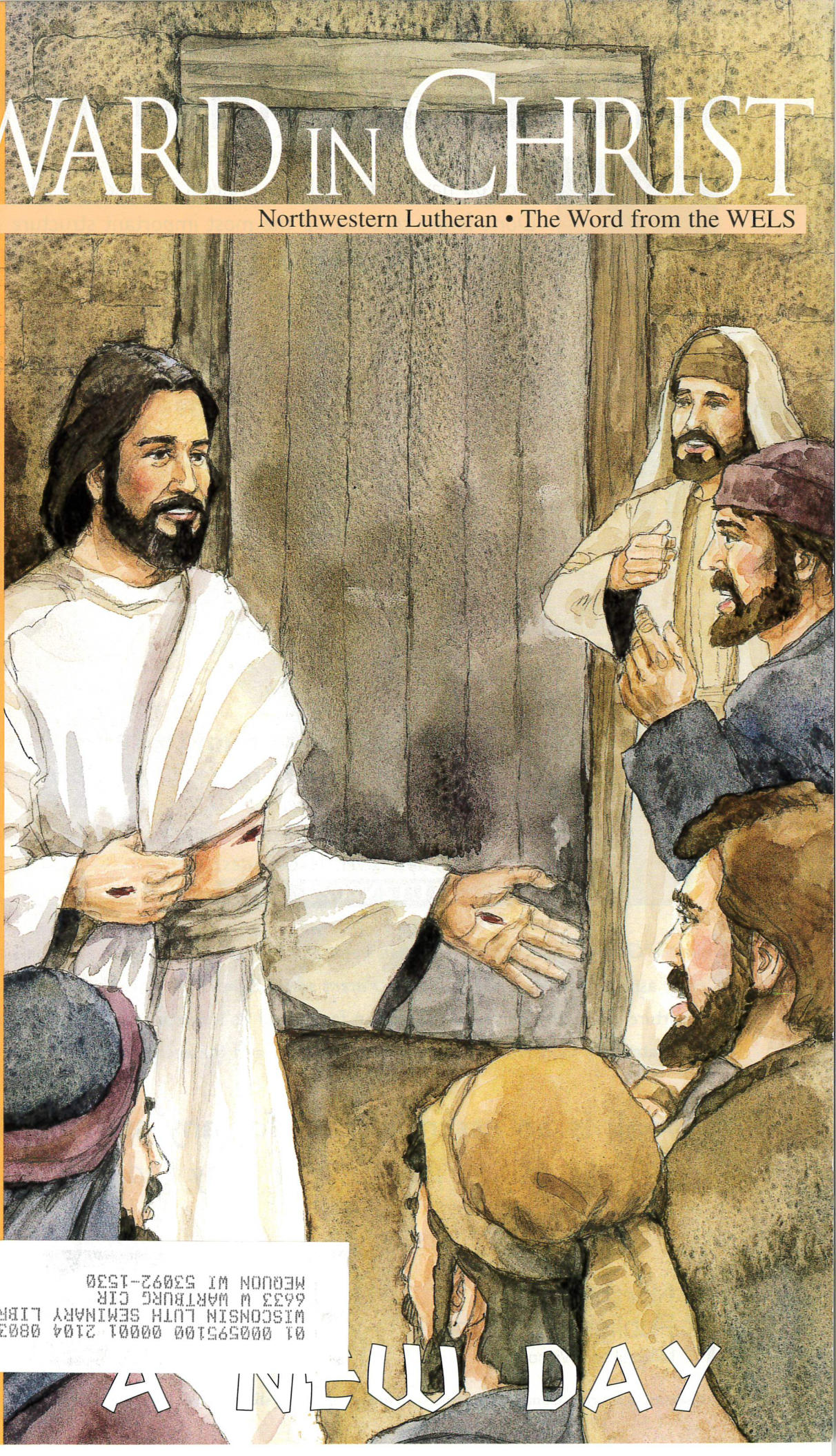
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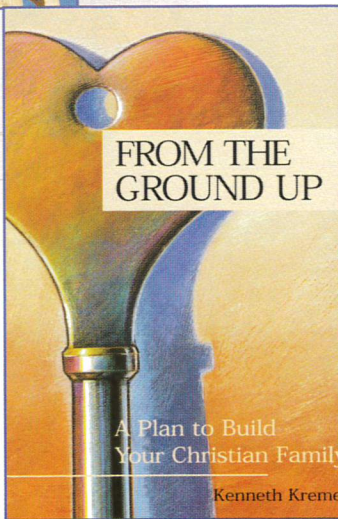
# A NEW DAY



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# The full armor of God

*Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Ephesians 6:13*

Eric S. Hartzell

**J**esus chose not to use the armor of God, and he fell in the battle.

## Jesus gave us God's armor

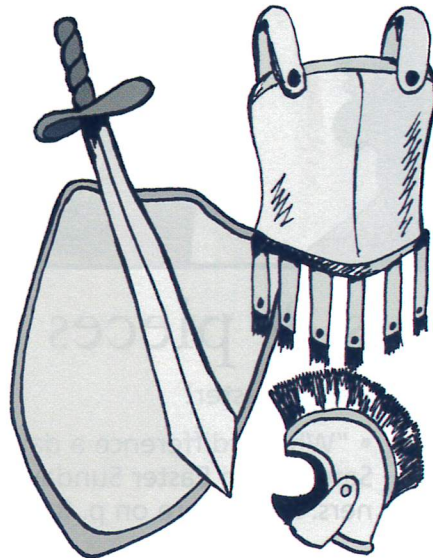
The deepest stroke that pierced him was the stroke that Justice gave. No armor fended it off. There was no belt of protective truth for him. Pilate quipped, "What is truth?" Lies had their way as they pelted down on Jesus from his tormentors and splattered on the court walls and the cross.

There was no helmet of salvation for him, nothing on his head to ward off the thorns of the mockers' crown.

No breastplate of righteousness. The crushing onslaught of our iniquity broke his brave heart. The centurion's spear found its mark.

No shield of faith against doubt's flaming arrows. "He trusts in God. Let God rescue him now if he wants him," they said pointing at the shield, which seemingly failed. The burning arrows struck him. "My God, my God why have you forsaken me?" he cried out. His feet weren't protected, nor his hands. The nails held him in their merciless grasp.

Jesus sank down and died that day without the armor so that we could put it on and stand. He forwent the bugle call to summon the legions of his angels. He stepped out alone on that day when darkness reigned to fight our fight and to leave behind his armor for us to wear. He became vulnerable so that we would be



invulnerable. He died that we might live ensconced in his power and might and righteousness.

Good Friday is about Jesus setting aside the armor. He not only gave us his life, he gave us his armor. He made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross. The full armor of God was not in that picture for him.

## We need God's armor

We are now told by God to put on his armor . . . belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace, shield of faith, helmet of salvation. Put it all on!

It would be the height of arrogance to step out onto the field against rulers and authorities and powers of this dark world and spiritual forces of evil and be clad only in flimsy undergarments of our own righteousness. It would be folly to attempt the fight with some makeshift armor of our own devising. If Jesus fell mortally wounded in the strife, what would happen to us? Jesus knows the stakes. He knows our natural nakedness when it comes to our adversary's weaponry. He says with weight in his voice, "Put on the full armor of God . . . and stand!"

King Ahab did not stand. 1 Kings 22:34 says, "But someone drew his bow at random and hit the king of Israel between the sections of his armor." An armor-clad Goliath did not stand either. But no one with God's armor in place falls to any foe.

The best offense is a good defense. Our standing in triumph on the evil day does not depend on what we do. It depends on what we wear. It depends on what encircles us, heart and mind and limb.



*Eric Hartzell is pastor at Cross and Crown, Georgetown, Texas.*



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Cover illustration by Bill Clark

This is the day  
the Lord has  
made. Let us  
rejoice and be  
glad in it.

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## bits & pieces



### Happy Easter!

• “What a difference a day makes,” Tom Kock reminds us. From Saturday to Easter Sunday God turned us from losers to winners. Read more on p. 8.

• Even though we’re already winners through Jesus Christ, we still need to protect ourselves from the evil of this world. Eric Hartzell reminds us to use the full armor of God (p. 3).

• We receive the Spirit’s power in baptism. President Gurgel reminds us to use it to live a new life in and for Christ (p. 31).



Teens, this is for you! A new series, “whatever,” starts this month, featuring stories written by teens, for teens. The first article talks about interfaith dating (p. 20). We’re counting on you, teens, to keep this series alive. Send us your stories!



Millions of men and women from the United States served in World War II, including hundreds of Apaches. Find out through poignant historical letters from the soldiers themselves how Missionary E. Edgar and Minnie Guenther served these Apaches in the armed forces (p. 14).



A new series by a new author starts this month. Steve Degner, pastor at Star of Bethlehem, Santa Maria, Calif., writes about the views of the new world and how we can reach out with the old-time truth. Check out his first article on proclaiming the resurrection in the 21st century marketplace (p. 12).



To celebrate Christ’s resurrection and our salvation through faith in him, we offer this month’s issue in full color. Enjoy!

—JKT



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The disciples might have felt like failures on Saturday, but how their spirits must have soared on Sunday!

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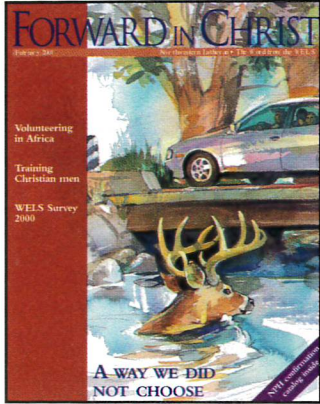
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**Spiritual living is healthy**






**Thank you for the continually edifying and interesting articles that appear in *Forward/NL*.** “Finding our way” [Feb. 2001] helped me remember similar experiences and

rejoice again because our God graciously guides us to our appointed tasks—including those we didn’t realize were in our schedule on a particular day. Thanks for the reminders.

Now for a matter of precision. “I’ll be with you!” [fourth last paragraph] is AMONG the last things Jesus said before his ascension. But Luke gives us Jesus’ last recorded words in Acts 1. Jesus spoke his promise to be with us while he was with his disciples in Galilee (Matthew 28:16) on an earlier occasion during the 40 days. He ascended to heaven at the end of the 40 days while in “the vicinity of Bethany” (Luke 24:50).

Blessings on your ministry through *Forward/NL*.

Joel T. Luetke

 Olivia, Minnesota

**“Finding our way” [Feb. 2001] was so true.** A friend brought my attention to it. So often we do find ourselves on roads that we did not choose. Thanks to God that we are never alone. Thanks to the author for reminding us so vividly.

Paul R. Boehlke

 Milwaukee, Wisconsin

**I can’t begin to tell you how much I enjoyed the article featured on your cover this month [“Finding our way” Feb. 2001].** I can’t stop talking about it and sharing it with others. God’s grace and omnipotence is beautifully displayed through this author’s pen. He communicates a subtle humility and sincerity that is

rare and lovely. When he writes, “God will orchestrate our confusion. He will direct our misdirection,” it confirms in my heart that no matter how misguided or lost I may feel, the Lord is the one directing my path. My heart goes into my throat and tears come to my eyes. Thank you for including this article. Please include more writing like it in future issues.

BethAnn M. Meier

 New York City, New York

I just finished reading the January issue of *Forward in Christ*.

**There were so many good articles, but the two I enjoyed most were “Heaven’s camera” by Dawn Ferch and “Protect your paper bags” by Becky Rardin.**

I hope we can have more of the same. They were encouraging and uplifting. Thanks!

Frieda Miller

Benton Harbor, Michigan

**Pastor Raasch [“Is God punishing me?” Jan. 2001] gives a number of good reasons why God may use hardships in our lives.** I feel that there is another reason that many, especially those who suffer, overlook. That reason is so God’s love and mercy may be manifested through the Christian to those around him. How we deal with our suffering can be a great testament of our faith, especially to our unbelieving friends and relatives.

David Dahlke

 Port Orchard, Washington


**This article [“WELS generalizations?” Jan. 2001] reminded me of some generalizations to which I used to hold.** “The fellowship in my church is dead; few people greet each other.” And, “I’ll never be an individual here, but only the son of my parents.”

I eventually realized that, even if such statements were true, I did nothing to change them. In fact, I myself didn’t greet anybody other than the few I knew. I shied away from fellowship events and passed

up opportunities to serve my Savior with the saints. How could I ever enjoy fellowship or be an individual if I didn’t get to know others or give them a chance to know me?

As Prof. Cherney pointed out, such assumptions are often a reflection of ourselves. Let us repent of such assumptions and our own attitudes and actions that support them. Then let us rejoice in the opportunities to be active in God’s kingdom of grace.

Daniel J. Dexter

 El Paso, Texas


**Gerald Kastens made some good points in explaining why teenagers stray [Jan. 2001]. I only wish he had also addressed the problem of part-time parenting.**

It is inevitable that teens will test their parents’ wisdom. It’s a part of finding out for yourself what works. That testing is especially dangerous in a world that exalts the pleasures of self-gratification. If parents want their teen to uphold parental values, it is essential that those values be taught and demonstrated during the child’s most formative years.

If our children have learned their values from babysitters, daycare attendants, pre-school teachers, and a variety of coaches and instructors, we should not be surprised if they adopt someone else’s values when they grow up.

I realize that this lays a burden of guilt upon many parents today, but if parenting has deteriorated into the warehousing of children, the fault needs to be acknowledged and corrected. If we want our children to have our values as well as our genes, we need to immerse them in those values during their formative years. Absent parents can’t do that!

Rolf Westendorf

 Milwaukee, Wisconsin

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# “Committed” is not the same as married

Kenneth A. Cherney Jr.

**T**emptation *Island* is the latest offering from the purveyors of sleaze at the Fox network. On the show, four couples are joined on a tropical island by 26 scantily-clad seductresses and seducers who will do whatever they can to break the couples up—and to titillate the millions of voyeurs who dutifully tune in every week.

If all this is news to you because you pay no attention to the trash on TV, then good for you! Besides, the show *Temptation Island* couldn't possibly be as interesting as the controversy surrounding it.

Two features of that controversy come to mind. First is the way the Fox network, in advertising the show, has done everything possible to depict it as a sexual free-for-all. Then Fox has the chutzpah to tell us that the show isn't about sex at all—and shame on us for having such dirty minds! One wonders which is worse: the sleaze itself or the accompanying hypocrisy.

Second, there is widespread agreement among critics that *Temptation Island* represents a new low, even for Fox. But one loud note in all the criticism doesn't quite ring true. It's all the shock and outrage expressed over the fact that someone would try to break up these “committed” but—please note—unmarried couples.

Certainly, it is selfish and cruel to try to separate two people who love each other. To do such a thing for entertainment purposes is despicable. But ever since God brought Eve to Adam and the two became “one flesh” (Genesis 2:24), there has been a divinely and socially sanctioned way for two people to establish an inviolable relationship. It's called “marriage.”

In a recent article about *Temptation Island*, media critic Michael Medved

pointed out that for years now, marriage has been scorned as “just a piece of paper” that couples don't need, as long as they love and are “committed” to one another. But that “piece of paper” publicly recognizes a couple's commitment. It proclaims to the world, “These two people have an exclusive right to one another. Everybody else, stay away!” It safeguards the rights of any children the couple may have. The “piece of paper” called marriage is one of the most important components of a society worth living in—which is surely, among other things, a society where everybody knows who belongs to whom.

I don't know a lot about the couples on *Temptation Island*, but I do know this: a couple that won't marry is not a “committed” couple. Nor is the sacred awe that surrounds a marriage appropriate to relationships like these. The folks on *Temptation Island* deserve criticism for trying to break up these couples in prime time, but let's be careful. We dare not elevate mere relationships to the status of marriages or bring marriage down to the level of whatever these people share.

“Marriage should be honored by all,” the writer to the Hebrews says (13:4). Couples who won't marry can't claim the same honor for their relationships. And the harsh reality is that they're taking their chances.

*Ken Cherney is a professor at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota.*

We dare not elevate mere relationships to the status of marriages or bring marriage down to the level of whatever these people share.



# WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DAY MAKES

**The disciples might have felt like failures on Saturday,  
but how their spirits must have soared on Sunday!**

Thomas D. Kock

I burst out laughing. I couldn't help it. There on the shelf as I did my Christmas shopping was a computer program titled "Y2K-Proof Your Computer."

Of course, a year before I might not have been laughing quite as easily. Do you remember the uncertainty and uneasiness that accompanied the switch from 1999 to 2000? Predictions ranged from the relatively harmless (your personal computer would mess up the dates on things) to the catastrophic (that our nuclear armaments would arm themselves and launch a strike, or the nation's power grid would shut down). So, people prepared—some more, some less.

Then the day came: New Year's Eve 1999. Almost all the computer people were required to be at work, "just in case." The clock struck midnight, and 1999 passed into 2000.

And? Outside of a few minor glitches, everything went fine. The phones stayed on, the power grid remained up and running, the nuclear arms stayed in their silos, and by mid-day of Jan. 1, 2000, the whole Y2K worry had been replaced by (arguably) more important questions such as, "Who will win the bowl games?"

What a difference a day makes!

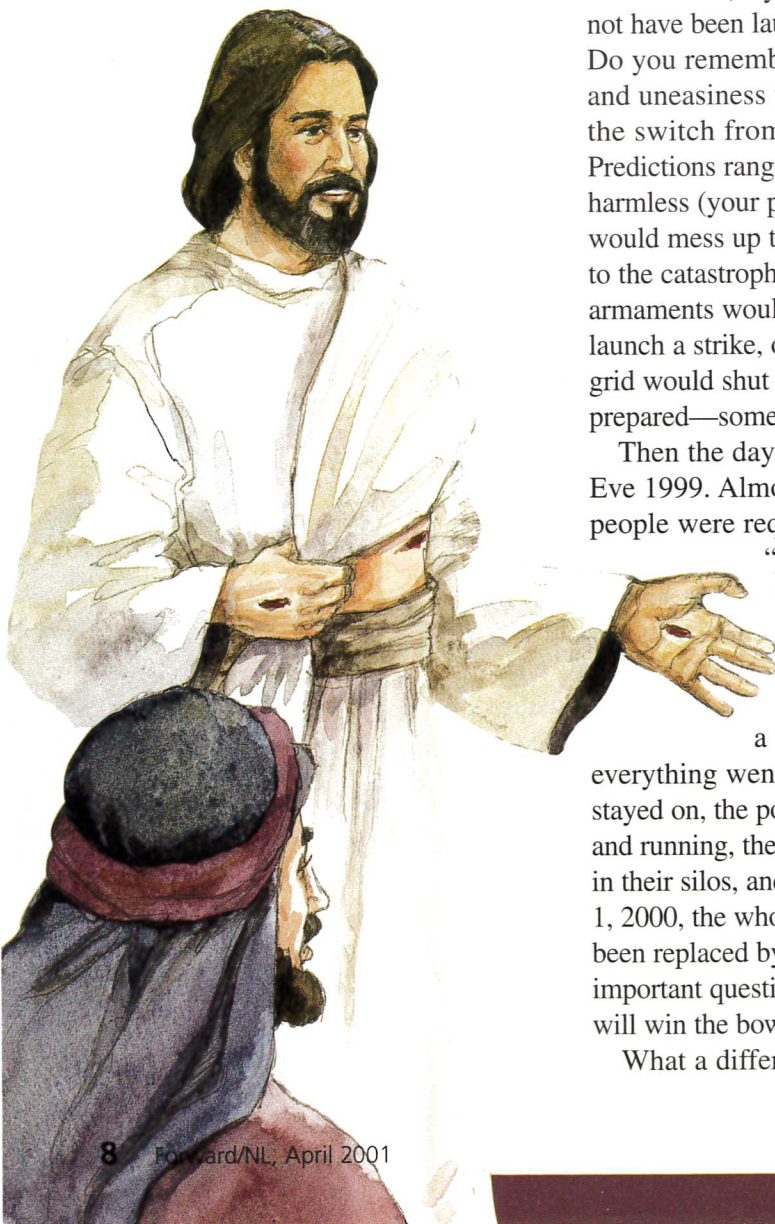
## **A dark day**

Can you imagine what the Saturday of that first Holy Week must have been like for the disciples? It was the Sabbath, so they couldn't work. Instead, they had plenty of time to think about the events they had just witnessed. Can you imagine how their hearts must have ached?

They had seen Jesus—the one who healed so many, who told the future with complete accuracy, who fed the multitudes, who calmed the storm, who even raised the dead—they had seen him taken captive, put onto a cross, and die.

Where had they been? They had run away from their Jesus. They deserted him. A few of them, like Peter and John, "crept" nearby to see what was going to happen. Peter denied that he even knew Jesus, and his good friend John helped it along by opening up the doors to the high priest's courtyard. Also, they had seen Judas—one of their own inner circle—betray Jesus. One of their own was a traitor, and they hadn't even recognized it.

Can you imagine the disciples' frustration with themselves? Can you imagine their feelings of complete and total failure? Can you imagine their sense of gloom? With Jesus gone, what good could the future possibly hold?





Besides all that, they must have felt as if they had just wasted the last three years of their lives. Here they had looked to Jesus as the Messiah, had told others that he was the Savior. And now? Now he was dead! And they had been his followers?

I can empathize with those disciples, and I'd imagine that you can too. How often we feel like failures, like losers! Perhaps we think of goals we set for ourselves, goals that have gone unmet. Or perhaps we second-guess how we raised our kids. Or maybe we remember some of those key relationships that we allowed—or caused—to crumble or not to grow as we would have liked.

Worse! What about our service to God? We want to serve God, we want to be confident about the future, we want to trust that God is guiding us in the way that's best.

But what do we see? We see ourselves failing to keep our temper, failing to exercise unselfish love, failing to focus on God and his promises, failing to trust that our God is guiding things for our benefit, failing to love God with all our heart, failing to love our neighbors as God would have us love them.

We see failure.

As we think about it, it frustrates us. It hurts. We're no different than those disciples, running away, failing over and over. What losers!

### **A new day**

What a difference a day makes! Though the disciples' stomachs must have churned all day Saturday, how their spirits must have soared on Sunday. For there stood Jesus, right in their midst. He had risen!

All the failures of the disciples? They were gone, whisked away with the sight of Jesus' outstretched, nail-

pierced hands and his soothing words: "Peace be with you!" (John 20:19).

On Saturday they felt like failures. On Saturday they probably felt as if Jesus was a failure. But on Sunday? On Sunday they realized that Jesus was the biggest winner ever, and because they were connected to him, they were winners, too. What a difference a day makes!

## **Because Jesus rose from the dead, and because God has connected us to Jesus, we are not losers.**

We wonder about our lives—like the disciples on Saturday. We see our own weaknesses, shortcomings, and failures. We mark ourselves losers. But it's just the opposite. Because Jesus rose from the dead, and because God has connected us to Jesus, we are not losers. We're winners. Right now!

We may not feel as if we're winners, and often we don't act like winners, and certainly many in the world wouldn't call us winners. Then again, they didn't call the Easter-eve disciples winners, either. But they were. They were winners because their Jesus was about to get out of the grave. The disciples were winners—not because of who they were, but because they were connected to Jesus. Because God has connected you to Jesus, you're a winner, too. No matter what it looks like now.

Someday the heavens are going to split open, and the same Jesus who said, "Peace be with you!" to those first-century disciples is going to say to his 21st-century disciples, "Peace be with you!"

He's going to come back to this earth, and you'll have the honor of looking at the same Jesus as the first-century disciples did. You'll have the joy of seeing those same nail-pierced hands outstretched. The same Jesus who ate with the Emmaus disciples on the day he rose will welcome you to the eternal banquet feast in heaven. You will be winners forever.

How can you know it's true? How can you know it's real? It's all true, it's all real because Jesus didn't stay in the grave. It's all true because Jesus rose. Because Jesus rose, you're forgiven. Because Jesus rose, you're a winner. Now . . . and forever!

Oh, fellow winners—what a difference a day makes!



*Thomas Kock is pastor at Living Word, Johnson City, Tennessee.*





# GOING TO

What do you do when a young adult is out of control? Journey to

**F**or whatever reason, the mix in our family just was not working. Sin, in and with our DNA, was combining with Satan's promptings to have my husband, my son, and me at each other's throats as our son entered his teenage years. There came a moment when through tears and cries to God I knew that if things continued as they were, something terrible would happen before the year's end.

Worse than the anger and disobedience, our son seemed to delight in calling into question many of the things he had learned in our church's elementary school. Maybe this is a common temptation of the teenage years, but we saw him playing hackysack with the holiness of God's Word, and we were enormously bothered.

However, I was almost more bothered by my own inability to correctly apply the word of truth to our parenting situations. We were acting like people who were blazing their own frustrated trails up the steep and thorny path of the teenage years instead of following the guidance of the Good Shepherd.

## Acknowledging the problem

God sent us an "angel" in the form of my sister-in-law. Happy, upbeat "Jill" visited us in the summer. A trained WELS elementary teacher and longtime behavioral disabilities para-educator, she interacted well with our son, even during his stormy mood changes. Our son loved having

her at our house for that week.

Jill watched "Tim" manipulate his parents even as she watched our mercurial parenting style. She modeled some appropriate ways of speaking to him in a non-threatening, yet firm way. He responded well. When we tried, it seemed like trying to glue wings onto an ostrich. In her thoughtful, insightful way, Jill said one night, "I think Calvary Academy in South Milwaukee would be good for Tim."

I denied, then cried, then made an appointment to talk to our pastor.

## Facing the solution

My husband was already holding down two intense jobs, and I had just lost a job. We were playing "funny money" with our checkbook and bills each week, always keeping just ahead of the returned check fees. We had already remortgaged our house for years of tuitions and credit card debts. I shuddered at the thought of burdening my husband with the news that we should spend \$45 per day for 18 months of private counseling and behavior restructuring at Calvary Academy, a WELS-affiliated residential facility for children in crisis. He reacted as I thought he would, asking, "Where are we going to get \$24,000?"

But then we went as a family to Calvary. Not South Milwaukee's Calvary, not yet. In spirit we went once again to the Judean hill of two millennia ago. Looking in faith to the Christ of the cross who had paid for

every ugly thing we had been saying to each other for the past three years, for each filthy thought we ever had viewing a PG-13 video, every disgusting act against our individual Table of Duties, for each despairing word we had uttered, for our failure to love, and our failure to pray. We laid down also our own inability to change the situation in our home.

Then God the Holy Spirit spoke to us from Romans 8, "He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?" (v. 32). As Armin Panning writes in *The People's Bible*, "If (or rather since) God did the greater thing of giving his own Son into death to win salvation for us, won't he now also do all the lesser and easier things to see to it that we actually get that salvation?" (p. 143).

It has been said that the only thing you can "take with you" are the souls of those you have led to Jesus. We thought of that, and the money issue evaporated. The three of us went to see our pastor, and he told Tim the news for us. "Tim, your parents have made the decision for you to attend Calvary Academy." Then we lovingly but firmly escorted our son to Calvary's doors.

## Focusing on the Good Shepherd

We now have our son back. We rejoiced at the graduation ceremony with its wonderful focus on our Good Shepherd. We hugged and shook



# CALVARY

## Calvary Academy in Milwaukee, after stopping at the cross of Christ.

hands with the incredibly caring Calvary staff. We looked in their eyes and saw Jesus. We marveled that Calvary was here at a time when we needed it so desperately, and that out of several hundred thousand WELS members, our son was one of 15 to be enrolled for those 18 back-from-the-dead months.

The first day Tim was home was like heaven compared with the years following his 12th birthday. The first night our son was home saw hell raising its wand of despair and hopelessness as we fell into old communication patterns.

Our son wailed, "It's all happening again. It's like it was before." Panicking, he said, "I want to go back to Calvary!"

God intervened. He led me to hug my son, read to him from Psalms and Isaiah 43, and then turn out the light saying, "Go to sleep. God cares, and everything will look so much better in the morning." But I had doubts about my own abilities improving by dawn.

God intervened further, taking this mom by the scruff of her neck and saying, "The wise woman builds her house, but with her own hands the foolish one tears hers down" (Proverbs 14:1). Proverbs has a unique way of bringing out the sinful folly of many of our behaviors. So, I roughed out a schedule for the rest of the summer with promises to tighten up even more once school started.

### Following through on the lessons

Calvary Academy has permitted parents to stretch out their payments to several years interest free. However, it will be a joy for us to find a loan provider so that we can quickly pay off our balance. We know that this wonderful institution, which has provided emotional, spiritual, and behavioral CPR on many young people, is itself in need of having its financial oxygen supply replenished.

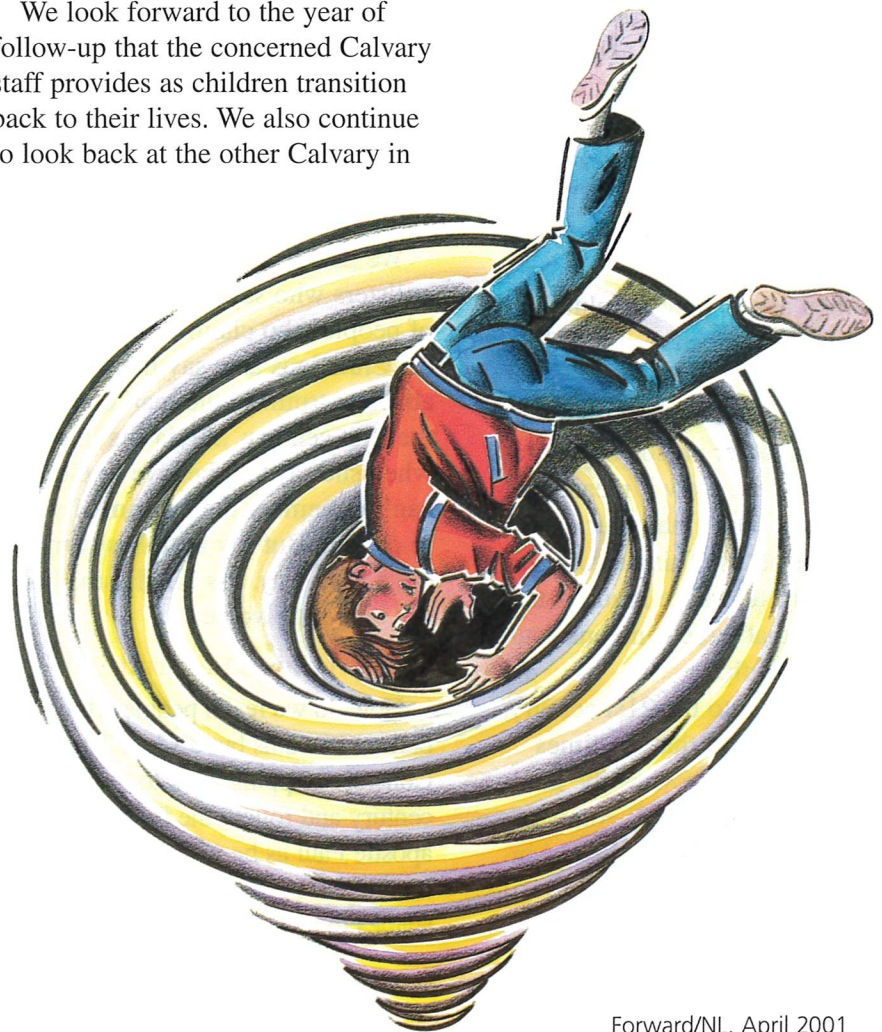
We look forward to the year of follow-up that the concerned Calvary staff provides as children transition back to their lives. We also continue to look back at the other Calvary in

thankfulness for our own deliverance from the sin that bound us. Daily we look to God for opportunities to thank him as the need for both Calvarys increases with the population and times.

*For more information, see page 25.*



*Because of the personal nature of this article, the author wishes to remain anonymous.*





# The real truth

Proclaiming the resurrection in the 21st-century marketplace.



Steven C. Degner

“**D**ad, the kids in my AP English class are so careful to make comments that won’t hurt the feelings of others in the class. It almost seems that they are afraid to step on someone’s toes.” Then my son mused, “No one seems to be wearing any shoes.”

## The world’s view of truth

Shortly after hearing these words from my high school senior, I read an article by Josh McDowell who described a conversation he had with his son Sean, also a senior in high school. He asked, “Son, in your 12 years of public school, were you ever taught that anything is absolutely true?”

His son surprised him by saying, “Sure.”

He then asked what absolute truth he had learned. Sean responded, “Tolerance.”

Tolerance used to mean that you respected another person’s right to a different view. Now it means that you dare not insist that your truth is superior or better. This new meaning for the word tolerance requires that we believe that there is no one source of absolute truth.

As we step into the 21st century, we need to realize that the times have changed. If we view the landscape around us, we will come to the conclusion that Dorothy did in the *Wizard of Oz*, “We’re not in Kansas anymore.”

One of the first lectures my son attended in a secular college began with the professor saying, “There are no right answers in this class.” The question facing us today is: “How do we reach a generation that communicates with its eyes and thinks with its feelings?”

**Tolerance of all truths, even conflicting views, may feel good for the moment, but it does not provide a lasting solution for nagging uncertainty.**

We puzzle at the findings of pollsters who say that 61 percent of people who claim to be evangelical Christians also say there is no absolute truth. In the marketplace of the 21st century, Sheila fits in well when she says, “I believe in God. I can’t remember the last time I went to church. But my faith has carried me a long way. It’s Sheilaism. Just my own little voice.”

## Paul proclaims the Truth

How do we reach people who believe in truths but disdain Truth? Consider stepping back to the first century and follow the footsteps of the apostle Paul as he walks through the marketplace in Athens. The plethora of statues to different gods and the open-

ness to different ideas and different truths led him to see how religious the people were. Distress gripped him when he saw the city was full of idols (Acts 17:16). Our English word “paroxysm”—a sudden convulsion or outburst—comes directly from the Greek word for distress. Paul’s stomach churned to have these people come to the Truth as the Lord had revealed it to him.

“Men of Athens, I see that in every way you are very religious. For as I walked around and looked carefully at your objects of worship, I even found an altar with this inscription: TO AN UNKNOWN GOD” (Acts 17:22,23). With these words Paul demonstrates compassion, love, concern, and understanding for those who did not know Jesus as the way, the truth, and the life.

What if Paul joined us in walking through the marketplace of the 21st century? Can’t you hear him tell the current generation, “I can see that in every way you are very religious”? A popular marketing analyst, Faith Popcorn, writes, “We’re at the start of a Great Awakening. A time of spiritual upheaval and religious revival. . . . What’s different about this awakening is that there’s very little agreement on who or what God is, what constitutes worship, and what this ritualistic outpouring means for the future direction of our civilization.” Spirituality sells in a materialistic world.



Paul was distressed, yet he was confident that he had the Truth to reach people adrift in a sea of different truths. He proclaimed the true God. "The God who made the world and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth and does not live in temples built by hands" (Acts 17:24).

With his stomach churning and his heart pounding in love he pleaded, "But now he commands all people everywhere to repent." He warned about the judgment to come. "For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed." He spoke to a generation that said, "What is truth?" by anchoring his statements in the supreme truth of Christ's resurrection from the dead. "He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead" (Acts 17:30,31).

### The touchstone of all truth

This is how we reach a generation marooned on an island where all truth is relative. Proclaim Truth by proclaiming that Jesus Christ rose from the dead.

What happens when the Truth collides with truths that are bouncing around like agitated electrons? An explosion takes place. Some sneer and walk away. Others say, "We want to hear you again on this subject" (Acts 17:32). Some in our generation will shrug their shoulders, or slouch down in their seats and say, "Whatever," "Who cares?" or "That's your truth." Others will see the risen Christ as Paul did on the road to Damascus. The resurrection of Christ is the touchstone of all truth.

Tolerance of all truths, even con-

flicting views, may feel good for the moment, but it does not provide a lasting solution for nagging uncertainty. When your lips are chapped and dry, you can find immediate relief by licking them. Then what happens? For a moment they feel better, but then it gets worse. The appropriate cure is not more licking. It is lip balm.

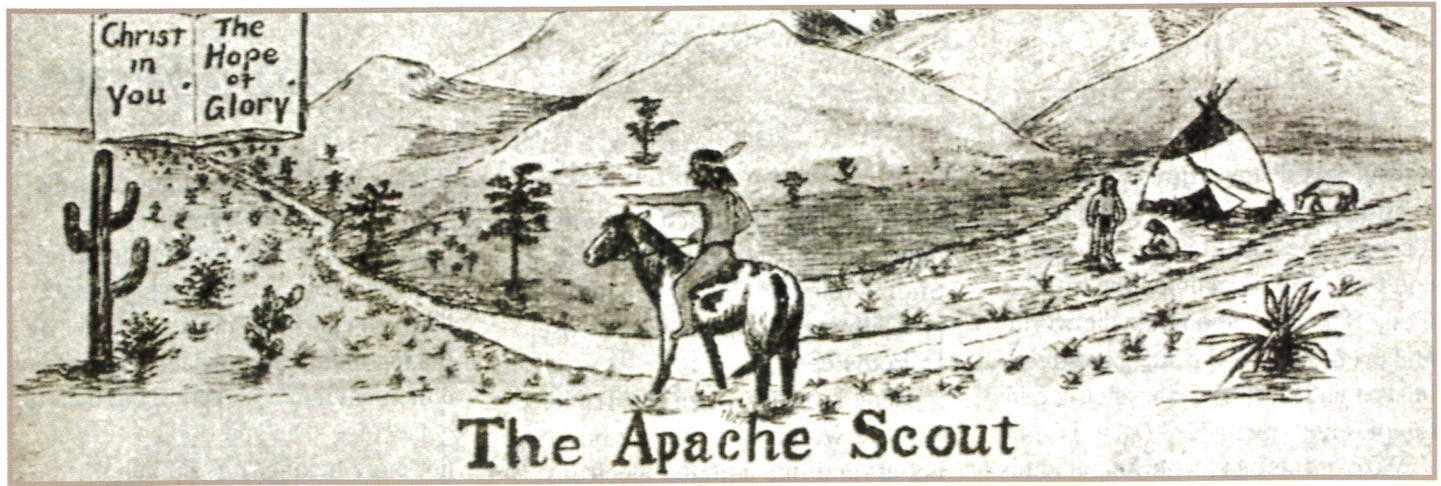
Proclaim Christ and his resurrection as the cure for uncertainty. This holds true for every generation and every group of people as Paul testified, "He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead" (Acts 17:31). Proof to all people? Yes, even people of the 21st-century marketplace afraid to step on someone's toes.



Steven Degner is pastor at Star of Bethlehem, Santa Maria, California.







# LUTHERAN APACHE SOLDIERS

Letters from Apache soldiers show the soldiers' faith and courage during World War II.

Ruth G. Kessel

**B**efore their country called them to serve in World War II, many young Apache men had never traveled beyond the boundaries of their homeland, the Fort Apache Indian Reservation in Arizona.

**As an ever increasing number of young Apache men left for boot camp, and then on to duty overseas, letters to E. Edgar Guenther, missionary to the Apaches, began filling the Whiteriver Lutheran Mission post office box.** About 300 Apaches went to war, and Pastor Guenther and his wife, Minnie, corresponded with over 100 of them.

Pastor Guenther spent hours every night writing to them. Minnie sent packages containing Bibles, devotional booklets, stationery and pencils, copies of *The Apache Scout*, little gifts, piñons and acorns from the trees on the reservation, and candy.

The letters kept coming—from France, Italy, New Guinea, Germany, the Philippines, from war zones and hospitals. The logistics of keeping in touch with so many men were daunting.

But then Pastor Guenther had an idea. *The Apache Scout*, an eight-page monthly newsletter started by Pastor Guenther in 1923 for those on the San Carlos and Fort Apache reservations, was the perfect vehicle for the servicemen to keep in touch with everyone. Pastor Guenther started a military column that listed names and addresses of the Apache men in the service. He then invited the men to write where they were and what they were doing. *The Apache Scout* printed their letters and announcements of promotions, the location of the wounded, and the names of the dead. The men sent poems, pictures, prayers, cartoons, and Christmas cards. They described the places they had seen and the things they had done. The letters are a lasting testament to the bravery and courage of those Christian Apache soldiers.

## Here are excerpts from some of the letters (as written):

As to start my letter (from the South Pacific) I would like to thank you very much for the Christmas package I received from you. I thank you more

than words can say in fact with all my heart. The boys gathered around me as I showed them the books and read several passages. I never felt so happy in all my life.—R.M.

Thanks to you both for the nice Bible, Prayer Book, stationaries, etc., which I wanted, above all I'll never forget it. . . . Thanks to Lord Jesus that I'm fine. I pray to him each night and each morning.—J.D.

We boys out here in the tropics are missing the good old white Christmas again. This will make two Christmas' in the jungle for us. . . . We've been thru many danger spots during the past couple of years and seen plenty of Tojos planes but I know our Savior is right with us everywhere we go and spread His wings o'er us.—R.Z.

I was really happy over the Christmas package you and Mrs. Guenther sent me. That Apache Scout paper was really good too, I read it over a couple of times before I went to bed and



after I went to bed I was still thinking about that article "Home on the Range." And today I broke into the pinion nuts that you sent and had a handful and went walking around the camp eating them while thinking of home. I didn't believe myself eating pinions way out here in Marianas Islands. . . . We had quite a battle here with the Japs, I was praying to the Lord in my fox hole.—L.H.

I have just received the Apache Scout here. I sure enjoyed reading what you had written in that edition. I have been over here in South Pacific on this island for 18 months now but when I read the Scout it seem that I have been all over the reservation again. I know you are preaching to our people on the reservation and that you are praying for us that are serving in the Armed forces. . . . Please keep on praying for us.—F.D.

Really Rev. Guenther, I appreciate the things your race of people did when they raised me. Also I'm glad I have found the right way to praise and give thanks to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. I was wondering and worrying for a long time, where I would be now hadn't it been for the Lutheran church to adopt me. Wishing you the blessing of God our Father and of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.—B.J.

My friend Willie and I were like to have a new issue *The Apache Scout*. I wish you would send some to us, because we have nothing to read out here in the jungle. I arrive here in New Guinea from Australia. . . . I was in action on Admiralty. Boy! was it a tough day, that day I never thought that I would get through there safe.

The Japs were firing at us on both side of the harbor where we make landing, I can see the bullets flying over our heads, it sound like somebody hitting the drum, but our plane was protecting us. . . . On Sunday me and Willie we both promoted to K.P. and after we finish our job we went to Sunday services.—R.C.

I was very glad today when I got the package from you. Was even more glad to get the Apache Scouts and the Bible stories. . . . Thanks to our Lord who has protected me through the dangerous life. He is with me so now I have nothing to be afraid of. I went through Schwienfurt, Nurmberg, and through Munich Germany. . . . I met one of the Apache boy from Canyon Day. . . . It was a very happy day when we spoke to each other in our own language again.—R.K.

There are boys here from Cibicue, Cedar Creek, and East Fork and we all belong to Lutheran Church. So far I know everything is alright since we came over here, but

A typical photo sent to Pastor Guenther from an Apache correspondent. On the back, it reads: "Please don't forget me in your prayer. To a friend, from a friend."—R.C.

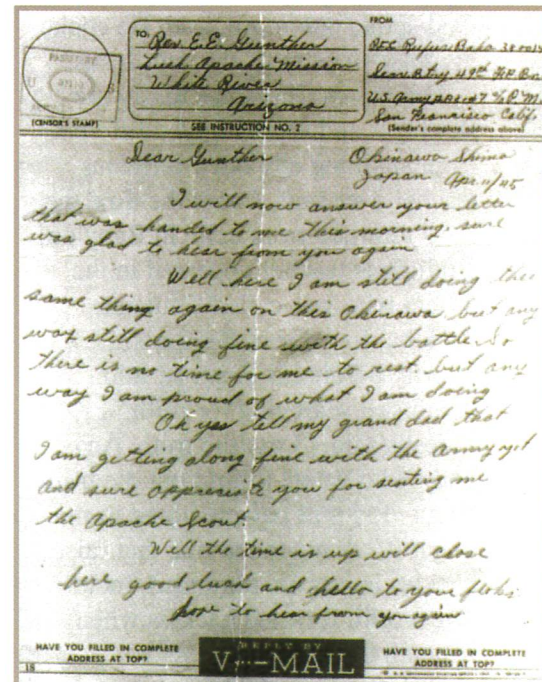


sometimes we are lonesome about home. Please tell our folks not to worry about the boys over here but teach them the Word of God and not to worry. I pray to God every night to protect me from all trouble so I can come back home and listen to God's word in our church again.—E.N.

I thought of dropping you a few lines and while I was writing this message I was thinking of the Lutheran church at Whiteriver. Wondering if the church bell is calling Come! Come! right at this very moment. I just could see the church bell swinging back and forth calling all Indians to come to church.—N.D.



Ruth Kessel, daughter of Pastor E. Edgar Guenther, is a member at Peace, Cottonwood, Arizona.



A typical v-mail letter. The term v-mail first appeared more than 50 years ago for a method of micro-filming U.S. forces' mail to and from home to cut down shipping costs (the V stood then for "victory").



*Christology (kris-TO-lo-ji) is not an everyday word for most of us. It's the Bible teaching that answers the question: Who is Jesus Christ? Your answer to that question determines where you spend eternity. This series of articles will try to help you see that who Jesus is determines whether or not he can save sinners.*

# JESUS IS THE GOD-MAN

**Jesus' dual nature gives authority to what he says  
and validity to his work of saving sinners.**

John C. Jeske

**W**hen God wanted to speak to a world of people, he did not first conduct a public opinion poll to learn what people wanted to hear. Speaking through prophets and apostles, God gave us the message of heaven in the language of earth. He even gave it to us in writing. Then, after speaking through prophets and apostles, God spoke one more time. He spoke his final word to us through Jesus.

The things Christ has to say are sharply—and shockingly—different from anything any other religious teacher ever said. About the time the Jews returned from exile in Babylon, a religious teacher appeared in the Orient who was called Gautama Buddha, founder of Buddhism. Shortly before his death he said, “I am still searching for truth.”

Jesus said: “I am the truth. Anybody who wants to find out the truth about God will have to come to me to get it.” A statement like that raises hackles in our broadminded, inclusive world. It raised hackles when Jesus first said it too.

Or how about this statement of Jesus? “Don't let anybody or anything come between you and me. If anything does, get rid of it. If your eye misleads you, gouge it out! If your hand or your foot does things

that disturb your relationship with God, cut it off! Better for you to enter life crippled, or with one eye, than to have two eyes and hands and feet and to go to hell.”

Although the question sounds impolite, perhaps even blasphemous, we need to ask: What gives Jesus the right to make such claims and demands?

### **Jesus' dual nature gives authority to what he says**

Lutheran Christology answers that question by emphasizing: “Jesus Christ is the God-Man.” The *Formula of Concord*, one of Lutheranism's statements of beliefs, states: “We believe, teach, and confess . . . that Jesus Christ is now in one person at the same time true, eternal God, born of the Father from eternity, and a true man, born of the most blessed Virgin Mary” (F.C. VIII:6).

When Jesus spoke, he spoke not only as a Galilean carpenter-teacher. He spoke as God in human form. Christ's dual nature gives authority to what he says. What lies at the heart of everything Jesus said is the basic claim he made for himself: “I and the Father are one” (John 10:30).

### **Jesus' dual nature gives validity to his work of saving sinners**

Christ's two natures did not act independently of each other. Those

two natures form one undivided person. Lutheran Christology teaches that Christ performed all his saving acts according to both natures. My brain tells me: “God cannot die.” But because of this mutual sharing of Christ's two natures, the Bible can say that the Son of God shed his blood and died and that Mary's son exercised almighty power.

Do you see what difference this makes to you? You will remember that when God gave his law to humans, he said basically two sorts of things. He said something about obedience, and he said something about disobedience. The one he demands, the other he forbids. God still says these two things to every human:

- “Obey me, and do everything I command you, and you will be my people, and I will be your God” (Jeremiah 11:4).
- “Cursed is the man who does not uphold the words of this law by carrying them out” (Deuteronomy 27:26).

### **A double job**

Our Savior, therefore, had a double job to do, in order to ransom and to restore us to a place in God's family. As our substitute, he first had to provide that perfect obedience to the Word and the will of God that God demanded—but never got—from you



and me. This is Christ's active obedience—doing what we had not done.

The other half of Christ's assignment was to undo what we had done. On that awful Friday we call "Good," he suffered the curse God announced on our sinfulness. "It was the LORD's will to crush him and cause him to suffer" (Isaiah 53:10). This work we call Christ's passive obedience. The one who died on the skull-shaped hill was not just an unfortunate martyr to a good cause. Our substitute intercepted and then absorbed in his own holy body God's white-hot anger over sin. As a human, Jesus took the place of sinful humans under the holy demands God's law makes of every sinner and under the curse God's law announces on every sinner.

Imagine that before you finish reading this article a magnificent trumpet sounds, and in a split second you're standing before the Judge of all the earth. What will you answer when he asks, "Have you kept my law perfectly?" I hope you'll answer, "Yes, Father, I have—not personally, but through my substitute, Jesus. In my place he gave you perfect obedience. He lived the life I owed, and he died the death I had coming."

In order to be able to do that, the Messiah promised by God had to be a real human being. Jesus is that.

But he had to be more. Imagine that you are absolutely sinless in God's sight. On Judgment Day God would say, "Come, my child. Enter the joy of your Lord!" But what if you would say, "May I take my family with me?" The Judge would have to answer, "Your holiness is sufficient for you but not for you and them. They'll have to stand before me on their own."

## Lutheran Christology emphasizes the vital link between Christ's dual nature and our forgiveness.

Do you see why our flesh-and-blood Savior had to be God? The perfect life he lived and the innocent death he died had to be adequate to save not only himself but an entire human race. Because two natures are united in Christ, the perfect life he lived was actually not a single life, but one life for every person who

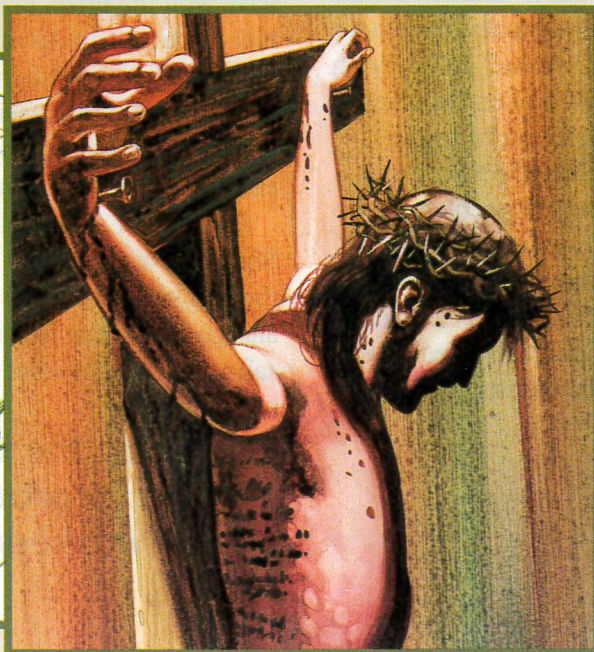
ever lived. And because the death on Calvary was the death of the Son of God, that death has infinite value. The death Jesus died was actually not a single death, but one death for every person who ever lived.

Do you see how important Lutheran Christology is for your faith? It emphasizes the vital link between Christ's dual nature and our forgiveness. Because it was the God-Man who lived our life and died our death, he reconciled to God every human being. A righteous God can—without compromising his principles—justly consider the penalty for sin to have been paid for all sinners.

Martin Luther wrote many beautiful prayers but none more beautiful than the one incised in marble at the base of his statue on Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary's campus: "Lord Jesus, you are my righteousness; I am your sin. You became what you were not, and made me to be what I was not."



*John Jeske, a retired pastor, is a member at St. Luke, Watertown, Wisconsin.*





# “Once upon a time . . .”

## Outgrowing a fairy-tale faith.

John L. Eich

Children love to hear stories of giants, castles, and fairy princesses. The world of make-believe and the world of really-believe can often mingle in a child’s mind. Heaven and Oz, God and Santa Claus, life after death and enchanted forests—as a child we received them all in such trust and such confusion. As maturing Christians, we need to separate truth and fantasy because there are faith fairy tales that Satan wants us to believe.



### **Pollyanna or a reality-based faith**

There is the Pollyannaish fairy tale with its image of the Christian life as a “Six Flags over Jesus”—a continuous joy ride. We may not say those words. But every time we complain “Why me?” or “It’s not fair” or “God didn’t do this or that,” we are showing that this fairy tale has gotten into our minds.

We’re expecting life to be a smooth ride. Christianity is a reality-based faith. It doesn’t minimize sin, suffering, disappointment, or death. It doesn’t inflate human ability, success, and feelings. It sees us as we are: saint and sinner, blessed and cursed, hopeless and hope filled. It sees us as we are and as God sees us through Christ.

The child’s lullaby, “Rock a bye baby,” teaches a timeless truth. It doesn’t say, “If the bough breaks, the cradle will fall.” It says, “When the bough breaks.” To be living in this world is to live in the midst of broken branches, failing families, fractured futures. Life can be tragic.

Faith enables us to experience and explore the goodness of God in the midst of life’s greatest problems. Faith enables us to know that God is doing the best of things in the worst of times. Faith doesn’t deny trials, but overcomes them as it trusts in the limitless love of the heavenly Father. With faith we aren’t shocked when bad things happen. Rather we rejoice because we are sharing in the sufferings of Christ.

*Faith doesn’t deny trials,  
but overcomes them.*



### **Boy who cried wolf or the voice of the Good Shepherd**

There is the “boy who cried wolf” fairy tale. Telemarketers call to tell you that you have won the grand prize of a contest (which you haven’t even entered). Now all you have to do is give them your charge card number or bank numbers so that they can transfer a \$100 processing/shipping fee and you’ll receive your prize. Yeah, right! We see this fairy tale a mile away.

Do we miss the spiritual fairy tales just like it? Satan, the great deceiver, tempts us into believing that we can gain so much more enjoyment by spending our time and money on the things of this world. He tells us that we have won the prize, even though he is stealing our spiritual resources out from under us. He gets us to believe the “wolf” is coming into our congregations because of some problem or decision, so that we run for cover and stay away from our God-given strength—the Word and sacraments and Christian fellowship.

Let’s listen attentively to the voice of our Good Shepherd who has laid down his life to protect us from the real wolf in sheep’s clothing. Jesus speaks the truth and gives us what he says—forgiveness, new life, and salvation. We get what he paid for.

*Listen to the Good Shepherd, who works to protect us from the real wolf in sheep’s clothing—Satan.*





### King Midas or life eternal

Then there is the Midas-like fairy tale that everything we touch is to turn to gold. Now, we can spot a fake \$20 bill. The holographic images and minute printing make counterfeiting difficult at best. Yet so many of us fall for this spiritual Midas fairy tale—that it's what you've got that matters.

Work harder, save more, buy more. But a money-and-materialism mentality soon finds that, as Jesus says, "A man's life does not consist in the abundance of his possessions" (Luke 12:15). Many pierce themselves with all sorts of trials and problems because they believe this materialistic fairy tale. Our security doesn't lie in what we possess, but in who possesses us.

God never guarantees our life will be gold-plated and silver-lined. However, Christians aren't without hope for a golden future. We are the most hope-filled people in the world. Our hope isn't for this world. It's for the eternal world yet to come. Jerusalem the golden, the city fair and wide, that's when everything really does turn golden.

*Our security doesn't lie in what we possess, but in who possesses us.*



### Peter Pan or growing in God's Word

There is the Peter Pan fairy tale, the "I'll never grow up" faith. This is the "everything I need to know I learned in Sunday school" approach to Christianity. We are called to be childlike in our faith. But it's a sad reality that we see more childishness than "child-likeness" in God's family. There is a resistance to growing in the Word because it isn't fun.

Sure we need the foundational, elementary teachings about Christ. But you can't keep laying a foundation. What would people think if you had a six-story foundation? You need to add the walls and the roof and finish

the inside of this spiritual temple of God that we call our life. We are to progress into the deeper spiritual things of God. The only way we do this is by continually learning and growing in God's Word. The more you grow, the more "Christlikeness" people will see in you. This is growing up in Christ!

*We all need to "grow up" in Christ.*



### Justifying behavior or accepting consequences

One additional fairy tale we can fall for is to justify unrighteous and selfish behavior with excuses: "It's not my fault," "That's just the way I am," "I was abused," "I'm an only child," "I'm a middle child," "I came from a broken home," "I was born this way." I'm not suggesting insensitivity to real hurts, but we need to get over them. We have to move beyond acting out and excusing sinful behaviors because we are victims. Let's bring those wounds to Jesus so he will heal them.

Little children don't understand the difference between ant spray and apple juice, cough medicine and Kool-Aid. They stick anything in their mouth that fits. They touch anything they can reach. They will crawl, climb, and toddle their way into harmful situations. As we grow in Christ, we learn to distinguish between what is good and evil. Maturing Christians see more clearly the consequences of their attitudes and actions. Enabled through Word and sacraments, they choose more and more to put off the works of the sinful flesh and to honor God and serve others with their actions.

*Bring your wounds to Jesus so he can heal them.*



**W**hat we believe will have eternal, not to mention earthly, consequences for us. God wants us to outgrow the fractured fairy tales Satan tells and to grow up in the timeless truths that God provides. May we do just that.



*John Eich is pastor at Grace, Alma, Michigan.*



# WHATEVER

## Dating dilemma

Should religion be a deciding factor in whom to date?

Catrina J. Meyers

It was the middle of my junior year, and I was trying to get over a bad break-up. My friend, Caleb, was doing all he could to help me. We started spending most of our free time together, and our relationship deepened. The only problem was that Caleb was a Seventh-day Adventist.

My parents were reluctant about our growing relationship. They warned me about dating someone with a different religious background, telling me how difficult it would be and worrying about the harm that could come to my faith. Being the know-it-all teenager that I am, I pretended to listen to their advice and dated Caleb anyway.

**As the months went by, it became apparent to me how different our beliefs really were.** I was concerned with his spiritual life and invited him to church. He attended Lenten services with me. At first I thought he was going to church because he had a true interest in WELS, but I soon realized that he was going just to be with me and to make me happy.

I told Caleb about my faith and why I believe the things I do. I explained about communion and forgiveness of sins, baptism, and eternal life. I told him how Jesus lived a perfect life and died for the sins of the world. He was stubborn and shot down everything I said.

In response, I asked him to explain his religion's teachings. I figured that if I understood more about his beliefs, then I would know where he was coming from. He told me bits and pieces. When I asked him questions, he got defensive. He finally refused to say anything more about it and claimed that he really didn't

know enough about his faith to tell me more.

My pastor was a huge help and gave me literature about Seventh-day Adventists. Soon it seemed I knew more about Caleb's religion than he did. I would ask him questions, and when he didn't know the answers, I would tell him what one of his church leaders had said. He would blindly agree with it, saying that it sounded right.

We started having heated discussions about religion that soon turned into fights. We would usually have these discussions over the phone, and I would end up crying when we hung up. It was not the way I pictured things turning out.

**I prayed every night that I would be the tool to bring Jesus into Caleb's life.** I relied heavily on God to help me. I prayed for the right words to say and for guidance to find the right Bible passages to encourage him. Psalm 50:15 comforted me: "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you and you will honor me." I called really loud for strength, and God gave it to me.

After about a month of intensified disagreements, Caleb and I experienced a period of silence on the subject. Then we decided to break up. It had been in the back of our minds for a few weeks. He finally put into words what we had both been thinking. We both cried, but agreed to the decision, knowing it would be best in the end. He never called me again. Our relationship and our friendship ended.

My parents' advice in this situation was right on. Having friends of a different religion is one thing, but having a "significant other" who does not share my religious beliefs is a whole new ballgame.

Catrina Meyers, a senior at California Lutheran High School in Wildomar, is a member at St. Stephen, Fallbrook, California.







The disciples wondered why they couldn't do what Jesus had commissioned them to do: drive out a demon. Jesus answered them in two ways. "Because you have so little faith," he said, and "this kind can come out only by prayer." Jesus connected faith and prayer. The disciples caught on (this time!). As far as we know, they never asked Jesus to teach them to preach or teach. They did ask him, "Lord, teach us to pray." Jesus responded by pointing them to a prayer he had taught them earlier. He teaches us to take care of our souls by paying attention to prayer.

## Health factor—Prayer

### God's Word

• Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one (Matthew 6:9-13).

1. What does the first word, "Our," teach you about prayer?
2. Not in volumes of Jewish prayer literature did anyone call God "Father"—until Jesus. Jesus called God "Father" over 200 times in the gospels. His first recorded words were, "Didn't you know I must be in my Father's house?" What does Jesus teach us about prayer with the simple word "Father"?
3. Jesus always addressed God as "Father" when he prayed—except once. The single exception came from the cross when Jesus prayed, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" Isaiah helps us understand the change: "the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all" (53:6). In your own words, why did the crucified Jesus call out to "God" instead of "Father"?
4. Underline each specific request in the verses above. Count the underlined requests. How many of them can you hold or touch? What does that teach you about prayer?
5. Jesus fit his model prayer into 58 words. What does that teach you about prayer?

### My soul for personal check-up

1. The Lord's Prayer asks for only 14 percent physical blessings. What percentage of my prayers ask for physical blessings?
2. Challenge yourself to pray specifically for each of the requests you underlined. If you're not sure what to pray for, check out Luther's explanation on the Web site listed below.
3. For the next week, make one of the Lord's Prayer requests your "theme of the day." Pray it often and try to bring it into your conversations.
4. What are your earliest recollections of praying the Lord's Prayer? Call or write the person responsible and thank him/her.

### My church for group check-up

1. List your ideas for making the Lord's Prayer more meaningful in your church.
2. Create a mission statement for your church using the Lord's Prayer as a guide.
3. Which of these requests do you find the most difficult to practice?
4. Most likely, Jesus didn't include the words, "the kingdom, power, and glory are yours." A thousand years earlier, though, King David used those words in a prayer after a building fund drive. By 400 years after Christ, some churches were adding those words. Today not all churches include them. List all the reasons to include them. List reasons for not including them.

### Web-med

*Intriguing Web sites to help you continue your check-up.*

Read Luther's explanations of the Lord's Prayer at <http://www.wels.net/sab/listen/luth-sm-cat.html#lp>.

Find a Bible study on the Lord's Prayer and daily prayers at <http://www.wels.net/sab/frm-talk.html>.

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





## Behind the scenes

Lights. Camera. Action!

A new director is born. Not for the movies, but for WELS media communications.

Steve Zambo started as media communications director in January. In this position he is working to help all WELS areas of ministry as well as WELS congregations expand their use of media in their ministry. This media includes newspapers, television, cable, video, and Web-based services.

Zambo hopes to accomplish this task by

- Consulting with areas of ministry and congregations in the actual conceiving, writing, and producing of the media. "I want to help people think through what they need to do," says Zambo.

- Training and educating people in the effective use of media through one-on-one consulting, workshops and seminars, and videos. "I'd like to see every congregation have a media ministry committee, which would determine how to use the Web, local television, and print media to get the Word out," says Zambo.

- Creating tools to make media production easier for congregations.

- Providing the areas of ministry and congregations cost-effective, professional options for media production.

His dreams for the future include putting together a WELS V-tour (a virtual tour of the WELS synod

administration building) and developing a continuous broadcast of audio and visual programming over the Internet.

In all this Zambo will work to present the truth creatively. "But," he warns, "you can't have the sizzle without the steak [God's Word]."

The media communications position, developed from the former director of mass media position, is now under WELS Communication Services. This position will continue to work closely with the Commission on Evangelism in developing mass media programs.

Zambo had worked at Christian Life Resources from 1992-2000, last serving as administrator of Compass Productions. While there he worked on everything from directing and producing videos to writing the original story for and co-producing the feature film *Finding Home*. Prior to that he served as director of state governor relations for Senator Bob Kasten and director of private sector initiatives for President George H. W. Bush. Zambo graduated from Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, in 1981, with an associate of arts degree and received a bachelor of arts degree from Carroll College, Waukesha, Wis., in 1983.

Zambo and his wife, Beth, have five children: Benjamin (15), Jessica (13), Ashley (11), Nathan (7), and Peter (2 months).

*If you have a need for media assistance or wish to use your gifts in the area of media, contact Steve Zambo at <stevez@sab.wels.net>.*

**Steve Zambo and his family on-site in Maine for the filming of *Finding Home*. From left: Beth, Nathan, Jessica, Ashley, Steve, and Benjamin.**

## Teens writing on teen issues

### WHATEVER

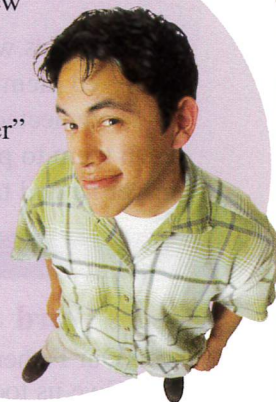
You may notice a new series with a new look on our pages this month (p. 20).

The series "whatever" (what's happening among teens everlasting) is written by teens for teens about teen issues.

We hope the series will give our teen readers (and our adult ones) new perspectives on what issues WELS teens are facing.

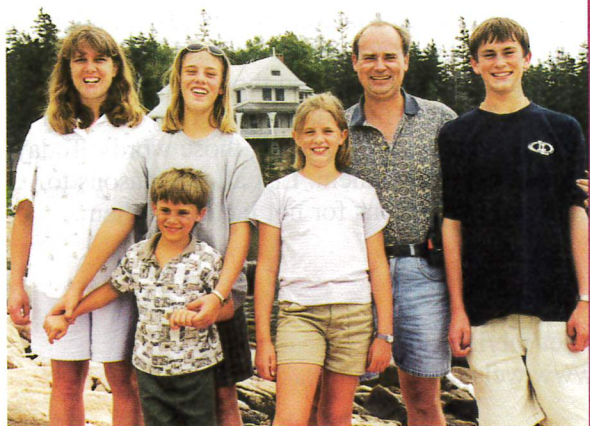
The first four months of the series will feature the winners of a teen writing contest that *Forward/NL* sponsored. But we need more articles. So, teens, let us know what's on your minds. Tell us what issues you're dealing with and how your faith helped you face them. We're looking for 500-word articles with a Christ-centered focus. But keep it real.

Send all articles to *Forward/NL*, Teen articles, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222, or e-mail <fic@sab.wels.net>. Please include your name, address, phone number, e-mail, church, and high school. Call us at 414/256-3231 if you have any questions.



### DEFINING RELIGION

**Mercy:** the compassion and love of God for us sinners that moved him not to count our sins against us, but to count them against his Son Jesus, who was put to death as our substitute. God demonstrates his mercy by forgiving our sins and withholding from us the punishment we deserve.





## REAL TIME WITH A MISSIONARY

*In this section, you'll hear news that came via e-mail from missionaries. We hope you enjoy these tidbits from our missions.*

From Nancy Huwe, a WELS Kingdom Workers volunteer in Thailand:

Although Amnat, a college-aged young Thai man, has attended a few of our Sunday worship services and is an English student in another volunteer's class, my contact with him had been limited to greetings and brief chit-chat.

I was at the center preparing a children's lesson to teach the Christmas story in the Hmong village. I only needed to make 120 copies of the coloring sheet—a picture of the nativity. I saw that the sheet had English words on the bottom and thought it would be good to put an appropriate Thai phrase instead. Although I can write in Thai, I feared writing something just slightly incorrect enough to give it a strange meaning.

Not wanting to make 120 copies

of my possibly humorous attempts, I caught Amnat as he was leaving and asked him to help me think of a Christmas-related phrase to write on the coloring sheet. Amnat looked at me and then stared at the picture of Mary, Joseph, and the baby Jesus. I started suggesting Thai phrases and asked his opinion. He looked at me and said, "I don't know, Nancy. I don't know this story."

I was dumbfounded.

I told him who was in the picture and suggested another phrase. He reworded it in Thai, and we agreed on "Jesus was born for us—each of us."

As he finished writing, it hit me that he really did not know the Christmas story. Somebody had better tell him. I asked him again incredulously, "Amnat, you really don't know the Christmas story?!"

"No," he replied.

I had just studied the Thai vocabulary for the Christmas story. "Guess it's time to use it," I thought. I motioned to the creche at the front



A Christmas celebration at the Baan Ruam Thai Children's Home on the outskirts of Chiangmai, Thailand, in December 2000. WELS missionaries and volunteers teach and witness to about 40 children twice a month at this home. Nancy Huwe and Amnat both are in this photo. Huwe is in the top row, third from the right. Amnat is in the front row, seventh from the left.

of the center, and we sat on the floor as I described each of the characters and their place in the story of God sending his Son to our needy world. Amnat listened attentively.

With the Holy Spirit's help, my stumbling new vocabulary words seemed to make sense to him. Jesus was born for us—each of us.

At Christmas the angels were the honored messengers, telling the shepherds that their Savior had finally been born. How honored I am to have God use me as a messenger to tell this same good news. God was born to be with us—each of us.

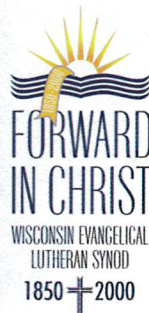
## WELS news briefs

*These updates are from the offices at the synod administration building. You can contact these offices and administrators at 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.*

**Communication Services Commission**  
414/256-3210

**WELS Tech 2001 registration booklets** have been sent to all WELS churches, schools, pastors, and teachers. If you would like this booklet detailing the synodwide technology conference to be held in July, talk to your pastor or e-mail <welstech2001@sab.wels.net>.

Memorabilia  
**C  
A  
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G**



**WELS memorabilia from the Forward in Christ celebration is still available—and now at a reduced price.** A 25 percent discount will be applied to all remaining memorabilia while supplies

last. Send any orders to WELS Communication Services, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222.

### Board for World Missions

414/256-3239



Jud Krohn was commissioned as a WELS missionary to Thailand on Feb. 11, 2001. Krohn and his family plan to arrive in Thailand in August. From left: Haley, Barbara, Jud, and Braeden Krohn.



## Meet the editorial staff—uncut

*Ever ask yourself, “Who are these people who write for Forward/NL?” Through this series you can find out. Read on:*

### Dr. Soul

“How healthy is your soul?” questions Randy Keith Hunter in *Forward/NL’s* Jan. 2001 “Soul care.” This interactive Bible study was the first of 12 that Hunter is writing to help readers determine how healthy they are spiritually.

This calling to help people spiritually as a pastor came to Hunter at an early age. “My parents quietly encouraged me from the time I was in grade school,” he explains.

When Hunter graduated from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in 1985, he was assigned to St. Andrew, Middleton, Wis., where he still serves today. The church he arrived at 16 years ago and the church he serves today are very different places, though.

As Hunter describes, “About a year ago St. Andrew sold its church property. For 12 months we’ve ‘wandered in the wilderness,’ wor-

shipping in a rented church and two different hotels. . . . The people of St. Andrew could have been content with full pews and vibrant adult Bible studies and children’s ministries. But they believed God was blessing them to become a blessing to more. So they stretched. The result? In May we’ll dedicate a building six times larger than the old one. In the fall, we’ll begin an outreach and nurture ministry called Westside Christian School.”

Much of the growth in attendance that God blessed St. Andrew with can be traced back to an increased emphasis on adult spiritual growth through Bible study. As a member of the Commission on Adult Discipleship, Hunter “promotes adult spiritual growth by helping congregations lead God’s people into God’s Word.

“Simply put: we’re into Bible study with a purpose,” says Hunter. “In the last decade I’ve been able to work with hundreds of lay Bible study leaders, dozens of authors,



Paige, Jackson, Philip, Randy, and Karen Hunter enjoy snorkeling in the Florida Keys.

and Northwestern Publishing House. The Bible studies are ready. The leaders are ready. The blessings are ready.”

Are you ready? Read Hunter’s “Soul care” each month to find out what your health factor is, and perform a check-up on your soul.

## Family ties

Randy Hunter’s college roommate had a “cute sister named Karen. I was happy to meet her,” says Hunter, “and, a few years later, even happier to marry her.”

Randy and Karen Hunter have three children: Philip, age 12; Paige, age 10; and Jackson, age 8.



Children at Christ Our Redeemer, Aurora, Colo., created this quilt as part of the congregation’s Forward in Christ celebration. Each child drew a heart and included a favorite Bible passage.



## Stars in the wilderness

Over 140 collegians took the opportunity to usher in the “true millennium” in a unique fashion, deep within the northern woods of Wisconsin.

With over 700 acres of forest, 25 kilometers of cross country ski trails, and breathtaking scenery, the Marvin M. Schwan Retreat and Conference Center in Trego, Wis., was the site of the 2000 WELS National Campus Rally, held Dec. 29, 2000-Jan. 1, 2001.

Away from the hustle and bustle of the city, the Schwan Retreat Center offered a place to relax and learn more about our theme—Shining like Stars in the Wilderness. This theme—based on Philippians 2:15, “You are children of God without fault in a crooked and depraved generation, in which you shine like stars in the universe”—was chosen because of its encouragement to reflect the brightness of Christ’s love and peace to those who are living in darkness.

As Christians in today’s world, we use weekends like the rally to

strengthen our faith and become re-energized to handle the trials of everyday life. For students from a public university, the rally is a time to meet other Christian collegians. It is a time to renew old friendships, meet new lifetime friends, and become closer to our true friend, Jesus. For some, it is even a time to meet their future spouses.

One student at the rally said that it was a great comfort to be around such a large group of fellow Christians. This came from a person who felt he was the only Christian on his campus.

The rally also reminded us to shine like stars in our everyday lives. One student at the rally said someone asked her why she was going all



Students prepare to go snow tubing down hills at the Schwan Retreat Center. Rally attendees had plenty of time to relax and enjoy winter activities during the retreat.

the way to northern Wisconsin for a church event. She said it was a time to learn more about the Lord and spend it with students who believe the same things.

*Paul Osterman & Jena Schwichtenberg  
Students at Minnesota State  
University—Mankato*

## Where are they now?

*In Forward/NL, we report the news but aren't always able to follow up. "Where are they now" is our way of giving you the rest of the story.*

*"School for in-crisis children opens" ran in February 1997.*

### Here's a recap:

In January 1997, Calvary Academy, a boarding school for in-crisis children, opened in South Milwaukee, Wis. Calvary's goal during the youths' 18-month stay was to keep the teens close to God and return them—committed to their Savior—to their families.

### So, where are they now?

Thirty students have been returned to their homes from Calvary's program, 14 of whom have achieved the highest level—graduation. Over 60 (with current

enrollment) have been enrolled in the program. Calvary continues to offer a Christ-centered education, Christian guidance counseling, pastoral care and services, and structured daily living for troubled children and teenagers.

Calvary Academy went national in November 2000, with 26 WELS congregations now part of Calvary's federation. As part of the federation, a congregation can send a delegate to national meetings as well as receive a 10 percent tuition reduction for any student attending the academy.

Going national will help Calvary attain its goal of establishing additional academies when and if needed. New academies will help Calvary maintain its one-on-one contact with students because

it will allow for smaller numbers per academy as well as give them regional accessibility.

Another way Calvary is trying to maintain its high-quality program is by working to change a law stating that students in residential boarding schools have to go home for two consecutive months during the summer. Since sending its students home for that period of time would compromise the work being done, Calvary wants to change that time period to two weeks.

*For more information, contact Calvary Academy, 2200 9th Ave, South Milwaukee WI 53172; 414/571-1522 or 1-800-510-3989; <calcad@globaldialog.com>.*



## District news

### Michigan

On Nov. 5, 2000, **Peace of Our Savior, New Carlisle, Ohio**, dedicated its new education/fellowship building.

### Nebraska

The district's **Platte Circuit** restructured this past year. The restructuring allowed a new mission effort in Alma, Neb., at Water of Life. Water of Life is forming a dual parish with Redeemer, Norton, Kan. Trinity, McCook, Neb., is forming a dual parish with St. Paul, North Platte, Neb.

### South Atlantic

**Faith, St. Petersburg, Fla.**, hosted a Health and Safety Day on the church grounds to reach out to the community.

**Victory, Jacksonville, Fla.**, opened a new ministry center on Mar. 1.

### Southeastern Wisconsin

**Grace Oasis** is a program held at Salem, Milwaukee, every Friday night. Men, women, and teens recovering from drug and alcohol addictions share a meal, Bible study, counseling, and Christian fellowship. A new Grace Oasis program has begun in Waukesha, Wis.

More than 150 women attended the **Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary**

**Auxiliary's annual meeting** on Oct. 4, 2000, at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis.

### South Central



On Feb. 11, members of Calvary, Dallas, Tex., held a service of praise to celebrate the anniversaries of six called workers. The workers have a combined total of 110 years of service in the public ministry. From left: Teacher Jim Henrickson, 15 years; Teacher Linda Hengst, 20 years; Pastor John Vieths, 10 years; Teacher Dawn Aswege, 20 years; Teacher Helen Jungemann, 25 years; Teacher Jan Fritz, 20 years.

### South Atlantic



As part of the Forward in Christ celebration, members of Beautiful Savior, Marietta, Ga., wrote, produced, and acted in an original play about the history of WELS.

These pastors are the reporters for the districts featured this month: MI—Geoff Kieta; NA—Kevin Schultz; NE—Michael Helwig; SA—Mark Haefner; SC—Peter Snyder; SEW—Scott Oelhafen.

**CORRECTION:** Messiah, South Windsor, Conn., did not have a raffle as was reported in the March issue (p. 26). They had a free drawing in which they gave away 25 to 30 Christ-centered books.

### North Atlantic



Members of St. Paul, Amherst, N.H., invited St. Paul's former pastors to help celebrate the church's 25th anniversary on Reformation Sunday 2000. From left: Philip Henselin, Frederick Mutterer, Jeremy Glowicki, current pastor Joel Peterman, Gary Kluball, Paul Meier, Marcus Schulz, Jeffrey Wegner, Richard Schleicher, and Karl Gurgel.



## SHARE IT!

Leave your copy of *Forward/NL*—

- On a plane
- At the laundromat
- At the exercise club

How have you shared your *Forward/NL*? Let us know, and we'll send you another—free. *Forward/NL*, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222; 414/256-3231; <fic@sab.wels.net>.



## Obituaries

### Kirsten Marie Bergholz 1944-2001

Kirsten Bergholz was born Aug. 28, 1944 in Prairie County, Mont. She died Feb. 5, 2001, in Kaukauna, Wis.

Bergholz served 25 years at Fox Valley Lutheran High School, Appleton, Wis.

Bergholz was preceded in death by her father. She is survived by her husband, Thomas Ziebell; her mother, and several other relatives.

### Gerhardt J. Ehlert 1913-2000

Gerhardt Ehlert was born Apr. 12, 1913, in Goodwin, S.D. He died Dec. 27, 2000, in Little Chute, Wis.

A 1939 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Ehlert served St. Paul, Hazelton, N.D.; St. Andrew, Saint Paul Park, Minn.; Good Shepherd, Fond du Lac, Wis.; and Trinity, Waukesha, Wis.

Ehlert is survived by his wife, Pearle; one son, one daughter, two grandchildren, and one sister.

### Frederick G. Tiefel 1914-2000

Frederick Tiefel was born July 27, 1914. He died Sept. 13, 2000, in Tokyo, Japan.

A 1939 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis., Tiefel served congregations in Leavenworth, Withrow, and Spokane, Wash. He also served as civilian chaplain in Yokohama, Japan.

Tiefel's wife, Louise, preceded him in death.

### Erwin R. Scharf 1907-2001

Erwin Scharf was born Apr. 8, 1907, in Lomira, Wis. He died Feb. 10, 2001, in Milwaukee, Wis.

A 1933 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis., Scharf served Winnebago Lutheran Academy, Fond du Lac, Wis.; St.

Paul, Slinger/Cedar Lake, Wis.; Zion, Rhineland, Wis.; and Northwestern College, Watertown, Wis. In 1942 Scharf became WELS' first full-time civilian service pastor.

Scharf was preceded in death by five brothers, two sisters, and one granddaughter. He is survived by his wife, Irene; his sister, one son, three daughters, 25 grandchildren, and 14 great-grandchildren.

### Arlene D. Schoeneck 1944-2001

Arlene Schoeneck (nee Weiss) was born Nov. 3, 1944, in Mobridge, S.D. She died Jan. 30, 2001, in Pompano Beach, Fla.

A 1966 graduate of Doctor Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., Schoeneck served St. Stephen, Beaver Dam, Wis.; St. Mark, Citrus Heights, Calif.; River Heights, East Grand Forks, Minn. (ELS); Mount Olive, Mankato, Minn. (ELS); St. Lucas, Milwaukee, Wis.; and St. John, Milwaukee.

Schoeneck is survived by her husband, Mark; her mother, sister, and brother.

### Frederick A. Werner 1915-2001

Frederick Werner was born Aug. 20, 1915, in Pewaukee, Wis. He died Feb. 2, 2001, in River Falls, Wis.

A 1940 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis., Werner served St. Paul Lutheran School, Town Forest/Mount Calvary, Wis.; St. John, Centuria, Wis.; Redeemer, Rock Creek, Wis.; Immanuel, Woodville, Wis.; First, Hersey, Wis.; Gethsemane, Omaha, Neb.; Resurrection, Rochester, Minn.; St. John, Barre Mills, Wis.; Luther High School, Onalaska, Wis.; and Christ the King, Washington, Kan.

Werner was preceded in death by his son, Erick. He is survived by his wife, Loraine; three children, and nine grandchildren.

## ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

During vacation Bible school this year I took care of the crafts for grades two and three. On our last day, using the lesson illustration as a guide, each child drew a picture of the empty tomb and printed "HE IS RISEN" in large block letters above it. Then they colored the tomb and used glitter to highlight the letters, the outline and entrance of the tomb, and the big stone beside it.

As each picture was being drawn, I didn't realize how much the tomb resembled a windowless stone house with a large front door until one boy raised his hand and asked, "Can I put a chimney on it?"

*Jan Kuske*

*Green Bay, Wisconsin*

**April 2001**

1. Numbers 25-26	18. Ps. 14, 50, 136
2. Num. 27-29:31	• Jude
3. Num. 29:32-31	19. Joshua 1-4
4. Num. 32-33:49	20. Jos. 5-8:23
5. Num. 33:50-36	21. Jos. 8:24-10
6. Deuteronomy 1-2	• Ps. 28
7. Dt. 3-4	22. Jos. 11-13:23
8. Dt. 5-7	• Ps. 9
9. Dt. 8-11:12	23. Jos. 13:24-15
• Psalm 128	• Ps. 133
10. Dt. 11:13-14:21	24. Jos. 16-18:10
11. Dt. 14:22-17	• Ps. 65, 113-115
• Ps. 112	25. Jos. 18:11-20
12. Dt. 18-21	• Ps. 46
13. Dt. 22-25:16	26. Jos. 21-22
14. Dt. 25:17-28:14	• Ps. 125
• Ps. 135	27. Jos. 23-24
15. Dt. 28:15-29	• Ps. 116-117, 148
16. Dt. 30-32:44	28. Judges 1-3
17. Dt. 32:45-34	29. Jdg. 4-5 • Ps. 44
• Ps. 90-91	30. Jdg. 6-8:28





## Accessibility begins in the heart

Sue didn't catch half of the pastor's sermon. It wasn't because she was daydreaming, but because she couldn't hear him.

Trent has a developmental disability. He really wants to come to church, but he can't drive.

Bobby doesn't open his hymnal when it comes time to sing. He says he knows the hymns by heart, but really he just can't read that fine print anymore.

Lois can get into church by using the wheelchair ramp. Using the restrooms is a different story—they're all in the basement.

Does your congregation have members like this? According to the National Organization on Disability, 20 percent of the population in the United States experience some form of disability. Some of those people are members of WELS churches.

WELS Accessible 2000, a program sponsored by the Commission on Special Ministries, is working to help WELS congregations

- discover those in their congregations who have disabilities or mental health needs,
- assess how the congregation can serve these people better through

Christian attitude, program, and architecture, and

- create and carry out a plan of action.

Helping make congregations more aware of those with disabilities in their own church is only part of WELS Accessible 2000: "Once you see those within your congregation, then you become more aware of those outside the congregation," says Bruce Cuppan, a member of the WELS Accessible 2000 planning team.

According to Gene Seidel, director of WELS' Committee on the Deaf & Hard of Hearing, 85 percent of those with hearing problems are unchurched. Currently only about two percent of WELS churches offer signed services. A huge mission field exists.

There's also more to serving those with disabilities than just making the church and its programs more accessible.

"Besides ministering to individuals with special needs, we also want to minister with them," says Cuppan. This could include having hearing- and sight-impaired members on church committees or asking those with developmental disabilities to usher.

In the end, "accessibility begins in



Chris Leyrer, a child with Down syndrome, helps hand out bulletins at St. John, Wauwatosa, Wis. Involving individuals with special needs in ministry is as important as ministering to them.

the heart," according to Cuppan. It means accepting all people for what they are—redeemed by Christ.

*The prayer of the Accessible 2000 program committee is that all WELS congregations will have an accessibility plan by the end of 2001, to be completed in a five-year period. Information has been mailed out to all congregations. If you want to learn more about Accessible 2000, contact the Commission on Special Ministries, 414/256-3241; <usr10@sab.wels.net>.*

## Candidates sought for EDSS position

A search is being conducted for candidates to fill the position of Executive Director of Support Services (EDSS) for WELS. The synod's bylaws define the position as "an executive director of support services who, under the direction of the president, shall have overall responsibility for providing all support services not specifically assigned to other. . . ." The synod president is responsible for hiring the EDSS.

The support areas reporting to the EDSS include accounting/finance, benefit plans, budgeting, data information services, human resources, legal, lending, planning,

real estate, and revenue forecasting. Unit managers will have ongoing responsibility for daily operations of one or more of these areas.

The position will serve to establish self-management team-based structure, establishing goals and objectives that result in effective work results of the various units. The focus will be on client service to the mission and ministry work of Home and World Missions, Ministerial Education, Parish Services, and others outside the synod administration building. The EDSS will team with the president and vice-president for mission and

ministry in providing administrative support, including strategic planning, for the synod in convention, Conference of Presidents, Synodical Council, and synod officers.

Potential candidates with broad-based experience in business, educational, or technical organizations are invited to submit letters of interest for this position by May 1 to Synod President Karl Gurgel, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398. Questions regarding the process may be directed to the WELS Human Resources Office, 414/256-3269 or <cboldt@sab.wels.net>.



**CHANGES IN MINISTRY****Pastors**

**Chworowsky, John F.**, to retirement  
**Enderle, Jerome L.**, to Grace of God, Dix Hills, N.Y.  
**Geiger, Gerald E.**, to Great Plains LHS, Watertown, S.D.  
**Kolander, David P.**, to Christ the Lord, Brookfield, Wis.  
**Krause, Andrew H.**, to St. John/Grace, Goodhue, Minn.  
**Kugler, Richard A.**, Prince of Peace, Yuma, Ariz.  
**Mutterer, Frederick A.**, to Grace, Mosinee/St. Paul, Stratford, Wis.  
**Schaewe, Matthew J.**, to Huron Valley LHS, Westland, Mich.  
**Seiltz, Nathan C.**, to Santiago, Dominican Republic  
**Voigt, Brett E.**, to St. Paul, Menomonie, Wis.

**Teachers**

**Backus, David A.**, to Good Shepherd, Burton, Mich.  
**Callies, Nancy L.**, to St. Peter, Appleton, Wis.  
**Charron, Craig D.**, to Nebraska LHS, Waco, Neb.  
**Dorn, Jeffrey O.**, to Morning Star, Jackson, Wis.  
**Fellers, Patti A.**, to Grace, Charlotte, N.C.  
**Gawrisch, Lisa D.**, to Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw  
**Gresens, Daniel L.**, to Trinity, Kaukauna, Wis.  
**Groth, Kristin M.**, to Beautiful Savior, Milwaukee  
**Gurgel, Bart R.**, to Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw  
**Gustafson, Timothy M.**, to David's Star, Jackson, Wis.  
**Heyn, Nathan C.**, to Mt. Olive, Las Vegas, Nev.  
**Huntington, Monte L.**, to St. Paul, Appleton, Wis.  
**Johnson, Christina K.**, to Christ-St. John, West Salem, Wis.  
**Klugherz, Elizabeth**, to Trinity, Nicollet, Minn.  
**Martinson, Ronald J.**, to Bloomington, Bloomington, Minn.  
**Moeller, Matthew J.**, to Kettle Moraine LHS, Jackson, Wis.  
**Otte, Mark C.**, to Kettle Moraine LHS, Jackson, Wis.  
**Plamann, Diane S.**, to St. Paul, Appleton, Wis.  
**Pleuss, Marlene I.**, to St. John, Manitowoc, Wis.  
**Reese, Maria**, to Evangelical Lutheran Free Church, Zwickau, Germany  
**Schmidt, Michelle M.**, to New Life, Lake Zurich, Ill.  
**Stahman, Kristy**, to Christ-St. Peter, Milwaukee  
**Sternaman, Roxanne**, to Zion, South Milwaukee  
**Uher, Alan E.**, to Mt. Calvary, Waukesha, Wis.  
**Vitale, Katherine L.**, to Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw  
**Walz, Jason D.**, to Kettle Moraine LHS, Jackson, Wis.

**COLLOQUY NOTICE**

Lic Canot, formerly a pastor in an independent Lutheran congregation, after having successfully completed the steps of our colloquy program, was declared eligible for call into the ministerium of our Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Karl R. Gurgel, President

**SYNOD CONVENTION**

The 56th biennial convention of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod will be held July 30-Aug. 3 at Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw. Details will be announced later.

**ANNIVERSARIES**

**Lake Mills, Wis.**—St. Paul Lutheran School (100). Services, May 6. 8 & 10:30 AM. Noon

meal and program to follow at Lakeside LHS. RSVP to Connie Wilson, 920/648-4738.

**Fort Atkinson, Wis.**—St. Paul (140). May 6. Services, 8 & 10:30 AM. Lifting High the Cross in our elementary school. 920/563-2263.  
**Oshkosh, Wis.**—Faith (50). Apr. 29. Service, 10 AM. Dinner to follow. RSVP, 920/231-3757.  
**West Bend, Wis.**—Good Shepherd (50). Apr. 29. Service, 3:30 PM. Meal, 5 PM. 262/334-7881.  
**Milwaukee, Wis.**—Christ (100). May 13. Service, 8:45 AM. 414/645-2840.  
**Plymouth, Wis.**—Good Shepherd (25). May 20. Service, 9 AM. Meal to follow. 920/893-0207.  
**Medford, Wis.**—Immanuel (125). May 20. Service, 8 & 10:30 AM. Meal to follow. RSVP, 715/748-2921.  
**Sleepy Eye, Minn.**—St. John (125). June 16. Service, 7:30 PM. Ice cream social to follow. June 17. Service, 10 AM. Catered dinner to follow. RSVP, 507/794-7476.

**COMING EVENTS****WELS handbell festivals—**

Apr. 1—Great Plains LHS, Watertown, S.D., 2 PM  
 Apr. 22—Fox Valley LHS, Appleton, Wis.; Shoreland LHS, Somers, Wis., 2 PM  
 Apr. 28—St. Paul Lutheran School, Livonia, Mich., 6:30 PM  
 Cheryl Diener, 715/258-7203.

**Concerts**—Lutheran Festival Chorus, "Celebrating 25 years of spreading God's Word through song." Apr. 8. 3 PM, Resurrection, Aurora, Ill. 7:30 PM, Christ the King, Palatine, Ill. Marvin Koch, 847/437-8187.

**Luther Preparatory School Prep Singers concert tour—**

Apr. 11—St. John, Neillsville, Wis., 7:30 PM  
 Apr. 12—Cross of Christ, Coon Rapids, Minn., 7 PM  
 Apr. 13—Jerusalem, Morton Grove, Ill., 7:30 PM  
 Apr. 15—Lord and Savior, Crystal Lake, Ill., 6:30 AM; Faith, Antioch, Ill., 10:30 AM; Bethany, Manitowoc, Wis., 7 PM  
 Apr. 16—St. John, Watertown, Wis., 7 PM

**WELS Church Librarians' Organization meeting**—Apr. 21. St. Paul, Wonevot, Wis. Advance registration, 414/256-3222. \$7 fee includes lunch. Speakers from Jesus Cares Ministries and Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Services.

**Alcoholism awareness retreat**—Apr. 27-29 at Wonderland Camp & Conference Center (about 30 miles south of Milwaukee). Cost: \$60 (covers two nights lodging, five meals, and workshops). Financial help is available. Sponsored by Wisconsin Lutheran Child & Family Service. John Cook, 414/353-5005; <jcook@wlcfcs.org>.

**National Lutheran Pioneer convention**—Apr. 28. Emanuel First, Lansing, Mich. Lutheran Pioneers, 888/214-8225.

**SHARE's spring seminar and social**—Singles Helping one Another on the Road to Eternity. Apr. 28. Milwaukee, Wis. 262/534-7582.

**Concerts**—Lutheran Chorale. Apr. 29. St. Paul, Muskego, Wis., 3 PM; St. John, Wauwatosa, Wis., 7 PM. Mary Prange, 414/873-9105; <mjprange@aol.com>.

**NPH music reading workshop—**

June 16—Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich., 9 AM to 1:30 PM  
 June 17—Grace, St. Joseph, Mich., 2 to 6:30 PM  
 June 30—Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., 9 AM to 1:30 PM  
 July 1—Bloomington, Bloomington, Minn., 2 to 6:30 PM

July 7—Resurrection, Milwaukee, Wis., 9 AM to 1:30 PM

July 14—Mt. Olive, Appleton, Wis., 9 AM to 1:30 PM  
 Workshop fee, \$25. Register by June 1. 800/662-6093 ext. 5763 (Milwaukee area, 414/615-5763).

**Teaching English as a Foreign Language certificate course**—June 18-July 13. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn. Thomas Hunter, 507/354-8221 ext. 309.

**Western Wisconsin District retreat**—June 21-24. Schwam Retreat Center, Trego, Wis. Elton Stroh, 608/837-3819.

**Lutheran Women's Missionary Society convention**—June 22-24. Holiday Inn O'Hare International, Chicago. Shirley Billings, 714/633-1130.

**2001 Teacher's Convention for ESL/EFL teachers**—June 26-27. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn. Lisa Hunter, 507/354-6985.

**National Teachers Convention**—June 26-29. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn. <<http://www.mlc-wels.edu/ntc>>. Roger Klockziem, <[klockzrc@mlc-wels.edu](mailto:klockzrc@mlc-wels.edu)>.

**WELS Tech 2001**—technology conference for pastors, teachers, and laypeople. July 15-18, Fox Valley Lutheran High School, Appleton, Wis. <<http://www.wels.net/welstech2001>>. For a registration brochure, contact Debbie, 414/256-3210; <[welstech2001@sab.wels.net](mailto:welstech2001@sab.wels.net)>.

**WELS Kingdom Workers convention**—July 19-22. Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee. 800/466-9357.

**Alaska cruise**—a 14-day Alaska cruise and land tour sponsored by Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service. Departing from Chicago on July 28. Fred Matzke, 888/685-9522.

**Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Auxiliary**—annual meeting, Oct. 6. Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis.

**Christian Life Resources national convention**—Oct. 12-14. Mayo Civic Center, Rochester, Minn. 414/774-1331.

**POSITIONS AVAILABLE**

**Lutheran Mobile Clinic in Malawi**—Christian couple to serve at the Lutheran Mobile Clinic in Malawi. Three-year commitment. Wife should be a registered nurse, and husband would serve as administrative coordinator. Irene Brug, 262/242-8139.

**NEEDED**

**Hanging advent wreath**—Paul Sullivan, 715/835-5507.

**Volunteers**—single or couple for Martin Luther School in Plzen, Czech Republic, to teach English and religion to K-9 students. Airfare, housing, and utilities paid for by mission. David Meyer, 608/243-3227.

**NAMES WANTED**

**Lexington, Ky.**—Victory. Jonathan Zietlow, 859/258-9030.

**SERVICE TIMES**

**Renville, Minn.**—St. John. Sunday service, September-May, 10 AM; June-August, 9 AM. 320/329-3826.

To place an announcement, call 414/256-3210; FAX, 414/256-3899; <[BulletinBoard@sab.wels.net](mailto:BulletinBoard@sab.wels.net)>. Deadline is eight weeks before publication date.



# The LORD, our commander

The joy of knowing the Savior-God transforms believers into obedient servants.

James A. Aderman

The least comfortable part of being a pastor—for me—is urging straying sheep to return to Jesus. The thought conjures haunting recollections of the times (it's only been a few) that my admonition has met snarls.

Elijah also shepherded straying sheep. Only his sheep were more cantankerous. A couple of Elijah's wayward sheep had a taste for his blood. Yet the prophet did not quail when God commanded him to condemn their sin. Here are two examples.

## Elijah and Ahab

When we last visited Elijah, the gentle voice of his Father had transformed him from depressed to determined. He called Elisha as his assistant and resumed his career.

Some time later, King Ahab coveted a plot of ground next to his palace in Samaria (1 Kings 21). Naboth owned it, and Naboth wasn't about to part with it. That piece of Israel had been in his family from the time of Joshua's conquest of Canaan. Fortunately for the king (but unfortunately for Naboth), Queen Jezebel knew how heathen rulers dealt with such situations. She twisted arms in the city's government, had Naboth executed on false charges of blasphemy and treason, and seized his property as a right of the king.

Enter Elijah with the LORD's message to bloody-handed Ahab. The prophet confronted him while he was tending his stolen garden.

OUR COMMANDER

Imagine the courage—this man had labeled Elijah his enemy, he had put a price on the prophet's head, he had “sold himself to do evil in the eyes of the LORD” (21:20). Yet the prophet spoke the LORD's judgment, a condemnation that matched the monarch's atrocity. “In the place where dogs licked up Naboth's blood, dogs will lick up your blood” (21:19). Ahab's family would also pay the price: “every last male” in Ahab's household would die. Jezebel's end would be equally wretched—dogs would devour her body.

## Elijah and Ahaziah

We see Elijah's astounding obedience again when he deals with Ahaziah, Israel's next king.

Ahab died in battle against the Syrians. His blood was washed out of his chariot—in the same place Naboth died. Like father, like son, his successor “did evil in the eyes of the LORD . . . [and] provoked the LORD . . . to anger (1 Kings 22:52,53).” Mercifully, Ahaziah's immorality ended after the second year of his rule, shortly after a two-story fall.

Left paralyzed, he sought Baal's prediction about his future. The LORD

responded instead. Once again a dutiful Elijah carried his Commander's message: “Is it because there is no God in Israel that you are going off to consult Baal? . . . You will certainly die” (2 Kings 1:4).

Fearless, iron-tough, unswerving in obedience to God. But why? Consider the impact of an encounter with the almighty, awesome God who speaks in a gentle, gracious voice to his wayward creatures. Consider the life-change that comes with trusting the God of forgiveness and second chances. He obeyed because, as his name testifies, “The LORD (*Yahweh*, the eternal source of mercy) is my God.”

The joy of knowing the Savior-God continues to transform believers into obedient servants—including pastors uncomfortable with wandering sheep.

*James Aderman is pastor at Fairview, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.*

## For further study

1. How does 2 Corinthians 5:15 describe our motivation for obeying God?
2. Where are you wrestling with obedience to God? How does recognizing that *Yahweh* is also your God make that obedience easier?



# Buried with Christ

**W**ould you like to be buried with your favorite horse, person, or furniture? Some ancient people were. They thought it would give them a head start in the next life. But all it did was require a bigger grave. Remember the size of the pyramids? They had to be so big to accommodate all the things buried with the Egyptian kings.

However, no matter what goes into the grave, you exit the grave just like everyone else—unaccompanied by anything or anyone. That is, unless you were buried with something really special.

I'm talking about being buried with Christ through baptism. "Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life" (Romans 6:3,4).

Jesus' death on Good Friday benefits you and me. Through the baptismal-faith, God's Spirit works in us, the saving effects of Jesus' death become ours. In short, baptism offers us the forgiveness the Savior won for us. New life, eternal life, and resurrection from the dead are all ours once we, by faith, possess forgiveness.

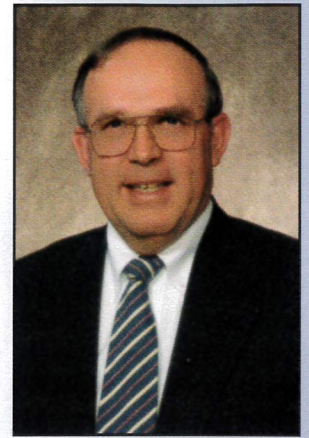
Although forgiveness and eternal life are the chief blessings that God gives us, we receive still more by being linked to Jesus' death in baptism. Remember Luther's answer to the question, "What does baptizing with water mean?"

"It means," he said, "that our Old Adam with his evil deeds and desires should be drowned by daily contrition and repentance, and die, and that day by day a new man should arise, as from the dead, to live in the presence of God in righteousness and purity now and forever."

The certain prospect of resurrection from the dead is marvelous. Right now, though, there is another resurrection to new life in Christ. Grateful for the blessings of salvation Jesus won and freely gives us, we have the strongest possible incentive to rise "as from the dead." We drown the Old Adam, and, by the Spirit's power, the new man comes to life in us, living a new life more reflective of the perfect holiness God credits to us by faith in Jesus. All of this because, in baptism, we are buried with Christ.

So, this Easter, let's think deeply about our baptism. It links us with Christ's death and resurrection. Eagerly anticipate your future resurrection, the absolutely pure and eternal life that will commence after our death. But, while we live, let's taste, even now, our final victory. Through the Spirit's power, given us in baptism, let's rise from the death of sin to live a new life in and for Christ. Daily let Easter be reflected in the way death gives way to life in us both now and forever—all because we, by baptism, are linked to Christ in life and in death.

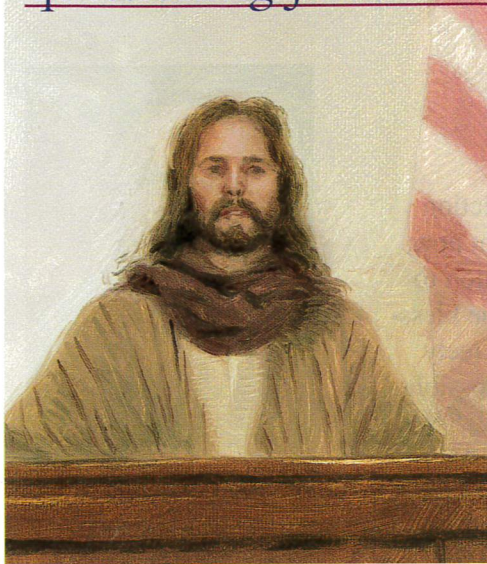
Our rising to life from sin or death cannot have the same effect Jesus' resurrection had. However, God may well use the reflection in our lives of the Savior's death and resurrection to point someone to Jesus, whose death and resurrection really matters. It's one way the Spirit lets our light shine, glorifying our Father in heaven. It all begins with this Easter realization. In baptism, we are buried with Christ, only to rise with him from sin and death.



Karl R. Gurgel is the president of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Through the Spirit's power, given us in baptism, let's rise from the death of sin to live a new life in and for Christ.





# What is truth?

**God's absolute, revealed truth answers the hardest questions in life: Who are we? Where did we come from? Where are we going? Why are we here?**

**Thomas H. Trapp**

**A**fter much controversy, in 1894 the Board of Regents at the University of Wisconsin adopted an academic freedom statement: "Whatever may be the limitations which trammel inquiry elsewhere, we believe that the great State University of Wisconsin shall ever encourage that continual and fearless sifting and winnowing by which alone the truth may be found."

Such late 19th-century encouragement to "sift and winnow" has helped uncover some "truths" by faculty and students at UW-Madison: Vitamins A, B, and super vitamin D were discovered on this Big Ten campus. The first bone marrow transplant in the United States was performed at UW Hospital. And in 1890, Prof. Stephen Babcock developed a low-cost way to test the butterfat content of milk that revolutionized the dairy industry worldwide. Babcock is one of the reasons we Americans enjoy rich, flavorful ice cream.

## Human "truths"

All these "truths," however, are scientifically-based relative truths, subject to scrutiny and change.

God's truth, on the other hand, is completely different. It's not relative and subject to "sifting and

winnowing." It's absolute, revealed truth and answers the hardest questions in life: Who are we? Where did we come from? Where are we going? Why are we here?

People have searched for answers to these questions since Adam and Eve fell into sin. Yet they all come up empty. American novelist Ernest Hemingway states hopelessly, "Life is just a dirty trick, a short journey from nothingness to nothingness." Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy asks, "What is life for? To die?" Comedian Woody Allen jests, "It's not that I'm afraid to die, I just don't want to be there when it happens." And rock 'n' roll musicians Lennon and McCartney ponder, "He's a real nowhere man sitting in his nowhere land making all his nowhere plans for nobody. Doesn't have a point of view, knows not where he's going to—isn't he a bit like me and you?"

Is he a bit like you and me?

## God's truth

"Nowhere man" was a bit like Pontius Pilate. Jesus directly told Pilate, "I came into the world to testify to the truth. Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

Pilate asked, "What is truth?" (John 18:37,38).

"You're looking at it!" Jesus was telling him. Pilate missed the point.

Even before he met Pilate, Jesus clearly told his disciples, "I am . . .

the truth!" (John 14:6). Do you want to know who you are and where you came from and where you are going and why you are here? Then listen to Jesus.

Jesus says those who "repent and believe the good news" of his forgiveness and "become like little children" in faith and humility are members of God's kingdom (Mark 1:15, Matthew 18:1-4). That is who we are.

Where did we come from? Jesus reminds us that we came from God the Father, our "Creator" (Matthew 19:4).

Where are we going? Jesus promised he is going to "prepare a place" for us so we can "be with" him eternally, even though we die (John 11:25, 14:2,3).

Why are we here? Jesus responds, "As I have loved you, so you must love one another" (John 13:34). That is why we are here.

The world sneers, "What is truth?"

Jesus answers, "Everyone on the side of truth listens to me."

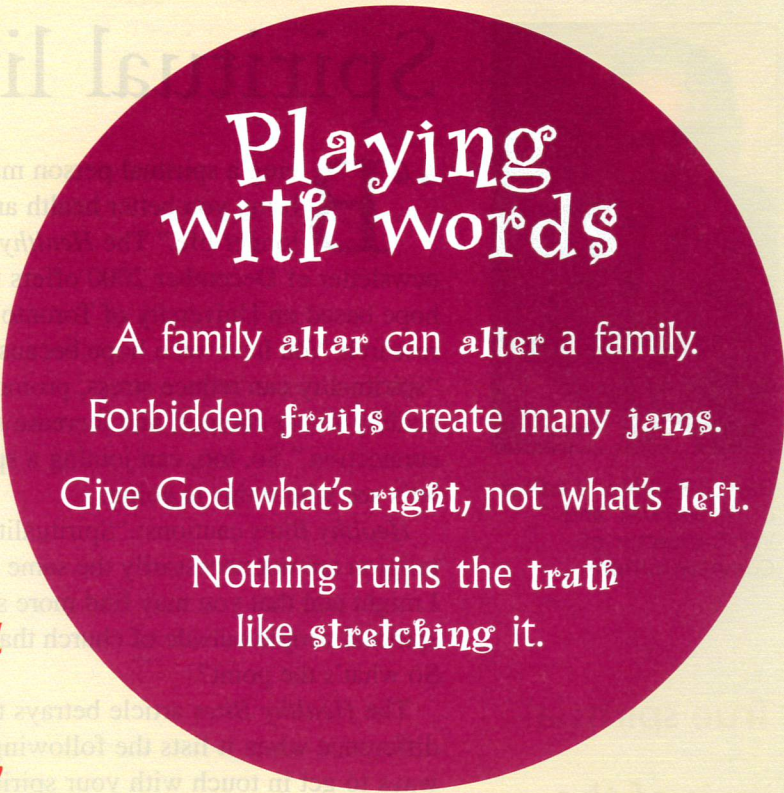
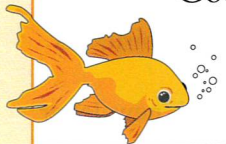
Listen, learn the truth, and live.



*Thomas Trapp is full-time campus pastor at Wisconsin Lutheran Chapel & Student Center at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.*



Laura Schoephoester and her Camp Phillip cabinmates came up with their own explanation for the Christian fish symbol. Laura writes: "F.I.S.H.—Fishers in Savior's Hand. It means that God is with us always and we should willingly spread his Word."



# Playing with words

A family **altar** can **alter** a family.

Forbidden **fruits** create many **jams**.

Give God what's **right**, not what's **left**.

Nothing ruins the **truth** like **stretching** it.

"I avoid looking forward or backward and try to keep looking upward."  
Charlotte Bronte

*"Never be afraid to trust an unknown future to a known God."  
Carrie Jen Boom*

"Most people are about as happy as they make up their minds to be."  
Abraham Lincoln

## Picture this



Students from Teens Living for Christ (T.L.C.) at St. Mark, Green Bay, Wis., put their faith into action by participating in teen mission trips during the summer of 2000. Here Anne Barkow, Jenny Gilbert, and Alicia Radtke are armed with their trusty paintbrushes. These teens served Pilgrim, Minneapolis, Minn.

*Submitted by Dr. Mike Pfeifer, former Minister of Discipleship at St. Mark, Green Bay, Wis. Pfeifer is now the administrator for WELS' Commission on Youth Discipleship.*

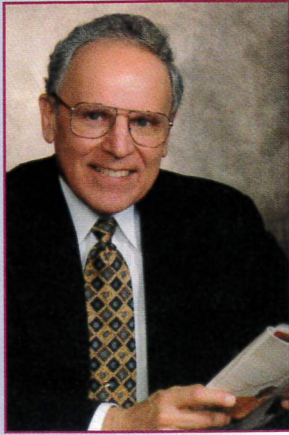
## THINKING ABOUT IT ANOTHER WAY

Thank you, God...

- \* for the taxes that I pay, because it means that I am employed.
- \* for the mess to clean up after a party, because it means that I have been surrounded by friends.
- \* for my huge heating bill, because it means that I am warm.
- \* for the alarm that goes off in the early morning hours, because it means that I am alive.

Send pictures to *Picture this*, Forward/NL, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398. On a separate sheet, give us information about the photo. Those whose photos are chosen will receive a small gift.





Gary P. Baumler is editor of *Forward/NL* and WELS Director of Communications.

True spiritual-  
ity is of the  
Spirit. It starts  
with God,  
not with us.

## Spiritual living is healthy

“**B**eing a spiritual person may bring you better health and a longer life.” The *Healthy Bites* newsletter of December 2000 offers that hope based on University of Toronto research. You have such hope because “spirituality can reduce stress, promote healthy living choices, and increase social connection.” So, too, can joining a spa, but let’s see where this is going.

*Healthy Bites* cautions: “Spirituality and religion are not necessarily the same thing.” I might add that you may find more such spiritual people outside of church than in. So what’s the point?

The *Healthy Bites* article betrays the difference when it lists the following ways to get in touch with your spiritual self: “Take a balanced approach to material achievement, respect the environment, and give priority to your relationships with family and friends.” Should we add, “and get plenty of rest”?

Those are all good things that we should pay attention to, but what do they have to do with spirituality? It depends on your definition of what is spiritual. The new definition has to do with putting your spirit at rest—being satisfied with your place in the universe, feeling connected to a higher power (not to be more specifically defined) and to your social and physical environments. When you are spiritual, you have a strong sense of being a part of the life forces around you. And it shows in your way of life.

But you must know that there is nothing new in that kind of spirituality. In fact, it gives rise to the practices of some really

ancient religions: meditation, for example, or communing with spirits. It depends on you to find a way to calm your spirit. It’s as old as self-righteousness.

The connection with a health newsletter is not surprising. This spirituality can achieve little more for you than better health and a longer life. It can keep you calm and lengthen your life, but it comes to a dead end. It’s like a spiritual face-lift. It keeps things looking good on the outside, but it can’t stop the decay going on inside. At some point, the health and life stop—forever.

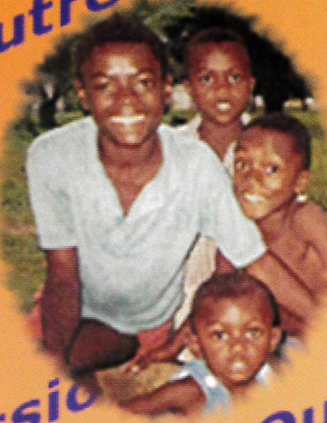
True spirituality is of the Spirit. It starts with God, not with us. God’s Spirit touches our spirit through the good news of our Savior, Jesus Christ. He moves us to believe for our salvation. By his Spirit, we learn to call God our Father and find our comfort in knowing we belong to his family forever. This spirituality cures what the world’s spirituality cannot; namely, the deadly effects of sin in us. This spirituality works inside, on the soul, no matter how things are going on the outside. And it lasts long after this body decays in the earth, for we will rise to live in heavenly glory with Jesus in eternity.

Now, I have a question for you (yes, I’ll ask it of myself too). Since you have the spirituality that comes from God, does it show in your spiritual life as it does with those who have the world’s spirituality? Or must we look outside of the church to find “spiritual” people?

*Gary P. Baumler*



Outreach Missions Outreach Missions Outreach



Missions Outreach Missions Outreach Missions Outreach Missions Outreach Missions Outreach

# Forward in Christ



MLC Chapel MLC Chapel WLS Heritage Project WLS Heritage Project MLC Chapel MLC Chapel WLS Heritage Project WLS Heritage Project

# Thank Offering



**Give thanks to the Lord,  
for he is good;  
his love endures forever.  
(1 Chronicles 16:34)**



**Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod  
2929 N. Mayfair Road Milwaukee, WI 53222**

**Ministry of Planned Giving  
800-827-5482 or 414-256-3881**





# IN LIFE AND IN DEATH

We don't come up with our own answer to death. Christ is our answer.

David D. Sellnow

In March 2000, hundreds of corpses covered the charred compound of a heretofore unknown cult in Uganda. The fire was followed by further discoveries—dead bodies, strangled and dismembered, buried in the dirt floor of an abandoned house and others dumped in mass graves. All told, 924 deaths were linked to the mysterious Movement for the Restoration of the Ten Commandments.

This is not the first time a religious group has met its end en masse. In 1997, 39 followers of Marshall Applewhite sought Heaven's Gate on the tail of a comet and overdosed on vodka and barbiturates. Four years before, the Branch Davidians believed in David Koresh to the bitter end. Perhaps the most famous fatalities brought on by worship were the 912 who died at Jonestown, Guyana, in 1978. These followers of Jim Jones took part in a communion of kool-aid laced with cyanide.

Some were purely victims. Not all chose to die. In other cases, though, the individuals invited death, seeking an exit to the next life, choosing the moment of departure according to their own method or timetable.

## **"In Adam, all die"**

There is no place in Christianity for suicide cults. It is not ours to choose the time to die. David confessed, "I trust in you, O Lord; I say, 'You are my God.' My times are in your hands" (Psalm 31:14,15). "There is . . . a time to be born and a time to die" (Ecclesiastes 3:1,2), and both times are to be determined by God. He is "the author of life" (Acts 3:15). He also is the one who "sweep[s] men away in the sleep of death" (Psalm 90:5). We believe God is the only one who has the right to determine when we are to die.

It takes faith to trust God in life and in death. To us, death often seems to come at inappropriate times or in undesirable ways. When a child is taken, when a parent dies while children are still young—these seem like dreadful mistakes on the part of a sovereign God. Likewise, when death comes by tragedy or by painful, protracted misery, we struggle to accept these things as God's will.

What we must ask ourselves is this: Is it ever good to die? Not from a human perspective. Perpetual youth and uninterrupted health would be our ideal. But earth is no longer Eden. Sin leaves its scars

on our bodies. "In Adam all die" (1 Corinthians 15:22).

## **"In Christ all will be made alive"**

But there is good news: "In Christ all will be made alive" (1 Corinthians 15:22). We don't come up with our own answer to death. Christ is our answer. He suffered what appeared to be a most untimely and unsightly end—by execution. Yet we know that by doing so, he was defeating death for all of us.

Now, no matter how death may come, we have a Savior to see us through it. With Jesus, we are confident that "if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord" (Romans 14:8).

So we place ourselves in his hands. We let him decide the time and the circumstances, and we trust that we will survive to eternity. No disease can destroy us so much that Jesus cannot restore us. No amount of suffering before death can compare with the glory that Christ will bestow on us in the resurrection (Romans 8:18).

*David Sellnow is a professor at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota.*

