

FORWARD IN CHRIST

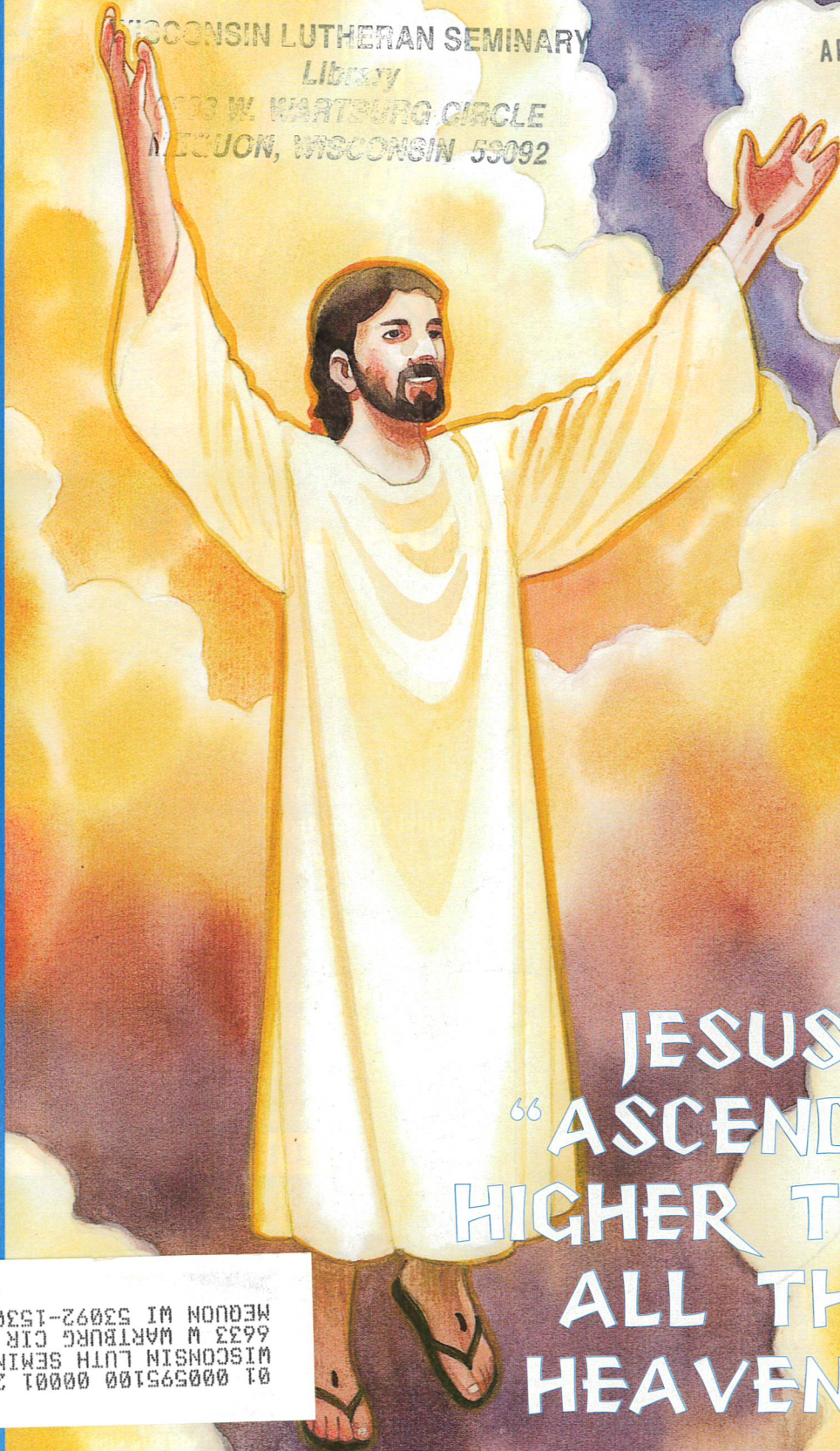
May 2001

Northwestern Lutheran • The Word from the WELS

Find yourself
in God's self-
portrait

Be a ready
witness

Are only a
few going
to be saved?



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What's Up?



with the Pentecostals and the charismatics

Speaking in tongues, healing the sick, seeing the future: these are all part of the Pentecostal and charismatic movement. How does it affect us as Lutherans? As this movement becomes even more popular, you may know people who are active in these groups. Maybe you've been interested yourself. How can you be prepared?

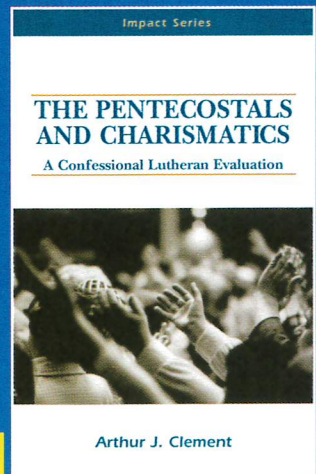
This book gives a clear understanding of the history of Pentecostals and charismatics and the practices that distinguish them from other Christians. It offers a thorough evaluation of the ways this movement has departed from Scripture and shows the proper theology of the Holy Spirit.


The Pentecostals and Charismatics **A Confessional Lutheran Evaluation**

by Arthur J. Clement

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Who will survive?

Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength. . . . But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. Jeremiah 17:5-7

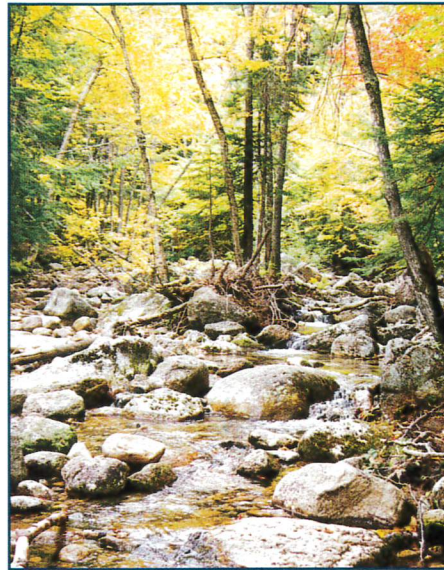
Thomas A. Westra

I'm glad I'm not a contestant on *Survivor*, the television show that has captured America's imagination. I'm better off watching the contestants pretend to get along while in reality they are stabbing each other in the back and plotting to vote each other out at the next tribal council.

I guess they call it "reality" TV because it features real people instead of actors. But, of course, it's not reality. It's a game, a diversion. Who will survive the rigorous challenge of living in primitive conditions in the heat of the Australian outback? Who will survive the heart-breaking intrigue as they maneuver to eliminate one another from the competition and get a chance for the million-dollar prize?

Real life

Tuning in each week to find out distracts me from the real questions of life. Who will survive the break-up of their marriage, the rebellion of their wayward teenager, or the difficulty of caring for a cranky, bed-wetting parent with advanced Alzheimer's? Who will survive the sudden loss of income when caught in corporate downsizing or the sudden loss of freedom that comes when hit with a debilitating illness? Who will survive cancer? Loneliness? Depression? Who will survive the loss of someone about whom they care deeply? Bottom line: who will survive death? Sadly, while America amuses itself with television, many are not daring to ask the real questions of life.



The ultimate survival tip

Who will survive? The prophet Jeremiah had the answer: "Cursed is the one who trusts in man, who depends on flesh for his strength. . . . He will be like a bush in the wastelands; he will not see prosperity. . . . But blessed is the man who trusts in the Lord, whose confidence is in him. He will be like a tree planted by the water that sends out its roots by the stream. It does not fear when heat comes; its leaves are always green" (Jeremiah 17:5-8).

There you have it. In order to survive, you have to have the right alliance. Is your confidence in yourself, in your abilities, in your strength? Do you think that you have surrounded yourself with the right people in order to be successful in life? If that is where you have placed your confidence, you will lose. And the stakes

are much higher than a million dollars. Like a bush in the wasteland, which succumbs to the heat and drought and withers up and dies, you will succumb to the challenges of life, and you will ultimately perish on the Last Day.

Is your confidence in God, in his forgiving love and in his awesome strength? If that is where you have placed your confidence, you will survive. Like a tree planted near a constant source of water, you will survive the challenges of life, and ultimately you will triumph on the Last Day.

An eternal alliance

You will survive your sins—for he has taken them all away by his incredible act of love and sacrifice at Calvary's cross. You will survive death, for he has conquered it. He demonstrated his victory by his resurrection on Easter. You will survive anything that life can throw at you, for you have an alliance with the Almighty—an alliance he made with you at baptism. Through that miracle of water connected with his promise, he said, "You are mine—forever."

Who will survive? We will. As Paul says in Romans 8, we are more than survivors, more than conquerors, through him who loved us.



Thomas Westra is pastor at Beautiful Savior, Cincinnati, Ohio.

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Cover illustration by Dan Grossmann

Jesus ascended
to heaven and
rules the whole
universe as
God-Man.

8

bits & pieces



Christ is no longer in his state of humiliation. He has ascended into heaven and now rules over all. But Jesus also had to be true man in order for us to have full salvation. Retired pastor John Jeske explains more about the dual nature of Christ in the last of his three-part series on "Christology—and your faith" (p. 8).



For those of you who watch *Survivor* on TV—the end is getting near. Who will survive all the challenges and win the million-dollar prize? A better question to ask is who will survive the challenges of this life and triumph on the Last Day. Find out the answer by tuning in to our "Thought for today" (p. 3).



In this issue, you'll find a listing of the people who will be representing your district at the 56th synod convention (p. 20). The synod in convention carries out the responsibilities of the legislative body of WELS. Look for a special issue of *Forward/NL* in October that will cover what happened at the convention. This issue, which will be mailed to all congregations, will have an outreach emphasis and also include a readers' survey so you can let us know how we can serve you better. Make sure to check it out.



Same magazine, but more color. That's what you'll see from now on in *Forward/NL*. Because of a special gift from Northwestern Publishing House (NPH), we now can have full color every month. Thanks, NPH!

—JKT

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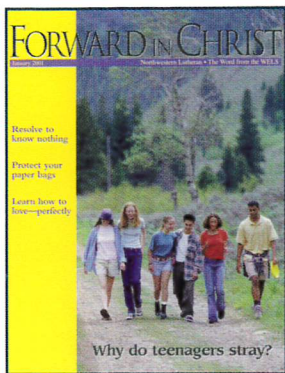
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I just finished your article about teens getting into trouble ["Why do teenagers stray?" Jan.]. As a retired teacher who taught in public school for 25 years, I can tell you all

your points were on target. There is one big omission, however.

Through these years I saw the deterioration of student behavior and respect with the advance of television. At first, it was such a good thing: family values shown with programs like *Father Knows Best*, and then a gradual declining of values so that even watching a network has degraded decency to a low level.

Peer pressure is the strongest influence on young people. If their friends watch a show like [*Survivor*], they will wonder why they shouldn't. I wish all Christian students could go to [WELS] high schools, where I witness the strength of Christian love and faith exhibited by the three children of our nephew and niece.

Lois Knobloch

 *Tinley Park, Illinois*

Re: Beyond Bo-Peep [Feb.]. It is not news to me that teenagers say that "they don't need the church and its message." Teenagers in North America will likely live for another 60 or 70 years, maybe longer. Death, dying, hell, and heaven are not on their minds. They have to deal with school grades, boyfriends, girlfriends, temptations of drugs and sex, divorced parents, and hormones.

For the church to get their attention it has to help them where they are and with the issues they face. It has to show them how to apply Christianity in a practical way in the secular world.

Teenagers have the ability, which most adults appear to have lost, to apply a thought process that allows them to clearly see the hypocrisy

of attending church every Sunday on the one hand and doing little or nothing to help the hungry and the homeless on the other.

If the church is to attract and serve teen members it must first take a close, hard look at itself.

Ab Jagermath

 *Nepean, Ontario*

I agree with all of the elements of ["Ministering to teenagers," Mar.]. In my view there should have been one more: Doing the church's work.

... As I view the church directory, I see only men and women, few below the age of 40, and on up to 80+. All very dedicated members.

Where are the youth, pre-confirmed, and up to 21? One of the ways to become a part of the church and love its work is starting as acolytes, up to ushers, counting committee, a member of the trustees, evangelism, and one of the officers of the church council, and when meeting the age, a member of the voters assembly.

As we teach them the workings of the Church, they will be fully involved members, and love all of the Church's workings. In my humble view, we are missing this vital part of our work for God and his place of worship.


Wilbur Bingham

Santa Maria, California

It was stated that our synod needs to "do more for and with our youth" ("I am WELS," Feb.). A good place to start is by giving greater support to our area Lutheran high schools.

A majority of our teenagers are served by our WELS area Lutheran high schools. As a synod we need to recognize that a change has occurred concerning our prep schools. They were once the only means to a Christian high school education and pathway for becoming a pastor or teacher. This is not true anymore.

Mary Rabbers

 *Stevensville, Michigan*


In Pastor Hartzell's article, "Seeing God" [Feb.], he uses the name "God" 14 times, "Jesus" four times, "Lord" four times.

Does this mean that they can be used interchangeably?

When God speaks to us, does he speak as one of the three persons, that is, as God the Father, God the Son, or God the Holy Ghost?

How does one decide which terminology to use?

Howard Lemke

 *Appleton, Wisconsin*


Pastor Hartzell is not necessarily interchanging Jesus with God as used in Hagar's experience, but he is extending the picture to include Jesus and us. He can do that because Jesus is God, and the terms "Lord" and "God" from the Old Testament reference properly apply to him too. Sometimes the terms "Lord" and "God" apply specifically to the Father or the Son or the Holy Spirit. The context of Scripture will inform us. Even then the terms are not necessarily exclusive, since God is one God. Such is the mystery of the Trinity.—ed.

I would like to respond to a letter printed in the Sept. 2000 issue that claimed cartoons are horrible to print on a magazine cover about Christ.

Laughter, smiles, and having fun are beautiful gifts from God. . . . God never told us we couldn't draw cartoons and laugh while still serving God. As long as we don't use these gifts against him, laughter can be a wonderful remedy to keep one's spirit singing with joy.

 *Rachel Evans*

Send your letters to Readers forum, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398; FAX, 414/256-3899; <fic@sab.wels.net>. Include full name, address, and daytime phone number. Letters are edited for clarity and conciseness. Writers' views are not necessarily those of WELS or Forward/NL.

 . . . via the Internet

Do our vacancies concern you?

Walter F. Beckmann

District presidents are again finding it difficult to supply vacant congregations with pastoral call lists. Recently a well-meaning colleague sent me a list of nine names that he felt would be well suited for a vacancy in our district. However, I found that three of them were currently considering calls. The other six had returned calls in the past few months. We have about 85 vacancies in our synod, and they're all calling from the same limited manpower pool.

That pool will increase this month when we assign our seminary graduates to their first calls. But we have only 31 graduates, leaving 60 percent of our vacancies unfilled. With about 34 graduates available for 2002, call day next year will be more of the same.

My last two years as a seminary student (almost 45 years ago), we had graduation classes of 30 and 34. Then we were supplying pastors for about 800 congregations, today for about 1,250. We also have about 20 more area high schools, a greatly expanded world mission program, plus administrative and staff positions we didn't have in the late 1950s. Thirty-one or 34 seminary graduates a year will not meet our needs today. We could use 50 or more.

Until we produce more seminary graduates, the number of vacancies will continue to grow. Your congregation could experience a vacancy, if it hasn't already.

A vacancy for some has been a good experience. It caused the members to step up and work together. It made them realize what a blessing their pastor had been. But usually a vacancy produces adverse effects. Church attendance declines. Programs are put on hold. It also adversely affects the congregation whose pastor serves the vacancy. He has to spread himself thin and cut corners he'd just as soon not. Then, too, vacancies

have a ripple effect. Many get passed on from one congregation to another. In the course of a year, one vacancy can affect the programs of several congregations.

A great number of vacancies also limits our ability to take advantage of new mission opportunities the Lord sets before us.

It's time to study our use of manpower and try to be more creative with it. Smaller congregations might consider sharing the services of a pastor. Larger congregations might consider the use of a staff minister in place of that second or third pastor. When we're calling for some teaching or administrative position we should ask, "Do we really need a pastor-trained person?"

Many church bodies are experiencing pastoral shortages, some even more critical than ours. I hope that we won't be too quick to accept this as proof that it's inevitable.

We may be tempted to say, "God probably sent this pastor shortage for our good." But didn't he tell us that when the harvest is great and the workers are few we are to pray to him to send us more workers? Doesn't he promise to hear and answer our prayers? Doesn't he also expect us to work for what we pray for? Doesn't he expect us to seek out boys and men in our congregations and in our own families and encourage them—"The Lord may have a place for you in our ministry"—and then be ready to help them financially toward that end?

So, let's pray for workers as we've prayed before, recruit as we've never recruited before, and only then be ready to thankfully accept what seems to be a shortage as God's good and gracious will for us.

Walter Beckmann is the retirement pastor at Grace, Falls Church, Virginia.

It's time to
study our use
of manpower
and try to be
more creative
with it.

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.

EXPLAINING A MIRACLE

Jesus' dual nature is a miracle that is impossible to fully explain, but it is essential for our salvation that Jesus is both God and man.

John C. Jeske

The Lutheran Church has struggled to put into words what the Bible teaches about the unique person of Jesus Christ, the God-Man. There's no way we can explain how the eternal God, without beginning and without end, could be united in one person with an infant who had just spent nine months in his mother's womb.

When, seven centuries in advance of the event, God pulled aside the veil of the future and gave the prophet Isaiah a preview of this, Isaiah commented in worshipful amazement: "He will be called Wonderful . . ." (literally, "Miracle!"). Explain the miracle of Jesus' dual nature? We might as well try to cage the wind or catch a melody in a bag.

The relevancy of Lutheran Christology

The Bible teaching of the personal union of the two natures in Christ is not prominent in contemporary theology. With pathetic pride, church leaders today pronounce this message not only outlandish, but irrelevant to citizens of the 21st century.

But was the message of the person and work of the God-Man irrelevant for the first-century Jews and Greeks to whom Jesus and the apostles preached? There were social problems

in Christ's day—plenty of them—but he still thought it necessary to speak to people about the unique person through whom God bridged the gap between sinful humans and a holy but offended Creator.

Jesus dealt with a man born blind, with a woman arrested in the act of adultery, and with a five-time divorcée. In Palestine there was racial hatred between Samaritans and Jews. Onesimus was a runaway slave. In Ephesus a labor union caused Paul much grief. Why should we think our problems today are so different or that we need a new message for people?

Is the Bible teaching about Jesus' dual nature perhaps one of the finer points of Christian teaching? Could it be one of those teachings that we expect our Lutheran teachers and pastors to learn about, but that the rest of us can afford to ignore?

Lutheran Christology emphasizes that Jesus' dual nature—God and man in one person—gives validity and authority to what he says. The disciples could not have missed the implication of the change in the way Christ announced his message from the way the Old Testament prophets introduced theirs. Their familiar "This is what the LORD says" was now replaced by "But I say to you. . ."

If, on the other hand, Jesus of Nazareth is not who he says he is, if he was just another itinerant rabbi, then we can safely afford to ignore what he has to say.

Lutheran Christology emphasizes that Jesus' dual nature gives validity to his work of saving sinners. If Jesus Christ was no more than a heroic but misguided martyr, you and I don't have a Savior. If the Bible is not truthful in what it tells us about who Jesus is—son of a virgin, God and man in one person—then there is no such thing as happiness for us. We're all on our way to hell.

In the ancient words of the Nicene Creed we regularly confess: "We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ . . . God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God . . . of one being with the Father. . . For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven . . . and became fully human." If those words are not true, then our past is only a trail of unforgiven sin, our present is only a waste of time, and our future is a ghastly nightmare that we must face alone.

Jesus' dual nature offers comfort to Christians

Think of what the Bible teaching of the two natures of Christ means to you as you live out your life in

an unfriendly world. Scripture assures us that Christ ascended to heaven not merely as some sweet saint, but as the all-powerful and ever-present God-Man.

When Christ was on earth, he “made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant” (Philippians 2:7). During what we call his “state of humiliation,” Jesus kept his God-nature under wraps. He didn’t always use it. He chose, for example, to be in only one place at a time.

But Christ is no longer in his state of humiliation. He has “ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe” (Ephesians 4:10). Now he rules as God-Man from sea to sea, to the ends of the earth—at your kitchen table, in hospital operating rooms, on freeways and runways, over the Oval Office and the Kremlin.

Sense the implications

Do you see what this means for you? A five-year-old girl was afraid to be alone. Her mother told her: “But, God is with you.” The child responded: “But I want somebody with skin on!”

The helper God sent us is a helper “with skin on.” The One who is seated

at the video monitor of the universe is the eternal God, yet 20 centuries ago he wrapped himself in your flesh and blood. And do you recall that he never laid aside his human nature? He still retains it. It’s our Brother, who is alive today in a resurrected and glorified body of flesh, bone, and blood, who is ruling the world.

In his memoirs, Winston Churchill, British prime minister during World War II, recalled the grim days of the London blitz. In the fall of 1940, an average of 200 Nazi bombers attacked London for two months straight. After one air raid, Churchill visited an area in South London that had just been hit. Where several dozen three-story homes had stood, there was now only a huge hole 20 feet deep. As Churchill viewed the smoldering ruins, with people now homeless standing around him, he broke down and wept. One lady was heard saying: “Look, he really cares. He’s crying!”

We do not suffer any hurt that our Brother, the God-Man, has not felt. We face no problem that he has not faced. Is pain your constant companion? Your Savior knows a thing

or two about pain. Have family members disappointed you or forgotten about you or friends turned against you? As our substitute, Jesus was forsaken not only by his closest friends, but even by his own Father.

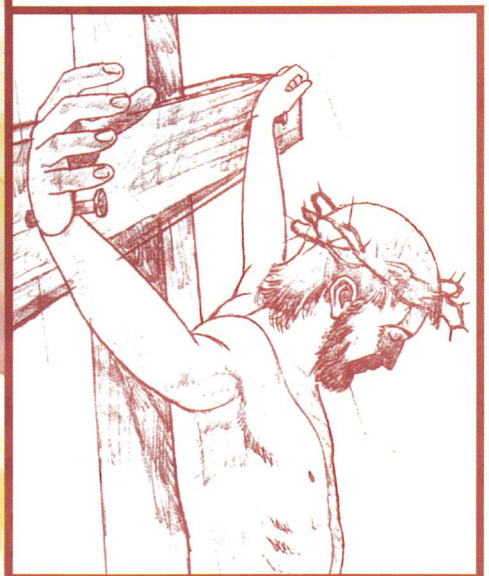
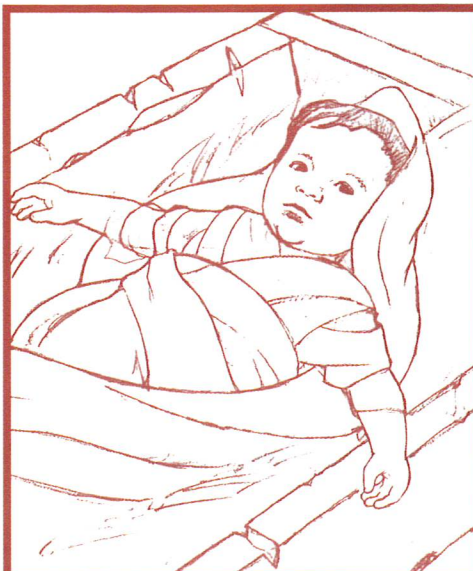
When you’re hurting, listen for his voice saying: “Child, I’m here—right next to you. Come into my arms. Child, remember that you’re special to me. Nothing in all of creation can separate you from my love.” Jesus—my Brother—sympathizes . . . with me! It almost brings tears to your eyes. What a Savior!

Is biblical Christology just arguing about words? Should the church today find more important things to talk about than the dual nature of Jesus Christ? Our Lutheran forefathers who wrote the *Formula of Concord* (FC) didn’t think so.

“Christ truly fills all things, and being present everywhere not only as God but also as man, rules from sea to sea and to the ends of the earth” (FC VII:27).



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



GOD'S SELF-PORTRAIT



**In the picture of the prodigal son,
God paints a self-portrait of himself as the loving father.**

Eric S. Hartzell

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him” (Luke 15:20).

Vincent Van Gogh painted many self-portraits. They are haunting pictures: red beard, widespread eyes, sallow and gaunt face. In one he painted a bandage over his right ear. He had cut it off himself while in the throes of a violent seizure. He fell in with hard drinking and bad women. Finally he committed suicide. What did Van Gogh want us to see in his self-portrait? What did he see? We can only guess.

Other artists, too, have painted themselves. Some serious, some not so. In Norman Rockwell’s self-portrait, Rockwell painted himself painting himself. The picture shows him peering around his canvas looking into a mirror. The artist with his back to us and his face reflected in the mirror wears thick glasses. The picture he’s painting on the canvas doesn’t. What do we see in this self-portrait? Do we see a man who doesn’t take himself too seriously, or do we see a man who does take himself too seriously and wants us to smile about it?

God’s self-portrait shows his love

The greatest artist of all, the one who paints the sunsets and fashions the design of the snowflakes and splashes the color of the flowers over the landscape, also painted a self-portrait. You have seen it.

In the picture of the prodigal son, he painted himself as the old father. Convention in dignified oriental society said, “No running.” Running was considered demeaning, something kids did. But in the picture God paints, he is running. He doesn’t care about decorum. His sandaled feet smack the stones of the road. One hand is held out in front farther than

the other pleading for the first touch of his son. The hoarse syllables of his son’s name are jarred loose by his running. That’s God’s self-portrait. An old man running. An old man kissing away the dirt of his son’s life and embracing him when no one else would.

God’s self-portrait shows one who is not worried about how his love looks to others. When God loves us, he takes the risk of looking bad. He takes the risk of loving someone who can waste his love on the pigs. When he takes his son back and does it quickly and with emotion, some criticize and say it is too fast and too easy. There is so little proof that the son won’t do what he did again. Where is the proper time of grieving over sins? Where is the crawling and begging and fawning that some love would require before allowing good graces to be entertained? The self-portrait of God shows someone vulnerable who is criticized as being too quick to open his arms and to run.

God’s self-portrait shows one who is not worried about how his love looks to others.

But God doesn’t care because that’s really how God is and how he looks. He is an old man running, son in sight, hair disheveled, robes flying, dignity gone, nothing else matters.

We see ourselves in God’s self-portrait

Many have passed by this self-portrait of God as they shuffle

through the gallery of this world’s great pictures. All the talented gods of this world have current shows and displays in his gallery. You can hear “ooohs” and “aaahs.” Some stop and point at this picture and that.

Many have stopped behind the velvet ropes and have seen this self-portrait of God. With their arms crossed some have studied this picture of the old man running and then passed by.

But something draws others and compels them to cross the velvet rope and get closer. They look this way and that and step over the soft restraint. They get closer. There is something hauntingly familiar about that other face in the painting, the face of the returning son in the murky background of the picture. They get even closer, and they see. “Oh! That’s me!” The words come out almost like a sob. They look around again and point at their face on God’s self-portrait. Some passers-by see them and wonder. Some don’t get it. They don’t see what anyone can see in the picture of an old man running.

The worth of God’s self-portrait

People often measure wealth by the acquisition of expensive art. But you can’t buy God’s self-portrait. However, you can have it. It’s free. God invites you to tack it up on the walls of your mind and heart . . . the picture of the old man running.

Once you have tacked up God’s self-portrait, you’ll realize that the true measure of a picture’s worth is not what it is worth but what it does for those who look at it.



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

GOD'S WORD WORKS

A story about God's plan for a Jewish agnostic.

Julie K. Tessmer

God's Word works. That's the only explanation for the story of Steven Green, a man who grew up culturally Jewish and religiously agnostic, but now is a member of Risen Savior, Austin, Tex.

"It was all part of the Spirit's plan," he says, as he relates the tale of how he got where he is today.

Growing up

Green was born into a Jewish family in New York City in 1959. Although he was raised Jewish culturally, the Jewish religion wasn't a factor.

"My mother is over the line where I'm pretty sure she's close to being atheist," says Green. "My father would be on the other side. He believes there is a god, but he doesn't really have much of an interest."

Green still learned some of the Jewish customs and teachings from a private school that was 15 percent Jewish that he attended in his youth, from girls he dated, from his parents, and from other relatives. He even followed some of the customs.



Joyce Graves and Steven Green.

"It was expected that every Jewish boy go through the bar mitzvah, regardless of his religious views. If you want to talk in tax forms, I took the short form or the EZ form," says Green, an accountant by trade. "My bar mitzvah consisted of me reading two paragraphs of Hebrew that was phoeneticized for me in a reformed service. We had a big party afterward."

But an organized religious life wasn't a priority in Green's life until his last year in college at Drexel University in Philadelphia. Green was down after a breakup with a woman and was invited to a Bud-

dhist prayer meeting. He went.

"[Buddhists] try to be in rhythm with the forces of nature so there isn't really a personal god," says Green. "That appealed to me at the time because I was leaning toward being an atheist."

Although he got the "spiritual support" he needed at that time, he got tired of it and quit when he graduated in 1983.

"Searching for the dollar" led Green to Boston for a year, and then back to New York City. Working 14-hour days, studying for his certified public accountant exam, and going to baseball games took up most of his time—leaving little for God.

Finding God

But God had a plan. He led Green to Austin, Tex., in 1989. Here Green read the Bible for the first time.

"I did it because I didn't want to be ignorant of something that people were talking about," says Green. "I wanted to know what it was about—sort of like a social study."

He continues, "It was more like nonsense to me. I really couldn't



make anything out about it. I just read it to see what was there.”

But God didn't desert Green in his misunderstanding.

“I think it was the work of God,” says Green. “Right after I read the Bible I started making Christian friends. They would ask me stuff because it was sort of novel—me being Jewish. They would ask me questions and then witness to me.”

Although Green was busy with managing properties he had acquired, he now found time to talk with his Christian friends.

“The Holy Spirit was laying a foundation for when I really came to Christ,” says Green.

God also worked into Green's life some difficult circumstances, which led him to place his trust in something he had never trusted before—God.

“It was the point of no return. I was led to believe very strongly. It wasn't a decision. This was it. I had to believe,” says Green. The date was Nov. 9, 1994—the day Green trusted Jesus as his Savior.

Growing in faith

But Green still had to grow in his new faith.

Joyce Graves, his future wife, was an important part in that growth. But first she had some growing to do on her own.

Graves was born and raised Lutheran in Minnesota. Although she went through confirmation, 14-year-old Graves fell away from organized religion after her mother died.

“I was spiritual by being close to nature,” says Graves. “I felt closer to God that way. At church they were always judging you.”

After living all over the country, Graves ended up in Austin in 1986. In 1995, while helping a friend look

for an apartment, she called Green.

“God brought us together,” said Graves. “God had a plan.”

Green and Graves began dating. Three months later in June they went to Minnesota, where Graves baptized Green before they were engaged.

Yet neither of them was going to church. A friend invited them to Risen Savior, Austin, Tex. They attended in August 1995—Green's first time in a WELS church.

“I never stopped going,” says Green. “It felt so right.”

His one complaint: “The sermons are too short.”

He continues, “I feast on the Word. I like that the Word of God gets front and center.”

Green and Graves began attending Bible classes at Risen Savior and Holy Word, another WELS church in Austin that was closer to where Graves lived. They also attended pre-marriage counseling to work through some of their differences before they got married in 1996. They began reading the People's Bible together at home.

“He had never heard the stories of Sodom and Gomorrah or David and Goliath when he was a kid,” says Graves. “I would tell him what I could, but I didn't necessarily know which part of the Bible to take them from. I would have to get my children's Bible book or a concordance. I was a naïve Christian also.”

And sometimes it was hard for Green to give up old habits. “I was going from the wide and broad to the straight and narrow path,” says Green.

Giving money to the church and fighting against a love of money were areas he needed to work on. He also took a few side paths along the way while learning to live by God's truth.

Graves worked hard to help him down this road. “Sometimes I was fighting Steven and the devil, and they were both on the same side,” says Graves.

But they both grew in their faith. “We feed off each other when it comes to knowledge of the Bible,” says Graves.

Serving God

And growth continues. “Steven's entire social life is church-centered,” says Roger Zehms, pastor at Risen Savior. “The church is where his efforts are.”

Now retired, Green attends Bible classes at Risen Savior and Holy Word, including the pastors' Bible study. He is the elder of evangelism at Risen Savior as well as financial secretary. “The gospel and the kingdom are what's the priority, and I want to do all I can for God,” he says.

He is also working to bring others to Jesus. Green and Graves go to other WELS churches to share their story, to educate about the Jewish culture, and to give ways to reach out to Jews.

Perhaps the people Green is trying hardest to reach are his parents. “It's hard to know what I know—that if they keep rejecting the Word, they're going to receive condemnation,” says Green.

“Jews need to be saved, and most Jews need to hear the law and gospel,” reminds Green. “You can't be scared to tell them that Jesus is the Savior. Be concerned about God's feelings; don't worry about their feelings.”

In other words, share God's Word. Because it works.

Julie Tessmer is senior communications assistant for Forward/NL and WELS Communication Services.



The only way

Although other religions claim to know the “way,” the supreme proof that Christ is the only way back to God lies embedded in the resurrection.



Steven C. Degner

He was praying on his knees in the parking lot of the airport, bowing toward the east, with the sun setting in the west. Next to the small carpet on which he was kneeling were his shoes, neatly placed at his side.

Equality of religions—the way of the world

Muslims pray openly in our country. Mosques dot our landscape. The United States Army installed its first Muslim chaplain in 1993. The religious album of America is bursting with new snapshots. Our country proudly flies the banner of being tolerant and accepting of all religions. We are a pluralistic society that welcomes people of other cultures, other creeds, and other races into our melting pot. This tolerance of all religions allows us to freely practice our religious beliefs without fear of suppression and retaliation.

The times are changing. On the cusp of the 21st century, there are new voices calling for a new brand of tolerance that want to make all religions equal. Those who proclaim their religion to be superior to others are labeled as bigoted, narrow-minded, and intolerant.

Here is what one Hindu wrote about the needs of the 21st-century religious scene: “In the dawning global age we can no longer claim that any one religion is the only truth

for all humanity any more than we can claim that one language, culture, or way of life is the best for all. We must have a broad enough view to recognize what is of value in the different peoples and cultures of the globe from so-called aborigines, who have a much deeper understanding of nature than modern people, to the great civilizations not only of Europe and the Middle East but of America, Africa, and Asia, including those not built upon Biblical religious ideas.”

Jesus is the only way

In striking contrast to the words of this Hindu religious leader, stand the claims of Jesus in John 14:6: “I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me.” The aborigine may have a deep understanding of nature, but according to Jesus, this will not enable him to come to the Father.

Peter’s words in Acts 4:12 are also exclusive: “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”

Religious scholars have experienced bouts of apoplexy over Jesus’ exclusive words in John and the words of Acts 4. Krister Stendahl, an alleged Lutheran theologian of the past century, once lectured on a college campus in the 1970s on “Pluralism and the Christian Faith.” He held up the clear words of Jesus

in John 14:6 and claimed they were an example of hyperbole or exaggeration. Thankfully, the lecture ended that night when a devout Christian woman asked the renowned theologian to explain why Jesus prayed the way he did in the Garden of Gethsemane. He was taken aback by her gentle yet firm request to explain why Jesus had to drink the cup of suffering, if there were other paths and other ways back to God.

All religions have equal place in our country, but not all religions are equal.

Dr. John Hick of Wellesley College currently leads the charge in the 21st century to combat the intolerance of those who claim that Jesus’ words in John 14:6 are actually true. He suggests that other religions offer equal access to God, since the essence of all religion is to “love your neighbor as yourself.” He writes, “We have no good reason to believe that any one of the great religious traditions has shown itself to be more productive of love/compassion than another.”

All religions have equal place in our country, but not all religions are equal. It is quite obvious that there is a major difference in monotheism (the belief in one god), polytheism (belief in many gods), and pantheism

DAMAGED GOODS

We are all “damaged goods.”
But in Jesus, we have been made “new”
through his sacrifice on the cross.

Carl R. Henkel



Large “Hail Sale” signs line the sides of the boulevard in front of each new car dealership. If you don’t mind a few dents on the hood, sides, top, and trunk of a brand new car, you can probably save some money.

The ad in the newspaper advertises a “Scratch and Dent Sale” with “huge savings” on new appliances that have a few flaws and blemishes.

Damaged goods are usually not as desirable as merchandise that is brand spanking new. Most people will avoid buying something new that is visibly defective, dented, or scratched. If they do purchase it, they certainly are not willing to pay full price.

The problem ruins life

Damaged goods. Like it or not, that’s what you and I are. And our flaws are far more serious than surface blemishes. If scratches and dents were our only problem, we’d be in great shape. Unfortunately, our damage is deep down inside and can’t be remedied by a trip to the body shop.

Why is it, then, that we can distinguish and diagnose the damage in other folks, but are so often oblivious to the seriousness of our own disgraceful defects? How is it that we dare to pass judgment on others while forgetting that the same shameful imperfections are intrinsic to us all? We’re all made of the same stuff.

We Christians are frequently the most cruel and judgmental of all. When a brother falls, our first inclination may be to shake our heads in disgust and self-righteously ask, “How could he do that?,” rather than to humbly acknowledge that there but for the grace of God go I. When a sister yields to temptation,

we might shun her as though she has the plague, rather than compassionately and sympathetically seeking to heal her wounds.

If we are to be faithful representatives of Jesus Christ, we must first come to the full realization that every one of us is damaged goods. It’s not a matter of “they” vs. “us.” “All” have sinned and fall short of God’s glory. If we think we have only a few scratches and dents, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

The solution is for life

Once we have come to grips with our own status as “damaged goods,” then we can begin to see how desperately we all need our Savior, Jesus. He died on Calvary for sinners like you and me—but not only for us. He died for all. How we appropriate his holy law and his glorious gospel in our personal lives will radically change the way we feel about and treat other “sinners.”

If we are to be faithful representatives of Jesus Christ, we must first come to the full realization that every one of us is damaged goods.

True Christianity is not a matter of knowing a few facts; it’s a matter of living out the life and love of Jesus. The gospels were not inspired by God and written down by the apostles to be a history lesson. They were recorded so that we might know and believe that Jesus is our

blessed Savior and Redeemer, that we might know his grace and compassion, and that we might be moved and motivated to emulate his mercy and love.

I’m reminded of the little girl who came home from her first day at school and said to her mother, “I think I started something today that I’ll never finish.” Rather perceptive and profound from a six-year-old, wouldn’t you say? It’s a remarkable thing that even a child can look over the desk, over the books and papers, over the walls of the classroom, anticipating a life journey that will never be finished.

The school of life is an exciting venture for us Christians. Every day it offers new opportunities for Jesus to live out his life through us. Every day we have a fresh, new chance to show another “damaged,” hurting, and struggling sinner the kindness of our Lord. Each new day brings us another moment to be thankful to God for his presence and patience and to share that grateful moment with another sojourner. Each day we are privileged to pray “forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us” and really mean it.

Indeed, we are all “damaged goods.” But in Jesus, we have been made “new” through his sacrifice on the cross. What a blessing! Now we can be a blessing to others as we anticipate a life journey that will never be finished.



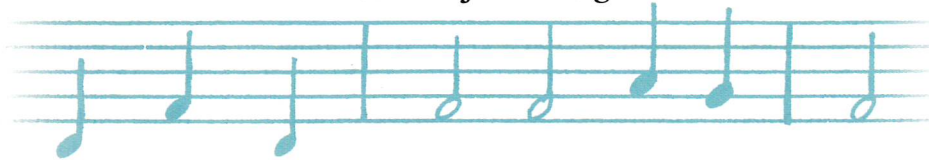
Carl Henkel is pastor at Mount Olive, Saint Paul, Minnesota.



O God, O Lord of heaven and earth

In this spiritually rudderless world, the message of hymn 400 is both relevant and essential.

Theodore J. Hartwig



Unique among the approximately 100 hymns of American vintage in *Christian Worship* is number 400, “O God, O Lord of Heaven and Earth.”

The uniqueness of hymn 400 lies in its uncommon message. No other hymn in *Christian Worship* speaks so perceptively to the present-day human plight: people adrift in what seems to them a meaningless existence. No hymn is its superior for imaging in its stark ugliness the deep disorder at the root of this plight. No hymn expresses in such graphic poetry God’s coming into our hideously sinful environment to shout the message of deliverance from mankind’s self-inflicted bondage. No hymn prays more poignantly for a revived Christianity that glorifies God.

The hymn’s exalted language is, like Luther’s, a model of visual poetry. We see what we sing:

- God’s living finger that sketched out his holy design for the crown of his creation;
- the aimlessly restless mote, that tiny speck of dust, invisible until caught in a beam of sunlight;
- the divine Word of life hurled through a broken world;
- the wall of sin in which we entombed ourselves and where death runs the show;

- Christ’s coming to breathe the poisoned air that strangled us;
- his messenger feet hurrying to proclaim the gospel of escape from prison;
- the Spirit’s restorative breath to heal the shattered shards of the church and unloose lips to glorify God.

Now let the poetry speak for itself: “O God, O Lord of heav’n and earth, Your living finger never wrote That life should be an aimless mote, A deathward drift from futile birth. Your Word meant life triumphant hurled In splendor through your broken world; Since light awoke and life began, You made for us a holy plan.

“In blind revolt we would not see That rebel wills wrought death and night. We seized and used in fear and spite Your wondrous gift of liberty. We walled us in this house of doom, Where death had royal scope and room, Until your servant, Prince of Peace, Broke down its walls for our release.

“You came into our hall of death, O Christ, to breathe our poisoned air, To drink for us the deep despair That strangled our reluctant breath. How beautiful the feet that trod The road to bring good news from God! How beautiful the feet that bring Good tidings of our saving King!

“O Spirit, who did once restore The church that it might yet recall The bringer of good news to all: Breathe on your cloven church once more That in these gray and latter days There may be those whose life is praise, Each life a high doxology Unto the holy Trinity.”

The hymn’s author, Martin Franzmann, taught at schools of higher education in both the Wisconsin and Missouri synods through the mid-1900s. A modest Christian gentleman and naturally gifted poet, he had an eloquent command of the English language and a deep love for the melodious tones of the old King James translation of the Bible. Our hymnal is enriched by eight of his hymns. His most majestic hymn, “Thy Strong Word” (CW 280), elevated by a rousing Welsh melody, stands in the same class with Luther’s “A Mighty Fortress.”

In the high company of hymns composed by Franzmann, CW 400 languishes as something of a stepchild. It merits more use for its message so emphatically relevant and so essential for Christian meditation in this spiritually rudderless world.

Theodore Hartwig is a professor at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota.

WHATEVER

A ready witness

Our **actions witness**, whether we want them to or not. The only question is what **type of witness** will they be?

Becky Nolte

Ever noticed that in school, particularly public high school, it's just not cool to be a Christian? Being a light for Christ is a real struggle in situations like biology class, when the theory of evolution is being crammed down everyone's throat and God is unheard of. Perhaps it's even harder to be a Christian witness while just hanging out with friends. In many groups, it's normal to curse and swear, be rebellious, and talk inappropriately about the opposite sex. It seems for today's teens, most of "what's in" goes against the Christian life and faith. It's hard to be a believer in the year 2001.

Someone else had problems like these way longer ago than last year. Timothy (we'll call him Tim), a young Christian pastor in the years just after Christ died, faced big problems. He lived in a time and place where Christians were beaten, killed, unfairly tried, and convicted for the "crime" of following Jesus.

On top of all that, Tim was having difficulty in his own church. The apostle Paul, his professor, mentor, and friend, advised: "Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith, and in purity" (1 Timothy 4:12). That's a pretty thorough bit of encouragement, huh? Paul told Tim to be strong in his faith even though he was young. He said, "Even though you're the little guy, younger than those people picking on you, they have no business looking down their noses at you just 'cause you're half their age."

That's great, but there's more. Tim couldn't just walk around preachin', teachin', condemnin', and blessin'. He had a responsibility! He needed to encourage his Christian friends by his example.

Flip over to Matthew 5:16, and Jesus told us that our actions have another purpose as well: "... let your light shine before men, that they may see your good deeds and praise your Father in heaven."

Ever heard the saying, "Actions speak louder than words"? No matter how crusty and proper it sounds, it's no less true for us today. Yes, it applies to us personally. If we say, "Jesus is my Savior," but then people see us shoplift from stores, spread rumors about our friends, and use profanity, how believable is it that what Jesus says is important to us?

Now, granted, we can't be perfect. We are saved by grace alone. That has nothing to do with our actions, only the blood of Christ. When we mess up, Christ is willing and ready to forgive. It's a good thing, 'cause if my salvation was up to me, I'd have blown it long ago. But Paul reminds us that the world, Christians and unbelievers alike, is watching.

Not only can our actions encourage our believing friends, but they will also witness to our unbelieving friends. Our actions witness, whether we want them to or not. The only question is what type of witness will they be? Will we show our friends that Christ is everything to us, or will we show them that he doesn't matter at all? And what about our Christian friends? Could we weaken their faith by what we do? The possibility is there. The devil is tricky. But God is with us. He sustains our faith, and he will work even our mistakes for the good of all who love him.

Becky Nolte, a senior at Niwot High School, is a member at Our Savior, Longmont, Colorado.



voting delegates

Delegates for the 56th biennial convention of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw—July 30-August 3, 2001

Arizona-California

Conference	Lay delegates	Teachers	Pastors
Apache	Mr. Franklin Quintero, East Fork, Whiteriver, Ariz.	Mr. James Brandt Mr. Stephen Granberg Mr. Alan Mindock Mr. Steven Rosenbaum Mr. Paul Schultz	Rev. John Berg Rev. Mark Hallemeier Rev. Dennis Halverson Rev. Kerry Kronebush Rev. Richard Kugler Rev. H. Curtis Lyon Rev. Paul Mueller Rev. Martin Spaude Rev. John Sprain
Black Canyon	Mr. Ron Clegg, Heritage, Gilbert, Ariz. Mr. Roger Harmann, St. Thomas, Phoenix, Ariz. Mr. Vernon Henderson, Peace, Cottonwood, Ariz. Mr. James Sexton, Christ, Prescott Valley, Ariz. Mr. Sherman Unkefer, Paradise Valley, Phoenix, Ariz.		
California North	Mr. James Becker, St. Andrew, Sacramento, Calif. Mr. Brian Heintz, St. Mark, Citrus Heights, Calif. Mr. Al Rousseau, Shepherd of the Mountains, Reno, Nev.		
California South	Mr. Randy Baker, Shepherd of the Hills, La Mesa, Calif. Mr. Steven Burk, Prince of Peace, Yucaipa, Calif. Mr. Joseph Junk, Trinity, Ridgecrest, Calif. Mr. Jack Marten, St. John, Victorville, Calif. Mr. Phil Scheuer, Mt. Olive, Las Vegas, Nev.		
Gadsden	Mr. Ken Jamka, Trinity, Sierra Vista, Ariz. Mr. Herman Koester, Shepherd, Albuquerque, N.M. Mr. Gene Waldkoetter, Peace, Tucson, Ariz.		

Dakota-Montana

Conference	Lay delegates	Teachers	Pastors
Eastern	Mr. Brad Bartz, Prince of Peace, Yankton, S.D. Mr. Leon Begalka, Trinity, Clear Lake, S.D. Mr. Tom Hansen, Faith, Huron, S.D. Mr. Larry Lindemann, Bethel, Sioux Falls, S.D. Mr. Ron Smallfield, Good Shepherd, Sioux Falls, S.D.	Mr. Jeff Roloff	Rev. Jeff Carter Rev. Doug Priestap Rev. William Russow Rev. Winfried Schroeder
Rocky Mountain	Mr. Neil Doerr, Apostles, Billings, Mont. Mr. Tom Kuegler, Shining Mountain, Bozeman, Mont. Mr. Keith Stensvad, Faith, Melstone, Mont.		
Western	Mr. Norman Frey, Zion, Mobridge, S.D. Mr. Wayne Hauschildt, Shepherd of the Hills, Custer, S.D. Mr. William Stewart, Trinity, Aberdeen, S.D. Mr. Delbert Wells, St. John, Paradise, N.D. Mr. George Zeller, Trinity, Carson, N.D.		

Michigan

Conference	Lay delegates	Teachers	Pastors
Northern	Mr. Terry Baker, Grace, Flint, Mich. Mr. Roger Bogenschutz, Faith, Harrison, Mich. Mr. Thomas Conzelmann, St. John, Frankenmuth, Mich. Mr. Ken Draheim, St. Paul, Mayville, Mich. Mr. Robert Goddard, Mt. Sinai, Montrose, Mich. Mr. Lawrence Hollenbeck, Grace, Alma, Mich. Mr. Keith Humbert, St. John, Gladwin, Mich. Mr. Lary Schlaack, Trinity, Lincoln, Mich. Mr. Ron Weber, St. Luke, Saginaw, Mich. Mr. Charles Withey, Memorial, Williamston, Mich.	Mr. Jon Biedenbender Mr. Ronald Briney Mr. David Brohn Mr. Willard Engel Mr. Brian Fuerstenau Mr. Steven Grosinske Mr. Timothy Plath Mr. William Zeiger	Rev. Andrew Backus Rev. Patrick Bell Rev. Marcus Bode Rev. Daniel Buske Rev. Paul Fetzer Rev. David Furno Rev. Daniel Gawrisch Rev. Robert Hoepner Rev. Walter Oelhafen Rev. Richard Scheibe Rev. Paul Schmiede Rev. Dennis Smith Rev. Mark Schulz
Ohio	Mr. Mike Grimes, Amazing Grace, Florence, Ky. Mr. Tim Hanson, King of Kings, Willoughby, Ohio Mr. Harold Pietz, Beautiful Savior, Cincinnati, Ohio Mr. Richard Sreptock, St. Andrew, Toledo, Ohio		
Southeastern	Mr. George Bock, St. Luke, Jackson, Mich. Mr. Terry Brenke, St. John, Riga, Mich. Mr. George Doebler, Zion, Warren, Mich. Mr. Arnold Heyer, St. Paul, Monroe, Mich. Mr. Jim Hoble, Good Shepherd, Novi, Mich. Mr. Robert Janes, Immanuel, South Lyon, Mich.		
Southwestern	Mr. James Hass, Grace, Eau Claire, Mich. Mr. Richard Miller, St. Paul, South Haven, Mich. Mr. Robert Schafer, Trinity, Wayland, Mich. Mr. Edgar Zobel, Holy Trinity, Wyoming, Mich.		

Minnesota

Conference	Lay delegates	Teachers	Pastors
Crow River	Mr. Willmar Bechtold, Salem, Loretto, Minn. Mr. Bernard Christianson, St. Peter, Monticello, Minn. Mr. Walter Ring, Grace, Hutchinson, Minn. Mr. Allan Schmidt, St. Paul, Litchfield, Minn.	Mr. Gary Dallmann Mr. John Festerling Mr. Paul Fritze Mr. Richard Gibson Mr. Jonathon Harley Mr. Peter Lemke Mr. Frederick Lohmiller Mr. Stephen Merten Mr. John Micheel Mr. John Nolte Mr. Mark Renner Mr. Alan Spurgin	Rev. Daniel Balge Rev. Mark Cordes Rev. Michael Dietz Rev. Michael Hatzung Rev. David Huebner Rev. Roger Knepprath Rev. Freddy Krieger Rev. Richard Kuckhahn Rev. James Liggett Rev. Randall Kuznicki Rev. Joel Lintner Rev. Donald Main Rev. Lawrence Olson Rev. Paul Schmeling Rev. Carl Ziemer
Mankato	Mr. Louis Marzinske, St. John, Janesville, Minn. Mr. Brian Schulz, Trinity, Janesville, Minn.		
New Ulm	Mr. Jerome Bentz, St. Paul, New Ulm, Minn. Mr. Vernon Gieseke, Zion, New Ulm, Minn.		
Red Wing	Mr. Jim Atkinson, Trinity, Lincoln Township, Minn. Mr. Norman Gerken, St. John, Frontenac, Minn. Mr. Marvin Howatt, St. John, Lake City, Minn. Mr. Merlyn Ruff, Grace, Nelson, Wis. Mr. Jertold Zenke, St. John, Nodine, Minn.		
Redwood Falls	Mr. Alton Beadell, St. Paul, Seaforth, Minn. Mr. Norman Riediger, St. John, Renville, Minn. Mr. Bruce Tolzmann, St. John, Redwood Falls, Minn.		
Southern	Mr. Kurt Braasch, Zion, Springfield, Mo. Mr. Lewis Rosenbaum, Martin Luther, St. Louis, Minn.		
St. Croix	Mr. Gerald Foss, Salem, Woodbury, Minn. Mr. Daniel Johnson, St. John, Centuria, Wis. Mr. Derwood LaValla, Forest Lake, Forest Lake, Minn. Mr. Lester Mortenson, Trinity, Osceola, Wis. Mr. Thomas Patterson, St. Paul, Prescott, Wis. Mr. Ronald Sather, St. Paul, Cannon Falls, Minn. Mr. Carol Tammen, St. John, Hastings, Minn. Mr. Richard Waldschmidt, Salem, Stillwater, Minn.		

Nebraska

	Lay delegates	Teachers	Pastors
Conference Central	Mr. Dallas Oestreich, Immanuel, Hadar, Neb.	Mr. Guy Gast Mr. Mark Kaiser	Rev. Ray Beckmann Rev. Brian Goens Rev. James Piltzuweit Rev. Thomas Spiegelberg Rev. Michael Traudt Rev. Peter Unnasch
Colorado	Mr. Paul Herzfeldt, Shepherd of the Hills, Greeley, Colo. Mr. David Stuhrt, Lord of Life, Thornton, Colo.		
Rosebud	Mr. Mike Haney, St. Paul, Naper, Neb.		
Southern	Mr. Robert Duvall, Gethsemane, Lee's Summit, Mo. Mr. Michael Friesenegger, Trinity, McCook, Neb. Mr. Don Niemann, St. Mark, Lincoln, Neb. Mr. Robert Rosky, Rock of Ages, Kansas City, Mo. Mr. Larry Todd, Our Savior, Harrisonville, Mo.		

North Atlantic

	Lay delegates	Teachers	Pastors
Conference Colonial North	Dr. Harold Kluender, Christ Redeemer, Trumbull, Conn.	Mr. Jonathan Roux	Rev. Thomas Haar Rev. Jonathan Kehren Rev. Jon Kuske
Colonial South	Mr. Jerry Dretsch, Resurrection, Virginia Beach, Va. Mr. Mark Fostervold, Atonement, Baltimore, Md. Mr. Thomas Hohler, St. John, Newark, Del. Mr. William Iverson, Our Savior, East Brunswick, N.J.		

Northern Wisconsin

	Lay delegates	Teachers	Pastors
Conference Fox River Valley	Mr. David Falck, St. Paul, Appleton, Wis. Mr. Robert Goggins, St. John, Sturgeon Bay, Wis. Mr. Ernest Kandler, St. Paul, Winneconne, Wis. Mr. David Peserik, Messiah, Green Bay, Wis. Mr. Kevin Raucholz, Mt. Calvary, Kimberly, Wis. Mr. LeRoy Ruppel, St. Paul, Dale, Wis. Mr. Wayne Springstroh, St. Matthew, Appleton, Wis. Mr. David Werth, St. Peter, Weyauwega, Wis.	Mr. Steve Brich Mr. James Curtis Mr. David Ebeling Mr. Fredric Heiderich Mr. Donald Kerr Mr. Michael Kiecker Mr. David Koepsell Dr. George LaGrow Mr. Steve Lemke Mr. Lyle Schneider Mr. Frederick Uttech Mr. David Voss	Rev. David Beckman Rev. Thomas Behnke Rev. Kenneth Frey Rev. Mark Gass Rev. Victor Headrick Rev. Ross Henzi Rev. David Hussman Rev. John Parlow Rev. Stephen Pope Rev. David Putz Rev. Brad Ragner Rev. Stuart Zak
Lake Superior	Mr. Don Brandt, St. Martin, Rapid River, Mich. Mr. John Deschane, Grace, Crivitz, Wis. Mr. Dwayne Klein, St. Paul, Bark River, Mich.		
Manitowoc	Mr. Ed Duellman, St. John St. Peter, Cleveland, Wis. Mr. Howard Rauch, Grace, Manitowoc, Wis. Mr. David Seehauer, Immanuel, Manitowoc, Wis.		
Rhineland	Mr. Roger Belongia, Zion, Mercer, Wis. Mr. David Bender, St. John, Pelican Lake, Wis. Mr. Fritz Perlwitz, Trinity, Minocqua, Wis.		
Winnebago	Mr. Eugene Anderson, Peace, Green Lake, Wis. Mr. Alan Geisthardt, St. Paul, North Fond du Lac, Wis. Mr. Ellsworth Katzur, Grace, Pickett, Wis. Mr. Daniel Kemnitz, Faith, Fond du Lac, Wis.		

Pacific Northwest

	Lay delegates	Teachers	Pastors
Conference Cascades	Mr. Keith Detro, Messiah, Nampa, Idaho Mr. John Eskew, Our Savior, East Wenatchee, Wash. Mr. Milton Gibbs, Divine Savior, Pullman, Wash. Mr. Gary Gray, Peace, Vancouver, Wash. Mr. Robert Gronlund, Immanuel, Salem, Ore. Mr. Charles Mills, Messiah, Olympia, Wash.	Mr. David Habeck	Rev. James Humann Rev. John Ruege Jr. Rev. Melvin Teske

South Atlantic

	Lay delegates	Teachers	Pastors
Conference Cottonbelt	Mr. Dale Jensens, Crown of Life, New Orleans, La. Mr. Ralph Kunz, Sola Scriptura, Decatur, Ga. Mr. Tom Poelman, Lamb of God, Madison, Ala.	Mr. Russell Hurst	Rev. Joel Jaeger Rev. Keith Kruck Rev. Christopher Kruschel Rev. Paul Lemke Rev. Paul Workentine
Cypress	Mr. Robert Kappen, Peace, Holiday, Fla. Mr. Jim Stansell, Good Shepherd, Deltona, Fla.		
Everglades	Mr. William Ekwere, St. John, Antigua, West Indies Mr. Glen Hutson, Hope, West Palm Beach, Fla. Mr. Carl Lange, Crown of Life, Fort Myers, Fla.		

South Central

	Lay delegates	Teachers	Pastors
Conference	Mr. Armondo Beltran, Abiding Savior, Weslaco, Tex. Mr. Bob Boyd, Cross of Christ, Universal City, Tex. Mr. Terry Eischen, Holy Cross, Oklahoma City, Okla. Mr. Brad Engel, Beautiful Savior, College Station, Tex. Mr. Robert Hintz, Trinity, Temple, Tex. Mr. Roger Wilkins, Grace, Lowell, Ark. Mr. Paul Wirth, Christ the Lord, Houston, Tex.	Mr. Brad Nommensen	Rev. Wayne Laitinen Rev. Timothy Soukup Rev. Roger Zehms

Southeastern Wisconsin

	Lay delegates	Teachers	Pastors
Conference Chicago	Mr. Jan Buelo, Faith, Kokomo, Ind. Mr. Walter Fritz, Grace, Indianapolis, Ind. Mr. Dennis Schendel, Hope, West Chicago, Ill. Mr. John Tolppi, Our Savior, Zion, Ill.	Mr. Thomas Banaszak Mr. Edward Becker Mr. Robert Buschkopf Mr. Jeffrey Dorn Mr. Mark Eisenmann Mr. Steven Enter Dr. Mel Friske Mr. Gary Heiman Mr. Donald Helwig Mr. Donald Kolander Mr. Michael Maas Mr. Henry Meyer Mr. John Meyer Mr. David Nelson Mr. Carl Nolte Mr. Mark Probst Mr. Kenneth Proeber Mr. Darwin Schramm Mr. Paul Scriver Mr. James Sievert Mr. Richard Sievert Mr. Scott Wagner Mr. Steven Zellmer	Rev. Timothy Bauer Rev. John Beck Rev. Bruce Becker Rev. William Carter Rev. Robert Dick Rev. Duane Erstad Rev. Robert Gurgel Rev. John Kelly Rev. James Korthals Rev. Kenneth Kratz Rev. Richard Krause Rev. Kurt Loescher Rev. Wayne Meier Rev. Philip Merten Rev. Paul Reede Rev. Martin Schoell Rev. John Stellick Rev. Jon Tesch Rev. Raymond Ziebell
Kettle Moraine	Mr. Merten Hess, Peace, Hartford, Wis. Mr. Ed Qualmann, Bethany, Hustisford, Wis. Mr. Don Snider, St. Matthew, Port Washington, Wis. Mr. Donald Timmermann, Bethlehem, Menomonee Falls, Wis. Mr. Barry Washburn, David's Star, Jackson, Wis.		
Milwaukee Metro	Mr. Timothy Jacobson, St. Jacobi, Greenfield, Wis. Mr. Steven Miller, Salem, Milwaukee, Wis. Mr. Kevin Moony, St. John, Oak Creek, Wis. Mr. Lloyd Morison, Calvary, Milwaukee, Wis. Mr. John W. Peterman, St. John, Wauwatosa, Wis.		
Milwaukee Urban	Mr. Tom Hall, St. Marcus, Milwaukee, Wis. Mr. Mark Krueger, Risen Savior, Milwaukee, Wis. Mr. Fred Schuettker, Salem, Milwaukee, Wis.		
Shoreland	Mr. Terrance Hebron, P.E., Zion, Bristol, Wis. Mr. Duane Keller, Faith, Antioch, Ill. Mr. Merlen Koepke, Bethany, Kenosha, Wis.		
Western Lakes	Mr. Robert Bruha, St. Paul, Franklin, Wis. Mr. James Bucholtz, St. Paul, Muskego, Wis. Mr. William Merten, Grace, Waukesha, Wis. Mr. Glenn Volkman, St. John, Mukwonago, Wis.		

continued on p. 22

voting delegates continued . . .

Western Wisconsin

Conference Central	Lay delegates Mr. William Banbury, St. Paul, Lake Mills, Wis. Mr. Robert Bartz, St. John, Waterloo, Wis. Mr. Michael Bennett, St. Stephen, Fall River, Wis. Mr. John Erdmann, St. John, Watertown, Wis. Mr. Duane Nelson, Our Redeemer, Madison, Wis. Mr. Dale Opperman, St. John, Jefferson, Wis. Mr. Charles Pieper, Zion, Arlington, Wis. Mr. Dale Roenneburg, St. Peter, Brodhead, Wis. Mr. Leland Schmidt, St. Mark, Richwood, Wis. Mr. David Schumann, St. Mark, Watertown, Wis. Mr. Joel Scott, St. Stephen, Beaver Dam, Wis. Mr. Dennis Staude, Immanuel, Farmington, Wis.
Chippewa River Valley	Mr. Gary Dunsmoor, Beautiful Savior, Spooner, Wis. Mr. Joe Knepper, Redeemer, Rice Lake, Wis.
Mississippi River Valley	Mr. Gary Evans, Trinity, Goodview, Minn. Mr. Oscar Miller, St. Matthew, Stoddard, Wis. Mr. Herb Peter, St. Matthew, Winona, Minn. Mr. Paul Schwartz, St. Peter, Chaseburg, Wis.
Southwestern	Mr. Luther Barclay, Christ, Mindoro, Wis. Mr. Vernon Kingery, St. John, Baraboo, Wis.
Wisconsin River Valley	Mr. Jonathan Blum, St. Paul, Wisconsin Rapids, Wis. Mr. Albert Meier, Zion, Ogema, Wis. Mr. John Tappe, St. Peter, Schofield, Wis.
Wisillowa	Mr. Robert Meske, Mt. Olive, Monroe, Wis. Mr. LeRoy Millestedter, Our Savior, Burlington, Iowa

Missionaries
Rev. Guy Marquardt
Rev. Wayne Oblender
Rev. Mark Rieke
Rev. Larry M. Schlomer
Rev. Arno Wolfgramm

Teachers
Mr. Joel Babinec
Mr. Daniel Bilitz
Mr. Ronald Brown
Mr. Paul Jacobs
Mr. Nathan Kieselhorst
Mr. Kenneth Lehman
Mr. Kevin Loersch
Mr. Michael Raabe
Mr. Peter Schaeuwe
Mr. Craig Sonntag
Mr. Paul Strutzel
Mr. Peter Wentzel
Mr. Andrew Willems
Mr. Keith Wordell

Pastors
Rev. Kenneth Arndt
Rev. Donald Buch
Rev. Michael Duncan
Rev. David Eckert
Rev. Thomas Fricke
Rev. Kevin Hanke
Rev. Edward Lindemann
Rev. Kurtis Mau
Rev. Marcus Neuman
Rev. David Nottling
Rev. David Plochke
Rev. Nathan Radtke
Rev. Lyle Schalow
Rev. Mark Schlenner
Rev. Mark Toepel

Gospel music meets Caribbean reggae

Did you know that the only acoustic musical instrument invented in the 20th century was the steel drum?

In the late 1930s, oil drums were plentiful in Trinidad and Tobago. Artisans began to carefully dent and tune the 55-gallon drums to create a variety of pitches. They discovered that the steel drums, also called “pans,” can contain the full chromatic range of tones and produce almost any type of music—including music that praises God.

In September 1998, eight members at St. John, St. Johns, Antigua, began a steel drum band to coincide with the congregation’s 25th anniversary celebration. The teens and adults took lessons from a director of a local group.

Bryan Schneck, director of one of the groups, says, “We practiced weekly in the nearby village of Potters, setting up the pans in the street, usually in darkness, which helped us to memorize our way around the pans.”

The group debuted at the anniversary service, after which there was so much interest that a children’s group and a teen group were started.

Recently a Spanish teen group was also organized.

The groups enjoy taking a familiar song and reinterpreting it in a Caribbean style.

Schneck also reports that, “Last summer the ladies of the adult group performed at the LWMS Rally in Nashville. . . . We hope to send a touring group again in the next couple of years, but the task is daunting, especially because of the air transport of our instruments. Full-size oil drums are not exactly carry-on items.”

Another group of WELS members is also praising God with steel drums. These members, though, are not living in the Caribbean. Instead, they worship at Hope, Toronto, Canada.

Many of the 16 members of the Hope Lutheran Church Steel Orchestra migrated from the Caribbean to Canada. In 1993, these Caribbean natives organized their steel drum band. This past summer they performed a seven-day, eight-concert tour in the United States from Aug. 23-29.

The orchestra performs a wide variety of music, ranging from



The Hope Lutheran Church Steel Orchestra focuses on going Forward in Christ—even on the front cover of their CD.

favorite old hymns such as “How great thou art” and “Amazing grace” to a classic like “Minuet in G.” Most often, the orchestra plays gospel music with a Caribbean flavor.

In September 2000, the Hope Lutheran Church Steel Orchestra released its first CD, *Forward in Christ—Celebration 2000*. For more information, contact Pauline Soman at 905/471-3578.

WELS Relief Fund helps earthquake victims in India

The WELS Committee on Relief exists to carry out God's directive in Galatians 6:10, "Therefore, as we have opportunity, let us do good to all people, especially to those who belong to the family of believers."

The committee donated \$50,000 for the January earthquake in India. Of the \$50,000 to India, \$30,000 was directed through one of our friendly counselors in India, Mark Krueger. Below is a report from Krueger about the situation in India following the earthquake.

It is one of those photos that you can't get out of your mind. You have those indelible images etched in your mind as well. Oklahoma City . . . bombing . . . fireman carrying a child. The photo in my mind takes me to another disaster on the other side of the world. The place is Gujarat, a state in the country of India. The disaster is an earthquake. The photo is of a pile of rubble at first glance. And then you see the rubble taking shape, and you make out the dust-covered hair and eyes of a little girl. She is dead, of course, crushed beneath tons of concrete and steel. Just the top of her head protrudes and it is that image that will not go away.

There are many such images as a result of the earthquake that hit the northwest part of India. The estimates of the dead range from 30,000 to over 100,000. The final toll will never be

known. Many were cremated without giving official notification to anyone. There was not enough time for that. The bodies were decomposing in the heat. Wood was running short because there were so many cremations.

Life for many of the survivors has become a nightmare. They have lost their homes and all their possessions. Well over one-third of a million people are homeless. Even if they had homes to go to, many people are so traumatized by the quake and continuing tremors that they do not want to sleep in a building. They fear the roof will collapse on them.

Thousands are also jobless. Their places of employment lie in ruins. Some businesses that were not destroyed can't find workers. They are busy trying to put their own lives back together, searching for relatives, recuperating from injuries, or leaving the area for safer regions of India.

On behalf of the WELS Relief Fund, I presented a \$30,000 check to the Chief Minister of Andhra Pradesh (comparable to a governor of a state in the United States) for his relief fund. The money will go to aid the people of Gujarat. The immediate needs are food, water, and temporary shelter. The long-term needs are housing, jobs, clinics, hospitals, and schools.

On behalf of the people of Gujarat, I thank you for your support of the Relief Fund. Because of your gen-

erosity, people will be able to begin rebuilding their lives. Because of your generosity, we have been able to show Christian love and concern for the people of India.

Grants distributed by the Committee on Relief October 1999-December 2000

DOMESTIC

\$2,000	Aid for Navajo Indians
30,000	WELS Kingdom Workers general relief (funds matched)
5,000	Project Share
44,330	Aid to families in medical need
95,000	Disaster relief to various WELS churches
10,000	North Carolina floods
7,000	Inner-city food pantries
\$193,330	

FOREIGN

\$5,000	Disaster relief in Taiwan
20,000	Hunger in Zaire
10,000	Hunger in Bangladesh
10,000	India flooding
40,000	Ethiopia hunger
10,000	Relief in Sudan
20,000	African refugee camps
25,000	Grant to Humanitarian Aid Committee (world missions)
10,000	India cyclone relief
39,000	Care International Relief
4,000	World mission relief funds
25,000	Latvia
\$218,000	

\$411,330 Total grants distributed

ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

We were singing hymn 377 during the distribution of communion one Sunday morning, and my six-year-old son examined the word JUSTIFICATION at the top of the page.

"J—U—S," he whispered. "Where are the E and the other S?"

Remembering that JESUS was the only J-word he knew, I whispered back, "This is a different word. Justification."

He looked into the distance for a second and then put up his index finger (Eureka!) and said, "Jesus-fication!"

I was amazed at the simplicity and complexity of his word, at how much he understood in his own childish way that God declares us "not guilty" through his Son.

I was wrong.

"Jesus-fication," he whispered again. "So, where does Jesus go on vacation?"

*Laurie Biedenbender
Watertown, Wisconsin*

DEFINING RELIGION

Pentecost: The festival of the church year in which we commemorate the special outpouring of the Holy Spirit 50 days after Easter (Acts 2). In the Old Testament, Pentecost commemorated the harvest and was one of the three great festivals celebrated annually along with Passover and Tabernacles (Exodus 23:14-17, Leviticus 23).



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:

In James Aderman's words
Bible study writer Pastor James Allan Aderman, on . . .

. . . what he wanted to be when he grew up:

About sixth grade I determined that only two careers would suit me. With Alan Shepard as my hero, I wanted to walk in the shoes of the Mercury astronauts. With Pastor Henry Juroff as my hero, I wanted to serve Jesus as one of his shepherds. I reconciled my interest in the two professions into a single career goal: to be the first WELS missionary to the moon. As it turns out, I'm still waiting for that call.

. . . a life-changing experience:

Being part of a Milwaukee inner city vacation Bible school project in the summer of 1971 changed me. I had just graduated from Northwestern College, but I wasn't certain that becoming a pastor was an

appropriate life goal. Then for three weeks I talked to adults and children about Jesus. I experienced firsthand the transformation the gospel made in lives that had been hopeless and empty. I knew that sharing Jesus with others was what I wanted to spend the rest of my life doing.

. . . teen ministry, one of his special interests:

Teens will be the movers and shakers in the kingdom within a generation. Investing in their spiritual development is an investment in the health of the Lord's Church and his people.

To work with teens, Aderman started and is serving as editor of a teen on-line magazine called LivingBold, <www.livingbold.net>.

. . . his relationship with his wife:

As empty nesters, Sharon and I are enjoying a time of hiatus from gnawing problems. Our [three] daughters are on their own and doing well. Our health is good. . . . We live within our means, and our



Pastor James Aderman (left) baptizing one of his flock at Fairview, Milwaukee. Aderman has served as pastor at Fairview since 1987.

means allow some pleasant extras (like travel). That has allowed us to concentrate on being husband and wife without the complications of also being father and mother—and we've discovered a new level of caring and love in our relationship.

. . . the one word he would use to describe himself:

Challenge-required (do hyphenated words count?). . . . I prefer change over "the same old." There's something exhilarating to know that I'm doing something God wants me to do, yet without his help, I'm going to fail.

Obituaries

Adelia R. Sievert 1913-2001

Adelia Sievert was born Sept. 1, 1913, in Houston County, Minn. She died March 7, 2001, in Mankato, Minn.

A 1933 graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., Sievert taught at St. John, Neillsville, Wis. She is an emerita of Dr. Martin Luther College, where she served as a college classroom student teaching supervisor at St. Paul, New Ulm, Minn., from 1959-1978.

She was preceded in death by her husband, Erich; and a son. She is survived by three children, 11 grandchildren, and six great-grandchildren.

Roland Alvin Ferdinand Langbecker 1905-2001

Roland Langbecker was born Feb. 6, 1905, in Hamburg, Wis. He died March 4, 2001, in Portland, Ore.

A 1930 graduate of Concordia Lutheran Seminary, St. Louis, Mo., Langbecker served several churches, including Mt. Calvary, Flagstaff, Ariz.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Caroline; two sons; and a daughter. He is survived by four sons, two daughters, two brothers, two sisters, and numerous grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

Joseph A. Lequia 1943-2001

Joseph Lequia was born July 8, 1943. He died March 21, 2001, in West St. Paul, Minn.

A 1967 graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., Lequia taught at St. Paul, Cudahy, Wis., and St. Croix Lutheran High School, West St. Paul, Minn.

Lequia is survived by his wife, Margaret; two sisters; and many nieces and nephews.

In the news

“**Rawland Storm** won a battle with the Livonia Education Association over his religious beliefs,” wrote *The Detroit News* on Jan. 4.

Storm, a member at Good Shepherd, Novi, Mich., is quoted as saying, “I’ve been a Lutheran my whole life, and the teachers union promotes a lot of causes I don’t believe in, like abortion rights. . . . It’s my legal right to donate my dues to a charity instead of supporting those issues I don’t believe in.”

Raymond F. Pifer celebrated his 108th birthday on Jan. 7. Pifer, a life-long member of Trinity, Jenera, Ohio, was featured in a short article in the *Findlay, Ohio, Courier* on Jan. 11.

The Arizona Republic featured **WELS Mission to the Children** in the Nov. 25, 2000, edition of its newspaper. The article described how, “Once a month, Ted Bodjanac, 36, and Terry Deters, 56, two Lutheran pastors from Phoenix, brave [the road in Mexico that leads to the villages of Sasabe, Saric, and Cerro Prieto] to minister to the people of the three dusty farming villages, where the average family survives on 1,000 pesos a month (about \$100).

“The pastors leave before sunrise and return home long after dark. Driving time alone is five hours each way. Besides Bible lessons, they distribute blankets, clothing, shoes, vitamins, and food coupons as part of a Tucson-based Christian group called Mission to the Children.”

An article about **Silas Krueger**, pastor at Beautiful Savior, Carlsbad, Calif., was published in the Feb. 22 edition of the *North County Times* in California. The newspaper focused on Krueger’s assistance with WELS missionary work. Krueger has taught in India, Canada, and the Navajo Nation. The Jan. 25 earthquake in India hit just hours after Krueger boarded a plane for his return flight from India to the United States.

2000-2001 WELS school statistics

As we end the 2000-01 school year, here are some statistics from our WELS schools. For a more complete rundown and comparison of statistics, contact the Commission on Parish Schools (414/256-3222, <jaweber@sab.wels.net>) and ask for the booklet, “School statistics 2000-2001.”

High schools

22 schools
5,717 students
453 teachers

Elementary schools*

366 schools
29,424 students
2,059 teachers

Early childhood education

313 schools
• 238 with an LES*
• 75 without an LES
5,775 students
331 teachers

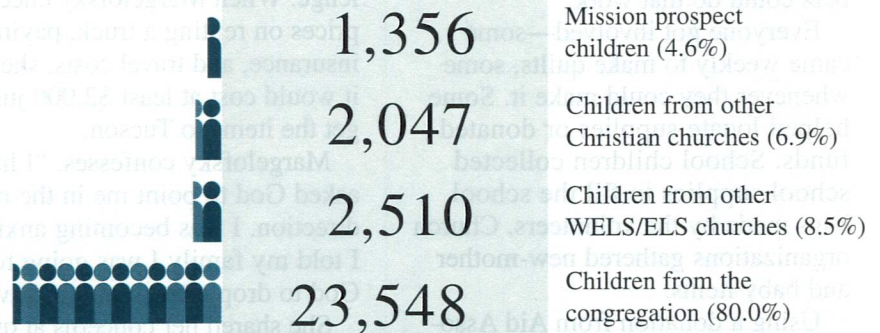
Eight new preschools/child care centers

Christ the King Preschool, Palatine, Ill.
Come Unto Me Child Care, Dale, Wis.
Cross of Glory Preschool/Child Care, Baton Rouge, La.
Grace Preschool, Prairie du Chien, Wis.
Jesus’ Little Lambs Preschool, Fond du Lac, Wis.
Joyful Noise Preschool, Hudson, Wis.
Little Lambs Preschool, LaCrescent, Minn.
Little Lambs Preschool/Child Care, Deltona, Fla.
Our Hope Preschool, Chippewa Falls, Wis.
Precious Little Lambs, Jacksonville, Fla.
Zion Preschool and Child Care, Peshtigo, Wis.

Three new Lutheran elementary schools

Mount Olive, Las Vegas, Nev.
Northdale, Tampa, Fla.
Shepherd of the Hills, Greeley, Colo.

Breakdown of students who attend Lutheran elementary schools



*Lutheran elementary schools (LES).



Sgt. Andrew Dahlie, a member at Divine Savior, Shawano, Wis., spent Christmas in Kosovo as a member of the 43rd Army Reserve unit from Green Bay, Wis. Dahlie was sent to Kosovo in August 2000. On Dec. 29, 2000, the *Shawano Leader* wrote about Dahlie’s experiences in Kosovo and the support he has received from members at Divine Savior.



A stitch in time

People are saved one soul at a time. That's what Barb Margelofsky and Marles Pieper, members at Bethany, Hustisford, Wis., learned while working on a mission to help needy families in remote villages of Mexico.

The project began in spring 1999 after a showing of *WELS Connection* that featured WELS Mission to the Children, a program out of Tucson, Ariz., that provides for the spiritual and physical needs of people in northern Mexican villages.

Margelofsky contacted Gene Durfey, coordinator of the program. She found out that the people Mission to the Children were serving were eager to hear God's Word, but they were also cold and hungry.

With the support of Bethany's church council, Margelofsky called a meeting to see what members could do to help. The response was overwhelming. The group decided they could make quilts. Pieper volunteered her home as a place where the members could do that work.

Everyone got involved—some came weekly to make quilts, some whenever they could make it. Some helped locate supplies or donated funds. School children collected school supplies to fill the school bags made by the volunteers. Church organizations gathered new-mother and baby items.

Using a donation from Aid Association for Lutherans, the group shipped the supplies to Tucson in time for Christmas.

But the effort didn't stop there. That was just the beginning of a mission of love that resulted in a second, this-time personal, delivery of 300 quilts, 274 pairs of shoes, 112 school bags filled with supplies, 26 new-mom bags, 26 baby diaper bags filled with supplies, 15 diaper bags, sports equipment, school supplies, children's Spanish language story books, toys, jewelry, vitamins, and Bible study lessons.



Barb Margelofsky (right) organized a mission project of love at Bethany, Hustisford, Wis. Marles Pieper (left) donated the use of her basement for the ongoing project. Jamie Brie (center) served as vicar at Bethany in 1999-2000.

Making the quilts and getting supplies together were only half the challenge. When Margelofsky checked prices on renting a truck, paying the insurance, and travel costs, she found it would cost at least \$2,000 just to get the items to Tucson.

Margelofsky confesses, "I had asked God to point me in the right direction. I was becoming anxious. I told my family I was going to ask God to drop a truck in our driveway."

She shared her concerns at quilting, and one member said she would talk to a trucker she knew. He offered to haul the items at a minimal fee, but once he realized the urgent need, he donated the entire trucking.

"Tears filled my eyes and I knew that with God nothing is impossible," Margelofsky says.

After the supplies and quilts arrived in Tucson, arrangements were made to transport the supplies to the Mexican villages. Pieper and Margelofsky joined a delegation of WELS Kingdom Workers and pastors in Tucson for the final leg of the

journey, which included traveling a road that was little more than a pair of ruts carving a jagged path through the Sonoran Desert.

When the vans arrived at Atil they were greeted by more than 70 women and children. Following a church service the delegation presented the villagers with the boxes of quilts and supplies. Margelofsky says, "Marles and I were able to give the quilts that our church had made to families we thought we would never see."

After another service at Saric, it was time to head back. The entire adventure for both Pieper and Margelofsky renewed their spirits and enthusiasm. In fact, they are already at work back in Hustisford, with a growing number of volunteers who are making more quilts for families in need.

With each stitch they make on the quilts they are reminded of the work missionaries face every day. People are not helped one nation at a time. They are reached one soul at a time.

Gloria Hafemeister

He loves his work—and it shows

When I heard him talk about them, I got goosebumps. I could *feel* how passionate he was about these people. In his own words, Mike Pfeifer, the new administrator for the Commission on Youth Discipleship (CYD), says, “I love high school students.”

He adds, “Many of my friends think I’m crazy—which I am, somewhat.”

But, as he talks about teenagers and the love he has for that age group, I begin to understand why he has devoted his 20-year ministry to working with them.

Pfeifer, explaining his love of teenagers, says, “They are my favorite age group. It’s such a critical time of development—not just from a physical standpoint, but also from a spiritual standpoint. I’m afraid we all-too-often miss the opportunities there. We run them through confirmation. We stick the white gown and the flower on them, and then we tend to lose a pretty good share of them. Not all of them, thank the Lord.”



Mike Pfeifer, the new Commission on Youth Discipleship administrator, may look relaxed, but he is actually very focused on motivating teenagers to become involved in evangelism. When at home, Pfeifer focuses on his wife, Chris; daughter, Katie; and son, Thomas.

Dr. Michael Pfeifer has spent his years in the ministry serving the Lord and the Lord’s children. A 1981 graduate of Doctor Martin Luther College, Pfeifer began his ministry at St. Matthew, Appleton, Wis.

In 1989 he accepted a staff ministry call to Bloomington Lutheran in Bloomington, Minn., becoming one of the first WELS staff ministers. He says, “Bloomington wanted to get beyond the entertainment mindset of youth ministry to get high school students doing ministry. We had students involved in mission trips. Last year Bloomington had about 70 members go on mission trips between adults and teens.”

In 1996, Pfeifer accepted a call to St. Mark, Green Bay, Wis. Then, in the summer of 2000, Gerald Kastens, then the CYD administrator, accepted a call to be a staff minister at Trinity, Watertown, Wis. Pfeifer accepted the call to fill Kastens’ vacancy in early 2001.

As CYD administrator, Pfeifer has big plans, including partnering core groups of congregations who will let their teens get involved in outreach with congregations who want high school students to come and help with outreach by doing phone calling, canvassing, mailings, letter writing, and more.

“There are so many things we can explore,” Pfeifer explains. “We just need to sit down and get at it and let the Lord bless it. . . . I call it the driver’s ed. model of witness training, for lack of a better analogy. You don’t just read about it in a book. You don’t just talk about it in academic abstractions. You really do it. You jump in, buckle up, and go. . . . Time is slipping by real fast for too many people. We can’t dawdle around.”

In summary, Pfeifer notes, “I am deeply passionate about outreach. I am deeply in love with high school ministry. Those are what make my life tick.”

District news

Southeastern Wisconsin

Sara Urbanek, a junior at the University of Wisconsin–Madison, played in the NCAA Division I women’s volleyball finals in December 2000. Her team came in second. Urbanek is a member at St. John, Lannon, Wis.

Western Wisconsin

The team representing **Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis.**, in the Wisconsin Junior Classical League Convention placed first in the qualitative competition. They scored the most points per individual competing at the competition, which focused primarily on the Latin language.

Minnesota

Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., hosted WELS’ National Band Festival Mar. 16–18. One hundred twenty-seven students from 21 WELS secondary schools attended. The Mar. 18 concert featured the world premiere of “Logos,” composed by Jared Spears. “Logos” is a musical arrangement for band and choir commissioned by the WELS high schools to celebrate WELS’ 150th anniversary.

Michigan



On Nov. 5, members of Peace of Our Savior, New Carlisle, Ohio, dedicated their new education/fellowship building. The 3,700 square foot addition contains classrooms, a fellowship area, a kitchen, a workroom, handicapped accessible restrooms, and the pastor’s office.

These pastors are the reporters for the districts featured this month: MI—Geoffrey Kieta; MN—Jeffrey Bovee; SEW—Scott Oelhafen; WW—Elton Stroh.



Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod president dies—Pastor A.L. Barry, president of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), died Mar. 23, 2001.

Barry, 69, was the synod's 11th president and the first to die in office. Serving as president since 1992, Barry was in his third term in office and was planning to serve again if reelected at the LCMS convention in July.

Pastor Karl R. Gurgel, WELS president, said, "We are saddened to learn of Dr. Barry's passing. He is now in the Lord's gracious hands."

"Dr. Barry," he continued, "has been appreciated as a contender for historic, confessional Lutheranism. His voice, raising Christian concerns, will be missed."

Barry contracted an antibiotic-resistant staph infection while being treated for pneumonia in February. His condition worsened in March, when he experienced kidney dysfunction. He died of complications from kidney and liver failure.

The LCMS first vice president, Pastor Robert T. Kuhn, became president upon Barry's death. He will serve as president until a new president is installed in September.

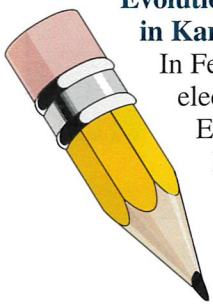
(*LCMSNews*, Mar. 24, 2001)

Evolution teaching restored in Kansas' public schools—

In February, the recently elected Kansas Board of Education restored evolution to the state science curriculum for public schools.

References to evolution as the only explanation for the

origins of humanity had been erased from the state's public school curriculum by a previous, more conservative board in 1999. That move removed evolution from state assessment tests. Elections last November changed the board's make-up, allowing for a reversal of that decision.



Who's the biggest?—According to the National Council of Churches' *2001 Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches*, the 10 largest "Christian" churches in the United States are the

- Roman Catholic Church: 62 million,
- Southern Baptist Convention: 15.85 million,
- United Methodist Church: 8.37 million,
- Church of God in Christ: 5.49 million,
- Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: 5.14 million,
- Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (Mormons): 5.11 million,
- Presbyterian Church (USA): 3.56 million,
- National Baptist Convention of America: 3.5 million,
- Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod: 2.58 million, and
- Assemblies of God: 2.57 million.

Many churches saw membership gains or losses within a margin of about one percent. The highest growth was recorded by a Pentecostal denomination, the Assemblies of God, which grew 1.9 percent.

Dürer woodcuts on display—Forty-three original Albrecht Dürer woodcut prints went on display at the Concordia Historical Institute, the department of archives for the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, in February—22 of the 36 prints from the "Small Passion" series and the 19-piece "Life of Mary" series.

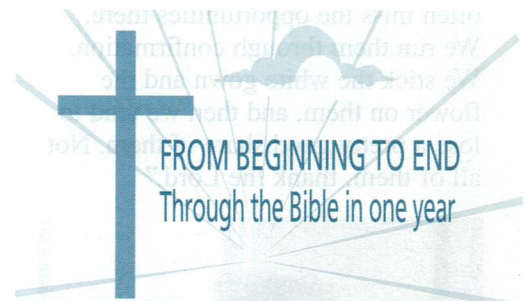
Pastor Mark Loest found the collection four years ago when he began his job at the institute. He is not sure why the pieces had not been catalogued in 40 years, but he knows how they got there. A Lutheran minister, shortly before he died in 1958, donated the

"Life of Mary" series. The "Small Passion" series came from an anonymous donor at about the same time.

Dürer (1471-1528) was born in Nuremberg, Germany, after the invention of the printing press by Johann Gutenberg. His art form—woodcuts—could be carved in a block of wood, and hundreds, if not thousands, of copies could be printed before the block wore out.

Loest said the exhibit will run at least through the end of 2001. The woodcut prints can be viewed on-line at <<http://chi.lcms.org>>.

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



May 2001

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Judges 8:29–10:16 | 18. 1 Sam. 31 • 2 |
| 2. Jdg. 10:17–12 | Samuel 1 & 2 • Ps. 5 |
| • Psalms 10 & 95 | 19. 2 Sam. 3–5 |
| 3. Jdg. 13–16:22 | • Ps. 30 |
| 4. Jdg. 16:23–19 | 20. 2 Sam. 6 & 7 |
| 5. Jdg. 20 & 21 • Ps. 80 | • Ps. 68 |
| 6. Ruth | 21. 2 Sam. 8–10 |
| 7. 1 Samuel 1–3 | • Ps. 35 |
| 8. 1 Sam. 4–7 • Ps. 3 | 22. 2 Sam. 11–12:23 |
| 9. 1 Sam. 8–11 | • Ps. 32, 130, & 138 |
| 10. 1 Sam. 12 | 23. 2 Sam. 12:24–15:6 |
| • Habakkuk | 24. 2 Sam. 15:7–17 |
| 11. 1 Sam. 13–15:9 | 25. 2 Sam. 18–19:15 |
| 12. 1 Sam. 15:10–17:49 | • Ps. 31 & 39 |
| 13. 1 Sam. 17:50–18 | 26. 2 Sam. 19:16–21 |
| • Ps. 7, 11, 12, & 17 | 27. 2 Sam. 22 & 23 |
| 14. 1 Sam. 19–22:2 | 28. 2 Sam. 24 |
| 15. 1 Sam. 22:3–24 | • 1 Kings 1 |
| • Ps. 56 | 29. 1 Kgs. 2–4:19 |
| 16. 1 Sam. 25 & 26 | 30. 1 Kgs. 4:20–7:12 |
| • Ps. 57 | 31. 1 Kgs. 7:13–8:53 |
| 17. 1 Sam. 27–30 | |
| • Ps. 4 | |



CHANGES IN MINISTRY

Pastors

- Jensen, Robert Q., to Gethsemane, Milwaukee
- Kannenber, Delmer F., to Cross of Christ, Liverpool, N.Y.
- Lau, David B., to Cross of Christ, Kingman, Ariz.
- Mahnke, Jeffrey P., to Christ the Lord, Clearwater, Fla.
- Mann, Kenley D., to Grace, Zillah, Wash.
- Smith, Timothy, to St. Paul, New Ulm, Minn.
- Stensberg, Burton E., to Mt. Olive, Appleton, Wis.
- White, Paul R., to Zion, Colome, S.D.
- Witte, Daniel A., to exploratory outreach, East Sarasota, Fla.

Teachers

- Adams, Betty J., to St. John, Peshtigo, Wis.
- Allerheiligen, David L., to St. John, Wauwatosa, Wis.
- Boehm, Lucas D., to St. Croix LHS, West St. Paul, Minn.
- Boeldt, Deborah S., to Kettle Moraine LHS, Jackson, Wis.
- Cornell, Kari L., to St. Mark, Green Bay, Wis.
- Fenske, Victor L., to Arizona Lutheran Academy, Phoenix, Ariz.
- Fillner, Douglas K., to Cross of Glory, Washington, Mich.
- Getka, Naomi S., to Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw
- Herrel, Kurt A., to Trinity, Marshfield, Wis.
- Markgraf, Carol L., to Beautiful Savior, Cincinnati, Ohio
- Markgraf, Daniel J., to Beautiful Savior, Cincinnati, Ohio
- Moldenhauer, Patricia, to St. Mark, Green Bay, Wis.
- Naumann, Dina R., to Jerusalem, Morton Grove, Ill.
- Page, Kim, to Living Word, Mission Viejo, Calif.
- Parker, Ruth, to St. John, Watertown, Wis.
- Plocher, Jonathan M., to Christ the Lord, Houston, Tex.
- Proeber, Laurel F., to Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw
- Pufahl, Karen A., to Immanuel, Hadar, Neb.
- Schlenvogt, Jane A., to St. Andrew, Middleton, Wis.
- Sehloff, Peter T., to Fox Valley LHS, Appleton, Wis.
- Steffen, Susan L., to Centennial and Gethsemane, Milwaukee
- Tripp, Jennifer, to Ascension, Plymouth, Minn.
- Vanderheyden, Derek P., to St. Paul, Beverly Hills, Fla.
- Vetting, Jacqueline, to Riverview, Appleton, Wis.
- Wordell, Keith D., to West LHS, Plymouth, Minn.
- Zimmermann, Monica R., to St. Andrew, Chicago, Ill.

Staff ministers

- Buege, Charles H., to St. Paul, Livonia, Mich.
- Roloff, Jeffrey L., to Good Shepherd, Sioux Falls, S.D.

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

ANNIVERSARIES

Bangor, Mich.—Trinity Lutheran School (25).

May 5. Service, 3 PM. Open house and art fair, 4 PM. Dinner, 5 PM. 616/427-7102.

Lake Mills, Wis.—St. Paul Lutheran School (100). May 6. Service, 8 & 10:30 AM. Noon meal and program to follow at Lakeside LHS. RSVP to Connie Wilson, 920/648-4738.

North Fond du Lac, Wis.—St. Paul (100). May 12, 6:30 PM and May 13, 8 & 10:15 AM. Lutherans for Life weekend. 920/922-1080.

Milwaukee, Wis.—Christ (100). May 13. Service, 8:45 AM. 414/645-2840.

Saginaw, Mich.—St. Paul (150). May 20. Service, 8 & 10:30 AM.

Plymouth, Wis.—Good Shepherd (25). May 20. Service, 10 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.

Allenton, Wis.—Zion (140). June 17. Service, 10:30 AM. Catered meal, 12:30 PM. RSVP by May 17, 262/629-5914.

Westland, Mich.—St. John (125). June 24. Service, 9:30 AM. Dinner and program to follow. RSVP, 734/721-4650.

Fort Wayne, Ind.—Holy Scripture (25). June 24. Service, 4 PM. Banquet and entertainment to follow. RSVP, 219/478-1717.

Grass Lake, Mich.—St. Jacob (160). July 8. Service, 10:15 AM. Pig roast to follow.

Galesville, Wis.—Bethel (25). July 15. Service, 10:15 AM. Fellowship meal and activities to follow. Anniversary service, 3 PM. RSVP, 715/662-2209.

Baileys Harbor, Wis.—Christ (125). July 22, 1:30 PM. Dinner, 3 PM.

COMING EVENTS

NPH music reading workshops—

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, 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. Schwan Retreat Center, Trego, Wis. Elton Stroh, 608/837-3819.

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>.

OWLS annual convention—Organization of WELS Lutheran Seniors. July 10-12. Collins Plaza, Cedar Rapids, Iowa. 414/321-9977.

Asian Mission and Ministry convocation—July 29-Aug. 2. Schwan Retreat Center, Trego, Wis. Leon Piepenbrink, 651/306-0645.

Michigan Lutheran Seminary class of 1971 reunion—Aug. 17-19. Larry Dittmar, 616/532-7017.

Campus ministry staff conference—for pastors and lay and student representatives. Sept. 7-9.

Radisson Hotel, Milwaukee. Registration deadline is Aug. 15. Karen Marshall, 414/256-3279.

AVAILABLE

Choir gowns—more than 50 beige/taupe choir gowns. Lightweight and assorted sizes. Free for the cost of shipping. Joel Ungemach, 616/429-7861.

Choir robes—approximately 25 gold robes with double liturgical stoles. Free for the cost of shipping. Jim Pieper, 262/635-1955.

NEEDED

Writers—for new Web site seeking to reach the unchurched or weak in faith. Gospelfacts is looking for WELS pastors, teachers, and laypeople. Ray Tetzloff, <rtetzloff@gospelfacts.org> or Tim Shrimpton, <tshrimpton@gospelfacts.org>.

Volunteer RN/EMT—as medical assistant for developmentally disabled. June 17-22. Camp BASIC. Wyalusing State Park, Bagley, Wis. Paul Snyder, 608/643-7918.

Volunteer pastor/seminary student—to serve as spiritual leader for the developmentally disabled. June 10-16. Camp BASIC. Wyalusing State Park, Bagley, Wis. Duties include devotions, counselor Bible studies, etc. Jim Bell, 507/454-1997.

Preachers—needed for July 8 & July 15 in exchange for use of parsonage at St. Paul, Amherst, N.H. Joel Petermann, 603/880-8574.

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

Bella Vista/Pea Ridge/Hiawasse/Gravette/Bentonville, Ark. and Pineville/Anderson, Mo.—Russel Kobs, 501/876-2155.

Lake Whitney, Tex. —Don and D'Anne Thompson, 253/694-4212.

POSITION AVAILABLE

Child care providers—Grace, Charlotte, N.C., is seeking WELS/ELS individuals to work at Lambs of Grace Child Development Center (ages six weeks to five years) opening this fall. Experience a plus but not necessary. Patti Fellers, 704/366-9309.

SERVICE TIMES

Bella Vista, Ark.—Beautiful Savior. Service, 8 AM. 501/876-2155.

Whitefish Bay, Wis.—Divinity-Divine Charity. Starting Apr. 1, service time will be 9:30 AM. 414/332-7572.

YEARBOOK CORRECTIONS

Pastor Burgess Huehn's e-mail is <revbahuehn@gogebic.cc.mi.us>.

Pastor David Warskow's home phone number is 661/722-9721.

To place an announcement, call

414/256-3210; FAX, 414/256-3899;

<BulletinBoard@sab.wels.net>. Deadline

is eight weeks before publication date.

The LORD, our rescuer

Just as the LORD protected and rescued Elijah throughout his ministry, so will he also keep us safe.

James A. Aderman

A moment before: The two stood side by side. A blazing, white-hot chariot. A roaring tornado.

Stunned, Elisha stood alone (2 Kings 2:1-14).

On the ground lay his master's cloak. He had watched it flutter down as that whirlwind pulled Elijah heavenward. His master's cloak: the symbol of Elijah's position as the LORD's soldier and spokesman.

The LORD rescues Elijah

As that cloak had protected Elijah from the elements, his God protected him throughout his harrowing ministry. The LORD hid him in a cave, nourished him with ravens' snacks, miraculously provided for him using the resources of a poor widow. He accented the prophet's ministry with explosive displays of his power: a sacrifice that evaporated in a fireball, a three-year drought and a prayed-for thunderstorm that ended it, the fiery demise of royal troops sent to capture the prophet.

God shielded Elijah from the beast of kings—particularly when God marched his prophet into that royal lair to speak his Word. He pulled him from the abyss of depression with the gentle sound of his grace. Now the final rescue, the ultimate rescue. A whirlwind transported Elijah, soul and body, into an eternity of God's serene presence.

Elisha fingered his master's cloak. Only minutes before in the prophet's



OUR RESCUER

hands that garment, rolled into a tube, had struck the Jordan River and parted the waters so Elijah and Elisha could cross on dry ground. The miracle was God's signal. The LORD stood with them as he had with the nation of Israel when they entered the land under Joshua a half millennium before.

The coarse camel hair coat smelled of long years spent in service to God. But the era of Elijah was over. Rest had come—though much too soon for the troops left behind—to another faithful warrior. Rescued by the grace that saves every believer, Elijah was welcomed into the applause of heaven.

The LORD still rescues us

Now what of the remaining troops and the war for souls that they fought? Elisha had begged his mentor for the right to succeed him. Elijah reminded his protégé that only the LORD could grant such a request. "Yet if you see me when I am taken from you," Elijah assured him, "it will be yours—otherwise not."

"Where now is the LORD, the God of Elijah?" Elisha shouted as he also took that rolled up cloak and struck

the Jordan River. God's answer? The waters parted, and dry ground appeared. Elisha walked back into the land. The war was not over.

This side of heaven the church remains militant—though the warriors change. The mantle had fallen to Elisha and with it the LORD's commitment to rescue his people for one more generation, one more generation until there are no more generations.

James Aderman is pastor at Fairview, Milwaukee.

For further study

1. Read 2 Timothy 4:16-18. Paul faced dangers similar to those Elijah encountered. What assurances gave the apostle a positive view of his trying situation? How do those assurances apply in your life?
2. Jesus promises that on rock-like faith "I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it" (Matthew 16:18). How is that energizing in an era of Christians selling short the message of the Scriptures, along with the seeming triumph of evil and false religion? How will that promise change you today?



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

In our review of spiritual health “systems,” we’ve come to an activity begun on earth and continuing in eternity: worship. Simply, it’s what happens when the Lord catches people. Worship begins with God’s mission to rescue, restore, and recreate. He feeds, forgives, encourages, empowers, and sends us out with a mission. We praise the Father. We remember the work of the Son. We call upon the Holy Spirit. That’s worship, and it doesn’t stop after the benediction. Jesus said if we did stop, the rocks would start! How’s your worship life?

Health factor—Worship

God’s Word

Shout for joy to the LORD, all the earth. ²Worship the LORD with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. ³Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. ⁴Enter his gates with thanksgiving and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name. ⁵For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations (Psalm 100).

1. Underline all the action words that describe our actions in worship.
2. Describe how we carry out those actions today.
3. Circle all the action words that describe what the Lord has done or is doing.
4. When we gather to worship, what reminds us of those actions?
5. From this Psalm, how would you describe the temple worship of the Old Testament?

My soul

for personal check-up

1. “If there is an audience in worship, it’s God.” Do you agree with the theologian who said that? Why or why not?
2. Psalm 100 is labeled, “for giving thanks.” Think of five occasions on which you will use this psalm to give thanks.
3. What worship services stand out in your memory? Why?
4. Name three differences you have noticed between your private devotions and your public gathering with others for worship.

My church

for group check-up

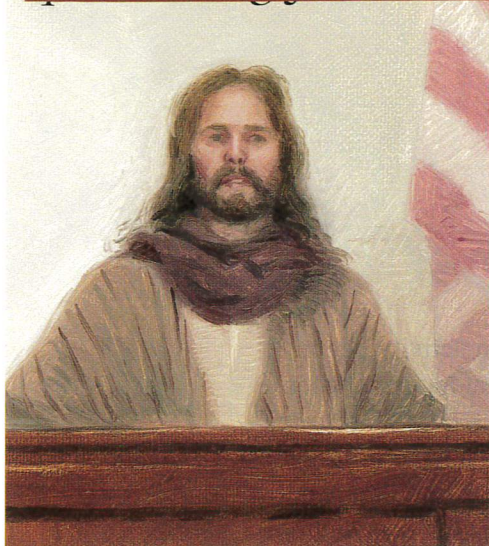
1. “There is no such thing as a ‘dead ritual;’ only the people who perform them are dead.” What are our rituals in worship?
2. What keeps those rituals from becoming “dead” or without meaning?
3. How does our congregation discover members’ joys and frustrations in worship? How about non-members’ joys and frustrations in worship?
4. How might our church help worshipers meditate and reflect on the Sunday worship themes throughout each week? Ask each person in your group to write three suggestions. Then take turns telling the whole group one idea at a time.

Web-med

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

Browse the worship articles at the WELS Web site: <http://www.wels.net/sab/frm-cow.html>.

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



Are only a few going to be saved?

By walking down the narrow road with Jesus, we can enter the narrow gate to heaven.

Thomas H. Trapp

One day someone asked Jesus, “Lord, are only a few people going to be saved?”

Jesus personalized his answer, “Make every effort to enter through the narrow door, because many, I tell you, will try to enter and will not be able to” (Luke 13:23,24).

In his Sermon on the Mount, Jesus expanded on his response: “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it” (Matthew 7:13,14).

Stay off the popular unbelieving road to self-destruction.

Are only a few going to be saved from hell’s torments? In a word, yes.

What the world thinks

Most Americans disagree. They believe most people will be saved, at least “good” people. According to the Barna Research Group, in 1999, 53 percent of Americans believed that all good people, whether or not they consider Jesus to be their Savior, will live in heaven after they die on earth (a significant increase since 1992, when only 40 percent agreed). National

surveys also indicate that almost 70 percent of Americans do not believe hell is an actual place where people experience physical torment.

This lack of faith is nothing new. In the 1960s Father James Kavanaugh rejected the existence of hell (i.e., eternal separation from God) as well as the reality of heaven (i.e., being in God’s presence forever). This priest wrote in his best-selling book, *A Modern Priest Looks at His Outdated Church*, “I do not fear hell because I cannot fathom it. I do not seek heaven because it offers no image that I can grasp.”

What the Bible tells us

Jesus, however, grasped heaven and fathomed hell. He said heaven is so wonderful, he wants all to go there (1 Timothy 2:4).

He also warned that hell is so horrible that it is better to gouge out our eye that causes us to sin and throw it away rather than for our whole body to be thrown into hell (Matthew 5:29). With this hyperbolic illustration, Jesus drove home the truth of hell’s reality as a place of “eternal punishment” (Matthew 25:46). Just read Jesus’ story in Luke 16 of the rich man and poor Lazareth to get a taste of heaven and hell. Even as he was conquering the damning forces of hell, Jesus experienced these forces as he cried out on the cross,

“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?”

So he pleads with us, “Make every effort to enter through the narrow door.”

Seventeenth-century English writer Richard Crashaw captures this truth in his poem “But men loved darkness rather than light”:

“The world’s light shines; shine as it will,
The world will love its darkness still:
I doubt though when the world’s in Hell,
It will not love its darkness half so well.”

Do not be deceived by the American mindset. Stay off the popular unbelieving road to self-destruction. Keep walking the narrow walk with Jesus and only Jesus. He is the road and gate to heaven. Confess daily all your sins to him. Accept full forgiveness from him. Put all your faith in him.

Eventually, the narrow road will lead us through a narrow gate into a beautiful place called “Paradise.” There God will wipe away all tears from our eyes, and there will be no more death or pain or sorrow (Revelation 21:4). Now that is an image I can grasp! Can’t you?



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

GOD'S WISDOM FOR TODAY

An anxious heart weighs a man down, but a kind word cheers him up.

Proverbs 12:25

The way of a fool seems right to him, but a wise man listens to advice.

Proverbs 12:15

One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.

Proverbs 11:24

Whoever loves discipline loves knowledge, but he who hates correction is stupid.

Proverbs 12:1

Whoever believes in him . . .

When faith in Christ goes, man, the thinker, loses his greatest thought.

When faith in Christ goes, man, the worker, loses his greatest motive.

When faith in Christ goes, man, the sinner, loses his greatest help.

When faith in Christ goes, man, the sufferer, loses his securest refuge.

When faith in Christ goes, man, the lover, loses sight of his first love.

When faith in Christ goes, man, the mortal, loses his only hope.

TODAY,
GOD WILLING



You ought to say, "If it is the Lord's will, we will live and do this or that" (James 4:15).

Today is here. I will start with a smile and resolve to be agreeable. I will not criticize.

Today I refuse to spend time worrying about what might happen—it usually doesn't. I am going to spend time making things happen.

Today I am determined to do the things I should and stop making excuses for what I do not want to do.

Today I will not imagine what I would do if things were different. They are not different.

Today I will act toward other people as though this might be my last day on earth. I will not wait for tomorrow. Tomorrow never comes.

"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own" (Matthew 6:34).

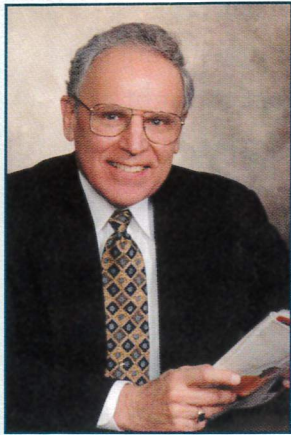
Picture this



This picture was taken in front of the original building of St. John, Renville, Minn. The pastor standing in the back is Rev. Martin Schuetze. He was installed on May 17, 1903, and served the congregation from 1903 to 1913. It is uncertain who the young people are: a confirmation class? A young peoples' society? Write to us if you know.

Submitted by Pastor John Melke

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.

Play with passion

The other night, my favorite professional basketball team blew a 28-point lead in the second half. Only a super shot at the final buzzer salvaged the win.

That wouldn't mean much except that it has been a pattern for this team this season to play without passion when it has big leads. The players become selfish and careless in their execution. They lose their focus and their drive, and, in a number of cases, they have lost the ball games too. They have everything going for them, exceptional talent, but they don't always use it, and so they fail.

I see a similar phenomenon in my favorite church body, among my favorite Christians. We have everything going for us. We have enjoyed widespread blessings from the Lord in spreading his Word throughout the world. We have had times of prosperity that might be likened to a basketball team having a 28-point lead.

We have the God-given talent. We have limitless opportunities. We have all the means to take the lead and forge ahead. We have more! We have a motivation that defies the basketball analogy. We have the love of Christ compelling us.

In addition, we have something that many other Christians lack: a solid confessional stand on all the teachings of Scripture. We treasure Baptism and the Lord's Supper and the forgiveness they bring us. We champion the three *solas*: *sola gratia*, *sola fide*, *sola scriptura* (by grace alone, by faith alone, through Scripture alone). We have rich, meaningful, Bible-centered liturgy and hymns.

Why, then, do we so often play out the game, our Christian life and mission, without passion? Why do we lose focus on the game plan the Lord laid out for us before his ascension? Why do we get self-centered and self-satisfied and fail to capitalize fully on the tremendous advantages God has given us?

Do we need the warning God gave to the church at Sardis: "Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God" (Revelation 3:2)? Is God calling to us when he says to the church at Laodicia: "Because you are lukewarm—neither hot nor cold—I am about to spit you out of my mouth" (Revelation 3:16)? Might we lose God at some point for our lack of zeal for God's service?

It's hard to deal with lukewarm people. It's like when you try to make a serious point with your teenager and you get back, with a shrug, "Whatever." You know how frustrating it is to come up against that kind of attitude, don't you? It really grinds your teeth, doesn't it?

Well, then, don't be a spiritual, "what-me-worry?" teenager in the church. Don't be the basketball team playing without emotion. Our calling as Christians is not about "whatever," it's about forever. It's not just about you, it's about your neighbor. It's not just about WELS, it's about the world.

The final buzzer will sound any time now. Are you hustling to get the job done before it goes off?

Gary P. Baumler

Are you
hustling to
get the job
done before
[the final
buzzer] goes
off?

A Video Docudrama on the
Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod



HARVEST of JOY

"A triumph for the WELS."

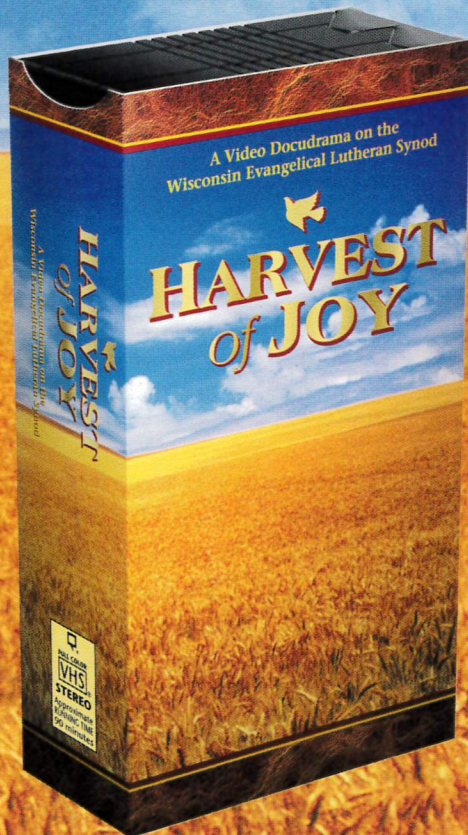
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So, you're a mom

Once the title of “mother” is donned, love begins to grow, along with feelings of inadequacy.

Robyn Smith

I knew I wanted to be a mom someday, but my adolescent thoughts centered on what I wouldn't allow: kids dragging scraggly teddy bears or threadbare blankets around in public, the wearing of mismatched clothes, and leaving remnants of breakfast or a nasty cold on little faces. I wouldn't give spit baths, and they'd never sass me in front of others. Reality set in after the birth of my first child.

Once the title of “mother” is donned, whether in the recovery room after an exhausting labor or at a courthouse signing adoption papers, love begins to grow, along with feelings of inadequacy. I quickly realized I wasn't trained for this work. I didn't know what I was doing and had no idea how to handle all the future decisions. Teachers receive diplomas after years of dedication qualifying them to instruct children, but I had no degree showing I was prepared to be responsible for another soul. Drawing from other parent's experiences or my own ideas from childhood was useless, for flesh gives birth to flesh. Just observe a toddler.

God's parenting manual

I need help. God graciously gave me a mother-in-law who shared her parenting manual with me. When I asked how she raised godly, loving sons, she didn't offer her own tips on raising successful children. She had one answer: God's Word. Her parenting advice remained consistent: spend time, dig into your Bible. My faith grew alongside my child. Although God soon took my mentor home, she had anchored me to the

only trustworthy guide to navigate me through this maze called motherhood.

Long nights of soothing sick infants and endless days battling willful toddlers and adolescents made me scoff when others said years would pass in the blink of an eye, but they were right. Two decades have flown by, and the verse framed in the center of our family photo wall is still true: “Only one life and soon it's past—only what's done for Christ will last.”

Our daughters are almost grown with dreams of their own. Their childhood memories will dim and possessions wear out, but God promises their spiritual training will endure.

God's protecting love— for mother and children

There's an old story of a hen trapped in a chicken coop fire. Firemen sifting through the ashes knocked over the charred bird and her chicks scampered out unharmed. Their mother sat through a raging fire to protect her babies. My Savior loved me like that, sacrificing his life for me.

His love gives me courage, for mothers live in the heat of the battle, and the battle is fierce. Physical and spiritual dangers threaten to consume our children. Little ones remain in the nest under our protective wings for only a brief time.

His love forgives me, for motherhood is humbling. I don't always



Robyn Smith and her first child, Toni (now 21 years old).

set godly examples or give right answers, but God does. He takes sin-tainted efforts to mold my children to love and serve him and works them for their good.

His love gives me peace, for I live in his grace. Grace that covers weakness and doubt. Bringing healing and strengthening my trust, he will guard and protect my children until he brings them safely home.

So while I'll enjoy Mother's Day this May and probably shed a tear opening the beautiful cards, I know every day God has given me one of his greatest gifts. He called me to be a mother.

Robyn Smith is a member at Prince of Peace, Salt Lake City, Utah.