

FORWARD IN CHRIST

May 2003

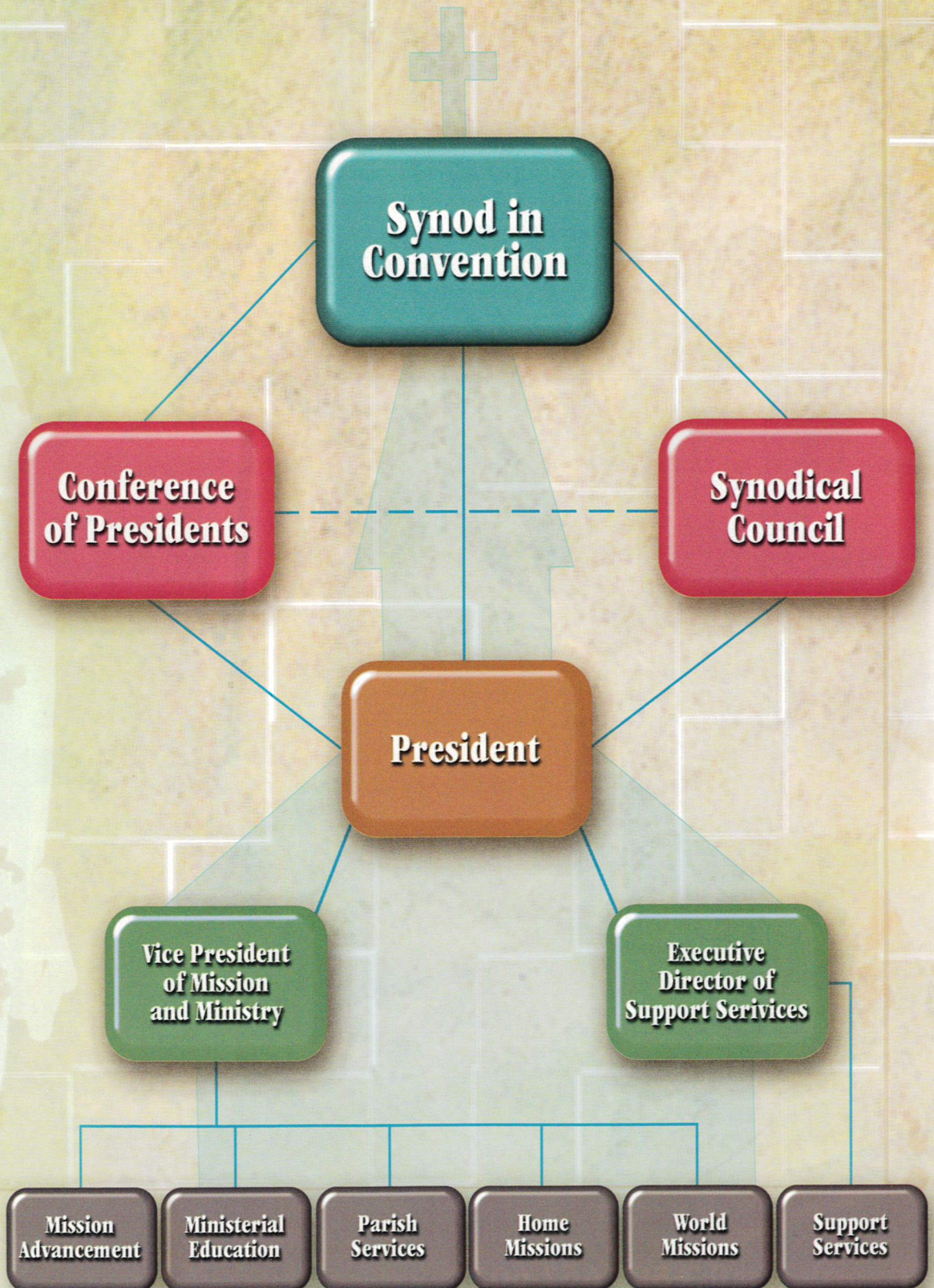
The Word from the WELS

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Interview
with a WELS
mother and
U.S. Army
captain

Reach out
to people
not like you



Mother's Day—
remember the everyday blessings that
we sometimes take for granted.

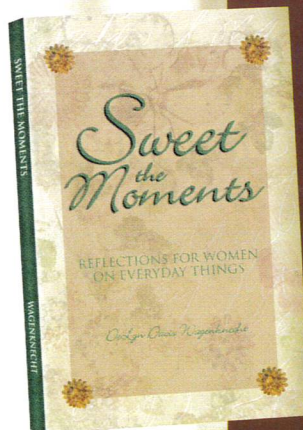


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Both books make great gifts!

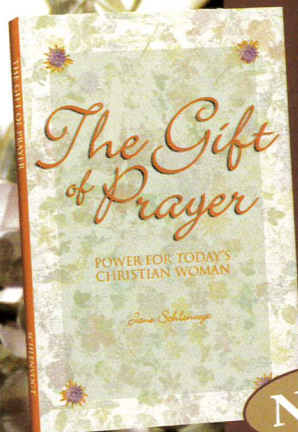
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Made clean

A man with leprosy came to him and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean." Filled with compassion, Jesus reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Mark 1:40,41

Eric S. Hartzell

You don't usually want to touch something dirty. Who gets his hands filthy if he doesn't have to? With our knowledge of disease we don't knowingly touch something contaminated and germ infested, either. Imagine seeing anthrax spores and then reaching out to touch them. Our skin shrinks at the prospect.

A leper is made clean

Jesus, too, was born with human sensitivities about dirt and disease. Yet he reached out and touched a leper.

Jews weren't allowed to touch lepers. The law said, "Touch no unclean thing." About the unclean one it said, "The person with such an infectious disease must wear torn clothes, let his hair be unkempt, cover the lower part of his face and cry out, 'Unclean! Unclean!' As long as he has the infection he remains unclean. He must live alone; he must live outside the camp" (Leviticus 13:45,46). Jesus knew the law and what it meant when he reached out and touched the leper.

Jesus willingly and knowingly reached out his hand and touched the man. It wasn't an accident. He saw the disease. He knew the "rules." He came into this world not only to save lepers. He came into this world to touch lepers. He came not only to cleanse the world. He came to get dirty in the world. He came to "catch"



what we had. Isaiah the prophet knew this when he said of Jesus, "Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows" (Isaiah 53:4). Jesus walked into the infirmary of this world knowing that he was going to die from what was killing people there.

All sinners are made clean

Sin does all the things that leprosy does, but it does them for eternity. Sin infects. Sin is contagious. Sin destroys even our bodies. Sin deforms. Sin drives us from our loved ones. Sin makes us lonely. Sin makes us sick. Sin finally kills. "Death came to all men, because all sinned" (Romans 5:12).

Sin makes us unclean. The leper said to Jesus, "If you are willing,

you can make me clean." It was his uncleanness that drove him to his knees that day. It was David's uncleanness that buckled his knees before his Savior after the adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband. "Create in me a clean heart," he begged. "Cleanse me with hyssop and I will be clean; wash me and I will be whiter than snow." Sin's uncleanness is what caused a poor invalid named Charlotte Elliott to pray in that homespun hymn of hers, "Just as I am and waiting not to rid my soul of one dark blot, To thee, whose blood can cleanse each spot, O Lamb of God, I come, I come" (*Christian Worship* 397:2).

Thank God for the Savior who did not shrink from touching us all. His hand touched us in our baptism and washed our sins away. Every time we go to the Lord's Supper, his body and blood really touch us. As if Jesus grabs us by our shoulders, looks into our eyes there at the altar, and says, "I am willing, be clean!"

Surely the leper remembered the day when his Savior touched him . . . an untouchable. Surely we all remember! "For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities" (Hebrews 4:15, KJV).



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

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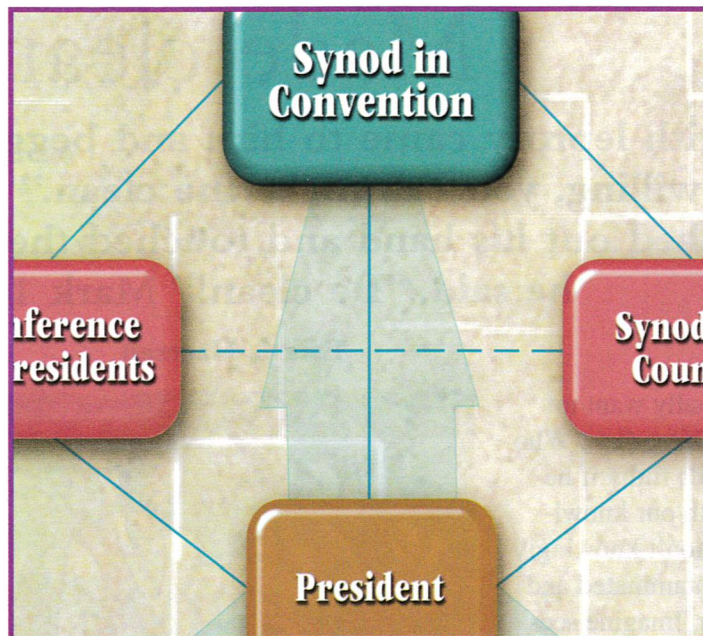
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Everyone's responsibility quickly falls to no one. So we have organized as a synod.

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Cover illustration by Paul Burmeister and Carianne Ciriacks

bits & pieces



A new series explaining the Wisconsin Synod's organizational structure begins on p. 8. This five-part series will highlight how each one of us fits into this structure and will explain the ways that we can become involved in walking together as a synod.



It's easy to take our freedom for granted. Yet military personnel and their families know all too well what freedom costs.

- Dawn Orta, a member at Abiding Savior, Killeen, Texas, and a captain in the U.S. Army, shares her thoughts with Katherine Martin on what it's like to prepare for war. Read more on p. 10.
- Nancy Callies reveals a mother's heartache when her son leaves for Kuwait with the U.S. Army (p. 27).



Is your mom a list maker? Mine is! On the back page Dave Danford shares how the lists that his wife makes for their children have influenced their lives. Read "Mom's List" and see if Danford's wife reminds you of your mother.



Two series end this month.

- Special thanks goes to Philip Kieselhorst for helping us witness God's plan of salvation in the book of Daniel. The final article is on p. 30.
- "To every tribe and nation," on p. 12, concludes the 11-part series on our brothers and sisters in the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference. Clearly there are many Christians all over the world who share our confessional Lutheran beliefs. Keep these brothers and sisters and their church bodies in your prayers.

—NRB

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IN THE CROSS HAIRS
Richard L. Gurgel

I am very encouraged by the answer given for what is meant biblically by being “born again” [“In the cross hairs,” Feb.]. Too many look at the human action both by the speaker and the hearer. I am amazed at the confusion that it brings.

Jesus was clear that we can't come to him unless the Father draws us to him (John 6:44, 17:2). See also John 16:8 where Jesus says the Holy Spirit will convince the world of its sin. Just as it is important to know that we are only born again by the Father drawing us and the work of the Holy Spirit, it is important for us to know that God is commanding us to proclaim his kingdom and good news of Jesus (Matthew 28:18-20, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:46-48, John 15:27, Acts 1:8) to this lost world as we co-labor with him to reach the lost. That, fellow Christians, is very exciting and quite a humbling honor! We are Christ's ambassadors (2 Corinthians 5:20).

Charles Krueger



Virginia Beach, Virginia

As I read Gary Baumler's article [“Doctrine builds faith,” March], I could not help but think of how lacking so many “Christians” are regarding doctrine and insist exclusively that only faith be taught. But this article additionally revealed to me how that lack of doctrine is the equivalent of a musician (so to speak) having eschewed or evaded solid theoretical practices in the art of music for the sake of just the music alone. I have found over the years that the lack or denial of sound Christian doctrine is as equally bad as the lack or denial of sound theoretical knowledge is in the art of music. These are inextricably linked.

Steven Wasson



Dayton, Ohio

Thank you for Laurie Biedenbender's article in the January issue [“And baby makes three”]. The timeless truths of parenthood are sincerely and eloquently stated. It is a powerful promotion for full-time parenting, without saying it in confrontational words, as I am apt to do.

Rolfe Westendorf



Milwaukee, Wisconsin

I am thankful that *Forward in Christ* printed both Richard Gurgel's “In the cross hairs” article on WELS ministry cut-backs (Jan.) and Joel Nelson's feelings that “this ‘cross hairs’ article missed the target just a bit” (“Readers forum,” March).

These two articles help to frame a problem that exists in WELS and which must be dealt with by the synod convention delegates in July.

The budget crunch has revealed that there is a distinct difference of opinion as to what the vital areas of ministry are. In fact, the answer to that question may even disclose a contributing factor to the shortfall. Unless this is dealt with, it may do more damage in the future.

It is incumbent upon every area of ministry to be the best steward possible of the resources at its disposal. It is also the better part of wisdom to be able to judge between what is vital and what one could get along without.

As important as the many activities of Parish Services, planned giving counselors, and an ever-increasing number of administrators may be in a vibrant economy, are they vital? Is it possible that these same activities could be carried on, albeit perhaps not as well, by those general practitioners who have been trained and called to do exactly that?

Ministerial education and home and world missions are vital to our ministry as a synod. If this is not so, then I would need to rethink its reason for being, my support of the same, and also my need to belong.

Perhaps the Lord of the Church is not only giving us an opportunity to examine our priorities as a synod, as divisions of WELS, as individual congregations, and as members, but he may actually be insisting that we do so.

Ed Lindemann

Pardeeville, Wisconsin

An article on raising teens [“Life on hold: the roller coaster years,” Feb.] described them as “hell with acne and attitude.” If hell were only as bad as raising teenagers I would shut the door to my church and tell my people to let the party start because hell isn't all that bad, and we may as well eat, drink, and be merry.

When we take a term like “hell,” which means the ultimate separation from God's sustaining grace, and apply it to something as minor as the trouble we have with our kids, we become desensitized to what hell really is. And in the end, that will only lead us to under-appreciate what Christ has saved us from.

Paul P. Huebner



Grass Lake, Michigan

CORRECTION

John Oldfield's obituary incorrectly stated that he graduated from Doctor Martin Luther College (DMLC) in 1946. Oldfield actually began his 37-year service to DMLC in 1946.

Send your letters to Readers forum, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398; FAX, 414/256-3862; <fic@sab.wels.net>. Include full name, address, and daytime phone number. Letters are edited for clarity, conciseness, and relevance. Writers' views are not necessarily those of WELS or *Forward in Christ* magazine.



The sight is glorious

Douglas J. Engelbrecht

A booklet entitled *Our Daily Bread* contains the following poem:

“Sunday the sermon was boring,
Twas hard attention to keep.
The theme was faultily chosen
It almost put me to sleep.
Monday was blue with sheer boredom,
Tuesday was sinful by choice.
By Wednesday my conscience was weakened
By the sounds of a small inner voice.
Thursday my heart was responding,
Friday God’s nudging was strong.
I came to thorough repentance
The following Saturday;
I yielded in full surrender
As all on the altar I lay.
Sunday the sermon was perfect,
Superb and quite at its peak.
It’s amazing how greatly the pastor
Had improved in the space of one week!”

Very often the problem is not a dull preacher or a dull sermon, but a dull heart. The difference between the person who goes away from God’s house rejoicing and the one who goes away yawning is often the condition of the worshiper’s heart before he came.

As Thomas Kelly visualized Christ ascending into heaven, he wrote, “What a glorious sight it is . . . Jesus at the rig.” Kelly also wrote an Ascension hymn entitled “Look, Ye Saints, The Sight Is Glorious.” Now, if you and I don’t agree, if we don’t come away from Ascension Day worship thrilled with what we have heard and seen, then perhaps we were in the right place, but our hearts weren’t!

Look, you saints, the sight is glorious . . . Jesus ascending and sitting at the right hand of God. This glorious sight means that God has accepted the work that Jesus completed by his life and his death on the cross and that all our sins are washed away.

A six-year-old, whose parents noticed that she walked with a limp, found out

from doctors that she had a broken hip. Because she suffers from a rare disease called ganglioneuropathy, she felt no pain.

If we don’t think Jesus ascending into heaven and sitting at the right hand of God is a glorious sight, perhaps the problem is that we’re suffering from spiritual ganglioneuropathy. Perhaps because the world has made things like abortion, living together, and adultery mere “lapses in judgment,” merely a social faux pas, no more serious than belching at the dinner table, we have become insensitive to sin and blind to the wonderful assurance of God’s forgiveness.

Pray God that he will help us, through the power of his holy Word, to put our hearts in the right place, to become more sensitive to sin and see how hopelessly lost we are without his forgiveness in Christ. For then we will see Jesus ascending into heaven and being seated at the right hand of God, and walk away from our Ascension worship and agree with Thomas Kelly: “The sight is glorious!”

The sight is glorious . . . Jesus at God’s right hand preparing to judge the nations! The Savior has ascended and rules in his heaven. That’s the sight we come to see. That’s the reason we come in praise.

If you and I don’t think the sight of Jesus enthroned in heaven, preparing to judge the nations, is glorious, perhaps the reason is that we’re not ready for our King’s return. Perhaps we are so “this life only” oriented that we have given neither serious thought to nor decent preparation to the second coming of Christ.

May God help us to be better prepared. Only when our hearts and lives are focused on heaven, waiting for the second coming of Christ, can we look at the sight of Jesus ascending on high, preparing to return to judge the nations and proclaim with the hymn writer: “The sight is glorious!”

Doug Engelbrecht is pastor at Trinity, Neenah, Wisconsin.

Look, you
saints, the
sight is
glorious . . .
Jesus
ascending
and sitting
at the right
hand of God.

Leaders among peers— assigning responsibility

Organized to carry out the Lord's mission together, the Wisconsin Synod entrusts leadership to its fellow Christians.

Gary P. Baumler

A Christian community is the ultimate egalitarian society. Everyone is equally a sinner. Everyone is equally saved through faith in Christ and is equally holy in God's eyes. Everyone, in turn, is called upon to help carry out the Lord's mission and share his blessings worldwide.

Everyone's responsibility, however, quickly falls to no one, unless the community organizes and delegates duties. So we have organized as a synod.

Still, not everyone understands the process and how it works. At this time, with our synod experiencing financial setbacks, it helps to know.

Many are confused:

"Why doesn't President Gurgel exert more leadership?"

"Who gave the Synodical Council the authority to alter ministry programs?"

"The synod in convention should be making these decisions."

Being presidential

Our president is the designated pastor and chief executive officer of the synod. We look to him for spiritual and corporate leadership. We ask him to oversee the total church body's operation to insure that it is true to our mission and objectives

and consistent with our doctrine and practice. We ask him to be our pastor among pastors and to represent the synod in public affairs.

The president can easily spend all of his time and energies on either one of his major responsibilities. His role as the synod's pastor takes him across the country and sometimes around the world to speak and counsel. Maybe you have heard him speak for an anniversary service at your church. Anyone with a serious question or problem having to do with how the church is running at home or away may eventually log into the president's line.

Overseeing the total operations of the synod is also a huge task, involving millions of dollars in many forms of ministry. For this function he has help. The Vice President for Mission and Ministry coordinates the various areas of ministry. The Executive Director of Support Services coordinates fiscal and other support. Administrators, supervisors, boards, commissions, and staff all play their part. Still, the final accountability for implementing the synod's ministry lies with the president.

Be careful to note, however, that the president does not establish the ministry or directly manage the spending for it. He carries out the will of the synod in convention and

the Synodical Council between conventions. They set the direction, and he steers the ship where they say. His greatest challenge, says President Gurgel, "is to focus my eyes, as well as the eyes of others, on the important task . . . of being God's gospel representatives in all the world."

Establishing policy

The synod in convention is the legislative body of WELS and establishes the policy and direction we are to take. At the synod convention, the delegates look at the big picture, address any major issues brought to them, and approve the overall program and budget for the biennium. They "establish, review, and amend the policies and direction of the synod in pursuit of its mission" (WELS Constitution, Art. VIII, Sec. 2). The constitution dictates that they adopt a balanced budget. They also elect the synodwide officers.

Since the convention meets for only five days every two years, the 400 voting delegates (split between lay members and called workers) cannot effectively address the details of managing the synod's ministry. During the two years between conventions, the synod entrusts the daily management to others. The Conference of Presidents and the

The Conference of Presidents (COP)

- 12 district presidents, elected by their districts. Each one is a parish pastor.
- 2 synod vice presidents, elected by the synod in convention.
 - The first vice president is full-time.
 - The second vice president is a parish pastor.
- The synod president, elected by the synod in convention. He chairs the COP.
- The recording secretary (non-voting), elected by the synod in convention. He is either a parish pastor or teacher.

The Synodical Council (SC)

- 12 district lay representatives, elected by their districts
- 3 district presidents selected by the COP
- 6 at-large members from among the pastors and male teachers active in the ministry. Presently, four are the board chairmen of the four areas of ministry, plus one pastor and one teacher.
- The synod president chairs the SC.

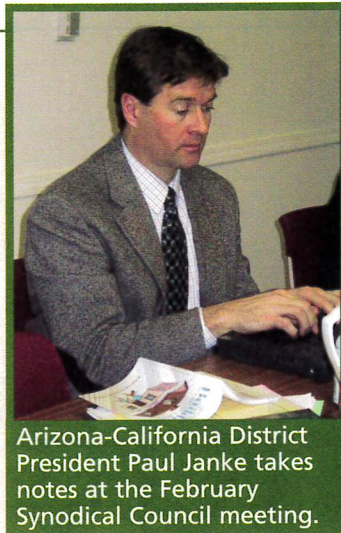
Synodical Council function on behalf of the synod to guide the synod's affairs.

Dealing with doctrine

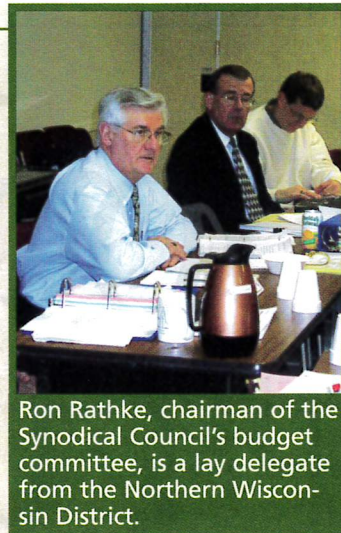
Our church's mission centers on our use and sharing of God's Word. Unless we teach and live by every teaching of Scripture, we will miss our mission.

We entrust the Conference of Presidents (COP) with supervising, maintaining, and strengthening our unity of doctrine and practice. That may seem a daunting task, but Arizona-California District President Paul Janke points out that "the Lord has given us well-trained pastors, teachers, and staff ministers, who are wonderfully united in faith and practice."

The COP helps guide and implement the placement of WELS public ministers. COP members consider it an especially high honor to assign graduates to their first calls at graduation. Says Janke, "God has given us a



Arizona-California District President Paul Janke takes notes at the February Synodical Council meeting.



Ron Rathke, chairman of the Synodical Council's budget committee, is a lay delegate from the Northern Wisconsin District.

tremendous blessing in the young people who are presenting themselves for service in his church. It's thrilling to be a part of the assignment process."

Another duty of the COP takes center stage now; namely, to fund the synod's ministry and promote the synod's mission and ministry in the districts. The presidents see themselves as encouraging the local congregations through their pastors to prioritize the work of the synod in the local budgets, to train in biblical stewardship, and to see how their stewardship of money affects our mission goals around the globe. The Commission for Communication on Financial Support assists the presidents in this task, and the Communication Services Commission helps with communicating the mission and ministry.

Keeping on course

Between synod conventions, the Synodical Council has the responsibility, "the legal right and power" (Constitution, Art. VII, Sec. 3), to act on behalf of the synod in all matters except those delegated to the COP or reserved for the synod in convention. The council deals with matters of planning, programs, budgets, operations, and legal and fiscal matters for the synod in pursuit of its mission.

The lay representative from each district serves as an important communications link from the district to the council and back to the district. As Ron Rathke, lay delegate of

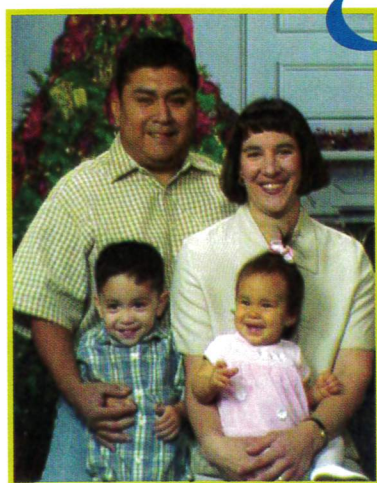
the Northern Wisconsin District says, "It is a huge privilege and an awesome responsibility to serve in this capacity." He experiences close up the worldwide ministry of our church, but he also bears the responsibility to help guide that ministry in the direction God would have us go.

Says Rathke, "There is no doubt that we are a prime decision making and policy making body of our church. However, it is important to know that we don't make decisions or establish policies in a vacuum." He points to interactive Bible study as a focal point of Synodical Council meetings, the experience and expertise of advisors, and the input of hundreds of other fellow Christians from committees and commissions throughout WELS.

So we have organized, and we trust and we pray. And let us remember as President Gurgel says, "The synod is not any one individual or small groups of people making decisions that affect all of us. In reality it is all of us, united by a common purpose and compelled by God's love for us, working to proclaim the saving gospel to everyone everywhere." ✨

Gary Baumler is editor of Forward in Christ magazine and WELS Director of Communications.

God will guide me



(Above) Dawn Orta and her family—husband Carlos and children Joshua and Hannah. (Below) Dawn with her sister (left) and daughter.



Dawn Orta, mother of two and a captain in the U.S. Army, faces military deployment with confidence in God's promises.

Katherine Martin

I had spent the majority of my morning worrying and chasing around. My husband is a pastor so I was faced with the usual Sunday morning routine of getting two kids, snacks, books, the Sunday school lessons, and myself in some sort of order before rushing out of the house.

My mind was wandering as usual. I didn't pay attention to the lessons because I was helping my son find the "right crayon" for his notebook. I missed the majority of the sermon because there was a goldfish mishap on the floor, and I missed the opportunity to sing the hymns with a joyful heart as well. Another opportunity to praise the Lord had been squandered.

I know that too often I am guilty of wasting opportunities to grow in faith because I am too busy worrying about the here and now instead of focusing on the hereafter. It wasn't until after I conducted this interview later that afternoon that I came to realize just how much I take for granted.

The impending departure

As I entered Dawn Orta's house for the interview, she apologized for being unable to meet earlier. She had been called into work to receive her chemical suit. A chemical suit? This wasn't something I thought about on a daily basis. My daily thoughts generally consist of cooking, cleaning, laundry, and other mundane tasks that allow me to keep up with my two small children. Here Orta was, also a mother of two small children, and instead of preparing supper, she was preparing her unit for war with Iraq. How does she handle the uncertainty and the fear of coming to grips with deployment?

Orta is a captain in the U.S. Army stationed at Fort Hood, Texas. She is a Physician's Assistant assigned to a Forward Support Battalion and now has been called to join the other 12,500 men and women who have been deployed from Fort Hood to prepare for war with Iraq. Orta's husband, Carlos, gave up his own military career to be a stay-at-home dad for their two small children, two-year-old Joshua and one-year-old Hannah.

In January, Orta's unit was called up to deploy to somewhere in southwest Asia for an undetermined amount of time.* They didn't know when they would leave, but the preparations for their departure

What will happen to me, a Christian woman, if I become a prisoner of war?

had them working 14-hour days (or more) and weekends. The following interview gave this busy mother a rare chance to sit down and reflect on what military life entails.

The mounting distress

Question: Describe some of the difficulties faced daily by soldiers in the military.

Answer: Lack of control of your life. Although the military does give you some choice where you will serve, you aren't always able to choose where you will live and what job you will perform. The position to which you were assigned may not have anything to do with the training you have received.

Question: Has the military taught you any life lessons that you feel you may not have learned anywhere else?

Answer: Definitely. I have learned independence and how to fire a weapon. I still don't like it, but if I hadn't joined the military, I don't think I would have ever fired a weapon voluntarily. I have also learned to be more assertive and to take on more responsibility. Most often, in the civilian world, people will only take on what they can handle. In the military, you are put in positions that you didn't choose and find it's your responsibility to fix them.

Question: What questions go through your mind as you think about deployment? What challenges might you and your family face?

Answer: Uncertainty of what will happen. Is life or death in store for me? I think that I certainly could be killed in a car crash tomorrow if it is the time

God has chosen to take me to heaven. However, upon entering a hostile area where there will be bombs and bullets flying, the threat of death seems more up front.

What will I have to face as a woman in a Muslim country where women are treated like cattle or worse? What will happen to me, a Christian woman, if I become a prisoner of war? What conflicts will I have because of my Christianity? Will I be able to practice my faith? We heard that during Desert Storm soldiers had to take off crosses. Will I be asked to do the same?

How will I respond to what I experience visually, biologically, or chemically?

Will my kids be well taken care of, or will they have permanent emotional or psychological effects because I am leaving?

The promised deliverance

Question: What comfort do you find in God's Word to help you as you deal with these emotions?

Answer: I guess there isn't one passage in particular that keeps me going. I just remember the promise of God to always be with me no matter where I go. In times when I feel weak, I remember that God is carrying me along. God is always with me, and I have the reassurance of my ultimate destination—heaven.

Question: How do you handle the uncertainty of not knowing where or when you will be called to serve?

Answer: At times it is certainly aggravating and stressful. But I just try to remember that God is in control. As things evolve with Iraq, I know

that God has a hand in it. No matter what happens, I cannot control my life, but God can.

The lessons learned

After the interview was complete, the drive home gave me time to reflect on an important lesson that I had learned that day. My eyes filled with tears as I thought of leaving my own children at home to go to war.

Feelings of gratitude overwhelmed me. My gratitude to the Lord is inexpressible. All that I am and have comes from him, and yet I am too willing to blame him for my problems and ignore him when I have the chance to grow in his Word. My gratitude also stretched to Dawn Orta and the thousands of men and women like her who are willing to sacrifice their lives to make the practice of my religion possible.

As I pulled into my driveway, I said a prayer of thanks to the Lord for all the blessings he has showered upon me in spite of my ingratitude. A prayer of thanks for all the Dawn Ortas who are defending the freedoms I take for granted every day. A prayer of thanks for the lesson that Dawn taught me that day. Even though her heart is heavy with uncertainty, she has her eyes focused on Christ and his ability to carry her through every situation, no matter how dark.

Katherine Martin is a member at Abiding Savior, Killeen, Texas.

*Dawn Orta and her unit were deployed the first week of April.

TO EVERY TRIBE AND NATION

See how our sister synod practices worship, praise, and evangelism—**Zambian style.**

Laura Warmuth

“**Y**ou can drink water even at a lame man’s home,” says Pastor Hachibamba, the principal at the seminary in Lusaka, Zambia. He uses this Tonga proverb to demonstrate that the Lutheran Church of Central Africa—Zambia (LCCA-Z) is growing stronger even through its struggles. Our God speaks similar words to Paul in 2 Corinthians 12:9 when he says, “My power is made perfect in weakness.”

Satan’s grip on the people of Africa is evident. Traditional African religion holds that one must seek to please the spirits of the dead lest they bring trouble to one’s life. Because of the popularity of witchcraft, people live in fear of being “witched” by angry spirits for breaking taboos or being accused of witchcraft for being too rich or successful.

But Christ has been taught in the midst of these beliefs for about 150 years, and Zambia has been an officially Christian nation for over 10 years. The first WELS missionaries arrived in 1953, and the WELS Medical Mission at Mwembezhi began in 1961. By 1970 the Lutheran

Church of Central Africa (LCCA) had opened a Bible Institute and Lutheran Seminary in Lusaka, Zambia. In 1996 the LCCA church body divided its finances and became two self-administrating synods: LCCA-Malawi and LCCA-Zambia.

Financially independent

Dan Kroll, missionary to Zambia, describes the connection between WELS and the LCCA-Z as a father/son relationship: “WELS is supporting the LCCA financially and training it to be its own independent entity. . . . The son is independent enough to make some of his own decisions but not yet capable enough to fully pay for those decisions to be carried out.” The LCCA-Z is only accepting a certain portion of its budget from WELS and only after its congregations have fulfilled their percentages of the budget.

This transition to becoming financially independent has not been easy. Zambian congregations are struggling to fully support just four of their 14 national pastors. Pastor Mumba shares that for national pastors “to educate



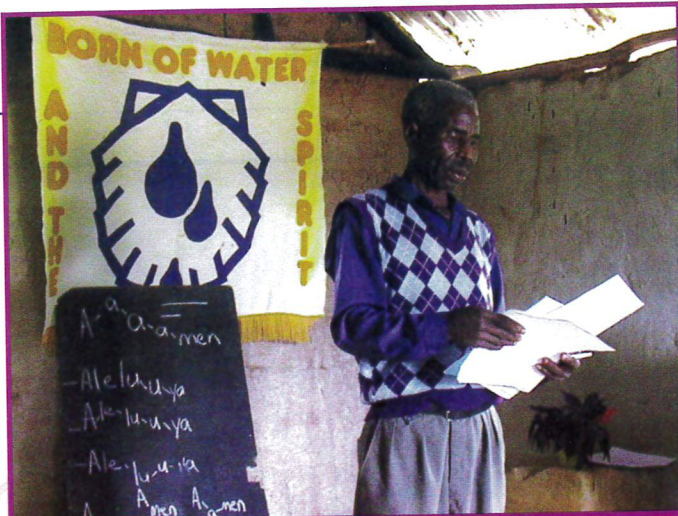
Beauty Mwale, a member at St. John’s, Kabushi, is wearing the LCCA-Z uniform. The purple head covering and skirt (not pictured) represent the passion of Christ. The white blouse represents Christ’s purity while the red trim on the collar stands for his blood to cover sin. She is also wearing black shoes, representative of sin, which is to be trampled under foot.

their children, to make ends meet, it becomes a dream.” Kroll demonstrates the positive reaction of the LCCA-Z to these struggles when he says, “We are now challenged to endure the hardships of ministry and to find ways (financially or creatively) to carry out our own programs.”

These financial challenges provide especially the larger congregations of the LCCA-Z with a chance to learn what they are capable of. Although one congregation’s first course of action when building a new church was to ask WELS for iron sheets and cement, the congregation completed the building project on its own without a hitch.

Spiritually bonded

Although the LCCA-Z aims to become financially independent of WELS, Pastor Mumba points out the need for the two synods to continue



Mr. T. Mukwita from Kafulafuta congregation in the Copperbelt is a layman who leads the service about twice a month. He is practicing the new liturgy in Chi-Bemba, which includes singing rather than the previous speaking-only version.

Lutheran Church of Central Africa—Zambia*

Locations: 5 out of 8 Zambian provinces

Baptized members: 11,639

Confirmed members: 6,206

Established congregations: 28

Mission congregations: 70

Preaching stations: 25

National pastors: 14

WELS expatriate missionaries:

8 (down from 11 because of budget cutbacks)

**Information compiled from the 2001 WELS Statistical Report.*

to “strengthen spiritual relationships.” Mr. Phiri, a member in Lifwambula, Zambia, demonstrates the LCCA-Z’s regard for the truth when he says, “Our teachings are very good because they come right from the Bible.” To keep this truth flowing to the people, a full-time language coordinator works to distribute written materials in at least four of the seven major languages in Zambia.

Kroll experiences the Zambian people’s excitement for the truth fairly regularly when members at Kristu Imfumu (Christ the Lord) Lutheran Church in Chipulukusu, Ndola, break into song during his

sermons. They say it means that he has hit an important point, but he thinks it means that the sermon has gotten too long, because it never happens in the first 15 minutes.

On January 12, 2003, the Synodical Council of the LCCA-Z approved

a strategy through which the church body will accept a more active role in the spiritual care of its members. One major point of the plan is to phase out WELS missionaries from rural congregations by 2008 and replace them with Zambian pastors and vicars or laymen qualified to teach. The missionaries withdrawn from rural churches will help organize urban ministry at colleges and other learning institutions.

Effects of WELS budget cutbacks

Because of WELS budget cutbacks, two of the 10 expatriate missionaries to Zambia will be returning to the States, and one missionary vacancy will not be filled. “Losing these men means that many of our people will not be fed the Word of God on a regular basis,” says Kroll.

Although this is a severe loss, the seminary in Lusaka will help to fill these positions. The seminary recently adopted a new curriculum based on the bachelor of arts curriculum used at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., and courses at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wis. Six men who have demonstrated their teaching and humble leadership skills during their vicar years will graduate in May and begin their ministries.

Members serving members

The tribal background of the Zambian people instills members with a need for belonging to a group and unity within that group. Though this poses a challenge when a member must be disciplined, these same loyalties move members to work hard for one another and for their church. Choirs, Sunday schools, and church councils engage members in service. Women’s groups cook for guests, sweep out the dried mud brick churches, and visit members.

“Members serving members in such a spiritual way is the thing that makes the LCCA-Z strong,” Kroll says. Willie Muzala, a lay preacher from the Malifeyo congregation, sets a tender example of Christian love when he comforts a member whose wife has died of tuberculosis. Muzala reminds his friend that Jesus’ own tears cooled the grief of Mary and Martha upon Lazarus’s death and that his understanding cools our grief as well.

Mufwi nolungi chibolele panshi.

“A spear that goes up must come down,” says another Tonga proverb. Indeed, nothing in this world stays the same. But although the LCCA-Z is going through financial and spiritual leadership changes, the gospel message is constant and its members remain eager to serve. Kroll says, “Our members are creative and talented, with ingenuity to use whatever they have for the glory of God.” Thank God that his perfect ingenuity has blessed the efforts of his church in Zambia.

Laura Warmuth, a senior at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, works part-time for WELS Communication Services.

Part 1: What do the terms "minister" and "ministry" mean, and how should they best be used?

Part 2: What is a Christian's role as a priest of God?

Part 3: What is the public ministry? Who serves in the public ministry?

Part 4: What is the relationship between pastors and "priests"?

Public ministry

When God established the public ministry, he created an orderly way of carrying on ministry on behalf of a body of believers.

David J. Valleskey

Public ministry does not mean what one might think at first. It is not referring to ministry that is carried out in public in contrast with ministry performed in private. A pastor administering private communion to a shut-in is, in fact, carrying out a function of the public ministry. Public ministry refers to ministry that is performed in the name of and on behalf of a body of believers.

The public ministry's origin

The public ministry of the gospel owes its origin to God himself, as does the priesthood of all believers (see *Every Christian a priest?*, April). In Old Testament times God established the offices of priests and prophets to carry out the function of the public ministry in the name of and on behalf of his people. It is clear from a reading of the New Testament that, though there is no direct command for the public ministry in the New Testament church, the sacred writers simply assume that this is God's will. Christ called the Apostles, and the Apostle Paul appointed men to serve as spiritual leaders in the congrega-

tions he had founded. The public ministry of the gospel is a divine, not a human, institution. Flocks need shepherds, and Christ himself supplies them through his Church.

Flocks need shepherds, and Christ himself supplies them through his Church.

Why did God establish the public ministry? There are at least two reasons: 1) to carry out such functions as cannot be carried out by all at the same time without disorder, e.g., preaching, conducting worship, and administering the sacraments; and 2) to carry out such functions for which all Christians are not equally capable or qualified. In 1 Timothy 3, for example, a primary requirement for a public minister of the gospel is the ability to teach.

The call to the public ministry

Public ministry is entered upon by a call. Our Lutheran Confessions state: "Nobody should preach publicly in the church or administer the sacra-

ments unless he is regularly called" (Augsburg Confession, Article XIV). Numbers 16 records how God displayed his just wrath against three men who, without a call, sought to assume the leadership role that God had given to Moses and Aaron by a call.

The call to the public ministry has come in two ways: directly (sometimes called an immediate call, a call that does not involve an intervening agency) or indirectly (a mediate call, one that does involve an intervening agency). The call of Moses, for example, was a direct, immediate call. Mediate, or indirect calls, come through the agency of the Church.

When Paul met with the elders of the church in Ephesus, men who were serving in a function much like our pastors today, he counseled them, "Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers" (Acts 20:28). Undoubtedly the church at Ephesus, under Paul's leadership, had called these men to serve in the public ministry in their midst; but Paul makes it clear that ultimately it was the Lord himself who had called them.

Without denying the Lord's continued right to call people directly into the public ministry, it is clear that since the time of the Apostles the norm has been that Christ calls public ministers through his Church.

Forms of public ministry

Public ministry is ministry carried out on the basis of a call in the name of and on behalf of a body of believers. Under that definition, in a broad sense public ministry could cover quite a bit of ground. In Acts 6, for example, seven men were chosen to supervise the distribution of food for the widows in the Jerusalem congregation. Thus, it could properly be said that they were serving in a public ministry, since they were carrying out their work on the basis of a call in the name of and on behalf of the congregation. However, to avoid confusion it would be wise to narrow our definition somewhat and to restrict the term "public ministry" to ministry that has to do with the proclamation of the gospel, with preaching and teaching the Word, and with administering the sacraments.

What can we discern from the Scriptures about the forms that the public ministry of the gospel might take? There are some that would maintain that the only divinely instituted form of the public ministry is that of the pastoral office and that all other forms are derived from this one office. The Scriptures, however, do not speak in this way.

Already in New Testament times there were many different forms of the one office of the public ministry of the gospel: apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers, elders/overseers, deacons. Today also we can properly speak of different offices of the public ministry in the

Church, such as pastors, teachers in our synod's schools, staff ministers, missionaries, or administrators in the church, in so far as their call involves them in the ministry of the Word.

Public ministry of the gospel can also be carried out part-time, as for example, when a congregation calls members to serve as elders in the church or teachers in the Sunday school. We might call this "member ministry" to differentiate it from the ministry of those called to the full-time public ministry of the church. Nevertheless, it is a form of public ministry of the gospel and not just an exercise of the priesthood of believers, since it is entered upon by a call of the Church.

No one of these offices has a higher status than the other, in this sense: Each of these offices is a valid form of public ministry of the gospel, entered upon by virtue of a call that comes from Christ through his Church. We can properly say, however, that the pastoral office as we now view it is the most comprehensive of the various offices of public ministry within a congregation, because the pastoral office involves oversight of the congregation's entire ministry.

A congregation needs a spiritual shepherd or shepherds. Whether the title "pastor" is given to the one called to exercise spiritual oversight over the congregation or some other title is given, is not the critical issue. The critical issue is that the congregation has a shepherd, who with the gospel in Word and Sacrament feeds and leads and guards and protects the flock.

David Valleskey is president of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin.

Important terms

Minister: one who serves God (broad definition); one who is authorized [called] to perform religious functions in a church (common definition).

Ministry: service to God (broad definition); the profession, services, and duties of a minister of religion (common definition).

Personal ministry: the service that every Christian renders to God in response to God's love and mercy in Christ.

Public ministry: ministry performed in the name of and on behalf of a body of believers (broad definition); ministry that has to do with the proclamation of the gospel (preaching and teaching the Word and administering the sacraments) performed in the name of and on behalf of a body of believers (narrow definition).

Member ministry: a type of public ministry of the gospel carried out on a part-time basis by a congregation member.

Priest: every Christian (also referred to as the "universal priesthood" and "priesthood of all believers").

Pastor: a public minister of the gospel who oversees the entire ministry of the church.

Immediate (direct) call: a call that doesn't involve an intervening agency.

Mediate (indirect) call: a call that involves an intervening agency (such as a congregation).

Building for Christ in Texas

These builders do not labor in vain.

Eric S. Hartzell

When Christy Franklin said she would pray that we get a crane and a front-end loader, we probably didn't pay her much serious attention. Christy is from our sister congregation, Risen Savior, in south Austin, Texas. We enjoy having her visit us because sometimes Christy "sees" things we don't. By the way, Christy is blind.

Blind faith

We at Cross and Crown, Georgetown, Texas, needed the crane and front-end loader for the construction of our new church. The Builders For Christ crew had the 10-foot walls up and now they needed to set the trusses and continue working up on the roof. After years of preparation, the church was going up!

But there was this matter of the crane and the front-end loader. Frankly, we weren't as optimistic as Christy was. Who ever heard of praying for a crane and a front-end loader anyway?

We finally managed to rent a crane (for lots of money) to put up the trusses. On that very day, some of the wives of the Builders For Christ crew were visiting a home for needy teenage girls next to our church property. They were offering to help at the home while their husbands built our church. As they were talking to the lady in charge, they saw a truss being lifted into place.

"Did you have to rent that crane?" the woman at the home asked. "My husband has a crane and a front-end loader he's trying to sell. Why don't you just use them."

And so we did. For the whole building project!

A labor of love

If it takes a village to raise a child, it takes considerably more than that to raise a church. In our case, people came from all over the country to help us raise ours. The Builders For Christ folks came in their motor homes. We prepared a park for them with electrical, sewer, and water hookups. They came in cars, too, to stay at our members' homes. They came from Michigan and Minnesota and Wisconsin and South Dakota and Nevada. They came from all sorts of backgrounds. One of them had even flown missions on D-Day! He is still flying missions—home missions—after all these years. He and the others came to work hard and long. They even came to have fun doing it. (That's what Martin Leyrer, the captain of the project, often told the men in the dawn's light when they embarked on their day: "Have lots of fun, men, and be careful.")

Women from our congregation and four neighboring congregations showed up at noon with hot food for everyone to eat. It turned out to be a

10-pound project—because that was the average poundage gained by those who worked and ate. The five congregations took turns preparing the food and bringing it. During the entire project, with many different people preparing the food and driving it to the work site, sometimes from 50 miles away, not once was there a mix-up or a late dinner. It was feast fare every day.

Neighbors who drove by on the road were impressed at how quickly the building went up. Contractors weren't juggling this work with several other jobs. It was a concentrated effort by people who were dedicated and saw something more in the building than a job and a paycheck. Sub-contractors commented more than once on the quality of the craftsmanship. We all worked hard. Members of the congregation did, too, taking off work, putting their own livelihoods on hold while they built the church. By the end of the project, the members of the congregation had provided a fifth of the man-hours needed for the building.

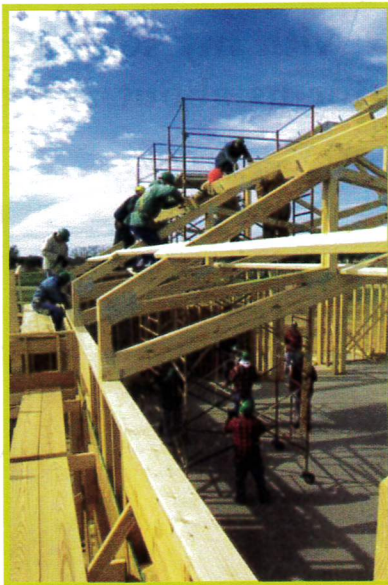
The Builders For Christ brought a spiritual experience too. The storefront used for five years on Rock Street in Georgetown was too small in an instant. Suddenly there were all these mature and dedicated Christians there. The liturgy and the hymns never sounded so good. The Bible study and Lenten services had the

Builders for Christ Martin and Rose Leyrer helped build Cross and Crown, Georgetown, Texas.



Builders For Christ

Builders For Christ, a division of WELS Kingdom Workers, provides workers to help congregations, schools, and organizations build facilities at an affordable price. Over 350 men and women have volunteered to build over 60 worship facilities and other structures. For more information, contact Dale Mueller at 1-800-466-9357.



Here are the donated crane and front-end loader that God provided for Cross and Crown's building project.

life of and interest of all these believers who had Jesus up front and center in their own lives. Can you imagine the encouragement their presence provided to pastor and people? One of our members said that the best thing the builders did for us was not build our church but worship with us.

While the men did their labor of love, the women headed out into the neighborhoods and canvassed. The word got out. They targeted Sun City nearby. They had much in common with many of the folks living there. The builders have been gone for a while but every now and then someone will still say, "Oh, you're with those people who lived on your church property and came to visit us."

Answered prayers

And so the building was done. The slab was poured Dec. 20, 2001.

On Feb. 1, 2002, Christy Franklin's prayer was answered. The first truss went up that day. On April 13, 2002, the builders left to go to new work. They left a week ahead of schedule. We were able to finish the building ourselves at that point. We held our first service in the new building July 21 and had our own personal dedication service. The formal dedication was Sept. 8. Representatives from Builders For Christ were there. So were many of the cooks and drivers for the meals. A hurricane was on the loose in Texas on that day. The rain came down as it can only in Texas. But never mind. The people came anyway, and our new church was full.

God has been good to us. As he often does, he channeled his goodness to us through the people of

our church. There were those who lent us the money to build through the Church Extension Fund. There were those who came and did the work to about a 25 percent savings of the anticipated cost. There were those who cooked and brought snacks. There were the encouragers. There were good times worshipping together. We made good friends, and we endured painful partings.

"Unless the LORD builds the house, its builders labor in vain" (Psalm 127:1). We experienced the inverse of that truth. When the Lord builds the house, its builders do not labor in vain. It is not only what we hope. It is what we see.



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

Work with people NOT LIKE YOU

Playing **CANDY LAND** with my sons reminds me of the advice Paul models for us about reaching lost souls.

Donald W. Patterson

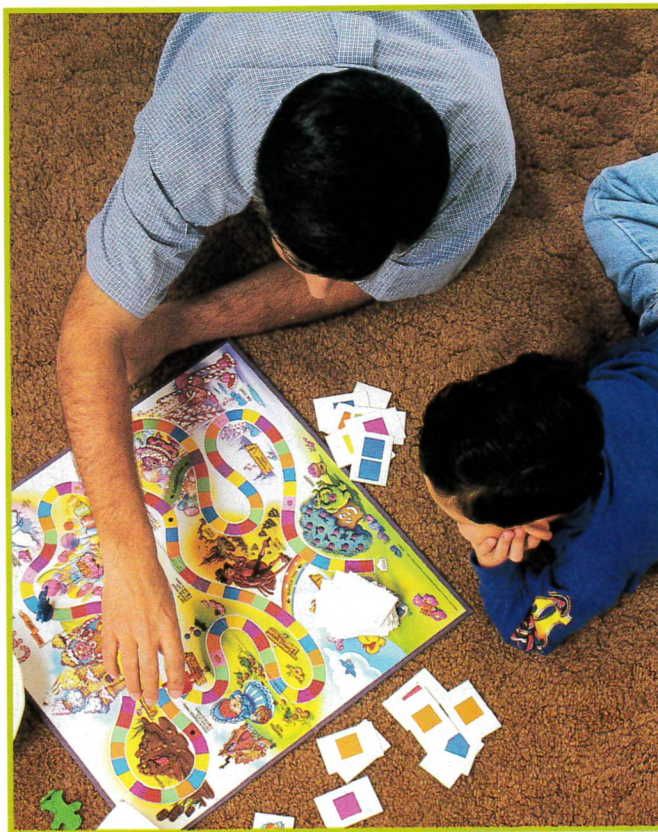
I have a confession to make. In the privacy of my home, behind closed doors—I have been playing Candy Land for about 13 years. I'm not hopelessly addicted to the game, all the evidence notwithstanding. To be frank, I am very tired of it. But I still find myself playing it, sometimes three times in a sitting.



Do you know why I have been playing Candy Land so ardently for 13 years?

I have four boys ranging in age from five to 15. For 13 years my boys have each gone through the stage of loving that silly game. From age two to six they seem addicted to its bright colors and simple rules. And through their addiction I have become codependent. I have the feeling that I am not alone.

Some psychological purists might call me a deranged hypocrite. You see, I don't really like to play Candy Land. It's boring. But my boys didn't know that. Over the years, when they asked to play, I'd smile, get the game,



and play it gleefully with them. If my son was about to win (which would relieve me of my misery) and he drew a card that sent him all the way back to Plumpy (nine spaces from the beginning), I would laugh and keep on playing as if I was happy we'd get to play some more.

Is that hypocritical? Of course not. That is love, a love that wants to bond

with a son, a love that wants a son to have joy, contentment, and success. As far as my sons were concerned, I was as excited about Candy Land as they were—that is, until they got older and figured it out.

Figured what out? Well, they figured out the game wasn't all that fun for grown ups. They figured out that Dad loved playing with them anyway because he loved them. Well, all but one has figured it out. The youngest still thinks I love the game. Please don't tell him.



Playing Candy Land with small hearts in our homes reminds me of the advice Paul models for

us about reaching the lost in our world. Paul shows us by example that it is good to play along with the lost in their world so that we can show them how much Jesus loves them.

Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible. To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To

those under the law I became like those under the law . . . so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law, I became like one not having law . . . so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all men so that by all possible means I might save some. I do all this for the sake of the gospel, that I may share in its blessings. (1 Corinthians 9:19-23)

Was Paul a hypocrite? Certainly not! He was a servant of people. He made himself play “Candy Land” with whoever needed him to so that he could bond with them, understand them, be understood by them, and finally win them over to Jesus.



If you are with me so far, you are already thinking of some examples of how you want to play “Candy Land” with someone you know in order to reach him with God’s love. But in case you aren’t coming up with many, let me make some suggestions.

If you used to live in “cheese head” country and you have moved out of Wisconsin to a big city with a different pro football team, why not tone down the green and gold stuff a bit? You can cheer for whomever you want, but you don’t have to be obnoxious about it. Some lost person you know might feel closer to you if you weren’t so predictably color-coordinated with your home state.

If you are standing in church next to someone who barely knows the liturgy, why not pick up the hymnal and follow along from the book instead of standing there saying it

all from memory. It might make the novice feel more comfortable.

If you are the preacher, why not give some background to the sermon text before reading it at the beginning of the sermon? Surely someone there is not familiar with the text and would feel more included if you brought her up to speed.

Choosing what “Candy Land” we are willing to play with the lost is a fiercely personal decision for every Christian.

And what about those who have small children? Would providing a children’s sermon and a staffed nursery during worship help you reach new people on their level with Jesus by all possible means?

Here’s another example: If you are a blue collar worker and are about to make a call to a white collar home, why not change clothes and dress up a bit? Fit in for them and don’t demand that they fit in for you! I’ve changed clothes twice in one day for the same reason.

I have even used slang words (not curse words) when I thought it would make someone feel more comfortable with me. With one who speaks excellent English, I try to use excellent English (with a southern accent of course), and with the one who doesn’t, I don’t. By all possible means I might save some. By now you get the drift.



A word of caution: Paul is not leading us to sin in order to reach

the lost. There never is a good reason to sin! So, becoming all things to all men to save some does not allow for drunkenness, carousing, cursing, and revelry. But it does sometimes force us out of places where people sit nicely and quietly interact with each other—to where today’s tax collectors and prostitutes hang out. It drives us to spend time with people whose language reddens our Christian ears.

I’d guess that some of you have a lot better examples. You might even not like mine. But remember this, in Christ we are free to disagree about what we will try to reach the lost. Paul said, “Though I am free and belong to no man, I make myself a slave to everyone, to win as many as possible.” Choosing what “Candy Land” we are willing to play with the lost is a fiercely personal decision for every Christian. The choice is forced by love welling up in the Christian’s soul.

We cannot judge one another’s choices. I am not better if I choose to play “Candy Land” or if I don’t. But what I do know is this: I love the lost of this world because Jesus loved them enough to die for them. For him and for them, I am willing to try anything to get them to listen to his gospel from my lips. How about you?



Donald Patterson is pastor at Holy Word, Austin, Texas.

WORK
while it is day

WHATEVER

Hang in there!

Here are some hints for how **students** can stay close to **Jesus**.

Charlotte Hanna

I haven't been a Lutheran my whole life. In high school, I was an Episcopalian, and my attitude towards God was vague, apathetic, and half-hearted. But Jesus decided to draw my family closer to him and moved my father to look for a stronger church community with a firmer biblical basis.

The first WELS service I went to was unlike any I had ever attended: God's message was being preached, without any beating around the bush. It woke us up! My parents began attending communicant member classes at home, while I took the class from my WELS pastor in Alma, where I am going to school. God was bringing me into a closer, more loving relationship with him.

My confirmation turned out to be only the beginning of my journey with Jesus. You see, after weeks of going to church, I still felt sinful, weak, and overwhelmed. Too much time in my life was taken up with extracurriculars and friends, with little or no room left for God. I realized that confirmation wasn't some instant ticket to a perfect relationship with the Lord. How could I hold onto my newfound faith while attending a school without a firm Christian foundation?

Staying faithful to Christ's commandments is even harder for teens and students—I know. We juggle homework, sports, clubs, and activities while resisting pressures to drink or take drugs. We feel like we're slipping away from God, faster and faster. We wonder: "Is there anyone else out there who can help?"

Well, I am here to say, "YES!" This someone lived a life filled with temptations and pressures—and he resisted them all, 100 percent of the time, no exceptions. He lived a perfect life and died innocently so we could be with him one day. He is our one and only living Savior, Jesus Christ! Whenever I think about his holy life and compare it to mine, I realize just how badly I need his help. But thinking about him is only the beginning. What else can students and teens do to stay close to Jesus in our fight

to keep the faith? I don't claim to be an expert, but here are some steps I have taken in my life to keep me strong in a secular environment.

1. Go to church. Sure, it sounds simple, and you may do it already. But when you're at college, surrounded by friends who sleep in on Sunday mornings, it's tough. So set your alarm, get up, and go! God promises it will "recharge" your faith, so you're ready to take on the temptations Satan throws at you.

2. Have some quiet time with God. Yes, it is hard to set aside the time in your day to pray or study the Bible. But the more often you do it, the easier it becomes. Try to pick one time, every day. Let your intercessions and petitions fly up to Jesus; let God's Word come down to comfort and heal you.

3. Seek support and encouragement from fellow Christians. If you have Christian friends at school, seek out their help. Maybe you can help them someday. Keep in touch with your family—your parents may not be that cool, but they have great advice when it comes to faith and living. Lastly, don't be afraid to call or meet with your pastor. His phone number is in your church bulletin for a reason—he became a pastor to help people just like you, people who are struggling to keep their love for God in the face of life's hardships.

Yes, life as a young Christian is tough. But don't get depressed! Jesus knows what you're going through, even if it seems like no one else does. Hold onto your faith, as tightly as you can! Before you know it, you will see Jesus face to face. He who has forgiven every slip up and sin of yours will hold you in his arms, smile at you, and say: "Well done, good and faithful servant! You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your master's happiness!" (Matthew 25:21).

Charlotte Hanna, a junior at Alma College, Alma, Michigan, is a member at Good Shepherd, Alma/St. Louis, Michigan.





Luther the monk

Luther's sense of sin and fear of death pushed him to enter a monastery. Yet even there he could not rid himself of an overwhelming sense of guilt.

Richard D. Balge

Near Stutterheim in Germany, between Luther's hometown Mansfeld and Erfurt, there is a rock inscribed with the words: "St. Anne, help me, I will become a monk." It marks the spot where Martin Luther addressed those words to the patron saint of miners, the mother of the Virgin Mary. In the 22nd year of his life, as he was returning from a visit to his parents, the young law student was caught in a fierce storm. A close lightning strike knocked him to the ground and in terror he made a fateful promise.

Was it a sudden impulsive decision or was it the culmination of a long internal debate? It is probable that the two causes came together in the terror of that storm. In Luther's upbringing there had been more dread of God the Judge than trust in Jesus the Savior. Recent events had worked to deepen his sense of sin and fear of death. He had an accident with his student sword, slicing an artery and suffering complications in the healing. At the time he finished work for his bachelor's degree he suffered from a dangerously high fever. The "intimations of mortality" that naturally resulted from these experiences helped to heighten his spiritual anxiety. Some internal crisis prompted him to take a leave of absence after just one month in law school.

Seeking salvation

Two weeks after the storm he hosted a farewell gathering for a

group of fellow students, giving away his books and other belongings. The next day he entered the "Black Cloister," so named because of the black habit worn by the Order of Observants of the Augustinian Hermits. In September he took the vows of a novice and made them permanent one year later.

In Luther's upbringing there had been more dread of God the Judge than trust in Jesus the Savior.

After his final vows, Luther's brothers in religion congratulated him because he was released from all guilt, like a newly baptized infant. He said in later years, "I took the monastic vows not to fill my stomach, but to seek my salvation, and I kept all our statutes very strictly." But he was by no means confident that he was right with God. Probing his own thoughts, emotions, and motives only aggravated his sense of guilt.

A gnawing sense of guilt

In 1533, when he was almost 50 years old and preaching on 1 Corinthians 15, he said: "With all my masses, with prayers, fasts, vigils, and chastity, I never advanced to the point where I could say, 'Now I am certain that God is gracious to me.'"

The vicar general of the Augustinians in Germany, John Staupitz, recognized Luther's struggles and kept the young monk busy so that he would have less time for morbid introspection. Especially, he directed him to God's forgiveness in Christ. Eleven months before his own death Luther would recall: "Staupitz was at the very beginning my father in this doctrine and gave birth to me in Christ." Still, for most of his years as a monk, Luther's great concern was that God could never be gracious to a sinner such as he.

There were more than 90 cloisters in Erfurt at the time Luther entered monastic life. In God's providence Martin chose the order and the house where he would get the greatest opportunity to study the Bible and the works of Augustine. Luther had not become a monk in order to become a priest. In his spiritual anxiety he could not imagine caring for the souls of others. Staupitz, however, also recognized Brother Martin's potential for further studies and scholarship and directed him to begin studies for the priesthood. As an obedient monk, Luther would eventually go on to earn a doctorate and become a professor of theology.



Richard Balge, a member of Calvary, Thiensville, Wisconsin, is a professor emeritus at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin.



Kids for Christ

Whether cleaning for the community or church or winning the Mayor's Award in the Holiday Parade, Grace, Oshkosh, Wis., is making a difference through its KIDS4CHRIST program. Started about 15 years ago as an offshoot of the Lutheran Pioneers, this service-oriented group's theme is "Committed to serve in our church, school, and neighborhood."

John Neiman has been heading up KIDS4CHRIST for the past six years. "As leader, [I] set the schedule and then call upon the parents for help. If I ever have a need, it is met right away," says Neiman. "They are always ready for a challenge and eager to pitch in and make the event a reality."

Pastor Daniel Krause, initially disappointed with the elimination of Pioneers, admires the enthusiasm for and in the group. "The kid's have fun, the congregation and community

are served, and the Lord is praised. It is a flexible and energetic organization that seems to be well-suited for our changing times."

One of the favorite activities has become drive-in movie night. Families bring movies to be voted on for viewing. Old tuxedos are borrowed for ushers. Best of all, using cardboard boxes and wagons, some make their own cars to sit in. Some of the cars even have working lights and radios. Over 150 people participated in the first drive-in night three years ago, and it keeps growing.

Over 50 families out of this 1,400-member church make up the group, and the majority takes part in every activity. "While it is great to get together for some fun—it is much more important to teach the words 'volunteer' and 'service' to our youth. Giving back should be a



Kids4Christ families go all out designing cars from cardboard boxes for drive-in movie night.

natural response when we consider all of our blessings," says Neiman. "Our focus is always on the cross and how we can share that news with others, so now instead of an adult just doing the sharing—the family does it."

Diane Behm

A call to teach—seen, not heard

"I can do everything through him who gives me strength" (Philippians 4:13). No one knows this better than 28-year-old Nicole Hartman, a teacher at St. John, Libertyville, Ill.

Hartman spends each day in front of a classroom of second graders, but the most challenging part of her day is not teaching classes, it is reading lips. Hartman is deaf. Her students are thrilled about signing and love using the signs she teaches them. At St. John she gets support from the parents as well as the faculty, and she loves teaching there.

Aside from coaching volleyball and track and helping with vacation Bible school, Hartman and her sister, who is also deaf, are starting a sign language class for the congregation. "People in the congregation came up to me and wanted to learn," Hartman says.

Born deaf, Hartman was mainstreamed in hearing classrooms for the majority of her education. She learned to speak and read lips as a

small child and did not learn sign language until she was in high school. Learning sign language, though, has given her the essential tool to witness to the deaf community. Because she never had an interpreter, Hartman had to study hard from books, but the lessons she remembers most from her childhood are the nightly devotions with her family.

"I didn't really understand why we had to do these devotions every night. My parents would tell me that Jesus died for me, but I didn't understand why or what that meant," she says. She remembers finally understanding when she was about the age of her students now. While attending Michigan Lutheran High School in St. Joseph, Mich., Hartman learned about Martin Luther College (MLC), New Ulm, Minn.

"A group from MLC came to our school and said that if you wanted to



Nicole Hartman with her second grade class at St. John, Libertyville, Ill. Hartman's students quickly learned that even though she is deaf, she still knows when they are whispering in class.

be a teacher in WELS, this is where you went," she notes.

Knowing she wanted to teach, Hartman set aside her plans to teach the deaf so that she could teach the gospel. "I wanted to travel and spread the news," she explains. Hartman's dream is to start a WELS school for the deaf someday, even if it's only one classroom.

Diane Behm

2002-2003 WELS school statistics

WELS was blessed with 12 new schools this past year—eight early childhood missions and four elementary schools. Unfortunately, Lutheran elementary school enrollments have gone from 31,665 in 1992-93 to 28,202 today, an 11 percent decrease. Challenge 2010, the future plan for WELS schools, encourages outreach to educate children (not just WELS children), strengthen families, and serve the church.

“We are very concerned about the declining, collapsing system of our Lutheran elementary schools because they have been a backbone for so many things in our synod, including future called workers,” says Commission on Parish Schools administrator Jason Nelson. “We are encouraging churches to prepare and turn schools to outreach in order to carry out the Great Commission.”

For a more complete summary of WELS school statistics, contact the Commission on Parish Schools to obtain the “School statistics 2002-2003” booklet.

High schools

24 schools
5,671 students
468 teachers

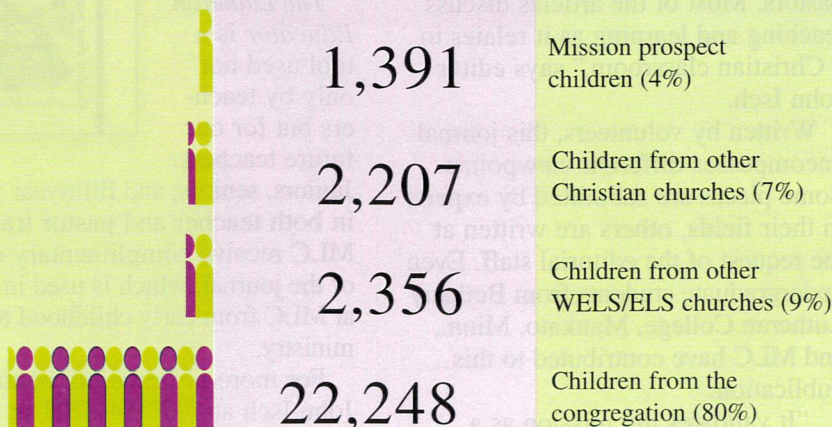
Elementary schools

359 schools
28,202 students
2,128 teachers

Early childhood education

343 schools
• 248 with an LES*
• 95 without an LES
(free standing)
6,530 students
450 teachers

Breakdown of students who attend Lutheran elementary schools



*LES=Lutheran elementary school

For our good —

You already know the bad news: WELS is suffering from a major synod budget deficit. But have you heard the good news? The Lord is using this struggle, as he has promised to use every situation in believers' lives, for the good of those who love him. WELS members are stepping up to help fund the budget and are learning about trust, stewardship, and Christian love in the process. Here are a few examples:

- Salem, Scottsdale, Ariz., had a special opportunity in January to help with the budget deficit when it received an inheritance of \$22,000. Since it is Salem's policy to give at least 10 percent of all bequests to a mission or charity outside the congregation, members voted to give \$2,000 dollars to the synod budget.

- Pastor Daniel Wagenknecht of Grace, Yorba Linda, Calif., notes, “Some of our people don't really have much contact with the synod other than our congregation. We look at *WELS Connection*, distribute *Forward in Christ* and *Mission Connection* to every member, and whenever possible invite missionaries and other guest speakers to increase our awareness of those we walk together with. But sometimes synod still seems to be way over there in Milwaukee. Grace members have responded to the budget appeal with gifts of over \$3,000. It sure did encourage me that this congregation cares.”

- “Our small country church, St. Matthew of Beaver, Wis., had never carried out a full-scale stewardship effort,” says Pastor Mark Hannemann. “It didn't seem necessary. But the financial crisis of our synod woke us up to thinking we ought to see if we could do better.” Implementing the Work While It Is Day program to help them focus on how much Christ did for them, the congregation increased their offerings so much that they voted to raise their mission pledge by 30 percent for 2003.

Laura Warmuth

Answers to your WELS budget questions

WELS Vice President Wayne Mueller answers your questions about the current revenue shortfall.

Question: How much of the \$18,529,896 allocated to our schools is from tuition from the students at our schools?

Answer: At their meeting at the end of February, the Synodical Council sent the whole matter of how to report support for our schools to a special committee. This has been an ongoing debate in leadership groups for 15 years.

I will provide the information you want below, but understand that this does not tell the whole story of how schools are funded. Understand that the campuses and facilities at which the schools raise their tuition and fees are entirely owned by the synod and not by the schools. That is one of the reasons our auditors require that tuition revenue be counted as synod revenue. Also, support for schools (in addition to direct synod support and tuition) comes from many other

sources including room fees, board fees, and school owned revolving funds. This is why a special committee was assigned to determine a fair and clear way of showing how our schools are funded. You can expect the report of this committee to be before the synod in convention.

In the meantime, we have found an old Board of Trustees resolution (before they were disbanded in 1997) calling for tuition fees to be reported alongside support for schools in parentheses. So we will be reporting the following numbers in the *Book of Reports and Memorials* for the convention:

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary

Total synod support: \$1,826,839
Tuition portion: (\$661,000)

Martin Luther College

Total synod support: \$7,319,760
Tuition portion: (\$5,955,000)

Luther Preparatory School

Total synod support: \$4,207,560
Tuition portion: (\$1,792,000)

Michigan Lutheran Seminary

Total synod support: \$2,067,630
Tuition portion: (\$1,076,000)

In addition, the synod provides the schools with \$2,568,116 for "system-wide allocations." This is synod support from which all the schools benefit. There is no tuition contribution to these expenses, which include school administration, capital building amortization, program maintenance, and tuition support.

The amount of revolving funds that the schools are contributing to ministry programs will also be reported in the *Book of Reports and Memorials*.

Find out the latest on the WELS revenue shortfall at <www.wels.net>, jump word "budget." If you have a question about the budget, e-mail <budget@wels.net>. Answers will be posted at <www.wels.net>.

Perusing WELS publications

Need some good reading material? Why not check out WELS publications. There's something for everyone. This series will introduce you to the various publications so you can discover which ones will benefit you.

The Lutheran Educator

How do you improve technology, handle learning disabilities, communicate with parents, or teach music in the classroom? How do you as a parent or layperson begin to understand the important issues inside your Lutheran school? *The Lutheran Educator*, a professional journal published quarterly by Martin Luther College (MLC), New Ulm, Minn., is taking these issues and helping out the members of our synod who have an interest in education, specifically the cause of Christian education.

From the *Schulzeitung* in 1878 to the present, *The Lutheran Educator* has been focused on the classroom. "It addresses the concerns of parents, laypersons, students, teachers, and pastors. Most of the articles discuss teaching and learning as it relates to a Christian classroom," says editor John Isch.

Written by volunteers, this journal encompasses different viewpoints. Some pieces are submitted by experts in their fields, others are written at the request of the editorial staff. Even undergraduate students from Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, Minn., and MLC have contributed to this publication.

"It validates my mission as a Christian educator and contains ideas that make me think," says Ned Goede,

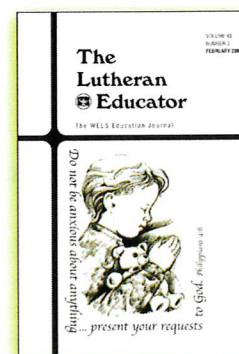
principal at Wisconsin Lutheran High School, Milwaukee.

The Lutheran Educator is a tool used not only by teachers but for our future teachers.

Juniors, seniors, and fifth-year students in both teacher and pastor tracks at MLC receive complimentary copies of the journal, which is used in classes at MLC from early childhood to staff ministry.

For more information, contact John Isch at 507/354-8221 or e-mail <lutheraneducator@mlc-wels.edu>.

Diane Behm



WELS news briefs

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

Synodical Council

414/256-3204

The Synodical Council met from Feb. 26-March 1. Most of the council's time was spent on budget matters. **Here, in summary form, are the proposed budget allocations for each area of ministry for 2003-2004, which will be submitted to the synod in convention.**

The Ministerial Education figure includes a 9% increase in tuition and a \$660 surcharge at Martin Luther College. Administration includes the Conference of President's budget as well as that of the Synodical Council. All budget expenses relating to the Commission for Communication on Financial Support and the Communication Services Commission, including the publication of *Forward in Christ*, are under Mission Advancement.

Ministerial Education:

\$18,529,896

Home Missions: \$8,369,330

World Missions: \$7,717,595

Administration: \$2,063,711

Parish Services: \$2,013,819

Support Services: \$1,519,129

Mission Advancement \$1,075,732

The revenue forecast for the next fiscal year is \$1 million higher. This includes the remainder of the Seek and Keep funds. The \$1.1 million left in Seek and Keep were applied nearly evenly to the 2002-2003 and 2003-2004 fiscal years. This enabled the Synodical Council to add to the initial budget proposals \$700,000 for Ministerial Education; \$200,000 for World Missions; and \$100,000 for Home Missions. These amounts are included in the figures listed above.

For Home Missions this means that four vicars can serve in mission settings. World Missions can add

back two missionaries for Africa, and Ministerial Education will be able to retain additional professors at the preparatory schools.

Commission for Communication on Financial Support

414/256-3881

Congregations and individual members can now "adopt" a mission project as part of the Mission Partners program.

If you choose to be a mission partner, you will receive updates about your project directly from those who are working on it. As a relationship is developed between you and those working on your project, you can pray for each other and encourage each other in your gospel work. Mission Partners is designed to be a meaningful, focused way for you to share God's love and forgiveness with those beyond your own community.

For more information, contact the Commission for Communication on Financial Support, 800/827-5482 or <mpg@sab.wels.net>.

Board for World Missions

414/256-3233

It was necessary for the WELS counselors in India to return to the United States in February to apply for a different visa. Hopefully, new visas will be obtained soon so that the WELS personnel can return to their duties in India. In the meantime, all aspects of the work continue: the seminary and pre-seminary meet monthly; seminars are conducted in all areas of the work; building projects go on unabated; the orphanages remain open to serve the children; and the publications program is being carried out by qualified, dedicated workers. The WELS counselors are in daily contact with the leaders of the national church. In spite of the present difficulties, the Lord continues to bless a vibrant ministry. Pray that the Lord will continue to keep the doors open to WELS in India.



In February, seven of the people pictured here were baptized and two were received into membership at the WELS mission in Taichung, Taiwan, through affirmation of faith (shown with Missionary Kevin Stellick).

Commission on Adult Discipleship

414/256-3278

To encourage stewardship among God's people, the commission has produced *Stewards of Our Faith—Pass it On!* (product #38-7503).

It consists of a three-week program: Pass it On—In My Family; Pass it On—In My Church; Pass it On—Through My Life. Program elements are accessible on a CD-ROM. Check <www.shopwels.net>.

Commission on Special Ministries

414/256-3240

The Military Services Committee of Special Ministries has developed a system that will allow WELS members to send e-mail messages of support to WELS military personnel and their families. Here is how the system works:

1. WELS military personnel and their families who wish to receive e-mail messages should register their addresses with the Special Ministries E-mail Message Center at <WELSmilitarye-mail@attbi.com>. Please include the name, city, and state of your home congregation.

2. WELS members wanting to send e-mail messages to military personnel should send them to <WELSmilitarye-mail@attbi.com>. Please note that groups such as schools and congregations should only send one message so that our server is not overloaded.

3. Volunteers will forward messages from that site to military personnel and their families.

District news

Michigan



In November 2002, St. Paul's, Columbus, Ohio, recognized couples that had been married for 50 years or more. Ten of the 14 couples were present for this picture. Pastor Gary Pieper says, "People are blessed when they follow God's plan for marriage."

Nebraska

The Sunday school and Lutheran Girl Pioneers of **Faith, Pittsburg, Kan.**, participated in a community Christmas parade in December 2002. They gave away over 4,000 mints with Bible verses printed on the wrappers.

California

Shepherd of the Hills, La Mesa, Calif., honored **Duane Schoonover** on Jan. 5 for serving as congregational treasurer for 37 years.

Minnesota

Two of the five members of the Redwood County Board of Commissioners in Minnesota are WELS members. **Brian Kletscher**, 2003 chairman of the board, is a member of St. John, Vesta. **Bruce Tolzmann** is a member of St. John, Redwood Falls.

South Atlantic

Prince of Peace, Englewood, Fla., held its grand re-opening service on April 13.

Happy Anniversary!

NW—Zion, Rhinelander, Wis., honored **Carol Krause** on Feb. 16 for serving 25 years in the teaching ministry.

These pastors are the reporters for the districts featured this month: CA—Hermann John; MI—John Eich; MN—Jeffrey Bovee; NE—Michael Helwig; NW—Joel Lillo; SA—Christopher Kruschel; WW—Martin Baur.

South Atlantic



On Dec. 15, 2002, members at Amazing Grace, Myrtle Beach, S.C., witnessed the baptism of five young children (pictured here with Pastor James Schumann). The children, who have been attending Amazing Grace's Sunday school, are members of three different families who were reached as part of this exploratory church's outreach efforts.

Western Wisconsin



Thirteen Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis., students attended the Wisconsin Junior Classical League convention in Madison, Wis., from Jan. 30–Feb. 1. The convention, which included 357 students from 16 schools, encourages interest in and appreciation for the classics. The advanced team from LPS took first place in the four-man team competition in classical knowledge. Overall, the LPS team placed first in the qualitative competition for the fourth consecutive year. Pictured here are 12 of the team's members and the coach, Prof. Ron Hahn.

THROUGH MY BIBLE IN 3 YEARS

JUNE 2003

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

From a mother's heart

"Hey, Mom."

"Peter! I was hoping you'd call today. How's it going?"

"Interesting. My unit got their orders to go to Kuwait."

Tears welled up in my eyes, my heart was in my mouth, and I choked out the only words I was able to say, "Talk to Dad. I can't right now."

Although I've never been prophetic about many things in life, in my mind's eye were always the images—Peter—soldier—war—Middle East. Why, I don't know. Those thoughts weren't there for his two younger brothers. Maybe it was because of comments made by the nurses when he was born: "All boys in the nursery. Must be a big war coming up."

"What a thing to say!" I thought as I held my blue bundle closer.

Perhaps that's why he was never encouraged to go into the military. His grandfathers and great uncles had fought in World War II, but there are no career military people in the family. Yet, from little on, the Army was always on his "to-do" list.

The recruiters started calling when he was in high school. "You must be his sister. You sound much too young to be his mother," they'd say.

I wasn't that easily manipulated. "It's not the right time. He has to finish college first." And he did. His penchant for vehicles and taking things apart served him well. As a General Motors-certified ASE mechanic, his future was promising. Still, his desire to be in the military remained.

He walked in the room with a spring in his step the day he enlisted. At 22, he was ready. I accepted it and had a sense of well-being. The time was right. He'd done what was asked, had life experiences to season him, and wanted to see the world. We helped him pack his things away and tearfully sent him off.

He had basic training at Fort Benning in Columbus, Ga., was an honor graduate at Aberdeen Proving Ground in Maryland, and was sta-

tioned at Fort Hood, Texas. When he'd call it was like talking to a college student in his dorm room—or so I'd like to think. The educational opportunities available to him were issues with which I could relate. That Sunday afternoon call put everything in perspective.

In a distant place and time I was one of those people opposing the Vietnam War and even now will not sit down and view *Saving Private Ryan* or *Band of Brothers* for recreational pastime. The words "War . . . what is it good for? Absolutely nothing!" that elementary-school kids now listen to on the "Oldies" station still burn in my heart.

When Peter called to say that he's the one in charge of the machine gun for his group, I replied, "Talk to Dad." Meanwhile, I asked how he'd been eating or if there were any good-looking Christian female mechanics in his unit. Yet, in April our son leaves to serve for a year in Iraq—or so he's recently been told. My fears from years ago have become a reality.

Although there won't be Lutheran churches everywhere he goes, I am

buoyed by our son's confession of faith: "Mom, I know what I believed when I was confirmed. That hasn't changed."

I also cling to the promise made in Joshua 1:9: "Be strong and courageous. Do not be terrified; do not be discouraged, for the LORD your God will be with you wherever you go."

We won't be able to see Peter before he leaves; somehow my need to touch him right now overwhelms me. It's my prayer that he returns safe and whole and most important, that nothing happens to him that will pull him away from his Savior.

Pray for our soldiers and their families. Those prayers are a power source that often remains untapped. We're extremely proud of our son, and he's loved with all our hearts, but we can't hold his hand and physically be there like we did when he was a little boy. He's got a better hand to hold right now. God go with you, Peter!

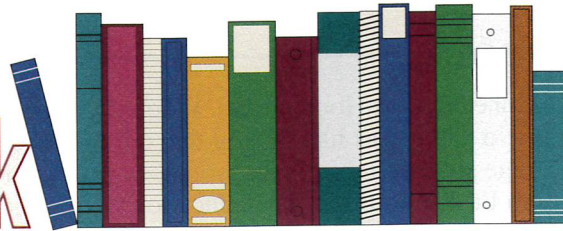
Nancy Callies,
St. Peter, Appleton, Wisconsin



Peter Callies, a member at St. Peter, Appleton, Wis., received deployment orders in March for Kuwait, where he will operate his group's machine gun.

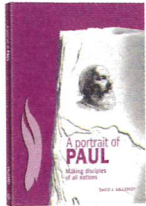


Booknook



A look at new books published by Northwestern Publishing House. For more information, visit <www.nph.net> or call 1-800-662-6022.

All about Paul



\$11.99

Effectively summarizing the ministry of the apostle Paul is no easy task, but David Valleskey has done a commendable job in his new book, *A Portrait of Paul*.

In just 102 pages, Valleskey—president of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary—presents an easy-to-read account of Paul’s personal life and mission strategies for establishing new congregations. He also offers straightforward commentary on how WELS’ mission efforts compare to those of Paul and his followers.

The book starts by painting a picture of the era in which Paul lived. Valleskey cites three distinct blessings from God that accelerated the spread of the gospel in those days. Readers will quickly see that the environment was prime for Paul’s mission work to begin.

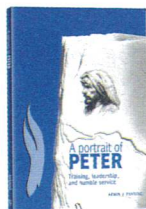
Next, Valleskey traces the pre-missionary days of Paul, going back to his boyhood days in Tarsus and ending with his conversion on the road to Damascus. Valleskey then explores the 15 years Paul spent preparing for his three great missionary journeys.

In the remaining two-thirds of the book, Valleskey begins an intriguing analysis of Paul’s mission strategy, message, and follow-up work. This fascinating account displays the brilliance of God’s great plan to spread the gospel through Paul and others. Along the way, Valleskey makes objective, eye-opening comparisons between Paul’s mission activities and WELS today.

At the conclusion of each chapter, readers will find study questions that make for great discussion. After reading this book, laypeople (as well as pastors and teachers) will appreciate the brilliance of Paul and the omnipotence of our Father in heaven.

Bruce F. Tieves, Grace, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

All about Peter



\$11.99

When I think of Jesus’ apostles, Peter is the name that comes to mind first. This popular apostle is the subject of Armin Panning’s 87-page book, *A Portrait of Peter: Training, leadership, and humble service*. His way of cross-referencing Scripture to piece together Peter’s life paints a most revealing picture.

Panning divides Peter’s life into three major periods: training, leadership, and declining prominence. In the first period, he reveals how this unschooled, ordinary fisherman came to be part of Jesus’ “inner circle” and how

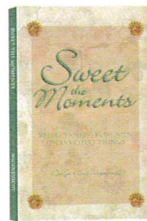
he received special attention and training. This training was put into practice as Peter assumed positions of leadership—first among the Twelve and later as the leader of the early Christian church in Jerusalem. In the third period, I learned that Peter faded into the background as the church expanded and Paul emerged onto the scene.

Panning addressed many common questions I had about Peter: What was his background? Was Peter really the first Pope? Why did he write his epistles? What was his influence on the gospel of Mark? How and when did Peter die? Each chapter is concluded with a series of questions that are well suited for use by a men’s or leaders’ study group.

Thorough, concise, and written in language that a layman or called worker can appreciate, Panning’s treatment of this warm and human apostle is sure to please its readers.

Kurt L. Austad, Abiding Word, Highlands Ranch, Colorado

Sweet reading moments



\$11.99

DeLyn Davis Wagenknecht takes her readers on a 148-page journey through the “many and varied, full of emotion and rich with growth” moments of life before age 35. In a new series written by women for women, Northwestern Publishing House offers *Sweet the Moments* to delight women of all ages, but especially wives and mothers of young children.

Early on, in a chapter called “Wagons,” the author relates her metamorphosis from single person to married woman, necessarily using a memory hook to teach people how to pronounce her name. You will bite your lip reading about her fall-apart brown cake wedding, only to smile later as you learn how she and hubby hammered honeymoon crabs. Tales of “wild” children will make young couples nod in agreement, and surely the scared bird freed from a fire-place prison will warm any wearied heart.

Wagenknecht writes with self-deprecating wit and an honesty that climaxes in a gripping poem about a friend named Jan. An easy read, the short chapters with facing Scripture texts are a perfect coffee table read or bedtime morsel. *Moments* will win a woman’s heart with its winsome ways and its focus on true joy. Interestingly, in a book where Wagenknecht continually shares her frustrations and woes, the Scripture she selects to face page one is Philippians 4:13, “I can do everything through him who gives me strength.” Surely the reader will sense how strongly the author believes these words. She wants her readers to believe the same.

Mary Schmal, St. John, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin



CHANGES IN MINISTRY

Pastors

Daley, Stephen E., to St. John, Riga, Mich.
Sievert, Robert A., to retirement
Warnke, Richard E., to Cameroon mission
Westendorf, Daniel D., to retirement

Teachers

Glodowski, Janelle A., to Loving Shepherd, Milwaukee
Hartwig, John P., to St. John, Baraboo, Wis.
Hassler, Karl D., to Christ, Big Bend, Wis.
Johnson, Jennifer K., to Faith, Antioch, Ill.
Konell, Cheryl, to Atonement, Milwaukee
Maas, Linda M., to St. Matthew, Iron Ridge, Wis.
Marggraf, Kathleen A., to Faith, Sussex, Wis.
Martens, Linda K., to Faith, Antioch, Ill.
Rupprecht, Carmen L., to Risen Savior, Milwaukee

The synod administration building will be closed May 26 for Memorial Day. Callers may leave voice mail messages, 414/256-3888.

ANNIVERSARIES

La Crosse, Wis.—Mount Calvary (75). May 3. Service, 6 PM. May 4. Service, 8 & 10:30 AM. Confirmation reunion brunch between Sunday services. Ed Ungemach, 608/784-5324.

Montello, Wis.—St. John (125). May 4. Sunday worship, 10:15 AM. Catered dinner, 11:30 AM. Adults, \$9.50; children (6-10), \$4.75; 5 and under are free. Anniversary service, 1 PM. James Wachholz, 608/297-9635.

Manitowoc, Wis.—Trinity (150). May 18. Service, 9:30 AM. July 13. Services, 9:30 AM & 1:30 PM. Catered meal on July 13. Adults 12 and up, \$10; children 2-11, \$5; children under 2, free. RSVP to Carol Kasten, 920/758-2507.

Rib Falls, Wis.—St. John (125). June 8. Service, 11 AM. Picnic to follow. Terry Reich, 715/443-2119.

Pigeon, Mich.—St. John's (125). July 4. 11 AM. Annual picnic for past pastors, teachers, and confirmands. July 6. Outdoor service, 10 AM.

Chippewa Falls, Wis.—Our Hope (20). Aug. 17. Service, 9 AM. Dinner to follow. Melanie Schaller, 715/723-9613.

New Ulm, Minn.—Minnesota Valley LHS (25). Sept. 19-21. 507/354-6855.

- Sept. 19—volleyball games followed by social hour.
- Sept. 20—founders' brunch, all-school tailgate party, football game, banquet, and dance.
- Sept. 21—festival service, 2 PM. Pie and ice cream social to follow.

Smaller celebrations will be held during the year at concerts, the Association banquet, and graduation.

COMING EVENTS

Summer camps—

- **Camp Phillip, Wautoma, Wis.** WELS summer camp for grades K-12. June 18-Aug. 13. Trained staff and exciting programs. Family camps during the summer, including Family Fest 2003, an exciting and spiritually renewing musical gathering of WELS performers and entertainers. 920/787-3202.
- **Luther Preparatory School music camp, Watertown, Wis.** June 15-20. Registration is being accepted for WELS/ELS youth who have completed sixth-eighth grade. Must have at least two years of keyboard experience. Enrollment limited to 24. LPS, 920/261-4352, ext. 129.
- **White Mountain Christian camp, Lakeside, Ariz.** June 22-27. Camp Grace. Fourth grade-high school. Gerald Ditter, 928/587-5906.

• **Good Shepherd Bible Camp, Thousand Oaks, Calif.** July 13-19. Charles Found, 805/492-8943.

Graduation dates—

- Martin Luther College commencement concert, May 16, 7:30 PM.
- Martin Luther College graduation, May 17, 10 AM. Call service, 2:30 PM.
- Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary call service, May 20, 10 AM. Concert, 7:30 PM.
- Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary graduation, May 21, 10 AM.
- Luther Preparatory School commencement concert, May 23, 7 PM.
- Michigan Lutheran Seminary commencement concert, May 23, 7 PM.
- Luther Preparatory School graduation, May 24, 10 AM.
- Michigan Lutheran Seminary graduation, May 24, 10:30 AM.

Confessional Lutheran Worldview Seminar—

June 20-27. Schwan Retreat Center, Trego, Wis. Six presenters will put forth the main tenets of confessional Lutheranism and then compare them with conflicting worldviews and religious trends. Cost, \$229, which includes food and lodging. David Thompson, 800/577-4848.

WELS Tech 2003—Technology conference for pastors, teachers, and laypeople. June 22-25. Fox Valley Lutheran High School, Appleton, Wis. On-line registration and information available at <www.wels.net/welstech>. WELS Communication Services, 414/256-3210.

Northwestern Publishing House Music Reading Workshops—

- June 21, Mount Olive, Appleton, Wis.
- June 28, Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.
- June 29, Bloomington, Bloomington, Minn.
- July 12, Emmanuel, Lansing, Mich.
- July 19, Resurrection, Milwaukee

Carl Nolte, 414/454-2105 or <www.nph.net>.

Dedication—St. Paul church and school, Howard's Grove, Wis. June 29. Service, 3 PM. Tours and refreshments to follow. Kristian Taves, 920/467-3659.

Mission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing conference—July 11-13. Holiday Inn East, Madison, Wis. Registration fee, \$70. Make room reservation directly with hotel. 414/259-0292 or <hrjimp@aol.com>.

NEEDED

Vacation preacher—

- **Trinity, Terry/Salem, Circle, Mont.**, June 1 & 8. Mark Wilde, 406/635-2180.
- **Mount Zion, Missoula, Mont.**, June 15 & 22. Justin Cloute, 406/549-5337.
- **St. Peter, St. Albert, Alberta, Canada**, June 22, 29, & July 6. Daniel Habben, <stpeter@interbaun.com>.
- **Messiah, Olympia, Washington**, July 27, Aug. 3 & 10. Joel Nitz, 360/923-1961.

Worship items—for new mission. *Christian Worship* hymnals, portable lectern, candleholders, offering plates, paraments, and banners. John Borgwardt, 262/547-9920.

Altar clothes—Donald Windsperger, 507/820-1414.

Guitars, drums, keyboards, amps, etc.—for youth ministry program in Bylas, Ariz. 928/475-4448.

Volunteer couple—to assist at Camp Phillip, Wautoma, Wis. Six-month commitment, but time is flexible. The couple must have a trailer or motor home, which can be parked on a campsite. Water and electrical utilities provided. Suggested duties include care of grounds, maintenance projects, supervision of volunteers,

housekeeping, office work, and campground hosts. Tom Towner, 912 W Parkway Blvd, Appleton WI 54914; <cpexec@yahoo.com>.

Volunteer health care staff—RNs, doctors, or EMTs to work as health care directors for one-week or half-week summer camp sessions at Camp Phillip, Wautoma, Wis. Jason Wiechmann, 920/787-3202.

Christian couples—to serve at the Lutheran Mobile Clinic in Malawi. Three-year commitment. The woman should be a registered nurse, and the man would serve as administrative coordinator. Kathie Wendland, 920/682-5694.

Registered nurses—for medical mission work in Zambia. Kathie Wendland, 920/682-5694.

SERVICE TIMES

Arcadia, Wis.—Bethel. Sunday worship, 9 AM. Sunday school and Bible study, 10 AM. 401 W Main St. Nathan Strutz, 888/428-3566.

Galesville, Wis.—Bethel. Sunday worship, 10:30 AM. Sunday school and Bible study, 9 AM. N16303 Church Lane. Nathan Strutz, 608/582-4329.

Union City/Martin, Tenn., area—Sunday worship is the second Sunday of each month. Call for time and location. Matthew Brown, 931/905-1400.

The Villages, Fla.—The Villages Lutherans is an outreach satellite of St. Mark, Leesburg, Fla. Morning devotion service and spiritual growth hour at the church on the square, Town Square, The Villages, Fla., on Thursdays at 9:30 AM. Herb Schaefer, 352/753-7515.

Kasson, Minn.—Our Savior. Sunday worship, 9 AM. Sunday school, 10:15 AM. Dean Gunn, 507/634-4692.

NAMES WANTED

Milwaukee-area college alumni—The WELS Campus Ministry in Milwaukee is looking for area alumni who were active at the Campus House on Kenwood Blvd. An alumni reunion is being planned. Send contact information and special memories to Wisconsin Lutheran Student Center, 2215 E Kenwood Blvd, Milwaukee WI 53211 or <wlsc@execpc.com>.

South Waukesha County—John Borgwardt, 262/547-9920.

Union City/Martin, Tenn., area—Paul Yates, 731/885-2292.

The Villages, Fla. (Lady Lake, Lake, Sumter, and Marion County area)—Herb Schaefer, 352/753-7515.

Chattanooga, Tenn.—Jim Turriff, 256/233-5255.

Europe—Civilian and military people. Services held in London area; four locations in Germany; and Zurich, Switzerland. Need names, addresses, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses. Michael Schroeder, <welschaplain@t-online.de>.

POSITIONS AVAILABLE

Summer paid staff—

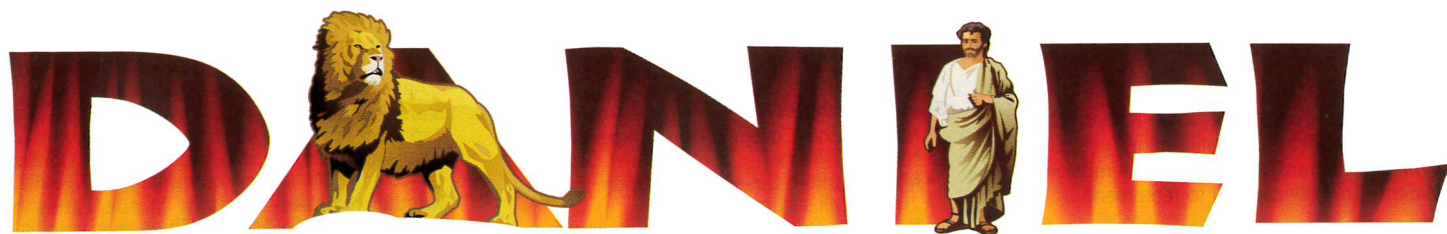
- **Schwan Center, near Spooner, Wis.** May-Aug. Program assistance, maintenance, housekeeping, and kitchen staff. 800/577-4848.
- **Camp Phillip, Wautoma, Wis.** May 27-Aug. 13. Counselors, head lifeguard, adventure coordinator, Bible study leader, kitchen staff, and junior staff director. Jason Wiechmann, 920/787-3202.

To place an announcement, call

414/256-3210; FAX, 414/256-3862;

<BulletinBoard@sab.wels.net>. Deadline

is eight weeks before publication date.



A witness to victory

Daniel 10 gives us a glimpse into the battles between the spiritual princes of evil and the holy powers of heaven.

Philip L. Kieselhorst

“When you hear of wars and rumors of wars, do not be alarmed. Such things must happen, but the end is still to come” (Mark 13:7). These haunting words of Jesus remind us how elusive the goal of world peace will remain. The closing chapters of Daniel are filled with depictions of wars. These chapters also reveal that a hidden war is escalating to a dramatic conclusion that will affect us all.

A record of war

Normally history is written after the events occur. But in Daniel 11 the precise details of future wars are recorded as if they had already happened. Looking back we are able to see how these shifts in power occurred in the exact ways described to Daniel.

While these kings and kingdoms fought for power, God was not surprised by any turn of events. In fact, God was intimately involved in the history that would be written, but his involvement would stay, for the most part, hidden.

The hidden war

Although we are able to witness many of the events of war shortly after they occur, it is still the unseen events that often shape the direction of a war. Years later as Special Forces’ operatives and eyewitnesses of plans hatched behind closed doors report

about what they witnessed, we begin to realize that the really important victories weren’t shown on CNN.

“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms” (Ephesians 6:12).

How comforting it is for us to know that the Son of God and his archangel Michael are personally fighting the spiritual forces of evil.

In Daniel 10 we are given a glimpse into what is taking place in the field of special operations—battles between the spiritual princes of evil and the holy powers of heaven. It seems likely that the man that Daniel witnessed in his vision was the Son of God himself (compare 10:5-6 with Ezekiel 1:26-28 and Revelation 1:13-15). In addition he speaks of the archangel Michael supporting him in the fight against the princes of this dark world.

How comforting it is for us to know that the Son of God and his archangel Michael are personally fighting the spiritual forces of evil.

Though hidden to our eyes, not a day goes by when our holy prince is not protecting us from the evil prince of this world.

The final outcome

The Son of God fought behind the scenes for the most part. But he shed his secrecy in Bethlehem. He made himself a target on Calvary. He crushed the last enemy on Easter for all to see. He creates and equips an army of saints through Baptism and the Lord’s Supper. He leads his army of believers with the Book of Truth. He arms his army with promises of perfect rest for all who follow him to the end. “As for you, go your way till the end. You will rest, and then at the end of the days you will rise to receive your allotted inheritance” (Daniel 12:13).

The final outcome has been determined by the Son of God. The Book has already been written. Read the Book of Truth in Daniel 12 and know that victory belongs to the Son of God and all who trust in him. We are witnesses to victory.

“Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever” (Daniel 12:3).

Philip Kieselhorst is pastor at Gethsemane, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

Getting to know God's story

Randy K. Hunter

The NFL's most coveted prize is the Lombardi trophy, named after a man who coached in the 1950s and 60s. One Lombardi legend involves a speech he gave at the beginning of training camp. "Gentlemen," he addressed the team as he held up a ball, "this is a football. Am I going too fast?"

When we left the nation of Israel last month, they were enduring a 40-year stint

in the desert. Now, a new man emerges to lead God's people. His name is Joshua, and he, too, begins with the basics. He holds out before the people promises the Lord God had made 40 years earlier to Moses and 500 years earlier to Abraham. That's what godly leaders did then, and that's what they do now: they point people to God's promises. In this case, the promise involved land.

- Read the Lord's promise to Abraham in Genesis 12:1-3. Now read the promise in Joshua 1:1-9, 500 years later. List the similarities and the differences between the two.
- Generals and philosophers have cautioned before war, "Let us not pray that God is on our side; rather let us pray that we are on God's side." Apply that caution to the incident before the battle of Jericho in Joshua 5:13-15.
- An Israelite named Achan stole 10 pounds of silver, a gold wedge, and some clothes from the enemy. For his sin, he and his family lost their lives. Read about it in Joshua 7. The Lord does not need to justify his actions to us or anyone, but identify from chapter 7 three reasons the Lord may have treated this family so severely.
- After the Israelites entered the promised land, leaders called "Judges" united the tribes, protected the nation, and led the people back to God when they strayed. Chapters 3-16 of the book of Judges cover 350 years and a dozen different Judges. As you page through these chapters, underline or circle the names of the Judges you encounter. Read their stories and generalize the history during the time of the Judges.
- Gideon stands out among the Judges. Read the strange story of his army in Judges 7. Conclude three lessons the Lord taught Gideon and the Israelites in this numbers game.
- Judges weren't kings; the Lord God was the king of Israel. But eventually the people of Israel demanded a king like the nations around them. The change comes in the book of 1 Samuel and it starts with a woman, Hannah, praying for a baby. That baby, Samuel, would be God's spokesman for ushering in a new era of kings. Read Hannah's story in 1 Samuel 1. Relate her response to having a child to the response of Christian parents today.
- The people persisted in their demand for a king. From 1 Samuel 8, identify three reasons they wanted a king and any criteria they might have had in mind for choosing a king.

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

Find this article and possible answers on-line. Go to <www.wels.net/sab/frm-nl.html> and click on "current issue." Then click on "Getting to know God's story." Answers will be available after May 5.

Creation & promise

Patriarchs

Freedom from captivity

Wandering

Promised Land

Kings

Major prophets 1

Major prophets 2

Minor prophets

Returning home

Wisdom books

Preparation for the coming Messiah

IN THE CROSS HAIRS

Richard L. Gurgel

TOPIC: FORGIVENESS OF SINS

Question: Since only God can forgive sins, why do our pastors say, “As a called servant of Christ and by his authority, I forgive you all your sins.” Is it appropriate for pastors to say, “I forgive you”? Shouldn’t they say, “God forgives you”?

Answer: When Jesus spoke forgiveness to a paralytic, some in the crowd disapproved. “He’s blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?” (Mark 2:7). Though wrong in one way (Jesus is God!), in another way they did have a point. Forgiveness is a prerogative of God.

Why is that? Every sin, even those we commit against others, is finally a sin against God. When David committed adultery with Bathsheba, murdered Uriah, and gave offense to all Israel, here’s what he said to God in Psalm 51:4: “Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight.”

We—and those harmed by our sin—are creatures of our Creator. When we sin, we break God’s law. Only God can grant forgiveness for breaking his law. What is more, as Psalm 49:7 reminds us, “No man can redeem the life of another.” It took the life, death, and resurrection of God himself to purchase the world’s forgiveness. In Jesus, God declared that an entire world of rebels has been reconciled to him (2 Corinthians 5:19). Therefore it certainly would be proper for our pastors to announce that “God forgives you.”

But there is more! This can be seen in words spoken by others that observed Jesus forgive and heal that same paralytic. They praised “God, who had given such authority to men” (Matthew 9:8). Once again, they were partially wrong and partially right. They only recognized Jesus as a great prophet. Yet in ignorance they uttered a biblical truth. When it comes to forgiving sins, which is God’s prerogative alone, God has given “such authority to men.”

How so? God entrusted to his church the keys of the kingdom of heaven. Every believer individually, and the church functioning as Christ’s body, holds those keys.

In Matthew 18:18 Jesus says, “Whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” In John 20:23 he speaks even more plainly: “If you forgive anyone his sins, they are forgiven; if you do not forgive them, they are not forgiven.” As our Lord tells us in Luke 10:16, “He who listens to you listens to me.”

God has appointed Christians as his authorized agents to dispense real gifts of forgiveness. There is beauty in hearing God’s ambassadors speak forgiveness in such a way that it sounds like God himself speaking to us—as, in fact, he is. God has given us the authority to speak on his behalf in the first person when proclaiming sins forgiven. Every royal priest of God has the authority to do this in his daily life. In the public absolution of worship, our called pastor speaks to us on God’s behalf. Luther beautifully captured this God-given authority in the Catechism. In the first part of confession he writes: “Confession has two parts. The one that we confess our sins; the other, that we receive absolution or forgiveness from the pastor as from God himself, not doubting but firmly believing that our sins are thus forgiven before God in heaven.”

How wonderful to know that God himself is speaking when his representatives deliver firsthand (and in the first person) the gift of forgiveness to our troubled hearts! The words of forgiveness our pastor speaks are God’s own. We have God’s Word on that.

God has given us the authority to speak on his behalf in the first person when proclaiming sins forgiven.

Richard Gurgel is a professor at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin.

Have a question you want answered? Send it to 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222; <fic@sab.wels.net>. Look on-line at <www.wels.net/sab/qa.html> for more questions and answers.

WHAT AMERICAN CHRISTIANS BELIEVE ABOUT LIFE AFTER DEATH:

61% believe that they will go to heaven when they die because they have confessed their sins and accepted Jesus as their savior.

12% do not know what will happen to them after they die.

10% believe that they will go to heaven because they are a generally good person.

7% believe that they will go to heaven because God loves all people and will not let them perish.

5% believe that when they die they will go to heaven because they have tried to obey the 10 commandments.

2% believe that they will not go to heaven when they die.

Barna Research Group, Ltd. (2001)

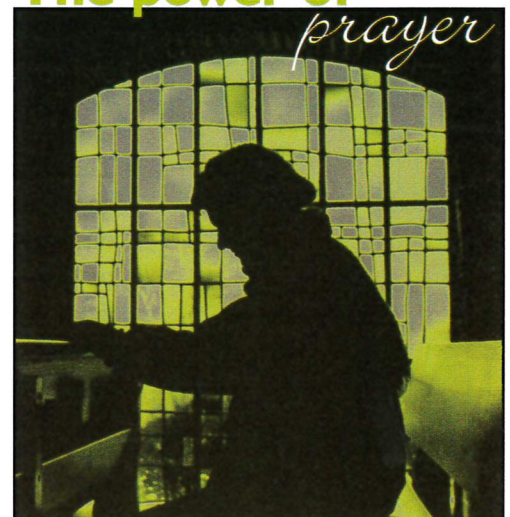
Picture this



On Good Friday 2002 Gary Strong witnessed this sunset in the backyard of his Vernon, Wis., home. Reminded of the day Christ will come to take us home to heaven, Strong recalled these words from 2 Peter 3:10: "But the day of the Lord will come like a thief. The heavens will disappear with a roar; the elements will be destroyed by fire, and the earth and everything in it will be laid bare." Strong reflects, "Seeing this on Good Friday reminded me that, because of my Savior, I don't have to fear that fire."

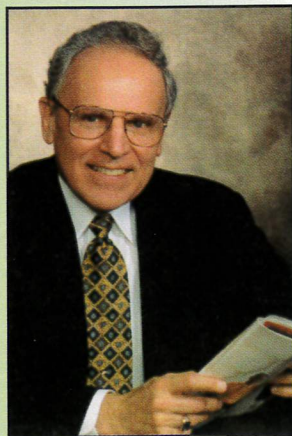
Send pictures to *Picture this*, *Forward in Christ* magazine, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398. On a separate sheet, give us information about the photo. Those whose photos are chosen will receive a small gift.

The power of



Prayer is an awesome privilege God gives to us. And God promises to answer all his children's prayers in his time. Can you think of a particular instance when God answered a prayer of yours? We'd like you to share it with us.

Send your reply to Potluck Poll, *Forward in Christ* magazine, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398; <fic@sab.wels.net >. Replies must be submitted by June 15 and must include your name, home church, phone number, and e-mail address. Some replies will be shared in the August issue.



Gary P. Baumler is editor of *Forward in Christ* magazine and WELS Director of Communications.

In the peace
of God, we
survive all
wars.

War!

War! It is ugly, brutal . . . deadly! No one who can begin to imagine the devastation war brings can want war. I know it scares me. Yet, when you read this, the United States will likely still be at war with Iraq. Meanwhile, another war still quietly rages (if you can fathom that)—the war on terrorism.

War with Iraq, however, has captured center stage, with possible links to the war on terrorism. And we're torn about how we should think about it.

No, I am not about to make a case for this being a just war or an unjust one. You will have to wrestle with that judgment personally. But I will remind you of some scriptural guidelines to help shape your thinking:

- God has given the power of the sword for governing authorities to use (Romans 13:4a). Christian soldiers properly serve that authority.
- The ruling authority "is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer" (Romans 13:4b). We readily understand that concept in connection with police work in our own country. It isn't always as obvious over against other countries.
- We are to submit ourselves to our rulers (Romans 13:1,5; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 2:13, 14). God doesn't say to submit only to the good ones or to the ones we agree with.
- We, as God's children, are to be "peaceable" (Titus 3:2; 1 Peter 3:11; Matthew 5:9). Still, we can support our government in war.

Now, if you feel some tension in your personal air about this matter, don't despair. At least two realities contribute to the conflicting emotions.

For starters, we are in the end times when there will be "wars and rumors of wars" (Matthew 24:6). War will happen in spite of all of our peace-loving efforts.

Worse yet, more often than not, the moral high ground for the warring parties can be hard to find or may even seem to be shifting ground. Complex issues surface. You've heard them in connection with Iraq: atrocities, evil leaders, weapons of mass destruction, oil, personal vendetta.

So we struggle.

But another source of tension enters the debate, another kind of a war—going on within each one of us. Our old sinful self (our very flesh!) wars against the new self in us born of the Spirit and submissive to Christ. The old self will fight at the slightest urging. War is good because it serves the old self's interests. The new self will seek peace. Yet, in doing so, it goes to war also against the old self. In the mix, the atmosphere can be oh so foggy.

Can there be peace then? Emphatically, yes!

At what price? The price Jesus paid on Calvary.

Your pastor may remind you after his Sunday sermons that Jesus gives a peace that surpasses all understanding that will "guard your hearts and minds" (Philippians 4:7). Jesus himself offers you his peace, but not "as the world gives" (John 14:27). In the peace of God, we survive all of the wars going on around us and within. His peace calms our troubled hearts and directs our attention to the day of his return.

So, whatever the situation in Iraq brings and however the war against terrorism turns out, we have peace with God through Christ. However troubling other threats of war may be, we have a peace that is eternal and as sure as God himself, who gives it. May God help us in the face of war here on earth and keep us in his peace forever.

Gary P. Baumler



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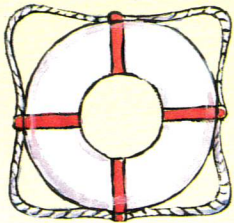
Your_Name@WELS.net

<http://www.wels.net/webmail>

Mom's List

How does a mother decide what is important for her children to learn? She makes a list, of course.

David A. Danford



Frightening thought, motherhood. It makes you say things like, "I think I'm going to make all of his baby food fresh at home. Watch while I show you how easy it is to run these green beans through the grinder. He'll like it so much more than that stuff in the jars." Mothers are given to an intense and relentless drive for perfection.

Safely observing the events from my vantage point as father, I watched our firstborn emphatically spit out the spoonful of green beans. Surely, we thought, it was a misunderstanding. Perhaps after that taste, he'd recognize the mistake he just made and be eager for another bite. More freshly ground green beans made the gentle arc over the end of the high chair tray, landing ingloriously on the kitchen floor. Bitter disappointment gradually gave way to an uneasy truce between mother and son. There would be no more freshly ground green beans. Gerber got our business back.

Our household notions of what represented successful motherhood would gradually be reshaped by repeated head-on collisions between a mother's idealism and each child's willfulness. They would re-emerge in other, more realistic forms, like Mom's List.

From time to time I hear about Mom's List, but I have neither seen it, nor do I fully know its contents.

I can tell you that learning to swim is on it. Our four children set new standards for objections to swimming lessons. "The water's too cold . . . the teacher's too tough . . . I'm too tired . . . it's pointless to learn all of those strokes . . . and I shouldn't have to go if I don't want to."

Despite their protests she made sure they went. Each time one of them completed the lessons and passed the swimming test, she'd say with a weary sigh, "That's one more thing we can check off my list. I think it is important that they all should learn to be safe in the water."

For a while I thought I had Mom's List figured out. It was all about safety. Then one of the children finished piano lessons. "We can check that off my list," I heard.

"I think they should all continue to take piano until they go to high school. After that they can stop. Someday, if they want to, they'll be able to sit down and play for the enjoyment of it."

Years have passed, and now all our children can swim and play the piano. I am still working out the mystery of what's on Mom's List. Sometimes it helps to look

back and ask a few questions. How old were the children when they began to comprehend the Bible stories Mom would read to them each bedtime? A few years? A few months? A few weeks? When was it they first noticed her example of going regularly to worship in the Lord's house? When did they commit to heart the words of the Lord's Prayer they heard her pray with them every night? When was it they began to say, "Shall we pray?" with her inflection in their voices at the beginning of our meals together?

These things happened long ago because allowing the Holy Spirit to work in the hearts of her children is the first thing on Mom's List, and it is the one entry that she'd never cross off as completed.

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