

AUGUST 2004

# Forward in Christ

God's wisdom, WELS' witness



**DON'T FORGET  
ABOUT THEM**

# WHAT DO YOU KNOW ABOUT "THE SPLIT"?

**"...An ambitious attempt to examine the histories, personalities, changing theologies, and complex doctrinal disagreements that caused these synods to break fellowship in 1961."**

—Greg Galler, *Forward in Christ*

**"I... appreciate very much the research, effort, clarity, and perspective [Mark Braun] brings to the task."**

—Mark A. Noll, Wheaton College, Illinois

**"... meets a need to inform a new generation of a defining conflict in the history of our synod."**

—John M. Brenner, *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*

**"A *Tale of Two Synods* is an invaluable documentation of the history of our forefathers and their struggle against sin and error. . . . It is easy reading, as well as interesting."**

—John K. Pfeiffer, *Journal of Theology* (Church of the Lutheran Confession)

The Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod can look back on the 1961 split with The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod as a defining moment for its little, conservative church body. Since then, the Wisconsin Synod has assumed a new profile and distinction in the history of conservative American Lutheranism. *A Tale of Two Synods* is the result of interviews, exhaustive research into the written records of both synods, and surveys of 82 WELS pastors who experienced the controversy firsthand. Those who lived through the split will appreciate author Mark Braun's review, and others will find this book a valuable resource for understanding a watershed event in the history of the two synods.

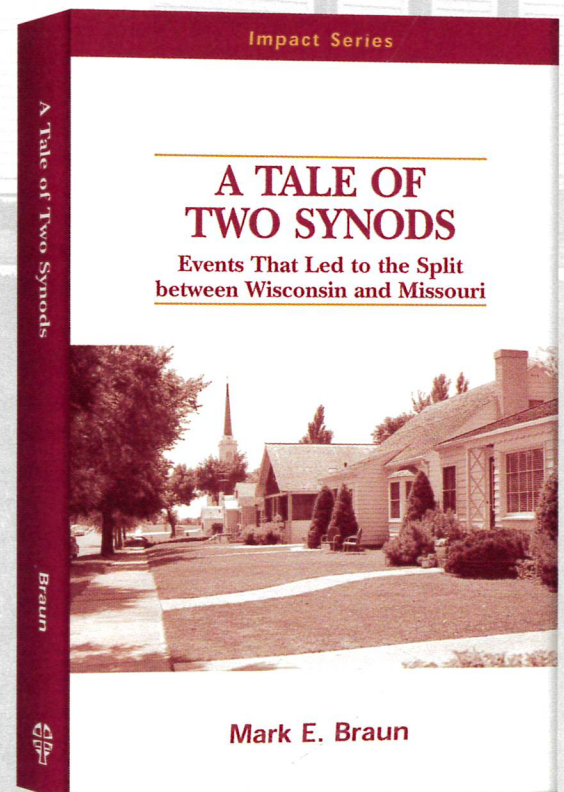
## **A Tale of Two Synods**

**Events That Led to the Split  
between Wisconsin and Missouri**


by Mark E. Braun

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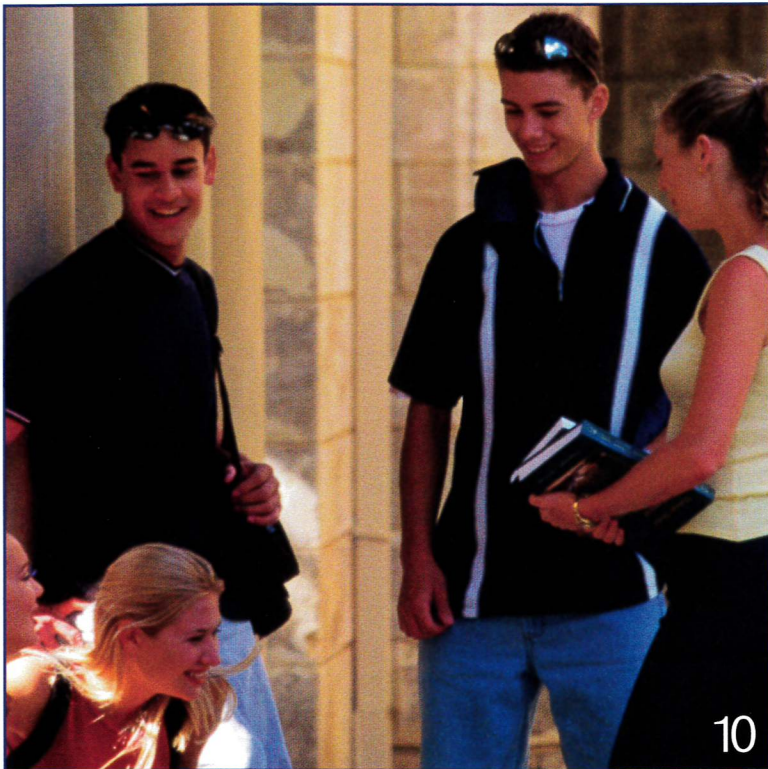
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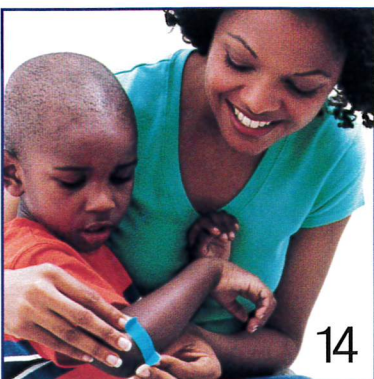
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## Forward in Christ

✝ The official magazine of the  
Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod

### FEATURES

**10 SHARING CHRIST WITH COLLEGE STUDENTS** Don't forget about reaching out to students who are enrolled at higher-education institutions across the United States.

*David D. Sellnow*

**12 THE RISING CRESCENT** Islam is growing every day.

*Roland C. Ehrlke*

**14 LIVING IN JESUS' PEACE** Stress management is a job for the soul.

*Donald W. Patterson*

**16 GOD IS IN CONTROL** All my efforts to manage and govern my life are an illusion.

*George Martin*

**17 MANAGING OUR INVESTMENTS** WELS Investment Funds, Inc., helps WELS with its long-term investment needs.

*Julie K. Wietzke*

**32 GETTING TO KNOW . . . PERIDOT & GRACE, SAN CARLOS APACHE RESERVATION** Together we stand.

*Laura C. Warmuth*

**34 REMARRIAGE** Enjoying a right relationship with God is the key to a successful second marriage.

*Daniel Hrobsky*

**40 JUST A QUICK LOOK** Do you wander too close to trouble because of the allure of the world?

*Bob Gove*



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BE WITH US AS HE WAS  
WITH OUR FATHERS;  
MAY HE NEVER LEAVE US  
NOR FORSAKE US.

1 Kings 8:57

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AUGUST

**WHAT'S INSIDE**

Have you ever wondered how the editorial staff chooses what articles go inside *Forward in Christ*? There are four basic ways that we receive content:

1. A group of contributing editors chosen by the Conference of Presidents submits departmental content on a continual basis.
2. The editorial staff assigns articles to writers who are chosen for a variety of reasons, including their experience, knowledge, and writing style.
3. Each month editorial staff members write articles.
4. Freelance authors submit material to the editorial staff for review. Anyone can submit material (see editorial office information at left). We review these manuscripts and decide whether they will fit *Forward in Christ*.

The editorial staff tries to balance the magazine's content with a variety of inspirational and informational content on Christian living, the Bible, and church life. If you have a topic that you think we should cover, let us know. Feedback is the best way for us to know what readers want. We want to hear from you!

**DEPARTMENTS**



6 **FEEDBACK**

7 **DEVOTION**

How strict is your training regimen? *Peter A. Panitzke*

8 **EDITORIAL COMMENT**

Man's best friend *Kenneth A. Cherney Jr.*

9 **QUESTION & ANSWER**

Falling from faith *Richard L. Gurgel*

18 **WHATEVER**

When someone is gone *Becky Favorite*

19 **NEWS**

30 **BULLETIN BOARD**

31 **POTLUCK**

36 **FROM THE PRESIDENT'S OFFICE**

Drink deeply from the Water of Life *Karl R. Gurgel*

37 **BIBLE STUDY**

2 Corinthians 4:13-18: Opposites attract *Paul E. Zell*

38 **EDITOR'S PEN**

Patience *Gary P. Baumler*

39 **INTERACTIVE BIBLE STUDY**

It's all about Jesus: Bringer of joy *Mark J. Lenz*

**DIVORCE**

I was disappointed to read “Picking up the pieces” [June] regarding the process of “recovering” from divorce. Throughout the article, the author seems to adopt wholeheartedly the modern notion that divorce is not a sin by one or both spouses, but rather something that simply “happens”—like cancer or a hurricane.

Unscriptural divorce and remarriage results in adultery (Matthew 5:32; Matthew 19:9; Mark 10:11, 12). Sadly, divorce has now become so common that it is estimated that more than half of all children born today will not reach adulthood with their families intact. What is even sadder is that this trend is becoming increasingly common within our own church body.

While it is certainly God-pleasing to comfort and strengthen the innocent victims of divorce, it is certainly not God-pleasing to ignore open, unrepentant sin. Perhaps it is worth considering that the “depression” that often accompanies divorce is really a conscience demanding that the sufferer repent.

For the sake of our children, for the sake of eternal souls, and for the sake of the scriptural purity of our Church, we need to offer less psychological “cheap grace” and more traditional church discipline.

Steven Seim  
Beaver Dam, Wisconsin

**COUNSELING**

I am dismayed by the number of articles published recently in *Forward in Christ* that advocate seeking counseling for spiritual problems from psychiatrists or psychologists. Whatever happened to the idea that we should seek spiritual counseling from our pastors? Have we bought into the world’s lie that our pastors [who know God’s Word] are not equipped

to handle problems of the soul [psych], but people who have been trained in humanist and New Age philosophies are?

The Christian counselor in the article offered common sense helps for the lady who was going through a divorce such as eating right, getting enough sleep, exercising, and associating with other people. One need not be trained in psychology to offer this kind of advice. But putting the poor lady on antidepressant drugs only gives her another problem that she has to overcome—withdrawal!

Herb Kluth  
Prior Lake, Minnesota

**FAITH AND SOCIETY**

What a timely and compelling editorial [“Change laws? Change hearts!”, June]. [Gary Baumler’s] words reached down to the basic sinful faults of our society and reached up to the source of help in the gospel of Jesus Christ. While *Forward in Christ* reaches thousands of readers, this editorial needs to be more widely disseminated amongst other Christians and read by more citizens of our nation.

Harold Essmann  
Appleton, Wisconsin

**CAPITAL PUNISHMENT**

In Rich Gurgel’s “In the cross hairs” column in the May issue he bases his endorsement of capital punishment on the section in Romans 13 about the government “bearing the sword” as “God’s servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.”

The problem I have with his approach is that that passage of Scripture is a word of law. There’s no grace there. In forming an opinion about anything, especially a life and death matter like capital punishment, I want to know what both law and gospel have to say.

And I want the gospel, not the law, to have the final say. Capital punishment makes the message of the law the bottom line. When we Americans, for instance, gave a lethal injection to a proud and unrepentant Tim McVeigh, we were telling him, literally, “Mr. McVeigh, go to hell.” I don’t want to make that my last word to anybody if I can help it.

Phil Merten  
Wauwatosa, Wisconsin

**FEMINISM**

I was very displeased with the book review by Kathie Wendland in the “Book nook” column of the June issue. . . .

As one of many reviewers of books for Northwestern Publishing House, I read Pastor Pope’s book both before and after it was published. I reviewed it positively. I don’t object to the fact that Wendland has an opinion at variance with my own, but the supposed weaknesses that she identifies in her article are too vague and general to take seriously. . . .

David G. Peters  
Union Grove, Wisconsin

**CHRIST’S GRACE**

Thank you for the excellent article, “When Christ’s grace moves hearts,” [July]. In a unique way [Wayne Laitinen] demonstrated the difference between those who live under the law and those who live by faith in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Bill Fischer  
Manitowoc, Wisconsin

Send your letters to “Feedback,” *Forward in Christ*, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222; fic@sab.wels.net. Letters between 100 and 250 words are preferred. Include full name and address. Letters are edited for clarity, conciseness, and relevance. Not all letters received can be acknowledged or used. Writers’ views are not necessarily those of WELS or *Forward in Christ*.

# How strict is your training regimen?

*Everyone who competes in the games goes into strict training. 1 Corinthians 9:25*

Peter A. Panitzke

As I sit down to write, my preparation includes a few cookies. Not exactly the diet of champions. But my goal isn't to win an Olympic gold. So I excuse myself for this indulgence and promise myself that I won't get up for seconds too soon.

If you are going for the gold, you cannot afford that kind of freedom. You enter a strict training regimen months or even years before the event. An Olympic-class athlete must continue to train if she or he hopes to win.

The apostle Paul knew about that kind of training. On his second missionary tour, Paul stopped in Athens briefly and then spent 18 months in Corinth, about 40 miles to the west. He was familiar with the ancient version of the Olympics and the strict training needed to win the prize. Paul used that illustration to help the Corinthians with a problem that continues to plague our approach to life.

## Cheating in your training

The Corinthians wanted to be able to enjoy being God's people and enjoy his forgiveness. At the same time they wanted to enjoy some of what Corinth had to offer, specifically, uniting themselves with prostitutes and feasting at idol temples. They wanted the prize of eternal life, but they also wanted to enjoy nibbling at the pleasures of this life.

Are Christians who will watch the 28th Olympiad any different from Christians watching the ancient games? Do we take God's grace for granted and assume that God will always look the other way? Do we

want to receive the prize, but not enter the strict training?

Like the Corinthians, many Christians are tempted to nibble at the illicit sexual pleasures our day has to offer—either over the Internet, on movies, or in person. Christians are enticed by all kinds of food that war against our soul. What whets your appetite? Gossip? Greed? Grumbling? Holding a grudge? Foul language? Drug or alcohol abuse?

No one who fails to exercise self-control in training will receive Olympic gold. Isn't that also true of us who seek the crown of life? We may enjoy a nibble or two and think, "It won't make any difference," but Paul knew otherwise. He knew the risk: "I beat my body and make it my slave so that after I have preached to others, I myself will not be disqualified for the prize" (1 Corinthians 9:27). Paul was not overconfident. He knew that he could lose the crown of eternal life.

## Training to win the prize

Enter into a strict training regimen. Counter the cravings of the sinful nature. Learn from the past. "We should not commit sexual immorality, as some of them did—and in one day twenty-three thousand of them died . . . Do not grumble, as some of them did—and were killed by the destroying angel" (1 Corinthians 10:8,10). This is a bitter message to hear, but one that helps us know the real effects of sin.

Be refreshed by God's promises. "Whoever believes and is baptized



will be saved" (Mark 16:16). "God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear" (1 Corinthians 10:13). Trust God. He who brought you to saving faith in Jesus can also give you strength to resist temptations.

Focus on the goal. Not an Olympic gold, but "the crown that will last forever." The crown is ours because of what Jesus has done. We can't earn it. But we can lose it. Let us decide daily to forego the delicacies of sin and feed on the soul-strengthening Word.

*Contributing editor Peter Panitzke is pastor at St. Paul, Muskego, Wisconsin.*

# Man's best friend

Kenneth A. Cherney Jr.

Radio host Dennis Prager has been speaking to crowds of high school seniors for the past 25 years. He sometimes asks them: "If you had to choose, whom would you save from drowning first—your own dog or a human stranger?"

Nearly always the answer he gets is, "My dog." Why? "Because I know and love my dog," the students say.<sup>1</sup> In other words, for these young people, an animal that they know deserves to live more than a person they don't know.

Think about this. It's frightening.

How does it happen? Is this the result of an aggressive ad campaign by People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA)? Have these students been warped by too much childhood exposure to fairy tales and Disney cartoons? Maybe. But the real problem is bigger than an out-of-control love for animals. It's a scale of values—a way of making moral decisions—that's totally out of whack.

At the center of their moral universe, the students have really placed, not their dogs, but themselves. How close something is to me is what determines its value. People and things become less important as they move out of my little orbit. This is the only way someone comes to believe that a person is worth less than a dog—or a cat, or a car, or a brand-name pair of tennis shoes.

It's frightening because the logic at work here leads to pure savagery. Once an anthropologist was talking with a tribesman in the Amazon about how the tribe dealt with strangers they would meet in the forest. "Why do you kill them?" the anthropologist asked.

"Because we don't know them," the tribesman finally said, after at first appearing not to understand the question. The difference between the

tribe's value system and that of Prager's high school seniors is only a matter of degree.

In fact, this is the default value system of all humanity. St. Augustine called it *homo incurvatus in se*—"man turned in on himself," a phrase Martin Luther quoted often. It's that basic, human egocentrism that assumes that the whole world revolves around me, and anything that can't or won't is expendable. Because it comes so naturally to us, human egocentrism is a powerful—almost unstoppable—force.

But in God, it meets the Immovable Object. In his Word, God makes it clear that he's not about to become just another planet in my little solar system. When we meet God in his Word,

the result is a Copernican revolution. God takes his rightful place at the center of things. We return to our rightful orbit around him. God—not ourselves—becomes the supreme value. And as we grow, we learn to see things the way God does and to value the things God values.

In particular, we grow to prize the precious people whom God loves and for whom Jesus died. That means all people, everywhere—whether or not I know them, whether or not I smile every time I think of them.

The way I do with my dog.

*Contributing editor Ken Cherney is pastor at St. John, St. John's, Antigua, West Indies.*

*"It's the Heart versus the Bible," Jewish World Review online, March 15, 2004.*

**God makes it clear that he's not about to become just another planet in my little solar system.**





at the foot of the cross. Richard L. Gurgel

## TOPIC: Falling from faith

**Some Christians believe in “once saved, always saved.” Am I right that Lutherans reject this, saying that believers can fall from faith?**

Here we are confronted with two sets of Scripture passages that, to our limited human reason, appear to contradict each other.

On one side, Scripture warns of the real danger of falling from faith. In Jesus’ parable of the sower, he mourns those who “believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away” (Luke 8:13). Paul speaks a powerful warning in 1 Corinthians 10:12: “So, if you think you are standing firm, be careful that you do not fall.” In 1 Timothy, Paul even mentions Christians by name who “shipwrecked their faith” (1:19).

On the other side are passages that teach our eternal election. In Ephesians 1:4 Paul unveils the wonder that God “chose us in [Christ] before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight.” In Romans 8:30 Paul weaves what some call the “unbreakable golden chain of our election”: “Those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified.” What begins in eternity continues inevitably to a glorious eternity. Jesus also promises that none of us will slip through his or his Father’s hands (John 10:28,29). We see that portrayed in picture language in Revelation 7 as the exact “number” of the elect arrives home safely. Not one is missing.

Some attempt to solve this dilemma by saying that God warns about falling to keep us watchful, even though it’s an impossibility. Yet that paints God as less than honest.

Others counter by making election conditioned upon our continuing in the faith. Some suggest that while no one can snatch us out of Jesus’ hand, we can jump out! But that strips the comfort from the promise of election, making it far less than what Scripture tells us.

There’s only one option for those who trust that God’s Word is the errorless message of the Savior who loves us without limit. We simply

let God be God, admitting that our “wisdom” is foolishness and acknowledging that God’s “foolishness” will prove itself to be eternal wisdom.

Allow me to close with the words of former seminary professor Siegbert Becker:

Reason finds it impossible to see how the man who is convinced that he can fall, that he may fall, that he is in great danger of falling away throughout his earthly life, can also be perfectly sure that he will never fall away.

One answer that Lutheranism gives is that the contradictory heart of man needs a contradictory doctrine. Thus the Christian must learn to live in constant tension between these two. When he begins to lean over to the left, toward pride and presumption and confidence in the strength of his faith, and to trust in his own character, then the warnings against apostasy, the Savior’s “Watch and pray, lest ye enter into temptation,” pushes him upright once more. But usually man, even the Christian man, whose heart is never fully what it ought to be, begins then to lean over to the right—he becomes afraid and begins to doubt that he will ever make it to the gates of the heavenly city. Once again the Savior comes and stands on the other side with his promise, “Do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God” (Isaiah 41:10). And he knows that when his pilgrimage comes to an end, “all the trumpets” will be blowing “for him on the other side.” (*The Foolishness of God*, pp. 222-224)

*Contributing editor Richard Gurgel, a professor at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin, is a member at Calvary, Thiensville.*

Have a question? Send it to “Q & A,” *Forward in Christ*, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222; fic@sab.wels.net. Look online at [www.wels.net](http://www.wels.net), jumpword “qa,” for more questions and answers.

# Sharing Christ with college students

Nearly 15 million students are enrolled at over 4,000 higher-education institutions across the United States. Don't forget about reaching out to these students, whether they're members of your church or members of your community.

David D. Sellnow

It's that time of year. I've got my back-to-school to-do list:

- Buy supplies—markers, pencils, binder, folders.
- Renew wardrobes—jeans, sweatshirts, shoes.
- Necessary checkups—physical exams, contact lens prescription.

Congregations should have back-to-school to-do lists too. I don't mean just those congregations that operate Lutheran elementary schools. I'm thinking of all congregations, on the assumption that all congregations have members or relatives of members who are college students. And many congregations have a college or university nearby, and thus have prime opportunity for ministry to students.

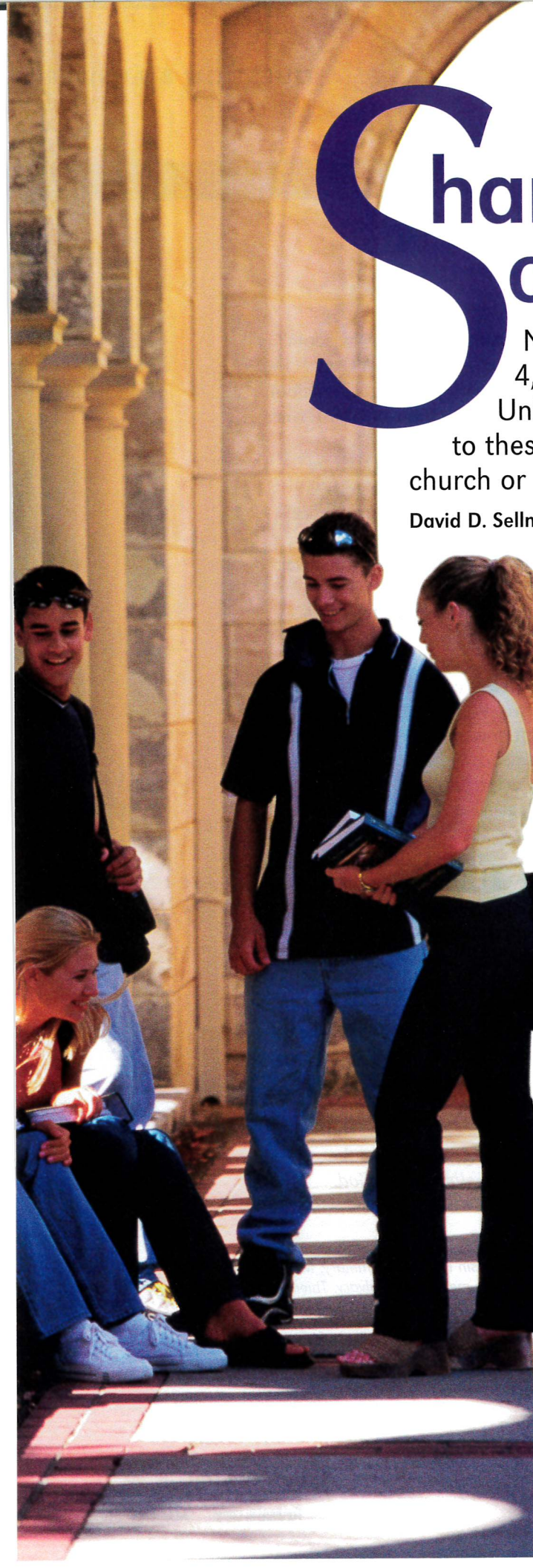
## Ministering to students who are away

When students from your church family go to college, don't forget about them! Refer their names to WELS Campus Ministry so that your students are welcomed by spiritual partners in their college community. They will also receive mailings such as *Lightsource* (a magazine for college students), plus invitations to rallies and other events.

After you've referred your congregation's students to their spiritual home-away-from-home, still don't forget about them! A care package of cookies is good, of course, but also focus on their faith. Find ways to communicate Christ across the miles to your members who are away at school.

- Have mentors back home write letters of spiritual encouragement to help young adults through the faith challenges they face.
- Host a "Welcome Home" potluck at the end of the semester, offering students a forum to tell about their spiritual experiences on campus.
- Give students space in your church newsletter to share stories from their journey of faith.
- Offer to help pay their way to the WELS national college rally in Houston, Jan. 6-9, 2005.

Be creative—think of your own ways to express faithful support to your congregation's students and to give them opportunities to communicate with you.



## Ministering to students in your community

According to *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, nearly 15 million students are enrolled at over 4,000 higher-education institutions across the United States. U.S. Census figures show that persons 18 to 24 years of age represent 10 percent of the nation's population. The college crowd is a significant group to be considered as we plan for gospel outreach.

Humanistic learning has its limits and its dangers. The apostle Paul—himself a well-educated man—cautioned: “See to it that no one takes you captive through hollow and deceptive philosophy, which depends on human tradition and the basic principles of this world rather than on Christ” (Colossians 2:8).

Who will help searching, inquiring students see that the answers to life's biggest questions do not come from any philosopher or scientist or sociologist or poet, but from the Lord Jesus Christ? How will they know him or believe in him unless someone proclaims to them the good news (Romans 10:13-15)? Our WELS students on campus and our congregations in college towns are positioned to be Christ's ambassadors.

WELS Campus Ministry is a part of the Home Missions division of our synod. We see spiritual work on campuses as a key component of our North American outreach emphasis. We hope you will, too, and will increase mission efforts toward students who come your way each fall.

Sometimes those students bring the world to your doorstep. Glenn Schwanke, pastor at Peace, Houghton, Mich., relates his experience: “We don't have to get on a plane to go to Taiwan or Armenia or Malaysia. To reach people from all these places, and many more, all we have to do is step onto our local college campus. What a thrill to witness to the Chinese professor who confesses his faith by

saying, ‘Why would I want to worship Buddha? He is dead and in his grave. I want to worship the living Lord Jesus!’ How humbling to witness to Sosina, an Armenian raised in the state church of that country, who says, ‘You mean Jesus Christ is the Savior who takes away all my sins? I've never heard that before.’ How overwhelming to hear a graduate student from Malaysia say, ‘I love coming to your church. You're so friendly, and you make the message of God's Word so easy to understand.’”

Traditional American students have the same need to hear truth in Jesus Christ clearly communicated. One campus ministry conducted a weekly Bible study in a university's student center even during years when no WELS students were attending. So many young adults—even those with backgrounds in other churches—have not heard the law/gospel message as Scripture declares it. Most have a legalistic view of religion, perceiving Christianity as mainly a set of rules. We offer them a unique testimony—the revelation of God's grace.

## Energizing your congregation through campus ministry

Maybe you're thinking, “Our congregation already is stretched to the limit. We haven't got the resources to take on something else.” Campus ministry need not be a drain on your energies. In fact, it may energize you.

“The campus ministry here [at the University of Michigan] has given new life to our congregation,” says Robert Hoepner, pastor at Redeemer, Ann Arbor, Mich. “It has given our congregation a focus.”

Schwanke echoes that sentiment: “Campus ministry has enriched us in many ways. For one thing, it keeps us young. Visitors typically comment, ‘Your congregation is so different—there are so many young people here!’ What life this gives us! What diversity! And what hope for the future! When these students leave

## More ways to be involved in campus ministry

Attend the Campus Ministry Staff Conference, a “how-to” workshop about campus ministry, on May 23-24, 2005, in Milwaukee. Watch for more information on the Campus Ministry Web site, [www.wels.net/cm](http://www.wels.net/cm).

E-mail, mail, or phone in address updates of college students. Pastors and church secretaries also can enter student information online in a private section of the WELS Web site. For access to this system, contact the Campus Ministry office.

Contact WELS Campus Ministry to help you in your efforts and to provide information, resources, even possible financial assistance. Also check out the WELS Campus Ministry Web site for news and streaming audio sermons. WELS Campus Ministry, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222; 414-256-3279; [cm@sab.wels.net](mailto:cm@sab.wels.net).

Michigan Tech, they go on to become leaders in many of our Wisconsin Synod congregations.”

Caleb Schoeneck, pastor at Beautiful Savior, College Station, Texas, speaks of how exciting it can be to provide spiritual connections to those who were unconnected. This past spring, a year of work with a young man from Texas A&M University culminated in an adult confirmation. “Is this a victory for a mission congregation? It's the highlight of our year. Is this a victory for the kingdom? One more soul is heaven bound—even the angels long to look into such things!”

Schwanke advances this petition: “I pray the Lord awakens our WELS to the incredible outreach possibilities—as well as the continued need for nurture—right in our back yards on our local college campuses.”

*David Sellnow, a professor at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota, is a member at St. Paul, New Ulm. He recently completed six years of service on the WELS Campus Ministry Committee.*

Roland C. Ehlke

# THE RISING CRESCENT

With one-and-a-quarter billion followers worldwide, Islam is second in numbers only to the combined branches of Christianity. Yet this religion, symbolized by the crescent moon, denies Jesus' crucifixion for the sins of the world.

Are the Green Bay Packers going to find a quarterback who will eventually replace Brett Favre? What will be this summer's blockbuster movie? Such questions are in the air as this article is being written. While they may capture local and national attention, they pale before other realities of the day. In particular, we face the reality that our nation is at war. The war on terror is not going away anytime soon.

Beyond the military and political struggle against Islamic terrorists is a battle between civilizations and—most significantly—a spiritual struggle between the saving faith of Jesus Christ and the soul-destroying religion of the false prophet Muhammad.

The purpose of this series of three articles is to make readers aware of Islam, how it differs from the Bible, and how we can reach Muslims with the gospel of Jesus Christ. This installment will review the rise of this world religion and its impact in today's world.

## Muhammad and the Qur'an

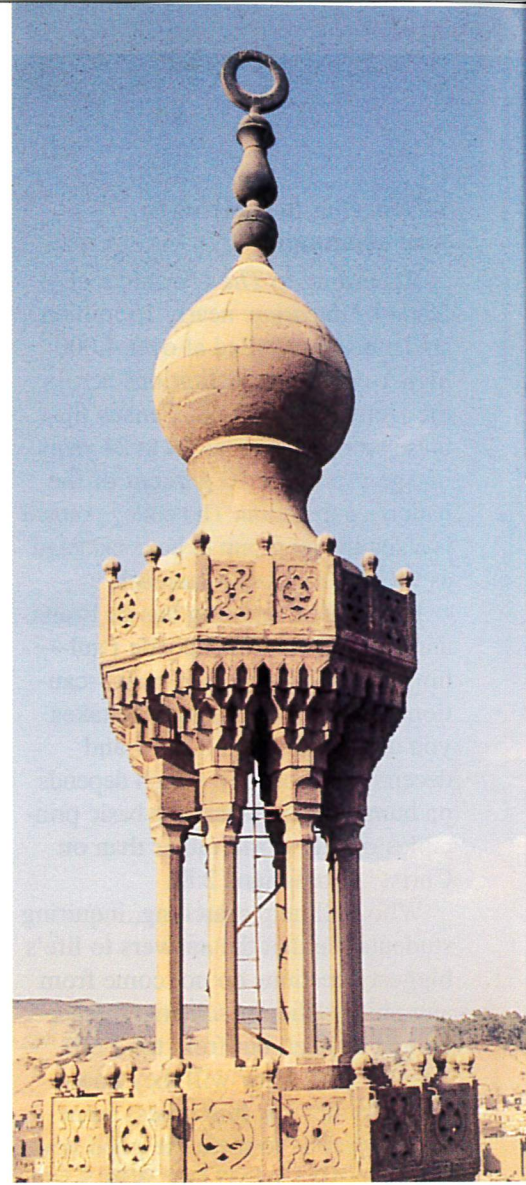
Islam traces its roots to the prophet Muhammad (A.D. 570-632). Born in Mecca (or Makkah) in southern Saudi Arabia, Muhammad tended sheep and camels as a youth and later became a caravan merchant. Muhammad would go out to a desert cave near Mecca to fast and meditate for days at a time.

On one such occasion, he claimed that the angel Gabriel appeared to him and related a message he was to share. The ensuing message rejected the prevalent Arab polytheism (worship of many different gods) and called for the worship of one God, Allah. Those who submitted to Allah became known as Muslims, literally "submitters," and their religion Islam, "submission."

In the wake of subsequent persecution, Muhammad and his followers fled to Medina (Yathrib), some 260 miles north of Mecca. The year of this "Migration" (*Hijra*), A.D. 622, marked the beginning of the Muslim era. Meanwhile, the prophet's revelations kept coming, spanning a period of 22 years (610-32). These revelations, recited by Muhammad and written down by his followers, make up the chapters, called *Suras*, of the Muslims' holy book, the Qur'an (Koran).

While in Medina, Muhammad added the role of secular leader to that of prophet. He led raids on enemy caravans and took part in numerous pitched battles. By the time of his death, he had established himself as master of much of Arabia and unified its many tribes under the banner of Islam.

Muhammad spoke of himself as the last and greatest in a line of



prophets that included Moses and Jesus. Tragically, he denied the center of Christian faith, Jesus' crucifixion for the sins of the world. This is the gospel, the good news that through his death we have forgiveness and life. The Bible asserts, "But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach a gospel other than the one we preached to you, let him be eternally condemned!" (Galatians 1:8). Muhammad stands under that condemnation.

## Muslims and the West

Within a hundred years after the prophet's death, Muslim armies had subjugated most of the Middle East, conquered North Africa, taken Spain, and penetrated into France, only to be stopped at the battle of Tours in 732. Centuries later, the Crusades (1095-about 1300) attempted through military force to win the Holy Land back

## High birth rates and worldwide expansion make Islam the world's fastest growing religion.



from the Muslims. In Martin Luther's day, the powerful Muslim Turkish armies menaced Europe from the east, besieging the city of Vienna in 1529.

In the late 1600s, however, the Turks suffered several military setbacks, followed by two long centuries of decline. By the end of the 19th century, Turkey was considered the "sick man" of Europe, and other countries eagerly looked forward to taking shares of what had been the Turkish Ottoman Empire. The final blow came when Turkey sided with Germany in World War I . . . and lost. Following the war, the Empire was divided into what is now the Middle East. New borders were drawn, and new countries, such as modern Iraq, were formed.

In fact, for a period of some 150 years, from about 1800 to 1950, Muslim lands were dominated by

European colonial powers. The creation of the state of Israel in 1948 marked the establishment of a non-Muslim nation in *dar al-Islam*, the house of Islam. The once glorious Muslim empires seemed little more than desert wastelands, divided by foreigners and unbelievers.

With the drilling of oil in the Middle East, Islamic hope revived. Especially within the last half century, Islam has again become a major force in world affairs. High birth rates and worldwide expansion make Islam the world's fastest growing religion. Many Muslims are willing to lay down their lives to destroy the enemies of Islam.

### Islamic expansion

Although we tend to think of Islam in connection with the Middle East, less than 20 percent of today's Muslims live in the Arab world. The largest Islamic community is in Indonesia; huge numbers of Muslims live in Pakistan and India; and the northern half of the continent of Africa is predominately Muslim.

What may be especially startling to many is the Muslim invasion of the West. France, for example, has had large numbers of Muslims ever since it colonized Algeria in the 1830s. The number mushroomed following World War I, when France welcomed Islam in gratitude to Algerian soldiers who served in the war. France's current Muslim population is estimated at anywhere from four to eight million.

A dozen years before Sept. 11, 2001, an article from the *Washington Times* noted: "In West Germany . . . Turkish doctors, to support large Moslem families, work overtime aborting German women in a country where the average couple has but one child. In the U.S.S.R., Moslems number 50 million and are the fastest growing segment of the population, while the average Russian woman has five abortions." What Muslim armies failed to do, Muslim immigrants and families are now accom-

plishing. Islam is the second largest religion in Europe and growing.

Meanwhile, in the United States, Islam is vying with Judaism for that position. The first U.S. mosque (place of worship) was built in the 1930s. Today there are more than 1,200 mosques and some five or six million Muslims. The states with the highest numbers of Muslims (in order) are California, New York, and Illinois, and many live in the Washington, D.C. area. More than 40 percent of American Muslims are African-Americans.

With one-and-a-quarter billion followers worldwide, Islam is second in numbers only to the combined branches of Christianity, which total about two billion. The two religions account for over half of the entire world's population.

Recently, I walked through the student union of a large Midwestern university, where the main atrium was dominated by displays promoting "Islam Awareness Week." Tables overflowed with free copies of the Qur'an and brochures extolling the greatness of Islam and its superiority over Christianity. Several videos were playing nonstop as friendly workers answered questions. While Islamist extremists resort to terror, mainline Islam is out to infiltrate and conquer in other ways.

As the cross symbolizes Christianity, the crescent moon represents Islam. Today that moon is on the rise. It presents a challenge to Christians—a challenge to hold fast to our God-given faith and to share it with those living under the illusions of Islam.

*Roland Cap Ehlke, a member of Gloria Dei-Bethesda, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, wrote the new Northwestern Publishing House book Speaking the Truth in Love to Muslims. He studied at the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. Ehlke teaches the "World of Islam" course at Concordia University, Mequon, Wisconsin.*

*This is the first of a three-part series.*



# LIVING IN JESUS' PEACE

Stress management is not just a job for the mind and body. It is also a job for the soul.

Donald W. Patterson

Ever since the fall into sin, people have had to manage stress in their lives. They don't always manage it well, either. Cain raised his hand against Abel to relieve the stress he thought his brother's righteousness was causing him. Ahab had Naboth murdered to relieve the stress of his own covetousness over his vineyard. Elijah ran and hid in a cave to escape the stress of his disappointment over Ahab and Jezebel's unbelief.

We don't always manage our stress well, either. Many folks have developed serious chemical dependencies with their ill-fated tactics for managing the stress in their lives. Others have run from family members for years.

Still others have made matters worse by taking no prisoners in loud and destructive arguments, all to try to relieve stress. The result? More and more stress.

## Give your stress to God

What does God want us to do to relieve stress? Exercise more? Yes, it helps the body relieve stress to give it a good and regular workout. Talk about the problems that cause us stress? Yes, that works well too. Often when we talk about what is causing us stress we work out better solutions than when we just mull it over alone.

But Jesus has given us much more than just physical exercise and talking with friends to relieve stress. He has given us his Word to reframe our lives under his redeeming grace and to give us hope and peace in his promises of forgiveness and eternal success in his Son.

He's given us prayer too. Prayer is one of God's unique ways to help us relieve stress.

It is one of the ways we live the peace Jesus gives us. Paul understood this. He had many stresses in his life. Try a four-year imprisonment, separation from friends and family, trauma from being shipwrecked, and a long wait for a trial that could end with his execution.

These were the stresses in Paul's life when he wrote words about how prayer relieves stress and restores Jesus' peace to our lives: "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:6,7). Paul should have been overwhelmed with stress, but he wasn't. He lived in the peace of Christ as he learned to make everything he worried about a special request to God. He gave each stressful thing to God to fix.

Remember when you were little and you could give your biggest problems to your parents? It was peaceful, wasn't it? When times got rough you called for your mommy and daddy. That's the way Jesus wants us to live in his peace. When our issues get too big for us, he wants us to call for him. He wants us to give them to him. When we do, we can rest knowing that he is going to carry them for us.

Mary understood this at the wedding of Cana. She was anxious and stressed about the lack of wine at the wedding. She told Jesus about it, and

even though he mildly rebuked her, she let go. With peace in her heart she said, "Do whatever he tells you." She had no more stress even though she didn't know how things would turn out. She had peace because she had turned it over to her son, Jesus.

## Remember when you were little and you could give your biggest problems to your parents?

So often we are stressed out because in our weakness of faith we think God doesn't really listen to us anyway. Nothing is further from the truth. We sinful parents love to listen to our children. How much more does God love to listen to us!

### Be at peace

A wonderful promise is attached to Paul's encouragement to pray. Paul promises that when we give every anxiety-causing problem to God, his peace guards our hearts. The original literally means that peace will stand at the door of our hearts like a sentry and keep enemies out. How does God's peace stand at the door of our hearts? It stands there with the reminder that we have given it to God, the one who loves us so much that he sent his Son to die for us.

One time a fairly big issue in our church was keeping me up at night. Then in my devotions I stumbled over this verse. It was like running into an old and beloved friend in the store. Immediately, I began to give my worry to God in prayer, and peace moved in and brought his friend, sleep, with him. Then, each time I tried to worry over the issue again, I'd be reminded that I had already given the entire situation to God. He could take care of it while I just did what I knew I was supposed to do. Peace kept guard over the door of my heart and drove out the unwelcome stress.

Jesus wants us to live in his peace not just in heaven but also while we struggle here on earth. The privilege of prayer is one of the ways he brings that peace. Next time you are stressing over the big stuff in your life, make each individual issue a specific prayer request to God. Let him have it the way Mary let Jesus have the problems at the wedding at Cana, the way Paul let God have the outcome of his trial.

Stress management is not just a job for the mind and body. It is also a job for the soul. The way the soul manages stress is through prayer to a dear Father from his dear child. He who did not spare his Son but gave him up for us all, how will he not along with him give us all that we need (Romans 8:32)? Whatever it is, give it to God and then live in his peace.

*Contributing editor Don Patterson is pastor at Holy Word, Austin, Texas.*

# God is in control

After my car accident, I recognized that all my efforts to manage and govern my life are an illusion.

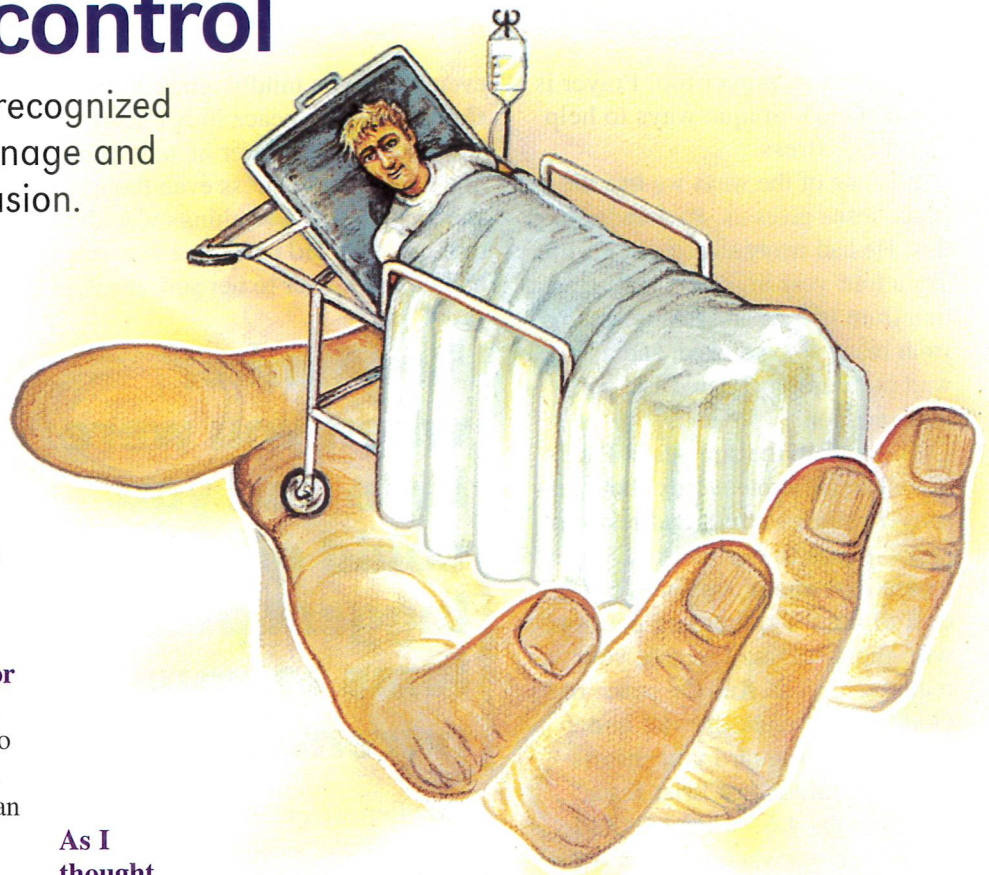
George Martin

The clock on the wall showed 12:00. Was it noon or midnight? As I racked my brain to try to remember, the last thing I could vaguely recall was leaving my office at about 11 A.M. Why was I strapped to this table? What was happening? What had happened? I didn't even know what day it was.

**As my eyes searched the room for clues and my brain struggled for answers, I recognized that I was in an emergency room.** Then I began to feel pain in several areas of my body. Medical personnel appeared and began to cut off my clothes and diagnose what I needed. Later a police officer entered and told me that someone had run a red light at 55 mph and hit my vehicle. The location suddenly clicked in my brain, but I could recall nothing about the accident to make a statement. My brain had lost an hour of my life.

As people left the room and I was alone, I knew that I would live and felt peaceful. I realized that without any doing of my own, I had survived and was alive—all by the grace of God. My guardian angel worked overtime that day.

Then tears welled up in my eyes. At first I couldn't figure out why I was crying. One reason to cry is pain, but I wasn't in terrible pain at the time. Sometimes tears indicate a sense of loss. But the '87 Buick I had driven could be replaced, and no one was killed. I realized that these were tears of joy and gratitude for the blessings the Lord had given me that day. He had preserved my life, saved me from crippling injuries, and maintained my spirit.



**As I thought more about this, I realized that God does this for me every day.**

Before this accident, I knew that in my head. But surviving the crash made me feel it as though it was a part of my body. I felt it in me. I recognized that all my efforts to control and govern my life are an illusion. God is in control. Always has been; always will be! It's freeing and humbling to realize that no matter what I try to do, if it's God's will, it will be done (just as we pray in the Lord's Prayer).

The accident also magnified the blessing of family, friends, coworkers, and fellow believers. Both pastors at our church visited me, even though I told them that I expected to be out soon. It turned out that I stayed longer than the doctors had anticipated, and I was glad the pastors came. As word spread, several congregations said prayers for me.

People added me to their prayer lists. Children in Lutheran Pioneers and teachers in our school sent cards. Coworkers encouraged me to take the time I needed to recover and not to worry about work. People brought meals for my wife and four children as they focused their attention to care for me. What a blessing to be comforted and supported in these ways!

**As I look forward to my life and continue to rehabilitate, I wonder what God has in store for me.** Why has he chosen to preserve the life of this servant? I don't know. But I look forward to living the answer because I know that he is with me every step of the journey and will continue to shower me with his blessings and grace.

*George Martin is a member at Grace, Falls Church, Virginia.*



WELS Investment Funds, Inc., is one of WELS' four separately incorporated subsidiaries. The others are WELS Church Extension Fund, Inc.; Northwestern Publishing House, Inc.; and WELS Foundation, Inc. Look for articles in future issues on the remaining subsidiaries.

# Managing our investments

WELS Investment Funds, Inc., helps WELS with its long-term investment needs.

Julie K. Wietzke

**S**tewardship is all about management—how we manage our money, talents, and time, to best serve our Lord.

One of the ways WELS practices good stewardship is by using WELS Investment Funds, Inc. WELS Investment Funds provides WELS and its congregations and organizations with cost-effective, professionally-managed investment portfolios for long-term investment management.

## History

The 1975 synod convention set up the WELS Investment Board (later known as the Investment Commission) because “good stewardship demands that the synod make use of the best possible resources available to it” (1975 *Proceedings*). WELS used this board to manage gifts given to the synod that were designated for long-term purposes (such as trusts, scholarships, and endowments).

In 1997 the responsibility for the investment of various synod funds was passed to the WELS Investment Funds. WELS Investment Funds made it possible for WELS congregations and WELS affiliated organizations to invest in the same investment portfolios (known as WELS Funds) used for synod trusts and endowments. Today, WELS groups (e.g. Home and World Missions, Ministerial Education, WELS Church Extension Fund, WELS Foundation), the four synodical schools, several area Lutheran high schools, and almost 50 congregations invest in WELS Funds. Total market

value for WELS Funds (as of May 31, 2004) is nearing \$100 million.

“When you break it all down, we’re talking about working together—WELS congregations and WELS organizations—to provide quality investment management,” says Jim Holm, president of WELS Investment Funds.

But how does working together with investing help make better use of money, talents, and time?

## Money

- Certain funds are cheaper to buy “in bulk.” By pooling resources, WELS Investment Funds can get better prices than individuals. By buying in bulk, WELS Investment Funds often doesn’t have to pay sales charges.
- WELS Investment Funds passes on its savings to its investors by not charging account fees, sales charges, or redemption fees.
- WELS Investment Funds considers the special needs of WELS organizations when making investment decisions. The WELS Balanced Fund, the fund most widely used, is a conservative mix of equity and fixed income securities. The WELS Income Fund and WELS Equity Fund provide flexibility for organizations that want to invest more aggressively or conservatively.

## Talents

- The Board of Directors of WELS Investment Funds decides which funds to invest in. These WELS members come from across the United States to volunteer their

investment experience and talents. “The ability to pool our resources and take advantage of that expertise is a huge benefit,” says Holm.

- Marquette Associates serves as the investment advisor for WELS Investment Funds. Marquette Associates works with non-profit and charitable organizations and specializes in institutional investing.

## Time

- It takes time to successfully manage investments—time many WELS congregations and organizations don’t have. WELS Investment Funds can manage a group’s investments, allowing time for other things.
- Monitoring a fund’s performance can be done with a click of the mouse through WELS Investment Funds’ Web site, [www.welsfunds.net](http://www.welsfunds.net). The site offers information about WELS Investment Funds and investment performance. Investors can even access their account information online.

By managing money, talents, and time, WELS Investment Funds will continue to serve our Lord by helping WELS and its congregations and organizations with their investment needs.

*Julie Wietzke is senior communications assistant for Forward in Christ and WELS Communication Services.*

*For more information on WELS Investment Funds, check out [www.welsfunds.net](http://www.welsfunds.net) or call 877-888-8953. This article is for informational purposes only and is not an offer to sell or request to buy securities. The offering of the WELS Funds is made solely by the offering circular.*

# WHATEVER

## When someone is gone

To me, Lisa is not really dead. She lives in my heart and comes with me wherever I go. I may not be able to see her now, but she'll be waiting in heaven for me.

Becky Favorite

I have often heard the saying, "You never know how much you miss someone until they're gone." I never understood it until I met Lisa.

Lisa was the daughter of one of our school secretaries. During the summer before I was in eighth grade, Lisa, my brother, and I spent countless hours playing in the sun or in my basement. Our imaginations ran wild whenever we got together. We never played games that most of the other kids did. We made up our own, which many times dealt with crashing ships and desert islands. Lisa and I also would wander around my yard in search of random leaves, sticks, berries, freshly mowed grass, and whatever else was lying around. We then would mix it all together with water and create our own special cuisine.

Lisa was a girl whom I could easily always pick out in a crowd. She was over a head taller than I was, even though she was two years younger. Her long brown hair, which she usually tied back in a ponytail or long braids, flowed down to her waist. Even though Lisa was tall, she was quite limber. She played basketball, was in cheerleading, and took gymnastics classes with me in the summer. Lisa had a heart that matched her height perfectly. She was one of the kindest people I have ever met. Anyone who stepped into her room could tell that she loved cats of any kind. Lisa loved them just like she loved her friends and family.

However, I will never be able to spend a summer with Lisa again. She was killed in a car accident on Dec. 4, the year I was in eighth

grade. It was the day before her 12th birthday. While coming home from grade-school band, the car she was in was struck by a car that crossed the center line. Of the five people involved in the crash, only two lived—my brother and his friend.

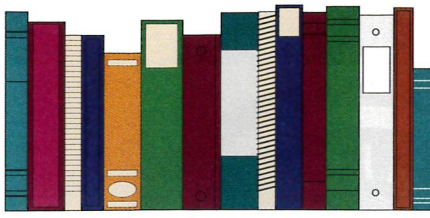
Whenever I tell people about Lisa, they tend to wonder why I don't have a hard time. I always tell them that I don't remember Lisa like most people would. To me, she's not really dead. She lives in my heart and comes with me wherever I go. I may not be able to see her now, but I will. She'll be waiting in heaven for me. Besides, she wouldn't want to be remembered with tears. She would want to be remembered with laughter and happiness. I will always remember Lisa because she is part of me, and the memories of being together are simply too hilarious to forget.

Before Lisa died, she was in critical care for a few hours at the hospital. I had to leave to cheer at a game that ended up being cancelled anyway. I really didn't want to go, but her mom told me that I needed to cheer loud for Lisa. Ever since that day, whenever I go out to the track or to the basketball court to perform a routine, I remember her words and cheer as loud as I can for Lisa.

Becky Favorite, a member of Emanuel, New London, Wisconsin, will be a freshman at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, this fall.



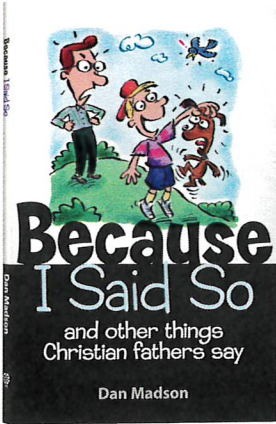
# heaven



# Booknook

A look at new books published by Northwestern Publishing House. For more information, visit [www.nph.net](http://www.nph.net) or call 800-662-6022. Note: These reviews are not meant to represent the opinions of WELS or Forward in Christ.

## Because I said so!



\$10.99

As a father of five whose children's ages span from three to 19, I found much in Dan Madson's book, *Because I Said So (and other things Christian fathers say)*, that I could relate to, learn from, and laugh at.

This book is an easy and delightful read at 73 pages. It is broken into 36 vignettes that are packed full of real-life, humorous family situations. In addition to warming the heart, each story offers a biblical tie that provides parents with valuable insight and direction. Subjects

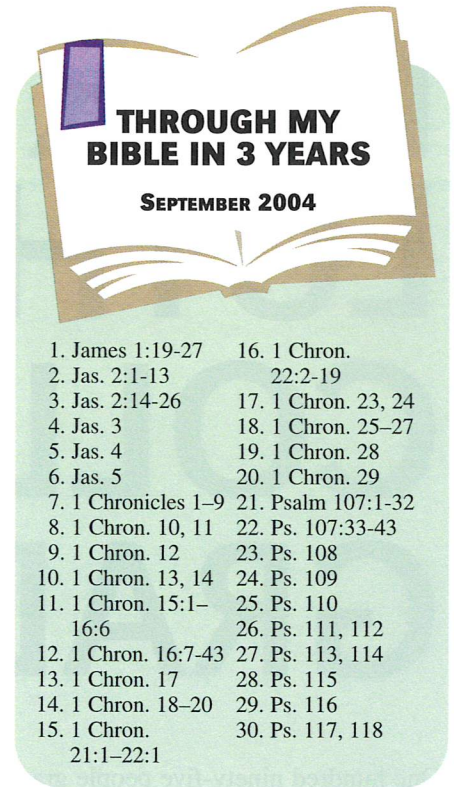
that the author covers include his theory of "Fix-it-ivity," traditions, humility, fireworks, vacations, driving lessons, and much more.

Though the book will be most enjoyed by dads, anyone who is a parent or was ever a kid will find humor and help in the stories told. This book will bring a smile to your face and encouragement and direction from Scripture to your heart.

Read it now! Why? Well . . . because I said so!

Steven F. Zambo  
St. Paul, Lake Mills, Wisconsin

*Editor's note: The 2004-05 edition of Chapel Talks for Christian Children is now available from Northwestern Publishing House for \$24.99. It features 42 lessons on "Jesus in the Gospels" and includes sermons and worship components for Lutheran elementary schools and Sunday schools.*



### THROUGH MY BIBLE IN 3 YEARS

SEPTEMBER 2004

1. James 1:19-27	16. 1 Chron. 22:2-19
2. Jas. 2:1-13	17. 1 Chron. 23, 24
3. Jas. 2:14-26	18. 1 Chron. 25-27
4. Jas. 3	19. 1 Chron. 28
5. Jas. 4	20. 1 Chron. 29
6. Jas. 5	21. Psalm 107:1-32
7. 1 Chronicles 1-9	22. Ps. 107:33-43
8. 1 Chron. 10, 11	23. Ps. 108
9. 1 Chron. 12	24. Ps. 109
10. 1 Chron. 13, 14	25. Ps. 110
11. 1 Chron. 15:1-16:6	26. Ps. 111, 112
12. 1 Chron. 16:7-43	27. Ps. 113, 114
13. 1 Chron. 17	28. Ps. 115
14. 1 Chron. 18-20	29. Ps. 116
15. 1 Chron. 21:1-22:1	30. Ps. 117, 118

## The seminary in Mequon: Proclaiming the gospel for 75 years

Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary is celebrating its 75th anniversary on the Mequon, Wis., campus. Attend one or more of the following events:

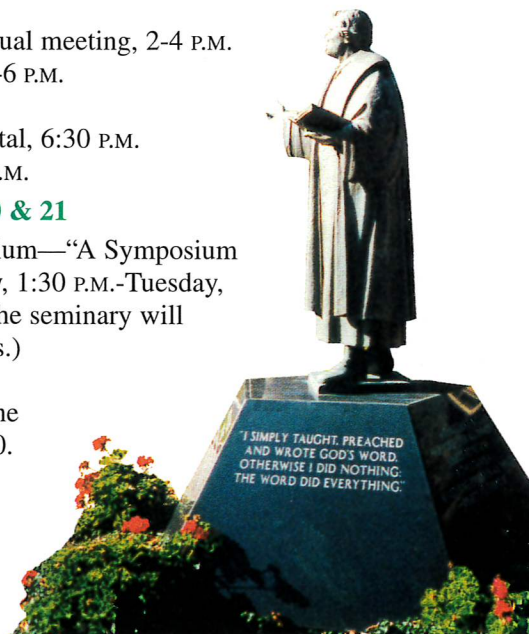
### Sunday, Sept. 19

- WELS Historical Institute's annual meeting, 2-4 P.M.
- Campus open house and tours, 4-6 P.M.
- Light refreshments, 4-6:45 P.M.
- Pre-service organ and brass recital, 6:30 P.M.
- Anniversary festival service, 7 P.M.

### Monday and Tuesday, Sept. 20 & 21

Fifth Annual Seminary Symposium—"A Symposium on Pastoral Education," Monday, 1:30 P.M.-Tuesday, 12:30 P.M. (Morning classes at the seminary will be open to symposium attendees.)

For more information, contact the seminary office at 262-242-8100.



## New look, new opportunity

Help spread the news about *Forward in Christ's* new look while also spreading God's good news! Give a gift subscription to a friend, family member, or coworker. For only \$14/year, you can give a gift that will reap eternal benefits.



To order a subscription to *Forward in Christ*, call Northwestern Publishing House, 800-662-6093, ext. 8. Milwaukee, 414-615-5785. Or order online, [www.nph.net/periodicals](http://www.nph.net/periodicals).

**Correction:** Lance Corporal Jonathan Reid was incorrectly identified as a Lieutenant Corporal [June, p. 25]. We apologize for the error.

# MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE GRADUATES



One hundred ninety-five people graduated from Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., on May 22. Those receiving Bachelor of Science degrees were in the teacher track or the staff ministry program. Men who received Bachelor of Arts degrees were in the pastor track.



Steven R. Abramowski ◆  
Knoxville, Tenn.



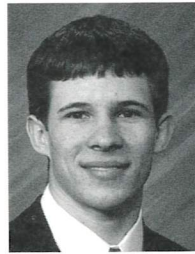
Sarah E. Augustine ▲  
Manitowoc, Wis.



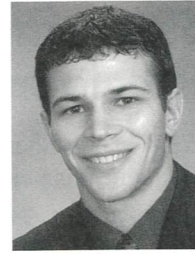
Kathryn M. Bare ▲  
Owosso, Mich.



Dana M. Barez ▲  
Mount Calvary, Wis.



Jonathan P. Bauer ◆  
Lake Mills, Wis.



Matthew T. Bauer ●  
Lake Mills, Wis.



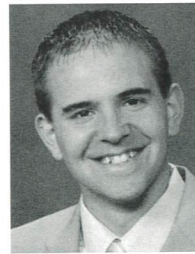
Rachel L. Bauer ●  
New Ulm, Minn.



John R. Baumgart ◆  
Juneau, Wis.



John C. Behrens ◆  
Crystal Lake, Ill.



Jeremy R. Belter ◆  
Appleton, Wis.



Thomas A. Benzing \*  
Phoenix, Ariz.



Daniel L. Berg ◆  
Plymouth, Mich.

- ◆ Bachelor of Arts
- \* Seminary Certification Program
- ▲ Bachelor of Science in Education—Elementary Education
- Bachelor of Science in Education—Secondary Education



Joseph M. Berg ◆  
Plymouth, Mich.



Dustin A. Bergene ◆  
Sturgeon Bay, Wis.



Angela M. Beyer ▲  
Appleton, Wis.



Dustin S. Blumer ◆  
Orlando, Fla.



Nathan T. Bode ◆  
Saginaw, Mich.



Daniel S. Bondow ◆  
Appleton, Wis.



Jonathan H. Bourman ◆  
Lake Mills, Wis.



Timothy C. Bourman ◆  
Lake Mills, Wis.



David T. Brandt ◆  
St. Louis, Mo.



Deborah K. Braun ▲  
Livingston, Mont.



Lisa A. Breikreutz ●  
Watertown, Wis.



Rebekah A. Buschkopf ▲  
Milwaukee, Wis.



Jeremy P. Cares ◆  
Nampa, Idaho



Nicole M. Chernohorsky ▲  
Hartland, Wis.



Andrew M. Dais ▲  
Milwaukee, Wis.



Katherine A. Danalis ■  
Winona, Minn.



Brian P. Davison ✪  
Markesan, Wis.



Sean C. De Frain ◆  
Phoenix, Ariz.



Lisa R. DeJarnett ●  
Kennesaw, Ga.



Justin T. Diestler ◆  
Shawano, Wis.



Amy G. Dirksen ●  
Mason City, Iowa



Seth P. Dorn ◆  
Oshkosh, Wis.



Michelle M. Dressel ■  
South Shore, S.D.



Melissa S. Ehlke ▲  
Watertown, Wis.



Thomas M. Engelbrecht ◆  
Yorkville, Ill.



Jessica M. Falck ●  
Grand Rapids, Minn.



Jonathan M. Favorite ●  
Eagle River, Wis.



Richard A. Fink ●  
Mayville, Wis.



Ryan B. Finkbeiner ▲  
Saginaw, Mich.



Katie N. Fischer ▲  
South Milwaukee, Wis.

■ Bachelor of Science in Education—Early Childhood Education

☆ Bachelor of Science in Education—Staff Ministry

✪ Staff Ministry Certification

X Bachelor of Science in Education—Elementary Education and Staff Ministry



**Daniel J. Frey** ◆  
Belleville, Mich.



**Laura M. Fry** ●  
Normal, Ill.



**Donald B. Fuhrmann** ▲  
New London, Wis.



**Adam S. Gawel** ◆  
Midland, Mich.



**Joseph B. Gumm** ●  
West Chicago, Ill.



**Erica J. Haefner** ●  
Seward, Neb.



**Lizette A. Hahnke** ▲  
Fond du Lac, Wis.



**Holly F. Hartmann** ▲  
Eagle River, Wis.



**James M. Hein** ◆  
Saginaw, Mich.



**Kelly N. Heldman** ▲  
Orange Park, Fla.



**Paul D. Heldman** ✕  
Jenera, Ohio



**Elizabeth N. Hella** ▲  
Watertown, Wis.



**Abbie R. Henke** ▲  
Appleton, Wis.



**Kelly A. Hering** ▲  
Beaver Dam, Wis.



**Daniel R. Hill** ▲  
Two Rivers, Wis.



**Christopher M. Hintz** ▲  
Wauwatosa, Wis.



**Rachael L. Hinz** ■  
New London, Wis.



**William S. Hinz** ●  
Pickett, Wis.



**Michele L. Hoppe** ▲  
Mishicot, Wis.



**Rachel M. Horneber** ▲  
Pittsford, N.Y.



**Jessica M. Horstman** ■  
West Salem, Wis.



**Jacqueline I. Horton** ▲  
Watertown, Wis.



**Christina A. Houser** ▲  
Caledonia, Minn.



**Andrew J. Hoyer** ★  
Jacksonville, Fla.



**Danielle M. Humann** ●  
Plymouth, Minn.



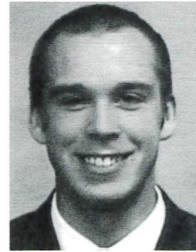
**Jeremy J. Husby** ◆  
Westland, Mich.



**Jacquelyn M. Ibberson** ▲  
Sleepy Eye, Minn.



**Elizabeth R. Ibisch** ●  
Wauwatosa, Wis.



**Paul S. Ihde** ▲  
Hartford, Wis.



**Benjamin M. Jaeger** ▲  
Johnson Creek, Wis.

- ◆ Bachelor of Arts
- \* Seminary Certification Program
- ▲ Bachelor of Science in Education—Elementary Education
- Bachelor of Science in Education—Secondary Education



**Angela M. Jastrow** ▲  
Eagle River, Wis.



**Elizabeth A. Kadow** ■  
Green Bay, Wis.



**Dominique Kiesling** ▲  
Saint Francis, Minn.



**Martha A. Kitzrow** ●  
Fond du Lac, Wis.



**Aaron M. Kjenstad** ▲  
Aberdeen, S.D.



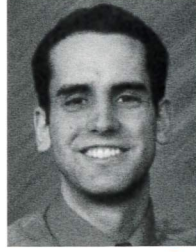
**Kathryn M. Kleist** ■  
Appleton, Wis.



**Sarah J. Klug** ▲  
Jefferson, Wis.



**Katie E. Koch** ▲  
Monroe, Mich.



**Anthony D. Kohler** ●  
Saginaw, Mich.



**Sarah S. Kohls** ▲  
Watertown, S.D.



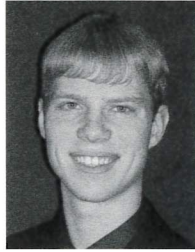
**Leslie M. Kolb** ▲  
Prairie City, S.D.



**Sarah L. Koppen** ▲  
Colorado Springs, Colo.



**Brian E. Koschnitzke** ◆  
Menomonee Falls, Wis.



**Daniel J. Krieger** ◆  
Tecumseh, Mich.



**Stephen P. Kuehl** ◆  
Hartford, Wis.



**Paul M. Kuehn** ◆  
Neenah, Wis.



**Faith E. Kurbis** ▲  
Tacoma, Wash.



**Rebekah A. Kurtzahn** ▲  
Coon Rapids, Minn.



**Jeremy D. Laitinen** ◆  
New Ulm, Minn.



**Matthew J. Langebartels** ◆  
Imlay City, Mich.



**Peter A. Langebartels** ●  
Imlay City, Mich.



**Kevin D. Lemke** ●  
Weyauwega, Wis.



**Abigail B. Leyrer** ▲  
New Ulm, Minn.



**Bonnie J. Lierman** ▲  
Menomonie, Wis.



**Erik J. Lindenberg** ★  
Milwaukee, Wis.



**Jessica J. Lindholm** ▲  
Delano, Minn.



**Amanda S. Loewen** ▲  
Phoenix, Ariz.



**Harvey B. Longshore III** \*  
New Ulm, Minn.



**Kathleen K. Luehring** ▲  
Lake Mills, Wis.



**Kathryn A. Luetke** ▲  
Olivia, Minn.

- Bachelor of Science in Education—Early Childhood Education
- ★ Bachelor of Science in Education—Staff Ministry
- ◆ Staff Ministry Certification
- ✕ Bachelor of Science in Education—Elementary Education and Staff Ministry



Michael N. Luetke ▲  
West Bend, Wis.



Jessica L. Manthey ●  
Saginaw, Mich.



Amanda L. Marquardt ●  
Weyauwega, Wis.



Anna M. Martin ■  
Muskego, Wis.



Elizabeth A. Martin ▲  
Wauwatosa, Wis.



Bethany N. Mashke ▲  
Benton Harbor, Mich.



Ryan J. Mattek ◆  
Watertown, Wis.



Melissa J. Matteson ■  
Tecumseh, Mich.



Albert H. Meier II ◆  
Spirit, Wis.



Dorothy M. Meier ▲  
Rib Lake, Wis.



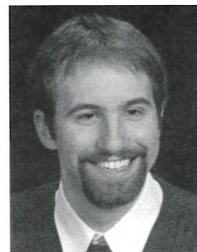
Tricia A. Mensching ■  
Marshfield, Wis.



Daniel R. Moffett ◆  
Saginaw, Mich.



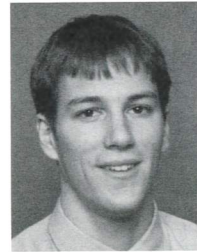
Kristy L. Mueller ▲  
Van Dyne, Wis.



Matthew S. Natsis ◆  
Saline, Mich.



Andrew T. Naumann ◆  
Mobridge, S.D.



Kyle J. Needham ▲  
Watertown, Wis.



Rachel M. Nemitz ▲  
Neillsville, Wis.



Kurt M. Nielsen ●  
Apple Valley, Minn.



Sarah J. Nolte ●  
St. Joseph, Mich.



Kevin J. Ohland ▲  
Beaver Dam, Wis.



Melodie L. Ohm ■  
New Ulm, Minn.



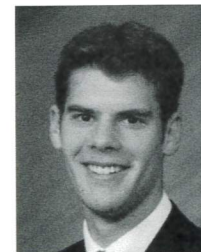
Jonathan E. Olson ◆  
New Ulm, Minn.



Joshua S. Olson ◆  
Evans, Ga.



Brittany E. Page ▲  
Oconomowoc, Wis.



David A. Panitzke ◆  
Muskego, Wis.



David L. Parsons ◆  
Montrose, Colo.



Anne L. Petersen ▲  
Eagle River, Wis.



Ellen C. Prah ▲  
Eau Claire, Wis.



Katie S. Priebe ▲  
Bay City, Mich.



Beth E. Putz ●  
Fond du Lac, Wis.

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**Bramdeo Ramgolam** ◆  
Castries, St. Lucia



**Amy A. Reede** ●  
West Bend, Wis.



**Kirsten L. Rehborg** ▲  
Madison, Wis.



**James A. Reichert** ◆  
New Berlin, Wis.



**Melissa K. Reichley** ▲  
Rawson, Ohio



**Marie L. Reu** ▲  
Fort Atkinson, Wis.



**Jennifer S. Rusch** ■  
Jackson, Wis.



**Jason E. Schmidt** ▲  
Sleepy Eye, Minn.



**Sara M. Schmidt** ▲  
Benton Harbor, Mich.



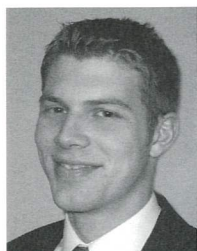
**Tami K. Schmidt** ▲  
Kenai, Alaska



**Brian J. Schuessler** ◆  
Livonia, Mich.



**Jessica D. Schuetze** ▲  
Mequon, Wis.



**Joel M. Schwartz** ◆  
Waterloo, Wis.



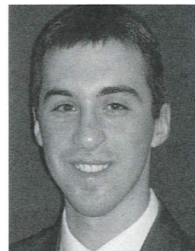
**Nancy M. Seymour** ▲  
Hayward, Wis.



**Louise A. Sherwood** ●  
Menomonee Falls, Wis.



**Timothy J. Shrimpton** ◆  
Medina, Ohio



**Bradley L. Sorn** ▲  
Cincinnati, Ohio



**Melanie K. Sosinski** ▲  
Saginaw, Mich.



**Jacob M. Spiess** X  
Eagle River, Wis.



**Lorelei A. Steele** ▲  
Mendota Heights, Minn.



**Michelle A. Steffenhagen** ▲  
Glendale, Ariz.



**Jennifer L. Steffens** ▲  
Burlington, Wis.



**Nicole M. Sternhagen** ▲  
Appleton, Wis.



**Scott H. Stevenson** ▲  
Pigeon, Mich.



**Heather M. Stippich** ■  
Juneau, Wis.



**Aaron M. Strong** ◆  
Greenfield, Minn.



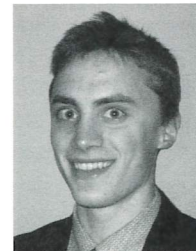
**Heidi J. Stuebs** ▲  
Kent, Wash.



**Amanda J. Suhr** ▲  
Appleton, Wis.



**Christina H. Sulzle** ▲  
Wautoma, Wis.



**Joel T. Sutton** ◆  
New Ulm, Minn.

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Lauren E. Tetzlaff ▲  
Oakfield, Wis.



Jackson R. Thiesfeldt ▲  
Federal Way, Wash.



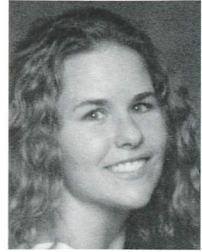
Matthew T. Tobeck ◆  
Humble, Texas



Luther A. Tollefson ◆  
Waukesha, Wis.



Tanya J. Tranberg ●  
De Pere, Wis.



Amanda T. Traucht ▲  
Rosemount, Minn.



Jackie I. Uhlenbrauck ▲  
Appleton, Wis.



Andrew W. Van Weele ▲  
Waukesha, Wis.



Aaron S. Wakeman ▲  
Manitowoc, Wis.



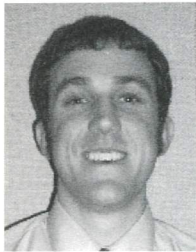
Joshua D. Walker ▲  
New Ulm, Minn.



Michelle L. Weihing X  
Hastings, Minn.



Melissa J. Weiss ■  
Iron Ridge, Wis.



James R. Wendland ▲  
New Ulm, Minn.



Elizabeth M. Westendorf ▲  
Mequon, Wis.



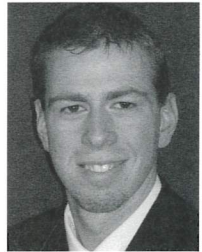
Brian P. Westgate ◆  
Blissfield, Mich.



Seth A. Wilke ◆  
Redwood Falls, Minn.



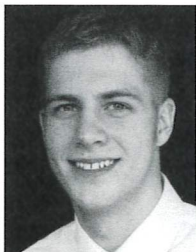
Rachel E. Wilkens ▲  
Fort Atkinson, Wis.



Jason M. Williams ▲  
Milwaukee, Wis.



Jessica M. Winkel ■  
Arvada, Colo.



Jerome R. Wolff ▲  
Caledonia, Minn.



Donna M. Wolle ☆  
Tempe, Ariz.



Robin A. Zeratsky ◆  
Green Bay, Wis.



Jacob N. Zimmermann ▲  
Sanborn, Minn.

**In absentia:**



Craig T. Born \*  
Cleveland, Wis.



Ronald R. Palm \*  
Jefferson, Wis.

**Not pictured:**

Theodore W. Kufahl ●  
La Crosse, Wis.

Leah V. Martin ▲  
Muskego, Wis.

Samantha I. O'Connell ▲  
Waukesha, Wis.

Alex G. Pudlo ◆  
Eagle River, Wis.

Timothy R. Raddatz ▲  
Kaukauna, Wis.

Jessica M. Scharrer ■  
Hemlock, Mich.

Lisa M. Storicks \*  
Newark, Del.

Ardell W. Tesmer ☆  
Elgin, Minn.

◆ Bachelor of Arts

\* Seminary Certification Program

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## Call assignments

Of this year's 195 graduates, 141 are teachers or staff ministers who are now eligible to serve WELS churches or schools. Twenty-eight deferred assignment, choosing to pursue further education or other areas of service. Three declined assignment. On May 15, the Conference of Presidents assigned 85 new graduates to their first full-time calls and reassigned 23 past graduates.

### Teachers

**Bain, Rachel C.**, to St. Mark, Watertown, Wis.  
**Bare, Kathryn M.**, to Shepherd of the Hills, Greeley, Colo.  
**Barenz, Dana M.**, to St. Stephen, Fallbrook, Calif.  
**Bauer, Matthew T.**, to English, Viroqua, Wis.  
**Beyer, Angela M.**, to Divine Savior, Doral, Fla.  
**Braun, Deborah K.**, to Immanuel, Greenville, Wis.  
**Breinling, Jeffery C.**, to Jerusalem, Morton Grove, Ill.  
**Chernohorsky, Nicole M.**, to Pilgrim, Minneapolis, Minn.  
**Christian, Patrick D.**, to St. Peter, Weyauwega, Wis.  
**Corona, James W.**, to St. Paul, Norfolk, Neb.  
**Dais, Andrew M.**, to Redeemer, Tucson, Ariz.  
**Danalis, Katherine A.**, to St. Thomas, Goodyear, Ariz.  
**Dirksen, Amy G.**, to California LHS, Wildomar, Calif.  
**Dittbenner, Hayley J.**, to Our Savior, Bylas, Ariz.  
**DuFore, Joseph D.**, to Fox Valley LHS, Appleton, Wis.  
**Ehlke, Melissa S.**, to Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich.  
**Falck, Jessica M.**, to Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich.  
**Favorite, Erin I.**, to Divine Savior, Shawano, Wis.  
**Ferguson, John E.**, to Our Savior, San Antonio, Texas  
**Fink, Richard A.**, to Nebraska LHS, Waco, Neb.  
**Fischer, Katie N.**, to St. Philip, Milwaukee  
**Fuhrmann, Donald B.**, to Abiding Word, Houston, Texas  
**Gumm, Joseph B.**, to Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis.  
**Haefner, Erica J.**, to St. Mark, Mankato, Minn.  
**Hahnke, Lizette A.**, to St. Paul, South Haven, Mich.  
**Hartzell, Sarah J.**, to Redeemer, Tucson, Ariz.  
**Heldman, Paul D.**, to Gethsemane, Omaha, Neb.  
**Henke, Abbie R.**, to Good Shepherd, Saint Peters, Mo.  
**Hering, Kelly A.**, to St. Luke, Saginaw, Mich.  
**Hill, Daniel R.**, to Great Plains LHS, Watertown, S.D.  
**Hintz, Christopher M.**, to Zion, Denver, Colo.  
**Hinz, William S.**, to Emanuel Redeemer, Brockway, Mich.  
**Hoppe, Michele L.**, to Trinity, El Paso, Texas  
**Horneber, Rachel M.**, to St. John, Lomira, Wis.  
**Ibberson, Jacquelyn M.**, to Garden Homes, Milwaukee  
**Ihde, Paul S.**, to Zion, Columbus, Wis.  
**Jaeger, Laura M.**, to St. John, Waterloo, Wis.  
**Kadow, Elizabeth A.**, to Shoreland LHS, Somers, Wis.

**Kiesling, Dominique**, to Immanuel, Waupaca, Wis.  
**Kitzrow, Martha A.**, to Nebraska LHS, Waco, Neb.  
**Kjenstad, Aaron M.**, to St. Peter, Saint Peter, Minn.  
**Kleist, Kathryn M.**, to La Crescent Christian Childcare Center, La Crescent, Minn.  
**Kolb, Leslie M.**, to Gethsemane, Omaha, Neb.  
**Kurbis, Faith E.**, to St. Matthew, Janesville, Wis.  
**Kurtzahn, Rebekah A.**, to Cross of Glory, Baton Rouge, La.  
**Langebartels, Peter A.**, to East Fork, Whiteriver, Ariz.  
**Lemke, Kevin D.**, to Trinity, Bangor, Mich.  
**Leyrer, Abigail B.**, to Bethany, Kenosha, Wis.  
**Lierman, Bonnie J.**, to Scarville (ELS), Scarville, Iowa  
**Lindholm, Jessica J.**, to Immanuel, Medford, Wis.  
**Loewen, Amanda S.**, to St. Paul, Cannon Falls, Minn.  
**Luetke, Kathryn A.**, to St. Mark, Citrus Heights, Calif.  
**Maki, Christopher W.**, to St. Andrew, Saint Paul Park, Minn.  
**Manthey, Jessica L.**, to Great Plains LHS, Watertown, S.D.  
**Marquardt, Amanda L.**, to St. Mark, Lincoln, Neb.  
**Martin, Anna M.**, to King of Kings, Maitland, Fla.  
**Mashke, Bethany N.**, to Mt. Olive, Overland Park, Kan.  
**Meier, Dorothy M.**, to St. Paul, Howards Grove, Wis.  
**Micheel, Sarah L.**, to Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis.  
**Moldenhauer, Mark R.**, to Our Savior, Bylas, Ariz.  
**Needham, Kyle J.**, to Timothy, Saint Louis Park, Minn.  
**Nelson, Joshua J.**, to St. Paul First, North Hollywood, Calif.  
**Nemitz, Rachel M.**, to Zion, Rhinelander, Wis.  
**Nolte, Sarah J.**, to St. John, Wrightstown, Wis.  
**O'Connell, Samantha I.**, to St. Paul, Muskego, Wis.  
**Ohland, Kevin J.**, to Zion, Greenleaf, Wis.  
**Ohm, Melodie L.**, to Shepherd Of Peace, Powell, Ohio  
**Page, Brittany E.**, to Martin Luther, Oshkosh, Wis.  
**Petersen, Anne L.**, to Lakewood (ELS), Lakewood, Wash.  
**Prahl, Ellen C.**, to St. John, Montello, Wis.  
**Priebe, Katie S.**, to King of Kings, Maitland, Fla.  
**Putz, Beth E.**, to Trinity, Waukesha, Wis.  
**Raddatz, Timothy R.**, to St. John, Goodhue, Minn.  
**Reichley, Melissa K.**, to St. Peter, Modesto, Calif.

**Reu, Marie L.**, to St. John, Lake City, Minn.  
**Schmidt, Jason E.**, to Christ the Lord, Clearwater, Fla.  
**Schmidt, Tami K.**, to Pilgrim, Minneapolis, Minn.  
**Schulmeister, Nathan F.**, to St. Croix LHS, West Saint Paul, Minn.  
**Seeger, Stephanie J.**, to Risen Savior, Milwaukee  
**Seymour, Nancy M.**, to Our Savior (ELS), Naples, Fla.  
**Sherwood, Louise A.**, to Resurrection, Rochester, Minn.  
**Spier, Anneliese M.**, to Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis.  
**Spiess, Jacob M.**, to Trinity, Kiel, Wis.  
**Steffenhagen, Michelle A.**, to Lord and Savior, Crystal Lake, Ill.  
**Steffens, Jennifer L.**, to Grace, Falls Church, Va.  
**Steinke, Craig M.**, to Bethany, Kenosha, Wis.  
**Stevenson, Scott H.**, to St. Paul, Algoma, Wis.  
**Stippich, Heather M.**, to La Crescent Christian Childcare Center, La Crescent, Minn.  
**Stockton, Richard L.**, to Bethlehem, Hortonville, Wis.  
**Stuebs, Heidi J.**, to Immanuel, Salem, Ore.  
**Thiesfeldt, Jackson R.**, to Trinity, Belle Plaine, Minn.  
**Tranberg, Tanya J.**, to Northland LHS, Mosinee, Wis.  
**Uhlenbrauck, Jackie I.**, to Emanuel, Tawas City, Mich.  
**Van Weele, Andrew W.**, to Lord of Life, Friendswood, Texas  
**Vasold, Steven T.**, to Christ the Lord, Houston, Texas  
**Walker, Joshua D.**, to Immanuel, Fort Worth, Texas  
**Weihing, Michelle L.**, to Our Savior, San Antonio, Texas  
**Wendland, James R.**, to Immanuel, Salem, Ore.  
**Westendorf, Elizabeth M.**, to Divine Savior, Doral, Fla.  
**Wilkins, Rachel E.**, to St. Paul, Plymouth, Neb.  
**Williams, Jason M.**, to St. John, Wrightstown, Wis.  
**Windschitl, Sara J.**, to Illinois LHS, Crete, Ill.  
**Wisniewski, Michael C.**, to California LHS, Wildomar, Calif.  
**Wolff, Jerome R.**, to St. John, Sturgis, Mich.  
**Wurster, Matthew E.**, to Trinity, Belle Plaine, Minn.  
**Zimmermann, Jacob N.**, to Zion, South Milwaukee, Wis.

### Staff ministers

**Davison, Brian P.**, to St. Marcus, Milwaukee  
**Lindenberg, Erik J.**, to Christ, Eden Prairie/Faith, Excelsior, Minn.

## Meet the editorial staff—uncut

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

### Connecting with his audience

*Forward in Christ*'s newest devotion writer, Peter Panitzke, is a self-described “picture person.”

“I have no artistic ability,” he explains, “but I tend to see passages in pictures. So don't be surprised in my devotions if I describe the picture that comes to my mind. For example, ‘There is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus’ (Romans 8:1). My picture is that I step into a Plexiglas tube—now I'm in Christ. Satan throws all kinds of garbage at me—‘Look at all that you've done.’ I can see it. But none of it hits me because I'm in Christ.”

Panitzke doesn't limit his picture language to writing. His sermons also come alive through his storytelling ability, as many of his members at St. Paul, Muskego, Wis., will tell you. Panitzke characterizes his preaching style as “conversational.”



Peter Panitzke and his family at his oldest son's graduation from Martin Luther College.

He notes, “I enjoy preaching. I recently saw a rock star in his late 50s being interviewed. He was asked why he kept on touring. He said that there was nothing better than connecting with the audience. I feel the same way about the congregation. When you are applying God's Word to the congregation and you can see that people are following the line of thought and benefiting from that Word—there's nothing better.”

Panitzke and his wife, Joni, have been married 25 years. They have four children—Sarah, 23; David, 22; Stephen, 17; and Nathan, 16.

## Looking back

*In this, the magazine's 90th anniversary, we bring you articles and news from previous issues.*

### From the Aug. 11, 1974, issue—

*John C. Lawrenz, South Atlantic district reporter, writes:*

“‘The Old Gospel for a New Age’ was a theme that fit the occasion as the nine-month-old South Atlantic District of the Wisconsin Synod assembled on June 11 and 12 for its first biennial convention. The site was the Gold Key Inn in Orlando, Florida, a spot less than 50 miles from the launching pads of Cape Kennedy. What could be

more modern than a trip to the moon? Yet less than five years after the first man stepped on the dusty lunar surface, activity at Florida's moonport is on the downturn. Not so the activity of God's servants bearing the everlasting Gospel! Pastor Raymond Wiechmann, who was elected the District's first president at a special organizing convention last September, welcomed 43 voting delegates (19 pastors, 4 male teachers, and 20 laymen). Each delegate displayed an observable eagerness to get on with the Lord's work and to launch the infant District into Synodical orbit as a full partner in the task of sharing the ageless truths of God's Word with sinners everywhere. . . .”

## Obituaries

### Kurt W. Troge 1950-2004

Kurt Troge was born Sept. 20, 1950, in Appleton, Wis. He died May 24, 2004, in Manitowoc, Wis.

A 1973 graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., he served at Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich.; Our Savior, Jacksonville, Fla.; Northland Lutheran High School, Merrill, Wis.; Minnesota Lutheran High School, New Ulm, Minn.; and Manitowoc Lutheran High School, Manitowoc, Wis.

He was preceded in death by his mother. He is survived by his wife, Deb; his father; two daughters; three sons; one granddaughter; one brother; and three sisters.

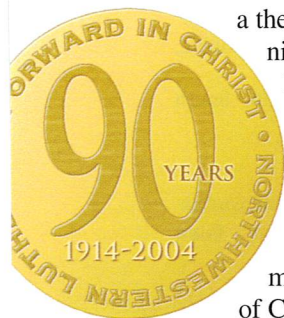
Kurt Troge appeared on the cover of *Forward in Christ* in September 2003. The accompanying article, “Miracles,” detailed his battle with brain cancer and the great faith he exhibited throughout his illness. To read more about him, go to [www.wels.net](http://www.wels.net), jumpword “ficarchive,” and search by the keyword phrase “Kurt Troge.”

### Gerhard August Emil Schmeling 1904-2004

Gerhard Schmeling was born Dec. 29, 1904, in Milwaukee, Wis. He died May 31, 2004, in Milwaukee.

A 1929 graduate of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Wauwatosa, Wis., he served as pastor at Henry, Clark, and Florence, S.D.; Trinity, Franksville, Wis.; Bethel, Milwaukee; and St. John and Zion, Rib Falls, Wis. He also served as part-time chaplain at Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Services, Milwaukee, and as a visitation pastor for several congregations.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Anna; four children; and one grandchild. He is survived by one brother, two sisters, three children, 20 grandchildren, 39 great-grandchildren, and four great-great-grandchildren.



## District news

### Minnesota

Three Martin Luther College coaches in New Ulm, Minn., received the Coach of the Year award for the Upper Midwest Athletic Conference: football coach **Dennis Gorsline**, soccer coach **Paul Koelpin**, and cross country coach **Mark Paustian**.

### South Atlantic



On May 23, God blessed Grace, Spring Hill, Fla., with four baptisms and five adult confirmations. Pictured: Paul Seager, pastor at Spring Hill, with the newly baptized and confirmed.

### Happy Anniversary!

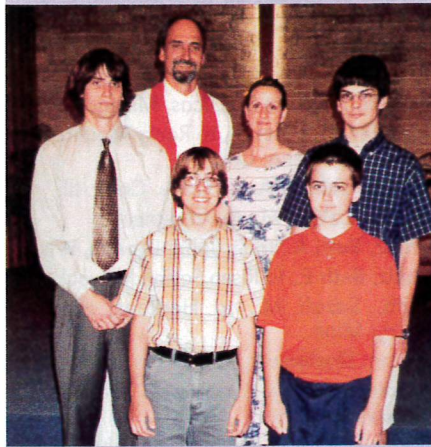
**NE—St. Paul, Norfolk, Neb.**, is celebrating the 25th anniversary of its radio broadcast ministry, "Worship with the Word," by upgrading its broadcast and focusing more on outreach. Begun in 1979, this live, one-hour Sunday morning broadcast reaches a multi-state area.

**NW—David Lauber**, vice principal at Winnebago Lutheran Academy, Fond du Lac, Wis., is celebrating his 40th anniversary in the teaching ministry this year.

**SEW—**On June 20, members of **St. John, Wauwatosa, Wis.**, observed the 75th anniversary of their church building. Dr. Theophil Otto played the organ at the dedication on June 23, 1929, and at the 75th anniversary service.

**WW—**Members of **First, La Crosse, Wis.**, are celebrating the 150th anniversary of their church building this year.

### Minnesota



Ken Cherney Jr. was commissioned as director of the Caribbean Christian Training Institute, Antigua, West Indies, on June 13, at St. John, New Ulm, Minn. A former Martin Luther College professor, Cherney now will be training potential church leaders in Antigua so that a confessionally sound church is sustained there. Here Cherney poses with his wife, Kristine, and their sons.

### Minnesota



Two Martin Luther College students, Brian Schuessler (middle) and Mark Parsons (right), host a student-run talk/comedy/variety show each week during the school year. The show, *Boo Brodie*, is now being aired on the public access television channel in New Ulm, Minn. The show's purpose is to provide free entertainment for the Martin Luther College student body. President Karl Gurgel (left) appeared on the show in April.

These pastors are the reporters for the districts featured this month: MN—Jeffrey Bovee; NE—Donald Wichmann; NW—Joel Lillo; SA—Christopher Kruschel; SEW—Scott Oelhafen; WW—Martin Baur.

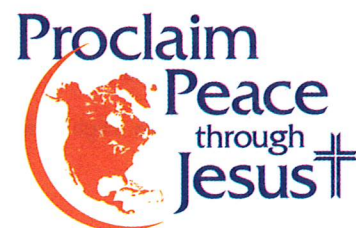
## What's all the buzz about?

If you've read any WELS publication lately or been to a WELS gathering, you've probably heard about North American outreach. At the 2003 synod convention, delegates voted to make North American outreach the synod's emphasis for the next four years. The synod's leaders have spent the past year putting a plan into place to do just that. What does all this mean, though?

Parish Services administrator Bruce Becker, appointed in February to coordinate the synod's North American outreach plan, says, "The apostle Peter's words really summarize what this North American outreach emphasis is all about: 'In your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have' (1 Peter 3:15). North American outreach is all about telling more people about Jesus. That's why our theme for the next four years is 'Proclaim Peace through Jesus.'"

To help members and congregations do that, congregation visits from district leaders are planned for each of the four years of the North American outreach emphasis. The purpose of the congregation visit in 2004 is to encourage, equip, and involve every WELS member in personal outreach and every WELS church in community outreach.

The visits, scheduled to occur between Sept. 1 and Dec. 15, will either be made during your congregation's worship service or Bible study hour or at a leadership group meeting. For more information, contact Becker at 414-256-3228, bps@sab.wels.net.



**CHANGES IN MINISTRY**

**Pastors**

**Bauer, Thomas E.**, to Shoreland LHS, Somers, Wis.  
**Bitter, Thad D.**, to Grace, Portland, Ore.  
**Deutschlander, Daniel**, to retirement  
**John, Hermann K.**, to retirement  
**Kante, Paul E.**, to retirement  
**Kobs, Russel G.**, to Our Savior, Burlington, Iowa  
**Liesener, Thomas A.**, to retirement  
**Michel, Robert H.**, to retirement  
**Plitzuweit, Jerald J.**, to assistant chaplain to Europe  
**Radloff, James J.**, to retirement  
**Schaeewe, Edward A.**, to retirement  
**Valleskey, David J.**, to retirement  
**Vertz, Karl J.**, to retirement

**Teachers**

**Adickes, Gloria K.**, to retirement  
**Arndt, Joan**, to Palos, Palos Heights, Ill.  
**Berg, Amanda L.**, to Salem, Milwaukee  
**Breitkreutz, Susan A.**, to St. Mark, Watertown, Wis.  
**Brown, Eric R.**, to Southern Lutheran Academy, Lakeland, Fla.  
**Buch, Nathan M.**, to St. John, Dowagiac, Mich.  
**Carbon, Brooke L.**, to Ascension, Sarasota, Fla.  
**Dankert, Anita A.**, to retirement  
**Doletzky, Deborah C.**, to St. Paul, Muskego, Wis.  
**Eppe, Julie K.**, to Jerusalem, Morton Grove, Ill.  
**Hahnke, Seth M.**, to Mt. Lebanon, Milwaukee  
**Hinz, Rachel L.**, to Emanuel Redeemer, Yale, Mich.  
**Holman, Cynthia L.**, to St. Marcus, Milwaukee  
**Hosbach, Andrea R.**, to St. John (Barre Mills), La Crosse, Wis.  
**Jaekel, Susan M.**, to retirement  
**Jordahl, Jody L.**, to St. John, Lewiston, Minn.  
**Kieselhorst, Janet L.**, to retirement  
**Klindworth, Robert F.**, to Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.  
**Knoblock, Susan**, to Grace, Portland, Ore.  
**Korth, Denise A.**, to Zion, Rhinelander, Wis.  
**Kutz, Gregory C.**, to Lakeside LHS, Lake Mills, Wis.  
**Liebenow, Janet L.**, to Cross of Glory, Washington, Mich.  
**Marquardt, Elizabeth**, to St. Paul, Muskego, Wis.  
**Mildebrandt, Kathleen**, to Christ, Eagle River, Wis.  
**Miles, Tommy**, to Hope High School, Milwaukee

**Mueller, Heide**, to St. Paul, Onalaska, Wis.  
**Palm, Angela M.**, to Garden Homes, Milwaukee  
**Perry, Anthony E.**, to Salem, Owosso, Mich.  
**Potratz, Elisabeth S.**, to Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee  
**Press, Anne L.**, to St. Thomas/*Santo Tomas*, Phoenix, Ariz.  
**Randall, Ryan**, to St. Lucas, Milwaukee  
**Schaefer, Michael G.**, to Rocky Mountain LHS, Northglenn, Colo.  
**Scharf, William A.**, to Crete, Crete, Ill.  
**Schultz, LaVon M.**, to retirement  
**Schulz, Beth A.**, to St. John, Lannon, Wis.  
**Schulz, Beth E.**, to Risen Savior, Milwaukee  
**Smith, Sarah M.**, to Heritage, Apple Valley, Minn.  
**Steffan, Darlene R.**, to retirement  
**Streckert, Cheryl L.**, to Good Shepherd, Burnsville, Minn.  
**Tarver, Jessica**, to St. Luke, Kenosha, Wis.  
**Tesch, Barbara A.**, to Trinity, Marinette, Wis.  
**Thompson, Monica**, to St. Paul, Livonia, Mich.  
**Westphal, Diane M.**, to retirement  
**Zuelke, Lynne M.**, to St. John, Lomira, Wis.  
**Staff minister**  
**Hill, Robert A.**, to Holy Word, Austin, Texas

**ANNIVERSARIES**

**Freeland, Mich.**—St. Matthew (125). Aug. 1 & Sept. 12. Service, 9 A.M. 989-695-9758.  
**Saginaw, Mich.**—Bethany (50). Aug. 8. Service, 10:30 A.M. Family picnic to follow. 989-793-7747.  
**St. Paul, Minn.**—Divinity (50). Aug. 8. Service, 9:30 A.M. Outdoor fellowship to follow. 651-776-1786.  
**Watertown, Wis.**—St. Mark (150). Aug. 14 & Sept. 18. Service, 6 P.M. Aug. 15 & Sept. 19. Services, 7:30, 9, & 10:45 A.M. Sept. 19. Archeology Speaker. Service, 3 P.M. 920-262-8500.  
**Fox Lake, Wis.**—St. John (100). Aug. 15. Services, 8 & 10 A.M. 920-928-3250.  
**Wausau, Wis.**—Grace (120). Aug. 29. Service, 10 A.M. Meal to follow. RSVP, 715-675-3751.  
**Loretto, Minn.**—Salem (100). Sept. 19. Services, 8 & 10:30 A.M. Catered meal, 11:30 A.M. 763-498-7281.  
**Oak Grove (rural Juneau), Wis.**—St. Peter (125). Sept. 19. Service, 10 A.M. Dinner to follow. RSVP, 920-386-4619.  
**Topeka, Kan.**—Beautiful Savior (25). Sept. 19. Service, 2 P.M. Joel Pankow, topekawels@hotmail.com.  
**Phoenix, Ariz.**—Deer Valley (25). Sept. 25. Service, 6 P.M. Sept. 26. Service, 9 A.M. Luncheon to follow at Iron Works Bellair, 11 A.M. Tickets available. 623-581-1198.

**COMING EVENTS**

**Church dedication**—Riverview, Appleton, Wis. Aug. 29. Services, 8 & 9:30 A.M. Tours to follow. Service, 3:30 P.M. Luncheon and program to follow. Dennis Belter, 920-733-2018.  
**WELS North Atlantic District Labor Day retreat**—Sept. 4-6. Camp Taconic, Hinsdale, Mass. Worship, recreation, and programs for all ages. Meals included. Judy Becker, 518-210-5590.  
**WELS South Atlantic District Labor Day retreat**—Sept. 4-6. F. D. R. State Park, Pine Mountain, Ga. Tracy Heinitz, 770-985-5983.  
**Church grand opening**—Sept. 12. Open house, 2-5 P.M. Water of Life, Las Vegas, Nev. Matthew Vogt, 702-253-7087.  
**Family ministry training**—sponsored by Wisconsin Lutheran Child & Family Service. Sept. 17, 9 A.M.-4 P.M. Holiday Inn Select, Naperville, Ill. Cost, \$89/person (includes meals & materials). 888-685-9522, ext. 209.  
**Reunion**—(35th). Michigan Lutheran Seminary class of 1969. Sept. 24-26. Chicago, Ill. Esther (Brassow) Huebner, 410-203-2020.  
**Regional women's retreat**—Oct. 1-3. Massanetta Springs Conference Center, Harrisonburg, Va. Lynnette Hupman, 703-361-1419.  
**"A day at the Seminary"**—sponsored by Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Auxiliary. Oct. 2, 8 A.M.-1 P.M. Worship, 9 A.M. Eunice Heckendorf, 262-677-2498.  
**Run for the prize 5K run/walk**—sponsored by Immanuel, Findlay, Ohio. Oct. 16, 10 A.M. Dave Braun, 800-688-8151, ext. 210.  
**Marriage enrichment retreat**—Nov. 6 & 7. Heidel House, Green Lake, Wis. \$250/couple, including housing, meals, and materials. Wisconsin Lutheran Child & Family Service, 888-685-9522, ext. 201.  
**NAMES WANTED**  
**Vacaville/Travis Air Force Base, Calif.**—Scott Stone, 707-469-1546.  
**Military bases in Colorado Springs, Colo.**—James Seiltz, 719-599-0200.  
**Women**—serving as spiritual leaders in WELS congregations. WELS Women's Ministry Committee. Peg Raabe, 414-256-3278.

**POSITIONS AVAILABLE**  
**Time of Grace**—a multi-media WELS ministry based in Milwaukee. Director of communications and marketing/communications assistant needed. For more information, contact Executive Director Jim Johnson, 414-562-8463.  
 To place an announcement, call 414-256-3210; bulletinboard@sab.wels.net. Deadline is eight weeks before publication date. An updated bulletin board is available at www.wels.net, jumpword "bulletinboard."

Picture this



Veteran missionary Roger Sprain with his first Puerto Rico vicar, Carl Leyrer (left), and his 2002-03 Puerto Rico vicar, Seth Haakenson (right). Leyrer vicared with Sprain in 1971-72.

Submitted by Carl Toepel

Send pictures to "Picture this," *Forward in Christ*, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222; fic@sab.wels.net. On a separate sheet, give us information about the photo. Those whose photos are chosen will receive a small gift.



Potluck poll results

In the May issue, we asked, "What fruit of the Spirit do you pray for most often?" based on Galatians 5:22,23: "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control."

With a total of 32 responses, here are the results:

- Patience (9)
- Self-control (7)
- Love (6)
- Peace (5)
- Faithfulness (2)
- Gentleness (1)
- Kindness (1)
- Joy (1)
- Goodness (0)

Read Gary Baumler's editorial, "Patience," for more about our struggles with fruits of the Spirit (p. 38).

The cracked pot

A water carrier in India had two large pots. Each hung on the end of a pole that he carried across his neck. One pot was perfect and always delivered a full portion of water at the end of the long walk from the stream to the master's house. The other pot was cracked and arrived only half full.

The perfect pot was proud of its accomplishments, but the cracked pot was ashamed that it could do only half of what it had been made to do. One day, it spoke to the water carrier.

"I am ashamed of myself, and I want to apologize to you."

"Why?" asked the carrier.

"This crack in my side causes water to leak out. Because of my flaws, you don't get full value from your efforts," the pot said.

The water carrier said, "I want you to notice the flowers along the path. Can you see that there are flowers only on your side of the path, but not on the other pot's side? I have always known about your flaw, and I took advantage of it. I planted flower seeds on your side of the path, and every day while we walked back from the stream, you've watered them. For two years I have been able to pick these beautiful flowers

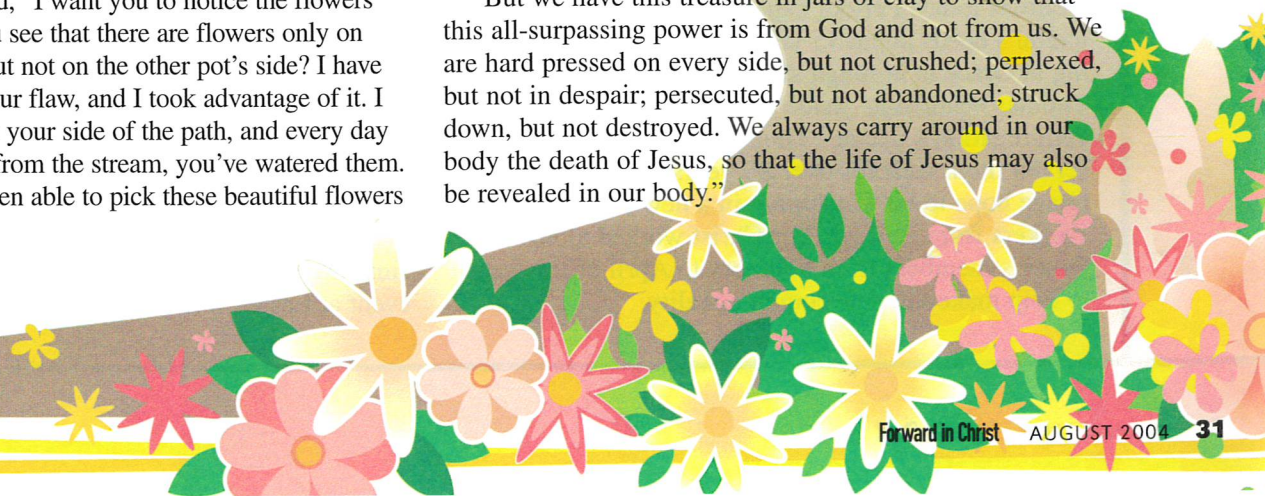
to decorate my master's table. Without you being just the way you are, he would not have this beauty to grace his house."

Each of us has our own unique flaws. We're all cracked pots. But if we acknowledge them and take advantage of them, they can become strengths instead of weaknesses.

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Sound familiar? Consider 2 Corinthians 4:5-10: "For we do not preach ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ.

"But we have this treasure in jars of clay to show that this all-surpassing power is from God and not from us. We are hard pressed on every side, but not crushed; perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not abandoned; struck down, but not destroyed. We always carry around in our body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be revealed in our body."



# PERIDOT & GRACE

## SAN CARLOS APACHE RESERVATION

Together we stand

Laura C. Warmuth

*That's our church . . . with the shattered windows . . . our school . . . where rocks that were thrown through the windows lie. The news traveled down the phone chain from member to member that April day when Peridot Lutheran Church in Peridot, Ariz., was broken into. Three buildings were damaged. Eleven church windows were broken. It didn't take long for members to react. They came with brooms, mops, and vacuums, and within an hour and a half the property was spotless. They could have done no less. It was their church that someone had desecrated.*

### Together with WELS

Peridot Lutheran Church is on the San Carlos Apache Reservation. It shares a pastor and many close ties with Grace Lutheran Church, San Carlos, Ariz., three miles down the road. Although both congregations are part of a world mission field, they are certainly taking ownership of their ministries. Martin Plocher, principal of the joint school in Peridot, puts it this way: "I was called to be a part of their ministry. Not the other way around."

This ministry has been growing since the first seeds were planted in 1893. Because no Christian missionaries were presently at work there, WELS sent Pastors John Plocher and George Adascheck to share the gospel with the Apache people. The government granted them 10 acres of land in Peridot on which they built a house and school in the next several years. Grace Lutheran Church was established in 1919 when Pastor Francis Uplegger arrived as the first resident pastor for San Carlos.

The two church buildings, dedicated in 1903 (Peridot) and 1921 (Grace), still serve as worship facilities today. Peridot expanded to meet the congregation's needs about 15 years ago. "Sadly, our building at Grace is in rough shape," says current pastor Thomas Naumann, "aside from being small for the congregation's needs." Though the little building served them well for over 80 years, members at Grace hope to be worshipping in a new facility by fall. Workers from Builders For Christ worked alongside Grace's members from February to April of this year to help make the new church a reality.



Peridot Lutheran Church after it was vandalized.

### Together to their community

"A close fellowship exists between the two congregations," explains Naumann, who serves at both sites. With the Holy Spirit in their hearts, members at Grace and Peridot are serving other members as well as reaching out to the community. Each congregation has its own Sunday school and church council, but they share many of their efforts, including Bible classes, vacation Bible school, and adult choir. They also collaborate on evangelism efforts such as ads and articles in the local newspaper, cable television ads, and the distribution of flyers. The joint ladies group serves potlucks and Easter breakfast and organizes spring cleaning and other service projects.

This past Christmas, Grace's Sunday school children paid special attention as their new "teachers" gave witness to the birth of Jesus. Why were they so enthralled? Their teachers were puppets! With teens controlling the puppets, the Sunday morning show brought out the lesson theme for the day. Friends and community members were invited to Grace for this event, doubling the size of its Sunday school, with similar results in Peridot. When Grace repeated the event at Easter, it tripled its attendance!



### Together for their children

The longest-standing effort shared by Grace and Peridot is the school, located at the Peridot site. One representative from each church council plus two lay members from each congregation make up the school board. "As a 'No Excuses School' we are committed to excellence in helping kids do their best," says Plocher. Basically that means that students and parents are committed under contract to be responsible for their education. The school provides a safe, disciplined environment for the kids, many of whom come from broken homes. More important, it provides a spiritual sanctuary where they can learn about the reliable love of Christ.



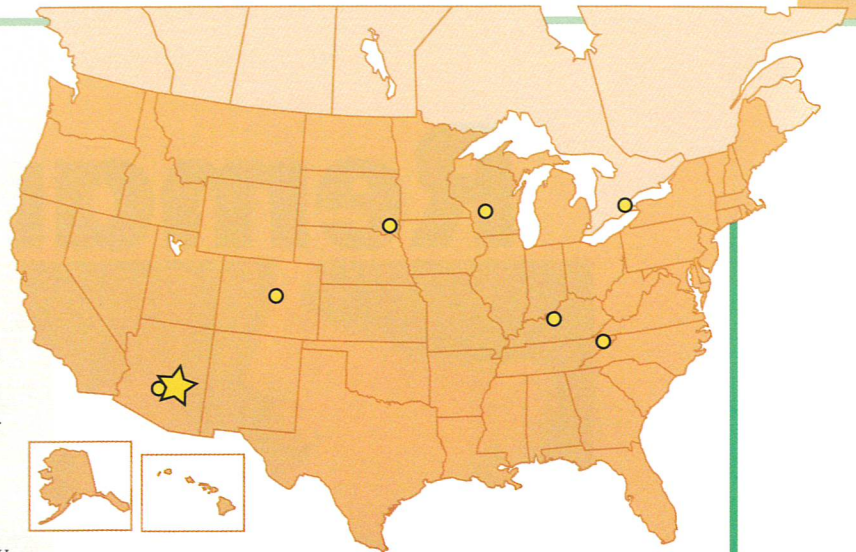
Children at Grace enjoy singing along to their favorite Bible songs.

Four years ago the school was entirely funded by the synod. Today 60 percent is funded locally. The Apache people are not only supporting their school monetarily, but are progressively taking on ownership by serving with their time and talents. Through projects like carpeting and painting classrooms, they are learning to budget, raise money, and seek contracts. As they make and carry through these decisions, the school board gains confidence in their leadership role.

Growing from 65 to 74 to 90 students over the past three years, the school will soon need extra classroom space. One of two buildings purchased at an auction from a local high school will fill that need. The second building was dismantled by a crew of 45 members and moved to Grace's property, where it was used as building materials for Grace's new facility.

### Together with their Savior

God has certainly been faithful to his promise to work through his Word wherever it is preached. We



★ Featured congregation    ○ Congregation already featured

### Quick facts

Grace, 928-475-3088:

- Baptized members: 798.
- Communicant members: 203.
- Established in 1919.
- Served by eight missionaries over the years.

Peridot, 928-475-3088:

- Baptized members: 386.
- Communicant members: 141.
- Established in 1893.
- Served by 15 missionaries over the years.

see concrete evidence of this in rising church attendance averages: up from 125 to 220 at Grace and 75 to 135 at Peridot since 2002. But these solid facts can't compare to the softer indications of the Holy Spirit's work in individual hearts. Oh, that we could see them all!

WELS Native Americans are challenged with the same temptations as you and I, but the truth that Jesus is their Savior is powerful news. The reality that with Jesus in their lives they can overcome all temptations and look forward to an eternity of perfection has changed many lives. Many Apache people have been baptized, confirmed, and grounded in God's Word and now serve as Christian examples to their peers. Some have attended WELS training schools and returned to the reservation as teachers.

"There is still plenty of work to do here as there is anywhere in our sinful world," concludes Naumann. "But with many dedicated and faithful workers—both called workers and our Apache brothers and sisters—we will move forward with God's kingdom work."

*Laura Warmuth is a part-time staff writer for Forward in Christ.*

# Remarriage



Enjoying a right relationship with God is the key to a successful second marriage.

Daniel Hrobsky

Statistics show that five out of six men and three out of four women eventually remarry, and that they remarry in three years. Why? Often because they hate being alone. But usually the most important reason is a deep need to get it right the next time. What a shock to find out that more second marriages end in divorce than first marriages.

The key to a successful second marriage lies in working on creating a right relationship with God. Counseling with a pastor or Christian therapist can be an integral part of a divorced person being right with God and getting it right the second time around.

The following scenarios help illustrate the struggles that counseling can help a divorced person work through.

## Dealing with isolation

“Marian’s” husband had an affair and left her. Shortly after the divorce,

he remarried. Ashamed and feeling guilty, she isolated herself. Her pastor encouraged her to attend a group therapy session made up of divorced Christians. “Jeff,” the group therapist, recognized how down she was. But as others talked about divorce, Marian discovered that they hurt as much as she did.

Divorced people frequently isolate themselves, not only from their “ex” but also from family, friends, and church.

Why the isolation? Sometimes it’s the embarrassment, that awkward silence when nobody knows what to say. Or they feel like a fifth wheel that doesn’t belong. Because their marriage failed, they feel like failures.

Talking to a pastor or a professional therapist helps divorced people address all the issues, from isolation to remarriage. Most important, Christian

counselors emphasize repentance, forgiveness, faith, and salvation. Adultery and desertion, or agreeing to divorce because you’ve drifted apart, all are sin. Sin separates from God. Christian counseling leads the divorced to confess their sin and assures the penitent of forgiveness and eternal life in heaven. Instead of accepting isolation, the counselor works toward restoring the divorced person’s relationship with God.

## Restoring a broken marriage

“Max” and “Erin” had drifted apart over the years. He worked too much. The kids were her life. After Jeff explained God’s will for marriage, he encouraged Max to try to reconcile. Max still loved Erin. He prayed she still loved him. Jeff also encouraged Max to go back to church, trusting that God would strengthen his resolve. Jeff didn’t know how long to encour-

age Max to attempt reconciliation but trusted that God would make it clear.

A right relationship with God strengthens faith, which leads to fruits of repentance. Penitent Christians will follow Jesus' command, "Let man not separate" (Matthew 19:6), and make every effort to restore a broken marriage. Much work is involved. Counseling can help identify the problems (alcohol and drug abuse, violence, annoying habits, communication) and help couples work through them so that those problems stop destroying the marriage. Counseling gives the opportunity to explore restoring the broken marriage.

Sometimes it is not possible to resolve marital problems. Marriage involves two people, and one may be an unbeliever or impenitent and refuse. Sometimes people repent and promise to follow God's will, but they lack knowledge of what that all involves so their effort is short lived. Other times a person promises to change but doesn't even try.

A marriage is established on trust. One big hole or many smaller holes in the fabric of marriage can destroy trust. It is easy to tell the divorced to rebuild their trust. But in practice it is never that easy. The best place to start is with a shared trust in the Savior and his forgiveness.

### **Entering into another serious relationship**

"Betty" hurt for other reasons. She hated being alone, but she always felt like the fifth wheel with her old friends. So she tried group therapy. "At least I'll be with other divorced people," she reassured herself. "I might even find a man who hates being alone. Maybe we could get married!"

During the group's sessions, Betty shared that her husband had an affair. Even though Jeff empathized with Betty, he encouraged her to go slowly. She needed to get stronger before she was ready for a serious relationship.

"Jim" was intrigued with Betty. He wasn't a newcomer to the group. He

had been in it off and on for over a year. He wasn't looking to get remarried, but there was something about Betty that attracted him to her. He knew Betty had to go slow, but he was all right with that. He knew he had to go slow himself through this next stage of his divorce recovery.

Six months after Betty joined the group, she and Jim started dating. A few months into the relationship, they started talking about marriage and decided to seek out couples counseling, as well as individual counseling, with Jeff. They wanted to get marriage right this time.

Both Betty and Jim had learned Christian values, but their families applied them differently. Clearing the air on topics such as godly living and church involvement, work and recreation, and saving and investing money helped set the tone for their future together.

Both also struggled with feeling worthless because their first marriages had failed. They worked through their anger at their previous spouses and forgave them so that residual anger from their "ex" would not spill into their new relationship.

Betty and Jim started trusting people again, which jumpstarted communication in their relationship. They shared their deepest fears and heartfelt desires. They talked about anything, because their feelings were respected no matter what.

Jim and Betty married a year after they started dating. Both were happier than they could remember being in years. Christ was the cornerstone of the new foundation they established. All the issues that Jim and Betty had resolved took their shape and direction from God's Word.

Sexual intimacy was one subject they did not fully discuss until after they married, because they were not intimate until then. Since they trusted one another, communication about their marriage bed flowed from hearts filled with love, not anger. Sexual love grew as they talked themselves through it.

Jim and Betty continued counseling after they were married. They encountered problems along the way, but they had a good foundation that enabled them to resolve problems before they got out of hand. A year into marriage, counseling consisted of "check-ups" every three to six months. Because God was their cornerstone, Jim and Betty built a strong home.

A right relationship with God—one based on repentance, forgiveness, faith, and salvation—is the key to getting it right in a marriage.

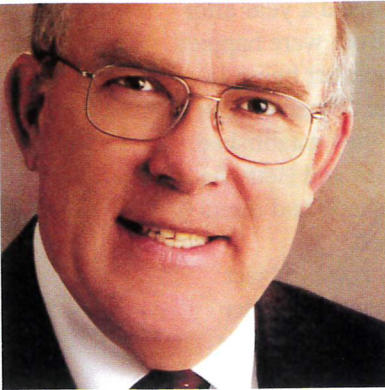
*Pastor Daniel Hrobsky, a member at St. Paul, Fort Atkinson, Wisconsin, is a counselor at Wisconsin Lutheran Child & Family Service, Inc.*

*This is the third of a four-part series on "Life after divorce." To read the first two parts, go to [www.wels.net](http://www.wels.net), jumpword "ficarchive." Search the keyword phrase "life after divorce."*

## **RESOURCES**

- Armin Schuetze's article "Marriage, Divorce and Remarriage," [www.wls.wels.net/library/Essays/Authors/S/SchuetzeMarriage/SchuetzeMarriage.htm](http://www.wls.wels.net/library/Essays/Authors/S/SchuetzeMarriage/SchuetzeMarriage.htm).
- John Schuetze's book *Marriage and family: The Family Photo Album*. Available for \$12.99 from Northwestern Publishing House, 800-662-6022 or [www.nph.net](http://www.nph.net) (OL-150619).
- Many other books talk about divorce and remarrying. Some may prescribe a set list of steps to take to help you understand and get ready for remarriage. Beware of lists! Every person and situation is different. God gives us principles in his Word. Let those principles be your guide.

# Drink deeply from the Water of Life



*Karl R. Gungel*

I made a mistake recently. I fertilized my lawn in spring. It was bad timing, just before days of rain came to Wisconsin. My lawn won't stop growing! There aren't enough sunny days to mow it.

Undoubtedly, though, I won't regret it later when the rains stop and the summer heat intensifies, burning everything. Normally at that time of year lawns turn brown unless watered frequently. As the prophet Isaiah put it, "The grass withers and the flowers fall" (Isaiah 40:8).

Isaiah, the Lord's mouthpiece, wasn't, however, playing the horticulturist. God's Word through the prophet is much more profound than that. He went on to say, "But the word of our God stands forever."

The Word of God, every word of God, stands eternally, and always with some effect. Through his enduring Word, the effect God intends for each of us is to create and sustain faith. God's Word, we might say, was meant to keep our faith green and alive, rather than brown, dry, and lifeless.

Psalm 1 beautifully speaks about the life-sustaining potential in the Word. Commenting on the one whose delight is in the Word of God, the psalmist says, "He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers" (Psalm 1:3).

Can't we see the picture—an oasis of green surrounded by a brown, barren wasteland? Water made the difference. In our case, the Word is the water of life.

During the summer months, water may be a larger part of our life. Watering the lawn or garden, swimming, and drinking a lot of ice-cold water are all wholesome activities. Even more so would be spending additional time drinking deeply from the cool refreshment of God's Word.

Ordinary water often produces magnificent, visible results. Don't we admire someone's lovely gardens and verdant lawn? The psalmist said everything prospers for the one who is watered by the Word. Isn't there something here, too, to admire in others, seeing what the water of the Word has produced in them?

John writes these words in his third letter: "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth" (v. 4).

John, perhaps nearing his 100th birthday, reflects on a lifetime of opportunity for proclaiming the Word, seeing its effect in the lives of many people. It brought him great joy to hear that the Word he was privileged to proclaim was at work, producing results in people's lives by the Spirit in the Word. Although he couldn't see faith in the heart or the final result of faith—heaven—he could see the outward signs of it. By the grace of God, through the nourishment supplied by the Word, people were growing in their faith, walking in God's ways.

Your frequent attendance at worship, participation in Bible study, and active role in your congregation are some of the ways God encourages those who serve you with the Word. First of all it's for your eternal benefit to hear the Word. Isn't it great, though, that our ever-gracious God allows what benefits you to also benefit those who serve you with the Word by encouraging them?

Water your lawns. Frolic in the water this summer. But, above all, be abundantly refreshed by the water of God's Word.

# Opposites attract

Paul used opposites in his letter to the Corinthians to communicate the news of Jesus Christ.

Paul E. Zell

Opposites attract one another and make for a good match. That's what some believe when discussing courtship and marriage.

Opposites attract our attention and make for a good lesson. That's what Paul believed when communicating the news of Jesus Christ.

## Outwardly wasting away, inwardly renewed

Paul's grueling workload must have aged him beyond his years. Floggings, shipwrecks, and thousands of miles on the road had taken their toll on his body. On the inside, though, his Savior's love kept making him new. "Though outwardly we are wasting away," he wrote, "yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day."

I've watched helplessly while Christian brothers and sisters waste away due to illness or advancing age. Perhaps you have too. But have you also witnessed the renewal that Jesus gave those same believers by the gospel? Wasn't the lift they received from the Lord's Supper impressive? New confidence. New peace. New hope. All because of the forgiveness of sins given with Christ's body and blood.

## Light troubles, heavy glory

But did the church at Corinth also have reason for hope? At first glance it didn't appear so. A wicked minority group was deceiving the faithful majority and disparaging the reputation of the founding pastor. The congregation was beset with "quarreling, jealousy, outbursts of

anger, factions, slander, gossip, arrogance and disorder" (12:20). Paul reminded the saints that all of this would come to an end at the resurrection, that "our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all."

None of us will deny the terrible effects of sin upon our lives and in our churches. Troubles abound, the tragic results of our own selfishness and others' stubbornness. But Jesus has carried all your sins away, nailing them to the cross. At his invitation you regularly "cast all your

anxiety on him because he cares for you" (1 Peter 5:7). He makes your troubles "light." Place earthly troubles on one pan of a balance scale and resurrection glories on the other pan, and there is no question as to which is heavier.

## Seen is temporary, unseen is eternal

Have you ever made a list of the afflictions you've seen in your lifetime? Later in 2 Corinthians (11:23-29) Paul tallied up some of his troubles. What your list and his have in common is the same descriptor: "temporary," which means there is no point in brooding over the sorrows we have seen. Rather, with Paul "we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal."

Now imagine a joyous reunion with believing loved ones. A holy and glorified body. "No more death or mourning or crying or pain" (Revelation 21:4). A face-to-face meeting with Jesus. Flawless service and tireless thanksgiving before him. The list of the "unseen" joys of heaven includes beautiful items. This list has another descriptor in common: "eternal."

These opposites attract our attention. They sustain our faith and empower our witnessing. They characterize "the grace that is reaching more and more people . . . to the glory of God."

*Contributing editor Paul Zell, a professor at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, Wisconsin, is a member at Grace, Milwaukee.*

*This is the last of a seven-part series.*

### 2 Corinthians 4:13-18

It is written: "I believed; therefore I have spoken."

With that same spirit of faith we also believe and therefore speak,<sup>14</sup> because we know that the one who raised the Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus and present us with you in his presence.

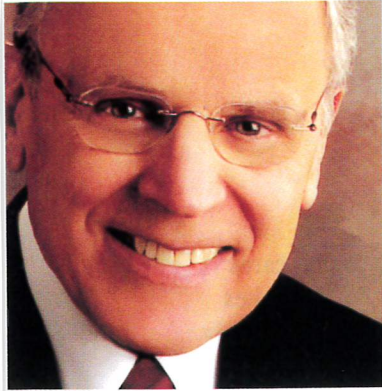
<sup>15</sup>All this is for your benefit, so that the grace that is reaching more and more people may cause thanksgiving to overflow to the glory of God.

<sup>16</sup>Therefore we do not lose heart. Though outwardly we are wasting away, yet inwardly we are being renewed day by day.

<sup>17</sup>For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all.

<sup>18</sup>So we fix our eyes not on what is seen, but on what is unseen.

For what is seen is temporary, but what is unseen is eternal.



*Gary A. Baumbach*

# Patience

**I**t wasn't a scientific poll, and the returns were meager, but the results caught me off guard. The question was, "Which fruit of the Spirit do you pray for most often?"

Not surprisingly, of the 32 replies, love (6) and peace (5) ranked high. However, to my surprise, patience (9) and self-control (7) ranked even higher.

In other words, in this small sampling, more people pray for patience than for love (or joy, peace, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, or gentleness). And although self-control is different than patience ("she has no self-control when she is near chocolate"), someone who loses patience also loses a level of self-control.

So, why would you or I pray for patience ahead of such other fine fruits of the Spirit?

It's not too hard to relate. Just think of some of your impatient moments:

- "I could just burst waiting for her to get ready."
- "Can't those know-nothings in . . . the government . . . the synod . . . the congregation . . . ever get it right?"
- "I'd rather do it myself than wait for him to get to it."
- "The moron ahead of me drove only 30 miles per hour the whole way."
- "Why did you do it that way?"
- "Here, let me do it."
- "It takes forever (20 seconds) to log into that program."

Read a high degree of agitation into each of those expressions and add your own pet moment when you lose patience.

Why? Why lose patience? Why pray for patience before other virtues?

First, to put this in context, we have more temptations than ever to be impatient. Everything is so fast-paced. When a letter took up to a week just to get delivered, we had no choice but to "patiently" wait up to two or more weeks for a reply. Bring on fax machines and e-mail, and we

expect instant replies. Television and the Internet and technology everywhere have conditioned us to expect instant gratification, instant and continued stimulation, and quick fixes.

So, we are products of our time ("the world"), no longer content to wait for things to happen; and our sinful natures hurry along to get in on the act.

Consider how often your or my impatience is aimed at other people. We are quick to judge them, to call them names, to assume they are just inconsiderate, and to declare them incompetent.

Incompetence! Why is there so much incompetence? Of course we lose patience.

God help us. Can we slow down and calm down long enough to see the implications of our impatience? For starters, it might help us to imagine how many times others are impatient with us and what that says about our competence. More to the point, when we judge others and fail to tolerate their slowness and measure their competence by our expectations, what are we but arrogant and self-righteous? And that is sinful.

Thank God that he had the patience to send his Son to save us from our incompetence. Thank Jesus that he had the patience to walk the way of temptation and sorrow and the cross without sin for our salvation. Thank the Holy Spirit that he does not abandon us in our arrogance.

In the faith we have that God will not lose patience with us (since we still lose control), let's pray for patience. Pray for patience because lack of it gets in the way of the other fruits of the Spirit. When I'm damning my neighbor's incompetence, I am hardly showing love and kindness. Pray for patience and take the time to show love, kindness, gentleness, goodness. Exercise self-control and reflect the peace and joy that is yours in Christ. Be patient and faithful, and thank God for the gifts of his Spirit.

# It's all about Jesus

Mark J. Lenz

Though it might be hard to imagine, the apostle Paul found happiness in prison. In four letters written from prison he speaks of a joy that transcends any circumstance or situation—a joy found in Jesus the Savior.

**Philemon:** Onesimus, a slave of Philemon of Colosse, had stolen from his master and fled to Rome. There he came in contact with Paul and became a believer in Jesus. Paul sent Onesimus back to Philemon with a letter asking that he be forgiven and received as a brother in the faith.

- What does Paul say Philemon will experience if he is active in sharing his faith (v. 1)?
- What is the cause of Paul's joy (v. 7)?
- The name Onesimus means "useful." How does Paul make a play on the meaning of this name (v. 11)?
- How does Paul intercede for Onesimus (vv. 10,18,19)?
- What new relationship does Paul suggest Philemon might have with Onesimus (vv. 15,16)?
- There is great joy in knowing we have forgiveness in Christ. List the ways this joy is reflected in the story of Philemon and Onesimus.

**Ephesians:** Paul felt constrained to write a letter to Philemon. Sending this letter gave him the opportunity to write and send other letters as well. Ephesians was one such letter. Paul intended it to be distributed to others through the church at Ephesus.

- As you read 1:3-8, list the spiritual blessings we have in Christ.
- Our salvation is entirely God's doing in Christ. How is this stated in 2:8-10?
- In what ways will we want to reflect the love of God in Christ to us (4:32-5:2)?
- What are ways by which our joy in the Lord will show itself (5:19,20)?
- What is the significance of each piece of the armor of God we are encouraged to put on (6:10-17)?

**Colossians:** It seems Colossians was another epistle occasioned by Paul's letter to Philemon. Though Paul probably had not visited Colosse in person, he was well aware of the heresy that had come from the East to this trade route city. False teachers were promising a mystical knowledge of God acquired by abstinence from certain foods and drinks and the observance of feasts and ceremonial days. Paul confronts this heresy by pointing his readers to Christ and his work of redemption.

- Why can the Colossians "joyfully [give] thanks to the Father" (1:12-14)?
- What important truths about the person and work of Christ do you learn from 1:15-20?
- Why is Paul delighted in the Colossians (2:5)?
- Colossians 3:1-17 speaks about life in Christ. What admonitions have particular significance for you in your present circumstances?

**Philippians:** Paul was filled with joy whenever he thought about the church in Philippi. The believers there had labored with him in the gospel, shown sympathy for him in prison, and even supported him financially.

- Words such as "rejoice," "joy," and "glad" are found repeatedly in this epistle. What is the cause of joy in each of the following verses: 1:18,25,26; 2:2,17,18,28,29; 3:1; 4:1,4,10?
- How did Christ humble himself? What application does Paul draw from this (2:3-8)?
- How does Paul emphasize that heaven is our home (3:14,20,21)?

**Conclusion:** Many people search in vain for happiness. Why is Christ the true source of joy?

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Find this article and possible answers online. Go to [www.wels.net](http://www.wels.net), jumpword "fic," and click on "It's all about Jesus." Answers will be available after Aug. 5.

Fulfiller of promises

Mighty Savior

Merciful Savior

Son of God

Savior of all

Liberator

Righteousness of God

Bringer of joy

Mediator with the Father

Sacrifice for sin

Word of life

Faithful witness

# JUST A QUICK LOOK



Do you wander too close to trouble because of the allure of the world?

Bob Gove

**A**s a phone installer, I frequently entered the back yards of homes, looking for test points and cross-connect boxes.

**Early in my career, I got in the habit of introducing myself to any dogs in the area before proceeding.**

It is common to find that the dog is the only one home during the day, and it is much wiser to whistle them up to you before entering a yard than to have one come charging out from under the porch with his teeth bared.

One day I tested the phone wire outside a house without going through the meet-the-dog routine because it was obvious that the occupants had moved out. I started back to my truck, but curiosity got the best of me, and I walked around the corner of the house to see if any useful “junk” had been abandoned when they vacated the place. That’s when the huge shaggy dog bolted at me—barking and snapping his teeth.

I instantly concluded that it was too late for making friends, since there was less than 12 feet between us. I spun around to flee and ran head on into the porch roof support post. As I fell backward nearly unconscious,

I could almost feel the fangs sinking into my flesh.

But it didn’t happen. When I came to my senses, the big mutt was still lunging at me, but he had reached the end of the chain around his neck that was tied to a tree.

**Get within the range of his chain, and you are in major trouble.**

**I have told this story dozens of times, and it always gets a good laugh. But only recently did the spiritual lesson dawn on me.** Now I see that back yard as a type of the alluring world. My old nature is drawn to it like an iron nail to a magnet. I allow myself to have a “quick look,” even though I know better. It is so easy to forget the Holy Spirit’s admonition to “be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around

like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8). Note that the devil prowls like a lion. He doesn’t look like a lion. In fact, he may look like an angel and have something very desirable in his hands.

But like the dog that I was so motivated to flee from, the devil is also chained. When the Lord Jesus defeated him on Golgotha, his reign of terror came to an end. When our mighty Savior came back from the realm of death, he left Satan with a great chain around his neck (Revelation 20:1,2).

Even so, we dare not wander into his back yard. Get within the range of his chain, and you are in major trouble.

Are you like so many of us who are trying to get just as close as possible without getting bit, or are you wise enough to run with all your might toward our Lord?

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