

The Northwestern Lutheran



**Focusing on
the family**



May the Lord our God be with us
as he was with our fathers;
may he never leave
or forsake us. 1 Kings 8:57

The Northwestern Lutheran

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Living in the light of God's love

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God (1 John 3:1).

Have you heard the phrase, "the insignificance of man?" Most of us have heard statements such as these: "When man is considered in the light of the universe, its galaxies, the immensity of space, — he becomes small indeed." "When we explore outer space and think in terms of light years, plus the millions of stars and the virtually unlimited boundaries 'out there and up there,' and compare it to tiny man below, he becomes almost a nothing, a speck of insignificance."

Oh? Frankly, this "loose cannon" talk is disturbing. The "insignificance bit" is totally incorrect and very misleading. Man insignificant? On the contrary; we are *very significant, very important*. God created space, time, galaxies, and the universe for man. It isn't the other way around. God placed man on planet earth and said, "This is your home until I call you to something far better."

Man is important

When man fell into sin alienating himself from his Creator, God did not say, "Well, man is such an insignificant part of my creation, I won't bother myself over him." No! God sent his Son, Jesus, to save, to redeem, to reconcile. Man is important in God's eyes. We are not specks of cosmic dust, but rather are creatures of God originally created in his image.

Kindly reread those heartwarming words of our God cited above. Note that we are so important to our God that he makes a special point of telling us that he loves us. Unfortunately we cannot say much about that love only because of the limitations of human thought. Even angels can do little more than wonder and adore as they face this thought of the Father's love for human beings.

In spite of this inadequacy, we would do well to think of it. God not only loves; he is love. Only in one other attribute does he say that he is the full embodiment of it; namely, when Jesus says, "I am . . . the truth."

His love is one of his ruling qualities. All of his acts are determined by it. Look at nature and hear it proclaimed. Look at history and see it declared. Look at the cross and empty tomb and hear it shouted — God is love. He cares for us. He loves us.

When the Spirit causes this truth to penetrate our souls, then we have peace-giving, strength-giving, joy-giving Christianity. Then we begin to appreciate that which has been lavished upon us.

Now what do we do with this knowledge? For one thing, we should begin to live "more abundantly" (to quote the Savior) in the light of love shining forth from the

face of God.

Spasmodic Christianity

In all candor, we do not think often enough of his love. We live our lives too frequently away from this warming light. Our lives are not governed by this light. Our Christianity is too spasmodic and sputtering.

For example, pastors visit life-long or long-term members who are hospitalized, perhaps for the first time in their lives, for gallbladder surgery, a broken bone, or an inflamed appendix. With disheartening frequency the minister hears the plaintive cry, "Why is God punishing me?" As though God is some vindictive and capricious "Force" who delights in occasionally "sticking pins" in us just to see us yelp or jump. How pathetic! The Father's towering love for us and his warming light are seemingly erased from life and soul at the first hint of difficulty which inevitably comes into the lives of all imperfect creatures.

Consider one more example. We are in the Christmas-Epiphany cycle. Recently we celebrated the Nativity and the Gentile Christmas. Especially in these high holy days we again were privileged to see the mighty acts of God which highlight his magnificent love for us. But, is it not true that the keen edge of our wonderment and enjoyment has been dulled if it has not in fact totally disappeared? "Christmasy" thoughts are out in trash barrels along with discarded trees.

Not a seasonal light

Living in the light of God's love should not be seasonal or something one switches on and off as one does a light bulb. Our daily lives should revolve around this thought: "God loves me and I want to live in the light of this knowledge."

But, how dare we weak mortals presume to live so confidently like that? Because God tells us that we are his "children." Through Christ we have been made a part of his blessed family. We are his sons and daughters by gracious adoption through Jesus.

Right! By nature this way of living would be the highest of arrogance. By nature we are perverse brats. By nature we are far from being dutiful, loving, trusting, children.

But through the power of the Spirit our nature has been changed. The old is put down; the new arises. We are now empowered to live that new way, that confident way in Christ.

So please, no more of this "insignificant people talk." Children of God know better. □

Kurt Koepflin is pastor of Atonement, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Is marriage outmoded?

“Dearly beloved: Whereas you desire to enter upon the holy estate of matrimony, ordained of God, and to be held in honor by all . . .” For years these words have preceded the exchange of vows by bride and groom in the Order of Marriage in use in our churches.

These traditional words touch upon two ancient beliefs about marriage. The wording may be somewhat antiquated, but the meaning is clear: Marriage was instituted by God, and it is to be honored. The principles set forth in these words are questioned by quite a few people today. Their question is, are not the thoughts expressed in these words, like the wording itself, antiquated?

A growing number of people in Western civilization seem to think that they are. Many proclaim through their lifestyles that marriage is outmoded. The U. S. Census Bureau reported late last year that 1.9 million couples in this country are now living together outside of marriage. Proponents of this practice commonly dismiss marriage as “just a piece of paper.” Obviously, marriage is not being “held in honor” by these couples.

One of the reasons why marriage is held in such low regard by many is the development in recent history of effective methods of contraception. Improved contraceptive technique has all but eliminated the fear of one of the natural, but unwanted, consequences of “living together.” Contributing to the view of marriage as merely an option for less sophisticated couples is the fact that the procreation of offspring outside of wedlock nowadays does not necessarily carry with it the social stigma it once did. As a matter of fact, it is not uncommon nowadays for celebrities not married to each other unashamedly to acknowledge joint parentage of a child born outside of marriage, thus reinforcing the view that marriage is an outdated relic of ages past.

The demotion of marriage to a low position on the social scale has had some unpleasant side effects. Social critic George Gilder, author of “Men and Marriage,” says that the absence of restraints implicit in the marriage bond has resulted in “a growing number of bachelors, giving free reign to their ‘instincts,’ becoming sexual savages.” Syndicated writer Don Feder adds that lack of respect for marriage has also had an effect upon the lifestyles of many young women. He writes of them, “Like their male counterparts, many have become predators, seeking amorous adventures at singles’ bars and other spots where the erotically restless prowl.” He also attributes the rising rate of alcohol and drug abuse among them to this factor.

Disrespect for the institution of marriage has also contributed to the appalling rate of divorce in this country. It has precipitated an untold number of abortions. It has resulted in an almost incredible number of single parent homes, along with their attendant problems. It has likewise led to widespread promiscuity, and it has been a major factor in the spread of frightening venereal disease.

No one would interpret these facts as evidences of the vaunted enlightenment of society. In fact, Feder writes, “if the trend isn’t reversed, civilization is doomed. Without the family as its firm center society soon disintegrates.”

“ . . . ordained of God, and to be held in honor by all. . . .” Clear facts, to say nothing of scriptural teaching, urge the conclusion that these words in our Order of Marriage do more than perpetuate an outmoded tradition.

Immanuel G. Frey



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Romans 8:1-17

Spirit-filled lives

We must remember that the act of being brought to faith, called conversion, is not a single, isolated act, but rather the beginning of a whole new life. At that moment the Holy Spirit takes up his abode in the heart and mind of the believer; and at the same time the believer becomes a member of Jesus' spiritual body, the Church, and Jesus also takes up his abode in the believer's heart and mind. This new state is spoken of as being "in Christ" and also "in the Spirit," and it must be emphasized that there is a real *unity* here. The first half of Romans 8 has to do with this new life in the Spirit. And we're going to read what Paul has to say.

New life gives us a new hope

"Now therefore there is no sentence of eternal death hanging over those people who are in Christ Jesus, because the Spirit's law of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and death.

The Spirit's task is to help us

"You see, the law isn't strong enough to help us because our sinful body is so weak. But God found a way to help us when he sent his own Son with a body that was like our sinful bodies to be a sin-offering. And by doing this he announced that the sin in our sinful body must be destroyed (when we die), so that we can fully satisfy every requirement of his law (in the new life to come). And if the Spirit, and not our sinful body, controls our lives, we can do so. After all, those whose lives are controlled by their sinful body think about the things their sinful body wants. But those whose lives are controlled by the Spirit think about the things the Spirit wants (being spiritually minded).

"The kind of thinking our sinful body does brings death (both physical, spiritual and eternal). But the kind of thinking the Spirit does brings life and peace. And the reason for this is that our sinful body thinks of God as our enemy, because it does not and cannot obey God's law. And so those people whose lives are controlled by their sinful body can't possibly please God (and be taken into the new heavens and earth).

"Your lives however aren't controlled by your sinful body, but by the Spirit, because *God's Spirit is living in you*. But the person who doesn't have Christ's Spirit can't possibly belong to Christ. However since *Christ is living in you*, your body is dead because of sin (and will

die), but your spirit is alive because God has accepted you as perfectly holy in his sight. We know that God raised Jesus back to life from the dead. And since God's Spirit is living in you, he who raised Christ back to life from the dead will also fill your dying bodies with new life through that same Spirit who is living in you (when Jesus returns on the last day, and gives you new, perfect bodies).

"And so, my brothers and sisters, we have a debt to pay, but it isn't to our sinful body. That is, we don't have to live the way it wants to live. After all, if you live the way your sinful body wants to live, you're going to die (eternally in hell). But if you let the Spirit give you the power to put an end to the things your body likes to do, you will live (eternally in God's perfect new heavens and earth).

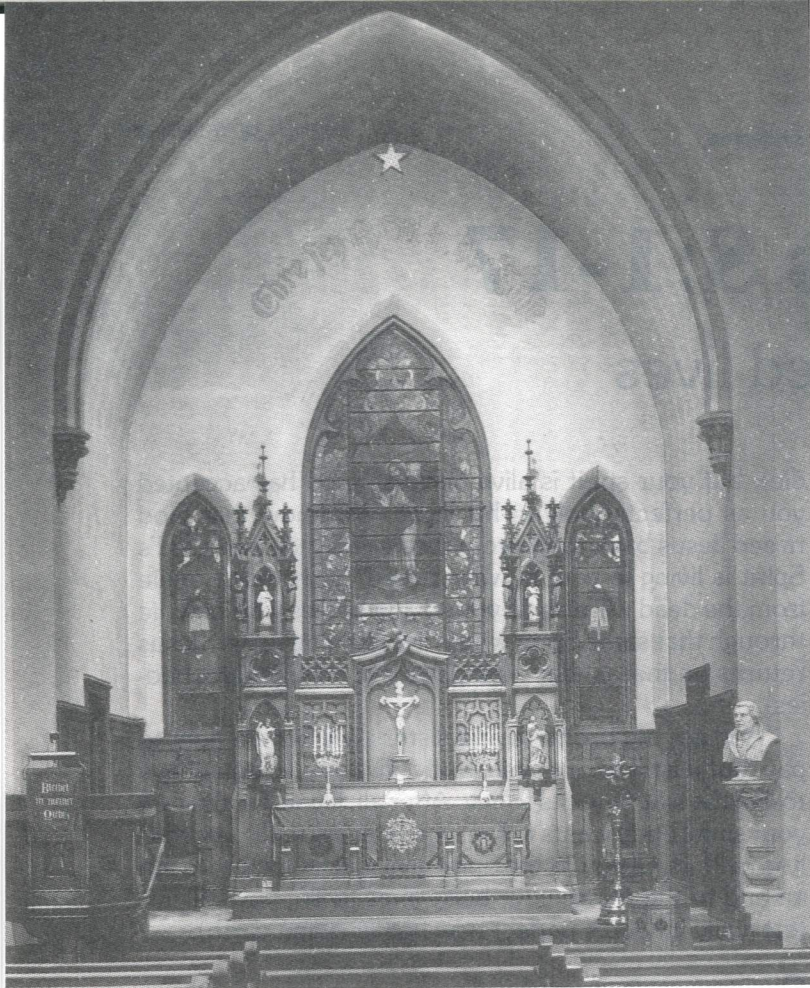
Our new status

"You see, all those who are led by God's Spirit are God's children. For you weren't given a spirit who makes you slaves again, so that you should be afraid. No indeed. You were given a Spirit who makes you *adopted children* (of God), and with his help we cry out and say, Abba [Hebrew, which means our Father]. And the Spirit himself assures us that what our own spirit tells us is the truth — that we are God's children. And since we are children, we're also *heirs*, who are going to receive whatever our Father has set aside to give us. Yes, we are God's heirs, and we're going to receive from our Father all the things Christ has received (think of it!). And since we're sharing Christ's sufferings, we shall also share his glory and honor" (forever in the new heavens and new earth).

Don't think living this kind of new life is easy, because it isn't. In fact, it's such a difficult task that no Christian can ever do it perfectly. The apostle Paul, whom we probably regard as a model, has written an account of his struggle and failure to do this in Romans 7:7-25. Read it. But our comfort is that we can confess our failures to do so and receive God's daily forgiveness. □



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St. John, Jefferson, Wisconsin

Another kind of stewardship

By Helena Ehlke

WELS congregations have inherited from our founding ancestors quite an impressive wealth of beautiful church buildings, with their accompanying contents such as stained glass windows, church furniture (altars, baptismal fonts, lecterns, pulpits, canopies), linens and altar hangings, communion and baptismal ware.

For earlier generations of WELS members, historical conservation and preservation of their belongings were not often a very urgent issue because nothing was very old. But today, while we still have left among us some beautiful architectural treasures and artifacts from the beginnings of our synod well over 100 years ago, it is high time to educate ourselves to proper conservation and preservation of those investments we inherited from our ancestors.

Becoming better informed stewards of the historical treasures passed down to us is not in conflict with any Christian biblical principle. Much of the art and architectural wealth we have inherited from our WELS forebearers can be cared for and will increase in esthetic, historical and financial value if it is preserved in its original integrity. That too is a stewardship.

Often it is less expensive to do the right thing in con-

servation than it is to do the wrong thing. Much damage has probably been done both in our synod and outside it by well-meant, but ill-informed or ill-advised spending of funds to "fix" or redo some feature of a church or its physical contents. Perhaps the best would have been to leave it be, costing little or nothing.

When people do become interested in historic preservation and would like their church to be structurally sound as well as true to its historical period, they may end up having to spend considerable money to undo the "redecorating" blunders of the past. It may cost little or nothing to properly clean areas of the church that have been left alone and thus maintain their original integrity.

Even if a congregation decides to engage some type of church decorator or art conservator to work on its buildings or furnishings, the old saying *caveat emptor* definitely applies. The church decorator or art conservator may have little knowledge of art history and little sensitivity to historic visual esthetics, and may not be able because of this lack to properly preserve the historical beauty and value of the original period.

So how can we be knowledgeable buyers when we may want to take care of our beautiful church buildings and their contents?

We could for starters take a look at the code of ethics established by the American Institute for Conservation. The four major concepts are: maintaining the integrity of the object; employing tested, stable, reversible materials and processes; providing documentation of treatments; and maintaining up-to-date knowledge.

Other simple guidelines are, "Respect for the esthetic, historic and physical integrity of the object must be placed uppermost. As much as possible of the original or historical character and components must be preserved." And "original paint is a valuable and important part of a wooden object and should be preserved. Due to the complex composition of painted objects, owner treatment other than careful dusting is not recommended."

So before you rip out that old pulpit or paint over those old altar pieces, think long before tearing out or covering up the old. To do so is often irrevocable and cannot be undone. Try to keep original architecture intact and to become more knowledgeable about the physical treasures we in WELS have inherited.

You may direct questions or express an interest in these matters to the WELS Historical Institute, Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 2929 North Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, WI 53222. The Spring 1987 issue of the *WELS Historical Journal* will include a more in-depth article on this subject for your further consideration. □



Helena Ehlke is a member of Grace, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Finish what we start

No, you didn't pick up a back number of *The Northwestern Lutheran* by mistake. With due apologies to Thomas Zellmer, the truck driver from Larsen, Wisconsin, whom I have never met, I simply borrowed his title from the January 1 issue.

I hope he won't mind. That title better expresses what I want to share with you today than anything I might have come up with. If somehow you missed his article last month, please go back and read it before proceeding.

You see, Tom has really provided the rationale for the special offering we're having during Lent for the operating budget of your synod.

I've visited more than a few of our mission congregations too. In fact, I've had the privilege of preaching for the dedication of quite a number of "first units" in mission congregations. They're not elaborate. They're very modest, a far cry from what most of us are used to in our well-established congregations. But after years of worshiping in less than ideal temporary quarters, it is a thrilling experience for the missionary and his flock to dedicate a building they can call their own. A building that tells the community, "We're not a fly-by-night outfit. We're here to stay. And we have a glorious message that we want to share with you."

Because of God's rich blessing on Reaching Out we've been able to provide those "first units" at a faster rate than would normally have been possible. But the building doesn't do us much good without a missionary in it proclaiming the good news. We would like to send more. But the current status of your synod's operating budget won't permit it.

In fact, the Board for Home Missions recently withdrew subsidy from six exploratory areas. This was a matter of good stewardship because the fields did not appear ripe for harvest. But if there were not also budgetary implications, we should have immediately deployed those six missionaries to other fields. This we have not done. The operating budget won't permit it.

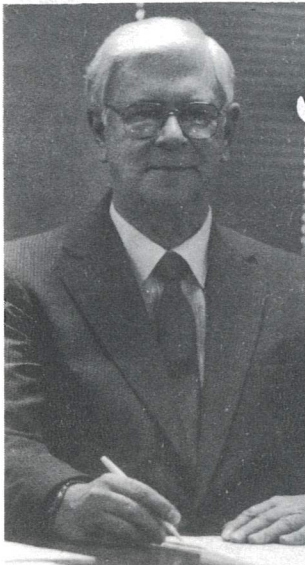
Very shortly you will receive a letter from me with further details about the offering. I hope you will also have an opportunity to see the video which has been prepared. As you love your Lord and are eager to share him with others, I ask you to give this matter your prayerful attention.

Remember the Savior's words, "From everyone who has been given much, much will be demanded; and from the one who has been entrusted with much, much more will be asked."

And the Lord has given us much. The supreme blessing is his word, the word through which you and I have learned to know our Savior, the word which our perishing world so desperately needs to hear. We still have preachers who are willing and eager to proclaim it. I ask your help that they may be sent.

We'd like to finish what we've started. That's what the special Lenten offering of your synod is all about.

And by the way, Tom Zellmer also sent along a check to underscore that he was serious about what he was saying.



Carl H. Muschke

FOCUSING ON THE FAMILY

First of a series



The importance of belonging

by Joanne Halter

Mama Mia's Pizza, the Beach Boys, English Leather cologne . . . that was a typical sampling of "special likes" listed in the yearbook by us, the graduating seniors of the class of 1967. Light fare, but standard stuff in the mindset of the 17-year-old of that time.

As a curious alumna, I enjoy occasionally browsing through yearbooks from that same Lutheran high school. What rock group or latest rage would the grads be listing as their "special likes" *now*, I wondered.

I was surprised — no, I was astounded — to see that the majority, actually 75 percent, of the seniors included "my family" in the special-likes category. Family?! Aw, come on! Aren't we talking here about adolescents who are at best simply frivolous and at worst totally rebellious against anything that smacks of old-fashioned virtues and traditions? Adolescents whose values are determined by the likes of Madonna, Bruce Springsteen and the continuing saga of General Hospital?

And, family? Aren't we living in an age when the family is in flux? Crumbling? Even passé? Certainly not something to stand up and cheer about.

Are these high school seniors for real?

In trying to make sense of all of this, I spent some time reflecting on "the family." What can "family" provide that can't quite be found in anything or anybody else? Simply this: a delicious sense of belonging.

Families are funny. They name us, nurture us, succor us, embarrass us, annoy us, and cause us to seek adventures as foreign to them as we can imagine. And then they lure us back home. Because we like to believe that home and family is where, when you want to be there, they want you.

Families won't go away. Families will survive because our need for them is so intense. Our capacity and need to be part of a family is one of the things that makes us human.

Perhaps twenty years ago we took this all for granted. In 1987, however, when single-person households are the fastest growing category in America, when more of us are on our own, we can no longer take family for granted.

I give those 17-year-olds tremendous credit for expressing out loud their appreciation for their families, for recognizing the comfort of that secure and predictable haven from the chaos outside, and for standing up for an institution that is blatantly under attack. There is a magnificent message for parents here too, especially for those who are battle-weary and feeling ready to give up: One of the biggest mistakes you can make is to underestimate your influence in your children's lives.

The recent White House Domestic Policy Council's *Report on the Family* found that, "The idols of our recent past were those who defied norms and shattered standards, and indeed there is always a place for 'rebels.' But in a healthy society, heroes are the women and men who hold the world together one home at a time: the parents and grandparents who forego pleasures, delay purchases, foreclose options, and commit most of their lives to the noblest undertaking of citizenship: raising children who, resting on the shoulders of the previous generation, will see farther than we and reach higher."

The family did not come about by accident. No way. The family was divinely established and as such its essence is applicable to every generation. The problems that plague the family cannot be blamed on the Lord's original blueprints. The problems are the result of sin-corrupted hearts of the people who make up the family and a sin-infested world that surrounds the family.

The Lord's purpose for the family is to provide blessings — just another way to demonstrate his incredible love for and understanding of us. The Lord knows us — our needs and our hurts and our longings — better than we know ourselves. He really understands about our need to belong, to connect with, to affirm and be affirmed by one another.

The family is where this sense of oneness can thrive and be passed on to children. The family is where children gain a sense of identity, learn what it means to be loved and to be forgiven, and become equipped to venture out into a strange and sometimes frightening world. Children who do not learn to live out commitments to others in a family do not learn to live within a larger society either. The Christian family is the only institution which can instill in the next generation the proper values and Christian faith. Therein lies the family's genuine hope for survival.

Christian husbands and wives are hungry for ways to restore broken marriages and raise well-adjusted children in homes where love prevails. They want to know, in a practical way, how this sense of belonging can be promoted. Here are a few suggestions that nurture feelings of belonging:

- Using nicknames, terms of endearment
- Establishing family rituals and traditions (e.g., a crown for the birthday person, Sunday nights with popcorn and monopoly)
- Celebrating together each other's successes
- Grieving together major losses or failures
- Offering prayers on each other's behalf
- Creating and reviewing a family memory book of pictures and anecdotes of shared experiences
- Keeping the person rather than the gifts central on special occasions
- Giving homemade cards, drawings, poems or treats, and not just on special occasions
- Sharing a regular diet of hugs and kisses
- Listening to each other and conveying a sense that all opinions are valued
- Being included in serious business as well as family fun
- Keeping family "secrets"
- Planning together the family vacation
- Thanking God for each other

Feelings of belonging in a family lead to feelings of being accepted, loved and of worth to others outside the family. And, more importantly, God's presence and grace in our lives become all the more real to us.

Thank you, graduating seniors, for being so wise and causing me to reflect on your need, our need to belong. Savor the goodness and richness of this special blessing of your families as you become strong and are readied to touch the lives of others with God's love. □



Joanne Halter is director of social services at Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

Fewer generalizations, please

“**B**ring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord” (Ephesians 6:4).

“We have different gifts, according to the grace given us” (Romans 12:6).

“The highest ambition of the matron of the John Grier Home was to turn the ninety-seven orphans into ninety-seven twins” (Jean Webster, *Daddy Long-Legs*).

I am sorry to juxtapose a purely secular quotation against Bible verses like those, but this line from a dearly loved book of my childhood has sprung to my mind in a surprising number of instances as I read comments about women as women and women as mothers. There seems to be a widespread desire among Christian commentators to make every woman into “ninety-seven twins,” every family into “ninety-seven twins,” and every mother into “ninety-seven twins.”

Personally, I flinch when I read comments along the lines of, “God has given women the talent to teach small children.” It’s the kind of generalization that makes me want to rise up and shout along with Sojourner Truth, “And ain’t I a woman?” God barely gave me enough of whatever it takes to cope with my own three when they were small. I confess: I do better with three-year-olds than with infants; I prefer the elementary age to toddlers; I have found mine much more interesting by the time they got into their teens. I like them best of all when they grow up. Sorry about that!

Every conscientious Christian mother has the obligation to second her husband in bringing up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Beyond that general obligation, we find remarkably few prescriptions in the Bible as to precisely how this obligation should be carried out. This is just as well, because even prescriptions for family life that commentators try to base on biblical principles often turn out to be remarkably inapplicable. I remember how my mother used to laugh at admonitions that a wife should make the home a sanctuary where the husband could find refuge from the tribulations of the outside world. Daddy was a farmer. We lived in the middle of his business. She had runt pigs in the chicken yard, veterinary medicine in the refrigerator, and was likely to drop purely domestic duties on an instant’s notice to help switch the cattle across the road.

As with wives, the duties of even the best of mothers are going to vary widely. The mother of physically healthy children is in a different position from the mother



by Virginia DeMarce

of a handicapped child. The mother of three, aged 5, 3 and 1, is going to allocate her time very differently from the mother of three, aged 17, 13 and 9.

We must also face the fact that a woman who has no desire to mother a child, no interest in mothering a child, or no talent for mothering a child (these three things are *not* the same) need not leave the home in order to neglect the child, either physically or emotionally. There is not some kind of magic about having the mother physically present in the house, and there never has been.

I am merely saying that motherhood/home is not somehow beneficial on automatic pilot.

Generalizations are not necessarily helpful. Why can we not as Christians turn to supporting one another in our best efforts to rear our children, no matter how each individual family decides to do it, rather than constantly offering criticism of those who have chosen to do things in a way that would not suit us personally at all? It may suit another family’s situation just fine.

Thus, admonitions that a wife should not be curious about her husband’s professional life may well be applicable for the wife of a pastor, a doctor or a lawyer. They tend not to make much sense to the wife of a small-town businessman who runs the front counter for him, keeps the books and is responsible in large part for being right up to date with the wants and needs of their customers. Similarly, admonitions that a mother should automatically be doing thus, this or that may not be applicable in the situation of a particular family at a particular time. Why devote our efforts to giving one another bad consciences? Why not, rather, in the absence of evidence to the contrary, presume the best about each fellow Christian — even if she is a mother — whether she works or whether she does not. □

Virginia DeMarce is a member of Grace, Falls Church, Virginia.

"No one cares"

Thanks go to Ellen Kuber for her powerful article about abortion (November 15). Without ever mentioning the word, she cut through to the heart of the issue more quickly and cleanly than more direct and lengthy theological treatises might ever do. In reading the article, I could hear the anguished cries of Jerusalem's mothers in the wake of Herod's slaughter of the infants, the voice of Rachel weeping and mourning for her children, refusing to be comforted because they are no more.

We must take care, though, to avoid the temptation to despair of God's wisdom, power and justice. We must take care that we not go forth in anger nor place our hopes in man's laws. We must obediently and courageously go forth with law and gospel, confident that God in his mercy will call whom he will out of darkness and in his righteous wrath cast the unrepentant into eternal darkness.

Mark A. Scharfenaker
Denver, Colorado

"Walking Together"

I would like to say how wonderful it was to view "Walking Together," produced by the synod's Commission for Communication and Financial Support. Our whole family felt truly blessed because the day it was shown here we had brought two non-Lutherans with us to church. They were both very moved by it. It is a wonderful way for the authors to use their talents, and it would be of great benefit in membership instruction classes.

I would like to add that I am very happy we are publicizing WELS again. For many years it was almost painful to mention that we were "Wisconsin Synod" as the break between Wisconsin and Missouri Synods left friends and neighbors on both sides.

I would like to see the Northwestern Lutheran do an article on the differences between the synods as a reminder to all Lutherans that there is something serious to be concerned about right now.

Ruth Jaeger
Appleton, Wisconsin

Thank God for our missionaries

In the *Sampler of New Hymns and Liturgy*, there is a hymn whose first line is "In Christ there is no east or west." This was proven to me when I had the privilege recently of visiting Taipei, Taiwan and Hong Kong, China. What an exciting trip it was — such a different culture, and yet all the conveniences we are accustomed to in the United States. The most memorable part of the trip to me was meeting our missionaries and their wives and children. Being a grandmother, I looked at them as "my" children and they were doing "my" work in a foreign land.

Seeing the missionaries with the love and zeal they have for their work made me very humble. I know they have chosen this life. They knew what they were doing. But could I do it even as a younger person? I'm afraid I'm too selfish to give up what I have.

Attending church services in Hong Kong was so special. Coming from a large church in the midwest — having all the fancy trappings and a big organ — and being in a simple church with a piano and humble surroundings made me realize (I've really known it all along, but it is so easy to forget) that we don't need the adiaphora as long as God's word is being preached.

They have heeded the words, "Here am I, send me, send me" — not just pastors, but their wives who have willingly gone too, and have been strong supporters of their husband's work. If it weren't for their wives, I'm sure the task would be very difficult. I also feel we have to remember the families left behind in the States. They too have suffered a "loss" in having their families so far away. Let's keep all of them in our prayers. They are doing our work for us. Thank God for them!

Joy Chasty
Elm Grove, Wisconsin

TNL appreciated

I praise God for The Northwestern Lutheran. I have received a subscription for many years. I have attended a Wisconsin Lutheran church since infancy. I am so thankful for being raised in a Christian environment. Now that I am 17, and a senior, I am experiencing a fruitful harvest in my life that reaches out to others around me.

I want to encourage other teenagers not to be ashamed of the gospel of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. I want all of them to know that they don't have to give into temptations around them because, "Greater is he that is in them than he that is in the world."

I am so happy for all that you have done for me. Thank you for working so hard to put this magazine together. I hope that other readers will join me in prayer that God will use this magazine in a mighty way for the great commission.

Larry Sterling Brandt
Albuquerque, New Mexico

It can't happen here

I want to commend you on what I am beginning to perceive in the Northwestern Lutheran magazine. The world is full of deadly sin: pornography. We are now seeing some of these sins unveiled. Unfortunately, we in these United States still have the mentality I encountered prior to World War II — "It can't happen here." It did.

Somehow we have confused "love and meekness" with weakness. If our church fails in this battle (and that is what it is) our failure will affect generations to come.

Keep up the good work. I only ask that you work harder and faster to combat the evil in our midst. God go with you.

Myrtle Brown
Arlington, Virginia

Letters between 100 and 250 words are preferred. In the interest of conciseness, letters are subject to editing. Full name, address and phone number should accompany each letter. Names will be withheld only under unusual circumstances. Letters cannot be acknowledged, nor can all letters be used. Address your letters to *LETTERS, The Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N. Mayfair Road, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53222.*

NEWS around the world



World population projections . . . The U. S. Census Bureau reports that four new babies are born somewhere on earth every second, a rate that is expected to help push the planet's population from the current 4.9 billion to 6.2 billion by the year 2000. The anticipated growth of 1.3 billion people between 1985 and 2000 will add more than five times the population of the United States to the world's total during 15 years, according to the Census Bureau's "World Population Profile: 1985," published in December. "Approximately four persons were born each second in 1985; this is expected to increase to 4½ births per second by the year 2000," the bureau reported. And even subtracting deaths, the world gains between two and three new persons every second, according to the report. There were 2.6 billion people in the world in 1950, and 4.9 billion in mid-1985. Thus, even with similar annual growth rates, there were 38 million people added in 1950 and 79 million added in 1985. Currently almost half the people in the world live in four countries — China, India, the Soviet Union and the U. S. But by 2035 Nigeria could climb to third place on the list and India will likely top China as the most populous nation, the study said.

Friends missing in heaven . . . Most Americans believe in heaven and say they expect to get there, but they're not so sure about their friends, a newspaper poll says. In fact, Americans interviewed for USA Today said they thought that only 60 percent of their friends would go to heaven, and nearly 25 percent of their friends would go to hell. But 72 percent of those interviewed rated their own chances of getting there as good or excellent. Overall, 80 percent said they believed in heaven, and 67 percent said they believed in hell, the poll said. Pollsters also found that of the 96 percent who said they believed in God or the idea of a supreme being, nearly 60 percent said they think of God as a man, none think of God as a woman, and 37 percent think of God as neither.

Vatican — U. S. ambassador approved by court . . . At the Supreme Court December 9 opponents of renewed diplomatic relations between the United States and the Roman Catholic Church lost a last-ditch effort to challenge the new arrangement. Responding as it normally does to petitions for reconsideration of cases already rejected, the high court in a one-line order, declined the petition from a wide range of religious bodies and leaders. The routine action ends an unsuccessful

three-year attempt to have the federal courts invalidate President Reagan's appointment of two ambassadors to the Vatican and the latter's sending of Archbishop Pio Laghi as papal pronuncio to the U. S. Robert L. Maddox, executive director of Americans United for Separation of Church and State, issued a statement pledging to press Congress for the relief denied by the courts. "We intend to seek a legislative remedy," he said, "and to make sure the public understands the harm it is suffering today." He added, "I have no doubt that eventually the truth will prevail. My only regret is that such an egregious violation of the separation of church and state was ever allowed to take place. This action shows once again that if Americans want to keep their rights, they have to fight for them."

Family ties still strong . . . Family ties may be strained by social change, but authorities say that most families hold onto them, and not just at the holidays. American families live much closer together and see and hear from each other more often than the "scattered to the four winds" stereotype. The 1981 White House Conference on Aging reported that 79 percent of people older than 65 had surviving children and that 73 percent of those parents lived within a 30-minute drive of their nearest child. Of those with children, 53 percent reported contact with a child "today or yesterday" and another 24 percent had contact within the previous week. Dawn Bressler of the American Association of Retired Persons says that all this data shows only the surface. "The family is still the basic social unit, and women are still at the heart of it," she says. "Many times you'll find that the grandmother is the pivotal figure, even in fragmented families."

Swaggart endorses Robertson . . . Television evangelist Jimmy Swaggart says he has endorsed Rev. Pat Robertson for president because he really never felt his fellow Christian broadcaster has "the calling of God" to be a preacher or pastor. The Baton Rouge, La., evangelist made the remark in explaining to followers why, after so many years of railing against ministers in politics, he gave his much-sought-after endorsement in September to Robertson. Writing in the *Evangelist*, his monthly magazine, Swaggart said he hasn't changed his mind about preachers aspiring to public office, asserting, "I have never seen any good come of it." But he added that while the news media have labeled Robertson, head of the Christian Broadcasting Network, as an evangelist, "I have never felt he had the calling of God to serve in the capacity of evangelist or pastor or even teacher." Thus Robertson is free to run for political office, he said. Officials of the CBN chief's presidential exploratory committee in Alexandria, Va., declined to comment on Swaggart's characterization. Robertson himself continues to insist that he is a broadcaster and talk-show host, not an evangelist. Robertson is an ordained Baptist minister.

News items appearing in *News Around the World* represent current events of general interest to the readers of *The Northwestern Lutheran* and should not be interpreted as representing the views of the editors.

Ten years old and growing

In a crowded classroom in Winona, Minn., in the summer of 1975, the representatives and leaders of youth groups from all over the United States and Canada decided that a special newsletter for the youth of the Wisconsin Synod should be published. That decision has led to ten years of *Generations*.

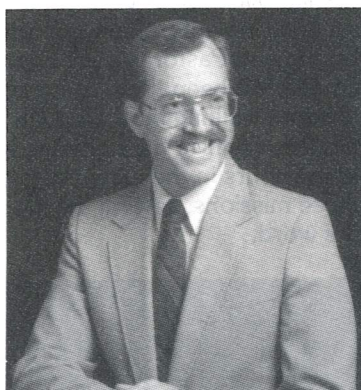
The first issue of *Generations* was printed and distributed in September 1975. The newsletter had no name at that time. Instead, a "name-your-newsletter" contest, offering a free registration to the next international youth rally, was held. A total of 27 names was submitted by 16 people. The name *Generations*, submitted by Sharon Saar of Ottawa, Canada, won her a trip to the Saginaw Rally.

The first two issues were paid for by the Women's Circle of Martin Luther Church of St. Louis. A total of 1900 copies was distributed to the pastors of the Wisconsin Synod. Requests immediately poured in for more copies and 2400 additional copies of the first issue were quickly sent.

The editor for the first year was Ernest Saar, the youth counselor for St. Paul Youth Group of Ottawa, Canada. Saar was instrumental in promoting youth work in our synod and he helped organize the first international youth rally in Ottawa in 1974. For many years he also served on the synod's Committee on Youth Ministry.


In 1976 Pastor Roger Zehms of Martin Luther Church in St. Louis became the new editor. Under his direction *Generations* grew from a small mimeographed letter to a professionally printed four-page tabloid and subscriptions grew from 4500 to 15,000.

Balza

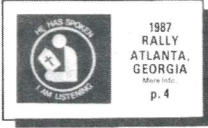


At the beginning, two copies of each issue of *Generations* were sent to all pastors of the synod. In 1981 congregations were given the option of submitting mailing lists of their youth and having *Generations* sent directly to them. In 1980 the present practice of sending bundles of each issue to congregations was begun. Bundles of 5, 10, 15 or 20 copies are sent out, depending on the size of the congregation, unless it requests a specific amount.


The cost of producing *Generations* has risen with its circulation. The first issue in 1975 was printed and mailed at a cost of only \$175.



RALLY MEMORIES
p. 2



1987 RALLY
ATLANTA, GEORGIA
p. 4




STRYPHER & WAYNE WATSON
p. 3

"His mercy extends to those who fear Him from"

GENERATIONS

GENERATION to GENERATION™
Fall 1986

ANOTHER RALLY IS HISTORY!



Participants Of 1986 Youth Rally At Roseville, MN

GENERATIONS STAFF

Feature Writer	Pastor Gene Jalinka, Nov., MI
Feature Writer	Pastor Dennis Kuest, Morton Grove, IL
Friendly Counselor	Pastor Walter Givens, Randolph, WI
Focus On Youth	Pastor Bruce Marggraf, New London, WI
Sing A New Song	Mr. Stephen Kati, Manitowoc, WI
Sing A New Song	Mr. John Kuhl, Wausau, WI
Art	Miss Vana Mohr, Milwaukee, WI
Assistant Editor	Pastor William Fischer, Milwaukee, WI
Editor	Pastor Robert Balza, Bear, DE

GENERATIONS

ROBERT BALZA
5 RAWLINGS DR.
BEAR, DE 19701

New Friends Forever

When I registered at Northwestern College for the International Youth Rally, I was assigned two complete strangers for roommates. I got a little upset about that since I couldn't stay with the roommates of my choice. However, I was pleasantly surprised that both of my roommates turned out to be really nice people. After a while, the situation turned out to be a benefit instead of the drawback I was expecting. After all, who did I come here if not to meet new people?

During the week of the rally, I met more people than I can even begin to count. I had stayed with just the person I had come with. I would have hardly met anyone. It's actually glad things didn't work out the way I had wanted them to.

I've discovered that the theme "Friends Forever" doesn't mean only keeping the same friends, but it also means meeting new friends. Although the rally presentations did a good job of presenting the theme, I learned even more from the friendly actions of the participants.

I've also made another discovery. It will always be easy to make new friends if you have just one thing in common. The tie that binds us as friends is friendship with Jesus, our common faith in Him. It will always be easy to make new friends in His name.

by Sharon Saar
Cannon Falls, MN

PUBLISHED BY THE YOUTH MINISTRY COMMISSION - WISCONSIN EV. LUTHERAN SYNOD - FALL, 1986

Today each issue requires about \$1000 to produce and distribute. The costs are covered by the subscription price of \$1 per year for the four issues.

Through the years the cost of producing and mailing *Generations* has been kept low because of volunteer help. None of the editors or writers is paid. We also thank the youth groups at Martin Luther and First Lutheran of Green Bay, Wis., who published the newsletter from 1975 to 1983, as well as the members of St. John, Christiana, Dela., who have mailed out *Generations* since 1983.

Generations' circulation continues to grow as it completes its tenth year of publication. In addition to news of youth activities around the country and important announcements of WELS youth ministries, *Generations* features articles on music and other topics of interest to youth, all written from a scriptural perspective. If you would like to subscribe, send your name and address to the editor, Pastor Robert Balza, 5 Rawlings Dr., Bear, DE 19701.

— Robert O. Balza

The first is a blessing

What joy a father or mother has to watch their firstborn take the *first* step! Parents continue to have that joy in watching their children accomplish other *firsts*. The *firsts* in life are blessings, as well as the seconds and the thirds.

The first Latin American Lay Delegate Conference of our Latin American World Missions was held in April 1986 in Monterrey, Mexico. Representing Colombia, South America were two Colombian lay delegates and one Colombian pastor. From Mexico there were three Mexican lay delegates and five national pastors. Puerto Rico sent four Puerto Ricans as lay delegates to participate in the three-day conference. WELS sent one missionary from each field and one layman from the Latin American Executive Commit-



Holy Cross, Monterrey, Mexico

tee to be observers. This first lay delegate conference was and is a blessing to our brothers and sisters in our Spanish-speaking congregations in Colombia and Mexico and Puerto Rico.

As I sat there watching this *first*, I wished over and over again that Pastor Venus Winter, Pastor Roger Sprain and Pastor Rupert Eggert could have been there to watch their children walking on their own. These pioneer Spanish missionaries spent many hours in the early years of these missions, sowing the seed of the word.

And now in Monterrey these Colombians, Mexicans and Puerto Ricans were conducting the business of a church conference, delivering and discussing full-length conference papers, such as "Christian Fellowship," and enjoying the common bond among them — faith in the Lord Jesus. To arrive at the conference, the national churches paid for the major portion of the expenses.

The blessings of this *first* step are many. One will not easily forget the extra efforts made by the host congregation in Monterrey, Mexico, La Iglesia Luterana de la Santa Cruz — Holy Cross Lutheran Church, and its pastor, Rev. Daniel Perez.

I heard delegates repeating: "It doesn't matter where we live, we are all members of one body — the Christian Church." "The problems that we have in our countries and in our churches are not too difficult to overcome with the help of the Lord." "I will never forget the many blessings of this week in Monterrey."

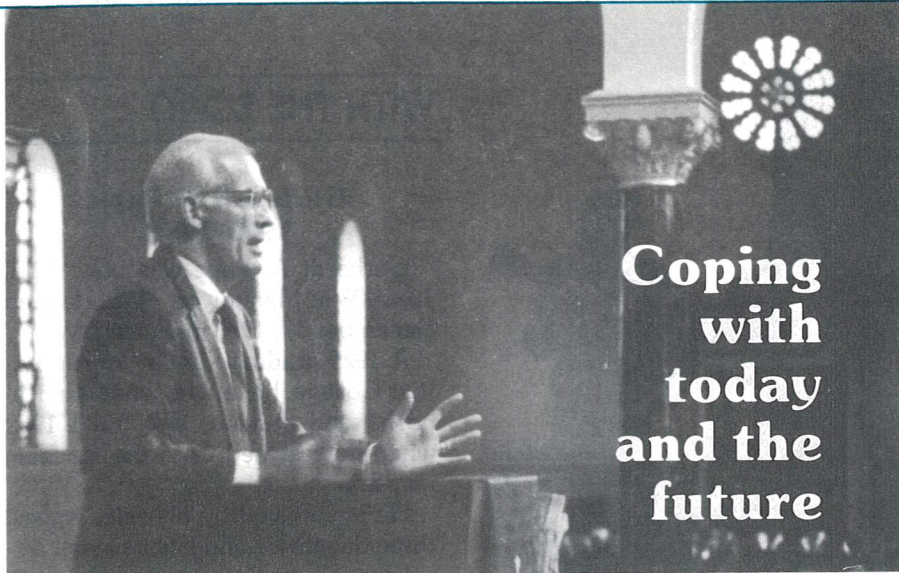
But who is satisfied with taking only one step? So one delegate from Puerto Rico prays: "May God grant that these conferences continue so that we may share more blessings with our brothers in faith from other parts of Latin America."

We join with him in such a prayer so that he and others in Latin America may lead more to taking their first steps with the Lord.

— Charles H. Flunker



Delegates from Puerto Rico: Charles Flunker, Hector Maldonado, Sergio Cortijo, Ivan Madera, Kelly Alvarez



Coping with today and the future

Attorney John A. Stocking of Milwaukee, Wisconsin was featured speaker at the seminar for parents of the mentally handicapped.

The first (but we certainly believe not the last) seminar for parents of persons who are mentally handicapped was held all day, October 25, at Wisconsin Lutheran College in Milwaukee. Members of the Special Education Services Committee of the Special Ministries Board arranged for knowledgeable speakers, many themselves parents of children with disabilities, to address the topic, "Coping With Today and the Future."

"Children are an heritage from the Lord," was the pervading message. The author of this verse does not supply qualifiers such as "beautiful," "talented," "superior" or "athletic," — he simply implies *all* children. God has made each child just as he wants him or her to be. Each is a part of the body of Christ.

We were firmly reminded that the mentally handicapped person has the *right* to spiritual training, religious education, and when appropriate, confirmation and the Lord's Supper. For those of us whose children function at lower levels, we were comforted with the knowledge that our children are members of God's kingdom through baptism and that communion is a blessing of affirmation and not a necessity. Dialogue between families and the special ministries committee members strongly supported the concept that parents

need and desire Christian training materials and classes for children and adults with special learning needs.

"What will happen to my child when I am no longer physically or financially capable of caring for him or her?" is a question frequently asked by parents. Professionals in their area skillfully guided the audience through the maze of guardianship, estate planning, and alternatives for meeting the family needs in both home and community settings.

A panel of parents who have children residing outside their own homes reminded us that sometimes the most loving and caring action on behalf of the entire family as well as the handicapped person is to choose an alternative living situation. Acknowledging the pain of such a separation, the parents also confirmed the great contribution made by teachers, therapists and trained staff. Recognizing the Lord's will is the key to coping.

A special feeling of kinship built as conversation flowed between parents, pastors, members of the special ministries committee, and even some adults with mental retardation whose presence reminded us of our task at hand. Amid warm goodbyes, hugs and handshakes floated the sounds of, "We must — no, we *will* — do this again!" Watch for it folks!

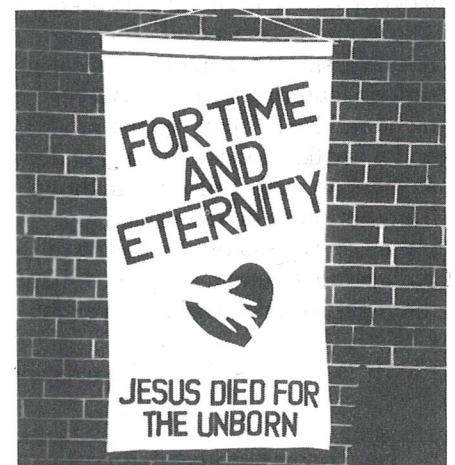
— Ruth Becker Schaller

WELS Lutherans for Life holds convention

On Saturday, October 25, WELS Lutherans for Life held its national convention at St. Paul, Muskego, Wis. Theme for the convention was "For Time and Eternity."

Feature of the convention was a group workshop presented by Brad Mattes, political consultant to National Right to Life (NRL). Mattes is a member of Apostles in Billings, Mont., and has been involved in the pro-life movement over 11 years.

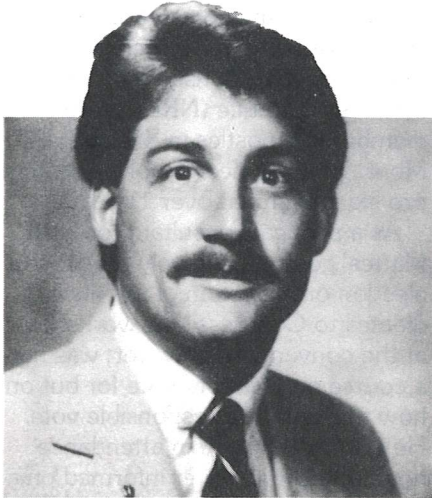
As a political consultant for NRL, Mattes' goal is to actively pursue the election or reelection of pro-life candidates to Congress. His workshop at the convention, however, was not a course on whom to vote for but on how to exercise a responsible vote. He instructed those in attendance how to become better informed on a candidate's position concerning the status of the unborn. He gave examples of how one can wade through



the rhetoric to determine a candidate's actual position.

Following this major workshop the audience broke into smaller groups to attend one of 14 workshops conducted by pastors, teachers, professors and lay experts in their respective fields. Workshops each ran 50 minutes during which time those in attendance could learn about God's word on abortion, witnessing and

handling cliches, chastity and euthanasia, abortion history and the psychology behind abortion, music used in the fight for life and a study of how it affects our attitudes about life. In addition there was a workshop sponsored by a pro-life youth auxiliary at Wisconsin Lutheran High School in Milwaukee and three rap sessions for counselors, hotliners and chapter board members.



Mattes

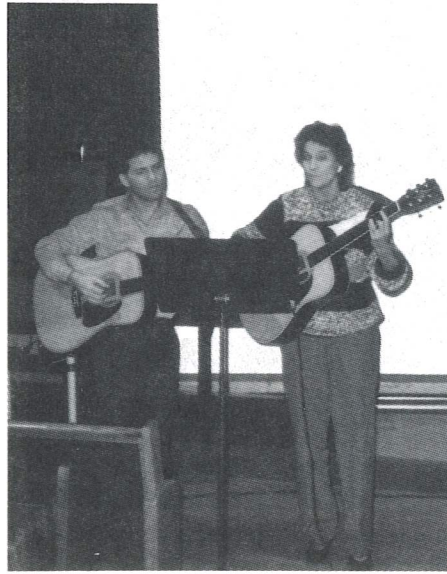
At the noon luncheon the latest in video available in the pro-life arena, "No Alibis," was viewed. The afternoon session contained a musical interlude featuring Lynnette Blievernicht and Kelly Voigt singing pro-life and Christian songs. The day ended as it began, with a devotional thought from Scripture on the value God places on life and on our calling to both protect human life and to share the message of eternal life through Christ.

— Robert Fleischmann

DISTRICT NEWS SCHEDULE

- February 1:** Northern Wisconsin, Pacific Northwest, South Atlantic
- February 15:** South Central, Southeastern Wisconsin, Western Wisconsin
- March 1:** Arizona, California, Dakota-Montana, Michigan
- March 15:** Minnesota, Nebraska, North Atlantic

If your district does not appear, it is because no news items were reported by your district reporter.



Voigt and Blievernicht

WITH THE LORD

**Gerhardt A. Pape
1908-1986**

Gerhardt A. Pape was born April 10, 1908 in Manitowoc, Wis. He died December 17, 1986 in Juneau, Wis.

A 1929 graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, he taught schools in Kenosha and Juneau, Wis. until 1952 when he resigned from the teaching ministry.

He is survived by his wife, Agnes, three daughters and eight sisters.

Funeral services were held December 20, 1986 at St. John, Juneau, Wis.



The Michigan Lutheran Seminary varsity football team capped their season with an exciting win that crowned the team the Michigan High School Athletic Association Class D State Champions. Michigan Lutheran Seminary is the first Saginaw-area school, public or private, to win a state football championship. The 36-24 MLS victory against Fowler High School took place before 14,439 fans on November 29 in the Pontiac Silverdome, the home of the Detroit Lions professional football team. Head Coach Loren Dietrich, who has taught and coached at MLS for seventeen years, declared the victory "the high point of my thirty years of coaching." The MLS Cardinals were led by outstanding seniors, including all-state defensive back and quarterback David Toepel, Jr., Saginaw, and all-state lineman Rod Hardy, Bay City.

NPH NOTICE

The retail store of Northwestern Publishing House will be closed for inventory all day on Monday, March 2 and until 12:00 noon on Tuesday, March 3.

SAMPLERS

Approximately 1000 WELS congregations are participating in the Sampler trial use. The supply of copies has now been exhausted. However, extra copies of the *Organist's Edition* are available from Northwestern Publishing House as long as they last.

NOTICES

The deadline for submitting items is five weeks before the date of issue

CONFERENCES

Michigan District, Northern Pastor/Teacher Conference, February 9-10 at Bethel, Bay City. Agenda: Christian Contemporary Music: Its Role in the Life of Young Christians and its Use in the Ministry of Their church (Tiefel); Exegesis 2 Peter 3:1-13 (Schweppe); Smalcald Articles, Part II, Art. 3 (Haag); An Analysis of the Church Growth Movement and its Theology (Muetzel).

Minnesota District, Crow River Conference, February 24 at St. Paul, Litchfield. Agenda: Evangelism Seminar (Paul Keim).

CHANGES IN MINISTRY

PASTORS:

Bode, Marcus R., from Minnesota Valley Lutheran High School, New Ulm, Minn., to Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich.
Heyn, Thomas A., from Bogota, Colombia, S. Amer., to Spanish Mission, Madison, Wis.
Manthey, Marcus P., from New Hope, West Melbourne, Fla., to Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich.
Yahr, Terry L., from Redeemer, Hettinger, N. Dak., to Faith, West Newton, Penn.

ADDRESSES

PASTORS:

Dorn, John S., R. 1, Box 1404, Hudson, WI 54016; 715/386-9851.
Horne, Thomas H., 2325 Bardwell Dr. NW, Bemidji, MN 56601; 218/751-6334.
Mueller, Richard W., 416 Patrick Ave., Waunakee, WI 53597; 608/849-8637.
Neumann, Marcus R., 1708 W. 6th Ave., Brodhead, WI 53520; 608/897-2420.
Ruppel, James A., 404 N. Cameron Ave., Casa Grande, AZ 85222; 602/836-8911.
Spencer, Steven D., 205 Rio Tinto, El Paso, TX 79912; 915/584-6231.
Valerio, Arthur J., 306 Kimsham St., Sitka, AK 99835; 907/747-6938.

TEACHERS:

Bain, Gary M., 1038 Old Dutch Mill, Colorado Springs, CO 80907; 303/598-4297.
Dorn, Jeffrey O., R. 1, Box 129, LaCrosse, WI 54601; 608/786-2841.

EXPLORATORY SERVICES

to determine the potential for establishing a WELS mission in the area. Services are held on Sundays.

GILBERT, ARIZONA — Heritage Lutheran, Gilbert Elementary School, 50 S. Gilbert Rd. Contact Pastor Richard Paustian, 3412 E. El Moro Ave., Mesa, AZ 85204; 602/924-1657.

CHANGE OF TIME OR PLACE OF WORSHIP

in the following exploratory areas or mission congregations.

FAYETTEVILLE/ROGERS/BELLA VISTA, ARKANSAS — Grace, 1701 E. Robinson Ave. (Hwy. 68E), Springdale, AR, 9:30 a.m.; SS/Bible class 10:30 a.m. Pastor Charles Huebner, 2723 Dove Dr., Fayetteville, AR 72701; 501/442-4021.

HIGHLANDS RANCH, COLORADO — Abiding Word, Sand Creek School, Dad Clark and Maplewood Dr., Highlands Ranch, CO, 9:00 a.m.; Bible study 10:15 a.m. Pastor Tom Jeske, 303/771-9721.

ST. PETERSBURG, FLORIDA — Faith, 2601 — 49th St. N, St. Petersburg, FL 33710. 8:30 a.m. and 10:45 a.m. from January through April.

BUFFALO GROVE, ILLINOIS — New Life Lutheran, Willow Grove Elementary School, 777 Checker Dr. (4 blocks south of where Hwy 83 meets Busch Rd. and Checker Dr.), 9:30 a.m.; SS/Bible Class 10:45 a.m. Pastor Chris Cordes, 890 Dunham Lane, Buffalo Grove, IL 60089; 312/520-9176.

FREDERICKSBURG, TEXAS — Shepherd of the Hills, Althaus Acres, 1906 N. Llano, Fredericksburg, 10:00 a.m. Pastor Floyd Mattek, 502 N. Edison, Fredericksburg, TX 78624; 512/997-2677.

RETREAT

"Strengthening our Recoveries Through Christ" will be the thrust of the fourth Recovering Alcohol-ic Individual/Family Retreat for Lutherans sponsored by the Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service Alcoholism and Other Drug Abuse Program to be held from Friday, April 24, 7:00 p.m., to Sunday, April 26, 1:00 p.m. at a Milwaukee retreat center. Workshops, devotions, group participation, Sunday service, an Alcoholism Awareness open meeting, swimming, fun and fellowship will be part of the retreat. Recovering individuals and/or their entire families are invited. It is hoped that adults who attend are members of Alcoholism Awareness, A.A. or Al-Anon. Sobriety for the previous three months is required of alcoholics who attend. Babysitting will be provided for younger children during Saturday sessions.

Cost will be \$40.00 per adult in a two-bed room; \$20.00 for each child. Two children can fit in their parents' room using their own sleeping bag and pillow. Scholarships are available upon request for special circumstances. A \$10.00 non-refundable registration fee will be charged for each individual or family which will apply toward the total cost. Reservations must be in by April 3. For further details or reservation information contact Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service, 6800 N. 76th St., Milwaukee, WI 53223; 414/353-5000.

CIVILIAN CHAPLAINS

Rev. Joel Jaeger Home Address Kastanien Strasse 4 6501 Klein Winternheim West Germany Phone 011-49-6136-8041	Rev. Lee Neujahr Home Address Rennweg 70 8500 Nürnberg 20 West Germany Phone 011-49-911-538563
Mailing Address Same as above	Mailing Address 98th General Hospital PO Box 391 APO NY 09105

Tourists in Europe: For time and place of services call the chaplains or WELS Special Ministries Board, 414/771-9357, USA.

NEW WELS CHURCHES

Names Requested

In recent months the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod began work in the states and cities listed below. Please send all names of members who moved into the general area of these cities, as well as names of people who may be interested in a Wisconsin Synod mission, to:

WELS MEMBERSHIP CONSERVATION
2929 N. Mayfair Rd., Milwaukee, WI 53222

Names as well as pertinent information regarding members referred will be forwarded to the nearest pastor and/or mission board chairman.

Alaska	Anchorage (South)*
Arizona	Gilbert*
	Peoria*
	Tucson (Southwest)*
Arkansas	Fayetteville/Bella Vista*
California	Bakersfield*
	Pleasanton*
Colorado	Colorado Springs (East)*
Florida	Jupiter*
	Miami (Hispanic)*
	Panama City*
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New York	Manhattan*
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Ohio	Toledo (Northwest)
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South Dakota	Custer*
Texas	Atascocita*
	Beaumont*
	Universal City
Washington	Everett*
	Spokane Valley*
	Woodinville/Bothell*
Wisconsin	Madison (Hispanic)*
	Portage
	Waunakee*
Ontario, Canada	Mississauga*
	New Market*

*Denotes exploratory services.

SYMPOSIUM

The Board for Parish Education and Dr. Martin Luther College are co-hosting a symposium on "The Lutheran Elementary School and Evangelism" on April 24-25 at the Yahara Center in Madison, Wis. Stimulating papers and models will be presented. All who attend will be invited to become involved in structured discussion of whether and how Lutheran schooling and Lutheran evangelism may be integrated.

The cost of attendance includes a minimal daily registration fee plus meals and lodging at the Yahara Center. Deadline for pre-registration is April 1. Enrollment is limited, so please hurry! Appropriate forms have been mailed to all pastors and elementary schools. For further information or additional pre-registration material contact Dr. John Isch, Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, MN 56073; 507/354-8221 or 507/354-2492.

PROJECTOR NEEDED

The Michigan WELS Lutherans for Life office is in need of a filmstrip projector. If you have one you can donate, please contact the office at 27489 W. Six-Mile Rd., Livonia, MI 48152; 313/522-8484.

WELS FILM/VIDEO RENTAL

ASSIGNMENT LIFE

1986 52 min. 1/2" VHS color SCA
 In this documentary on abortion, the viewer is led through the abortion process from the mother's initial contact in the abortion clinic to the end result. There are interviews with women who have experienced abortion and scenes of actual abortion processes and a live birth. Parents may not want their young children to view these scenes. Rental fee: \$15.00.

THE GOOSEHILL GANG AND THE MYSTERY OF THE TREEHOUSE GHOST

1986 20 min. 1/2" VHS color PIJ
 In this adventure the gang discovers that a runaway child has been stealing food from their treehouse. They help bring about a reconciliation between him and his parents. Rental fee: \$7.50.

STRANGERS

1986 30 min. 1/2" VHS color PIJSCA
 A family is living apart in the same house until a son runs away from home. Their pastor and Christian friends help to bring this family back together again. Rental fee: \$15.00.

NO ESCAPE FROM CHRISTMAS

1986 30 min. 1/2" VHS color JSCA
 After the death of their only son, the angry mother and her husband go on a backpacking trip to avoid the painful reminders that Christmas will bring. But a Christian husband's witness helps his wife overcome her bitterness. Rental fee: \$15.00.

TRUCE IN THE FOREST

1986 30 min. 1/2" VHS color IJSCA
 During the Battle of the Bulge a German woman befriends American soldiers on Christmas Eve. When a German patrol arrives, she demands that they leave their weapons outside, and the enemies celebrate Christmas together. The German dialogue will delight some of our German-speaking audiences. Rental fee: \$15.00.

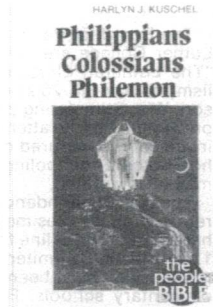
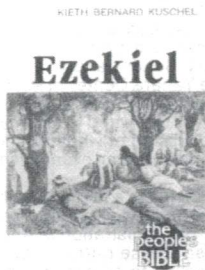
OTHERS

1986 30 min. 1/2" VHS color PIJSCA
 A Christian out of a job helps an unemployed stranger obtain the employment that he could have had. Like his Savior he wanted to put others ahead of himself. The happy ending only emphasizes the JOY ("Jesus" — "Others" — "You") that comes through service to our God. Rental fee: \$15.00.

NANNY AND ISAIAH LEARN TO FOLLOW JESUS

1986 50 min. 1/2" VHS color PIJ
 This time the puppets demonstrate Christian faith in action as they face the problems of trying to form a church softball team. The tape is divided into five segments, with discussion time planned for each segment. Rental fee: one week for \$10.00, two weeks for \$15.00.

Send your order for renting the videos to WELS FILM/VIDEO RENTAL SERVICE, Northwestern Publishing House, 1250 North 113th Street, P.O. Box 26975, Milwaukee, WI 53226-0975. Phone 414/475-6600.



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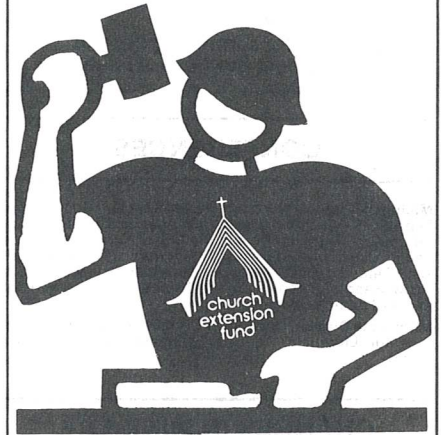
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FROM THIS CORNER

In recent months three correspondents in the letter column have suggested that the column be terminated. I have received several other personal letters which have suggested the same thing. The time has come to have a word or two on the subject.

First of all, a misconception should be cleared up. Several personal letters have called the letter column a favorite of the editor. 'Tis not so. 'Twill never be so. Because of the very nature of a letter column the editor frequently ends up in the middle, skewered more often than anyone else. For example, accusations that a letter was distorted by editing, charges that the editor showed poor taste or bad judgment or both, complaints that letters were censored or not printed. This is a sample of the letters I have received. Being human, I can and do flinch.

The principal charge seems to be that either the letters contain nothing of value or the controversy they at times reflect is unseemly. When the letters began in the June 15, 1982 issue, in accordance with our confessional stance I said that "the letter column will not be a vehicle for debating matters which God has decided in his word. . . . There are matters which are undebatable." I hope that I have honored that restriction.

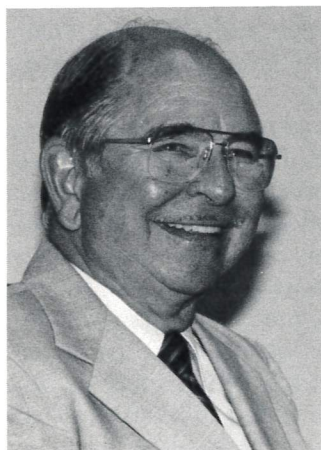
It is the nature of a letter column to be controversial. It may be a flaw in human nature, but we are quicker to fault than to laud. Any letter column — secular or religious — reflects this trait. This is not to question anyone's goodwill. Few of us are in any position to cast such stones. Opinions and ideas are sometimes passionately held, and the passion will find its way into a letter.

A strongly expressed fear is that the column projects to outsiders the wrong "image" of the Wisconsin Synod — contentious and divided. I don't know why anyone would believe that the Wisconsin Synod laity is an army of sheep. The divisions which tear at society are found among our people. There are many people who are not Wisconsin Synod who believe that rock and roll — religious or otherwise — is an abomination. And say so. A mild example? Perhaps, but indicative of many others.

Anyone who sits through a voters' assembly in one of our congregations will soon have dispelled any notion of our laity as an army of sheep. And I have sat through a half dozen conventions where the debate has reached a fever pitch. A synod of sheep? Hardly. People willing to hear and heed the word — please God — but not at all reluctant to question the word of any mere mortal. And our letters reflect this.

To the dismay of some, I am still convinced that our people, especially the laity, should have a forum for the *public* expression of their *opinions*. Not all, of course, will take advantage of the opportunity. Perhaps less than two percent of our readers will have written a letter for the letter column between June 15, 1982 and the date of my retirement. From that date on, the issue — and it will still be around — will be the care of another editor.

Anyway, I hope that my position has been clarified. I do not wish to appear obstinate or inerrable. I hear what my critics are saying, but I must respectfully, regretfully, and fraternally, disagree.





At the Christmas Retreat 1986

Goose bumps

By Sharon Wilking

A late night horror show will sometimes do it. Or perhaps it's a person who insists on rubbing styrofoam together because he knows you can't stand it. Maybe it takes the classic nails on a blackboard. But what I'm talking about are "goose bumps" — that chilly, skin-crawling feeling that we've all had at one time or another.

My husband and I have been getting goose bumps on a regular basis for the last four years — in our Sunday church services. No, the pastor isn't quite that scary looking, nor are his sermons packed in styrofoam.

It started one Sunday when we sleepily dragged ourselves out of bed and rushed to church as we had done for years. Imagine flying down the road wondering if we'd get there on time, turning the corner, and finding an empty lot where our church had been! It was gone without a trace. Not only was there no longer our familiar WELS church down the road a piece, but there was no longer our network of Christian friends and families in the neighborhood. Sound impossible? Although the circumstances were different, the result was the same for my husband and me when a sudden job transfer had given us a new home in Europe. Suddenly we found ourselves without a church.

All was not lost. We had heard about two WELS chaplains in Europe. Quick! Where are they? Let's give them a call . . . surely we can still worship as we had in the USA. Unfortunately it was not so simple as that. Imagine *yourself* having a "congregation" spread over thousands of miles. Every Sunday has a different location for the serv-

ice designated to it, and naturally it works on a supply and demand principle to serve the most people possible. As it turned out Belgium (our new home) was at the time a "low demand" country. Number of WELS members? The two of us were *it*.

Being six hours away from the closest service, we were thankful for months with five Sundays in them. It didn't mean a Sunday off for an already well-traveled pastor and his family, but instead meant being on the road yet again for a long trip from Germany to England to serve families there. This meant a stop to see us along the way, but sadly there are only two or three months a year that have the extra Sunday. We learned what it's like to try to worship alone — with helpful tools provided by the synod and "personalized" taped services that our home congregation sent. It's just not as easy as it sounds, and it's certainly not the same.

That very first visit from our chaplain gave us a totally new appreciation for the sacrament of communion, of hearing a real "live" sermon, and of singing a hymn in the harmony of at least a few voices. That's when they — the goose bumps — started!

Since then we've moved to yet another "low demand" country — Switzerland. Now we're only three hours away from the closest service (in Germany) and suddenly we have a realistic option. Provided work schedules cooperate with our one Sunday a month chance we usually make the drive, having quickly realized that missing one Sunday actually means not going to church for two months. Sometimes we still leave the house rather half-heartedly at the thought of spending six hours of a precious day off together on the autobahn, but we always find ourselves returning in the evening, being very glad we went — these goose bumps have a very special feeling to them!

We also enjoy attending some of the four-times-a-year "retreat weekends" when all the little congregations of both chaplains in Europe get together as one. Despite its meaning a full day's drive for many, the attendance is good. There's an easy explanation — it seems we're not the only ones with goose bumps.

It's sad to think that having a WELS church so handy is only one of the many precious gifts that we take for granted. No, we really *don't* appreciate them until they're gone.

One day I'm sure we'll return to our favorite of all places, the USA, and we can't help but wonder if the goose bumps will go away when we do. We can only pray that they don't! □



Sharon Wilking and her husband, a professional photographer, reside in Zurich, Switzerland.