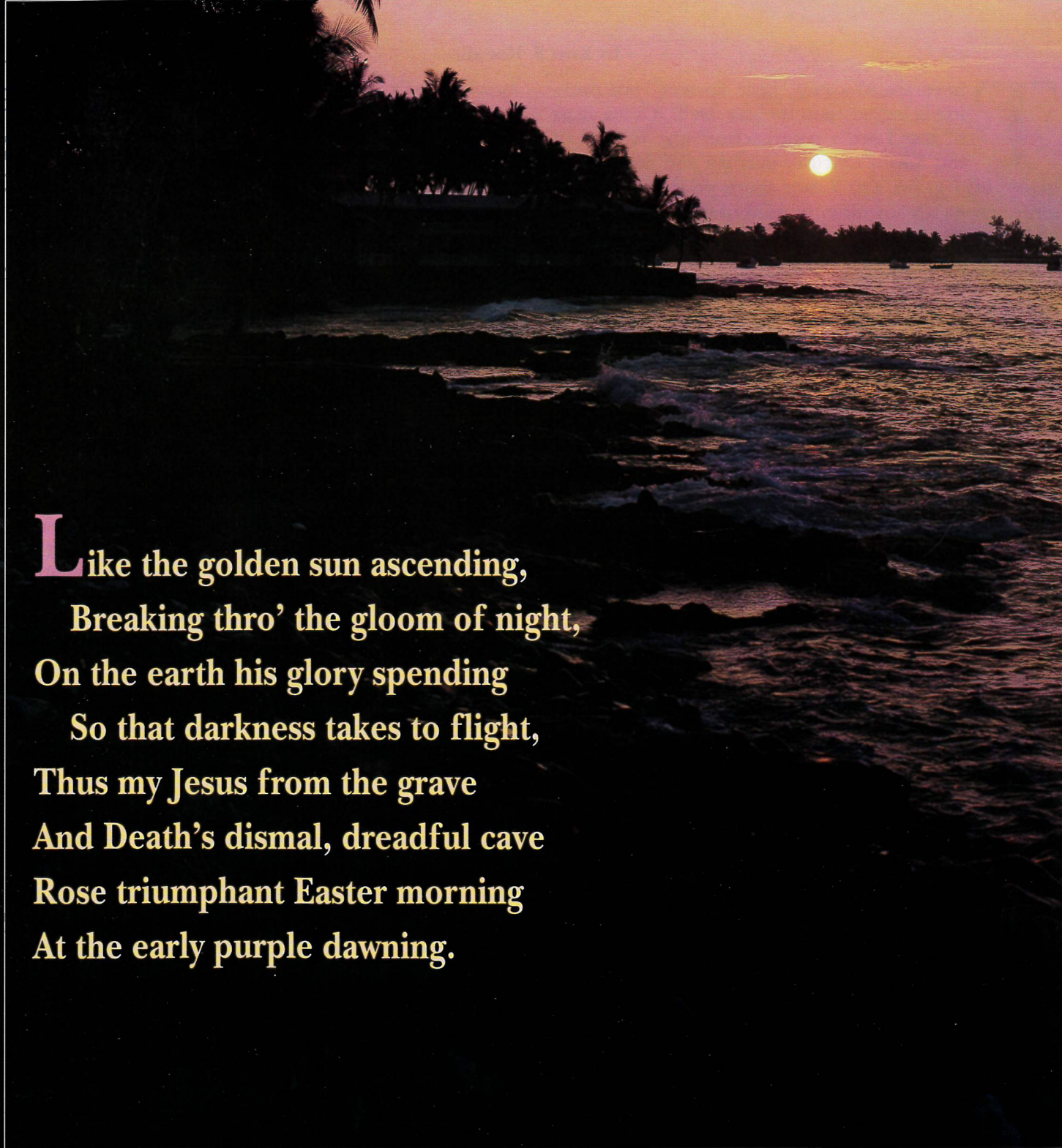


April 15, 1992

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of Easter p. 142

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the answer p. 144

NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN



Like the golden sun ascending,
Breaking thro' the gloom of night,
On the earth his glory spending
So that darkness takes to flight,
Thus my Jesus from the grave
And Death's dismal, dreadful cave
Rose triumphant Easter morning
At the early purple dawning.

Easter is Victory Day: Joy Day in Jesus, the living Lord

The three M's of Easter

by Kurt F. Koeplin

There are 51 other “little Easters,” but nothing is bigger than the day itself. It’s the feast of our Lord’s resurrection; the festival of our Savior’s victory over sin and Satan, over gloom and grave. On Easter more people will be in church than on any other Sunday of the year.

Although it would be difficult to prove, one cannot believe that the Christians who throng God’s house on that day are unhappy people. Indeed, we may have our share of grief, trouble, sorrow, and woe, but there is little unhappiness among Christians on Easter because it’s Victory Day: Joy Day in Jesus, the living Lord.

The messenger

As excited and joyful as we may get, one wonders what it must have been like in heaven on Holy Saturday among the hosts of angels. Think of the thrill that ran through the angelic legions as the Father delegated two of their number to go to the earth, roll the stone away to show that Jesus was no longer a resident, and to announce to some of his sorrowing followers that he had risen.

This is not the first time God chose angels to make contact with humans concerning their Savior. An angel announced John the forerunner’s birth to Zacharias, appeared to the virgin mother to announce she would be the one through whom the blessed Savior would enter our world and life, was sent to calm the nervous palpitations of the foster father, went to shepherds to herald his birth, to mention just a few. These servants of God did not speak on their own. They were God’s messengers who spoke only that which God wanted them to speak.

The message

They stated the facts, verifiable facts. What was said was not speculation, not just a possibility, certainly not a doubtful improbability. This Easter messenger

speaks God’s word to mankind; “He is not here; he has risen.”

That’s the message of Easter; not complicated, not spoken in words difficult to comprehend, not one of several messages open to misinterpretation. It’s three words, ten letters, able to be read by the youngest of school children: “He has risen.”

Here’s another fact. The resurrection of Jesus is spoken of no less than 108 times in the New Testament. Our faith, hope, life, way of doing things, our joy, peace,

salvation — everything about our life here and hereafter rests upon this Easter message: “He has risen.”

The meaning

One of the saddest headlines I ever read appeared in a major newspaper on its editorial page on Holy Saturday: “Author finds no answers to resurrection.”

“A new investigative report examining the vast and varied accumulation of facts about Jesus finds that the theories attempting to explain away his resurrection are basically flawed, one way or another. But just exactly what happened or how, can’t be definitely determined,” the study adds.

Friends, one of the M’s of Easter is not mystery! There is no hidden meaning. We do not have to muse or wonder, “What does this mean?”

Easter means that Jesus is the Son of God as Scripture says. It means that he who was delivered for our offenses has been raised again for our justification. It means that we can trust him with our life and destiny. It means that because he lives, so shall we. It means that death is conquered; the grave is never the end.

Those are the three M’s of Easter to which we add: Hallelujah!

*The angel said . . . “He is not here;
he has risen, just as he said”
(Matthew 28:5-6).*



Kurt Koeplin is pastor of Atonement, Milwaukee.

May the Lord our God 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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FORWARD

- Reincarnation and resurrection both refer to life after death, but they are not the same, says Roland Cap Ehlke, and the difference is not just academic. "It's the difference between futilely trying to earn release from this world or enjoying God's gifts of forgiveness and eternal life." He describes the difference in "Eternity in the heart" on page 144.
- The anniversary of the first Lord's Supper is an especially appropriate time to learn more about how the Lutheran church arrived at its

teaching that "in, with, and under" — as you probably recall from catechetical instruction — the bread and wine is the Lord's body and blood. The story of how we arrived at this understanding starts about 400 AD with Augustine and ends in the 1500s with Luther. James Kiecker traces the history of how the early church searched for the meaning of Jesus' words at the first Lord's Supper. "A delicate balance" begins on page 146.

DJS

Eternity in the heart

Reincarnation is not the answer

by Roland Cap Ehlke

The last snow of winter has melted. Another spring has come. Once again birds return from their southern migrations. Buds appear on trees and shoots break through the ground.

The death of winter has given way to the new life of another spring. Every year this awesome cycle repeats itself. It's as if all of nature longs for and aches for the coming of spring.

Indeed, that longing for life—for the assurance of rebirth—is a part of every human being. So is the awareness that death is not the end. As Solomon put it, “[God] has also set eternity in the hearts of men” (Ecclesiastes 3:11).

Except for a few hardened materialists, most people recognize that what we see in nature also applies to human beings: Death is followed by life.

Reincarnation

For many people—about half of the world's population—rebirth means reincarnation. This is the notion that at some time after death the human soul travels into another body to live again in this world.

Sometimes referred to as transmigration, this belief was held by the ancient Greek philosopher Pythagoras (582-507 BC). Today it is espoused by the two great religions of India—Hinduism and its offshoot Buddhism. At the turn of the century only one or two percent of the people in Europe and North America believed in reincarnation. By 1982 that figure was 22 percent; a more recent study indicates that 60 percent of Americans consider reincarnation “a reasonable probability.”

Movie star Shirley MacLaine has done much to popularize the notion. In her book *Out on a Limb*, she asserts that during her past lives she was at one time a

prostitute and at another an aristocrat who was beheaded during the French Revolution.

In the East reincarnation is seen as “a burden too great to bear,” to use Mahatma Gandhi's expression. The dreary repetition of struggling through one life after another is thought to go on for a million years or so. At last one escapes into a state of *nirvana* or *moksha*, where there is freedom from struggle and pain, but also the leaving behind of individuality.

Reincarnation rests on *karma*, the Hindu idea of justice. If our negative karma (bad deeds, thoughts, motives, etc.) outweighs our good karma, we are assigned a more miserable life the next time around, or vice versa. The process has no room for mercy or forgiveness.

Reincarnation and the Bible

Some who believe in reincarnation try to reconcile it with the Bible. One passage they cite is Matthew 11:14. There Jesus refers to John the Baptist and says, “He is the Elijah who was to come.” The Prophet Elijah had lived centuries before John. Yet Jesus is not saying that John is Elijah reincarnated. Rather, he is a mighty prophet like Elijah. In announcing John's birth to his father, the angel of the Lord explained it this way: “He will go on before the Lord, in the spirit and power of Elijah” (Luke 1:17).

Another passage quoted in support of reincarnation is John 3:3, where Jesus states, “Unless a man is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.” The context of this verse makes it clear that Jesus is speaking of spiritual rebirth, not reincarnation. Since we are by nature spiritually dead, we need to be born again. That is, we need to come to faith in the Savior.

God's word teaches that life in this world is a one-time event. “Just as man is destined to die once, and

The Bible presents the resurrection as a physical reality. Jesus was seen and touched by his disciples. He spoke with them and ate with them.

after that to face judgment, so Christ was sacrificed once to take away the sins of many people . . ." (Hebrews 9:27,28).

Christ and the resurrection

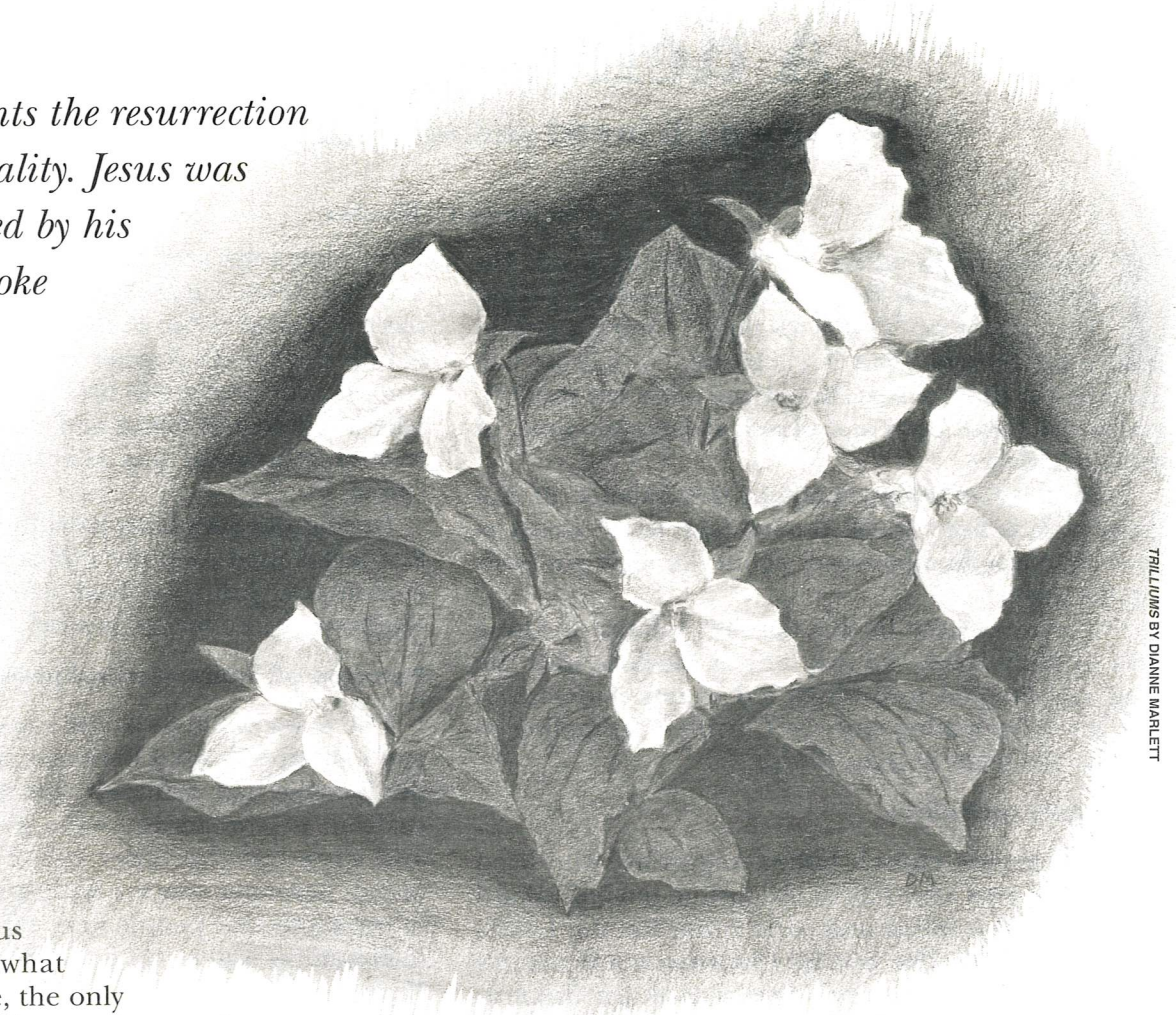
In the death and resurrection of Jesus we find the key to what lies beyond the grave, the only really positive alternative to reincarnation.

Christian hope rests on the historical fact of Jesus' conquest of death. The risen Christ was seen by more than 500 witnesses (1 Corinthians 15:6). The first Christians were so confident of the resurrection that many of them gave their lives for that confession.

The Bible also presents the resurrection as a physical reality. Jesus was seen and touched by his disciples. He spoke with them and ate with them. Though our bodies decay in death, we can say with Job, "I know that my Redeemer lives And after my skin has been destroyed, yet in my flesh I will see God; I myself will see him with my own eyes—I, and not another" (Job 19:25-27).

This physical resurrection is also one of glorious change, while at the same time we retain our individual identity. In the words of the Apostle Paul, "we will be changed" and our perishable and mortal bodies will become imperishable and immortal (1 Corinthians 15:52,53).

Given all this and more, we face the future with joyous certainty. No less an authority than the risen



TRILLIUMS BY DIANNE MARLETT

Savior himself has assured us, "Because I live, you also will live" (John 14:19). He who died for our sins has risen again that we might share in his resurrection and live forever in heaven.

Hope versus hopelessness

The difference between resurrection and reincarnation, then, is far more than academic. It's the difference between futilely trying to earn release from this world or enjoying God's gifts of forgiveness and eternal life. How tragic that many nominal Christians today are willing to exchange their priceless hope in Christ for a dreary, empty dream.

God has made us for eternity. The awakening of nature each spring revives that heart-felt longing. Only the Easter message of the empty tomb can fulfill it.



Roland Cap Ehlke is an editor at Northwestern Publishing House.

A delicate balance

We have both bread and wine, and body and blood

by James G. Kiecker

It is the night when our Lord is betrayed. He gathers with his friends for the Passover. Taking bread he says, "This is my body." Lifting a cup of wine he says, "This is my blood." A delicate balance lies in these words. Bread and wine are present, and so are Jesus' body and blood, at the same time, in the same place.

Lutheran Christians maintain this balance. It is a mystery. It is not logical. But we take Jesus' words at face value and let him worry about the logic and solving the mystery.

Yet, as we rejoice in this delicate balance in these days of Holy Week, we may not be familiar with the long and tangled trail which led to our understanding. It's a fascinating story of Christians grappling to express the truth of Jesus' words.

Augustine: symbolism

Start with the church father Augustine, who lived about 400 years after Christ. Augustine tended toward symbolism: the bread and wine stood for the Lord's body and blood. The faithful Christian would receive only bread and wine, but would look on them as stand-ins for Jesus' body and blood. In that sense Jesus would be present. The balance was tipped towards bread and wine.

Augustine's contemporary, Ambrose, inclined towards realism: the bread and wine were so changed that only the Lord's body and blood were present. This skewed the balance in the opposite direction from Augustine.

In the following centuries theologians generally sided with either Augustine (only bread and wine were present, representing Jesus' body and blood) or Ambrose (only body and blood were there, replacing bread and wine). A few theologians tried to combine the two views. Mostly the understanding of Jesus' words was in a state of flux.

Aristotle: reality

Then the church latched onto something which got the delicate balance even further out of whack. This was the philosophy of Aristotle. Around AD 500 his writings began to filter through Europe.

Aristotle's appeal lay in the way he viewed reality:

every object was said to have an outward appearance, the "accidents," as well as an inner being, the "substance." Could it be, theologians wondered, that this is how the Lord's Supper could be explained? After consecration you'd still have the outward appearance (the accidents) of bread and wine but the inner reality (the substance) was now the body and blood of Christ.

During the 800s both John the Scot and Paschasius Radbertus used Aristotle's philosophy to carry on the controversy. John inclined more toward symbolism, Radbertus more toward realism.

Berengar of Tours: spiritual presence

The main battle took place in the eleventh century and centered around Berengar of Tours. By this time the balance had definitely tipped from symbolism to realism: the bread and wine still looked like bread and wine but the inner being was only body and blood. Berengar reacted against this, possibly because of questions that people were raising: if a mouse ate a communion wafer, was it actually eating Jesus' body? If wine dribbled onto a shirt was this actually a blood stain?

Writing to a friend in 1050, Berengar says that the very words of Christ prove his point. Christ said "bread and wine," not "the appearance of bread and wine," were his body and blood. Therefore bread and wine must remain during communion. To another friend a few years later Berengar writes that bread and wine survive (remain after the consecration) and their substance is not annihilated (is not done away with so that only body and blood are there).

The trouble is, Berengar stressed the presence of bread and wine so much that he rejected the real presence of Jesus' body and blood. He tipped the scale back from Ambrose's idea (bread and wine are replaced by body and blood) and Aristotle's philosophy (you have the appearance of bread and wine but the inner reality is body and blood) to Augustine's (the bread and wine stay bread and wine, merely representing body and blood for faithful Christians).

In the clearest statement of his belief Berengar says, "After consecration the true bread and wine become, for faith and understanding, the true body and blood

of Christ, yet not materially but spiritually.” Christ was not really present, but only spiritually present. By avoiding one error Berengar fell into the other.

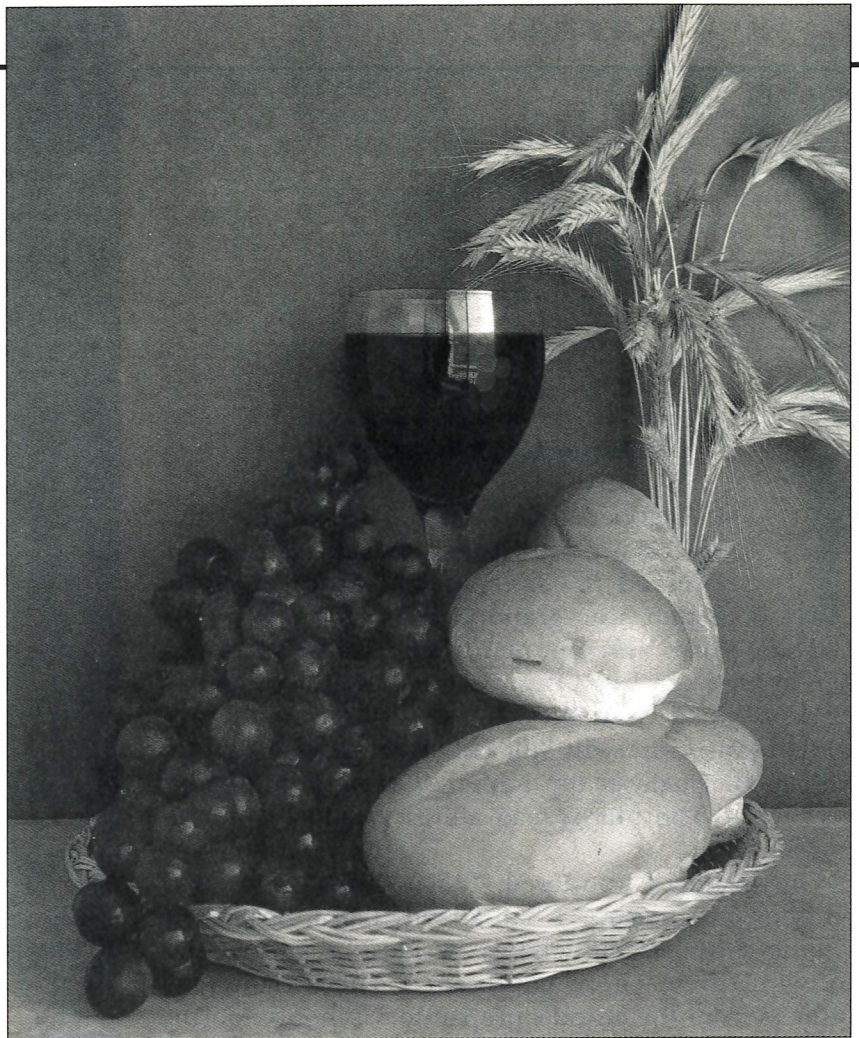
Berengar was condemned at many church councils, principally in 1059 and again in 1079. At the first of these a document was drawn up which stated that the bread and wine remained only in appearance, while the substance was changed to body and blood — the Ambrose/Aristotle error. With 113 hostile bishops glowering at him, Berengar signed. Later he gave the document his own twist and went back to his old beliefs.

At this point the papacy got involved, leading to Berengar’s final condemnation in 1079. The pope, Gregory VII, knew Berengar had a strong minority following which would be offended if he was condemned. So Gregory hit on a plan: A suitably ambiguous document would be drawn up using language Berengar could agree to, yet satisfying to his opponents. Gregory hinted privately to Berengar that if he’d sign and keep his mouth shut, things would work out well.

The document was composed. Berengar read it, choked a bit on some of the words, but decided he could interpret them in his own way later on, just as he’d done in 1059. This time, however, the bishops were more clever. They demanded that Berengar sign another document stating that he understood all words exactly as they did. This demand broke Berengar. He just couldn’t sign it. On top of this, he blurted out his deal with Gregory. Swiftly the embarrassed pope condemned him.

Pope Innocent III: transubstantiation

After Berengar, the Roman Catholic Church tipped the balance away from Augustine’s ideas toward Ambrose’s as shaped by Aristotle. It was said that the accidents (appearance) of bread and wine remained, but the substance (inner being) was changed. In 1215 Pope Innocent III declared “transubstantiation” a dogma that every Christian had to believe. This is still



MRS. KEVIN SCHEIBEL

Catholic teaching.

Many of the reformers in the 1500s, such as Zwingli and Calvin, reacted against transubstantiation. For them the bread and wine only represented Jesus’ body and blood. Jesus was not bodily present.

Luther: a delicate balance

Luther also rejected transubstantiation. He agreed with Ambrose that Jesus was really present, but not to the extent that the bread and wine were gone. Nor would he allow the pagan Aristotle to tell him how to interpret Scripture. But for Luther, Augustine was wrong too. Only a Christ who was really present could be the Savior.

So with Luther the delicate balance was restored. We have both bread and wine, and body and blood.

Establishing this truth not only took the church along a tangled road, but became truly a decisive event in the ongoing story of God’s people on earth.



James Kiecker teaches history at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee.

by **Kenneth L. Brokmeier**

Last October while I was getting ready for the Wisconsin state teachers' conference, I received the message, "Please call your mother. Your grandpa isn't doing well."

These words were not new to me. Twelve years earlier, in October, I had been notified of an accident at work in which Grandpa was hurt — he wasn't doing well. Many times during subsequent years I was informed, usually by my mother, "Grandpa isn't doing very well." The phrase had almost become a theme for our family.

On this day I wondered, "What should I do? Is it another false alarm?" I had already had a busy week visiting churches and schools. Besides, I really needed to be at the teachers' conference. The recruitment officers from the synod's preparatory schools, Martin Luther Prep, Northwestern Prep, and Michigan Lutheran Seminary, were making a presentation.

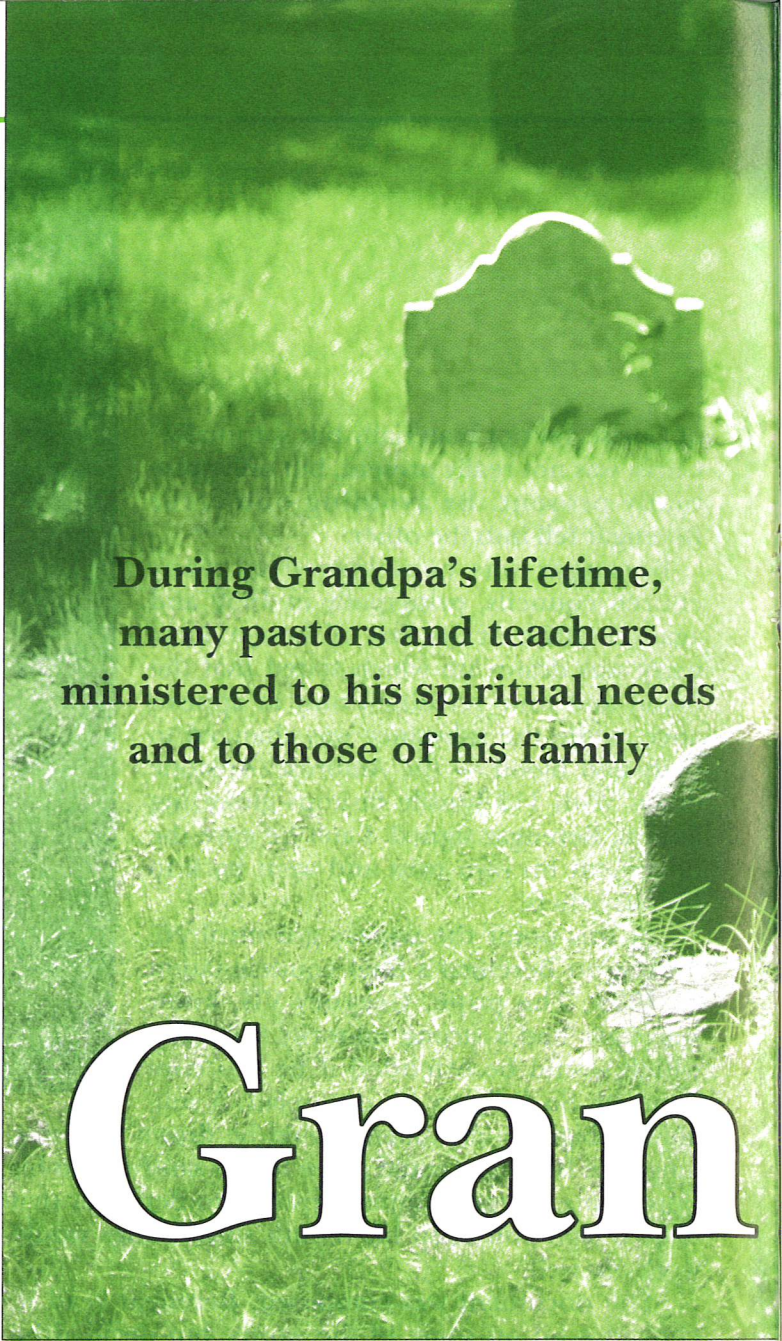
I called my mother. The report she shared sounded familiar. But I decided to make the drive to visit my grandfather.

Minutes after I reached his room in the health care center, I witnessed the Lord call him to his eternal rest. Just before I arrived, the family members present had sung to him the hymn, "Now the Light Has Gone Away," something that was regularly done with my grandpa after an evening visit.

That night one of the pastors came to my parents' home and shared with us the comforting reminder of the Savior who conquered death for us. Three days later the pastor repeated that same consolation at the funeral.

During his life, my grandpa had heard the law-gospel message every Sunday morning. My grandfather had been baptized, confirmed, and married. He had reared a family, and his children had the privilege of attending a Lutheran elementary school. Most of his grandchildren have sat at the feet of pastors and teachers at several elementary schools, area Lutheran high schools, and synodical schools.

Grandpa spent many months in hospitals and lived



**During Grandpa's lifetime,
many pastors and teachers
ministered to his spiritual needs
and to those of his family**

Gran

his final years in the nursing home. Throughout his 76 years, many pastors and teachers ministered to his spiritual needs and to those of his family.

Every day across our synod, pastors and teachers busy themselves by tending to the spiritual needs of our good shepherd's lambs and sheep. It is important work, eternally important.

Sunday, May 3, has been designated recruitment Sunday. On this day many congregations will give special emphasis to encouraging, educating, and sending more young men and women to fill the pulpits and classrooms of our synod.

There is much for each of us to do. Speaking a word of encouragement to young people who have gifts for the ministry, making a financial contribution



grandpa died

toward their education, and offering prayers on their behalf as they study for that service are only a few of the ways we can become directly involved.

Traditionally, recruitment Sunday has also been a time when many make a special contribution to replenish the WELS Student Assistance Fund. Every year hundreds of young men and women at our synodical schools, the future pastors and teachers of our synod, receive grants from this fund. Your pastor can give you direction if you are interested in helping such a student.

How appropriate it is that only a few weeks after recruitment Sunday, the Conference of Presidents will be meeting to assign graduates of Dr. Martin Luther College and Wisconsin

Lutheran Seminary to their first calls into the public ministry. These graduates will be teaching, preaching, baptizing, instructing, visiting, confirming, witnessing to, marrying, and burying people like my grandpa, his children, and grandchildren.

Above all, these pastors and teachers will be there to reassure and comfort people like you and me that we have a living and loving Savior. As long as there are people in this world, the need will continue for us to pray for, encourage, educate, and send more workers into our Lord's harvest. On recruitment Sunday, may God's grace move each of us to rededicate ourselves to these important tasks.

Kenneth Brokmeier is recruitment director at Martin Luther Preparatory School, Prairie du Chien, Wis.

The Apostles' Creed

by Wayne A. Laitinen

A document called the Apostolic Constitutions (380 AD) would have us believe that the apostles of our Lord composed the Apostles' Creed before they went their separate ways to "make disciples of all nations." Already by Luther's time, however, it was thought that this was a legend which was probably promoted in order to add more authority to the creed and force doubters to comply with the creed's teachings.

We do not need to defend the authority of the creed. Every phrase finds its authority in Scripture. If "Moses and the prophets" cannot convince the doubters, neither can an apostle — even if he arises from the dead and signs the creed in blood.

Unlike the Nicene Creed (written around 325 AD) and the Athanasian Creed (written around 450 AD), the Apostles' Creed grew to its present length over the course of several centuries.

It probably had its start with baptismal confessions which were patterned after our Savior's baptismal formula, "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." Implied in those few words were all of our Savior's teachings.

Here is a simple, baptismal creed which was used in the middle of the second century: "I believe in God, the Father almighty, and in Jesus Christ, our Savior; and in the Holy Spirit the Comforter; in the holy church, and in the forgiveness of sins."

As time went on, some Christians felt the need to confess publicly some beliefs which were only implied in the three-part baptismal formula. The fleshed-out creed became a simple tool to instruct newcomers in the basic truths of the gospel. Fifteen centuries later, we still use the Apostles' Creed as the creed of preference in teaching the gospel to our children.

The earliest evidence we have of a nearly complete form of the Apostles' Creed is found in a sermon of Faustus of Riez (in what today is France) which dates back to 480 AD.

Consider the wealth of gospel found in these few words:

"I believe"

Faith is being certain of what we do not see.

Though we have never seen the Triune God, we are certain of everything he has revealed about himself in Holy Scripture. Believing is seeing. This faith is a miracle of God's grace.

"in God the Father almighty"

Our universe was no accident of nature. We are certain that it was "formed at God's command, so that what is seen was not made out of what was visible" (Hebrews 11:2). Our Father has displayed his unlimited power in the way he creates, preserves, and protects us to this day.

"and in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord"

Just as Gabriel told Mary, the Son of God is also the Son of Man so that he could be our Savior. Though our mind cannot grasp this mystery, we embrace it in faith as our dearest and most lasting treasure.

"suffered under Pontius Pilate"

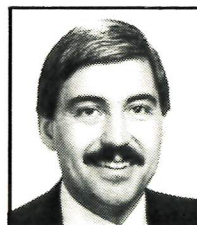
Jesus is no myth. His suffering under a well-known Roman governor is documented in both sacred and secular history. To remove our eternal death, Jesus "humiliated himself and became obedient to death — even death on a cross" (Philippians 2:8).

"he descended into hell . . . rose again from the dead"

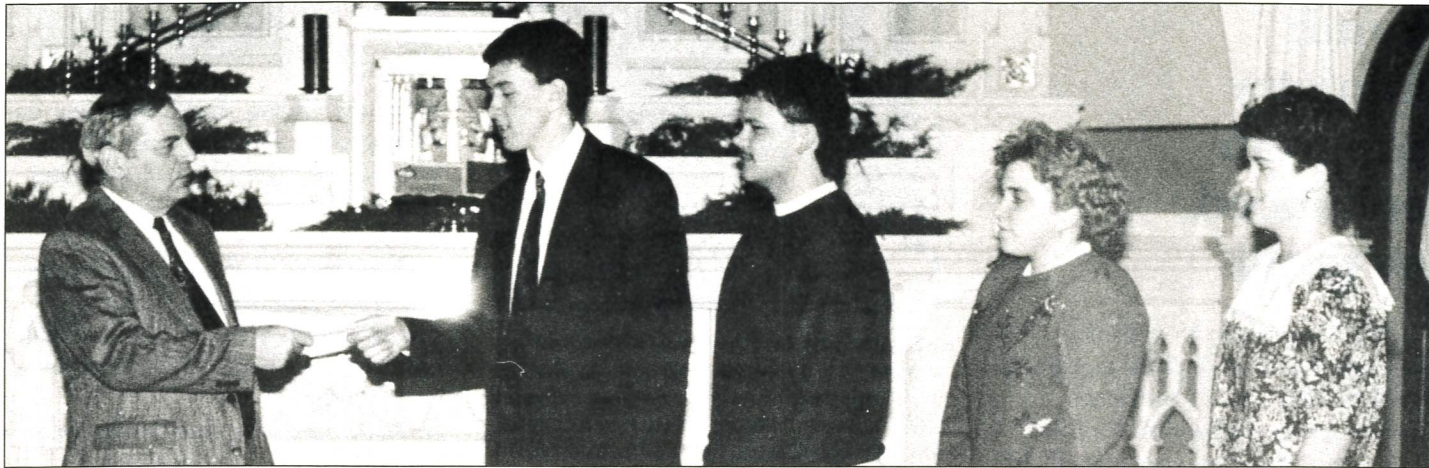
We can be certain that Christ's victory is our victory over sin, death, and eternal hell. We know this because Jesus gave his victory address to our enemies in hell. As a prelude to our physical resurrection, Jesus arose. He ascended into heaven to direct history for our sake. Finally, he will return in glory to judge the world.

"I believe in the Holy Spirit"

Through word and sacrament, the Holy Spirit creates saving faith in our hearts. It is this same faith in Christ with which the Spirit gathers and forgives his people daily. Therefore those who die in Christ will live with him forever.



Wayne Laitinen is pastor of Palos, Palos Heights, Illinois.



Student Assistance Fund — Harold Schewe, left, of Grace, Prairie du Chien, Wis., is shown presenting a check of \$250 each to Bradley Bode, Daniel Krueger, Kristi Kobleske, and Lisa Bode (left to right) from the congregation's Student Assistance Fund. The fund was established to support and encourage sons and daughters of the congregation as they prepare for ministry. Guidelines for establishing a fund in your congregation are available from *WELS Student Assistance Committee, Board for Working Training, 2929 N Mayfair Road, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.*

my heart and my home

My Heart and My Home, a stewardship program for 1992, offers congregations timeless truth in a new format. Home study materials (in versions for homes with and without children) engage head and heart in reflecting on Scripture and discussing its implications for real life. Four full-color brochures introduce home studies pointedly and practically. Thematic emphasis on the Christian family, home church, home town, and heavenly home are developed in worship resources as well as the stewardship study tools.

Sample packets are available from *WELS, Adult Discipleship office, 2929 N Mayfair Road, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.*



Norman Hansen (left) and Eugene Schulz

Kingdom Workers reach into Australia

The membership of WELS Kingdom Workers now includes an "Aussie." The new member is Norman A. Hansen, who lives in the city of NaraCoorte, South Australia.

Eugene Schulz of Milwaukee, treasurer of Kingdom Workers, and his wife Eleanore recently visited Hansen on a trip to Australia. Hansen has retired from his personal printing business and now spends his time in building children's furniture in a shop behind his house.

Hansen formerly was a member of the Lutheran Church of Australia, but left it for doctrinal reasons and is now affiliated with the Wisconsin Synod. He is an associate member of Atonement, Milwaukee, and receives the weekly taped worship services from Atonement. He also receives North-western Lutheran and generously supports various WELS projects and organizations with his gifts.

— Mark Krueger

Youth ministry program enhanced by grant

The Commission on Youth Discipleship has received a grant of \$57,000 from AAL's Lutheran Network Grant Program for 1991. The one-time grant provides \$3,500 for each district Youth Discipleship Committee to strengthen adult volunteer leadership in the area of youth ministry.

Throughout 1992, district coordinators for youth discipleship will utilize the grant funds to host a variety of workshops, purchase library materials, or create original youth ministry resources.

Gerald Kastens, administrator of the commission, reports that \$15,000 of the grant will be used to develop a youth ministry handbook and accompanying video. The training resource is scheduled for completion and distribution in early 1993.



45 years at Northwestern Publishing House — Ed Fenske, who went to work at NPH in 1947, is retiring. He has followed NPH to three different Milwaukee locations: on 4th and State, then 37th and North Avenue, and its present site on 113th and Watertown Plank Road. Fenske's first job was decorating the store window and wrapping. He was supervisor of the shipping department for almost 22 years. For the last four and one-half years he was responsible for merchandise reordering and inventory management.

WELS Connection videotapes

April topics

- Missionary families
- President Mischke's Easter message

For more information, contact *CCFS, WELS Administration Building, 2929 N Mayfair Road, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398*. Cost of a year's subscription is \$48.

St. Croix LHS supporter dies

Arthur H. Krueger, longtime friend and supporter of Saint Croix Lutheran High School, West St. Paul, Minn., died Feb. 12. He was 92.

In 1958, when the Twin City Lutheran High School Association was looking for property to build its high school, Krueger, a member of Emanuel and a truck farmer, made 25 acres of his land available.

Because that section of the city was undeveloped, access to the property was difficult. Krueger and his orange tractor became a thing of beauty to mud-stranded motorists and foot-sloggers alike. No less than

the then-president of WELS, Pastor Oscar Naumann, was more than once beholden to Krueger for transport.

It seemed only natural that Krueger, who retired from farming, would become St. Croix's first custodian, lavishing love and elbow grease in equal parts on the new building.

He also became the Crusaders' friend and confidant, and shared his wisdom and common sense with any student who was smart enough to seek it.

— Morton A. Schroeder

Book notes

When the Crying Stops: Abortion, the Pain and the Healing by Kathleen Winkler. Northwestern Publishing House. 173 pages, paperback, \$9.99.

Abortion's aftermath can cause an array of emotional problems, says Kathleen Winkler. Unresolved conflicts may come back months or years later.

When the Crying Stops introduces women who are struggling with guilt and pain because they had abortions. Each account is unique, reflecting different personalities, lifestyles, and circumstances. Yet each is the same, describing regret, shame, and grief.

Judy aborted two babies. Although she knows God has forgiven her, she says, "I still cry about it."

Mikki, however, is still struggling to find forgiveness. "Maybe it's that I haven't forgiven myself. On one hand I know it, but on the other hand, I don't know."

Not all are young women. Dee still mourns for the baby aborted 40 years ago. Sarah says she never broke down for 18 years. She knows she is forgiven, "but the grief will never leave. I will always grieve for the face that's not at the table."

Each account is followed by a poem in free verse written by Harold Senkbeil. These deeply moving meditations, based on the psalms, depict each woman's pain and offer assurance of Christ's love and forgiveness.

Little has been written about the emotional devastation that can follow abortion, and even less about how to find comfort and healing. *When the Crying Stops* helps to fill the void.

— Dorothy J. Sonntag

When the Crying Stops may be ordered from Northwestern Publishing House by calling 1-800-662-6022.

Wisconsin Lutheran College receives grant for new recreation center

Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee, has received a \$500,000 gift from the Siebert Foundation, Milwaukee. The gift, in support of the college's extended capital campaign, will be applied toward the completion of the school's new \$6.1 million recreation center currently under construction.

A dedication ceremony for the new center is scheduled for Sept. 12, 1992.

WLC is a four-year liberal arts college. It was established in 1973.



Students at St. Paul School, Norfolk, Nebraska, taped a public service announcement, "Things to Get Into Besides Drugs." The third and fourth graders, whose teacher is Jennifer Meyer, wrote the winning script for a contest open to area schools. The public service announcement was broadcast almost daily for three months on KTIV, Sioux City, Iowa.

Touch of laughter

At the end of the first morning of pre-kindergarten, one of the children in the 3-year-old class was met by his grandfather. Grandpa called out, "Do you know everything there is to know now, or do you have to go back again?"

The boy thought for a moment and then replied, "I think I have to go back next week."

*Trudy Madetzke
Marshall, Minnesota*

Just before my daughter's third birthday her favorite hobby was to spend hours poring over catalogs, compiling a wish list of things she wanted for her birthday. I realized this had gotten a little out of hand one day when she opened an issue of NL to the pages of the pictures of the seminary graduates and declared, "Mama, I want one of all of these for my birthday."

*Beth Marquardt
Slinger, Wisconsin*

Our minister was long in praying. My 2-year-old looked at the congregation with their bowed heads and announced, "Time to wake up, everybody!"

*Joan Hoerning
Greenwood, Nova Scotia*

Since our hectic schedule meant our family didn't see much of each other, we communicated with messages left on the kitchen table.

After a longer-than-usual stretch of time when the only evidence of our son's having been around was that food had been eaten and different clothes decorated his bedroom, I left a note. "Ron, I haven't seen you for a couple of days. Maybe for supper?"

The next morning I found an answer. "Mom and Dad, we'll do supper tomorrow. Love, Ron."

Along with the note he had left a wallet-size photo of himself.

*Trudy Erdmann
Milwaukee, Wisconsin*

The Sunday school children were studying Joshua and the battle of Jericho. After a rousing round of singing, the children were dismissed. One little girl was still singing as she came out of the Sunday school room, "Joshua fought the battle of cherry Coke, cherry Coke."

*Rod Pringle
St. Louis, Michigan*

The Special Ministries newsletter announced that Camp Basic director Bob Wolff had requested a leave of absence for health reasons. "We all wish Bob a speedy recovery," wrote reporter LeRoy Robbert, "and pray he will soon be able to resume his post. In the meantime we will do our best to be sheep in Wolff's clothing."

His Hands

Contributions are welcome. Please send them to LAUGHTER, Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N Mayfair Road, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.

We are different but the same

**Our oneness is in Christ, not culture;
in truth, not preference or perspective**

by Paul E. Kelm

When I was an adolescent, I thought no one else faced my fears and feelings. Yet I somehow believed everyone viewed life through my window. As a result, I didn't always understand people and dared not let others really understand me.

Some years wiser, I've come to understand how similar are the psyches of sinners, yet how different their viewpoint on life. I am more open, I hope, at both levels of human "being" as a result.

Scripture assures us that there are no temptations unique to any one of us, that Jesus too had to face down urges and anxieties. We can understand what's going on inside another human being, if we want to. Psychologists call that empathy. The Bible says simply, "Carry each other's burdens."

If misery loves company, there's a lot of company available. Though the details may be different, we all wrestle with irrational phobias, shameful lusts, carefully disguised insecurities, embarrassing wishes, idiotic irritations, and some feelings that no one has coined a word for yet. If I'm honest with myself, I can probably understand you. But how honest can we be with each other?

What Christians share is much more than a common experience of Adam's curse. There is absolution for guilt, an answer to anxiety, power to overcome temptation. We are encouragers who share the same Savior, not just the same sins. "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other," the apostle James urges. We can share what's going on inside us because Jesus covered that, outside us and for sure.

Secure in Jesus and the oneness that is ours in him, we can more openly explore our differences as well.

All of us view life through a window shaped by our culture and experience. The number of places we've lived, people we've met, schools and jobs, travel and traditions — all contribute to how we look at life. And that's one reason we don't all see things the same.

Some of us are aggressive personalities, others a bit more retiring. There are optimists and pessimists, stable and excitable natures, nose-to-the-grindstone and head-in-the-clouds types. Some are uncomfortable with change, while others are easily bored. We don't even see the same thing the same way.

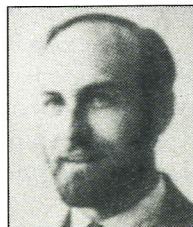
Our priorities are individual as well. For some it's getting the job done that matters, while others are concerned with how well we get along on the job. We tend to prefer what we're good at and avoid what makes us uncomfortable. "Different strokes for different folks."

Galatians 3:28 teaches two truths. "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

The first truth is that we are different, and that's OK. Greeks don't have to become Jews to fit into Christ's kingdom. Christianity isn't just middle class. Men can seek to understand women rather than demand mere conformity.

The second truth is that differences don't divide us. Our oneness is in Christ, not culture; in truth, not preference or perspective. Unity is not homogeneity. We can appreciate what makes us different while we celebrate what makes us one.

One Savior and Lord teaches us that life is looking up.



*Paul E. Kelm is administrator
for the Commission on Adult Discipleship.*

The unmerciful servant

Matthew 18:21-35

by Mark E. Braun

In the parables of the lost sheep and the lost coin, Jesus showed how far the Father will go to rescue lost sinners.

If that's how far he'll go, how far does he want us to go? How many times should we forgive? "Seven times?" asked Peter. Seven seemed especially generous. "No," Jesus replied, "seventy-seven."

Lamech boasted that if anyone hurt him he would be avenged seventy-seven times. Jesus reversed Lamech's arrogance: seventy-seven times we are to forgive.

But how and why can we forgive that often?

The king in Jesus' story must have been a gentile; Jewish law would not have let him sell a man's family. The servant must have been enormously important; how else could he have managed to owe his king ten thousand talents? The yearly tax revenue King Herod collected from the entire provinces of Galilee and Perea was two hundred talents.

This man was hopelessly in debt. Yet he begged for a chance to repay it, and in doing so he revealed the mistaken notion every sinner presumes: I can make up for my past if I do better.

But the king ignored such nonsense about repayment. He didn't even bother calculating his losses. Instead, he simply wiped out the debt. He said, "Let's forget it ever existed."

The meaning of this half of the story is clear. God will not forgive us if we try harder, or if we promise we'll do better. He does not forgive us because we're sorry. He forgives us for no reason at all, but grace. For the sake of one Man, our brother, who paid our debt with his blood, God forgives us. In his beloved Son the Father sees his whole creation forgiven and made new. We are his sons and daughters.

But that servant "went out," Jesus said, out of the king's presence, and all the grace he'd been given was forgotten when he met another servant who owed him "a hundred denarii" — lunch money!

The second servant too begged for time to repay.

But there wasn't a hint of kingly compassion in the ungrateful servant's voice; grabbing his brother's throat, he said, "With you we'll go by the books! Pay me what you owe!"

How could anyone fail to see that if you've just been forgiven a multi-million dollar debt, you cannot beat a few bucks out of someone who's as much a slave as you are?

But isn't there some of him in us all? We've been forgiven so much; do we extend even a fraction of that forgiveness to each other? God threw out his ledger, yet we go on treating one other with harsh, book-keeping logic.

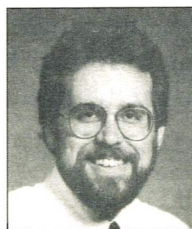
When the king heard about this sorry turn of events, he summoned his unmerciful servant for a second audience. "You want to go by the book?" the angered king demanded. "You get your wish. You want to deal with others in justice, rather than grace? Fine. That's how I'll deal with you."

How can we relieve the guilt that stands between us and our neighbor? How can we repair the broken promises of our marriages? How can we remove the wrath we feel toward those who've hurt us? Only when we remember how God has forgiven us can we rise above the anger and pain of the moment to be able, once and for all, to forgive.

Always we are echoes. But echoes of what? Either we are echoes of the madness, the meanness, the wickedness around us, and then we ourselves become mad and wicked and mean. Or else we are echoes of Jesus, and therefore echoes of that forgiving, renewing, healing love that comes to us from the Father.

And then we are set free, free to love, free to renew, to heal, to forgive.

Next: The good Samaritan.



Mark Braun is director of spiritual programming and instructor of theology at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee.

*Only when we remember
how God has forgiven us
can we rise above the anger
and pain of the moment
to forgive.*

Lottery mania

State lotteries have become almost as much a part of the American scene as supermarkets and superbowl, in a lot less time. New Hampshire inaugurated the first modern state lottery in 1964. Since then 31 other states have followed suit.

By the 1990s annual lottery sales reached \$20 billion a year. That averages out to \$250 per household in states that have succumbed to the lure of the lottery as a source of revenue. (That \$20 billion is only a fraction of the \$286 billion Americans spent on all legalized gambling in 1990 — 5 percent of the nation's gross national product.)

Instant winner games, computerized number games, and lotto contests lure customers with promises of huge jackpots and the chance to become instant millionaires. Riverboat gambling and video poker are next in line as ways and means of filling state coffers the "easy" way.

Razzle-dazzle advertising, as one lottery director put it, "takes an infrequent user and tries to convert him into a frequent user." And when frequent users become compulsive gamblers, who do you suppose ends up paying the bill for the social consequences?

Sociologists are finding hard evidence that state sponsored gambling is a liability rather than an asset. Two researchers at Indiana University have established that "lotteries encourage behavior that is not just undesirable but criminal." Their studies indicate that the "adoption of a state lottery is associated with a three percent increase in the crime rate." They attribute that to the fact that gambling "stimulates a taste for risk taking and feelings of envy." Evidently recreational gambling is not the innocent pastime some people assume it is.

Is gambling a sin? Not all students of the Bible agree on how to answer that question. We must always be careful not to make the Bible say more than it actually says. But if we change the question to read: is gambling good for society, the answer is unequivocally "no." Even secular sociologists are emphatic in condemning its corrupting influence.

That leaves us with an easier question to answer. Should Christians condone by indulgence an activity that corrupts society? If Christians are not all agreed that gambling involves irresponsible stewardship of what ultimately belongs to God, they ought at least to be agreed that gambling is a malignant influence on society. That should be reason enough for just saying no to the impulse to squander God-given resources.

When we decide as Christians what to do with what we sometimes call discretionary income, our Christian ethics ought to help us realize that lotteries and other forms of legalized gambling are not among the choices.

Augustine once observed that "the devil invented gambling." In view of the evidence, does anyone want to argue with that? Whoever called a pair of aces snake eyes may have been closer to the truth than he imagined.

Joel C. Gerlach



Joel Gerlach is pastor of St. John, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.

Abusus non tollit usum—

“Just because something is misused doesn’t mean it can’t be used”

by Paul O. Wendland

As I read “Speaking my mind” on the question of Christian rock (2/1), a Latin proverb kept running through my mind: *Abusus non tollit usum*—“Just because something is misused doesn’t mean it can’t be used.” Professor Habeck used to lay that one on us as we sat in his pastoral theology class. He did it to help us remember that Christians are free from rules and regulations made by those who would tell us to “Touch not, taste not, handle not.”

The funny thing is, I agree with much of what was said about the low morals and anti-Christian attitudes of many in the world of rock. As for what passes as “Christian” rock, it doesn’t impress me much. (I’m willing to concede that this opinion may be due more to my cultural bias as a burnt-out boomer than to anything else.)

But that phrase steals into my mind again like some crazy mantra: *Abusus non tollit usum*. And I think: it’s dangerous to forbid what God does not, and to create matters of conscience out of things of indifference.

It doesn’t help much to quote Paul. In 1 Corinthians 10:23, Paul is speaking against making a mere slogan out of Christian freedom without regard for anything else.

Yet I can’t see how that translates into a standard code of Biblical behavior appropriate to musical performance. Paul is not trying by these words to put a hedge of ceremonial law around the principle of Christian freedom.

In fact, everything said against Christian rock could just as easily be said against drinking alcohol. Who can deny that alcohol is abused in our world? Who can be blind to the terrible things that happen under its influence, and who can applaud the immoral actions associated with it?

But now let’s say some Christian couple would buy a vineyard and start making wine. What if another

Christian would buy that wine and encourage others to do the same? Would that constitute worldliness? Can we label all wine drinking as immoral, just because alcohol is abused?

Maybe wine is a good illustration for another reason.

There is no such thing as Christian wine or non-Christian wine. There’s just good wine and bad wine, as the master of the feast at Cana recognized.

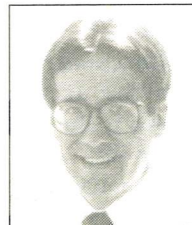
Personally, I wish we could get away from labels like “Christian” or “non-Christian” in judging art. I would rather see the debate framed in terms of whether art is good or bad. This is a much broader distinction, and involves such questions as: “Is it representative of the spirit of the times? Does it speak to our heart? Does it affirm life or lead us to despair? Is it true to the human condition? From what culture does it spring? What are the standards of excellence within that particular culture? Does it give expression to universal values?” Answering questions like these isn’t as simple as saying, “It’s secular. It’s bad.”

They force us to think. But whenever more heat than light is produced on an issue, I believe more thinking is required.

To give some examples: Percy Bysshe Shelley was an immoral wretch, but I happen to like *Ozymandias*, and think it an excellent poem. I am sure Helen Steiner Rice is a fine woman, but I don’t think much of her poetry.

Another Latin proverb comes to mind: *De gustibus non est disputandum*—“It’s useless to let matters of taste put your tie in a knot.”

Those pagan Romans gave good advice.



Paul Wendland is pastor of Prince of Peace, Salt Lake City, Utah.

Pray, praise, and give thanks

Our church body faces enormous challenges as we seek to pass on to our children what our fathers bequeathed to us. We would like to pass things on in good shape, at least as good as was given to us. Perhaps, by God's grace, we might even hope to pass things on a bit better. Let me propose an action plan: Pray, praise, and give thanks.

In reverse order — give thanks daily for what we have. It is far more than we deserve.

Praise the good works we see done by others, in our circle of Christian friends, in the work done by our congregations, and in the labors of our faithful — but human — pastors, teachers, and missionaries. And, yes, in our oft-criticized synod in all of its parts, too.

And then pray. When we have doubts about what others do, when we fear their ideas might be leading our church body astray, when we ourselves are just plain scared because of all the changes that seem to be necessary to keep up with Satan's perversion of the world we live in — pray! After all, the Lord is really the only one big enough, strong enough, or wise enough to make a difference!

Pray, praise, and give thanks!

*John C. Lawrenz
Saginaw, Michigan*

The Lord will provide

Who says the Lord doesn't provide? When the pledge cards came around the end of last year for Lift High the Cross, I approached my husband with an amount I thought we should pledge, even though we are both retired and on a limited but comfortable income. He hesitated, but I insisted, saying "The Lord will provide."

Sure enough, when our social security raise came through, it was for the full amount plus \$1, so we didn't have to rearrange our budget and still had \$1 to spare.

Thanks be to God!

*Sylvia J. DeGroot
Racine, Wisconsin*

History lesson

I enjoyed the history lesson in "From this corner" (1/1). May I add my heartfelt thanks to you and your staff for being willing and able to keep up with the times. "Our" Northwestern Lutheran is one of the best church body journals out there today.

*Frederick A. Kogler
West St. Paul, Minnesota*

Environmentalists

The editorial on animal rights activists (2/15) was certainly timely. However, Pastor Gerlach managed to cloud the issue by lumping animal rightists with environmentalists and indirectly with wildlife biologists.

Animal rightists feel that "a cow is a deer is a dog is a boy." In other words, animal rights are as important as human rights. On the contrary, "environmentalist" is a catch-all phrase, often misused and usually ill-defined. An environmentalist is concerned about the health and welfare of nature.

Wildlife biologists are professionals devoted to the conservation and wise use of nature, and should not be confused with animal rightists. Gerlach states that we cannot speak authoritatively as Christians on issues such as endangered species.

As a wildlife biologist who is also a Christian, I heartily disagree. I am often reminded of the multitude of biblical references to the glory of nature and our responsibility to be stewards of God's creation. One can be a wildlife biologist and an environmentalist without being an animal rights activist.

*Charles D. Dieter
Brookings, South Dakota*

Country is in trouble

I was happy to read the letter "Get involved" as well as "From this corner" (2/15).

Our country is in trouble, especially in the area of Christian ethics. Wrong is no longer wrong. Sin is no longer sin.

What has become of the Christian principles on which our nation was

founded? Our country needs to be turned around.

Is God waiting for us to help turn this country around? Has our salt lost its savor? It takes time and courage to become involved and let our voices be heard by our representatives in Washington.

Pray as if everything depends on God, and work as if everything depends on us.

*Caroline L. Neipp
Bedding, California*

Better and better

The NL is getting better and better. The news items and feature articles are informative and interesting.

I enjoy the new "Touch of laughter." Who doesn't need some laughter? "A merry heart doeth good like a medicine" (Proverbs 17:22).

Also "Everyday love" by Ramona Czer (2/15) can be used in many other interpersonal relationships, not only with a spouse.

*Frieda Miller
Benton Harbor, Michigan*

Lutheran confessions

Hallelujah! How wonderful to hear the grace of God expressed so clearly. I'm referring to Pastor Laitinen's article "A look at our Lutheran confessions" (3/1).

His words are a rallying call to every confessional Lutheran to stand up for the pure gospel. Truly, we have been blessed with a heritage which sets us apart to "speak the truth in love." I pray that this series will inspire every faithful Lutheran to reverse our trend toward compromising within Lutheranism today.

*William C. Heine
Pagosa Springs, Colorado*

In the interest of conciseness, letters are subject to editing. Full name, address and daytime 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 *READERS FORUM, Northwestern Lutheran, 2929 N Mayfair Road, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.*

This continues the report to our readers on the Northwestern Lutheran Readers' Survey. As to its reliability, our consultant, the Madison, Wis.-based Wood Communications Group, assured us that the "respondent group is an accurate reflection of NL readers." Unless otherwise indicated, this column reflects only the responses of our lay readers.

Surprisingly few other religious publications are read by NL readers (clergy and lay). The most frequent publication mentioned was Meditations, a booklet of daily devotions produced by our publishing house. Fifty-three percent of our readers indicated they read this publication. Among others mentioned (ranging from eight to two percent) were Christian News (mostly clergy), Focus on the Family, Lutheran Witness, Guideposts, Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly, Portals of Prayer, and Decision.

Quoting from the report, we will turn now to our lay readers: "Religion is an important part of the NL readers' daily lives, and they diligently work to better understand and live their faith. Accordingly, they read NL faithfully, with the vast majority of respondents reporting that they read almost every issue of the NL (80 percent) and that they read most or all of the issues (93 percent).

"Respondents report that they look to NL for guidance regarding their faith and religious issues. For example, a majority of readers (56 percent) turn to NL to help them understand their faith, and most (53 percent) rely on the NL to learn more about issues in the religious world. And, almost half read it primarily for inspiration."

Two NL objectives are to meet the religious educational needs of the synod's members and to assist them, under God, to live their lives in accordance with the Scriptures. "The pattern of responses to this survey," the consultant says, "suggests that readers believe that NL has been successful in both of these endeavors. . . . More than half of respondents indicate that they read NL to better understand their faith, and more than eight out of ten readers believe that NL is doing a very good or good job in helping them in this regard.

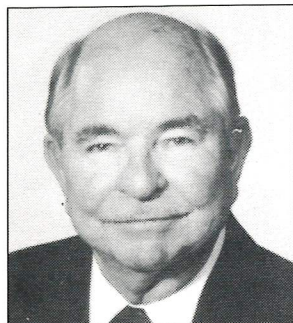
"Similarly, eight out of ten readers report that NL is doing a very good job or a good job in helping them understand the synod's position on important religious issues, inspiring them to live their lives in harmony with the Scriptures, and informing them of the activities of the synod. Two-thirds of the respondents give NL a very good or good rating in informing them of the activities of synod members."

Readers were asked to rate the magazine's content and how interesting they found it. On this question the older (45 and over) and younger (under 45) register differently. "Seven out of ten older readers rated NL as very interesting, while four out of ten younger readers rated NL as very interesting. Seventy percent of all individual subscribers consider NL very interesting."

A final note by our consultant in this category: "The NL receives its lowest rating in making readers feel closer to their congregation (47 percent positive). The message in this readers' evaluation . . . is that the NL is viewed more as a vehicle for religious instruction and inspiration than as a catalyst for strengthening the readers' relationship with their congregations."

Next time, some closing observations.

James P. Schaffer



"Religion is an important part of the NL readers' daily lives, and they diligently work to better understand and live their faith."



Mildred Albrecht Meyer (far right) with her mother, sisters, and brothers.

Eat the bread? Not on your life!

Under Mother's able tutelage I learned that Easter morning what really counts is that which is in the heart—faith, love, and trust in the Savior

by Mildred O. Meyer

I awakened early that Easter morning and slipped into my white dress. In our home all the girls wore white dresses for Easter. I decided to go for a short walk, resolving to be back by the time the family would gather at the breakfast table.

My next-door neighbor, Mrs. LaZaar, was also outside. She greeted me cheerfully. She was a friendly neighbor. Sometimes I felt a little strange in her presence. The LaZaars were Jewish. Weren't those the people who had crucified Jesus? My 5-year-old mind had not fathomed at that point that centuries had passed since those sad days.

"Here," said Mrs. LaZaar, handing me what looked like an over-sized cracker. "Enjoy a bit of unleavened bread."

I reached for the gift rather cautiously, but did thank her. Mother had impressed on us that you say thanks when folks give you something.

But eat the bread? Not on your life! That is what the Jewish people ate. I would not be in the same class with them. I would not risk committing an unforgivable sin.

Not wanting Mrs. Lazar to see how I would dispose of her gift, I walked several blocks farther than originally planned, threw the bread into a hedge, and proceeded home.

The family was gathered around the dining room

table. A bowl of rainbow-colored eggs graced the table, and also a bowl of yellow and orange-colored eggs. When Father and Mother were young, they had no colorful dyes. Their mothers used onion skins in the water in which Easter eggs were boiled. This resulted in the various shades of yellow.

And in the very middle of the table was a huge platter of unleavened bread. What's more, everyone seemed to be enjoying Mrs. LaZaar's Easter gift.

Mother, who could read the mind of any 5-year-old, soon had me confessing. Under her able tutelage I learned that Easter morning that it is not what we eat or drink, but what really counts is that which is in the heart—faith, love, and trust in the Savior.

Shortly after Easter the LaZaars moved to another city. She and Mother had often had long conversations. Knowing Mother, I am sure Jesus was often the topic of those talks. I never heard from Mrs.

LaZaar again, but I sincerely pray she and all the other LaZaars in the world have come to accept my Lord Jesus as their Savior from sin.



Mildred Meyer is a member of St. John, Jefferson, Wisconsin.