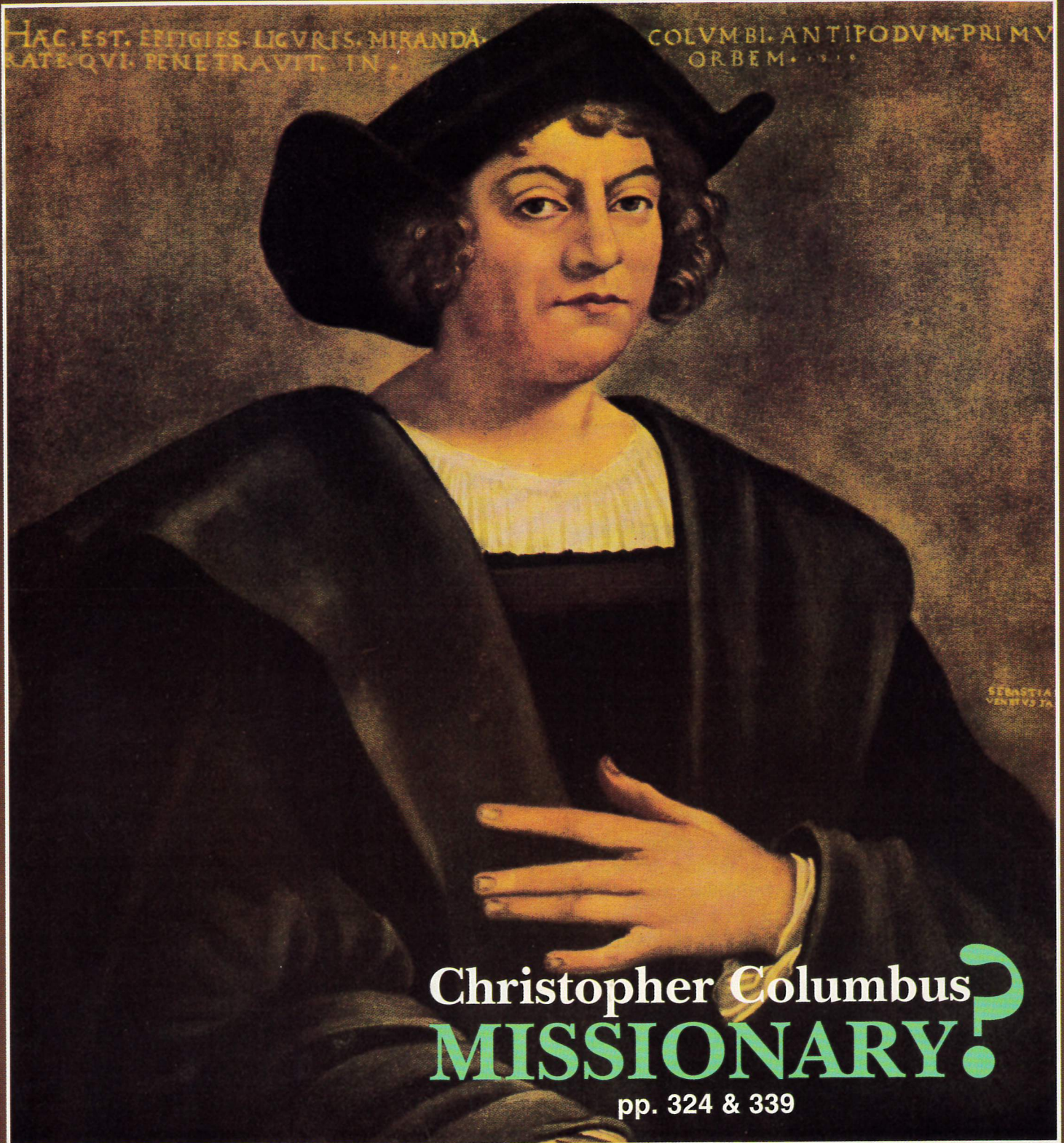


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NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN



Christopher Columbus
MISSIONARY?

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Committed—sort of

A magnificent salvation calls for more than mild adoration

by Robert H. Hochmuth

The description in 2 Chronicles 25:2 characterizes a nominally religious person heading for havoc as a consequence of compromising with evil. Amaziah, a king of Judah, exhibited flashes of zeal for the Lord, but succumbed to the yen for satisfying his sinful nature because deep down he was content with half-hearted devotion.

The sacred record reinforces our commitment in a day when lukewarmness menaces the ranks of God's people. How disconcerting and even demoralizing it is to discover lifelong, regular church-goers can become casually non-committal about manifest ungodliness.

What's worse, they expect us to accede to the view that to get along in today's world even professing Christians ought to be able to rationalize a little dishonesty. In a day when disregard for God's design for sex and marriage is being flaunted, the pressure is on us to become more tolerant of the immodest and indecent.

Often the argument is couched in the logic: "It's not as bad as some other things that are going on." As though token commitment to God's ways is all that he should expect of us! It amounts to asserting for ourselves the right to compromise God's standards when we choose.

In this mode Amaziah's successors are noted as people who worshipped the Lord, but gave their hearts to idols. And in the end they grew comfortable even about sacrificing their children.

How alarmingly similar to people going through the right religious motions, but letting devotion to their own personal trinity of profit, ease, and pleasure determine the big decisions in their lives. That kind of half-heartedness brought Amaziah to his spiritual undoing.

Horrible

Partial regard for what God wants equals disregard for what he wants. Let the prophet's divine renunciation of King Saul (1 Samuel 15) accentuate how God

detests our modifying his message to suit our corrupt inclinations.

The laser beam of God's "woe" strikes those who condone evil as good (Isaiah 5). They are charged with substituting darkness for light. Defiance for God has to be labeled for what it is: horrible. Being at odds with God in any degree is destructive.

Sinners will not be helped by minimizing sin. They need to realize that there is no tolerable margin for iniquity. Every offense is great. Consequently, on the basis of our own record every one of us is utterly doomed.

Magnificent

Similarly, our help does not lie in ersatz mercy. The gospel does not depict an easygoing deity now whimsically overlooking some iniquity. What kind of allegiance can such a ho-hum view of God possibly inspire? Perhaps it's such an inferior "grandfather image" of God that accounts for people being lukewarm toward Christ and what he has accomplished.

Christ did not come to make us comfortable in our sin, but to deliver us from its guilt and curse. To accomplish this required God becoming a perfect human being in Mary's virgin womb. To carry out an awesome assignment he traded places with us. Being condemned in our stead, he for all time reversed the verdict that was against us. On top of all this he conquered death for us.

It is no mediocre redemption he achieved. Outcasts become God's nobility. Enemies are adopted and granted the full rights of sons. Such a magnificent salvation calls for more than mild adoration. David expressed it: "I will praise you, O Lord, with all my heart; I will sing praise to your name, O Most High" (Psalm 9:1,2).

*"He did what was right
in the eyes of the Lord,
but not wholeheartedly"*
(2 Chronicles 25:2).



Robert Hochmuth is pastor of St. Andrew, Sacramento, California.

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

■ You probably recognize the picture on the cover; maybe it was in your school history book. In an earlier era, Christopher Columbus was considered a hero. More recently, however, his critics have called him exploitive, self-seeking—and, they say, not the discoverer of America. James Kiecker raises still another question: was Columbus a missionary? To learn some things about Columbus that you may not have learned in history class, turn the page.

■ Another look into history—although more recent than 1492—begins on page 328 with the first of two articles on the 1892 federation of the Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin synods. Morton Schroeder paints a vivid picture of life in the 1890s, when “The General Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan and Other States” was formed.

DJS



Christopher Columbus MISSIONARY?

There is no doubt that he also wanted to get rich and famous

by James G. Kiecker

Christopher Columbus—discoverer, great navigator, hero. Or is it destroyer, enslaver, and self-seeking gold-monger?

Whether you're still viewing Columbus in the traditional way, or in the newer, politically correct mode, here's a characterization you may have overlooked: Christopher Columbus, missionary. Missionary?

Those who knew Columbus best agree he was a man of faith. His son, Ferdinand, writes that "in matters of religion he was so strict that for fasting and say-

ing all the canonical offices he might have been taken for a member of a religious order." In fact, Columbus later donned the garb of a Franciscan.

Bartolome de Las Casas, a Dominican who in the early 1500s wrote a history of the Indies, adds that "in everything [Columbus] did and said or sought to begin, he always included 'In the name of the Holy Trinity I will do this.'" Of course, Columbus was a medieval Roman Catholic untouched by the Reformation. (Luther was eight years old when Columbus set sail.) From our perspective, then,

Columbus was an erring Christian, but a Christian nevertheless.

Columbus knew his Bible history. In the journal that he kept of his first voyage he recounts how an extended calm provoked fear and grumbling among his crew. Suddenly the sea "without wind, rose greatly" and carried them forward. Columbus comments that "such a thing had not been seen except in the time of the Jews, when those in Egypt came out against Moses."

Banners bore the cross of Christ

Finally sighting land, the reaction of Columbus and his crew was to sing a hymn. When he stepped ashore on October 12, 1492, it was under banners bearing the cross of Christ as well as the insignia of King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella.

Columbus would have agreed with Paul that in all things God works for the good of those who love him. On Christmas Eve, 1492, the Santa Maria ran aground and had to be scuttled. But this disaster led to a pleasant encounter with the island's inhabitants, who helped Columbus and his crew and even brought gifts. Things went so well that Columbus believed God had caused the event in accordance with his will.

"In truth," he wrote, "it was no disaster, but rather great good fortune. . . . Had I not run aground there, I would have kept out to sea." Since he left some of this crew there, this incident led to the first settlement of Europeans in the New World.

Trouble also befell Columbus on his return voyage to Spain. Engulfed in a violent storm, Columbus alternately feared that God willed his death, yet hoped God would bring him to safety. He attributed his fears to lack of confidence in divine providence, but drew comfort from the blessings which God had shown him. Ultimately, his biographer Las Casas tells us, "he committed his fate and entrusted all his undertaking to God." Columbus concluded his journal with "Thanks be to God."

All of which is not to say that Columbus was sinless. He married the mother of his first son only after she was pregnant. Left a widower, he never got around to marrying the mother of his second son. This however must have bothered him, for in his will he provided amply for her, explaining that this was "for the satisfaction of my conscience because the matter weighs heavily upon my soul."

So, granted, a man of faith. But a missionary?

Christianity comes to China

Here some background information is necessary. About the middle of the 1200s, the father and uncle of Marco Polo had journeyed to China in search of wealth. This they found in abundance, but they were also surprised to discover that the Great Khan took an interest in their religion. He asked the Polo brothers to petition the pope for a hundred well-trained men to come and Christianize his realm.

On a subsequent trip in the late 1200s the Polos, accompanied by young Marco, brought encouraging letters from the pope, and two friars who had authority to ordain priests among converted Chinese. The writings of Marco Polo, with their suggestion of Chinese eager for Christianity, excited the imagination of Europeans, Columbus among them.

Against this background we must set Columbus' missionary impulse. In his journal, before saying a single word about the wealth that a successful voyage might bring, Columbus alludes to the Great Khan, and praises his Spanish sovereigns "as princes devoted to the faith and propagators thereof" . . . who "thought to send . . . to see those peoples" . . . in order to learn "the manner which should be used to bring about their conversion to our holy faith." Columbus' first impression of the people he encountered was "that they would easily be made Christians, for it appeared . . . that they had no creed."

Ever the missionary

The stress on mission work continues throughout the journal. Columbus is certain that if "devout Christian persons, knowing their language," worked among these people, "they would all at once become Christians," and he hopes "that Your Highnesses will take action in this matter with great diligence, in order to turn to the Church such great peoples and to convert them." One is reminded of the reports of our WELS missionary survey teams.

When Columbus resolved to take some "Indians" back to Spain, "that they might learn our language . . . and that, on their return, they might be tongues for the Christians and adopt . . . the things of our faith," he seems to argue the case for national churches and pastors. And Columbus' observation that already "they believe and know that there is a God in heaven

. . . and they are very ready to repeat any prayer that we say to them” is an observation of what we’d call natural religion, which a person who wants to share revealed truth can make use of.

But however much Columbus the man of faith may have wanted to save souls, there is no doubt that he also wanted to get rich and famous. One reason it took several years for him to receive royal funding for his enterprise was his demand of a hefty share of whatever wealth he might discover, plus honorable titles. Kirkpatrick Sale, in a recent book, *The Conquest of Paradise*, notes the many times that Columbus mentions his desire for gold and honor. Sale argues that the admiral was more interested in gold than souls from the start, cloaking his real intent behind a show of piety. Sale also notes that no priests were included on the first voyage.

Gold is most excellent

Late in life, Columbus excused his desire for gold as a necessity for doing mission work: “Gold is most excellent . . . and with it, whoever has it may do what he wants in the world, and may succeed in taking souls to Paradise.” But Sale is unimpressed. Just more hypocrisy.

Whether Columbus viewed gold as a tool for mission work, or as an end in itself, the fact is that seeking gold soon triumphed over seeking the lost. On his second voyage, which involved seventeen ships, Columbus brought five priests, but they were almost lost among the 1,200 to 1,500 colonists, soldiers, knights, and general adventurers.

Here arose what has been termed the “Black Legend.” The Europeans began a campaign of killing, raping, and enslavement. The native population was sent out to find impossible amounts of gold, with torture and death for those who failed. Though Columbus himself refrained from the worst atrocities, he did approve them. Already on his first day in the New World he had noted that the natives would make “good servants.” Now about 500 were crammed onto four ships and transported to Spain to be sold as



Islands discovered by Columbus; in the illustrated edition of the Columbus letter, 1493.

slaves. Many died on the way. When Columbus returned later, he took another load. It’s not surprising that after three years there was not a single convert to Christianity.

The final voyages

This curious mixture of religion, mission work, and gold fever continued to dominate Columbus’ thoughts for the rest of his life. Medieval biblical scholarship had speculated on the location of the Garden of Eden, and placed it at the end of Asia. On his third voyage, while cruising

the coast of present-day Venezuela, Columbus was so taken with the wild beauty that he believed he was gazing at the remnants of the earthly paradise. The third voyage ended in disaster when, unable to control the gold-hungry colonists, Columbus was deposed and sent back to Spain in chains.

Before his fourth and final voyage, Columbus wrote the *Book of Prophecies*. It’s a bizarre work in which all strands of his thought blend together. He pictures himself as God’s chosen instrument, led to discover new lands where he might Christianize the heathen, and discover abundant gold to be used for financing the reconquest of the Holy Land, all to be done with haste since the end of the world lay only 155 years in the future. As he had done for many years, he signed his name “Christ-bearer,” the literal meaning of Christopher.

But the fourth voyage was another fiasco; he was marooned for almost a year, and was lucky to return to Spain alive. He died almost unnoticed on May 20, 1506, his last words the words of Jesus: “Father, into your hands I commit my spirit.”

Columbus’ self-chosen task of extending Christ’s name around the world went unfulfilled. Perhaps, given his equal concern with wealth and fame, it was an impossible dream.



James Kiecker teaches at Wisconsin Lutheran College, Milwaukee.



What do you want from a church?

A place where Jesus is Lord

by LeRoy A. Martin

What do you want from a church? “Good air conditioning,” that was what one woman said that 94-degree day I asked her that question. “A five-pound bass” was the reply of an avid but frustrated fisherman. Both were just joking, I think.

We asked literally thousands of people that question as we sought to get acquainted with the people of our community. There were other answers: “Life-related sermons, friendly people, seeing children enjoy church, a caring minister, a church that lives within its budget, a nursery for unhappy children, a convenient location, a place I feel comfortable.”

But most often we heard answers such as “Meet my spiritual needs. Don’t teach me about the Bible; teach me the Bible itself. Straightforward preaching from the Bible. Something to lean on. Back to the basics of religion. A place where Jesus is Lord. Point me to God. A place open to all.”

What do you want from a church? That’s an important question for you to answer also. Does your idea of what a church should offer you line up with God’s mission statement for his church?

We found that what most people want is a

church that teaches them about God. And we learned how people feel when a new church in town offers the message of God’s word. For at the end of a series of Bible information classes, one of the students, a woman in her 40s who has experienced great suffering in her life, asked if she could speak a prayer to God. What she said you must hear, if ever you wonder what a person should get from a church:

“God, I thank you for sending a pastor here to show us what’s in God’s word. Thank you for these times we’ve had to study your word. You know the terrible things that have happened to me. I’m sorry for the times I’ve blamed you. Forgive me. I’ve learned that all things are really under your control. Now I really want to join this congregation. Give me strength to be faithful to you and your word, in Jesus’ name. Amen.”

Thank God for bringing and keeping us in a church where what people want and need is so freely available.



LeRoy Martin is pastor of Christ the King, an exploratory mission in Port Charlotte, Florida.

Three become one

When the Michigan, and Minnesota, and Wisconsin synods federated in 1892, they formed the *Allgemeine Evangelisch-lutherische Synode von Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan und andern Staaten*

by Morton A. Schroeder

Picture, if you will, three stacks of file cards on a table. One stack is made up of blue cards, another of pink cards, and the third yellow. The blue cards represent pioneer Lutheran Christians in Michigan, the pink cards represent pioneer Lutheran Christians in Minnesota, and the yellow cards pioneer Lutheran Christians in Wisconsin.

Now take the three stacks of cards and mix them together. Although the individual cards have retained their distinctive colors, each stack has yielded its uniqueness to a larger, rainbow-hued unity.

In essence, that's what happened to our church body in 1892. The Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Michigan, the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Minnesota and Other States, and the German Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin and Other States joined pulpits, pews, and, in some situations, purses to form the little federation with the big name: the General Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Wisconsin, Minnesota, Michigan and Other States. This federation would last until it was replaced with a stronger union a quarter of a century later.

A changed America

America changed drastically during the years between 1892 and 1992. The German immigrants who flooded the midwest during the 19th century, were they able to return for a brief look around, would not recognize their land.

Ours was a nation of 44 states in 1892. The area of our country was less than 3 million square miles; the population, according to the 1890 census, was only about 63 million.

But each fresh wave of immigrants from northern Europe increased the then-sparse population of 21 people per square mile to the present 70. Close neighbors, a rarity in those days, became so commonplace

that people, according to an old folk tale, complained of seeing the smoke pouring from other chimneys. Later people would look into each other's windows and share common driveways.

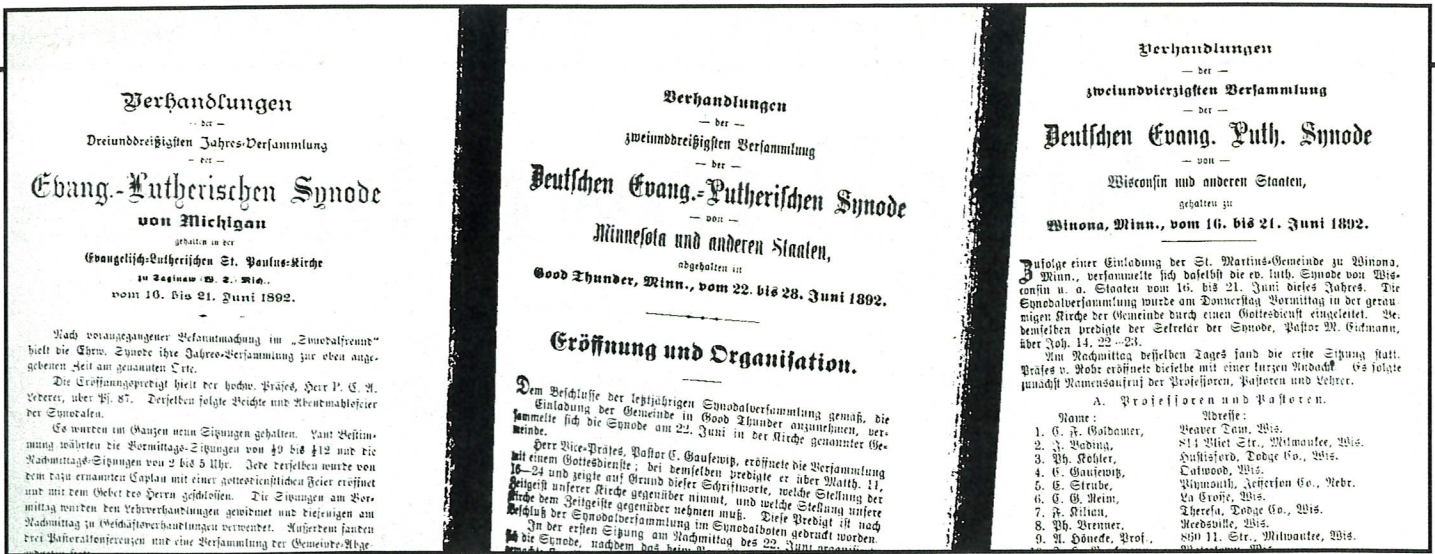
In 1890, Michigan's population was 2,094,000; Minnesota's 1,310,000; and Wisconsin's 1,693,000. Today, the combined population of these three states approaches 19 million. The states' three largest cities were then, as they still are, Detroit, Minneapolis, and Milwaukee. In 1900, their populations totaled under 800,000. Today their combined population exceeds two million. The count would be much larger if surrounding suburbs were included.

In 1892 the president of these 63 million Americans was Benjamin Harrison. His salary—and all other government expense—was paid by tariffs on imported goods, internal taxes on tobacco and distilled spirits, and miscellaneous levies. There was no income tax.

Communication was difficult

Communication of all kinds was difficult a century ago. There were no radios or televisions. The telegraph was yet to be invented. And because the telephone was still in its teens, it is safe to conclude that few of the pioneer immigrants, and perhaps fewer still of the pastors who served them, had the new-fangled gadget in their homes. The post, as reliable as railways and mud, plank and corduroy roads permitted it to be, was the most common method of communicating. Postal cards, with their one-cent postage, were especially popular.

A common hymnbook was unknown in 1892, and only hymns that were included in the greatest number of different hymnbooks could be used in worship services. Perhaps that's the reason certain hymns became favorites, to be sung again and again.



Proceedings from conventions of the three synods were written in the language of the German immigrants who founded the church bodies.

People who were interested in church news subscribed to the *Gemeinde-Blatt*, a German language magazine that had been published by the Wisconsin Synod since 1865. The magazine you are reading at this moment did not exist in 1892.

The *Gemeinde-Blatt* outlived its usefulness when German, the language the immigrants brought with them, was no longer the language of the documents they signed, of the pulpit and the pew, the butcher's block and the teller's cage, the newspaper and magazines. Few congregations in the WELS conduct German language services today. German began to give way to English in the 1890s; the pace quickened after 1917. Today Spanish, Hmong, and sign language find increased favor and use.

A new game

The Olympic Games did not exist in 1892, but we were almost obsessed with them in 1992. During the winter of 1891-1892, Dr. James Naismith invented a new game. Played with a soccer ball and peach baskets suspended at either end of a large room, it was called "basketball." During the past summer we were fascinated if not hypnotized by the basketball prowess and athletic skills of what the media fancifully dubbed the "Dream Team."

Our forebears were isolated from each other because of non-existing or poor roads, slow-moving carts and wagons, railroads that more than likely ran east and west, few public hostleries, and inadequate methods of public communication.

Accordingly, where two, three, four, or more gathered together for news from the Old Country, for economic security, and *Gemuettlichkeit* (light-hearted companionship), they formed *Bunds*. *Bunds* were apolitical associations designed to give immigrants an opportunity to rub elbows with their friends. Except

for the annual picnic or a special outing, they were for adult males only.

A coming together

And where two, three, four, or more gathered in the Savior's name to do his work, a synod was formed. The word synod means, quite literally, "a coming together." Unity based on the unchanging word of God, and not mere social union, was the prime, if not only, consideration in forming synods. The synods were also for men only.

Because unity was the order of the day, these "comings together" proceeded by fits and starts. Alliances which had existed between parent organizations in Europe and daughter organizations in America were severed; new alliances were formed, only to be dissolved. And so the names of various missionary societies and synodical organizations float in and out of the history of these early years: Prussian State Church, Basel Missionary Society, Langenberg Missionary Society, Missouri Synod, Synodical Conference of North America, General Synod, General Council.

In the midst of this storm and stress, three synods found each other. They worked at establishing a basis for cooperative efforts, promising to remain faithful to the principles which had caused them originally to seek succor in each other's Bible-based company. The road to unity was not always smooth, and even a temporary parting of the ways delayed cooperation until the loose confederation of 1892 was formed.



Morton Schroeder, professor emeritus of Dr. Martin Luther College, lives in Appleton, Wisconsin.

Small town harvest

by Anthony E. Schultz

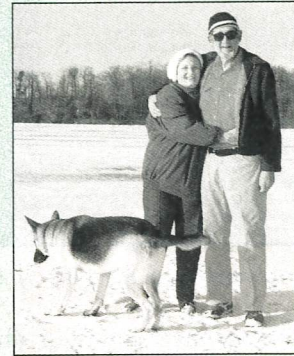
Dundee is one of the Lord's gardens. A patch so small there's a First Street but not a Second Street or a Main Street. One of the "farmers" is a man named Bill. With a dashing mustache and side burns, Bill scatters gospel seeds in the dentist's waiting room—a place where people come to grips with the painful "decay" in this world because of sin.

"Wild Bill" drives a semi hauling groceries. One day he almost died when the platform connected to the back of his truck collapsed. A fork lift pinned Bill to the wall. Massive metal bars smashed open Bill's leg. A whole bunch of guys weren't strong enough to push the load off Bill's leg. Like Samson, Bill reached up, worked the fork lift controls, and pulled his own leg free. He had unspeakable pain.

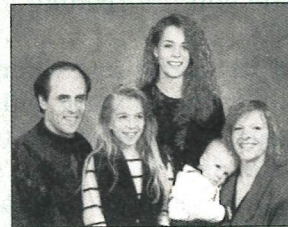
But Jesus made good come of this near-tragedy. Doctors, nurses, technicians, custodians, roommates, and visitors witnessed Bill's God-given courage. Instead of curses and complaints, they heard a man give thanks to his Lord for sparing his life. They saw a patient with God-given patience during endless days of learning how to walk all over again. Bill built up those who came to have devotions with him.

Bill had a camper in Dundee near Don and Carol's. Bill and Marge and their son Scott got to know Don and Carol. They spent time together. With gentle, humble, Holy Spirit-given words, they encouraged one another. When Carol was sick with cancer here were fellow believers to pray for one another. Here were the eyes of a strong man filled with tears of compassion. Here were friends to bring the comfort of the Easter gospel when their neighbor's wife was called home to heaven. This too is evangelism. To bring gospel healing to hearts aching and breaking.

Then there was Merlyn. I never saw Merlyn stand. A neighbor said, "Please go meet him. He's dying." Merlyn's body was weak but his mind was exceedingly powerful. Merlyn was like Ernest Hemingway. An Alaskan adventurer and intellectual. Merlyn's



People of Dundee, Wisconsin



CAMPBELLSPORT NEWS



VILLAGE APOTHECARY



TWOHIG'S FUNERAL HOME

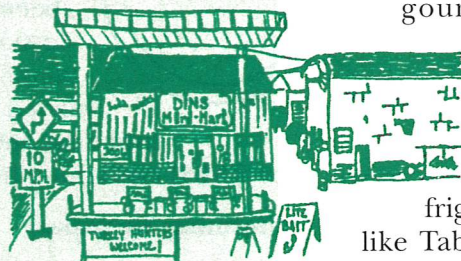


sick/death bed was in a home on the lake. Heidi, Merlyn's German shepherd, knew something was terribly wrong. When you came to visit you had to get past Heidi. Through a crack in the door Mrs. Schuster would smuggle out a doggie treat—your ticket to Heidi's heart.

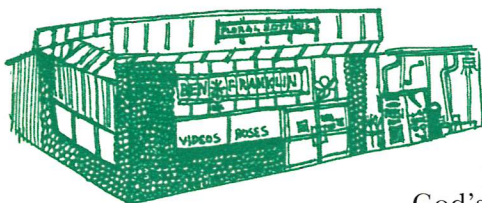
Merlyn talked about history, science, the arts, politics, and economics. He talked about John Wayne. He talked about Jesus' unconditional love—"Amazing grace, how sweet the sound that saved a wretch" like his pastor.

Jesus works powerfully in a small community. The Campbellsport News office. Mr. and Mrs. Ninneman, publishers. A blessing—Mr. Ninneman lets the pastor be "Clark Kent." What should the weekly column be called? He knows: "But God's word says. . . ." The

● ● ● the gospel takes root and God makes it grow



MINI-MART



BEN FRANKLIN STORE

world is clogged, caked, and choking with the foolishness of people's wisdom. But God's word is truth.

There's the village apothecary. Mr. Gussick, proprietor. Here you can buy fine porcelain to make a moment precious. Scripture passages with them. Not sweet sentimentality, but God's truth. He's not ashamed to say that. No vulgar greeting cards but scriptural encouragement. A literal pat on the back and hand of encouragement on the shoulder for Jesus' sake.

Across the street is Twohig's funeral home. On concrete outside or the quiet carpet inside evangelism is

going on. Sprays of flowers can't make the loss of the loved one go away. Only Jesus' blood washed sin away. Only Jesus' empty tomb explodes the prison of the grave for us. Here farmers and retired factory workers speak that gospel.

The Holy Spirit is in the hearts of Ben Franklin clerks talking in the picture frame department about Jesus. Dave and Rosie talk about Jesus in their mini-mart, changing oil, selling live bait. Thomas talks about Jesus and bear hunting in his gun shop. Ernie talks about Jesus while taking Matt fishing. The Loehr Meat Market—where they talk about the importance of infant baptism and Christian education. Honest business men for Jesus' sake like Don, Bill, Sammy, Jim, and Ken. Educators like Dennis—universally respected. Valerie—a gourmet cook



LOEHR MEAT MARKET

and banquet planner—for her

Savior. Jean, treating cancer patients with compassion for Jesus' sake. Barb, making house calls, giving shots to frightened children. Lori and Gayle, stitching like Tabitha for Jesus. Lois, cooking venison and poppy seed for Jesus like Mary and Martha. Diane, directing the "First Song of Isaiah." Doreen, singing the "Sparrow Song" to the glory of Jesus.

Wendy, Elizabeth and Jack, Dottie, Sylvia and Lawrence, Lloyd and Victoria from England. The queen's English plus passion to share the Savior. My friend Mike the drywall guy. Blessed with a God-fearing wife and children and with friends who lived their faith even on the softball field. Mike took adult instruction lessons—the same gospel in his heart that so colored his friends' lives. He in turn shares his faith with others.

The gospel takes root in what only looks like a small harvest field. God makes it grow.



Anthony Schultz, formerly of Dundee, is pastor of St. Luke, Watertown, Wisconsin.

LINE ILLUSTRATIONS BY ANTHONY SCHULTZ

The Smalcald Articles

More than just another church confession

by Wayne A. Laitinen

When the Diet of Augsburg adjourned, the empire was a religious powder keg ready to be ignited. Emperor Charles V remained loyal to the pope, but held out to the Lutherans the promise that a general council would be held to settle the religious differences.

Pope Paul III called a council for May 23, 1537, to be held in Mantua, Italy, for “the utter extirpation of the poisonous, pestilential Lutheran heresy.” When the papal envoy warned Luther to be ready for the council, the reformer replied, “Yes, my lord, with both this neck and head of mine.”

The Lutherans considered using the Augsburg Confession to make their case. But as the Lutheran movement became more popular, Catholic leaders became more adamant in their opposition. Any hopes that church authorities would be moved by the gospel were all but dashed. It was time to move from gentle admonitions to sharp assaults. It was Luther’s turn. And Luther did not tread nearly as lightly as Melanchthon had at Augsburg.

From Luther’s heart

The Smalcald Articles are more than just another church confession. They are the outpourings of a heart that, years earlier, wrestled to find peace with God through keeping the law, but had failed. That is reflected in the clarity and length with which Luther treats sin and repentance in the Smalcald Articles.

Salvation through Christ’s work alone is the main theme of the Smalcald Articles. “On this article rests all that we teach against the pope, the devil and the world,” he wrote. Nothing could be yielded.

Luther considered the mass to be an abomination because it replaced Christ’s sacrifice with a work of the priest. More than that, masses were bought and

sold, as if Christ’s forgiveness could be purchased. He wanted the mass replaced with the sacrament of holy communion as Christ instituted it.

Baptism, monastic vows, celibacy, and submission to papal authority were among the other issues Luther addressed. A tract was added which dealt with the power and primacy of the pope and his bishops. Luther’s co-worker, Melanchthon, was primarily involved in composing it.

Luther was certain he would die—either at the hands of the pope or of the sicknesses with which he had been plagued. He was sure this confession would be his last will and testament. With urgency and fervor he warned against the false gospel of the antichrist and bequeathed a Savior who had provided everything needed forever.

Storming the papacy

In preparation for the council, the Lutheran princes and theologians met in Schmalkald, Germany. While the princes discussed the political issues, the theologians agreed that Luther’s articles were a clear exposition of their faith.

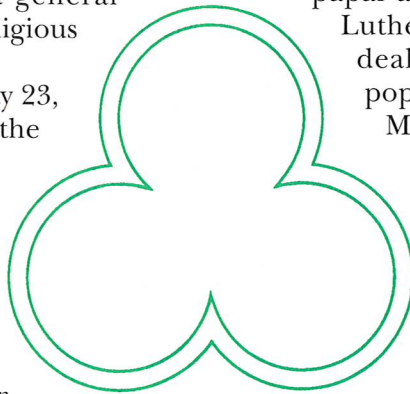
Unfortunately, Luther was suffering from a kidney stone attack and could not be at the meeting. Physicians feared he would die. The reformer insisted on going back to Saxony. On the way home he recovered. In fact, he lived nine more years.

When the Smalcald Articles were completed, Luther looked back and said, “I know I did right to storm the papacy with the word of God.”

Next: The Formula of Concord



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



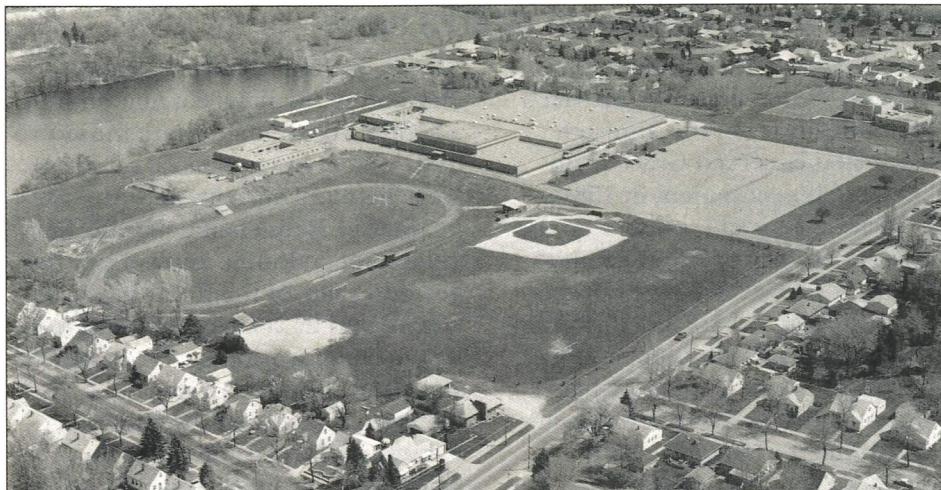
Saint Croix LHS moves to new school

Faith can move mountains, goes the expression. But a particularly large mountain loomed on the horizon for Saint Croix Lutheran High School in West St. Paul, Minnesota. In particular, a mountainous cash down payment to purchase a new property was needed soon.

More than two years ago, Saint Croix's regents began planning to expand the school building. Suddenly, a new opportunity was presented. Archbishop Brady High School was forced to close. The facility, within two miles of Saint Croix, offered more space for considerably less cost than expanding the current school. The only obstacle was the \$500,000 down payment.

The appeal was issued to the members of the 28 churches that make up the Twin Cities Lutheran High School Association. Over 1,100 families responded.

An elderly woman donated stock certificates. That one gift totaled



nearly \$7,000. One family, caring for a seriously ill child, managed to give \$50. A retired church worker and his wife sent in a \$10,000 gift.

Church groups and school PTAs held special events. Church suppers, special mission offerings, a grade school "jump-a-thon" and an offering from a church bowling league—all made the fund grow.

Saint Croix's PTA donated \$500, to be given in the name of its faculty members, as recognition for teachers' appreciation day. Emanuel Lutheran School faculty gave up its own teacher appreciation celebra-

tion; those designated funds went toward the down payment.

On the closing date Principal Merlyn Kruse handed over the down payment and St. Croix took possession of the building the end of April.

The new school, completely renovated thanks to an army of volunteers, was ready to welcome students in September. Dedication is planned for October 18, with tours and refreshments from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., with a break for a worship service at 2:30.

—Vicki Schmeling

Founding congregation celebrates 150th anniversary

St. John, Oak Creek, Wis., one of the oldest congregations in the Wisconsin Synod, will observe its 150th anniversary in 1993. The first of four anniversary services will be held Oct. 4, 1992, with the final service scheduled for Oct. 3, 1993.

In 1840, German immigrants in Oakwood (now Oak Creek) started coming to services conducted in the log cabin of Daniel Goelzer, an early settler. Pastor Schmidt, from New York, confirmed the first children in the community in 1841. On Oct. 2, 1843, St. John congregation was formally organized. St. John was one of five founding congregations of the

Wisconsin Synod, organized in 1850.

The first Christian elementary school opened in 1866 with 44 students, but closed in 1870. The school opened again in 1919, but closed in 1932 because of financial problems. In 1963, arrangements were made to bus the children of the congregation to Trinity Lutheran School in order to re-establish St. John's school. The school, reopened in 1964, is still functioning today.

The first English services were conducted in 1915. German services were discontinued in 1956.

In 1843 St. John had 24 voting members and their families. In 1991 it had grown to 503 baptized members and 376 communicants.

—Kristin Sonntag

WELS Connection videotapes

October topic:

- Second-career pastors

November topics:

- Partners in Apache Learning
- Youth discipleship

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

Southeastern Wisconsin District news

On July 12, Grace, Indianapolis, observed Pastor **Lester M. Hieber's** 50th anniversary in the ministry. Pastor Hieber served Grace from 1958 until his retirement in 1981. . . . St. Andrew, Chicago, celebrated the 40th anniversary of **Harold Robish** serving as president of the congregation. Robish has served 40 consecutive one-year terms as president of the congregation. . . . Pastor James Schaefer preached at a worship service commemorating the 25th anniversary of Pastor **Rolfe Westendorf** as pastor of Siloah, Milwaukee, on June 28. . . . **St. Marcus, Milwaukee**, observed an outdoor "Gospelfest" in connection with the neighborhood's "Juneteenth" celebration on June

14. . . . **St. John (Slades Corners), Burlington**, dedicated a new church in 1892. To commemorate those 100 years of grace, special services were held in February and August. . . . **Star of Bethlehem, New Berlin**, celebrated a double anniversary this year: 15 years of the founding of its school and 25 years of the founding of the congregation. . . . Four hundred and thirteen African-Americans attended the summer vacation Bible school at **Siloah, Milwaukee**, in June. About 30 volunteers assisted in teaching the largest number of inner city children served by a single project in our synod. . . . **Steven Zambow** has joined the national office of the WELS Lutherans for Life,

Milwaukee, as development director. . . . **Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School** dedicated its new Rogers organ, a gift from an anonymous donor, at the school's opening service on August 23. . . . **Zion, Hartland**, observed its 125th anniversary in May. Fifteen resident pastors have served Zion during its 125 year history. . . . Wisconsin Lutheran High School observed the following anniversaries in the teaching ministry: **Kenneth Leverence** (40 years); **Floyd Schwecke** (40 years); **Robert Arndt** (25 years); **Carl Lemke** (25 years); **Kenneth Luedke** (25 years); **Gunther Thoms** (25 years); and **Dale Walz** (25 years).

—Robert A. Sievert

Western Wisconsin District news

St. Matthew, Janesville, celebrated its 50th anniversary April 26. Pastor David Sievert serves St. Matthew and Kevin Proeber is the school principal. . . . The **Eau Claire campus ministry** held a reunion on June 27 and 28. Pastor Paul Lindhorst, an alumnus, delivered the Sunday sermon. . . . Christ congregation of Cochrane celebrated its 90th anniversary on June 28. . . . The **Lakeside Lutheran**

High School marching band and a capella choir participated in the nation's July 4th celebration in Washington D.C. Dave Fenske directed the band and James Wade the choir. . . . **St. Peter, Township Hamburg**, celebrated its 125th anniversary August 9. Pastors David Zietlow, Glen Hellwig, and James Korthals (sons of the congregation) and Lyle Schalow conducted the services. . . .

St. Paul, Wisconsin Rapids, gave thanks for **James Duehlmeier's** 25 years in the teaching ministry on March 22. . . . Martin Luther Preparatory School observed the anniversaries of two faculty members, **Eldon Hirsch** and **Myron Duin**. . . . **Steve Travis**, a member of Grace, Prairie du Chien, is the NCAA national champion in the 800 meter run.

—Elton C. Stroh

Obituaries

Immanuel P. G. Boettcher 1900-1992

Immanuel P. G. Boettcher was born in Hortonville, Wis., Feb. 5, 1900. He died Aug. 6, 1992, in Neenah, Wis.

A graduate of Northwestern College and Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Boettcher served congregations in Brewster, Neb., and Merrill, Wis. He also served as chaplain in Fox Valley, Green Bay reformatory, and Taycheedah Correctional Institution.

He was preceded in death by his first and second wives, Grace and Katherine, and his daughter Clarissa Hartwig.

He is survived by daughter Jane (Tom) Sudgen; son Carl (Audrey); six grandchildren; five great grandchildren; and sisters Olga Radichel and Irma Kehl.

Services were held at Trinity, Neenah.

Norman A. Schlavensky 1902-1992

Norman Schlavensky was born Sept. 11, 1902, in Kenosha, Wis. He died August 21, 1992, in Pewaukee,

Wis.

He graduated from Northwestern College in 1926 and from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary in 1929. He served as a parish pastor in Denmark, Peshtigo, and Milwaukee, Wis., and Tucson, Ariz.; and as a teacher at Wisconsin Lutheran High School, Milwaukee.

He was preceded in death by his wife, Irma. He is survived by three children, Jane Ross, Richard (Eileen) Schlavensky, and Ruth (Keith) Haberkorn; eight grandchildren; and three great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at North Trinity, Milwaukee.

1892-1992

The 1989 convention of our synod authorized “the appointment of a committee to plan an appropriate centennial recognition of the 1892 merger to help us appreciate the past and present blessings of this merger.” The Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota synods were the members of this new federation. These three constituting synods also continued their separate identities until 1917.

The above resolution was adopted without debate and without audible dissent. But with the possible exception of a few history “buffs” among us, it probably received little more than a passing glance from those who read the convention *Proceedings*. Subsequently the Conference of Presidents approved the committee report suggesting a low-key observance with articles in the *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* and *Northwestern Lutheran* and some special liturgical material for the anniversary Sunday, November 1, 1992. For there is indeed much we can learn from that historical event to help us appreciate its past and present blessings.

The 1892 agreement between the three synods called for three general areas of cooperation: publication, missions, and worker training. The agenda of our synod, the purpose of our walking together is essentially the same today.

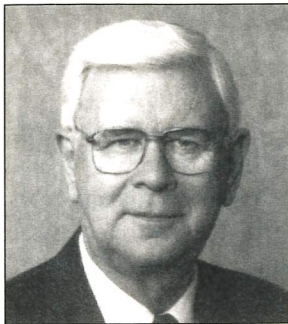
A publishing house which last year observed its 100th birthday continues to expand its faithful service to the church. The goal of “a common church periodical and a theological journal” is still being realized in *Northwestern Lutheran* and the *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*. The last decade saw a catechism revision into contemporary English. We are awaiting a new Lutheran hymnal. A coordinated religious curriculum and enlarged Bible study resources are at hand, to name but a few of today’s publishing ventures.

Almost immediately the federation implemented its goal of mission cooperation with its first real thrust in world mission work. For more than 50 years the resultant Apache Indian Mission, which is celebrating its 100th birthday in 1993, constituted the synod’s only world mission work. But the seed was sown for more rapid growth in the second half of the century, both at home and abroad, especially also in “other sheep” of another race, another color, another culture. One hundred years later, by God’s grace, “making disciples for time and for eternity, using the gospel to win the lost for Christ and nurture believers for lives of Christian service” is still our mission.

Perhaps we can appreciate the 1892 merger most of all in the area of ministerial education. The plan adopted at that time called for one seminary, two colleges, and three preparatory schools. Although the intervening years have seen some modification, that basic plan is still in place today. In light of many other non-doctrinal changes to which we have adjusted in the past 100 years, a calm and objective consideration of the school structure issue is surely not out of order today. Nor need it result in the strong feelings of a century ago when one of the synods temporarily severed its ties with the federation over this issue.

There’s an old saying that “the more some things change the more they remain the same.” May this brief backward glance remind us that the times in which we live are not as unique as we sometimes think and encourage us to address today’s issues boldly and positively, always undergirding all we say and do with the one thing that remains forever the same—the word of our eternal God.

Carl H. Mischke



Pastor Carl Mischke
is president of the Wisconsin
Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

A rich man who made three fatal mistakes

The rich man and Lazarus

Luke 16:19-31

by Mark E. Braun

The best revenge is living well, they say, and the rich man lived well. Purple was the color of kings, linen the priciest fabric of its day. "Livin' large" was everyday stuff. Yet this rich man made three fatal mistakes: he thought his body was more important than his soul, indulging one to the neglect of the other; he thought man was more important than God, presuming he would always be master of his own fate; he thought time was more important than eternity, counting this life for everything and the next one for nothing.

Lazarus? He was laid at the rich man's gate, which must mean he couldn't walk on his own. His body was a mass of sores. He craved (but never received) the rich man's leftovers. Readers sometimes credit the dogs with treating Lazarus better than the rich man did, because they licked his wounds. But these dogs weren't well-bred household pets, but filthy mongrels that roamed the streets. The dogs terrorized Lazarus, and he was too weak to shoo them off.

A reversal of fortune

But when the two men died, an amazing reversal of fortune took place. The angels carried Lazarus to Abraham's side—what a comforting, revealing glimpse of death! Now we pay attention to what "Lazarus" means: "the Lord helps." And now we see that when it comes to all the things that really matter, Lazarus was the rich man.

The rich man died too. But death drastically altered his destiny, for when he woke up he found he was in hell, in torment. And yet he remained the same man he had been; nothing was changed and nothing forgotten. He still considered other people (even people in heaven) lackeys to be summoned at will. He still despised the word of God, no more interested in hearing and doing it now than he had been on earth.

Even what sounds at first like commendable concern for others—"I have five brothers. Let him warn them"—became only another occasion to blame God for his misery. God messed up with me, the rich man implied; he'd better change his tactics or he'd blow it with the whole family.

You can't take it with you

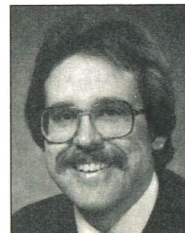
Abraham's answer gives us a penetrating look into the next life: heaven and hell are very different, very separate places, and, unlike the daily bus outing in C. S. Lewis' novel *The Great Divorce*, there's no easy commute from one to the other.

Abraham's answer also gives us a serious lesson in what truly counts in this life. People have the Scripture. They need to listen to it. If they reject it, nothing else will convince them of eternal life—no signs, no wonders, no ghosts, no resuscitated corpses. Martin Luther agreed completely with Abraham, and with Jesus: "The Holy Ghost does not wish to work in us in any other way than through the word and sacraments."

They say you can't take it with you. The story of the rich man and Lazarus illustrates how true—and how false—that statement is. It depends on what your riches are. If your treasure is only what the rich man had—purple and linen and parties every day—they're right; when you die you leave it all behind. But if your treasure is what Lazarus had—the certainty that God is your helper, the Father's grace, the Savior's love—when you die you take it all with you.

The best revenge is living well forever.

Next: The persistent widow.



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

No “new light”

In July, ABC television presented “In a New Light,” a program on AIDS. The stated purpose of the program was to present AIDS “in a new light,” to inform Americans about the AIDS peril. Actress Elizabeth Taylor led off by stating that it was “bad enough to die of AIDS, but no one should die of ignorance.” Another speaker warned the audience that “the most frightening thing in the world is ignorance in action.” ABC was out to dispel ignorance about the AIDS plague.

The program did present various items of information about the spread of AIDS: that by the year 2000 there could be between 38,000,000 and 110,000,000 AIDS victims in the world, that the number of known cases among young women in the US has nearly doubled in the last two years, that the number has increased by 70 percent among teenagers. One in 250 Americans is now infected with HIV. Barry Manilow said he had lost half of his phone book.

Such information had a prime purpose—to convince the audience that AIDS “is everyone’s thing; it isn’t just a gay thing.” Manilow sang “One Voice,” appealing to everyone to “join the cause”—not only to be aware of the tragedy, to show compassion, to assist in combating AIDS—services we owe our fellow man—but also to share responsibility for the epidemic and to share defense of an AIDS-breeding way of life.

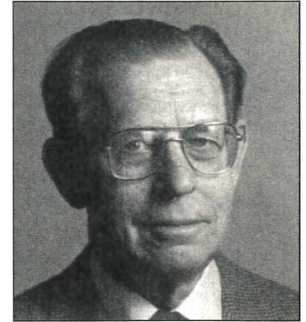
The presentation still left ignorance, even about AIDS statistics. If Liz Taylor and the rest of the cast and the producers of “In a New Light” were really concerned about removing public ignorance about AIDS, why did they not breathe one syllable about such recent statistics as 1992 Centers for Disease Control figures that demonstrate that in the US, homosexual sex is still responsible for 58 percent of reported AIDS cases; intravenous drug use with HIV contamination, for 23 percent; homosexual sex and drug use combined, plus HIV-tainted blood transfusions, for 8 percent. Why did they not disclose the CDC figure (or a similar one) that heterosexual sex was responsible for only 6 percent of AIDS cases? (But even in these cases, who infected these heterosexuals with HIV in the first place?)

When the “In a New Light” cast was calling on the non-gay world to link up with it in the battle against AIDS, they did not enlighten us when they did not distinguish between “guilty” HIV bearers and transmitters, and “innocent” HIV victims. Rather, it appeared that they were inviting non-gays to join their gay parade, perhaps even wearing T-shirts with a message like that worn by a gay marcher: All people with AIDS are innocent.

And no one heard anyone in this “In a New Light” fellowship even suggest that homosexuality is a sin that God unmistakably condemns, that it is a shameful vice of which homosexuals must repent, a vice that desperately needs the saving forgiveness Christ has provided for penitent sinners. Instead, the gay world continues to seek approval and acceptance of its “alternate” lifestyle.

The gay world’s “In a New Light” did not remove ignorance about AIDS; it only confirmed public ignorance about the plague.

Carleton Toppe



*Carleton Toppe,
president emeritus
of Northwestern College,
lives in Watertown, Wisconsin.*

Financial report WISCONSIN EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN SYNOD

NOTICES

Notices are printed in the first issue each month. The deadline for submitting items is five weeks before the date of issue.

NURSING HOME ADMINISTRATOR

Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service, Milwaukee, Wis., is looking for an individual to serve as the administrator of its 161-bed nursing home. WELS membership and the willingness and ability to obtain a Wisconsin license as a nursing home administrator are required. Contact Pastor James C. Berger, Wisconsin Lutheran Child and Family Service, 6800 North 76th Street, Milwaukee WI 53223; 414/353-5000.

WELS LUTHERANS FOR LIFE NATIONAL CONVENTION

The 1992 national convention will be held Oct. 16-17 at St. John, Burlington, Wis. Dr. Janet Lindemann, medical advisor for the national office of WELS Lutherans for Life, will be the keynote speaker. For registration, contact the national office of WELS Lutherans for Life, 1-800-729-9535.

DMLC LADIES AUXILIARY

Dr. Martin Luther College Ladies Auxiliary will meet at DMLC, New Ulm, Minn., October 14. Registration and coffee hour will begin at 9:00 am in Luther Memorial Union. Baby-sitting will be provided for small children. Opening service will begin at 10:30. You may send offerings for projects for the coming year to the treasurer, Mrs. Lorie Enter, Rt 2 Box 198, Nicollet MN 56074.

LWMS RALLY

The Lutheran Women's Missionary Society, Milwaukee Metro-South Circuit, announces a rally to be held October 27 at Trinity, 1052 White Rock Ave, Waukesha. James Kuehl will speak on mission work in Colombia, South America.

ANNIVERSARIES

ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI—Martin Luther (25th) Oct. 25, 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. Anniversary service, 4:00 p.m. Friends and members invited to noon meal and fellowship. Contact Jackie Koopmann, 314/391-6758.

KENTON, OHIO—Grace (40th) Oct. 25, 10:15 a.m. worship followed by meal, program, and fellowship. 419/674-4916 or 673-9286.

FRIESLAND, WISCONSIN—Trinity (75th) Oct. 18, 10:15 a.m. Buffet dinner following. Festival service, 2:30 p.m., fellowship following. Contact Pastor Jonathan Rimmert, Box 26, Friesland WI; 414/348-5189.

NEW BERLIN, WISCONSIN—Star of Bethlehem (25th), Oct. 11, 8:00 and 10:30 a.m. Catered dinner at noon. Contact Pastor John Gawrisch, 414/786-2900.

EXPLORATORY SERVICES

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

Woodbridge/Dale City, Virginia—Trinity. Worship 9:30 a.m.. Sunday school and Bible class 11:00 a.m. Antietam Elementary School, Mile One Antietam Drive, Lake Ridge. Pastor Timothy Unke, 2508 Deepford Drive, Woodbridge VA 22192; 703/491-8080.

ITEMS AVAILABLE

The following are available for the cost of shipping

Backdrop or divider drapes—Two pair wine color, one pair grey color. Pay for shipping. Contact St. Paul Lutheran Church, 315 9th St S, St. James MN 56081; 507/375-3636.

ITEMS NEEDED

Choir robes—We would like to have 12 or more adult choir robes in time for our 25th anniversary in 1993. Contact Resurrection, Virginia Beach VA 23464; 804/420-9652.

Hymnals—Exploratory Mission in Woodbridge, Virginia, needs hymnals. Contact Pastor Timothy Unke; 703/491-8080.

Set of handbells—Contact Paul Prange, 3007 Larson Cove, Austin TX 78748; 512/280-8283.

SYNOD MISSION SUBSCRIPTION PERFORMANCE

Three Months Ended 30 June 1992

Twelve Districts	Communicants 12/31/91	Subscription Amount for 1992	6/12 of Annual Subscription	Offerings Received		
				Six Months Offerings	Percent of Subscription	Average per Communicant
Arizona-California	16,589	\$ 975,174	\$ 487,587	\$ 396,918	81.4	\$ 23.93
Dakota-Montana	9,232	430,195	215,098	153,561	71.4	16.63
Michigan	37,683	2,121,384	1,060,692	800,768	75.5	21.25
Minnesota	46,001	2,503,468	1,251,734	989,368	79.0	21.51
Nebraska	9,817	519,356	259,678	209,465	80.7	21.34
North Atlantic	3,547	345,447	172,723	146,582	84.9	41.33
Northern Wisconsin	62,438	2,458,339	1,229,170	980,566	79.8	15.70
Pacific Northwest	4,434	271,797	135,899	119,879	88.2	27.04
South Atlantic	6,020	408,349	204,174	177,780	87.1	29.53
South Central	3,612	256,344	128,172	132,577	103.4	36.70
Southeastern Wisconsin	57,590	3,288,559	1,644,280	1,265,221	76.9	21.97
Western Wisconsin	60,830	2,850,445	1,425,222	1,160,503	81.4	19.08
Total—This Year	317,793	\$16,428,857	\$ 8,214,429	\$ 6,533,188	79.5	\$ 20.56
Total—Last Year	317,720	\$16,230,568	\$ 8,115,284	\$ 6,215,273	76.6	\$ 19.56

BUDGETARY FUND

Statement of Changes in Fund Balance

	Year Ended 30 June 1992		
	1992 Actual	1991 Actual	1992 Budget
Revenues:			
Synod Mission Offerings	\$15,849,726	\$15,508,165	\$15,620,000
Gifts and Memorials	300,057	345,195	400,000
Bequest/Planned Giving Income	1,145,258	347,546	756,000
Other Income	334,065	93,809	114,000
Transfers — Endowment/Trust Earnings	232,516	225,709	245,000
Transfers — Gift Trust	4,322,279	3,430,672	4,909,000
Transfers — Continuing Programs	822,502	870,309	825,000
Transfers — Other	717,662	120,009	672,000
Total Revenues	\$23,724,065	\$20,941,414	\$23,541,000
Expenditures:			
Administration Division	\$ 2,207,499	\$ 1,879,816	\$ 2,107,800
Home Missions Division	5,645,306	5,479,792	6,337,300
World Missions Division	5,071,852	4,732,139	5,057,700
Worker Training Division	7,050,191	6,785,945	7,120,100
Parish Services Division	1,092,535	954,699	1,196,100
Fiscal Services Division	1,537,958	1,266,379	1,522,000
Total Expenditures	\$22,605,341	\$21,098,770	\$23,341,000
Net Change for the Period	\$ 1,118,724	\$ (157,356)	
Fund Balance — Beginning of Year	\$ (150,376)	\$ 6,980	
Fund Balance — End of Period	\$ 968,348	\$ (150,376)	

Randy E. Matter, Controller

OWLS TOUR

Join us in April 1993 for a tour to New Orleans with visits to Civil War sites and plantations. For more information contact Reuben Feld, W4262 Emerald Dr, Watertown WI 53094; 414/699-3780.

NORTHWESTERN HOMECOMING

Alumni and friends of Northwestern are invited to attend homecoming activities on October 17. The schedule for the day includes brunch in the cafeteria, 8:30-11:30; college soccer vs. Wis. Luth. Sem., 10:00; college football vs. Northwestern of Minnesota, 11:30; prep football vs. Greendale Martin Luther, 2:30; luncheon in the cafeteria, 2:30-6:30.

STUDENT NAMES WANTED

Send names and addresses of students attending Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, or other colleges and universities in the northside Chicago area to Pastor Steve Radunzel, 2238 Central St #1, Evanston IL 60201; 708/864-55320.

TRAVELING CHURCH WORKERS

Bed and breakfast available on lakefront estate 30 minutes from downtown San Diego, 10 minutes from ocean. Hiking trails, quaint village. \$10 per night for church workers, missionaries, choirs. Write PO Box 19, Rancho Santa Fe CA 92067 or call 619/756-2152.

I will title this “a few haphazard reflections on the quincentenary of Columbus’ arrival in the Americas.”

Columbus’ arrival was not a random event. God is in control of this universe. That is one of the insistent motifs of the Scriptures. From the Garden of Eden to the Tower of Babel this was written by the Spirit in capital letters. The New Testament took up the theme. Even a sparrow, Jesus said, does not fall to the ground without the will of the Father. Paul told the famed philosophers of Athens: “From one man God made every nation of men, that they should inhabit the whole earth; and he determined the times set for them and the exact places where they should live.”

God is the master architect of events. To the Galatians Paul wrote: “When the time had fully come, God sent his Son.” It was the almighty God who gathered the strands of history and brought them to a focus on a baby in Bethlehem. The Bible says it: From the creation of Genesis to the gathering of the nations in the judgment of Revelation, God is the Lord of history.

Columbus devoutly embraced this biblical view of the world. In a late work he wrote, “Only 155 years are lacking for the completion of the seven thousand years which would be the end of the world.” Though it is seldom noted in the literature, the ultimate goal of Columbus’ westward passage was Jerusalem. That holy city in the hands of the Muslim infidels must be freed for the second coming of Christ in judgment.

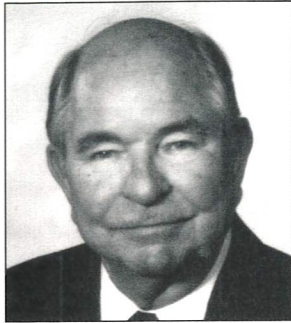
But whatever his noble intentions, Columbus’ landing on the American shores set in motion, says his recent biographer John Noble Wilford, “a history of greed, cruelty, slavery, and genocide.” The prevailing theme in the celebration of the event on its quincentenary is that downside. Russell Means of the American Indian Movement charges Columbus with making “Hitler look like a juvenile delinquent.”

But there is a fairer, more balanced view. Historian Arthur Schlesinger Jr. writes in the *Atlantic* that the record of Columbus “illustrates less the pitiless annihilation of an idyllic culture by a wrecking crew of aliens than it does the criminality of all the cultures and the universality of original sin.”

A noted church historian with roots in our own synod also sees matters differently. Prof. J. P. Koehler, who was president of our seminary in the 1920s, saw the landing of Columbus in the New World as the trigger for one of the most significant religious events since the Emperor Constantine placed the early church under government favor in 313 A. D. That single religious event, noted by Koehler, was the separation of church and state as it exists in the USA, freeing the church from its servitude to the state and its political purposes. That, Koehler said, is America’s great contribution to church history.

In an Old World with its state churches where less than five percent of the people attend church on a Sunday, the USA in the New World must be hailed as the last hope under God for the faith and missionary zeal which drove the early church. Every survey shows that the USA is the most religious country in the world. That is a great blessing—and a grave responsibility.

James P. Schuster



The landing of Columbus in the New World was the trigger for one of the most significant religious events since the fourth century.

The best freedom

In America
 We have freedom.
 Freedom of speech,
 Freedom to travel
 Where we want.
 Freedom to become
 What we want.
 But we are not
 Free from sin,
 Nobody but Jesus is.
 So God sent Jesus
 To win us back from Satan—
 The control of sin—
 A freedom that
 Will last for eternity;
 A freedom much better
 Than man can give—
 Eternal life in heaven
 With God.
 And that is the best
 Freedom for anybody.

*Rachel Moldenhauer
 Good Shepherd
 West Bend, Wisconsin*

I'll see you soon

Oh Jesus, great Jesus,
 You only are my Savior.
 To you I look for everything—
 My life, my light, my all.
 Great love for me brought you here
 To this dark, sin-infested world.
 This is why you died for me.
 What can I do?
 How can I serve you?
 Please, please, oh precious Savior,
 Give me faith to trust in you.
 Give me power to resist sin.
 Give me strength to obey you.
 You give me so much.
 I just want to say
 I love you,
 And I'll see you soon.

*Mark Jorgensen
 California LHS
 Huntington Beach, California*



Lakeside Lutheran High School band and choir of Lake Mills, Wis., received the "Toast of Cherryland" award from the National Cherry Festival in Traverse City, Michigan. Ron Hafmeister, president of the national Cherry Festival, and festival queen Susan Olney presented the award, given for attitude and conduct, to drum majors Judy Rhodes and Melissa Townswick. The band also won marching awards at the Cherry Festival and at the Independence Day parade in Washington, D.C.

Abortion

Some people think abortion is right
 And I often wonder why,
 'Cause it's really worth it
 Just to hear that infant's cry.

This cry would never have been heard
 If the baby hadn't come.
 Even though we're not always ready
 The harm is already done.

People don't always know what to do
 So they leave time to cry.
 Then they think there's no other way
 But to let the baby die.

You could have blessed a family
 With a child they couldn't conceive
 By giving the baby
 So it could have a life to lead.

That's something we all deserve
 Even if we were a mistake.
 So before killing the child
 Realize what's at stake.

Carrie Skogg

TeenTalk is edited by Karen Spencer. Young people ages 12-18 are invited to send brief articles, artwork, photos, or news on teen activities to *TeenTalk*, Karen Spencer, 2297 E 25th Place, Yuma AZ 85365. Include your name, address, school, church, and a self addressed stamped envelope for return.