

# FORWARD



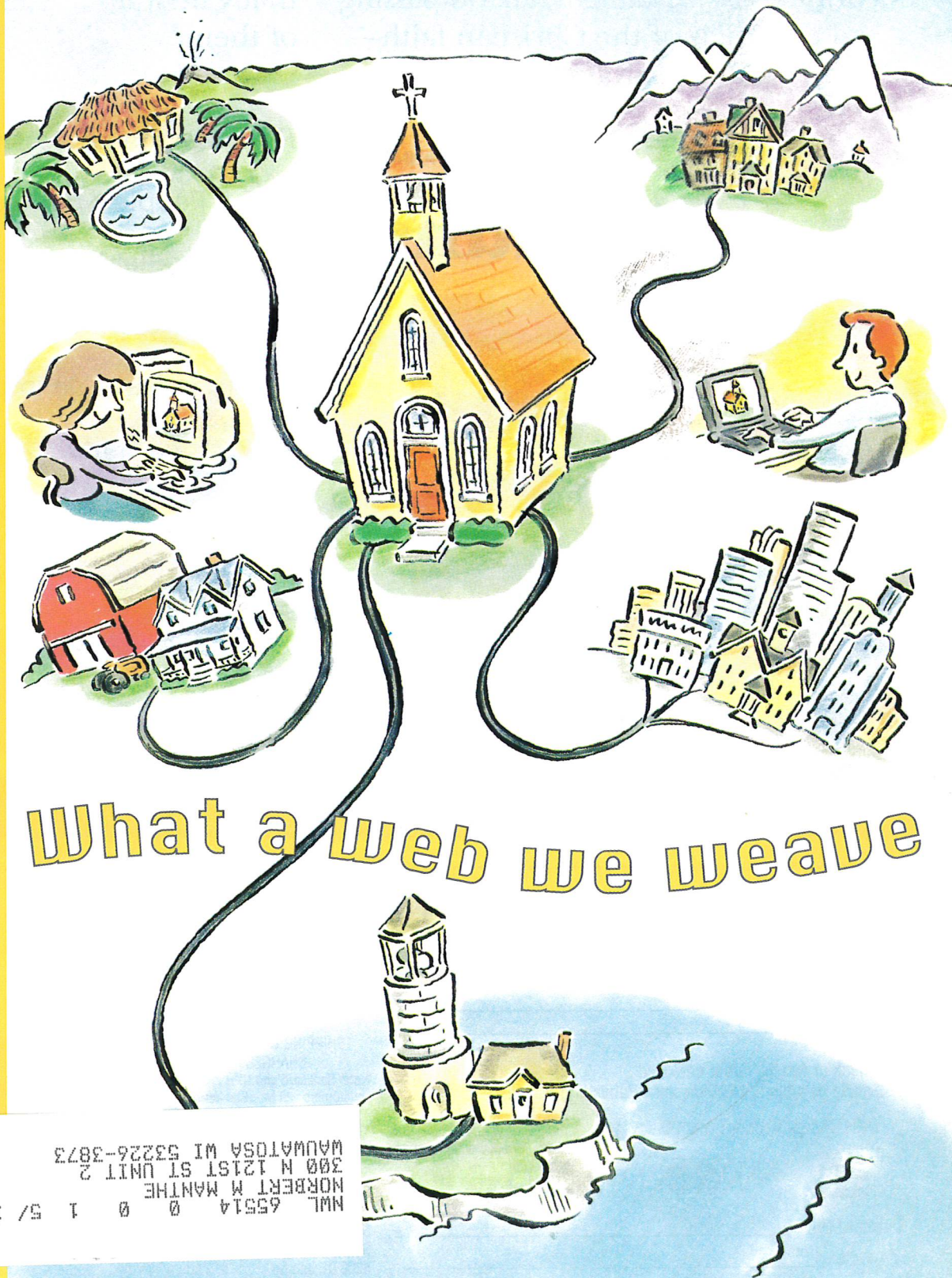
August 1999

Northwestern Lutheran • The Word from the WELS

Grace to you

You can reach other cultures

Trouble all around. Church too?



What a web we weave

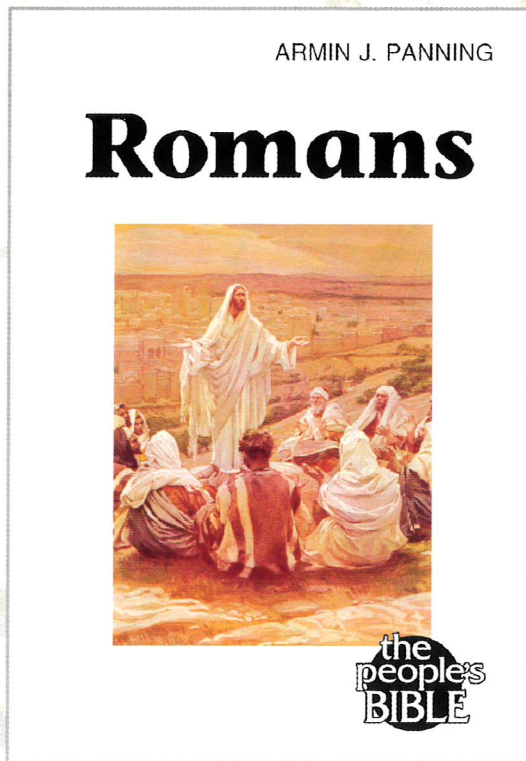
MNL 65514 0 1 5/1  
NORBERT M MANTHE  
300 N 121ST ST UNIT 2  
WAUWATOSA WI 53226-3873



# ROMANS NOW!

Romans isn't just a letter to a few sophisticates of a bygone empire. It's undoubtedly the key doctrinal book of the New Testament, encompassing all essentials of the Christian faith—God's plan of salvation.

Paul's masterful epistle shows us that life's important questions haven't changed in two thousand years and that Christ holds the answers to all of them.



**Romans**, the newest volume in The People's Bible series, offers a reliable, practical, and clear commentary that's certain to leave an impression on your faith life.

*"This work will surely become a WELS classic."*  
—Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary Professor Richard Balge

The People's Bible  
**Romans**  
by Armin J. Panning  
Papercover, 258 pages.  
**LU15N0582, \$11.99**

Order by phone 1-800-662-6022

(Milwaukee area 414-475-6600) 8:00 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. weekdays, online at [www.wels.net/nph](http://www.wels.net/nph), or mail the convenient order form below.

Please place my order for **Romans** from The People's Bible series.

Name (please print) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Daytime Phone (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

- Check or Money Order enclosed  
(make payable to Northwestern Publishing House)
- NPH Charge Account (net 30 days)
- If NPH charge, fill in 6-digit NPH Acct. No.

Bankcard No. \_\_\_\_\_  
Exp. Date \_\_\_\_\_

Stock #	Qty	Book Title	Price	Total
LU15N0582	_____	<b>Romans</b>	<b>\$11.99</b>	\$ _____
		Merchandise Total		\$ _____
		Shipping & Handling*		\$ _____
		Subtotal		\$ _____
		5% Sales Tax—Wisconsin residents		\$ _____
		.6% County Tax—Milwaukee County residents		\$ _____
		<b>Total Amount</b>		<b>\$ _____</b>

\*SHIPPING & HANDLING CHARGES

Note: Bankcard and NPH charge customers will be billed actual postage plus \$1.50 handling.

If order totals	Add
up to \$ 10.00	\$ 3.70
\$ 10.01 to \$ 25.00	\$ 4.80
\$ 25.01 to \$ 50.00	\$ 6.25
\$ 50.01 to \$100.00	\$ 7.90
\$100.01 to \$150.00	\$ 9.40
\$150.01 to \$200.00	\$10.90
\$200.01 and up	\$12.50

We reserve the right to bill you for actual shipping costs when the charges exceed the schedule.

5% Sales Tax—Wisconsin residents  
*Note: 5% on Subtotal required by Wisconsin law*



**Northwestern Publishing House**  
1250 North 113th Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53226-3284



# Beyond our wildest expectations

*The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. 1 Thessalonians 5:28*

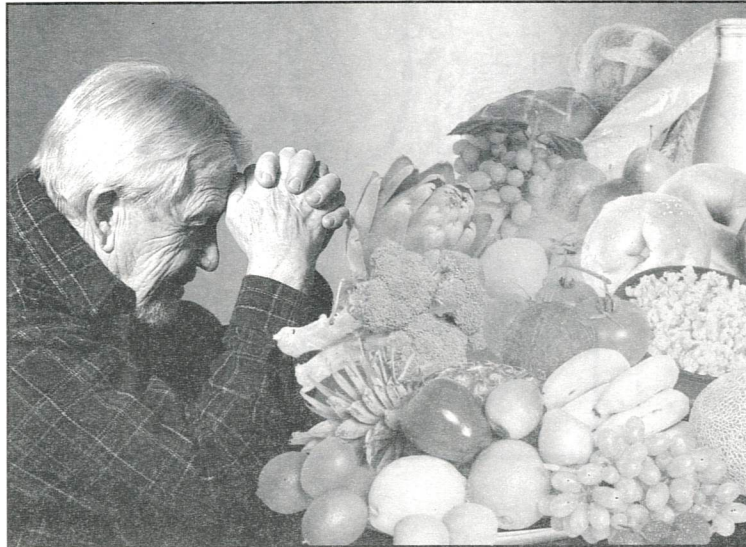
Eric S. Hartzell

If you are scrimping and saving to buy a motor scooter—and you don't have even enough money for that—and someone gives you a Harley Davidson motorcycle, that would be grace. If you longed to have a goose feather and an inkwell of black ink—because you wanted to write and had nothing to do it with—and someone gave you a new computer with the latest Pentium chip and Windows 98, that would be grace.

Grace is something that goes beyond our wildest expectations.

By saying that, we really have defined what it is. It is something that goes much further than what we imagine—or have the capability to imagine. Both Isaiah the prophet and Paul the apostle marveled about grace when they said, “No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him” (1 Corinthians 2:9). Grace!

So I sin and do something that sticks like a splinter in my soul. **I ask for forgiveness and peace.** I ask like David did because my sin is “always before me.” God says, “I will forgive that sin that troubles you. Go in peace. I forgive all the other sins too, even the ones you haven't done yet, even all those future splinters in your soul. In fact,



I have forgiven already all the sins of every man, woman, and child who ever lived, all the collective splinters that formed that massive cross that I carried.” That's grace!

**Grace is something that goes beyond our wildest expectations.**

**I pray, “Give me this day my daily bread.”** In my mind I might even think of the picture of the old man in his plaid shirt praying over his little loaf of bread. I think crumbs and a Spartan day's provisions, and God gives me rich and delicious food and well made clothes that after a while I lug off to charity before they are threadbare. I experience that lovely surprise of presents that I didn't expect, and I get presents at my birthday and at Christmas that I expect but don't really deserve. That's grace too.

It might also happen that I pray, “**Lord, deliver me from this illness.**” I'm thinking of deliverance from pain and discomfort so I can pursue my life here with family and friends. I pray, counting on God's grace that he can surely do what I have asked. But it might be that God's grace being what it is—beyond my wildest expectations—will answer my request by

taking me to heaven. What a wonderful manifestation of God's grace.

I ask for physical healing like someone praying for a scooter or a goose feather, and God forever heals my soul and gives me a resurrected body. I ask for more time here, and he gives me timelessness. I ask for the ability to continue with my family here, and he introduces me to my Father and family there . . . for always and ever.

That's grace! And God gives me the grace to recognize it when it happens.

John said, “From the fullness of his grace we have all received one blessing after another” (John 1:16). Think of the wonder of wishing God's grace on someone, on having the power to proclaim it in benediction on our friends and family.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you!



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



# FORWARD

## Northwestern Lutheran

Official magazine of the  
**Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod**  
August 1999 / Vol. 86, No. 8  
[www.wels.net](http://www.wels.net)

### Editorial office

**Forward/Northwestern Lutheran,**  
WELS, 2929 N Mayfair Rd,  
Milwaukee WI 53222-4398  
FAX, 414/256-3899; <nl@sab.wels.net>

### Editor

Rev. Gary P. Baumler, 414/256-3230  
<garyb@sab.wels.net>

### Senior Communications Assistant

Linda R. Baacke, 414/256-3232  
<lindab@sab.wels.net>

### Communications Assistant

Julie K. Tessmer, 414/256-3231  
<juliet@sab.wels.net>

### Seminary Consultant

Richard D. Balge

### Contributing Editors

J. A. Aderman, W. F. Beckmann, J. F. Brug,  
J. D. Buchholz, J. C. Gerlach, E. S. Hartzell,  
R. K. Hunter, P. M. Janke, M. J. Lenz,  
A. J. Panning, F. E. Piepenbrink, T. A. Westra

### Art Director

Paul Burmeister

### Graphic Designer

Paul Ehlke

### Photographs and Illustrations

Jerry Harders, p. 3  
Dean Lindberg, p. 8  
courtesy of Ken Gast, p. 10  
courtesy of James Hoff, p. 12  
Bruce Bond, p. 14  
courtesy of WELS Kingdom Workers, p. 16  
Ronald Baerbock, Carl Toepel, p. 18  
Gerry Koser, p. 40

### Subscription services

**1-800-662-6093 ext. 8**  
Milwaukee area 414/475-6600 ext. 5

**Northwestern Publishing House**  
1250 N 113 Street  
Milwaukee WI 53226-3284

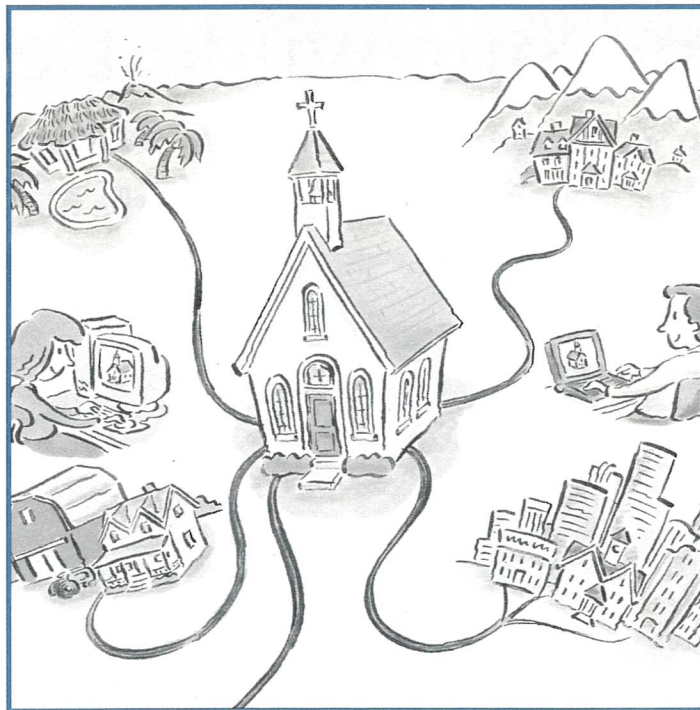
USA—\$9. Canada—\$9.63. Large print—\$24. All  
other countries—air mail \$40; surface mail \$24.  
Write for multi-year, blanket, and bundle rates.

Available on audio cassette  
from Mission for the Visually Impaired,  
559 Humboldt Avenue, St. Paul MN 55107.

*Forward/Northwestern Lutheran*  
(ISSN 0029-3512) is published monthly  
by Northwestern Publishing House,  
1250 N 113 St, Milwaukee WI 53226-3284.  
Periodical postage paid at Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

### POSTMASTER

Send address changes to *Forward/Northwestern Lutheran*, c/o Northwestern Publishing House,  
1250 N 113 St, Milwaukee WI 53226-3284.  
©1999 by *Forward/Northwestern Lutheran*.  
Printed in the USA.



Cover illustration by Dean Lindberg

Learn how  
your church  
can use  
technology  
to share the  
gospel with  
people all over  
the world.

8

## bits & pieces



Reaching all people by all possible means. This month, some of our features focus on how we—as congregations and a synod—are working to share the gospel with all people, in all sorts of ways.

- ✓ **Across cultures**—We are an increasingly diverse nation. As Christians, we need to learn how to share the gospel with our new neighbors. A new series, “Mission and ministry in the new millennium,” will highlight some of our synod’s exciting cross-cultural projects. The first article, “The shifting harvest field,” is on page 10.
- ✓ **Using technology**—Not all outreach is being done face to face. (Although that’s still the best way.) In “Webs of intriguing possibilities” you will find practical tips to help your church discover how to use the Internet to share the gospel. (p. 8)
- ✓ **In the Midwest**—We’re about halfway through the series “WELS in action.” This month you can learn how the young and young-at-heart members of this 127-year-old church in Livonia, Mich., bring the gospel to their community. (p. 12)
- ✓ **Throughout the world**—Our series “Encountering other religions” is like a religion class and a mission trip all wrapped into one. Our WELS missionaries around the world are teaching us what other religions believe and how they bring the truth of the gospel to these countries (p. 18).

—LRB



# features

WORLD WIDE WEB

## 8 Webs of intriguing possibilities

A whole new world awaits the Word from your church.  
*Gary P. Baumler and Julie C. Duran*

MISSION AND MINISTRY IN THE NEW MILLENNIUM

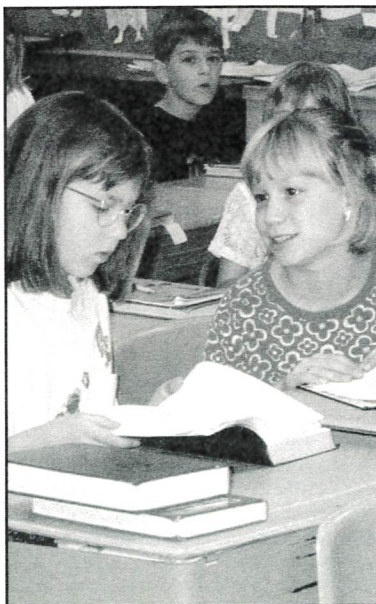
## 10 The shifting harvest field

The Lord has put new people into our neighborhoods so we can share the gospel with them.  
*Kenneth A. Gast*

WELS IN ACTION

## 12 A church like an old, healthy tree

St. Paul, Livonia, Mich., continues to reap the blessings of God's Word.  
*Gary P. Baumler*



12

INSIGHTS

## 14 Church: a refuge or sad refrain?

Exploring how we can have a place to escape tribulation in this life.  
*Rolf Westendorf*

WELS KINGDOM WORKERS

## 16 We can do that

WELS Kingdom Workers provides funds and volunteers to help spread the gospel.  
*Julie K. Tessmer*

ENCOUNTERING OTHER RELIGIONS

## 18 An open door in the Dominican Republic

A missionary shares the challenges and joys of preaching the gospel in a predominantly Catholic country.  
*Ronald E. Baerbock*

PERSON TO PERSON

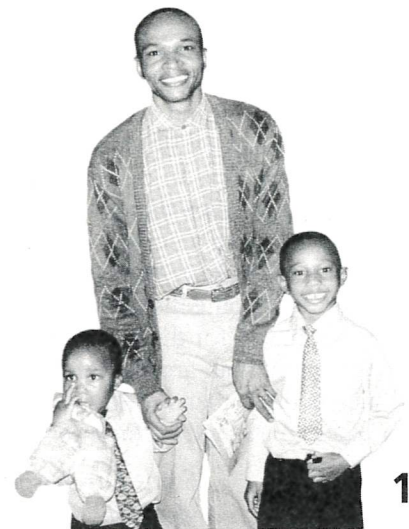
## 35 Back to Calvary, forward in Christ

Forward in Christ means looking heavenward.  
*Karl A. Gurgel*

INSIGHTS

## 40 Take off your mask

You have a friend to whom you can "let it all hang out."  
*Kenneth A. Cherney*



10

# departments

3 THOUGHT FOR TODAY

**Beyond our wildest expectations**

6 READERS FORUM

7 EDITORIAL COMMENT

**Divorce is not an option**

20 INTERACTIVE BIBLE STUDY

21 MARTIN LUTHER COLLEGE GRADUATES

27 WELS NEWS

32 WORLD NEWS

33 BULLETIN BOARD

34 BIBLE STUDY

**Angels at work**

36 YOUR QUESTION, PLEASE

**Doctrines of different denominations**

37 POTLUCK


38 EDITOR'S PEN

**Five million mail-order ministers can be wrong**





**Re: "The faceless believer" [May].**  
As a lifelong, active WELS member I recently relocated and find myself 125 miles away from the nearest WELS church. I found our Web site to be a wonderful addition to the resources that I have to continue to grow spiritually, even though I am physically far from a church family. Not only is the WELS Web site a useful tool for evangelism, but it is also a safe haven for those who want to attend church but are challenged to find means other than weekly church attendance to strengthen their faith.

 Stacy Dirnberger  
Dodge City, Kansas



**Mamas don't let your babies grow up to be . . . lawyerboys, doctorboys, preacherboys, or carpenterboys.**  
This is as absurd as saying, "Mamas don't let your sons

grow up to be cowboys" [May]. "Cowboy" is an honorable and honest profession. To stereotype and classify all cowboys as being less than Christian gentlemen was unfair of Reverend James Aderman to imply.

Christian cowboys are Jesus' boys, Christlike leaders and shepherds. Cowboys are not perfect, but are no less holy or Christian than other men. There are many good Christian cowboys in WELS. They accept others as and for who they are, not by the clothing they wear or the horse they ride or do not ride. Cowboys "ain't" perfect, but everyone falls short of the grace of God.

If a Christian cowboy were the last man standing, they would have to pry his cold, dead, stiff fingers from around his Bible and arms from around his God.

Rick Joy  
Springerville, Arizona

**I took offense to "Don't let your sons grow up to be cowboys."**

I have been a Lutheran all my life. I married a "cowboy" in 1954. We have raised six children, who are all Lutherans today. My husband still ranches beside his "cowboy" son, Michael. My grandson, Michael, will be the fifth generation "cowboy" on our ranch.

Our cowboys are strong and tough, but are also soft and kind! Our cowboys are dedicated to their careers, but they also have always had time for their families. In fact, their families work side by side daily. A cowboy does not stand alone but embraces his family, wife, and children. A cowboy does live by the principles of Christian leadership.

You end your article by saying, "Too many young men grow up to be cowboys." Well, I say, thank God they do.

Margaret L. Perkins  
Chino Valley, Arizona

**I just finished reading "Don't let your sons grow up to be cowboys" and feel I must set the record straight.**

The article was well intentioned and needed today. A fine article. However, I grew up with real cowboys and spent many a day in a saddle on round-up. I sat by the campfire at night and listened to the stories. These were real cowboys with sweatstained hats, faces ruddy and wrinkled from sun and wind, soft-spoken and always friendly. Many are Bible-believing churchgoing family men. Christian gentlemen.

Many Apache men in my congregation in Whitewater were cowboys. I was privileged to know some of the real cowboys . . . like Black Jack Trainor, Pecos Higgs, Walter Williams, Sandy VanWinkle, Sid Earl, Paul Amos—Christians having a simple childlike faith.

Arthur A. Guenther  
Pinetop, Arizona

*James Aderman replies: I thank those who wrote to point out that many*

*American cowboys don't fit the cowboy image frequently portrayed by John Wayne, Clint Eastwood, and the Marlboro Man. At the very least, my article should have clarified that the type of "cowboy" Christian parents will discourage their sons from becoming is the one popularized in American media. My apologies to the many fine Christian cowboys who honorably serve the Savior, his people, and his kingdom in that profession.*

**I am writing in response to concerns that readers raised about Tom Mellon [June],**

the science teacher at Kettle Moraine Lutheran High School. Rest assured that Mr. Mellon's teaching in his outdoor classroom setting is totally related to the Scriptures. He makes kids fully aware of the blessings that the Lord has given us in the environment, but also keeps it in perspective. The general feelings at KML are that Mr. Mellon is one of the best teachers we could have and a blessing to KML.

 Carol Koeppel  
Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin

**Your practice of allowing further explanation by writers in Readers forum is prudent.** I am disappointed that NL did not follow this practice with Tom Mellon when "Creation Appreciation 101" drew some criticism.

Mr. Mellon does not teach "radical, tree-hugging, green ideas that despise technology." He does encourage students to actively practice Christian stewardship of our environment. He does give students an opportunity to exercise their faith by providing common-sense activities.

I have a suggestion: Allow all authors the opportunity to clarify before being criticized publicly in print.

Keith Bowe  
Menomonee Falls, Wisconsin

Send your letters to Readers forum, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398; FAX, 414/256-3899; <nl@sab.wels.net>. Include full name, address, and daytime phone number. Letters are edited for clarity and conciseness. Writers' views are not necessarily those of WELS or Forward/NL.





# Divorce is not an option

Walter F. Beckmann

I just finished reading a book my family gave me for Christmas—Tom Brokaw’s best seller, *The Greatest Generation*. It’s a series of interviews with members of that generation called to fight World War II. My family knew I’d appreciate that book because I’ve often told them how vividly I recall that 1941 radio bulletin about Pearl Harbor.

I wasn’t quite a member of that great generation. I was only eight when the war began. But sometimes I was invited to join their games, especially if they needed a few extra cowboys to form a posse. The time came, though, when those older boys were no longer involved in neighborhood games. They had gone off to serve their country and knew that they were in “for the duration.”

But their sense of commitment wasn’t limited to military service. Those who returned home usually applied that same loyalty to their careers and also to their marriages. “For them,” Brokaw notes, “divorce was not an option.”

I lived next door to a member of that generation. One day he put a football in my hand and said, “Hey, kid, this is how you throw a spiral.” I still have the Japanese invasion scrip he sent me from the South Pacific. When he came home after the war he married a girl from our church. They must just about be ready to celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. I’ve met many members from that generation who’ve enjoyed long and successful marriages. Divorce was not an option.

We can find some marital commitments advocated in another book. The Bible tells us that when some Pharisees were trying to trick Jesus with a question about divorce, he told them, “What God has joined together, let man not separate”

(Matthew 19:6). When they pointed to the divorces Moses had once permitted, he told them that Moses was dealing with people whose hearts were hardened, but that was not how God had created marriage. Divorce was not an option.

Jesus did point out that there was an exception—marital unfaithfulness is scriptural grounds for divorce. Later, through the apostle Paul (1 Corinthians 7:15), he tells us that you’re no longer bound to a spouse who has deserted you. But two exceptions do not change the rule.

Like Israelites in the days of Moses, our society has demanded and received easy divorce laws. Marriage is often treated like a trial subscription to cable TV—if you’re not completely satisfied you can cancel at any time.

But, “til death do you part.” Isn’t that an awesome commitment? What if things get rough? Those who boarded World War II troop transport ships made an awesome commitment. Things often got tough for them, but they were in for the duration.

Remember, marriage is a two-way commitment. Our spouse commits to stay with us, even when the going gets rough, even when we may be the cause of the rough going. If you have the chance, talk to people from that greatest generation who have had the joy and stability of living together for 50 years. They’ll tell you, “In spite of some of the rough times it’s been marital bliss. It’s been the greatest, just as we knew it would be because Jesus told us to do it.”

*Walt Beckmann is the retirement pastor at Grace, Falls Church, Virginia.*

Marriage is often treated like a trial subscription to cable TV—if you’re not completely satisfied you can cancel at any time.



# Webs of intriguing possibilities

A whole new world awaits the Word from your church.

Gary P. Baumler and Julie C. Duran

It's one of those things like VCRs, cell phones, cable TV. You have to decide how soon you're going to join the flow and use the technology. The "thing" is the Internet, and "you" are the local congregation.

But, in this case, we're not talking about entertainment or luxuries; we're talking about a powerful tool to tell the gospel.

## Why the Web?

Maybe you've already said: "Why doesn't our church put up a Web site? Jo Ellen knows something about it and has volunteered to help." Or: "What's happening on our Web site? Is it getting any visitors?"

Slow down, catch your breath, and give serious thought to what a Web site can mean for your ministry. Know why you will have it and how you will use it. Count the costs and the returns. List the reasons.

Do you merely want to give directions to someone who might be seeking a WELS church? Or do you wish to share the gospel on-site with all who visit? Will it be for members or for outsiders or both? What age group(s) do you hope to reach? Why will they visit your site and, more important, return to it?

Yes, there are many questions to answer before you take the cyber plunge. Ill-planned Web sites only sit like cobwebs in forgotten corners, undisturbed and virtually use-

less. Well-planned sites have the potential to snare people from everywhere and give them a virtual look at God's reality.

## Now what?

How do you see the Internet? Do you think of your Web site as a glorified electronic sign board, impersonal, about as effective as a yellow pages ad? If you make it that, it'll get about the same amount of attention.

To get the most out of the Web, see it as a place to establish relationships, to serve real people, to involve visitors in God's truth. Although your Web page potentially can reach thousands of people, it reaches them one at a time. Think of that one person when creating a site: What will get him to visit, to stay a while, to return? How can I help her?

Then, give your visitor something worth staying for. A January 1999 Forrester Research study revealed that 75 percent of visitors return to a site because of strong content. You have the content that people want and need. You have the answers to life's toughest questions. You have true comfort for the sorrowing. You have a means to show people the pathway to God. You have the message of Christ cruci-

fied and risen. You have Christian love and concern for precious souls.

Use what you have. Use it well. Use it with purpose. Keep it fresh. Do only what you do well, always remembering to be relevant.

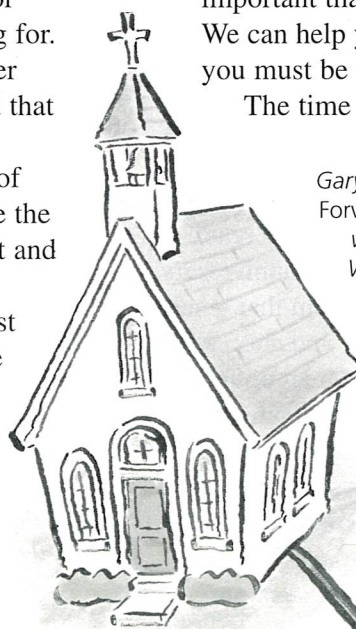
## Go or no go?

So, have you begun to answer the questions and see the possibilities? Is it time to put up a Web site for your church or to improve an existing one?

You need at least one more thing: commitment. If you put up a site and then forget about it, you get cyber cobwebs. Commit to keeping the site up-to-date, interactive, fresh. A site that is not regularly maintained signals that no one is home. It's not what you want for your church, for your Savior, for the person who visits. Commitment is more important than technical knowledge. We can help you with the how-to, but you must be there with the want-to.

The time is now. Are you ready?

Gary Baumler is editor of Forward/NL. Julie Duran is the webmaster for the WELS Web site, <[www.wels.net](http://www.wels.net)>.





## Keys to an active Web site

- 1. State your site's purpose** and keep your central goal in mind. Is it nurture, outreach, information, other?
- 2. Define your audience**, and design a site they can relate to.
- 3. Provide strong, relevant content.** Keep messages brief. Tell stories. Let Christ shine.
- 4. Create relationships.** Give people a means to contact you, and always respond. Serve people. Be interactive.
- 5. Maintain the site.** Update frequently. Sweep away cobwebs.
- 6. Keep the site simple:** quick to load and easy to navigate. Make it intuitive and well-organized. Always give the user an easy way to return to the home page.
- 7. Establish meaningful links.** Connect to <www.wels.net> and to specific pages on the WELS site: e.g., devotions, Bible studies, prayers. Beware of links and banners that may lead to unacceptable material.
- 8. Publicize, publicize, publicize!** Use your bulletin, bumper stickers, church sign, newsletter, public service announcements. Register with appropriate browsers.



## How we can help—six tips to get you started

You need tools to do a good job. Your most important tool is a dedicated worker, with an attitude that learning never ends. Then, a few other things make the job easier.

**1. Speak the language**—A user-friendly HTML program can greatly assist in Web page creation. Many people like a program such as FrontPage or DreamWeaver that “drags and drops” or creates a certain look at the click of a button. But, to solve problems, the webmaster still needs to know HTML basics. Invest in a community college course or an HTML textbook.

**2. Show and tell**—Understand the role of the “provider” and the “presenter.” The content provider brings approved materials to the webmaster, who then presents the content with personality. Your tone, layout, and presentation should be true to your content. A Web site draws people in. The content keeps them there.

**3. The plan**—To get started, surf for ideas. Jot down your likes,

focusing on style, layout, navigation ease, elements of surprise, and interactivity. If you start to squint, get frustrated, or laugh, note why. You’ve just created your “do’s and don’ts” list.

Use the WELS Web design online help guide <www.wels.net/sab/webhelp/web-home.html>. You’ll find resources to develop a tone, design, graphics, and an understanding of HTML coding.

**4. A picture in minutes**—Good pictures improve your site. Free clipart is on the Web. Invest in a digital camera or, for creative types, a software program that lets you create images. Remember, graphics’ sizes add to the overall size of the HTML document. Keep the total count under 100 bytes. Visitors prefer the message, not the wait.

**5. Test it to the limits**—Test, test, test! Everything looks great on the browser you used for design, but nothing may look great on another computer. You may not please everyone, but cover the basics. Test your pages on various platforms, browsers, browser versions, and screen resolutions. Invite visitors to give feedback.

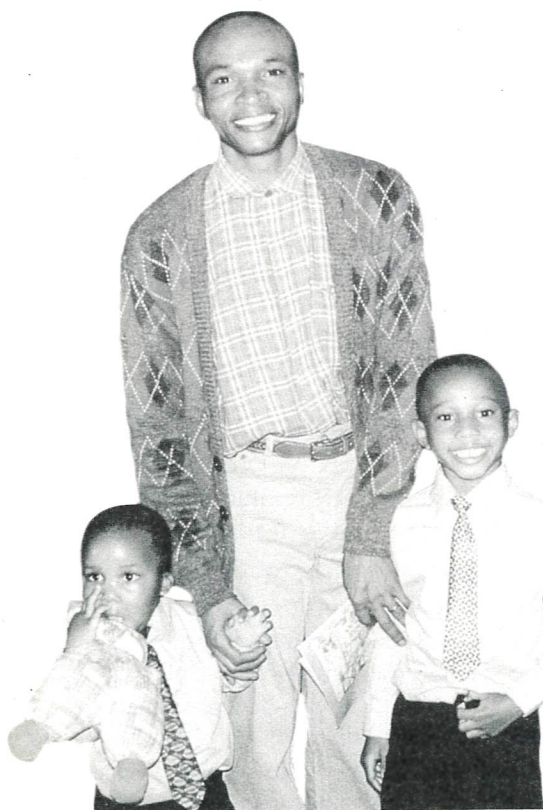
**6. Enter with caution**—Okay, so you really want to do something cool. That’s okay, but remember, the average user isn’t prepared to do “plug-ins.” Besides, one plug-in doesn’t necessarily work on all platforms. Be slow to introduce new technologies because that narrows the scope of your audience.

Test your page on a “computer illiterate” user. If he can figure it out . . . go for it!



# The shifting harvest field

The Lord has put new people into our neighborhoods and communities so we can share the gospel with them.



Julian Nkosi, his son Nhlanhla (right), and grandson Lesedi (left). Nkosi came to the States from South Africa. One day Nkosi attended Eastside, Madison, Wis. There found God's Word, and at the same time, found a truly warm, welcoming family.

Julian Nkosi walked into our church one Sunday morning. He and his family had recently moved to Madison, Wis., from South Africa. "I felt welcome immediately," he said later.

The next week he brought his wife, Kedi, along. They appreciated the gospel message they heard and soon arranged to have their son, Nhlanhla, and grandson, Lesedi, baptized. Julian and Kedi joined the Bible Information Class (BIC) and became members of our congregation.

Vicar Joshua Sternhagen then started witnessing to the Nkosi's teenage daughter, Siphwe, and Kedi's brother, Sello. They joined the next BIC and are now members of Eastside.

Kedi met Lloyd Mkhize at work. Mkhize is also from South Africa. The Nkosis invited the Mkhizes to "come and see." Now Lloyd and his wife, Rejoice, are in the present BIC. Joining them is Lorraine Modjeska from Japan. She came to us to inquire about having her children in our Lutheran elementary school.

## Recognizing the shift

This is typical of the shift taking place in North America. The rural United States, where WELS began gospel ministry some 150 years ago, is moving into the city. The United States is almost 90 percent urbanized. The cities are more and more becoming filled with various cul-

Kenneth A. Gast

tures. Some of these cultures gather as one community within the city. Others are sprinkled throughout the city. Everywhere you look you see people of different nationalities, languages, and cultures. Our melting pot nation is more diverse than ever. We no longer strive to fulfill Jesus' Great Commission to "make disciples of all nations" only by going to those nations across the seas or on to reservations. Those nations have become neighbors, co-workers, and friends.

Recognizing the great opportunity the Lord is placing before us in the changing face of North America, the Board for Home Missions formed a Multi-Cultural Committee (MC2) to study, encourage, and advise on how to share Jesus across cultures. The committee consists of pastors who work in various cultural settings across the country, i.e., Asian, Hispanic, Native American, other world religions, inner city, and urban areas.

## Responding to the shift

The men on the MC2 are ready to consult with missions or established congregations who are working among or have opportunity to work among other cultures but need help on how to reach them. These committee members will provide the future articles in this series.

Materials have also been developed to give direction to this ministry. The book *Change—Mission*



and *Ministry Across Cultures* helps a congregation to determine its willingness to reach across cultures, to determine just who its neighbors are, and to seek information to help it find a way to reach and teach as many as possible with the gospel.

In 1995 the Seeking Our Neighbor Committee was appointed to look more closely into gospel outreach among other cultures. They conducted interviews with people of various cultures and backgrounds throughout the country to obtain their feelings on the subject. Responding to the committee's report to the 1997 synod convention, the delegates strongly encouraged us to step up gospel ministry across cultures and in urban settings.

Since then, the Board for Home Missions has elevated cross-cultural work in its strategic planning. They've approved a Hmong coordinator in the Twin Cities; a missionary to the Vietnamese in Boise, Idaho; and a two-man team for New York City. The Multi-Cultural Committee has been on the streets with the missionaries in several locations. In Miami, Fla., ethnic

interviews with Hispanics were conducted door-to-door in the target area and in a nearby mall. A number of prospects were uncovered, and their names given to Missionary Carlos Leyrer. Gospel ministry across cultures has stepped up, but we have only just begun.

#### **Personal response to the shift**

Many of you, perhaps, do not live in a large city or sprawling urban area, and may feel you have no ministry among people of other cultures. Don't be so sure. There are Hmong in smaller cities such as Manitowoc and Appleton, Wis. I see many Hispanics, Asians, and people of other cultures walk by our church in Madison. One's heart of Christlike love goes out to them because not only are they often in a strange place where they may feel lost and alone, but they also often are lost and alone in sin.

God loved the whole world so that he gave his Son to pay for the sins of all people. Look and you will see people who need your love and the Savior's love. You may see different nationalities and hear different

languages. If you do not see them where you are, may your Christlike compassion for those souls go out to them wherever they live.

Jesus saw a great urgency to reach lost souls of every nation while there is time. As his disciples we feel that same great urgency. There may be no tomorrow for them or us. The Lord put them in our neighborhoods and communities so we can share Jesus with them today. Love them. Speak to them. Pray for them.

Insist also that we as a church body provide wisdom, compassion, money, and manpower to seize the opportunities our Lord is giving us in our local congregations and as a synod. Pray to the Lord to send workers into the shifting harvest fields in North America.



*Kenneth Gast is pastor at Eastside, Madison, Wisconsin. He is chairman of the Board for Home Missions and the Multi-Cultural Committee.*

## **Want to know more?**

- *Change—Mission and Ministry Across Cultures* by E. Allen Sorum is available from WELS Outreach Resources. Call 1-800-884-9312.
- A video series, Bible study, and other materials to help your congregation address cross-cultural ministry will be sent to every church near the end of the year. Keep your eyes open for it.
- For other information on how you can reach out, contact the Board for Home Missions, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222; 414/256-3888.



Coming from South Africa, these people found a new home at Eastside, Madison, Wis. From left: Lloyd Mkhize, Rejoice Mkhize, Kedi Nkosi, Vicar Joshua Sternhagen, Sello Sekana, and Siphwe Nkosi.



# A church like an OLD, HEALTHY TREE

Gary P. Baumler

## St. Paul, Livonia, Mich., continues to reap the blessings of God's Word.

Which of the following is closest to the truth?

- Old WELS churches (over 100 years) have mostly old people.
- Old large WELS churches (over 500 communicant members) are cold and slow to welcome strangers.
- Old large WELS churches are not able to provide personal service.
- All of the above.
- None of the above.

The members of St. Paul, Livonia, Mich., are happy to tell you it's "None of the above" at their suburban Detroit church.

### STILL YOUNG

In January 1872, in a 36-square-mile township with only 800 people, St. Paul held its first service at a farmhouse. Today, homes, churches, shopping centers, and 100,000 people fill the spaces that once housed livestock and grew produce. Pastor James Hoff wonders about those early German Lutheran families and how amazed they'd be to see the change—and their church: "from a kitchen table to a church family of 900 plus!"

Hoff likes to typify St. Paul as "127 years young." "We're like an old, healthy tree," he says, "still lots of new growth every year, yet lots of history and tradition."

What keeps the church young? Both Hoff and his associate, Pastor Eric Steinbrenner, point first to Christ's parable of the Sower and the Seed. Says Steinbrenner, "Here [at St. Paul] I have seen the truth that 'the man who hears the Word and understands it [the seed on the good soil] . . . produces a crop,

yielding a 100, 60, or 30 times what was sown' (Matthew 13:23)."

Says Hoff, "It's been '100 times' for quite a few years around here."

The 100 times increase is seen in the 20 to 30 new families who join the church each year, from five to 10 percent of the congregation. The youth is maintained in part because of job transfers and retirees moving to other areas.

A strong education program also helps keep the congregation young. "My joy as educational leader is to see young families enter our congregation because they want a Christ-centered school for their children," says Ron Brutlag, minister of Christian education. St. Paul's elementary school enjoys a reputation with the community that led the local realty people to list it as "a top provider of private education in Livonia." Adds Hoff, the members know that the "school and church are places where the Holy Spirit teaches hearts and souls through the means of grace."

"Our LES [Lutheran elementary school] is a tool for reaching the unchurched," adds Brutlag. It is in more ways than one. The seventh- and eighth-graders canvass neighborhoods with fliers before holidays.

#### St. Paul

Founded: 1872

Communicants: 727

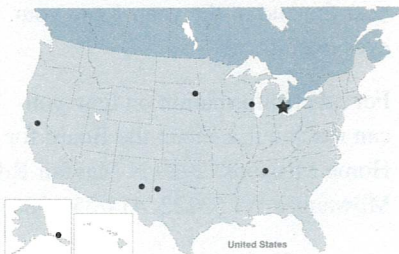
Souls: 975

Pastors: James Hoff, Eric Steinbrenner

17810 Farmington Rd, Livonia

MI 48152-3104

<<http://www.voyager.net/stpauls/>>



★ = featured congregation  
• = congregations already featured



## STILL WARM

Blessings bring challenges. With the flow of new faces, St. Paul works hard to get new members involved. Several members echo that thought: "Helping them to feel active, involved, and helping them grow in their faith is a challenge." It's a challenge that St. Paul people rise to meet. The church has active laypeople—in Bible study, activities, and outreach.

Their faith shows. Says Steinbrenner, "There is a closeness among the people of our congregation. Many visitors and new members have felt at home here from the moment of their first visit. . . . Our members want to bring people to church with them. Our visitors want to come back."

Although the congregation views itself as ever young, it's not a matter of having just young people. As one member puts it, "There are no outward factions. All are working together to spread God's Word." He counts St. Paul as unique in that it is "inter-generational—everyone contributes."



About 70 percent of new members' first contact with St. Paul is through the school, which helps parents teach their children that God is a part of their everyday life. From left: Catherine St. John and Ashley Thomas.

## STILL PERSONAL

In a church with increasing and changing membership, it's easy to lose personal contact. It's said that some people never get noticed in a larger church. However, "St. Paul," says Hoff, "is a big church with qualities much like a small church."

The members help keep it that way by providing adequate facilities and staffing to carry on ministry, including two pastors, a minister of education, a staff minister, and the teaching staff. "There is joy," says Steinbrenner, "in being able to serve people one-on-one, the way Jesus served them, without being pulled away from personal ministry by programs and administration."

This kind of personal touch comes naturally where God's Word produces "100 times" what has been sown. Asked to typify their church, members of St. Paul will tell you: "Our church is a Bible-based, mission-minded church with many caring and friendly members. We have also been blessed with doctrinally-sound, strong, and motivated pastors and teachers eager to share the gospel."

As Steinbrenner says it, "We



St. Paul is an extended family of several generations. Bob and Engla Puckett are among the more seasoned and experienced of those blessed at the church over the years.

don't have any unique programs here. But God's Word is at work in his people."

God's Word is at work because God's people at St. Paul put God's Word to work. Hoff tells us something about the church's priorities in what follows:

"The Lord brings lots of prospects to us via our great location and the great facility that he has allowed us to put together. Two more couples joined the church this past year because they were looking for a place to get married. Our church catches their eyes. We say the same to all inquirers—'God and St. Paul are not just interested in your wedding day. We want to be a part of your married life. Do you have a church? If not, come visit us in worship. See if this is a place where your family can be fed spiritually for the rest of your life. Then we can talk about a wedding day.' You'd be surprised how many come!"

Maybe, but we shouldn't be.



*Gary Baumler is editor of Forward/Northwestern Lutheran and WELS Director of Communications.*



Special music and choirs grace St. Paul worship.



# CHURCH: a refuge or sad refrain?

## Exploring how we can have a place to escape tribulation in this life.

Rolfe Westendorf

“We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God” (Acts 14:22 KJV).

With these words, St. Paul comforted fellow believers who were distressed about the abuse he had endured. The enemies of the gospel had stoned him and left him for dead. But Paul quickly recovered and returned to his brothers and sisters in faith. He was not pretty to look at. We can imagine his friends bursting into tears at the sight of his bloody bruises. Fears for their own safety added to their distress. Perhaps it would be better to abandon the faith, rather than endure such persecution.

With a few simple words, Paul showed the brothers and sisters that such persecution must be expected in a world that is hostile to the gospel. “Don’t think it strange that the world wants to beat the gospel out of you. That’s just the way things are. Remember the goal. Ours is the kingdom of God. Don’t give up the prize in order to avoid temporary tribulation.”

### Tribulation from without

We can’t expect to escape such tribulation either. Christians are no longer stoned to death or crucified in our part of the world. The persecution is more subtle and probably

more effective. When the world promotes the pleasure of sex, and drags our children into destructive adultery, the pain can be more intense and prolonged than bruises caused by a stoning. When friends and family fall away from faith in Jesus because of doctrines that diminish the grace of God and the authority of the Bible, that hurts too.

But Jesus told us that a world that crucified him will not be friendly to his followers, no matter how tolerant and accommodating it may appear. “We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.”

**Our church should be a place where the Word and Sacrament are accompanied by a caring and healing atmosphere.**

When the Bible speaks of tribulation, it most often refers to persecution from the enemies of the gospel. But there is also the tribulation that is more obvious, the suffering that comes with living in a world damaged by sin. Disease and disaster are not necessarily instigated by the unbelievers. They are simply a part of a creation that was corrupted when Adam and Eve fell into sin.

We know that God is in control of these natural tribulations and that he will use them to bless us in his own way. Yet there is much pain to be endured in disease and disaster. It is a part of the tribulation we must expect in a sinful world. But we do not lose heart, for at the end of the dark tunnel is the light of the kingdom of God.

### Tribulation from within

However, one place where the Christian should not expect tribulation is in the family of believers. “The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control” (Galatians 5:22,23). Where the Spirit works in the hearts of believers, there is no tribulation. Instead there is love—love that reflects the great love that God has for us. In a sinful world we can expect tribulation from unbelievers, disease, and disaster, but we should not expect tribulation in church.

Still, we do.

We know from experience that people in the church can be nasty, sarcastic, angry, and resentful company. In fact, sometimes we can find more joy in the company of drinking buddies than in the fellowship of our friends in Christ.

My brothers and sisters, such things ought not to be!

**Tribulation:** Great affliction, trial, or stress; suffering; an



Yet in some cases bickering at church is so common it doesn't seem out of place. Sometimes resentment is carefully nurtured for years, even for generations, and we take it for granted, like moldy cheese in the refrigerator that never gets thrown out because no one sees that it's there any more.

We suffer enough from the enemies of Christ, from troubles of a sinful world. We don't need more trouble when we get to church.

## In some cases bickering at church is so common it doesn't seem out of place.

Rather our church should be a place where we are accepted, loved, and forgiven; where we are appreciated because of the love that God has bestowed upon us; a place where "love covers over a multitude of sins"

(1 Peter 4:8). Our church should be a place where the Word and Sacrament are accompanied by a caring and healing atmosphere, so that believers are encouraged and comforted, and unbelievers become curious about the good things that go on there.

Of course, even the saints are still sinners who carry with them their sinful baggage, also when they come to church. But we don't have to prove that by displaying our inner evil. Rather, "speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by each supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work" (Ephesians 4:15,16).



*Rolfe Westendorf is pastor at Siloah, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.*



experience that tests one's endurance, patience, or faith.



# WE CAN DO THAT

WELS Kingdom Workers provides funds and volunteers to help spread the gospel throughout the world.

Julie K. Tessmer

Whether it's participating in a neighborhood canvass in Florida, teaching English as a Second Language in Japan, building a church in Minnesota, doing maintenance work in Arizona, or financing and producing a video Bible course, WELS Kingdom Workers (WKW) has just four words to say:

"We can do that!"

And then they do it—by informing, encouraging, and coordinating volunteers within WELS and by helping finance unfunded mission programs. This fulfills their overall purpose of helping WELS home and world missions spread the gospel worldwide.

## THE PEOPLE WHO DO THAT

When WKW first met in 1988, they may not have imagined how much they would be doing.

"Twelve years ago the only laypeople I know of who were doing mission work were the nurses in Mwebhezi [Africa]," said David Timm, national executive director of WKW. "Now we're putting 100 or more into WELS mission fields to help out."

These volunteers do everything from helping a mission congregation with vacation Bible school to doing accounting overseas to canvassing by telephone.

"We want our called workers to devote themselves to Word and sacrament and let us, as laypeople, take the responsibilities for being the bookkeepers and maintenance

people, the administrators and gofers," said Timm.

Volunteers can get involved in three different WKW programs. Builders For Christ, in cooperation with the Board for Home Missions, helps congregations with building projects. Faith In Action sends volunteers throughout the United States to help congregations with outreach. The Christian Volunteer Corps organizes volunteers, but focuses on finding people to help our overseas missions.

"We won't work for you, but we will work with you . . .," said Timm. "We want to know that the congregation will be involved—working shoulder to shoulder with the visiting volunteers."

## THE GIFTS THAT HELP DO THAT

Just as volunteers work shoulder to shoulder with congregation members, WKW works closely with WELS home and world mission boards. WKW chooses the projects they support from mission board requests. They then provide funds and volunteers, if needed.

WKW can support so many projects because a foundation matches all donations. The foundation also covers WKW operating expenses and gives grants for programs to help with hands-on gospel outreach.

This year these programs include *Mission Connection*, home and world missions' quarterly publication; *Communicating Christ*, a law/gospel video Bible course in


many languages; the Mission Information Center, a clearinghouse of information about WELS missions; and *WELS Kids Connection*, a video series for youth.

WKW tries to limit their financial support of each project to three years. "It's not a matter of not wanting to do the projects anymore, but getting the responsibility placed at the right location," said Timm. After three years, the projects become self-supporting, are put in the mission board budget, or are discontinued.

This year WKW has committed almost \$800,000 to mission projects, and the requests for next year for volunteers and funds are going up. Timm sees this as one of their biggest challenges. "We need to keep pace with the growth and do it responsibly."

And he knows they can do that.

"We've had some years in the past, like this year—where we had more than double the requests. At first I think, 'Are they crazy? We can't do that,' and my knees start to shake. But then I think, 'We can do that.' Everytime I've thought 'This is too much,' the Lord embarrasses me, and the gifts come in at an unbelievable rate."

Because the Lord helps them do that. 

Julie Tessmer is the communications assistant of Forward/NL and WELS Communication Services.

For more information about WELS Kingdom Workers or WKW area chapters, contact them at 2401 N Mayfair Rd Ste 204, Wauwatosa WI 53226; 414/771-6848 or 1-800-466-9357; <kingwork@kwk.wels.net>.





Heidi Loescher (far left, standing) and Anne Press (fifth from left, standing) came to Thailand in 1997 as WELS Kingdom Worker volunteers. They assist Missionary Rob Meister (third from left, standing) by teaching English to high school and college students, teaching songs, playing games, doing crafts, and witnessing their faith with children at a nearby children's home.

Seventh- and eighth-grade students from Centennial, Milwaukee, stock food pantry shelves at Lutheran Southside Ministries, a program funded by WELS Kingdom Workers (WKW) that brings the gospel to Milwaukee's central city.

Teenagers, college students, families, and retirees help U.S. congregations with outreach through Faith In Action. Opportunities include canvassing, follow-up calls, assisting with VBS, doing maintenance work, and filling in as mission assistants.

"The romance is to go overseas. But few people can actually do that," said Dave Timm, national director of WKW. "But the people who can work here in the United States—who can jump in their car and spend their vacation helping with vacation Bible school or with a mission congregation's outreach—that's real." Real to the tune of having 350 people involved this year, 220 of them college students serving during their spring break.

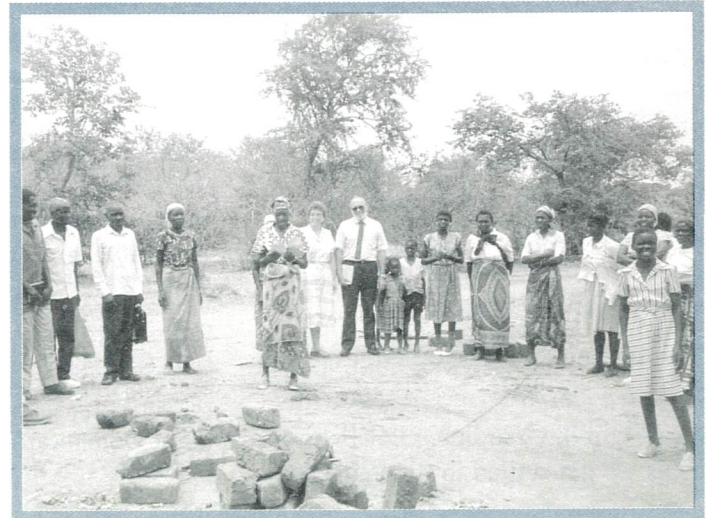


Members of Builders For Christ (BFC) helped St. Matthew, Port Washington, Wis., build their church in 1998. BFC provides volunteers to help build facilities at reduced cost.

WELS Kingdom Workers took over BFC in 1994. "We had this naive opinion that we would keep this BFC under control so we wouldn't overwhelm the Christian Volunteer Corps," said Timm. "That was like putting a cap over a geyser." What started out in 1994 as three project managers and 60 workers turned into nine project managers and over 400 workers in less than five years.

Herman and Lorraine Koester (center) and the Kamumba congregation in Malawi in 1988. The Koesters were the first WELS Kingdom Workers' laycouple to go to Africa. Herman was "Mr. Fix-it" on their compound, and Lorraine helped with administration and bookkeeping.

The Christian Volunteer Corps organizes volunteers for church work, especially in world missions. In 1999, 50 volunteers are teaching English as a Second Language, Sunday school, and Bible classes; canvassing; doing maintenance work; serving as accountants; and helping in areas such as Japan, Malawi, Bulgaria, Colombia, and the Arizona Apache mission.





# An open door in the

## A missionary shares the challenges and joys of preaching

Ronald E. Baerbock

**H**ave you gone to a party dressed casually only to find that it was a formal party? Remember the strange looks you received? You felt out of place and a bit uncomfortable, didn't you?

In August 1993 we arrived in the Dominican Republic on behalf of WELS to establish the first Lutheran church in this country of eight million people. It was like going to a formal party dressed casually. We felt out of place.

Why? The Dominican Republic is very Catholic. Anywhere from 80 to 94 percent (depending on whose statistics you believe) are members of the Catholic Church. In the 1981 census, 97 percent of the population designated Catholicism as their religion. Looking back over the past six years, we see the obstacles and challenges we have contended with while working in such a Catholic country.

Also, we have seen tremendous opportunities as the Lord fulfills his promises made through the prophet Isaiah: "So is my word that goes out from my mouth: It will not return to me empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it" (Isaiah 55:11).

### The obstacles and challenges

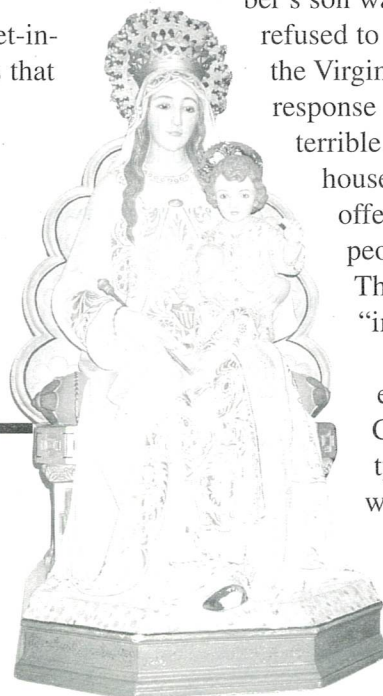
"Vaya con la Virgen" ("Go with the Virgin"), Grandma tells all 12 of us as we get settled in the Pathfinder

for the trip back to Santiago from Jarabacoa. We had just finished a class on the First Commandment where we spoke about serving God only. It had been made clear that the worship of saints and the *Virgen de Alta Gracia* is idolatry and a sin against the First Commandment. Yet Catholicism had been so ingrained in Grandma that she never thought twice about sending us on our way with the blessing of the Virgin.

So it is with most people. The Sunday school teacher who shows up to teach her class wearing an amulet of the Virgin is not uncommon. It was such a habit that she never thought twice before putting it on. She now wears a cross with the figure of Christ that her pastor purchased for her.

One of the most set-in-concrete traditions is that of the *Vela* and the *Velorio*, which takes place at a death. People are generally buried the day after they die. For eight days, friends and relatives gather at five o'clock. They

This statue is located at the temple of the Virgin Mercedes at Santo Cerro (Holy Hill). Catholicism and worshipping the Virgin is prevalent in the Dominican Republic.



recite the rosary and plead with God to open the door for the departed. "Salvation by works" is so evident at the *Velas*. It is sad to see the lack of comfort at these gatherings. After the eight-day period, the people come together once a month for a year then once a year for seven years. But the message is the same—salvation by works. The sadness is the same—the lack of belief in salvation through faith in Christ Jesus.

Our members are affected. In this third-world country, the mortality rate is high. Almost weekly, members feel constrained to go to these neighborhood *Velas*. What will people say if they do not go, or if they go and do not participate? A member's son was killed, but the family refused to place a large picture of the Virgin over his casket. The response of many was: "Some terrible disaster will strike your house because you have offended the Virgin." Our people are under pressure. They themselves are still "infants in the faith."

Then there is the government. The Catholic Church is a political entity and closely linked with the government. To buy votes a couple of years ago and seal his reelection, the president promised to donate all of his



# Dominican Republic

the gospel in a predominantly Catholic country.

wealth to the Catholic Church at his death. He won the election!

Our mission is not able to legally perform marriages. Only the Catholic Church can do that. One year ago, *La Iglesia Luterana Cristiana Confesional*—our WELS churches in the Dominican Republic—deposited the proper papers for registration with the government. Our lawyer keeps checking. We hear nothing.

Then there are fathers. Most fathers do not go to any church, not even the Catholic Church. Yet, because of their upbringing, they demand that children go to catechism class at the Catholic Church. Antonia was an original member and comes regularly with her two girls. But Dad insisted they go through the Catholic catechism class. The general feeling is that one needs to have some link to the Catholic Church, which is considered the only legitimate church, to get to heaven.

## The opportunities and open doors

In Revelation 3:8, the Lord gave much joy to the church in Philadelphia with these words: "I have placed before you an open door that no one can shut." So it is in the Dominican Republic. Politics, the lack of the gospel, and the neglect of the spiri-



Pastor Ron Baerbock (right) in the *Los Tres Brazos* area of Santo Domingo. He stands next to Ana Felicia Santo, who was recently confirmed. All five of her children have also been baptized. There are 125 baptized members in our Dominican Republic churches (1998 *Statistical Report*).

tual needs of the people have thrown open the doors of opportunity for us. The Catholic Church will not baptize unless you follow a long procedure and have several birth documents, which many people do not have the money to acquire. But people are eager to baptize their children. In the new area of *Los Tres Brazos* we have baptized some 40 children in six months. What joy there is at the throne of God to have these new little souls in the Lord's Kingdom. But many still are unbaptized.

As Victoria, a young mother, told me recently, "I had no idea why Jesus came to earth and why he died until studying the Scriptures in your church." What joy and peace she now has. The spiritual bankruptcy is so complete and the spiritual hunger so great that a Bible class in a home almost always guarantees a full

house because neighbors also come. They in turn invite others.

Did I say that 80 to 94 percent of the people are Catholic? I didn't tell you that only about 40 percent are practicing Catholics. Even with many evangelical groups working in the country, that leaves millions as unchurched or, should we say, future prospects. People often think that preaching Christ crucified in a heavily Catholic country is an

unsuccessful drudgery. Think that no longer. A deep spiritual hunger opens so many doors "that no one can shut," as the Lord assures us.

The road is not without bumps for these new infants in the faith. They have the pressures of friends. Many young members have pressures from parents. There are the *Velas* every week. The Virgin still is positioned above the statue of Christ in the Catholic Church in Santiago. There is a national holiday celebrating the "day of the Virgin." We need to include these new Christians in our prayers as they head down that bumpy road. Here on the field we will continue to arm them with "the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God."

Ronald Baerbock is a missionary in the Dominican Republic.







# Inter-Act

"The Word of God is living and active."—Hebrews 4:12

## Introduction

In 1875 a French painter dictated a letter to his fiancée. It was possibly the longest—and simplest—love letter ever written. The letter contained the phrase "I love you" 1,875,000 times—a thousand times the calendar year of the date. The man could simply have instructed the scribe he hired to write the sentence 1,875,000 times. Instead he dictated it word for word and had the scribe repeat it verbatim. Altogether, the phrase "I love you" was uttered orally and in writing 5,625,000 times.

How often have you said, "I love you" to someone close to you? A thousand times? Ten thousand times? More?

How often have you said, "I love you" to God?

## I. Text

Read 1 John 4:7-12:

<sup>7</sup>Dear friends, let us love one another, for love comes from God. Everyone who loves has been born of God and knows God.

<sup>8</sup>Whoever does not love does not know God, because God is love.

<sup>9</sup>This is how God showed his love among us: He sent his one and only Son into the world that we might live through him. <sup>10</sup>This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. <sup>11</sup>Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. <sup>12</sup>No one has ever seen God; but if we love one another, God lives in us and his love is made complete in us.

## III. Application

1. Over 30 years ago, a popular song said, "What the world needs now is love, sweet love." How does the world's view of love differ from God's view?
2. We find it relatively easy to love a well-disciplined child, a loving spouse, a fair-minded employer, a pleasant neighbor, etc. How is it still possible to love when the opposite is the case?
3. Agree/Disagree: Saying "I love you" means nothing unless it is backed up by action.
4. Think of a specific way in which you can show love today to a family member, a neighbor, a co-worker, and a stranger. Are great and noble actions always necessary, or can your words, your facial expression, and even your body language accomplish the same thing?
5. Is it ever possible to be too loving toward others?

## II. Questions

1. How many times does the word "love" in its various forms occur in 1 John 4:7-12 above? Why does John mention the word "love" so often? What clue does John's constant reference to himself in his gospel (e.g., 13:23) give?
2. God loves, but John also says that "God is love." What does this add to your understanding of love?
3. The kind of love of which John speaks does not love because another is so desirable or can do something in return. Rather it is undeserved love to those who are loveless and pitying love to those who can do nothing to save themselves. It is God's love to sinners. How are we able to show this kind of love?
4. For what two reasons did God send his Son into the world? What is the significance of each of the reasons?
5. Why are we to "love one another"?
6. How is the invisible God seen in this world?
7. If God's love is complete and perfect in itself, how can it be "made complete" in us? ("Made complete" can be understood in the sense of "reach full expression.")

## IV. Prayer

Father, your love to me is wonderful and amazing! I have not loved you and others as I should. Yet you loved me so much that you sent your only Son to be the atoning sacrifice for my sins. You have given me life through him. Help me love others as you have loved me. Cause others to see your great love in my words and actions. Amen.

*Mark Lenz is a professor at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota.*





# Martin Luther College

One hundred thirty-six people graduated from Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., on May 15. Those receiving Bachelor of Science degrees were in the teacher track. Men who received Bachelor of Arts degrees were in the pastor track.



**Kollin L. Adickes** ▲  
Chino Hills, Calif.



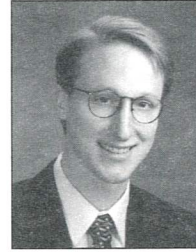
**Tamara A. Aita** ▲  
Grosse Pointe Park, Mich.



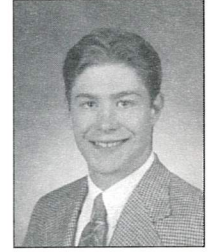
**John D. Backus** ◆  
Hemlock, Mich.



**Kimberly M. Baldwin** ▲  
Silverwood, Mich.



**Steven F. Bauer** ◆  
Great Falls, Mont.



**Jonathan F. Bergemann** ◆  
Wauwatosa, Wis.



**Jay W. Bickelhaupt** ◆  
Fond du Lac, Wis.



**David F. Bivens** ◆  
Mequon, Wis.



**Benjamin E. Blumer** ◆  
Orlando, Fla.



**Bethel K. Bode** ▲  
Delano, Minn.



**Jamie L. Boehm** ▲  
Racine, Wis.



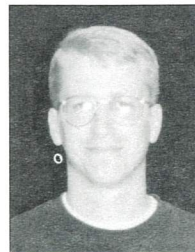
**Sarah J. Boese** ●  
New London, Wis.



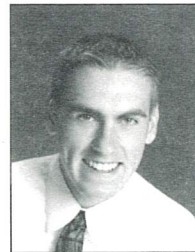
**Julie A. Boomsma** ■  
Huron, S.D.



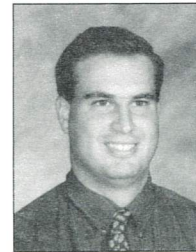
**Samantha J. Brandt** ▲  
Readfield, Wis.



**Patrick L. Brown** ◆  
Fort Atkinson, Wis.



**Jason D. Busse** ▲  
Franklin, Wis.



**Michael S. Chappell** ●  
Orange Park, Fla.



**John K. Cook Jr.** ◆  
Milwaukee, Wis.

- ◆ Bachelor of Arts
- \* Seminary Certification Program
- ▲ Bachelor of Science in Education—Elementary Education
- Bachelor of Science in Education—Secondary Education
- Bachelor of Science in Education—Early Childhood Education
- X Bachelor of Science in Education—Elementary Education and Staff Ministry



# MLC graduates



**William L. Cornelius \***  
Madrid, Neb.



**Chad M. Czerwan ●**  
Kingsford, Mich.



**Barbara J. Darling ▲**  
Saginaw, Mich.



**Rebecca K. Daup ▲**  
Adrian, Mich.



**Eugene M. DeVries \***  
Ontario, Calif.



**Deanna R. Diener ▲**  
Milwaukee, Wis.



**Angela R. Duin ▲**  
Watertown, Wis.



**Annaliese J. Endorf ●**  
Juneau, Alaska



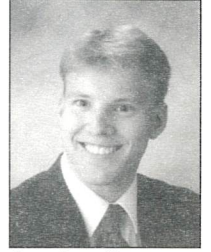
**Abraham M. Enter ▲**  
Nicollet, Minn.



**David E. Ernest ◆**  
Carlisle, Pa.



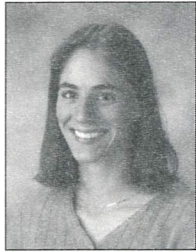
**Jason W. Ewart ◆**  
Broken Arrow, Okla.



**Jonathon C. Floerke ●**  
Fort Atkinson, Wis.



**Matthew D. Foley ●**  
Garden Grove, Calif.



**Mary L. Geiger ▲**  
Belmont, Calif.



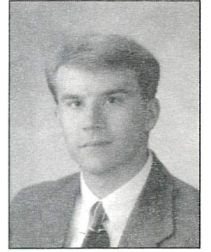
**Aubrey L. Gentz ▲**  
Juneau, Wis.



**Justin D. Gosch ◆**  
Aberdeen, S.D.



**Charles R. Greenley ◆**  
Appleton, Wis.



**James S. Groth ●**  
Manitowoc, Wis.



**Matthew J. Grow ●**  
Appleton, Wis.



**Brigetta K. Guelker ■**  
Roy, Wash.



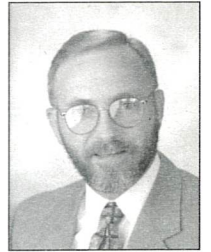
**Brian K. Haack X**  
Fond du Lac, Wis.



**Joel T. Haar ◆**  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada



**Steven A. Hahm ◆**  
Grafton, Wis.



**Mark D. Hanna \***  
Van Vleck, Tex.



**Jennifer L. Hartzell ▲**  
New Ulm, Minn.



**Jennifer M. Hein ▲**  
Saginaw, Mich.



**Matthew R. Herbst ▲**  
Bay City, Mich.



**Carrie L. Herlich ▲**  
Manito, Ill.



**Kurt A. Herrel ▲**  
Haven, Kan.



**Valerie L. Honerbrink ▲**  
Minneapolis, Minn.





**Brian J. Humann ▲**  
Edmonds, Wash.



**Macord A. Johnson ▲**  
Mankato, Minn.



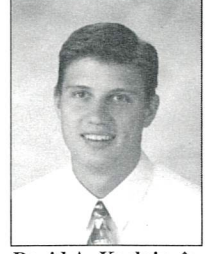
**George D. Kellermann ▲**  
White Bear Lake, Minn.



**Kevin L. Klug ▲**  
New Ulm, Minn.



**Amy M. Knurowski ▲**  
Princeton, Wis.



**David A. Koelpin ◆**  
Tucson, Ariz.



**Mary E. Koelpin ▲**  
Tucson, Ariz.



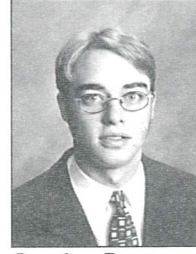
**John F. Korthals ◆**  
Mequon, Wis.



**Benjamin K. Kratz ◆**  
Oak Creek, Wis.



**Brian A. Krueger ◆**  
Hartford, Wis.



**Jonathan P. Kruschel ◆**  
New Berlin, Wis.



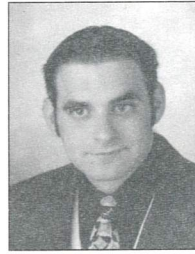
**Joanne M. Kumbalek ▲**  
Sun Prairie, Wis.



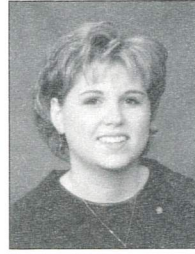
**Elisabeth C. Loftin ●**  
Houston, Tex.



**Craig H. Lokensgard ◆**  
Lafayette, Minn.



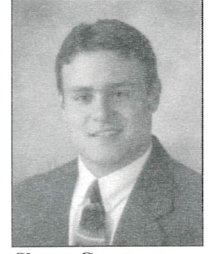
**Jonathan J. Lorenz ◆**  
Indianapolis, Ind.



**Sarah M. Lowery ▲**  
Rapid City, S.D.



**Jamie C. Luehring ▲**  
Appleton, Wis.



**Shaun C. Luehring ●**  
Appleton, Wis.



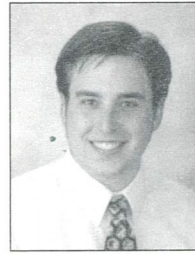
**J. Anna Luetke ▲**  
Olivia, Minn.



**Mark T. Luetzow ◆**  
Watertown, Wis.



**Chad T. Marohn ●**  
Appleton, Wis.



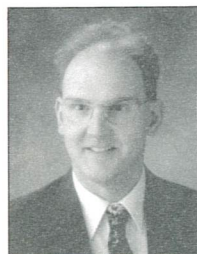
**Corey E. Marohn ▲**  
Appleton, Wis.



**April D. Marquardt ▲**  
Colgate, Wis.



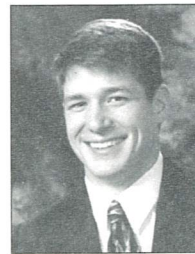
**Sarah E. Meyer ●**  
Milwaukee, Wis.



**David C. Mielke \***  
New Ulm, Minn.



**Shiloh M. Monday ◆**  
Hartford, Wis.



**Aaron T. Mueller ◆**  
Ixonia, Wis.



**Kari A. Muent ●**  
West Bend, Wis.



**Charissa M. Neumann ▲**  
Melstone, Mont.



**Barbara J. Noon ▲**  
Eagan, Minn.

- ◆ Bachelor of Arts
- \* Seminary Certification Program
- ▲ Bachelor of Science in Education—Elementary Education
- Bachelor of Science in Education—Secondary Education
- Bachelor of Science in Education—Early Childhood Education
- ✕ Bachelor of Science in Education—Elementary Education and Staff Ministry



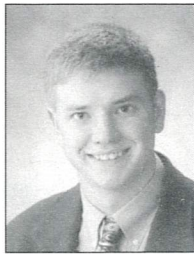
# MLC graduates



**Thomas M. Oakes \***  
Milwaukee, Wis.



**Rachel E. Oblinger ●**  
Green Bay, Wis.



**Karl W. Paulsen ◆**  
New Ulm, Minn.



**Eric A. Pelzl ◆**  
New Ulm, Minn.



**David J. Peter ●**  
Manitowoc, Wis.



**Gary A. Pufahl ◆**  
Lake Mills, Minn.



**Sarah A. Randall ▲**  
Sioux Falls, S.D.



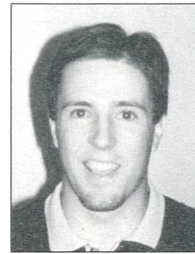
**Sarah A. Rautenberg ▲**  
Fond du Lac, Wis.



**Trevor J. Reader ●**  
Appleton, Wis.



**Maria R. Reese ▲**  
Goodhue, Minn.



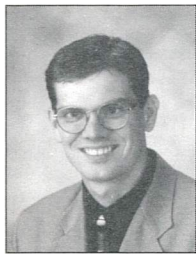
**Shawn B. Riesop ▲**  
Whiteriver, Ariz.



**Jason M. Rimmert ▲**  
Friesland, Wis.



**Christy A. Rodmyre ▲**  
Des Moines, Wash.



**Ryan N. Roth ▲**  
Fort Atkinson, Wis.



**David M. Ruddat ◆**  
Manitowoc, Wis.



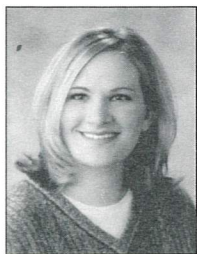
**Angela R. Scharf ▲**  
West Allis, Wis.



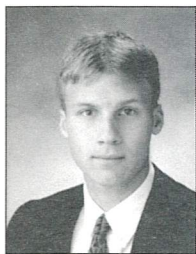
**Kristen L. Scharf ▲**  
New Ulm, Minn.



**Melinda M. Scharlemann ▲**  
Waldorf, Minn.



**Jody L. Schmidt ▲**  
New Ulm, Minn.



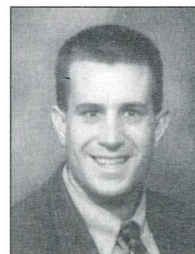
**Caleb C. Schoeneck ◆**  
Federal Way, Wash.



**Anne M. Schroeder ●**  
Plymouth, Mich.



**Annette F. Schultz ▲**  
Mankato, Minn.



**Stephen P. Schultz ▲**  
Waukesha, Wis.



**Joni R. Schuman ▲**  
Sun Prairie, Wis.



**Melissa M. Schupmann ▲**  
Aurora, Ill.



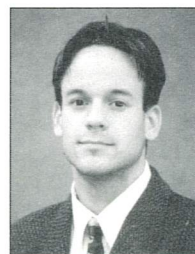
**Kristin M. Siekert ▲**  
Milwaukee, Wis.



**Matthew P. Sonntag ●**  
Alpine, Calif.



**Deneal M. Sperle ●**  
Bison, S.D.



**Timothy J. Spiegelberg ◆**  
Grand Junction, Colo.



**Kris K. Springstroh ●**  
Appleton, Wis.

Not pictured

**Jason J. Beyer ▲**, Algoma, Wis.; **Scott D. Indahl ●**, La Crosse, Wis.;  
**Mark L. Kjenstad ●**, Aberdeen, S.D.; **Christa J. Zanto ▲**, Eden Prairie, Minn.





**Valeria V. Stchetinina** ▲  
Moscow, Russia



**Nicole A. Stellick** ▲  
Crete, Ill.



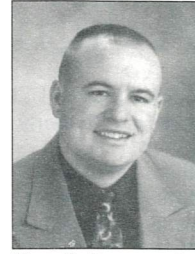
**John L. Sulzle** ◆  
Wautoma, Wis.



**Nathan O. Sutton** ◆  
New Ulm, Minn.



**Chrystal M. Sveom** X  
Fort Atkinson, Wis.



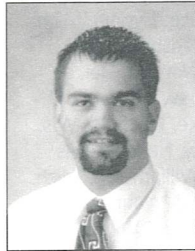
**Troy S. Swenson** ◆  
Neenah, Wis.



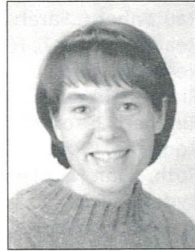
**Bonnie L. Timm** ▲  
New Ulm, Minn.



**Sarah J. Troge** ▲  
Kaukauna, Wis.



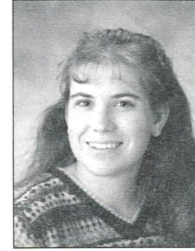
**David J. Uhlhorn** ●  
New Ulm, Minn.



**Kathy L. Underwood** ▲  
W. Baraboo, Wis.



**Frank C. Van Brocklin** ▲  
New Ulm, Minn.



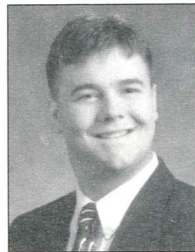
**Jacqueline H. Vetting** ▲  
Grand Chute, Wis.



**Joel D. Walker** ▲  
Tucson, Ariz.



**Megan J. Walker** ▲  
Bloomer, Wis.



**Chad G. Walta** ◆  
Lake Mills, Wis.



**Paul F. Welke** \*  
Sleepy Eye, Minn.



**Sarah B. Wenzel** ▲  
Riverside, Calif.



**Amy M. Werner** ▲  
Belle Plaine, Minn.



**Erich W. Westphal** ◆  
Colgate, Wis.



**Ryan D. Willis** ▲  
New Ulm, Minn.



**Christian J. Winkel** ◆  
Thiensville, Wis.



**Sarah J. Wolfrath** ▲  
Hortonville, Wis.



**Sarah A. Zahrt** ▲  
Richardson, Tex.



**Seth J. Zimmerman** ●  
Sanborn, Minn.

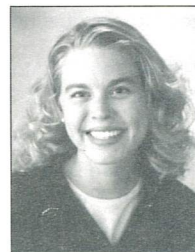
## December 1998 MLC graduates



**Martin G. Berg** ●  
Appleton, Wis.



**Ruth N. Herrmann** ▲  
Sheboygan, Wis.



**Sarah E. Bilitz** ●  
Burlington, Wis.



**Ryan J. Rathje** ▲  
Port Huron, Mich.



**Ruth E. Schluesener** ▲  
Utica, Neb.

- ◆ Bachelor of Arts
- \* Seminary Certification Program
- ▲ Bachelor of Science in Education—Elementary Education
- Bachelor of Science in Education—Secondary Education
- Bachelor of Science in Education—Early Childhood Education
- X Bachelor of Science in Education—Elementary Education and Staff Ministry



## Assignments

**Adickes, Kollin L.**, St. Mark, Watertown, Wis.  
**Baldwin, Kimberly M.**, Centennial, Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Bilitz, Sarah E.**, St. Paul, East Troy, Wis.  
**Birling, Jennie M.**, St. John, Montello, Wis.  
**Bode, Bethel K.**, First German, Manitowoc, Wis.  
**Boehm, Jamie L.**, St. Peter, Schofield, Wis.  
**Boese, Sarah J.**, California LHS, Wildomar, Calif.  
**Brandt, Samantha J.**, St. Paul, Algoma, Wis.  
**Busse, Jason D.**, Trinity, Jenera, Ohio  
**Chappell, Michael S.**, First, Green Bay, Wis.  
**Czerwan, Chad M.**, St. John, St. Paul, Minn.  
**Darling, Barbara J.**, Beautiful Savior, Cincinnati, Ohio  
**Daup, Rebecca K.**, St. John, Manitowoc, Wis.  
**Diener, Deanna R.**, Pilgrim, Minneapolis, Minn.  
**Duin, Angela R.**, Salem (107th St.), Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Endorf, Annaliese J.**, St. John, Red Wing, Minn.  
**Enter, Abraham M.**, Mount Calvary, Kimberly, Wis.  
**Floerke, Jonathon C.**, Grace, Glendale, Ariz.  
**Foley, Matthew D.**, Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis.  
**Geiger, Mary L.**, Beautiful Saviour, Carlsbad, Calif.  
**Groth, James S.**, Shoreland LHS, Somers, Wis.  
**Grow, Matthew J.**, First, Elkhorn, Wis.  
**Guelker, Brigetta K.**, Shepherd, Albuquerque, N.M.  
**Haack, Brian K.**, Christ-St. Peter, Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Hahm, Kristin S.**, Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Hahm, Tabitha M.**, Trinity Christian Academy, Woodbridge, Va.  
**Hartzell, Jennifer L.**, Trinity, Nicollet, Minn.  
**Hein, Jennifer M.**, Good Shepherd, Cedar Rapids, Iowa  
**Herbst, Matthew R.**, Salem, Colorado Springs, Colo.  
**Herlich, Carrie L.**, Beautiful Savior, Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Herrel, Kurt A.**, Zion, Clatonia, Neb.  
**Herrmann, Ruth N.**, Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis.  
**Honerbrink, Valerie L.**, Atonement, Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Humann, Brian J.**, Zion, Morrison, Wis.  
**Indahl, Scott D.**, Good Shepherd, Omaha, Neb.  
**Johnson, Macord A.**, Immanuel, Gibbon, Minn.  
**Kellermann, George D.**, Trinity, Aberdeen, S.D.  
**Kjenstad, Mark L.**, Crete, Crete, Ill.  
**Klug, Kevin L.**, St. John, Juneau, Wis.  
**Klug, Kirstie D.**, Our Savior, San Antonio, Tex.  
**Klug, Theodore A.**, Our Savior, San Antonio, Tex.  
**Knurowski, Amy M.**, St. John, Libertyville, Ill.  
**Kumbalek, Joanne M.**, Trinity, Brillion, Wis.  
**Loftin, Elisabeth C.**, St. James, Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Lowery, Sarah M.**, Our Savior, Longmont, Colo.  
**Luehring, Jamie C.**, St. Paul, Riverside, Calif.  
**Luehring, Shaun C.**, Grace, Eau Claire, Mich.  
**Luetke, J. Anna**, Divine Savior, Indianapolis, Ind.  
**Marohn, Chad T.**, St. Mark, Eau Claire, Wis.  
**Marohn, Corey E.**, Abiding Word, Houston, Tex.  
**Marquardt, April D.**, St. Paul, New Ulm, Minn.

**Meyer, Sarah E.**, Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich.  
**Muente, Kari A.**, Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis.  
**Neumann, Charissa M.**, Our Savior, Bylas, Ariz.  
**Noon, Barbara J.**, Gethsemane, Oklahoma City, Okla.  
**Oblinger, Rachel E.**, Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich.  
**Peter, David J.**, California LHS, Wildomar, Calif.  
**Randall, Sarah A.**, St. John, Lannon, Wis.  
**Rautenberg, Sarah A.**, Peace, Livonia, Mich.  
**Reader, Trevor J.**, Faith, Reedsburg, Wis.  
**Reese, Maria R.**, St. John, Newark, Del.  
**Riesop, Shawn B.**, St. Andrew, Chicago, Ill.  
**Rimmert, Jason M.**, St. Luke, Oakfield, Wis.  
**Rodmyre, Christy A.**, Trinity, Neenah, Wis.  
**Roth, Ryan N.**, Memorial, Williamston, Mich.  
**Rydecki, Krista L.**, Immanuel, Waupaca, Wis.  
**Rydecki, Matthew C.**, Immanuel, Waupaca, Wis.  
**Scharf, Angela R.**, Luther Preparatory School, Watertown, Wis.  
**Scharf, Kristen L.**, Zion, Monroe, Mich.  
**Scharlemann, Melinda M.**, Sola Fide, Lawrenceville, Ga.  
**Schluesener, Ruth E.**, Zion, Denver, Colo.  
**Schmidt, Jody L.**, Grace, Yakima, Wash.  
**Schroeder, Anne M.**, West LHS, Plymouth, Minn.  
**Schultz, Stephen P.**, Emanuel-Redeemer, Yale, Mich.  
**Schuman, Joni R.**, St. John, Baraboo, Wis.  
**Schupmann, Melissa M.**, St. Mark, Eau Claire, Wis.  
**Siekert, Kristin M.**, Mount Calvary, Waukesha, Wis.  
**Sonntag, Matthew P.**, Arizona Lutheran Academy, Phoenix, Ariz.  
**Sperle, Deneal M.**, Michigan LHS, St. Joseph, Mich.  
**Springstroh, Kris K.**, Huron Valley LHS, Westland, Mich.  
**Stchetinina, Valeria V.**, Immanuel, Fort Worth, Tex.  
**Stellich, Nicole A.**, St. John, Minneapolis, Minn.  
**Taylor, C. Yvette**, Manitowoc LHS, Manitowoc, Wis.  
**Teague, Valerie K.**, St. Croix LHS, West St. Paul, Minn.  
**Troge, Sarah J.**, Gethsemane, Milwaukee, Wis.  
**Uhlhorn, David J.**, Manitowoc LHS, Manitowoc, Wis.  
**Van Brocklin, Frank C.**, King of Kings, Maitland, Fla.  
**Vetting, Jacqueline H.**, Living Hope, Omaha, Neb.  
**Walker, Joel D.**, Atonement, Baltimore, Md.  
**Walker, Megan J.**, Minnesota Valley LHS, New Ulm, Minn.  
**Wenzel, Sarah B.**, Zion, Rhinelander, Wis.  
**Willis, Ryan D.**, St. Paul, Stevensville, Mich.  
**Wolfrath, Sarah J.**, Abiding Word, Houston, Tex.  
**Zahrt, Sarah A.**, Gethsemane, Omaha, Neb.  
**Zimmermann, Seth J.**, Salem, Stillwater, Minn.

**Staff minister**  
**Ruddat, Jonathan A.**, Divine Savior, Pullman, Wash.

## 150th anniversary update

*In the year 2000, WELS turns 150 years old. From the 1999 synod convention to the 2001 synod convention, WELS will celebrate this anniversary.*

To mark this anniversary, a number of commemorative items will be available to WELS churches and members.

- Catalogs of 150th anniversary memorabilia have already been mailed to your congregation. The catalog includes items that showcase the anniversary theme—Forward in Christ—for children, teenagers, and adults. Ask your pastor about it if you haven't seen it. To receive an extra catalog, contact WELS Communication Services, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222; 414/256-3210; <nicolem@sab.wels.net>.

- Aid Association for Lutherans will be giving a 4 ft. x 10 ft. outdoor banner to all WELS congregations, synodical schools, and area Lutheran high schools. Display it and let everyone know about our rich heritage in Christ.

- Prof. John Brenner from Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary has prepared a Bible study on Acts with application to WELS history for the synod convention. It will be mailed out to all congregations.

- Every called worker, and every congregation member who requests it, will receive a 48-page pocket history of WELS free except for shipping and handling. These books will be given to members on WELS Anniversary Sunday, June 11, 2000. This is made possible through the synod budget and a generous gift from Northwestern Publishing House in honor of the anniversary. Watch for information on how you can get a copy.



## Where are they now?

*In Forward/NL, we report the news, but aren't always able to follow-up. "Where are they now" is our way of giving you the rest of the story.*

The news item "A corner store for Christ" ran in June 1998.

**Here's a recap:** In early 1998, an old liquor store and smoke shop was purchased for \$1 in Milwaukee, Wis. "We've been withdrawing from inner cities for so long," said William Kirchner, missionary to the economically deprived. This was a way to take the gospel back to the cities. With the help of WELS Kingdom Workers and Builders For Christ, the building was renovated and opened in May 1998 as a home for Northside Lutheran Ministries.

### So, where are they now?

*Pastor William Kirchner writes:* God blessed Northside abundantly during the last year. Kirchner, seminary students, and volunteers from area WELS congregations have plenty to do. Over 450 people have visited the center for food, clothing, and, most important, nourishment in God's Word. At the end of February, 530 people had participated in Bible studies.

The Milwaukee chapter of WELS Lutherans for Life works with local women, and Wisconsin Lutheran Institutional Ministries helps those trying to break free of drug and alcohol addiction. A Kids' Time ministry offers tutoring and Bible stories.

We have not held regular Sunday services yet, but many spontaneous worship services have broken out when groups of people came in for Bible study. We had 35 attend the Christmas service, but only six at Easter. The six that came for Easter have become committed to Northside Lutheran Ministries, and, because they are from the neighborhood, we feel they will become active in inviting others.

Several people have come to view Northside as a place of refuge and shelter from the world's temptations. Shariz came once so he wouldn't have to be with his "brothers" who were planning a party with drugs and alcohol. He was trying to stop "using," so he came to study God's Word. He later thanked God he could come to Northside at that point. His brothers got high, committed a

crime, and got shot up. But he was safe because he had come to be with God. He comes often now for strength from God's Word and the support of others who are trying to break free from drugs and alcohol.

Shariz and others like him are being gradually drawn closer to Jesus by studies in God's Word. Your prayers are greatly desired for all those involved. Also your support goes a long way to provide for the physical and spiritual needs of many in the inner city of Milwaukee. Food and clothing help us to meet those needs. With God's continued blessings and the support of fellow believers, Northside Lutheran Ministries will continue to serve those struggling with temptation and false teachings in Milwaukee.

## THROUGH MY BIBLE IN 3 YEARS

### September 1999

1. 2 Samuel	15. Ps. 61, 62
15:1-16:14	16. Ps. 63
2. 2 Sam.	17. Ps. 64, 65
16:15-17:29	18. Ps. 66, 67
3. 2 Sam.	19. Ps. 68:1-18
18:1-19:8	20. Ps. 68:19-35
4. 2 Sam. 19:9-39	21. Ps. 69
5. 2 Sam.	22. Ps. 70, 71
19:40-20:26	23. Ps. 72
6. 2 Sam. 21	24. 1 Kings 1
7. 2 Sam. 22	25. 1 Kgs. 2
8. 2 Sam. 23	26. 1 Kgs. 3, 4
9. 2 Sam. 24	27. 1 Kgs. 5
10. Psalms 52-54	28. 1 Kgs.
11. Ps. 55	6:1-7:12
12. Ps. 56, 57	29. 1 Kgs.
13. Ps. 58, 59	7:13-8:11
14. Ps. 60	30. 1 Kgs. 8:12-66



This old smoke shop and liquor store was covered with beer signs until the building was purchased and renovated by Builders For Christ. It now houses Northside Lutheran Ministries, an outreach to the city of Milwaukee.



## Hispanic outreach workshop held

Forty-five people met at St. Thomas, Phoenix, from April 27-28 for the second Hispanic Outreach Workshop.

The workshop, conducted entirely in Spanish, consisted of pastors and laypeople from across the United States, Puerto Rico, and Mexico. It was sponsored by the Board for Home Missions.

During the two-day workshop, participants were reminded of the large and exciting mission field the Lord has opened for us in the United States. Hispanics are making their homes not just in the south but right in the WELS heartland—in places such as Wisconsin, Minnesota, and South Dakota. Participants were reminded of how blessed we are to be given the opportunity to reach out to our neighbors of the Hispanic community with the good news of the Savior. Attendees were encouraged to carry the message to local WELS congregations to consider what they can do to bring the gospel to Latin Americans who live in our communities.

Participants also learned the importance of knowing the Spanish language and culture better. Those present were given important data that indicated that in just five years there will be more Hispanics living in the United States than African-Americans. They were encouraged to learn from these Latin brothers and sisters in Christ whom the Lord has given to his church. All were made aware of the great need for Hispanic workers and leaders in the church.

## From tragedy to friendship

One night in November 1998, a fire broke out at Maxine Carew's house in New London, Wis. Maxine's husband, Gerald; her son, Mark; and two grandchildren, Megan and Zachary, all died.

I felt the loss because I knew the family and had gone to school with one of her grandsons. As I taught the *Christ-Light*® lesson on "Jesus Raises Jairus' Daughter" to my second-grade class at St. John, Burlington, Wis., we talked about how Jesus had been able to raise the little girl, because he is the Son of God, and that he would raise us and those who have gone before us on that last day.

I saw a tie-in with what had happened in New London. As I told my second-grade students about the tragedy, one student raised his hand and said that we should write to the woman who had survived. The class agreed. I saw the Holy Spirit working in them to share their faith in the resurrection.

So we wrote and colored sympathy cards. This was just after the funeral, so the words really hit home with Maxine and her remaining family. When the students heard how they had touched Maxine's life, they decided to adopt her as their grandma. We sent her pictures and a class photo at Christmas, and on Valentine's Day we sent her a card.

During this time, my mother, Maxine's daughter-in-law, and I started thinking about getting Maxine to see her "grandkids" and hear them sing in church. At the same time, my students were busy working on a sweatshirt with their handprints for Grandma Maxine. On Wednesday night I got a phone call from my mother saying that Maxine was coming to hear her kids sing in



The second-grade class at St. John, Burlington, Wis., "adopted" Maxine Carew after a fire killed her husband, son, and two grandchildren.

church on Sunday. The students were told that there would be a special surprise for them after church. They sang "Amazing Grace" and after the service were led to the church's meeting room. "Grandma Maxine" was introduced to the children and was given her sweatshirt. These 26 second-graders gave of their love in an unselfish way to help someone who was in need of comfort.

We continue to correspond, and Maxine knows she will always hold a special place in these second-graders' hearts as they know they do in hers.

—Brad Marten

### DEFINING RELIGION

**eternal:** As an attribute of God, eternal means that he is without beginning and without end (Psalm 90:2). Eternal can also simply mean without end as when Scripture speaks of eternal life and eternal death (Matthew 25:46).



## REAL TIME WITH A MISSIONARY

*In this section, you'll hear news from missionaries that came via e-mail. We hope you enjoy these tidbits from our missions.*

### **From Luke Wolfgramm, missionary in Russia:**

For some time I have been teaching an adult instruction class in the city of Omsk—a nine-hour train ride west of Novosibirsk, Russia. God has blessed his Word, just as he promised. The last time I went to Omsk the people there gave me this letter to send to you. They are grateful for the mission spirit of our synod and hope that we will be able to continue to serve them in Omsk.

Dear Brothers in Christ,

We Russian believers in Omsk are writing to you wishing to express our deepest gratitude for your activities in this country and in our city of Omsk in particular. The weekly Bible classes have become an essential part of our lives.

The course *Communicating Christ* is a remarkable means to bring people to life through faith

which is not blind or fantastic but mature and conscious. It is a respectful way of bringing law and gospel to those who have long been in need of it. You and your pastors have not only given us the spiritual food we needed, but also have shown us the source where we can always find real comfort. And you teach us how to get the most precious knowledge, the most valuable answers, to our everyday questions.

By getting rid of our spiritual ignorance with the help of your *Communicating Christ* course, we can more competently and persuasively answer people's questions about our faith and church.

We are grateful to Pastor Roger Zehms, Pastor Luke Wolfgramm, Prof. Brug and their families for sharing the gospel with us, for giving us examples of Christian lives.

April 17, 1999, became a great day for us. It was the day of the first worship service in our city. We pray that the almighty power of our Lord will bring more Omsk citizens to faith and that this last year of the century will become the first year in the Omsk Lutheran congregation's life.

We thank you for the generosity and courage you have demonstrated

by bringing God's precious Word into our country, which has been living in an abyss of spiritual ignorance, enmity, and atheism for almost a century.

In spite of the changing political situation we are deeply concerned about our spiritual life and growth, about strengthening our faith. We would love to go on studying the Scriptures, and we do need your help in this and in starting a congregation in Omsk. We greatly appreciate your help in the present difficult situation in Russia.

We pray for you and our pastors. May success attend you in your activities.

We will be happy to welcome you in Omsk someday, God-willing.

In Christian love,

The believers in Omsk

Vladimir Burachuk, Galina Burachuk, Liliana Karimova, Elena Zhigay, Vladimir Danchenko, Natalya Zhuravlyova, Leonid Karabanov, Alexandra Kudenko, Svetlana Kudenko, Ludmilla Meleshchenko, Maria Meleshchenko

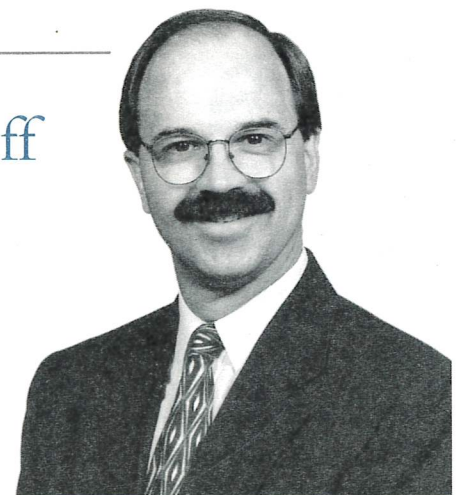
## Associate administrator joins CPS staff

Joel Nelson accepted the call to serve as the new associate administrator for the Commission on Parish Schools. He began his work in April.

He served as principal and upper grade teacher of St. Andrew, Chicago, Ill.; started Our Redeemer, Santa Barbara, Calif., and served as principal and teacher of all eight grades until 1990. He also served at St. Paul, Muskego, Wis., as its family minister.

Nelson graduated from Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn., in 1978 and has a Master's Degree in Family Studies from Concordia University in Mequon, Wis.

Joel and his wife, Carol, also a 1978 DMLC graduate, have three children: Natalie, 14, Eric, 13, and Lindsay, 7. They are members at St. Paul, Muskego.



Joel Nelson, the new associate administrator for parish schools.





## District news

### Nebraska

On May 4th, Nebraska governor, Mike Johanns, visited **St. Mark's Lutheran School, Lincoln, Neb.** He spoke to the school's 34 students for about 45 minutes, answering questions and signing autographs.

### North Atlantic

**Members of Atonement, Baltimore, Md.,** planned a unique fellowship event for their church and surrounding WELS churches. They held a square dance night at the church, complete with a professional caller. It didn't take long for everyone to pick up the steps of the trade and have a fun night.

**Four youth from Prince of Peace, Fairport, N.Y.,** used their spring break to go on a "WELS Schools Adventure." The group visited each WELS ministerial education school, starting with Michigan Lutheran Seminary, Saginaw, Mich., and going all the way to Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minn.—about 2,100 miles round trip! They returned tired, but enjoyed the trip. As a result, some are considering attending one of these schools.

**Sunday school children of Abiding Word, Orleans, Ontario,** prepared individual "mission" boxes for children of parents who are imprisoned. The "mission" boxes (shoeboxes) were filled



with Sunday school books, children's Bible stories, Christian activities, as well as toys, books, candies, and other trinkets. The mission boxes will be distributed by WELS Prison Ministry.

Those who attended the **North Atlantic District Pastor-Teacher Conference** in June were challenged to address the issue of the declining North American family in their churches and communities. Rolfe Westendorf from Siloah, Milwaukee, Wis., spoke about "How to Use the Church as the Most Effective Resource for Fixing the 21st Century Family." The pastors and teachers developed a plan of action for their own congregations, and then shared those ideas with the rest of the conference.

On Father's Day weekend, 36 men attended a **men's retreat** in Exeter, R.I. Wayne Mueller, administrator of the Board for Parish Services, spoke on "Faithful Fathers, Faithful Leaders." The men returned to their homes with a renewed commitment in their role as fathers and church leaders.

### South Atlantic

**Bay Pines, Seminole, Fla.,** broke ground for a school addition on April 25 for much needed classrooms and restrooms. Throughout 1999 Bay Pines will be celebrating the 40th anniversary of the church and 25th anniversary of the school.

**Living Savior, Valrico, Fla.,** dedicated its new facility on June 20.

**Pastor Jim Radloff and his wife, Joyce, served in Grenada** during June and July. The goal is to establish this new mission front in the Caribbean and to do it using pastor volunteers. Radloff is the South Atlantic District and Southeastern Wisconsin District mission counselor.

**Sola Fide, Lawrenceville, Ga.,** broke ground on May 23 on its 22-acre site for a new church and school building. After over a year of sharing their old building with others they look forward to moving in around the first of the year.

### Southeastern Wisconsin

**Christ the Lord, Brookfield, Wis.,** approved a building expansion program on May 23. Plans approved include four classrooms, a fellowship hall, a kitchen, and a high school size gymnasium. The congregation plans to break ground this summer. Christ the Lord will investigate new ministry options in childcare and among seniors or retirees.

### Happy anniversary!

**Grace, Milwaukee,** celebrated its 150th anniversary in May. On May 13, 1849, Pastor Johannes Muehlhaeuser and a group of laypeople officially organized Grace and began plans to build a church. Grace is also one of three founding churches of WELS. The synod's first meeting was held at Grace, and Muehlhaeuser was named the WELS first president. The congregation has seen explosive growth in recent years, with membership today at over 700.

**Lee Vaccarella,** a gift planning counselor for the ministry of planned giving, celebrated his 25th year in the ministry on June 6, in Milwaukee.

These are the reporters for this month's featured districts: MI—David M. Zahn; NA—Kevin Schultz; NE—Keith Petersen; SA—Mark A. Haefner; SEW—Scott Oelhafen

## ON THE BRIGHT SIDE

According to six-year-old Sanjeev, Jesus had a secret agent with him at the time of his Transfiguration. When asked which disciples were with Jesus on the mountain, Sanjeev replied, "Peter, James, and . . . Bond."

*Deborah Haar  
Toronto, Ontario, Canada*

### Michigan

Members of Zion, St. Louis, Mich., honored Duane Stacey for serving as organist for over 50 years. He began playing right after he graduated from high school. After a hymn festival, he was presented with a gift. Stacey said, "I enjoy music, and I've been privileged to give something back to the church."



## Southeastern Wisconsin



### Battle of the book champions

After finishing in second place the last two years, 10 fourth through sixth grade students from Bethany Lutheran School, Kenosha, Wis., finished first among 31 public and parochial schools from Kenosha County in the annual Battle of the Books. Led by coaches Kathryn Heide and Yvonne Jeske, these students read 40 books throughout the school year, prepared questions about each book, and memorized the books' titles and authors. Twice in April and May, the schools went head to head in the quest for the highest cumulative point total, while battling individual schools over their knowledge of the books. A mediator asked questions, and the teams answered them by giving the correct title and author of the book from which the question came.

The Battle of the Books champions from Bethany, Kenosha, Wis. Back, from left: Joy Christie, Erin Dorn, Stephanie Rovik, Maggie Flentge, Rachel Hintz. Front, from left: Jessica Smith, Hope Christie, Elisabeth Schalk, Katie Sjuggerud, Ashley Fenske.



Several long-time choir members at Bethany, Hustisford, Wis., were honored in May for their years of service as choir members. Standing in front of the rest of the choir are: (from left) Irene Schuett, a 50-year member; Marvin Schuett, a member for 57 years; Betty Lehmann, a 50-year member, and Lenora Brendebuehl who has sung with the choir for 59 years. The choir has others who have been with the group for several decades. They include Lucia Radloff, 42 years; Waldebar Schlieuwe, 42 years; Inez Kalfahs, 33 years; Hildegard Kuehl, 31 years; Hildebard Otto, 34 years; Helen Roeseler, 36 years; Gus Kalfahs, 35 years; and Ronald Kuehl, 31 years.

## WELS Web site receives honors

Two areas of the WELS Web site have been reviewed and honored by other online sites.

Christianity Online Connection gave WELS Heaven Sent postcards at <[www.wels.net/sab/postcard/comp2.html](http://www.wels.net/sab/postcard/comp2.html)> a four on a scale of five. WELS Heaven Sent postcards allow you to send free electronic postcards to anyone with e-mail and Internet access. The review was promoted to more than 75,000 subscribers.

The Commission on Adult Discipleship site <[www.wels.net/sab/frm-cad.html](http://www.wels.net/sab/frm-cad.html)> received four stars from the ABC's of Parenting Directory. This directory is devoted to providing Web surfers with reviews and ratings of the best Web sites of interest to families and parents-to-be.

The WELS Web site was developed in April 1997, but changes daily. Besides looking at the highlighted areas, check out the entire site at <[www.wels.net](http://www.wels.net)>.

## Obituary

### Pauline E. Rupprecht 1941-1999

Pauline Rupprecht was born April 25, 1941, in Pontiac, Mich. She died April 27, 1999, in Eagan, Minn.

A 1962 graduate of Dr. Martin Luther College, New Ulm, she served at St. Martin, Watertown, S.D.; Emanuel, Tawas City, Mich.; Mt. Calvary, Kimberly, Wis.; and St. Croix Lutheran High School, West St. Paul, Minn.

She is survived by her mother, three sisters, one brother, seven nieces and nephews, and one grand-niece.



**Europe bans human cloning—**

Nineteen European nations signed an agreement to forbid the cloning of humans. These countries will then ban “any intervention seeking to create human beings genetically identical to another human being, whether living or dead.” This does, however, permit cloning of other cells for research purposes.



Countries signing are Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Iceland, Italy, Latvia, Luxembourg, Moldova, Norway, Portugal, Romania, San Marino, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Macedonia, and Turkey. Germany did not sign the agreement because this measure is weaker than the current German law, which forbids all research on human embryos. Britain also did not sign because scientists there are at the forefront of cloning and do not want the restriction.

[5/99—*Cincinnati Right to Life Bulletin*, reprinted by WELS Lutherans for Life’s LifeWire]

**Teen pregnancy rates continue to decline—**Teen pregnancy, birth, and abortion rates continued to decrease in 1996, the Alan Guttmacher Institute reports.

Between 1995 and 1996, the teenage pregnancy rate, including births, abortions, and miscarriages, dropped four percent from 101.1 to 97.3 pregnancies per 1,000 women between the ages of 15 and 19. The teen birthrate declined four percent, and the abortion rate declined three percent.

Since its peak in 1990, the pregnancy rate has dropped 17 percent.

**Nurses’ views change on abortion—**

A survey of nurses’ views done by *RN* magazine, the official publication of the American Nursing

Association, showed that a change and polarization has been occurring among registered nurses in the United States regarding abortion. Overall, the change has been in the direction of pro-life.

Ten years ago, 48 percent of nurses said that they would not work in an Ob-Gyn unit where abortions of any kind are performed. Last year, that number had risen to 63 percent.

However, they were also asked how many would not work on a unit where abortions were forbidden. Ten years ago, 20 percent had this opinion. Today it’s 35 percent.

[*Cincinnati Right to Life Bulletin*, April 1999, reported in WELS Lutherans for Life’s LifeWire]

**Operation Rescue changes name—**

Operation Rescue, which finished a weeklong anti-abortion campaign in Buffalo, N.Y., on April 25, has announced a change in name and focus.

Spokeswoman Eileen Schopf said the organization now will be known as Operation Save America and will work to fight against not only abortion, but teen sex, homosexuality, child pornography, and the absence of God from the classroom.

Operation Rescue has been known for its vocal protests outside of abortion clinics, high schools, doctors’ offices, bookstores, and hospitals.

**“Clergy in the Schools” ruled unconstitutional—**The program that allowed local clergy to counsel Beaumont, Tex., students on civic virtues and morality has been ruled unconstitutional.

In April, a three-judge federal appeals panel agreed with seven parents and students who argued that the program violated the separation of church and state.

Since 1996, local religious leaders have

been invited to counsel elementary and secondary school students during school hours at their schools, the Associated Press reported.

The district said that the program helped increase school safety, gave a local group an interest in the school, and allowed students to discuss moral and civic issues. Clergy members were forbidden from discussing abortion, sex, or religion, and could not pray with students.

The appellate panel said the clergy chosen were disproportionately Protestants. Although students could decline to take part in the program, parents were not notified about the sessions or asked to give their consent.

**Alcohol, tobacco, and drug use permeate films and pop music—**

A report by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy found that 93 percent of 200 films released during 1996 and 1997 included alcohol images or references, while 89 percent included tobacco usage.

Illicit drug use—most often marijuana—was included in 22 percent of films. Eighteen percent of the 1,000 popular songs reviewed—but 63 percent of rap lyrics—included illicit drug use.

Even films rated for viewing by minors included heavy doses of substance use. While G or PG rated films were devoid of illicit drugs, 79 percent included tobacco use and 76 percent included alcohol use.

For PG-13 films, the figures were 97 percent for alcohol use and 82 percent for tobacco. Seventeen percent of PG-13 films showed illicit drug use.



Most news reported in this section is derived from Religion News Service. Items do not necessarily reflect the views of WELS or Forward/NL.





## CHANGES IN MINISTRY

## Pastors

**Bartelt, Kenneth D.**, to St. John, Victorville, Calif.  
**Baumann, John C.**, to St. Paul, Appleton, Wis.  
**Beckendorf, Wilbur L.**, to retirement  
**Biebert, Edwin F.**, to retirement  
**Bilitz, Keith J.**, to Mount Olive, Graceville/Bethany, Clinton, Minn.  
**Brokmeier, Kenneth L.**, to St. Paul, Lake Mills, Wis.  
**Dobberstein, Leroy A.**, to retirement  
**Grosnick, Roger A.**, to St. Peter, Juneau, Wis.  
**Hoff, Lance A.**, to St. Peter, Helenville, Wis.  
**Mattek, James A.**, to Trinity, Watertown, Wis.  
**Meier, Norbert R.**, to retirement  
**Mews, Scott D.**, to Amazing Grace, Milwaukee, Ore.  
**Pankow, Paul E.**, to retirement  
**Rawerts, D. Thomas**, to Trinity, Aberdeen, S.D.  
**Schaser, Erich K.**, to Fox Valley LHS, Appleton, Wis.  
**Schmeichel, Duane C.**, to Redeemer, Maple Grove, Minn.  
**Sonntag, Lyle F.**, to St. Andrew, Sacramento, Calif.  
**Unnash, Peter L.**, to Shepherd of Peace, Norfolk, Neb.  
**Voss, Carl W.**, to retirement  
**Westendorf, Daniel D.**, to Cameroon (1 yr.)

## Teachers

**Anderson, Ames E.**, to retirement  
**Anderson, Kris**, to Good Shepherd, West Bend, Wis.  
**Bloomquist, Brent D.**, to St. Marcus, Milwaukee  
**Bock, Marilyn M.**, to St. Mark, Watertown, Wis.  
**Carmichael, Gary G.**, to retirement  
**Daley, Evelyn K.**, to Western Koshkonong, Cottage Grove, Wis.  
**Draeger, Melissa R.**, to Beautiful Savior, Milwaukee  
**Dyke, Karen**, to Trinity, Caledonia, Wis.  
**Foelske, Wayne A.**, to Manitowoc LHS, Manitowoc, Wis.  
**Frederickson, Connie**, to Martin Luther, Oshkosh, Wis.  
**Gartner, Steven J.**, to St. John, Lannon, Wis.  
**Grams, Brenda K.**, to St. John, Sleepy Eye, Minn.  
**Haines, Elisabeth A.**, to retirement  
**Hillmer, Jennifer S.**, to Wisconsin LHS, Milwaukee  
**Hintz, Irene F.**, to retirement  
**Hirschmann, Craig R.**, to St. John, Milwaukee  
**Hussman, Karen E.**, to Immanuel, Greenville, Wis.  
**Johnson, Daniel W.**, to Arizona Lutheran Academy, Phoenix  
**Kallies, Ronald T.**, to St. Paul, Cudahy, Wis.  
**Kelm, Lynne J.**, to St. Marcus, Milwaukee  
**Knobloch, Janet S.**, to St. John, Oak Creek, Wis.  
**Korb, Margo**, to Divine Savior, Indianapolis, Ind.  
**Kuehl, Daniel J.**, to MLC, New Ulm, Minn.  
**Liebenow, Janet L.**, to St. John, Burlington, Wis.  
**Meihak, Barbara**, to Resurrection, Rochester, Minn.  
**Menk, Darin D.**, to First German, Manitowoc, Wis.  
**Mielke, Tammy L.**, to St. Paul First, North Hollywood, Calif.  
**Miller, Julie L.**, to Faith, Fond du Lac, Wis.  
**Plocher, Jill C.**, to Peridot, Peridot, Ariz.  
**Presser, Sharon A.**, to Shepherd of the Valley, Westminster, Colo.

**Rothe, Debbie K.**, to St. Matthew, Oconomowoc, Wis.  
**Salzwedel, Terri L.**, to St. Peter, Schofield, Wis.  
**Schmidt, Laurie**, to St. Matthew, Janesville, Wis.  
**Sebald, John A.**, to Evergreen LHS, Des Moines, Wash.  
**Staab, Katherine S.**, to Apostles, Billings, Mont.  
**Tank, James A.**, to retirement  
**Warning, Vicky L.**, to St. Peter, Balaton, Minn.  
**Wempner, Christine M.**, to Apostles, San Jose, Calif.  
**Wessel, Howard L.**, to retirement  
**Witt, Virginia L.**, to retirement  
**Zabel, David J.**, to Siloah, Milwaukee  
**Zuleger, Wayne**, to retirement

## REQUEST FOR COLLOQUY

John R. K. Nieminen, Cambridge, Ontario, Canada, formerly a pastor in the Church of the Lutheran Confession (CLC), has requested a colloquy for the purpose of serving in the pastoral ministry in WELS. Correspondence related to this request should be addressed to President Walter Beckmann, North Atlantic District, 7401 Masonville Dr, Annandale, VA.

## ANNIVERSARIES

**Stratford, Wis.**—Emmanuel (100). Aug. 8. Services, 10 AM & 2 PM; noon lunch. 715/687-3411.  
**Brownsville, Wis.**—St. Paul (75). Aug. 8. Service, 10 AM; lunch follows. 920/583-3615.  
**Palatine, Ill.**—Christ the King (30). Aug. 15. Service, 9:30 AM; picnic follows. Past members: please drop a line telling about your life if you can't attend. Andy Petri, 847/827-8510.  
**Herrick, S.D.**—St. John (75). Aug. 29. Service, 3 PM. Keith Petersen, 605/775-2462.  
**Jackson, Wis.**—Kettle Moraine LHS (25). Aug. 29. Anniversary service, 2:30 PM; reception follows.  
**Berlin, Wis.**—St. Paul (100). Aug. 29. Service, 2 PM; potluck follows.  
**La Crosse, Wis.**—First (140). Sept. 12. Confirmation remembrance and former called worker reunion services, 8 & 10:15 AM; cook-out follows.  
**Milwaukee, Wis.**—Salem (East Side) (110). Sept. 12. Service, 10 AM; dinner 1 PM at Bavarian Inn. RSVP by Sept. 1 for dinner. John Hoh, 414/365-6470.  
**Toledo, Ohio**—St. Andrew (35). Sept. 12. Anniversary/homecoming service, 11 AM.  
**Sparta, Wis.**—St. John. (25th anniversary of church building.) Sept. 12. Services, 8 & 10:30 AM. 608/269-4966.

## COMING EVENTS

**CESE summer conference**—Aug. 17, 8:30 AM-12:30 PM. Center for Arts & Performance, WLC, Milwaukee. Dr. Alan Spurgin: All Children Can Learn, But At What Rate. Eileen Schlavensky, 414/781-0685.  
**WELS retired teachers fellowship picnic**—Aug. 17, 10 AM-4 PM. Fond du Lac Lakeside Pavilion. Bring picnic supplies and dish to share. Artyc, 920/922-1993.  
**South suburban women's retreat**—Sept. 24-25. Cedar Lake Bible Conference Center, Cedar Lake, Ind. \$65. Deb Witte, 708/672-0633.  
**Annual MLC Ladies' Auxiliary meeting**—Oct. 13, 9 AM registration. Emanuel, Fairfax, Minn. Paul Doletzky, 507/426-7819.  
**WELS-CLO meeting**—Oct. 16, 8:30 AM registration. Our Hope, Chippewa Falls, Wis.

Registration materials available. Joanne Weber, 414/256-3222. <jaweber@sab.wels.net>.

## AVAILABLE

**Reed organ**—two manual and full pedal. Free for cost of shipping. Donald Arndt, 414/354-4354.  
**Handbell tables**—7 square, lightweight tables with adjustable-height legs. Free for cost of shipping. Cross, Rockford, Minn. <lorrie1158@yahoo.com>.

## NEEDED

**Altar cross, communion ware, paraments, and missal stand**—for Vermillion, S.D. exploratory. Marlena Miller, 605/624-5398.  
**Luther's Works**—St. Louis edition. James Danell, 507/354-9446; <danelljc@mlc-wels.edu>.  
**The Praetorius Organ**—Written by Paul Bunjes. Ryan Stangl, 920/887-8214; <kapel@hotmail.com>.  
**Materials/ideas**—for preK-12 education within WELS & ELS. Editor of new book is seeking materials that enhance instruction across the curriculum. Ideas and efforts to integrate Scripture are of special interest. Contact John Freese by Sept. 30, 414/257-9491; <jmffreese@aol.com>.  
**Pews**—20, 11 ft pews. Hope, Indian River, Mich. James Dunham, 616/238-7246.  
**Candlebra and Crucifix**—for altar. Juarez, Mexico exploratory. 915/857-5852.

## SERVICE TIMES

**Calgary, Alberta, Canada**—Mountain View. Sunday, 9:30 AM. Bible hour, 10:45 AM. 403/242-5000.

## POSITIONS AVAILABLE

**Resource development counselor**—for Southeastern Wisconsin District and Jesus Cares Ministries for The Lutheran Home Association. Responsible for promotion, public awareness, and donor development. Send resume to Michael Klatt, CEO, 611 West Main St, Belle Plain MN 56011.  
**Reference/public services librarian**—Martin Luther College library. Must have master's in Library Science from an ALA accredited institution. David Gosdeck, 1995 Luther Court, New Ulm MN 56073; 507/354-8221.

## NAMES WANTED

**Mobile, Ala.**—Living Word. Mobile and Gulf Shores, Ala. and Biloxi, Miss. area. Larry Simpson, 334/342-4048. <lsimpson@jaguar1.usouthal.edu>.  
**West Jordan, Utah**—Hope (ELS). ELS/WELS people interested in establishing a congregation in their area contact Greg Sahlstrom, 801/569-1111; <RevGregL.Sahlstrom@juno.com>.  
**Japan**—WELS/ELS members in Yokosuka Naval Base, Negishi Housing (Yokohama), Ikego Housing (Zushi) and Atsugi Naval Air Station, Yokota Air Force Base and Camp Zama. Dave & Beth Rupprecht, 011-81-468-72-7860; <gumcutter@nia.attmil.ne.jp>.

To place an announcement, call 414/256-3210; FAX, 414/256-3899; <nicolem@sab.wels.net> Deadline is eight weeks before publication date.



# Angels at work

God sends his angels to protect us from physical and spiritual harm.

James A. Aderman

**H**er swollen face made her look like a Cabbage Patch doll. I stood by the bedside of a member of my congregation after a car accident. She would be fine, but she was badly bruised.

Wincing through one of her famous wry smiles, she said, "I look in pretty rough shape, don't I, Pastor?"

"You look like you've been in a car that hit a bridge," I teased, "but imagine what your guardian angel looks like!"

## Protection through God's angels

Angels with broken wings, banded heads, and crutches may be the stuff of smiles, but the reality is God has commissioned his angels to protect us. Guardian angels are not fairy tales to ease childhood fears. The inspired sage of Psalm 91 says of God, **"He will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways; they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone"** (vs. 11,12).

We have fully armed spirit beings as bodyguards—no, as soul guards. They watch over us and pay attention to our every step so that we don't miss out on heaven. These heavenly beings "lift you up"—that's the same Hebrew verb that describes how the Flood raised Noah and his family above the reach of its destruction.

God does not need angels to provide for us. He isn't a harried, big city police chief who requires thousands of officers to keep citizens safe. He manages faultlessly on his own. But he created angels to confirm that we can't slip from his care.

## Protection from fallen angels

Not only do we have protection through God's angels, but we also have protection from fallen angels. Satan and his demons constantly stalk Christians and are ready to pounce and destroy at the slightest provocation. But we have more than protection from them; we have victory over them. **"You will tread**

**upon the lion and the cobra; you will trample the great lion and the serpent"** (v. 13).

Our Spirit-savvy author describes Satan with pictures that the Scriptures paint more fully in other places. 1 Peter 5:8 calls him a roaring lion on the prowl for his next meal. He appears in Genesis 3 as the crafty,

venomous serpent of Eden. The Hebrew word for serpent is also translated dragon and reminds us of Revelation 12:9, "The great dragon was hurled down—that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole world astray."

But notice, Satan is no match for us. The words "tread" and "trample" picture being kicked and stomped to death. This victory is ours because "the Son of God appeared . . . to destroy the devil's work" (1 John 3:8). Since Jesus kicked the daylight out of Satan for us, his victory is our victory.

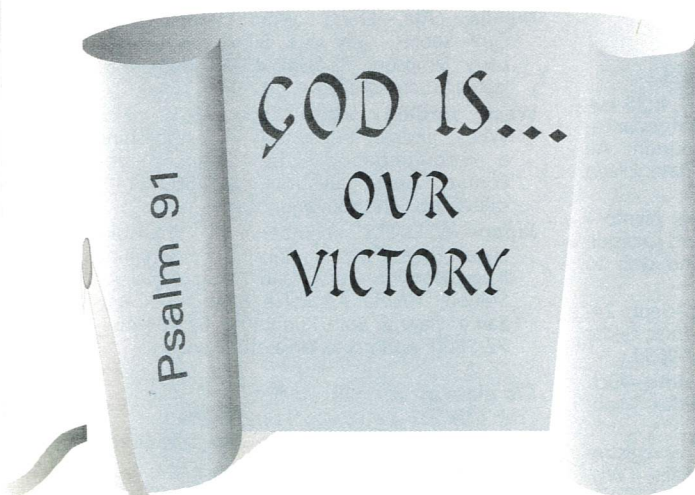
My member's guardian was no worse for wear after that accident. Spirit beings don't have to contend with the same physical laws as we. But her angel was there—protecting her, defending her, especially against the demons who wanted to use that occasion to rip her from her Savior's arms. How do I know? God tells us in Psalm 91.



*James Aderman is pastor at Fairview, Milwaukee.*

## For further study

1. Read Psalm 103:20 and Hebrews 1:14. How much power do angels have? What is their purpose? How does that assure you?
2. Look up Ephesians 6:10-18. What armor has God given us against demonic attack? How do we put this armor on?





# Back to Calvary, forward in Christ

**W**e all have our moments when we longingly look back over our shoulders. Remember Lot's wife. She, you recall, looked back, still lustfully desiring the sinful pleasures of Sodom. She became a pillar of salt. Never again would she be able to look forward—or backward—at anything.

Our looking back may not quite be the same. And yet, looking back, we can become almost as stationary as Lot's wife, mesmerized by "the good old days." Nostalgically, we may conclude that nothing in the present or foreseeable future could compare favorably with the pleasures or performances of the past. Such thinking paralyzes. It keeps us from boldly moving forward for Christ.

Or, looking back at past failures, we grow apprehensive about our prospects for the future. No doubt, in all of our lives, there are some specters from the past, the remnants of our own stupidity or sinfulness. These memories, also, may dim any dreams that we have of the future, making it hard for us to visualize any forward movement.

Honestly, looking back at our past performance doesn't give us any confidence for the future, does it? Far too many times, our record—our conscience—is scarred by sinful or foolish behavior. If success depends exclusively on our efforts, the effect in the future could only be as disastrous as it was in the past.

That's why the encouragement to move "Forward in Christ." Jesus suffered our penalty; he won God's pardon for us. Unmerited and undeserved, because of his love for us, our prospects for the future are bright.

We can acknowledge the bright moments in our past as indications of God's favor, and so see in them God's guarantee of future success as we move Forward in Christ.

As a synod, reflecting on 150 years of history, not everything was peaches and cream. There were some real lemons, things that, humanly speaking, left a sour taste. But, on the other hand, there were some otherwise unexplainable successes. The only possible explanation, in the words of the canticle: "Oh, taste and see that the Lord is good."

And so, together as a synod, we move Forward in Christ, observing the 2,000th anniversary of Christ's birth. As we also observe our 150th anniversary, we do well to remember Paul's inspired words: "Brothers, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 3:13,14).

Forward in Christ means, first, we can look back 2,000 years in time, remembering "the good old days"—Good Friday, that is, with all that Jesus' death means for us, wiping out the effect of every mistake from the past. Secondly, Forward in Christ means looking heavenward, confident of the future, blessed already by our Savior's fulfillment of the promises he has made.

So, just as Paul said, "Forgetting what is behind, straining toward what is ahead," as individuals, as congregations, as a synod, all together, let's move Forward in Christ.



Karl R. Gurgel is the president of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

Forward in  
Christ means  
looking  
heavenward,  
confident of  
the future,  
blessed  
already by  
our Savior's  
fulfillment of  
the promises  
he has made.



# Doctrines of different denominations

John F. Brug

## *What are the differences between WELS and a Southern Baptist church?*

A number of doctrinal differences exist between the two denominations. Listed below are a selected few.

**Original sin:** Southern Baptists believe that although human beings inherit a sinful nature, they are not under God's condemnation until they are capable of moral action. We believe that every human being stands under God's just condemnation from conception and birth because of original sin (Psalm 51:5; Romans 5:18,19; John 3:5,6).

**Perseverance of the saints:** Southern Baptists teach: "Those whom God has accepted in Christ, and sanctified by his Spirit, will never fall away from the state of grace, but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, bring reproach on the cause of Christ, and temporal judgments on themselves, yet they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." We believe that a believer can turn his back on his Savior and fall from faith (Luke 8:13; 1 Corinthians 10:12).

**Baptism:** Southern Baptists believe that baptism is an act of obedience, symbolizing a believer's faith. They do not baptize infants. We believe that baptism is a means of grace through which the Holy Spirit works faith and offers and conveys the forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation (Titus 3:5-7; Acts 2:38;

Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21). We believe that infants are to be baptized because they are included in Christ's command to baptize all nations (Matthew 28:19). They are sinful and need to be born again (Psalm 51:5; John 3:5,6). Babies also can believe (Luke 18:15-17).

**Lord's Supper:** The Southern Baptists believe that the Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church memorialize the death of Jesus. They deny the real presence in the Lord's Supper. We believe that Christ's true body and blood are given with the bread and wine to assure us that our sins are forgiven (Matthew 26:26-28; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29; 1 Corinthians 10:16,17).

## The main error of Calvinism is that God has predestined some to salvation and some to damnation.

*In my readings of a commentary, I am told that a certain interpretation is "Calvinistic." I know this refers to John Calvin, but I am not certain what the author is trying to tell me.*

Calvinism is sometimes summarized under five points, abbreviated as TULIP.

**T=total depravity.** Man is entirely sinful by nature and is unable to save himself. This is correct.

**U=unconditional grace.** God gives us his grace without any merit

or worthiness in us. Again this is correct.

**L=limited atonement.** Christ's death was not credited to all people, but only to those chosen for salvation. This is unscriptural.

**I=irresistible grace.** People cannot resist God's saving grace, which is offered only to the elect. This is incorrect because God's grace is sincerely offered to all. It is their fault if they reject it.

**P=perseverance of the saints.** It is impossible to fall from faith. This too is false.

The main error of Calvinism is that God has predestined some to salvation and some to damnation. Calvinists also treat the sacraments as signs rather than true means of grace. They do not believe in the real presence of Christ's body and blood for all recipients of the Lord's Supper. Calvinists generally confuse the roles of church and state.

A reference to some belief as "Calvinistic" would probably refer to one of these points.

*John Brug is a professor at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon.*

Send questions to your question, please, Forward/NL, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.



# Jesus' lap

Our daughter Katherine was enjoying "Jesus Time" in her kindergarten classroom, as evidenced by her eagerness to share that part of her day with me first. One day after school, she looked sad. "Mommy, I hope I die soon!" When I asked her why she said that, her reply was, "I'm afraid if I die when I'm a grown-up, I won't fit on Jesus' lap!"

Robin Ross  
Neenah, Wisconsin



## Picture this

The year: 1967

The place: Africa

Hilda Kretzmann from Rocky Ford, Colo., takes us back in time to the first years of the African missions. Rev. Theodore Kretzmann and Hilda served in Africa from 1965-1975—four years as missionaries in Zambia, and the rest opening a clinic in Malawi. Then WELS was ministering to 1,108 souls in Zambia and Malawi. Now we help minister to over 37,000 people.

The missionaries pictured here are on their way to a conference of the Zambia and Malawi churches at the Bible Institute in Chelston. Pictured from left are: Rev. Raymond Cox, Malawi; Mr. Elmer Schneider, Zambia; Rev. John Janosek, Malawi; Prof. Ernst Wendland, Zambia; Rev. Robert Sawall, Zambia; Rev. Theodore Kretzmann, Zambia; and Rev. Richard Mueller, Zambia. Janosek still serves in Malawi.

Do you have a picture showing your church life that you want to share? On a separate sheet, tell us why you took it, who is in it, and what it means to you. Include your name, address, and phone number. Those whose photos get printed will receive a small gift. Picture this, 2929 N Mayfair Rd, Milwaukee WI 53222-4398.

Seen on a church sign:

**"WHEN DOWN IN THE MOUTH, REMEMBER JONAH. HE CAME OUT ALL RIGHT."**



God takes each call and knows each caller personally. When you call, the Lord will answer. You will cry for help, and God will say, "Here I am."

Thank God, you can't call our Creator too often! You only need to ring once, and God hears you. Because of Jesus, you never get a busy signal.

## Check out these emergency phone numbers:

- When in sorrow, call John 14
- When people fail you, call Psalm 27
- When you worry, call Matthew 6:19-34
- When you are in danger, call Psalm 91
- When God seems far away, call Psalm 19
- When your faith needs stirring, call Hebrews 11
- When you are lonely and fearful, call Psalm 23
- When you grow bitter and critical, call 1 Corinthians 13
- When the world seems bigger than God, call Psalm 90
- When prayers grow narrow or selfish, call Psalm 67

All lines are open to heaven 24 hours a day.

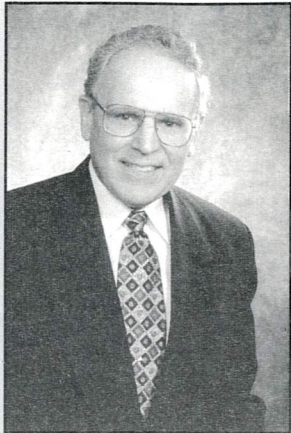
*From Mt. Olive, St. Paul, Minn., newsletter*

## Did you know?

### Facts and statistics about suicide

- X Every day, **1,900** adults attempt suicide, and **84** are successful.
- X **91** percent of all people who commit suicide are Caucasian.
- X Females are more likely to attempt suicide; however, males are **four times** more likely to die this way.
- X Gun owners, or people living with guns in the home, are **five times** more likely to commit suicide than people who live in gun-free homes.  
*[4/9/99—Center for Disease Control (www.save.org)]*
- X Suicide is the **ninth leading cause** of death in the United States.  
*[10/21/98—ABC News]*
- X Requests for physician-assisted suicide are most often made by patients with terminal and debilitating diseases, who fear a loss of control or feel they are becoming a burden to their family.
- X **26** percent of doctors say that they have been asked to help hasten a patient's death. *[3/27/99—JAMA]*  
*[WELS Lutherans for Life's LifeWire 5/27/99]*





Gary P. Baumler is editor of *Forward/NL* and WELS Director of Communications.

Is your  
minister's  
ordination  
certificate  
worth the  
paper it's  
written on?

## Five million mail-order ministers can be wrong

Thirty years ago, a man with a fifth-grade education suddenly became an ordained minister (to gain "equal" footing in court with a WELS minister he was suing over a street-corner accident). It did not work. Clearly, the man's ministry credentials were bogus (as was his case).

Still it was quite a ploy, a clever strategy, a thinly-veiled deception.

So—it seems we've come a long way in those 30 years. Today, you too can become an ordained minister in no more time than it takes to fire up a computer, access an Internet site, and fill out a form. The cost is zero dollars, and the ordination is court-tested legal, according to the Universal Life Church (ULC) that offers the deal.

Besides, you don't have to answer any questions of faith. The ULC has only two tenets: 1) They believe only in what is right, and 2) everybody has the right to determine what is right for themselves. (Mmmm! Ponder that, if you have any sense of logic, let alone knowledge of God's truth.)

You can "follow any path as long as it does not infringe on the rights of others." Yes, follow any path, even if it leads to a bottomless hole in the ground. Just don't do anything to turn others from their paths, even if they lead straight to hell.

Surely, after 30 years, we're not about to fall for such a hoax, are we? Or are we? The organization claims to have ordained over five million mail-order ministers worldwide. And many are following up with a \$20 donation to get an honorary doctor of divinity degree. Or you can get a Ph.D. in Religion by reading two books, answering 75 percent of the questions on the material, and donating \$100.

What a bargain! By contrast, our WELS ordained pastors must take eight years of

post high-school training at a cost of over \$28,000 (in itself a bargain). Add in room and board, and you pay close to \$50,000 to become a pastor in WELS today. Then, you still don't have a doctorate.

Besides, to become a WELS pastor, you have to know Greek and Hebrew, not to mention a basic knowledge of two other languages. You have to study subjects like dogmatics (study of the Bible's teachings), symbolics (study of the Lutheran confessions), exegesis (in-depth study of books of the Bible from the original languages), homiletics (study of how to preach), and isagogics (overview of books of the Bible). It's hard work, but it brings blessed results.

So, what is worth tens of thousands of dollars and endless study to you that you can't get for free through the ULC (or for \$100, if you must have that Ph.D.)?

You get a clergyman who

- cares about truth and knows where to find it,
- subjects all thinking to the Word and will of God,
- is able to study God's Word in its original languages,
- can correctly divide law and gospel,
- is more interested in helping you get into heaven than in making you feel good on earth (a formula that does both),
- cares about you as a blood-bought soul of Christ,
- will show you the one way to full and free salvation,
- focuses on Christ—crucified and risen,
- wouldn't want any less education before becoming ordained,
- feels privileged that God has used him in his service.

*Gary P. Baumler*



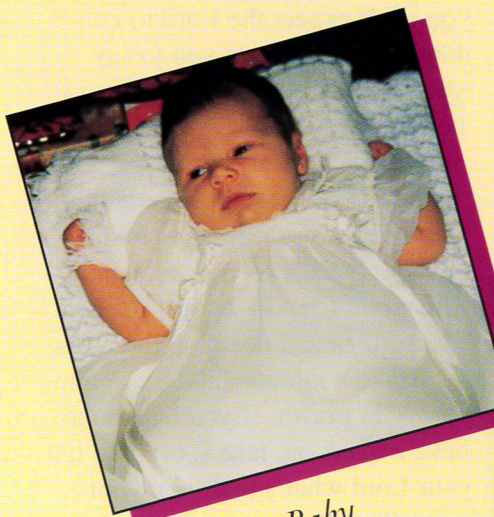
# Our Tribute Gifts



remember those special occasions  
that are close to our hearts

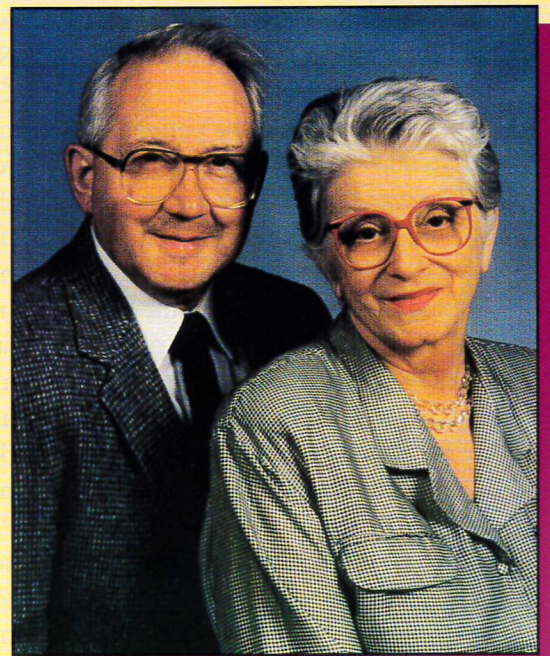
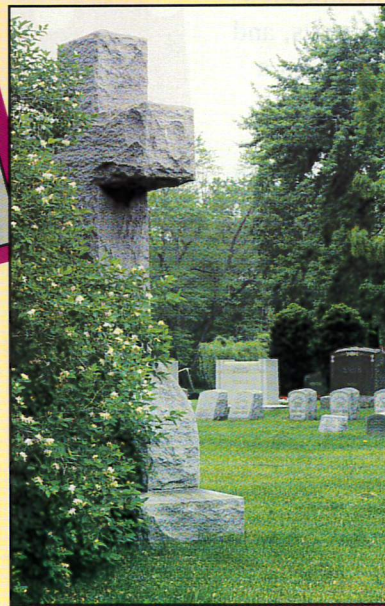
- *In memory of a loved one*
- *Birth/Adoption*
- *Birth/Adoption*
- *New grandchild*
- *Wedding anniversary*
- *Father's Day*
- *Ministerial anniversary*
- *Successful surgery*
- *Mother's Day*
- *Christmas*
- *Graduation*
- *Confirmation*

**A tribute is a meaningful way to express our joy, hope and thanks to God!**



*Baby*

*In Memory*



*Anniversary*

**Please call 800-827-5482 and ask for your free Tribute Packet.**

It's an easy way to remember those special people in your life and to  
extend your gifts beyond yourself to benefit others.



# Take off your MASK



You have a friend to

whom you can “let

it all hang out.”

**Kenneth A. Cherney**

**I**n 1835 a man walked into a doctor’s office in Florence, Italy. He hadn’t had a good night’s sleep in weeks. He had no appetite. He was filled with anxiety for no apparent reason. The doctor examined him thoroughly and found no physical problems.

He concluded that the patient simply needed cheering up, and he told him he was in luck. The circus was in town, and its feature attraction was a clown named Grimaldi. Grimaldi was magnificent, the doctor said. Every night he had people laughing till their sides ached. Go catch his act, the doctor said, and you’re bound to start feeling better.

The patient didn’t think that would work.

“You see, I’m Grimaldi,” he said.

## Putting on your mask

Who hasn’t felt like Grimaldi at one time or another? We all know what it’s like to have to keep up appearances—to pretend that we feel something we don’t or that we are something we’re not. So we put on a mask—a clownish one, a comfortable-and-successful one, a relaxed-and-in-control one. But behind the mask we’re ready to burst into flames. We hate the situa-

tion we’re in. We hate ourselves for getting into it. And we have absolutely no idea what we do next.

It’s rough to have to put on a happy face in a situation like that. So why do it? For Grimaldi, it was a matter of doing his job. Sometimes it’s the same for us, and that isn’t always a bad thing. For instance, I’m not sure I need to inflict a blow-by-blow account of how my day is going on every person who asks me, “How are you doing?” The solution isn’t for each of us to “let it all hang out” at every opportunity.

## Taking off your mask

Still.

Wouldn’t it be nice to have a friend with whom you could “let it all hang out”? Someone with whom no masks were ever necessary—someone, in fact, who forbade them in his presence? A friend you could count on to accept you precisely as you are—and not be shocked or

dismayed by what you’re thinking or feeling?

You have a friend like that. Yes, you know who.

Don’t misunderstand. When what you’re thinking or feeling is sinful, you can’t expect the Lord to condone it. He’ll expect you to say you’re sorry. But he still wants to hear about it. All of it. And then, he wants you to hear that in spite of it, he loves you, accepts you, and has removed every one of your sins—every obstacle to your remaining his good friend—by his innocent sufferings and death on the cross.

Take a minute and talk to him now, in prayer. If you happen to have a mask on, take it off, and tell your Lord what’s really on your mind. Then come on over to his house, or pick up his Book, and find out what’s on his mind. You’ll be glad you did.

It won’t be as amusing as a trip to the circus. But it’s a whole lot better for what ails you.

And a whole lot saner than pretending nothing’s wrong.

*Ken Cherney is a professor at Martin Luther College, New Ulm, Minnesota.*

