

# W *The Lutheran* WITNESS

SEPTEMBER 2005

VOL. 124  
NO. 8



**LWML:**  
**IN LEAGUE**  
**WITH THE LORD**





# The Lutheran WITNESS

A MAGAZINE FOR THE LAYPEOPLE OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH — MISSOURI SYNOD

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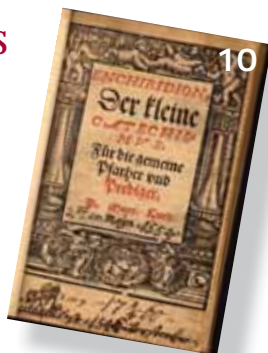
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## More on the kiddies

I am sure our pastor never would think of stopping his sermon and embarrassing the young mother of a crying child . . .

Betty Jane Ward  
Milwaukee

I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EYES WHEN I read the letter from Pastor Butz (August '05) about quieting children in church with the "effective" means of the pastor stopping his sermon and telling a mother to take her child to the nursery. Doesn't Pastor Butz realize that children are the future of the church?

My congregation welcomes little ones, and we are continually receiving new, young families into our church family, even families whose children cry and fuss a bit. I am sure our pastor never would think of stopping his sermon and embarrassing the young mother of a crying child. In doing so, he would embarrass himself as well, along with the rest of the congregation.

Betty Jane Ward  
Milwaukee

ARE YOU KIDDING ME? IT'S HARD ENOUGH to get young families to come to church. Now we're going to chastise them when their kids cry? Do you think these families will come back?

How do we expect children to learn how to behave in church if every time they start to act up we rush them to the nursery, which is where they want to go anyway, so they can play with the toys and not have to sit still?

Maybe a pastor trying to preach over the cries of a child could say something good-natured like, "Let's take a little pause in our sermon until the baby decides we can listen to the Word of God and not to him." At least he might get a chuckle from the congregation.

Emery Barg  
Dexter, Mo.

OUR BEAUTIFUL CHURCH HAS A GOOD-sized crying room with comfortable chairs, plenty of toys, and a one-way window allowing its occupants to see (and hear, with the help of a speaker) what's going on in the sanctuary. The crying room is used—but not often enough.

The noise of young children can affect the hearing of older parishioners, of whom our congregation—and the whole Missouri Synod, for that matter—has a good number. We like to see young children in church, but please keep them quiet during the service.

Anonymous  
New Jersey

## High incidence of mental illness

I COMMEND PAULA SCHLUETER ROSS for an excellent article on mental illness and its effects on the family ("You Are Not Alone," June/July '05). The article provided considerable enlightenment on these "hidden" disorders. One hopes it will lead to greater understanding and compassion in the LCMS.

Allow me to highlight and clarify some of the points raised in the article:

Regarding the prevalence of mental illness, the article stated that one in five families struggles with a serious mental illness. That figure is, in fact, an underestimate. The best research conducted to date, led by Dr. Darrel Regier, a member of the LCMS, shows that in any given year one in five persons experiences a mental illness, which includes bipolar disorder, major

depression, schizophrenia, alcohol and drug use disorders, the anxiety disorders, and mental retardation. All of these disorders are very serious, causing great distress both for the person and the family.

One in five persons is a staggering figure. A small church with 300 members will have, every year, about 60 members experience a mental illness. Such numbers must change the article's suggestion of what to do "if someone" you know has a mental illness to the question, "Which people *whom I know* have a mental illness?"

If you cannot identify the people you know who have a mental illness, it's almost certainly because they are too ashamed and possibly afraid to tell you.

Our society openly teaches that strong and good people do not contract mental illness. Regrettably, some Christians may further distort that idea and contend that mental illness is due to weak faith. But that idea is a perversion of the Gospel and must be rejected. Faith is "counted for righteousness" before God, but it does not protect anyone from affliction, such as cancer, diabetes, heart disease, arthritis, depression, or schizophrenia. We in the LCMS understand that human suffering is due to the fallen, sinful state of man and the ongoing decay of the corporeal world, not to problems with faith. The compassionate and well-informed "You Are Not Alone" program will be appreciated by LCMS members and churches.

Mental illness affects one in five pastors, one in five teachers, one in five congregants. We have an obligation to try to help those of us with a mental illness, and that begins by finding a way to be more open and understanding. The "You Are Not Alone" program is an ideal way to start.

Stephen M. Saunders, Ph.D.  
Assoc. Professor, Department of  
Psychology  
Marquette University

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## *Teammates in ministry?*

“TEAM WORK” (AUG. '05) ADVOCATES A controversial position on the doctrine of church and ministry on the eve of synodwide discussions on the matter (i.e., the Model Theological Conference Aug. 23–25 in Scottsdale, Ariz.).

The author, Marvin Bergman, asserts that lay leaders can assume certain pastoral responsibilities to help reduce clergy stress and burnout. Why merely reduce those things? Why not get rid of them entirely?

He also suggests that money, or the lack of it, determines whether pastoral ministry in a congregation should be done by a pastor or a lay leader. There is no teaching like that in the Scriptures. If lay leaders are allowed to carry on pastoral ministry in poor congregations, they should be allowed to carry on pastoral ministry in any congregation.

What, then, is pastoral ministry, and what need is there for it?

*Rev. Arlo Pullmann  
Laurel, Mont.*

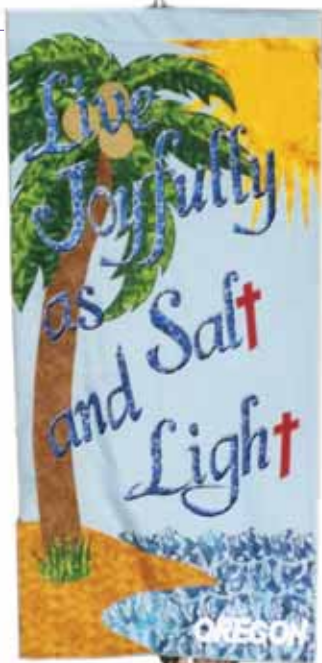
KUDOS TO MARVIN BERGMAN FOR CLARIFYING some issues relating to the training of lay leaders for ministry. It is heartening to see what some LCMS districts are doing in this area.

As a missionary in the Philippines 32 years ago, I wrote a small book called “Laymen: The Hope of the Church.” One pastor felt threatened and objected to the thesis. Others agreed that we cannot hope to reach out to a lost world for Christ without training and authorizing more laymen for important levels of ministry.

Why does it take a clergy shortage for us to understand what is so obvious in New Testament teaching and practice? Spirit-gifted laymen and clergy must work together if we hope to reach lost sinners with the saving Gospel of Christ.

*Rev. Norbert Becker  
St. Louis*

*At their 2005 convention, more than 600 delegates adopted 17 projects and set a mission goal of \$1.625 million.*



# IN LEAGUE WITH THE LORD

by Paula Schlueter Ross



**O**n a warm, sunny morning in August, something important was going on in the basement of a modest ranch house in a St. Louis suburb.

On this day, the blue-shuttered home of a retired widow had three cars in the driveway and another out front. Inside, five women—all members of Webster Gardens Lutheran Church, Webster Groves, Mo.—chatted as they sorted and packed notebooks, pencils, crayons, rulers, and other back-to-school items into hand-sewn bags.

Their goal? To pack 300 bags of school supplies and ship them to Lutheran World Relief's Minneapolis warehouse, where the items will be distributed to children worldwide.

They're just normal women, nothing too special, they'll tell you. But in the eyes of the world's poor, they're living, breathing saints.

The women—Kay, Donna, Trudy, Lorraine, and Lorene—are just five of the estimated 250,000 members of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League, the national organization for Lutheran Church—Missouri

Synod women.

As "LWMLers," they get "real satisfaction" out of helping others, they say. And their efforts, as simple as packing school supplies or tying quilts, have been recognized and applauded worldwide.

Kay Cross, one of several women in her congregation who hosts working sessions like these, says her little group has produced or collected 1,369 bags of school supplies, 682 quilts, 38 sewing kits, 91 health kits, and 297 pounds of soap over the past nine years. Her knees are getting a little stiff, she says, so she's had to quit the church choir and altar guild.

"I've given up a lot of things, but I don't want to give this up," says Cross. "It's something I can still do."

Donna Thomsen remembers how excited she was to get new school supplies as a girl, and she says it makes her happy to envision how today's impoverished children will react to the bags she is packing now.

Lorene Koepke, who served as a missionary in India for 26 years along with her late husband, Rev. Robert Koepke, believes she is continuing her mission work by serving the LWML. The organization, she



Three LWML members pack bags of school supplies at a home in suburban St. Louis. From left are Donna Thomsen, Lorene Koepke, and Lorraine Hummelsheim—all members of Webster Gardens Lutheran Church, Webster Groves, Mo. Their goal is to pack at least 300 bags for needy children.

says, is “very worthwhile” because of the evangelistic and charitable work of its members.

“The message they send, the good they do in the world—for so many years they have been helping others.”

## Worldwide mission

The “good they do,” indeed. Using little cardboard “mite boxes,” hundreds of thousands of LWML members over six decades have donated spare pennies, dimes, quarters, and larger contributions that together total more than \$80 million for Missouri Synod mission work.

Banding together under the LWML umbrella, Lutheran women have touched millions of people in more than 30 countries, providing chapels, missionary homes, and partner-church buildings; clinics, hospitals, and medical supplies; Bibles, Bible studies, books, magazines, *Mustard Seed* devotionals, and other inspirational materials; schools and classroom supplies, and other educational equipment; airplanes, jeeps, trucks, and motorcycles for numerous mission fields; computers,

radio transceivers, videos, and Bible translation centers—the list goes on and on.

Dr. Robert Roegner, executive director of LCMS World Mission, calls the LWML “one of the groups most critical for the church today because their heart for mission is so evident.” Through the LWML, Lutheran women have been a vital part of Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod mission work, he says, and without their contributions LCMS mission endeavors would surely suffer.

“What impresses me most about the LWML is that throughout their history, they have always put first things first,” Roegner says. “They continue to keep their focus on bringing the light of Christ to people who are living in darkness. They don’t only talk about it, but by their actions show that they put first things first.”



In addition to raising money, those actions include quilt-making. Over the years, numerous LWML sewing circles have taken donated clothing, curtains, and other materials and transformed them into millions of patchwork quilts that have comforted hurting people all over the world.

Most of those quilts are sent to Lutheran World Relief (LWR), which has distributed some 21 million handmade quilts worldwide over its 60-year history. The inter-Lutheran relief and development organization is probably as well-known for its quilts as the LWML—the “Good Samaritan Quilt Plaza” at its Baltimore headquarters features thousands of colored bricks, arranged in a quilt pattern, that donors can purchase and engrave with a name or message. Money raised from the sale of the bricks is used to ship donated quilts, health kits, and other human-care items around the world.

LWR President Kathryn Wolford considers the LWML a relief partner, and says its members have made “literally millions of quilts which have gone to places from A to Z—from Angola to Zambia and everywhere in between.

“They have tirelessly made kits and layettes, bringing reminders of God’s love to impoverished women and children in clinics, refugee camps, and remote villages,” Wolford says. LWR also has received two LWML mission grants to support its work in India and Kenya. “We are blessed, indeed, by LWML,” she says.

## More opportunities to serve

At its 31st biennial convention, held in June in Tampa, Fla., the LWML adopted a record mission goal of \$1.625 million and 17 mission projects to fund. Recipients of those grants include people affected



A smiling woman from Niger, West Africa, holds up a quilt she has received from Lutheran World Relief. The inter-Lutheran relief and development organization has distributed some 21 million quilts—many of them handmade by LWML members.



More than 40 African American, African immigrant, Hispanic, and Hmong women—all LCMS members—met before and during this year's LWML convention to celebrate their diversity and learn about the women's organization. In the photo below, Chance Perard, right, presents an LWML scarf and "Heart to Heart Sisters" pin to Felicia Flye.

by HIV/AIDS in Kenya, a Lutheran school in East St. Louis, Asian people in the United States, schools in Sierra Leone, blind people in East Africa, and impoverished people in China.

Concerned about the LWML's reputation as a group for "old ladies" and its overwhelmingly Caucasian membership, LWML leaders helped pay expenses for 70 women under age 40 and another 40 African-American, African immigrant, Hispanic, and Hmong women so they could take part in the Tampa convention.

The LWML "unites women

around a mission focus on a personal level" and brings them together for Bible study, prayer, fellowship, servant events, and mission service, says LWML President Linda Reiser.

But it also acts as "the arms, feet, hands, voice, and mission support of the church."

The LWML gives Lutheran women opportunities to use their gifts and skills in service to the church, she says, particularly their gifts of "building relationships, engaging others, and caring for others." LWML members today serve on many national LCMS boards, she notes.

Betty Duda, LWML president from 1987 to 1991, has served numerous civic and Lutheran boards and agencies, including SunTrust bank, Rollins College, the Central Florida Art Council, Orlando Junior League, Lutheran World Relief, Wheat Ridge Ministries, LCMS World Mission, and the LCMS Board of Directors.

Of all her leadership experiences, Duda says her LWML service has been the most fulfilling. The LWML "has helped women find their gifts that God has given them and use them in such a positive way," she says. "In the LWML you're free to use your gifts and to be a visionary and to be creative."

Virginia Von Seggern, who served as LWML president from 1999 to 2003, says she was asked to serve



Past LWML presidents pose with LWML "beanie bears" at the Tampa convention. From left are Virginia Von Seggern (who served from 1999 to 2003), Gloria Edwards (1995-99), Ida Mall (1991-95), Betty Duda (1987-91), and Helen Gienapp (1979-83).

on a number of LCMS boards as a result of her LWML service.

"The LWML is respected highly, and our opinions are valued by many," says Von Seggern, currently a member of the LCMS mission board.

Also of value is the care and concern LWMLers show to others and to each other, she says. When her 37-year-old daughter, Kay Hincker, died of a beta strep infection in 2001, Von Seggern was deluged with some 5,000 condolence cards and more than \$10,000 in contributions to the LWML endowment in Kay's memory.

"The support was fabulous—the love and just plain caring from so many," says Von Seggern. "I know I heard from everyone who had ever lost an adult child."

Marlys Taege, who served as the LWML's first public relations director and as editor-in-chief of the *Lutheran Woman's Quarterly* for 11 years, has written two books about the LWML. In the prologue of the first, *Women in God's Service*, Taege says, "It's said often, and it sounds trite, but it's true: those who have not been actively involved in the League don't know what they are missing."

Taege says LWMLers experience spiritual growth (through Bible studies and other devotions), personal growth (her LWML service, she says, helped her overcome her shyness), and life-long friendships (she describes LWML's biennial conventions as "huge family reunions").

Researching the first LWML book and its sequel, *Women in League with the Lord*, published this year, Taege says she learned about the "courage, talents, and wisdom" of LWML leaders. President Lillian Preisinger, for example, cancelled the LWML's 1955 convention in New Orleans because its Black delegates were refused rooms at the convention hotel. "We stood up against discrimination," Taege says.

Among LWML anecdotes she's discovered, Taege relates one about a



Dresses, hats—and gloves!—were considered appropriate attire at the LWML's first convention in Chicago in 1942.



Wearing green "Joyful Jaunt" T-shirts, hundreds of women took part in the convention's mission-pledge walk, raising more than \$58,840 for the LWML's 2005-07 mission goal.

planeload of LWMLers enroute to a convention. The flight attendant asked how many passengers were going to the LWML convention, and 81 raised their hands.

"Immediately it was announced over the intercom, 'There are 81 missionaries aboard!'" Taege writes in *Women in God's Service*.

Perhaps that observation isn't so far off. Von Seggern calls LWML members "the mission heart of the Synod, and certainly the best of volunteers."

"All they want to do is serve," she says. "And with the love of the Lord in their hearts."

For more information about the Lutheran Women's Missionary League, visit its Web site at [www.lwml.org](http://www.lwml.org) or call its St. Louis office at (800) 252-5965.



Paula Schlueter Ross is contributing editor for *The Lutheran Witness*.



## ORIGINAL SIN

by Janice Long

**A** 19th-century hymn describes eloquently and accurately the reality of our human condition:

“Come in poverty and meanness, come defiled, without, within;

From infection and uncleanness, from the leprosy of sin.”

Infection? Defiled? *Leprosy?*

Strong and unpopular words today, but truth nonetheless.

Scripture says that this defilement begins in the womb: “Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.” David was describing original sin, the inborn sin that we have all inherited since Adam’s fall. The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod holds strongly to this doctrine. We do so because the Bible tells us the truth about God and ourselves, and about ourselves it is clear: nothing good lives in us (Rom. 7:18).

According to these Scriptures, from where does this original or inherited sin come?

Gen. 3:1–7 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Rom. 5:12

\_\_\_\_\_

1 Cor. 15:21–22

The Epitome of the Formula of Concord, part of the confessions of our church body, says: “We believe, teach, and confess that original sin is not a slight corruption of human nature, but rather a corruption so deep that there is nothing sound or uncorrupted left in the human body or soul ... the damage is so indescribable that it cannot be recognized by our reason but only from God’s Word.”

From these verses, what does God’s Word tell us about our nature?

Jer. 17:9 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Rom. 8:6–8 \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Col. 1:21 \_\_\_\_\_

This corrupted nature affects us in many ways. Using *Luther’s Small Catechism*, especially questions 78–83 found in his discussion of the Ten Commandments, to help, write out how the following verses show that original sin:

Makes everyone guilty?  
Rom. 3:9, 5:19 and Eph. 2:3

\_\_\_\_\_

Leaves us with no spiritual life or understanding?  
Gen. 8:21; Ps. 14:1–3; 1 Cor. 2:14; and Eph. 2:1

\_\_\_\_\_

Leads to many other sins?  
Gal. 5:19 and James 1:15, 4:17

\_\_\_\_\_

If our situation looks bleak and dire, it is. Our disease is terminal, and left to ourselves there is no remedy. The cure must come from without. And this cure takes the form of water and Word.

What cure is talked about in these verses? And why is a new birth needed?

John 3:1–8; Rom. 6:1–7; and Titus 3:3–7

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



*Therefore sins are drowned in Baptism, and in place of sin righteousness comes forth.*

About Baptism’s curative powers Luther says: “For just as a child is drawn out of its mother’s womb and born, and through this fleshly birth is a sinful man and a child of wrath, so man is drawn out of Baptism and spiritually born and through this spiritual birth is a child of grace and a justified man. Therefore sins are drowned in Baptism, and in place of sin righteousness comes forth.” Good news indeed for infected, unclean, and leprous sinners!



Janice Long is a member of Gloria Christi Lutheran Church in Greeley, Colo.

## ME... A MISSIONARY?

*Helping people with medical needs turns out to be its own reward.*

by Arlene M. Loeschen

**A**long with 14 other Concordia University Wisconsin graduate nurse practitioner students, I decided to serve on a medical mission to Mexico in March 2002. Teri Kaul, an assistant professor at Concordia's graduate nursing program, headed the trip. We went to the Ensenada area of Baja California, Mexico, with three other instructors, a physical therapist, and a physician.

Although I have heard about mission work all my life, I have preferred to financially and prayerfully support someone else in the mission field. My idea of "roughing it" is a motel. But after prayerful consideration, I decided to go on the mission trip despite my uncertainties.

Culture shock set in as soon as we reached Rancho Agua Viva, a Christian camp 12 miles from Ensenada.

We quickly learned that electricity would be available for only five hours each evening—meaning no heat in the dorms, no lights in the morning, and no hair dryer after a shower. Plus there were warnings to not drink the water outside the camp grounds and not to eat the food from vendors, no matter how wonderful it smelled. And there would not be toilets or running water at some of the sites.

We saw nearly 500 patients the week we were there. They ranged in age from 4 months to 82 years, and they had a variety of illnesses. This would be considered a busy week in many clinics in the United States with modern facilities, but we didn't have anything vaguely resembling

the facilities we were all used to. We set up our clinic in a different location each day, usually in an impoverished neighborhood.

On many days there were not enough rooms inside, so the clinics spilled outside under trees and into backyards. Medications were shipped ahead from the state or they were provided by a local Christian doctor who worked with us.



Healthcare in Mexico is not readily available to the average person and is very expensive relative to the average wage of \$4 to \$6 per day. Consequently, even routine illnesses go untreated, and many become chronic because early intervention was not available.

Since our time with these individuals was so limited, we conducted classes each day on different health topics.

We also provided activities for the children as they waited, like face painting, making puppets, coloring, and making crosses.

We shared Jesus' love for them as much as we could. While telling them about Jesus and caring for them physically, we prayed that Gal. 5:6b

would come through loud and clear: "The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love."

We gathered bags of items including toothpaste, soap, shampoo, lotion, and toothbrushes, and distributed those as well as medicine. We received many "gracias" for the medicine, the care, and the personal articles despite the fact many individuals waited four or five hours to be seen.

Despite personal and professional inconveniences, the mental and spiritual rewards were phenomenal. Beyond the daily uplifting we received from the patients we saw each day, Teri Kaul's husband, Tom, pastor of Faith Lutheran Church, Germantown, Wis., provided us with written daily devotions to

strengthen us for each day.

I returned home feeling it was a life-changing experience. While many of us went with the expectation of changing the lives of those we cared for, most came home feeling the experience changed our lives and outlook more. I encourage others to prayerfully consider participating in a mission project of some kind at least once in his or her life. You too may be surprised to find that you want to do it again.



*Arlene Loeschen is a Family Nurse Practitioner. She and her husband, Don, live in Katy, Texas. He is the pastor of Christ Lutheran Church, Pattison, Texas.*

# THE SMALL CATECHISM: TEACHING THE BASIC TRUTHS

*Martin Luther's Small Catechism explains in simple and practical ways the basic truths revealed in the Scriptures.*



by Wilbert Kreiss

“The deplorable destitution which I recently observed, during a visitation of the churches has impelled and constrained me to prepare this Catechism.”

**M**artin Luther was bewildered by what he found when he visited congregations in Saxony in 1527. He witnessed the terrible religious ignorance of most people, including pastors trained for ministry. For pastors, he wrote his *Large Catechism*; for laypeople—especially schoolteachers and heads of households—he wrote the *Small Catechism*.

The *Small Catechism* first appeared as posters printed with the text and explanations of the Ten Commandments, the Apostles' Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Sacraments, as well as a set of daily prayers. Mounted on the walls of churches, schools, and homes, the posters were a practical way to remind people of Christianity's basic truths. In May 1529, the *Small Catechism* was published as a book. A second edition appeared a few weeks later, followed before summer by a third edition, and many more.

*This Small Catechism for children was published just 30 years after Luther launched the Reformation, reflecting the importance of the new printing press in rapidly spreading the true Gospel.*

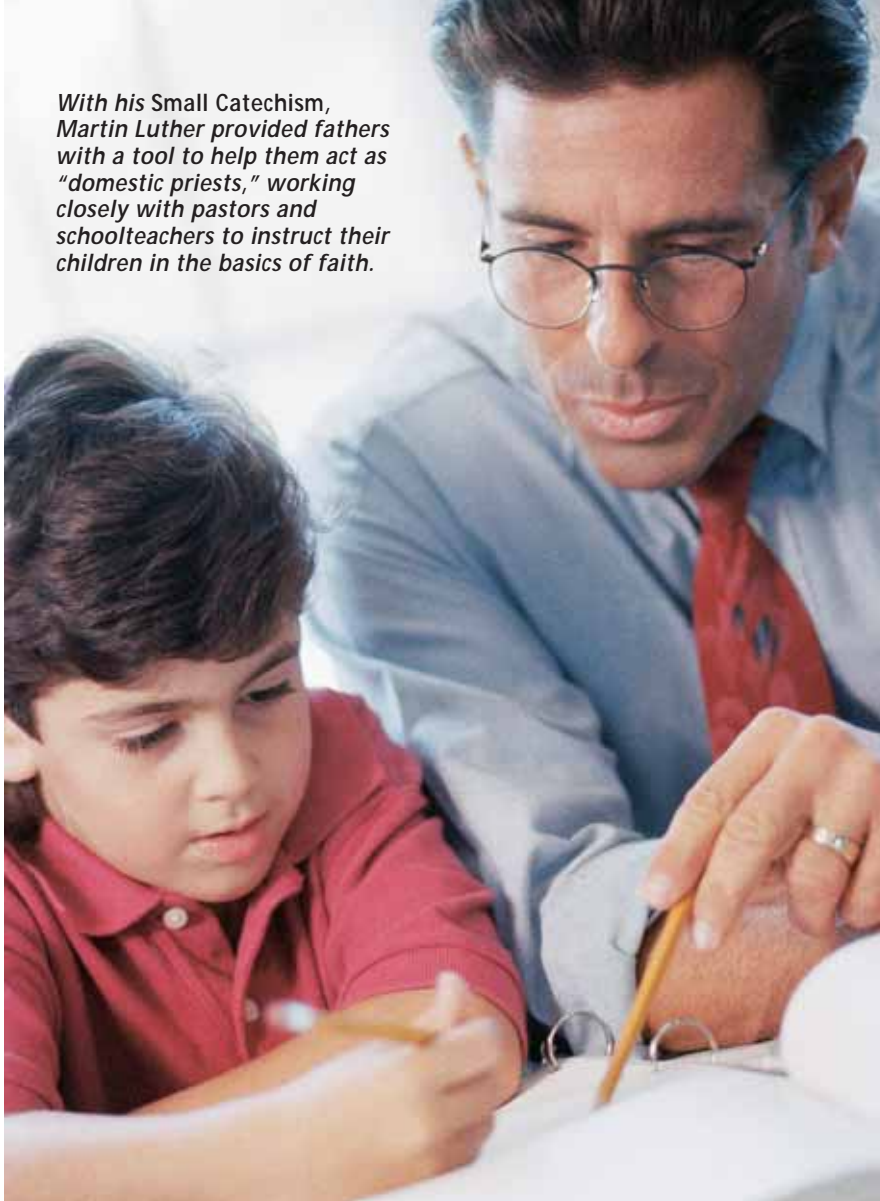
## THE BOOK OF CONCORD: A SOURCE OF HARMONY

*The Series Continues. ...*

In the first four installments of this series, “What Does It Mean to Be Confessional?” we have looked at individual elements of the Lutheran Confessions. This month we highlight The Book of Concord material most familiar to us—Luther's *Small* and *Large Catechisms*. These two teaching tools are also the earliest of the confessional writings.



With his *Small Catechism*, Martin Luther provided fathers with a tool to help them act as “domestic priests,” working closely with pastors and schoolteachers to instruct their children in the basics of faith.



## Summarizing essentials

The *Small Catechism* begins with the Ten Commandments and their deep spiritual meaning. Next, Luther presents the three articles of the Apostles’ Creed, which teach the work of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit with explanations that are especially beautiful, inviting believers to personally apply the Gospel promises and live under them.

In the third part of the *Small Catechism*, Luther shows the beauty and richness of the Lord’s Prayer so that reciting it might not be a simple rite performed automatically, but rather an expression of genuine adoration, faith, and confidence.

In the parts of the catechism dealing with Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, the Reformer presents the sacraments as authentic means of grace in which God offers the forgiveness of sins and eternal life to those receiving them with faith.

In a section entitled “Confession,” Luther speaks about confession and absolution. He shows the benefits that believers receive when they recognize the pastor as

God’s spokesman and acknowledge that the absolution he pronounces is as true and valid as if the Lord Himself had spoken it.

At the end of the catechism, after a collection of prayers, there is a “Table of Duties” that reminds Christians of their obligations according to their status in society and the responsibilities with which they have been entrusted.

*L*uther encourages fathers to act as “domestic priests,” carrying out their spiritual responsibilities.

Finally, “Christian Questions and Their Answers” help believers examine themselves and thus commune worthily, acknowledging and confessing their sins and checking the sincerity of their faith.

## Vigorous and valid

In a lengthy preface, Luther states why he wrote the *Small Catechism* and how he wants it used. He encourages fathers to act as “domestic priests,” carrying out their spiritual responsibilities, working closely with pastors and schoolteachers. He insists on the need to memorize the catechism’s fundamental texts so they might permeate the spirits and hearts of the children who study them.

Although the *Small Catechism* is 476 years old, it has lost none of its vigor, and it retains all its validity. It professes eternal truths deeply anchored in the Word of God and enunciated in a simple and practical way. The careful reader realizes immediately which lessons, encouragements, and consolations to draw from it and apply to daily life. That is why this little book is still used in Lutheran churches around the world. While it may be supplemented with other tools, it would be a serious mistake to replace it under the pretext that it is out of date. It is no more outdated than the truths for which it stands.



Dr. Wilbert Kreiss is a retired president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church—Synod of France and Belgium.

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# THE LARGE CATECHISM: INSTRUCTION FOR THE CLERGY

*Martin Luther exhorted all Christians, but especially the clergy, to study this Large Catechism every day. As a summary and epitome of the Scripture, it is designed to help them always teach the same.*

by Werner Klän

Luther wrote his *Large Catechism*, or “German Catechism,” to provide basic instruction in the fundamentals of the Christian faith. It contains, in Luther’s words, “what every Christian should know.”

According to his first preface, the *Large Catechism* was designed as a handbook to help heads of households teach the Christian faith to their families. Luther’s second preface directs the catechism to preachers and pastors, offering them a model for Christian education.

As in the *Small Catechism*, Luther treats the basic texts of Christian teaching in the tradition of the medieval church, adding Holy Baptism and the Sacrament of the Altar to the Ten Commandments,

the Creed, and the Lord’s Prayer.

The *Large Catechism* grew out of three series of sermons Luther preached in 1528. For several months that year, Luther replaced John Bugenhagen, the local pastor and superintendent, as the preacher at St. Mary’s Church in Wittenberg. Luther’s sermons at St. Mary’s focused on the basics of the Christian faith, and it was from these sermons that he drew the material for the catechism.

Luther began his work on the *Large Catechism* in September 1528. By April 1529, he had completed his task, and a first edition of the *Large Catechism* was published. Almost immediately, he began revising it, adding among other items, the “Brief Exhortation to Confession,”

which appeared in a revised edition published later that year.

## Meeting a need

Luther had started treating the commandments, the Creed, and the Lord’s Prayer in sermons as early as 1518, but the disastrous state of religious education he came across on the visitation program in Saxony in 1527–28 underscored the need to publish a concise synopsis of fundamental Christian doctrine in a clear-cut Reformation perspective.

The inner structure of the *Large Catechism* is guided by the idea of God’s solemn and sacred self-communication. This theme steers the explanation of the Ten Commandments, as the First Commandment focuses on God’s promise: “I, I

## THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH— SYNOD OF FRANCE AND BELGIUM

was formed in 1927 by congregations founded during the 19th century in Alsace Lorraine. It has almost 700 baptized members.

## SELBSTÄNDIGE EVANGELISCH—LUTHERISCHE KIRCHE (SELK) (INDEPENDENT EVANGELICAL—LUTHERAN CHURCH)

was formed in 1972 by most of the confessional Lutheran bodies in Germany. In 1991, the Evangelisch—Lutherische Kirche in the former German Democratic Republic joined the SELK. Today, it has 187 congregations and 37,760 baptized members.

myself will give you what you need and help you out of every danger.” To this promise, God adds: “Only do not let your heart cling to or rest in anyone else.”

In discussing the First Article of the Apostles’ Creed, Luther states: “[God] has given to us Himself with all creation ... apart from the fact that He has also showered us with inexpressible eternal blessings through His Son and the Holy Spirit.” Thus, in the Second Article, we learn, how God “has given Himself completely to us, withholding nothing.” Therefore, the Creed helps “us do what the Ten Commandments require of us.”

The petitions in the Lord’s Prayer correspondingly request nothing but the fulfillment of what is commanded in the Decalogue. Moreover, “God takes the initiative and puts into our mouths the very words.” The sacraments are regarded as “a treasure that God gives us and faith grasps,” and as a treasure “placed at everyone’s door, yes, upon the table.”

According to the “Binding Summary of the Formula of Concord” (1577), the *Large Catechism* summarizes Christian teaching as a “Bible of the Laity.” With this perspective in mind, the *Large Catechism* can serve as an exemplary piece of Christian education, motivating us to live our life in the light of the Gospel as rediscovered in the Lutheran Reformation.

## *L*uther’s sermons at St. Mary’s focused on the basics of the Christian faith, and it was from these sermons that he drew the material for the catechism.

St. Mary’s Church, the 16th-century stadtkirche, or city church, of Wittenberg, Germany, is where Martin Luther preached many of his instructional sermons that provided the springboard for both catechisms. In front, on the town square, are memorial statues to Luther (far left) and Philip Melancthon.

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# 'INTO ALL THE EARTH'

*Using God's gifts of technology, Synod's radio station, KFUO, takes the Gospel message literally "to the ends of the world."*



by Scott B. Kelly

**E**ric Anderson spends two hours commuting to and from work every day in New York City. To break the monotony, he listens to music and radio broadcasts—including KFUO, the radio station owned and operated by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Only radios in the St. Louis area can pick up KFUO's broadcast signals. So how does Eric tune in from almost 1,000 miles away?

He's a podcast listener.

"I've been using my iPod for a couple of years now, largely because of my long commute," says Eric. "[KFUO] is just about the only religious broadcaster to be doing this. It's a great way to reach out to young professionals like myself."

Podcasting refers to downloading, storing, and listening to radio programs with an MP3 player, iPod, or similar device. KFUF-AM began podcasting earlier this year—ahead of most radio stations of any type.

The station had started Internet streaming in the late 1990s. That technology allows listeners to hear programs over the Internet practically anywhere on Earth as they're being broadcast. Podcasting enables listeners to get the programs they want anytime they want, even long after it's been broadcast.

"LCMS was well ahead of its time as a pioneer in Gospel outreach by starting a radio station in 1924," says Dennis Stortz, KFUF director of broadcast operations. "LCMS was on the cutting edge back then and continues to be today with this new technology."

## The Voice of the Reformation

KFUF is the nation's longest continually running religious radio station. Rev. Richard Kretzschmar, Dr. John Fritz, and Dr. Walter A. Maier, who originated the famed "Lutheran Hour" broadcast, founded the AM station in 1924. Three years later, they moved the station to its current home on the Concordia Seminary campus in St. Louis. KFUF added an FM channel in 1948; both AM and FM outlets simulcast the same programming until 1975, when the Federal Communications Commission decided that the two channels should have different content. The FM station became the award-winning Classic 99, playing classical music, while the AM station focused on talk, interview, and worship music programming.

"KFUF-AM is *the* voice of the Reformation on the radio airwaves, in fact the only one in the world that I know of that presents the confessional Lutheran theology of the Reformation," says station manager, Chuck Rathert. The AM programming reaches thousands of listeners daily in the St. Louis area and across the country through syndication to more than 900 stations—and now around the world, thanks to Internet streaming and podcasting.

Paul Clayton, host of KFUF's "Morning Show," says that Internet streaming and podcasting are "the most exciting breakthroughs we've ever had. It's incredible to have the resources that reach well beyond our broadcast signal."

Rathert agrees. "The station's founders always aspired to use technology to get the message out as best as

possible," he says. Whereas Maier and the other founders strained at the limits of technology, today KFUF has the reach they could have only dreamed about as little as a few decades ago. "I can't underscore enough how thrilling it is to stand on top of all their work, foresight, vision, and passion to reach audiences with the Gospel—and receive

postcards from a lady in Sweden or a missionary in Argentina who hears our broadcasts over the Internet."

## Keeping Forward, Upward, Onward

Without quality programming all of the technology

would be useless. The airwaves are full of competitive religious broadcasting that is diverse and often conflicting. For example, the St. Louis radio market alone has almost two dozen Christian-oriented stations. The goal of KFUF's AM programming is to make sure that the truths of the Bible via confessional Lutheranism are in the marketplace and disseminated in a way that can be followed and understood by listeners.

Remembering what KFUF stands for—Keeping Forward, Upward, Onward—has helped the programming grow over the decades in ways that let the Gospel message penetrate through cultural changes and shifting attitudes. Most of the programs are original shows produced in St. Louis. For example, there is Clayton's magazine program, "Morning Show." Rathert hosts "The Bible Study," an hour-long examination of Scripture with guest pastors. Rev. Todd Wilken hosts the three-hour live talk program "Issues, Etc.," focusing on current



*Doris Christopher, right, the founder of The Pampered Chef, Ltd., appeared with host Paul Clayton on "The Morning Show," on August 5. Christopher, a member of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, is a major benefactor of Concordia University, River Forest, Ill.*





## 80 YEARS AGO . . .

From Greenfield, Iowa, a new KFUF listener had this profound and prophetic comment in his letter, written in December 1924:

“It certainly was a treat to hear the Word in song and speech and to know that our Concordia is permitted to spread the old Gospel on the wings of ether.”

Concordia Seminary, the Lutheran Laymen’s League, and the St Louis Lutheran Publicity Association all played roles in the start-up of KFUF, which became a synodical enterprise in 1927.



over the Internet in St. Paul, Minn., wrote late last year that he had “never heard more sound, unflinching explanations of the Christian faith anywhere in Christian broadcasting. The unapologetic apology of the Lutheran faith is sound, Christ-centered, and true. Thank you for your efforts.”

A life-long Lutheran from St. Louis wrote that she was a casual, Sunday-only Christian. But then she started listening to

events facing Christianity. The Sunday night “Issues, Etc.” is syndicated across the country.

“The responses we receive from listeners are the testimony that we’re getting it done,” says Rathert. “Some people we unnerve, and some we distress, because they’re hearing a perspective they’re not used to or don’t agree with. Some are encouraged by what they hear because they can’t find it anywhere else.”

One listener who hears KFUF

*I am a [former] Muslim who has been born again by grace alone, faith alone, Christ alone... May the God of Glory through Christ Jesus bless you.”*

An Internet listener in New Zealand.



KFUF. “I have been spreading the word about KFUF to my friends who are not Lutheran, because I find that the programming speaks from the Word to everyone. It’s not just a Lutheran station speaking Lutheran doctrine,” she wrote.

And last year KFUF received this surprising message from an Internet listener in Hamilton, New Zealand. He testified, “I am a [former] Muslim who has been born again by grace alone, faith alone, Christ alone. I [no longer] believe there is any other way to come to God. [From] John 14:6: May the God of Glory through Christ Jesus bless you.”

*John Roberts, music director for KFUF-FM, plays the music that the St. Louis community can hear only on “Classic 99,” as the station is known. His segment is “Classics of the Mid-Day.”*

*Chuck Rathert, general manager of KFUE, hosts "The Bible Study" program with frequent guest Rev. Richard Moore, pastor of Immanuel Chapel Lutheran Church, St. Louis County.*

## Sacred connection

Although the FCC mandated separate programming for KFUE's stations, the FM outlet, Classic 99, is not far removed from its roots. It still has a function in proclaiming the Gospel. The station plays devotions every morning and dedicates Sunday mornings to sacred music and worship. "Sacred music is a cornerstone of the LCMS: A *lot* of classical music is in fact based on sacred themes," says Stortz. "When the AM and FM formats split in 1975, it made perfect sense for the FM station to continue as a classical music outlet."

Unlike the AM station, which depends largely upon listener support for its financial viability,



*Dennis Stortz, director of broadcast operations, displays The National Association of Broadcasters' Marconi Award that KFUE-FM previously won as the Classical Station of the Year. The station is nominated again this year.*

Classic 99 is a commercial station. It's highly respected in the radio industry and was recently nominated a third time for the prestigious Marconi award for excellence in broadcasting. (It won this national award in 1999.) KFUE-FM also plays a vital and necessary role in St. Louis both as a community outreach vehicle and as the area's only classical music station. Live streaming is planned for KFUE-FM's future.

Classic 99 and its AM counterpart are LCMS treasures, and KFUE has a rich legacy and a forward-looking mission. It's making an impact far beyond its broadcast signals, reaching men and women with the Good News around the world. Who knows what will be possible 10 years from now? God willing, KFUE will be at its heart.

"The St. Louis area is blessed to have KFUE in its midst," says LCMS President Gerald B. Kieschnick. "I pray that God will continue to use this medium as a means to nurture the Christian community and reach the lost through a strong presentation of the Good News of Jesus Christ as Savior of the world."

Learn more about KFUE, its programming, Internet streaming, and podcasting at [www.kfuo.org](http://www.kfuo.org).



*Scott B. Kelly is a professional writer and a youth ministry volunteer at Lutheran Church of Webster Gardens in St. Louis County, Mo.*



# BLENDED FAMILIES

*God created families in part for people to care for and support one another. His love and wisdom apply to blended families as well.*

by Carol Jobs

**B**ill Schmidt felt queasy as he turned the corner onto Oak Hill Lane and drove slowly toward the two-story colonial house three doors down on the left. His second wife, Marilyn, sat anxiously beside him in the minivan. In the back seat, 9-year-old Johnny, Bill's son from his first marriage, and 4-year-old Linda, born of Bill's new relationship with Marilyn, seemed oblivious to the angst of their parents.

Bill knew that his first wife, Jane, their 15-year-daughter, Traci, and Jane's new husband, Tony, were waiting in the house. Their divorce five years ago had split their family, and there had been little contact between them. Now, after months of phone calls with Jane and discussions with his pastor, Bill had decid-

ed it was time for the two new families to meet and work out a relationship.

Welcome to the world of blended families.

Whatever name you call them—blended families, binuclear families, even stepfamily-relationship systems—more than half of Americans today have been, are now, or eventually will be members of such a family. Like Bill and Jane's youngsters, some 35 percent of children will live in a blended family by age 18. With nearly half of all marriages ending in divorce, and with 70 percent of divorced people remarrying, stepfamilies will continue to become even more prevalent in America.

How blended families are put together and work is not well understood. They often come with built-in ambiguity concerning boundaries and roles. And our culture has not

established clear patterns or rituals to help handle the complex relationships of acquired family members. "Stepmother," "stepfather," and "stepchild" can sound negative and stigmatizing, adding to the difficulty of families trying to work out these relationships. As a result, family members often make do with terms like "Mama Ruth," "Grandpa Joe," or the all-purpose "uncle."

What is a "family" anyway? In the not-too-distant past, it was Mom, Dad, and the kids (no divorce, no stepparents, no blended families), much like the oft-cited Cleavers from "Leave It to Beaver." Where did that concept originate? Our Creator established the first family. First came the man, Adam. Then God provided him a wife, Eve. They produced the first children, Cain and Abel.

For millennia, this arrangement

has been the standard for families in virtually all societies. Stepfamilies formed when a widowed parent remarried.

Today's blended families more often result from remarriage following divorce. Divorce is called "sin" in the Bible because it disrupts the union of two souls whom God Himself solemnly had united into "one flesh" (see Jesus' discussion on the subject in Luke 19:1–11). Of course, there are certain Biblical grounds for divorce, and some divorces really cannot be avoided. Still, if a divorce itself is not sinful, it likely was caused by sinful behavior, which, if not repented of and absolved, can be carried into a new relationship.

## New rules and roles

One mistake many stepfamilies make is trying to use the roles and rules of the first-marriage family as guidelines for the second. Are someone's original in-laws still his in-laws? Does Bill's son call Jane, his biological mother, "Mom," even though he hardly remembers her? How should Bill and Jane's daughter, Traci, address stepmother Marilyn? Trying to replicate the original nuclear family can get complicated and lead to problems.

Blended families require a new paradigm—one that develops a relationship system with permeable boundaries that allow children to belong in multiple homes and move easily between them.

Such families also must allow for open lines of communication between ex-spouses, as well as between children and their biological parents, stepparents, grandparents, and other relatives. Extended-family relationships in blended families may be even more important for a child's well-being than they are in first families.

Blended families have different

characteristics than nuclear families. Understanding and working with these characteristics is key to structuring the new family unit and making it work. Here is a brief look at some of these characteristics and tips on what you can do to deal with them:

*Faced with all of these challenges, can a blended family build healthy relationships and be a home where the name of Christ dwells? Absolutely.*

### Lack of clear definitions.

Who is in the family and who is out? How should family members address one another? For many, the best course of action (in the absence of hard-and-fast societal rules) is for the family members to define for themselves who is "in" and to work out a mutually agreed upon system of addressing one another. For example, Traci might call her father's new wife "Mom" or Marilyn.

### Absence of norms.

Blended-family members are continually confronted with the absence of models and norms for playing their roles. For example, what are the responsibilities of a stepparent to a stepchild? What obedience and respect do stepchildren owe their stepparents?

### Ambiguity regarding authority and power.

Power (the *ability* to do something) and authority (the *right* to do something) are divided among various adults. For example, a child may be allowed to do certain things when with one parent that he or she is not allowed to do when with the other, creating a conflict between the child and the less accommodating parent.

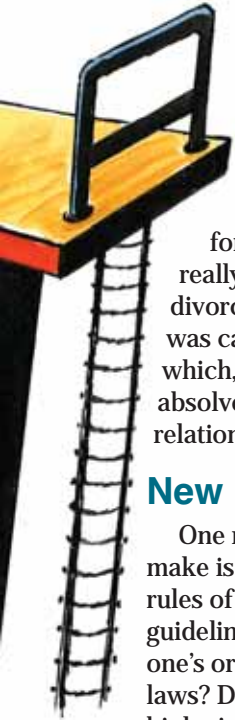
Though not easy to establish and follow, these "lines of authority"

and responsibilities are best worked out in advance between the responsible adults. Even with the best efforts, conflicts over finances, responsibilities, and loyalty arise which, not surprisingly, represent the most significant issues in post-divorce and remarriage families.

Complications regarding finances revolve around the fact that one or both parents usually enter the remarriage with financial obligations to the first family. Failure to pay or to collect alimony or child support often wreaks havoc in blended families.

One of the greatest strains on parents in blended families is loyalty conflict. Allowing their children to express the full range of negative and positive feelings toward all of their parents and stepparents can help resolve these conflicts. Quite often, both biological parents want the child's complete allegiance. Children feel caught, afraid that if they don't quickly and unconditionally love a new stepparent, they will hurt and anger that stepparent. Yet, if they do begin to love that stepparent, they feel they are being disloyal to their biological parent, perhaps to the point of losing the love of that parent.

Faced with all these challenges, can a blended family build healthy relationships and be a home where the name of Christ dwells? Absolutely. John and Emily Visher, authorities on the subject of stepfamily relationships, have described six characteristics of remarried families that they believe result from making wise adjustments:



# The time needed for stepfamilies to become integrated and begin functioning as a family unit can be two years or longer.

1. Completed mourning over the missing family members.
2. Realistic expectations for the new-family relationships.
3. A strong, unified marital couple as family executives.
4. Constructive customs and traditions developed specifically for the blended family. When possible, traditions from past family experiences

are retained or combined into new customs.

5. Respectful, caring step-relationships.
6. Appropriate cooperation and coordination between the separate family households.

Visher and Visher say the initial reorganization period—the time needed for stepfamilies to become integrated and begin functioning as a family unit—can take two years or longer.

Sometimes, professional intervention—that is, counseling—involving some basic education about family relationships can help blended families. Counseling also can help to identify difficulties stemming from unclear and unrealistic expectations. The professional can assist family members to explore and clarify such feelings as grief, anger, loss, loyalty, and hope. He or she can help them understand that stepfamilies can be organized in a variety of ways—ways that differ from nuclear families.

Here are three important points a counselor might emphasize in working with a blended family:

1. Stepparents do not have the same rights or privileges in relation to their stepchild as the child's natural parents do.
2. A stepparent and stepchild owe courtesy and respect to

one another. That is the extent of their obligation. Neither owes the other love.

3. Though stepparents may perform a variety of roles, they should not try to compete with the biological parent or substitute for him or her unless the latter clearly is unavailable to the child.

The helping professional will try to bring about an open, cooperative, co-parental relationship between former spouses, helping them work through lingering emo-

tional damage or resentments over their divorce. Children never should have final say on whether a parent remarries. Nor should children have the power to dictate the terms of custody or visitation, though their input on such things obviously increases with age.

Finally, it is hard to overstate the importance of a strong church-life for blended families. King Solomon, no stranger to the challenges of blended marriages, offered the following Godly wisdom: “Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain” (Ps. 127:1).

Marriage is God's institution given as a blessing to His children. When we give Him center stage in our families, He responds with the help and wisdom we need to experience the joy of family. As much as we might long for the days of Ward, June, Wally, and the Beav, we can't turn back the clock on societal change or the consequences of our own past sins or marital misfortunes. But we certainly can be assured of our Savior's mercy and forgiveness and trust Him to lead us in building healthy relationships in complicated blended-family situations.

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*Dr. Carol Jabs is associate professor of sociology at Concordia University, River Forest, Ill.*



# from the PRESIDENT

## SALT AND LIGHT

To attend a national convention of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League—the LWML—is to see the Missouri Synod at its best.

I say that for a number of reasons.

First is that “M” in LWML. This is an organization that exemplifies the *missionary* spirit, the sincere desire to bring the life-giving Gospel of Jesus Christ to a world of people who are lost in darkness.

In fact, the theme of this year's convention, held in June in Tampa, Fla., was, “*Live Joyfully as Salt and Light*.” Terry and I feel it was a privilege and a pleasure to attend this wonderful event.

I was impressed yet again by the tremendous spirit of positive, joyful, and dedicated support that members of the LWML give to the mission of the church. It was with rapt attention that they listened to missionaries on the program talk about their work. They gave the same careful attention to video summaries of mission projects that sought financial support.

Prayerfully and seriously, they

voted to adopt a record mission goal of \$1.625 million for the next two years and selected 17 projects to fund with their “mites.”

LWMLers keep their little “mite boxes” handy and drop in their change (and bills, too) to support these projects. I had an oversized mite box to use in a presentation, so I invited the members of the Council of Presidents—that includes the Synod's five vice presidents and the 35 district presidents—and their spouses to join Terry and me in providing some mites of our own.

The COP's mite box ended up with more than \$3,600 in it. My thanks to those who participated! (A number of COP members also attended the convention, including Second Vice President Paul Maier, who was a keynote speaker.)

Attending an LWML convention is seeing the Synod at its best also because of the tremendous emphasis on Bible study and worship that one finds there. From the opening worship with its parade of LWML-district banners to its close—and all the lively and worshipful singing in



between—the overall tone of the convention, as always, was very spiritual, missional, and devotional.

As with every convention, including Synod conventions, a highlight for me is seeing people from all over the country—and some from outside the country—join together at the Communion “table” in fellowship around the body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It's always a special thrill when I can join brother pastors, as I was able to do at the LWML convention, in distributing the Sacrament as well.

The women of the LWML demonstrate that conventions don't have to be only about bylaws and amendments, but that they also can focus on mission, worship, and joyful Christian fellowship, too—all in one event. It's certainly fitting that the LWML is being highlighted in this issue of *The Lutheran Witness*, and I pray for this wonderful auxiliary of the LCMS the Lord's richest blessings as they seek to be about His business.

My prayer is the same for you and for our Synod, as we all work together as one people, ablaze for the one mission of reaching lost people with the one message, that Jesus Christ is the Savior of the world!

### Jerry Kieschnick

Lives Transformed through Christ, in Time ... for Eternity!

John 3:16–17

e-mail: [president@lcms.org](mailto:president@lcms.org)

Web page: [www.lcms.org/president](http://www.lcms.org/president)



Synod President Gerald Kieschnick greets members of the Lutheran Women's Missionary League at the LWML's national convention in Tampa, Fla. More than 3,100 registrants attended the biennial convention, which ran from June 16–19.