



THE LUTHERAN WITNESS™

VOL. 129 NO. 4 APRIL 2010

Isaiah's *Easter Feast*

RESURRECTION
REFLECTIONS

FAITH, CULTURE
AND YOUTH

GARDENING
EAST OF EDEN

PRACTICING
HOSPITALITY



lcms.org/witness



Providing Missouri Synod laypeople with stories and information that complement congregational life, foster personal growth in faith, and help interpret the contemporary world from a Lutheran Christian perspective.

To the Reader

April. It's hard to believe that we are well into A.D. 2010—in the year of our Lord 2010, that is—and that Easter, glorious Easter, is upon us.

Yes, Christmas might be our favorite holiday, or at least the one that gets the most attention, but as Rev. Edward Kast points out in these pages, Easter is “the queen of Christian festivals,” for our faith is an Easter faith, one that begins with the resurrection of our Savior more than two millennia ago. It is because of Easter that we have hope.

And indeed, that hope is a glorious hope, explains Dr. Reed Lessing in “Isaiah’s Easter Feast,” our cover story. In Isaiah, Lessing says, we find not only a warning of universal judgment, but also a foretaste of Easter joy and the sure promise of eternal life that awaits us in heaven.

Also in this issue, Dr. Adam Francisco, assistant professor of historical theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, and Dr. Craig S. Oldenburg, executive director of Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Northern California, reflect on the influence of postmodern culture on young people today. Elsewhere, seminary student A. Trevor Sutton reflects on the lessons gardening has taught him, and Laura Wonderlin, a University of Iowa journalism student, highlights the efforts of Deaconess Angie Carriker and her congregation, St. Paul’s Lutheran Chapel and University Center in Iowa City, Iowa, to embrace that community’s international students, reaching out to them with a hand of friendship and the good news of Jesus.

And at the heart of it all, from beginning to end, the good news of Easter and the angel’s timeless words, “He is not here, for He has risen, as He said.”

Our timeless reply is simple, and full of joy: *Alleluia!*

*James H. Heine, Executive Editor
The Lutheran Witness
James.Heine@lcms.org*



On the Web

- “The Difference Easter Makes,” a *Classic Witness* Easter message from April 1960.
- For the latest Synod news, visit *Reporter Online* at lcms.org/reporter.



6
Isaiah’s
Easter Feast
by Reed Lessing



10
Resurrection
Reflections
by Edward L. Kast



11
Faith, Culture
and Youth
by Adam Francisco
and Craig S. Oldenburg



16
Gardening
East of Eden
by A. Trevor Sutton



18
Practicing
Hospitality
by Laura Wonderlin

Departments

- | | | | |
|----|----------|----|---------------------|
| 3 | Lifeline | 26 | Family Counselor |
| 4 | Letters | 27 | Shedding Some Light |
| 21 | Notices | 28 | Searching Scripture |
| 25 | Q & A | 29 | From the President |

Perspective—It Makes a Difference



Several months ago, my three best friends and I took the trip of a lifetime down the challenging rapids of the Grand Canyon's Colorado River. Yes, four women willingly embarked on that wild adventure. It was breathtaking, heart-stopping, and exhilarating. Each time we stopped for a break or camped along the shoreline, the surroundings were incredibly peaceful. It was a peacefulness that stilled my soul and allowed me to live fully in the moment. Each evening, I settled down with my journal and Bible and experienced amazing moments with our God. Each morning after packing up camp, we suited up in full gear and life vests, climbed aboard the rig, and started down the rapids. Peaceful was not the first emotion that surfaced. In fact, it didn't make the top 10.

Above the sounds of the rapids and my fellow rafters, I listened acutely for the captain's voice. When he shouted, "Brace," we grabbed the handholds and flattened our faces against the rig. The captain knew that if a wave hit us in mid-chest, we would catapult into the deadly currents. So my perspective



I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

—Phil. 4:13 ESV

from the chaos of the raging currents was vastly different from my perspective from the peaceful shore.

When God commanded Noah to build the ark (Gen. 6:11–21), Noah didn't have a clue what an ark looked like. When God described the construction plans for the ark, Noah listened acutely. For decades, Noah faithfully built the ark. His perspective from the ground was that of a hard worker, keeping his nose to the grindstone. One day, God issued the command to climb

aboard the ark, and Noah's perspective changed dramatically. From atop the ark, he had a much broader view. He saw everything he had built disappear under floodwaters. He watched friends fight for their lives and cry for help. He watched animals not invited into the ark grow tired of paddling and sink. Don't you think Noah wondered, "Why did this have to happen, God?"

Scripture tells us that God closed the door to the ark. I would suggest that Noah couldn't. If we, like Noah, knew what awaited our loved ones not on board, I don't believe we could shut the door, either. Sometimes, God has to be the one who shuts the door.

Have you ever asked God the question that Noah asked? Your life is rolling along smoothly, then a drastic event hits. You lose a loved one, get seriously ill, collect a pink slip, watch your marriage end, or see your child stray down a dangerous path.

Recently, I watched my marriage of 13 years end. My knight in shining armor rode off without me. I catapulted into currents of grief, anger, sadness, loneliness, fear, and unanswered questions. How did I miss the signs? Is this actually happening?

As God's children, how do we avoid being suffocated by destructive spiritual or emotional currents? In Ps. 18:16 and 19, God reminds us to brace ourselves in His strength: "He reached down from on high and took hold of me; He drew me out of deep waters. . . . He brought me out into a spacious place; He rescued me because He delighted in me" (NIV). Regardless of our storms, God rescues us and gives us strength. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, we focus on our Lord in faith, and listen acutely for His voice. God will not let us drown. He carefully places us in the ark of His compassion and gives us a new perspective. Why? Because He *delights* in us.

A member of Salem Lutheran Church, Tomball, Texas, Donna Pyle (dpyle@artesianministries.org) is vice president of Christian life for the Texas District Lutheran Women's Missionary League.



Rural Ministry

I was very impressed and encouraged by your article “It’s Not All Downhill!” in the February *Lutheran Witness*. Small churches need the encouragement to know that there is an alternative to declining attendance and membership. Most rural churches, especially in Middle America, are small, and many are declining. In some cases, they may be the only surviving church in a small town.

A pastor of a church who finds himself in this situation becomes the pastor for the community, and he can build a church’s attendance and eventually its membership. The main reason, of course, is to share the love of Jesus with all who are searching. A pastor’s visibility in such a community makes the church he serves a safe and visible place. The members of his church also feel encouraged, and then they will reach out to those in the area who have lost their home church and bring them into a family of believers.

A small-town pastor who is first to give a visit, a word, or just be there

lenging rural parishes. After visiting hundreds of congregations, and 50-plus years of interviewing pastors and teachers, I know of no more demanding, productive, and sometimes lonely ministry than that carried on today in rural/small town churches and schools. May the Spirit continue to breathe on these jewels in our LCMS crown, and through them on all of us.

*Rev. Charles S. Mueller Sr.
Bloomington, Ill.*

I want to share a story about Pastor Brad Birtell, whom Roland Lovstad profiled in your February story about rural ministry.

In the early 2000s, he was coaching St. John’s elementary school basketball team, and the team was quite good. Our much younger and shorter team played them in a Lutheran school tournament. At halftime, Pastor Birtell made adjustments and set restrictions on his team to help make it more competitive for our team. He required his boys to keep one foot in the paint on defense, and only one boy on their

School Days

I’d like to comment about the February issue of *The Lutheran Witness* and about rural ministries. I went to a one-room school with eight grades, and I’m probably telling my age, so I’ll tell you it was a small farming community at Lutherville, Ark.

I’m not advocating going back to this type of education, but I believe the Lutheran church is in decline because it is not implementing what Dr. Terry Tieman and Rev. Todd Jones proposed in revitalizing and changing the service to being more missional while keeping it traditional, especially for the southern and rural areas.

*Dick Knoernschild
Lamar, Ark.*

Hooray for Mrs. Bartels! (See p. 9 in February *Lutheran Witness*.) I was involved in Lutheran schools for quite some time. I started out by “helping out” for one year, which ended up being nine! Then it was back to college to finish my education, having been a music major for two years and then married. Upon graduation, I returned to my school and taught first and second grade.

After 10 years, I moved to Pennsylvania to be near my grandchildren. (I am now 93.) I was in a part of the state where there were no LCMS churches. After retirement, I joined the Foster Grandparent Program so I could continue helping children. I miss the religion, closeness, and singing that we enjoyed in our LCMS system.

May the Lord provide us with enough dedicated people so that Lutheran schools might stay alive. I was a product of one, and I am always grateful for the hymns and Bible verses learned.

How we need that in today’s world! God bless our schools!

*Mrs. Myrtha Witkop
Selinsgrove, Pa.*

Putting the ‘best construction’ on Melancthon

Reconstruction (spin) is not putting the “best construction” on historical figures such as Philip Melancthon (the February *Lutheran Witness*).



Thanks for featuring pastors and teachers who honor our Lord and the entirety of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod by the magnificent way they serve challenging rural parishes.

*Rev. Charles S. Mueller Sr.
Bloomington, Ill.*

when a need arises sets the stage for a hurting person to find a relationship with Jesus and with a church that cares about the community, not just its own fellowship.

*Gerald Hapke
Fort Wayne, Ind.*

I so agree with the February *Lutheran Witness* that valuable, significant, and effective parish ministry has nothing to do with congregational size or geographical location. Thanks for featuring pastors and teachers who honor our Lord and the entirety of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod by the magnificent way they serve chal-

lenging rural parishes. After visiting hundreds of congregations, and 50-plus years of interviewing pastors and teachers, I know of no more demanding, productive, and sometimes lonely ministry than that carried on today in rural/small town churches and schools. May the Spirit continue to breathe on these jewels in our LCMS crown, and through them on all of us.

team could shoot on offense—and he happened to be their shortest and possibly youngest player. It was an amazing thing to see, and it spoke volumes to our boys’ team, and to my husband as the coach. After the game, Pastor Birtell told my husband to point out to our team that we had outscored them in the second half. What an example for the youth of his congregation!

I think you can see that he has a special gift for working with youth, and that God has richly blessed his congregation and others through him.

*Jennifer Hoffschneider
Arlington, Neb.*

Let's accept the fact that Melanchthon excessively yielded to the political pressures in his later years. He did devalue the words that defined the precious Real Presence of Jesus in the Sacrament. Let's also acknowledge that Melanchthon was exemplary in his earlier expressions of conviction in the Augsburg Confession, the Apology, and the Treatise of 1537. Let's learn from "the historical construction." Let's learn from his earlier years of faithfulness and his later years of unnecessary compromise.

Lots to savor, lots to learn, lots of "positive construction."

Rev. John Temple

St. Charles, Mo.

P.S. Thanks for an interesting historical article.

For the person in the pew

Congratulations on your February article, "Word of God, Speak!" It was written for us "pew-sitters."

Every trade and profession has its own unique expressions understood

(continued on page 27)



cphorder@cph.org

Cover photo © DesignPics Inc.

Isaiah's *Easter Feast*

**In Isaiah, we find not only a warning
of universal judgment but also a
foretaste of Easter's resurrection joy
and a promise of the glorious eternal
banquet that awaits us in heaven.**





It comes as no surprise, then, that after the Lord's cosmic condemnation of human sin depicted throughout chapter 24, Isaiah states in chapter 25, "On this mountain the Lord Almighty will prepare a feast" (Is. 25:6a). Devastation will give way to deliverance, and judgment will give way to inexpressible joy. God's people will drink wine again with a song!

Death before Deliverance

Isaiah's grand celebration is founded on the fact that the Lord "will swallow up death forever" (Is. 25:8a). However, before something is swallowed, first it is tasted. Heb. 2:9 maintains that Jesus "suffered death, so that by the grace of God, He might taste death for everyone." On Good Friday, He tasted the soldiers' spit, their cheap wine, sweat running down His cheeks, and His own blood. But there was more. Jesus drank the cup of the Father's wrath. And He drained it to the very last drop. At that very moment, the enemy stalked our Savior, took aim, shot straight, and killed. It all ended "crucified, dead, and buried." Nothing is as bottomless as a pit, as lifeless as a grave, as hopeless as a tomb. Smell the mildew, the odor of blood, the stench of death. See the confines, the darkness, and the sealed stone.

The Life of the Party

But also witness the charred marks of a divine explosion to life! On that first Easter, John outruns Peter. Mary cries out, "Rabboni!" The Emmaus disciples feel their hearts burn. And later, Thomas exclaims, "My Lord and my God!" After tasting death, Jesus swallowed it, chewed it up, and spit it out. Now He is Life overriding death and making all things new. "In Him was life, and that life was the light of men" (John 1:4). "I am the Bread of Life" (John 6:35). "You have



In some places, the Old Testament flows like a brook toward its fulfillment in the New Testament, while in other places, it may be likened to a quiet backwater or small stream. In Isaiah, though, we come upon a rushing river that moves us mightily toward the message of salvation in Jesus Christ.

The party's over!" This can mean "It's 2 a.m., and I have got to go to work in six hours!" Or "Everyone's leaving!" Or maybe "You're all out of stuff to eat and drink!"

On the other hand, "the party's over" can convey the idea that "It's all over, the fat lady has sung, and mighty Casey has struck out!"

This second sense of "the party's over" coincides with Isaiah's vision of universal judgment in chapter 24 of his Old Testament book. He writes, in part: "The gaiety of the tambourines is stilled, the noise of the revelers has stopped, the joyful harp is silent. No longer do they drink wine with a song. . . ." (Is. 24:8-9a NIV).

This party is finished and done. It's over!

In some places, the Old Testament flows like a brook toward its fulfillment in the New Testament. In other places, it may be likened to a quiet backwater or small stream. In Isaiah, though, we come upon a rushing river that moves us mightily toward the message of salvation in Jesus Christ. Because of his clear and compelling testimony about the coming Savior, St. Jerome called Isaiah "the Fifth Gospel" while another Church father, John Chrysostom, called him "the prophet with the loudest voice."



On Good Friday, Jesus tasted the soldiers' spit, their cheap wine, sweat running down His cheeks, and His own blood. But there was more. Jesus drank the cup of the Father's wrath. And He drained it to the very last drop.

the words of eternal life" (John 6:68). "I have come that they may have life" (John 10:10). "I am the Resurrection and the Life" (John 11:25). "I am the Way and the Truth and the Life" (John 14:6). Because Jesus is the Life of this eternal party, far from being over, this celebration has just begun! Isaiah announces, "On this mountain the Lord Almighty will prepare a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines" (Is. 25:6).

Who Is Invited?

Every gala event elicits questions, one of which is, "Who is invited?" Within Is. 25:6–8, the prophet repeatedly announces that everyone is welcome. Isaiah employs the terms *all peoples, all nations, all faces, and all the earth*.

Note the sequence. "All peoples" denotes all ethnic groups. "All nations" points to all political groups. "All faces" promises that all individuals are summoned. And, just in case we miss it, Isaiah concludes 25:8 with "all the earth. The Lord has spoken." All are invited!

Tony Campolo, in his book, *The Kingdom of God Is a Party*, tells the story of John Carlson, who noticed that in his town on the night of the senior prom only the kids who were preppy, polished, and popular were invited. The prom left out those whom "the system" deemed rejects and losers. So Carlson came up with the idea of holding an event for teens that could not get a date because they were not all-state and were considered second rate. He called it the "reject prom."

Have you ever been rejected? Told you don't belong? Have you ever experienced partner rejection? Peer rejection? Parental rejection? Parishioner rejection? Or perhaps you are stuck in the hell of deep-running personal rejection. Isaiah's Easter party is for everyone. All are invited! *You* are invited!

What about My Appearance?

Another question often asked in conjunction with parties is this: "What about my appearance?" Isaiah says, "Come as you are." But you say, "My face bears the marks of worry. My shoulders are stooped from carrying life's burdens. My lips are dirty from slander. My heart is hardened toward my children. My arteries are clogged with bitterness and resentment. And my hands are clutched in anger because I keep accusing others for all this unhappiness!" So you are thinking, "What do you mean, Isaiah? Come as you are? I am a spiritual mess!" And the prophet responds, "So am I!"

One day, while he was worshiping in the Jerusalem temple, Isaiah caught a vision of God's holiness. He cried out, "Woe to me! . . . I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty" (Is. 6:5). What an experience! Isaiah knows all about shame and guilt. So much so, that he wants to die. This is why, in connection with the Easter celebration, he mentions "the shroud that enfolds all peoples, the sheet that covers all nations" (Is. 25:7). The prophet knows about our sinful predicament that tempts us to hide our mess with shrouds and sheets, addictions and compulsions, games and gimmicks. Nothing works. We end up with tears on our faces and deep-seated disgrace (Is. 25:8).

But the absolutely amazing fact is that this celebration is a "come as you are" party. Our God fully forgives us and extravagantly dresses us for the feast. In the parable of the prodigal son, the father says, "Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. . . . Let's have a feast and celebrate!" (Luke 15:22, 23). This same Father provides the proper attire for us prodigals: Easter baptismal robes washed white in the blood of the Lamb!

What Gifts Should I Bring?

Everyone is welcome, and we may come just as we are. But what party gifts should we bring? Isaiah says in effect, "You do not need them. Not even one!"

Let me explain. I loved being the pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church in Broken Arrow, Okla., because, among other things, we had church potlucks down to a theological art. My directions as the pastor went something like this. "You bring some chips, she'll bring some dessert (please make that pecan pie!), I'll bring some salad, and make sure Robert Buffington brings the main course!" (Robert Buffington is a terrific master chef.)

But for this Easter party we bring nothing. It is the antithesis of church potlucks! In Is. 25:6–8, the Lord is the subject of the verbs: *He* will prepare, *He* will destroy, *He* will swallow up, *He* will wipe away, and *He* will remove!

In another parable, Jesus compares this feast as follows, "At the time of the banquet he sent his servant to tell those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready'" (Luke 14:17).

We bring nothing to this party, because our God puts everything on the table. His gifts of mercy and grace were purchased at the cost of spitting, mocking, whipping, nailing, bleeding, sweating, and dying.

Make no mistake about it. Easter is not a Good Friday-denying event. Nor does it ignore Good Friday's terrible truth of our wickedness and sin. The scar tissue of Friday forever lingers in the body of Christ, and it protests against every form of Christian celebration that says we can enjoy heaven now while still living on planet earth. No, we cannot. You and I live in a world of personal, national, and global suffering, but (and make no mistake about this either!) we affirm that Jesus bodily lives to give the gifts. "A feast of rich food, a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines" (Is. 25:6). Among other things, the prophet points to our Savior's true body and blood given in the Eucharistic Feast, through which we receive forgiveness, life, and salvation—forevermore!

RSVP?

Finally, with most parties there is an RSVP. The Lord is so passionate about our presence at this banquet that He gives us the words of response: "In that day they will say, 'Surely this is our God; we trusted in Him, and He saved us'" (Is. 25:9). That day is every Lord's Day when we come to the ongoing Easter feast of victory for our God. Our celebration begins every time we sing "Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might," hear our pastor speak the words of institution, and approach the table singing, "Lamb of God, You take away the sin of the world." With the final trumpet call, the banquet will be brought to completion in the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, where we will sing an endless and deathless "Hallelujah!" And it all means that

during this joyful Eastertide it is time to drink wine again with this song: "The feast is ready. Come to the feast, the good and the bad. Come and be glad! Greatest and least, come to the feast!" (*Lutheran Worship* 346).

Dr. Reed Lessing (lessingr@csl.edu) is director of the graduate school and associate professor of exegetical theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo. He is the author of the Concordia Commentary series volumes on Jonah and Amos as well as the forthcoming volume on Isaiah 40–55.



Resurrection Reflections

Christmas might be our favorite holiday, but Easter is the queen of Christian festivals, the culmination of God's plan of salvation and the reason our faith is not futile.

I'm a night person. I love seeing little points of light pierce the darkness. Everything looks better in the glow of candlelight. That's why I love Christmas decorations and Christmas celebrations. For me, walking through Bronner's Christmas Wonderland in Frankenmuth, Mich., is always a treat.

Being a night person, my idea of joyful activity is not getting up before dawn, getting dressed up, and going somewhere to sing Easter hymns. Then, too, most of us probably warm up a whole lot more to a baby being born in humble circumstances than to a dead body coming to life and walking out of a tomb. But that's only sentiment.

Yes, Christmas is nice. Christmas is wonderful. But Easter is the queen of Christian festivals, the reason we have hope. Easter is far more significant than Christmas. It was centuries before Christ's birth was celebrated, not only because nobody knew when it happened, but also because it was thought inappropriate. The birthdays of earthly kings were celebrated, not that of God's eternal Son.

Without the resurrection of Jesus, His birth would have no more significance than that of anyone remembered in history. The Apostle Paul put it well: "If Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. . . . If Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins" (1 Cor. 15:14, 17 ESV).

But "in fact Christ has been raised, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep," as Paul continues in his letter to the church at Corinth. That is our hope, our consolation, "for as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive."

Some theologians accommodate their beliefs to the prevailing culture to make them more acceptable. They try to find in Easter a message of hope and new beginnings while discarding the bodily resurrection of Jesus.

Nice sentiment, but faith without the resurrection is wishful thinking. And if one accepts the idea of an almighty God who created life from nothing, what's so hard about re-creating life from death? Nothing. Absolutely nothing.

It's hard to believe that someone stole Jesus' body from under the noses of Roman soldiers. A Roman soldier could be executed for losing someone he guarded. Losing someone, or something, was not looked upon lightly by imperial authorities.

If I really thought Jesus did not rise from death, I'd stop being a Christian in a minute. But I believe that the resurrection is the best (and only) explanation for what transformed Jesus' disciples suddenly from doubt and despair to bold belief and joy.

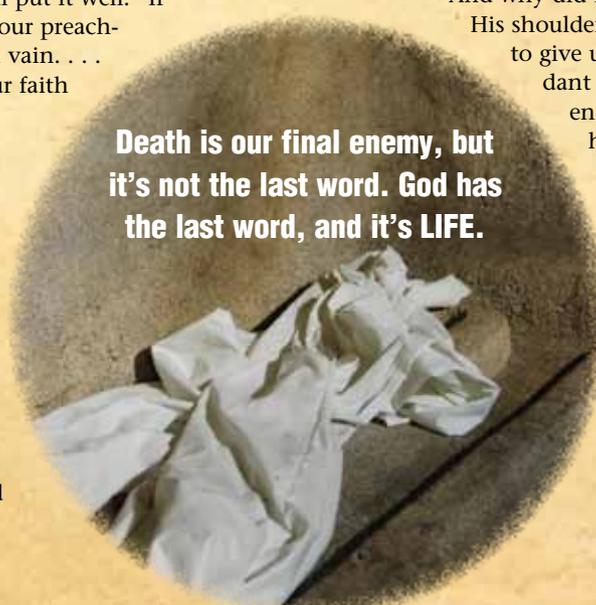
Shortly after, God's confirming Spirit converted the disciples from being closet Christians to confessing Christians—Christians who risked their lives to proclaim Christ's resurrection. Their cowardice turned into extraordinary courage. People do not die for what they know is a lie.

Can someone convince me that human intelligence is the highest intelligence in the infinite universe and that we are alone? That we are merely evolved animals that live and die with no meaning and purpose? Not likely. In the meantime, I'll keep believing that there is a Creator God who took the extraordinary step of becoming one of us.

And why did He do that? He did it to take upon His shoulders the responsibility of our sins and to give us the hope of life that is abundant and everlasting. Death is our final enemy, but it's not the last word. God has the last word, and it's LIFE.

That's why I celebrate Easter with great joy, even if I, as a night person, have to get up very early.

Rev. Edward L. Kast, emeritus, (edemkast@sbcglobal.net) is a member of Peace Lutheran Church, Saginaw, Mich.



Death is our final enemy, but it's not the last word. God has the last word, and it's LIFE.

What are kids thinking these days?

And why are they
thinking the way they do?



Faith, Culture, and Youth

Much could be said about the age in which we live. Some describe it as an age of global instability. Others view things a bit more optimistically, calling it the new era of global responsibility. Still others characterize it as the age of information. For the Church and Christianity in the West, however, one thing is pretty clear. We live in what many are now calling a post-church or post-Christian era.



The influence and, in many respects, the authority the Church and classic Christian beliefs once exerted on individuals and the broader culture has dwindled to the point of insignificance.

This may seem odd, for national surveys suggest that the strong majority of Americans—about 76 percent—identify themselves as Christian. How can it be, then, that Christianity is on the decline?

Probing the content of our religious beliefs, several recent studies indicate that, while professing to be Christian, a majority of Americans maintain beliefs inconsistent with Christianity. For example, the Pew Forum found that 65 percent of Americans believe that “many religions can lead to eternal life.” Although more eastern in its theological orientation, over half of these individuals also identified themselves as Christian.

Nowhere is the erosion of classic Christian beliefs and values more evident than amongst our nation’s youth. The Barna Group recently found, after more than a decade of research, that very few kids from the mosaic generation (those born between 1984 and 2002) even have what one might call a Christian or biblical worldview. Few believe there are fixed moral truths, the

Bible is totally authoritative, salvation is through faith in Christ, and God is omniscient and omnipotent.

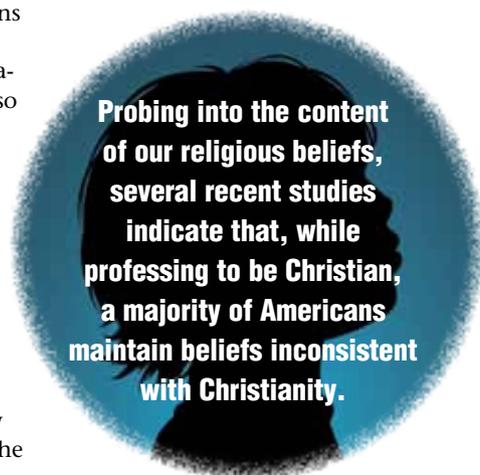
This and other comparable studies all illustrate an alarming trend: While younger kids largely assume the beliefs of their parents, the older they become, the more inclined they are to embrace ideas at odds with Christian beliefs. The Barna research even suggests that by their late teens and early twenties less than 1 percent of youth actually maintain basic biblical beliefs.

So, what are kids thinking these days? And why are they thinking the way they do?

A ‘Map of the World’

One way to understand the way a person thinks is to examine their worldview. Worldviews are conceptual maps that purport to explain the true nature of the universe and life within it, either by a story or in a set of propositions. More important, perhaps, they also help one interpret and explain one’s place in and relationship to God, the world, and other people.

As theoretical as all this sounds, one should not think that worldviews are irrelevant when discerning how kids think. It is true that few young people (or adults) can articulate every aspect of their worldview. But they—like all people—still think and act in light of it.



Probing into the content of our religious beliefs, several recent studies indicate that, while professing to be Christian, a majority of Americans maintain beliefs inconsistent with Christianity.

One of the most influential worldviews that predominates youth—and broader American—culture is postmodernism. Although it is notoriously difficult to define, one of its main features is its rejection of any worldview as the true one. And any worldview or person claiming to have a corner on the truth is typically viewed with suspicion and cynicism.

Postmodernism has, in many ways, led youth, while wanting to keep up religious appearances, to think about God and religion in a unique and ambivalent way. Survey responses indicate they largely see God as a distant being. They may acknowledge that He created the universe in one way or another. He can intervene in human affairs, and even be reached through prayer. Yet, He mostly remains aloof and disinterested. Also, according to this worldview, the highest goal in life for humans is happiness. This, along with being nice and kind, is what defines a moral person. And since morality is found in all religions, this view puts most if not all religions on an equal footing.

In this way of framing reality, religion and spirituality provide an escape, or therapy, for the individual and his quest—a quest, not for truth, but happiness. Jesus may figure into this worldview; however, He is largely regarded as a great moral example, or perhaps as a personal spiritual confidant, but not as the one and only Son of God whose death paid for the sins of humankind. It is presumed that all moral people will be saved.

Specialists in youth culture from the National Study of Youth and Religion have labeled this worldview, in the award-winning *Soul Searching: The Religion and Spiritual Lives of American Teenagers*, as “moralistic therapeutic deism.” Interestingly, a more recent follow-up study, entitled *Souls in Transition: The Religious and Spiritual Lives of Emerging Adults*, has found that the views of God and

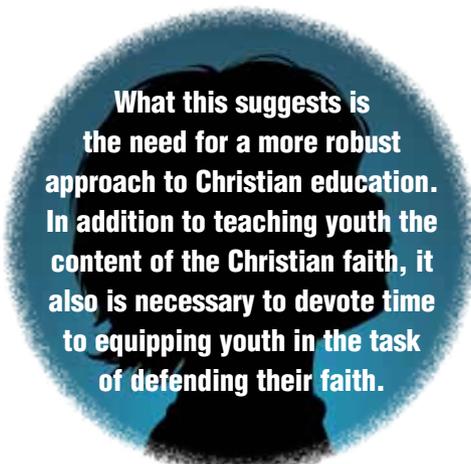
religion of the youth studied in *Soul Searching* grow even more ambivalent and complacent as they get older. What is most unsettling about this and other comparable studies is that they indicate many young adults who are ambiguous and uncommitted to any religious convictions were at one time during their youth active in church.

Addressing Challenges

What happened? There is no single discernable cause. A number of factors have contributed to the decline in Christian beliefs amongst youth. But perhaps the most startling one is detailed in Britt Beemer and Ken Ham's *Already Gone: Why Your Kids Will Quit Church and What You Can Do to Stop It*. This study found that many formerly churching youth and young adults were active in youth group, Bible study, and worship. Somewhere along the line, though, their faith was challenged by the claims of evolutionary science, revisionist history, and various worldly philosophies in the classroom, on the Internet, in their social circle, and elsewhere. Over time, unequipped for such challenges, they grew complacent and, in some cases, rejected the faith of their childhood.

The studies referred to above were all nationwide surveys. They do not speak for youth everywhere. Yet, they are a cause for concern, for there are a number of ideologies competing for young minds. Postmodern indifference toward religion is just one of them. Analysts also have noticed a rise in an aggressive and assertive form of atheism. Buddhism, paganism, and other world religions and philosophies also purport to offer equally viable spiritual alternatives to Christianity.

What this suggests is the need for a more robust approach to Christian education. In addition to teaching youth the content of the Christian faith, it also is necessary to devote time to equipping youth in the task of defending their faith. Are youth



What this suggests is the need for a more robust approach to Christian education. In addition to teaching youth the content of the Christian faith, it also is necessary to devote time to equipping youth in the task of defending their faith.

capable of this? Spend some time with them, and you will find out that our church is filled with remarkable kids who have tremendous intellectual abilities. Likewise, we have outstanding schools, youth ministries, and, of course, congregations where exceptional catechesis and Christian education takes place. Yet, the further we make our way into this post-Christian or post-church era, the more it will be necessary to address specific challenges of the age, to “destroy arguments and

every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God, and take every thought captive to obey Christ” (2 Cor. 10:5 ESV). The apostle Peter likewise enjoins Christians to “honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15).

There is indeed much work to be done. From the beginning, however, it is important to remember that the formation of the Christian mind is from beginning to end the work of God working through means. The Christian life begins, is nurtured, and sustained in, through, and by Baptism, the hearing, receiving, and learning of the Word of God, and the reception of the Lord's Supper. Kids these days, just like adults, need to be daily reminded of this as they navigate the age in which we live.

Dr. Adam Francisco (adam.francisco@ctsfw.edu) is assistant professor of historical theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.





Thoughts on Youth Ministry in a Postmodern Culture

Our postmodern culture is not limited to the youthful generation; however, it is more likely that youth and young adults have grown up in this transitional culture—a culture Dr. Adam Francisco says often “maintains beliefs inconsistent with Christianity.”

It sometimes is said that postmodern culture is neither good nor evil—it just is. But regardless of what one thinks about that, what really matters is how we choose to be the Church within that culture. What might we hear if we gather a group of young people together and ask them how the Christian Church could be more effective within this culture? Consider these six possible responses.

1

Please ask pastor to ‘get real.’

Will you please talk to the pastor for me? I can’t understand his messages when he talks about the pastors’ conference he went to, or says things like, “You know we are all good Germans . . .” I’m not German. Never have been. I’m wondering how to make it through life and how to have an identity. Can he teach me this? I need to see my congregation engaging the community I live in and not just Pastor caring for the “big givers” of the congregation. I’m not sure my pastor believes youth are important. His stories and examples talk to the older adults. He rarely looks in my eyes when he speaks. Please help him to know us—help him to get to know me—the kid who lives with his mom, doesn’t really know his dad, and wonders if God shows up in places besides the church building.

2

Youth workers, please stop entertaining us.

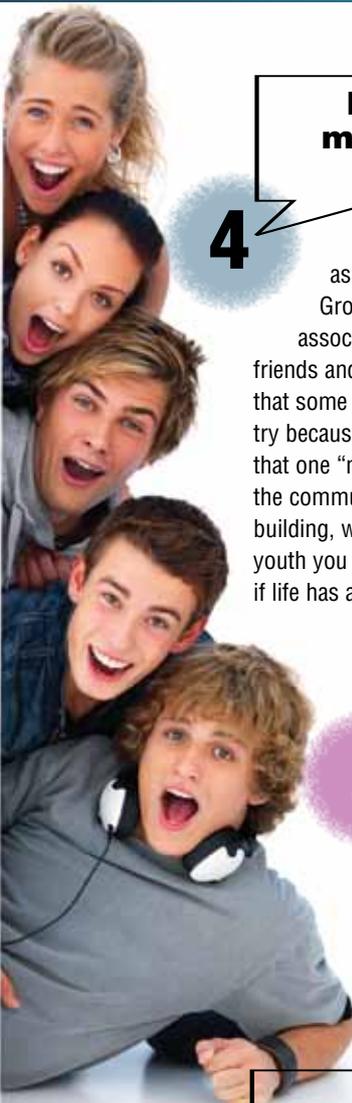
Why does the youth minister call herself “professional”? What does that mean? She is very smart, but all I do is sit and listen. Can you help me? I attended a friend’s church—it was Lutheran—and the youth there were involved in planning for ministry. Not just youth ministry, either. They were being challenged and equipped to live their faith with adult advocates—like you. Several of the adults of the congregation were involved. It didn’t seem like a youth program but more like a movement of the whole congregation.

3

Please close the youth room.

I know you mean well by spending money on a special place for us; but when you put me in the youth room, you forget about me. We are herded into the room like cattle, and the congregation only sees us when we come out for fundraising. The room seems like a symbol of youth ministry—but it adds to my isolation and my belief that this is not a real community of believers. So, what might youth ministry look like? In my opinion, it would be every believing adult in the congregation knowing and advocating for two to four of us. Knowing us by name and greeting us by name in and out of the church building—in the community—at our events. Knowing our hurts and pains—our joys and celebrations. Standing by us in crisis. Please know me.





Don't be afraid of ministry outside the church walls.

4

Please quit thinking in terms of "Youth Group" as the young people in our church. Our "Youth Group" is the entire community. It is not the 12 of us associated with the families of our congregation. My friends and I need to know Jesus' forgiveness. I've heard that some congregations say they don't have a youth ministry because they don't have any youth. That's foolish. I am that one "member" youth that is connected to 10 others in the community. I am that one youth walking past the church building, wondering what goes on inside. I am that one youth you pass on the road every day, while I'm wondering if life has any meaning.

Experience faith with us.

5

I want to see your faith in action. I don't want you to just talk about it. Invite me into your life. My dad is the biggest influencer of my faith—but he needs your support and encouragement. He needs you to take him out for breakfast, and to just listen to him. He needs you to take both of us to a baseball game and laugh together—so that we can cry together later on.

About the 'old liturgy . . .'

6

I may or may not be connected to your church the way you are connected. I *might* wander in some day to experience church. But I will not stay unless you satisfy two things: First, I need a *relationship* with you. Don't wait for me to come to you. Come to me and ask questions about me—about my life. Let me tell you what I believe without judging the content. Don't tell me what to believe or how to worship. Let me watch you. I am actually pretty smart. If you have a relationship with me, I will begin to ask you questions. Second, I need to be able to use the skills God has given me—just as they are. Don't assume your "old liturgy" will be enough. You are being told youth my age like the ancient liturgy—the more transcendent feel; but please remember, I am also a person gifted. Remember that you can adapt liturgy so that I can experience God with you (experience is my language). You might need to let me draw or paint during the pastor's message—and then we can discuss what I drew. Realize that God might be working through me and I might—I just might—be realizing that God is real. Very real.

And so go the responses, which may be true for only a few youth you know, or perhaps many, but they all reflect a need for faith to be experienced through a relationship with you. "Perfect love casts our fear," John wrote to his readers. Each of you probably has children, grandchildren, grandnieces or nephews who have not maintained a relationship with a Christian community of believers—a church. It is not that they have walked away; often, it is that they have been forgotten.

None of us should be standing alone in fear, wondering what to do. We, the "church," need to be standing at your side when times are tough, and their side, too—standing next to every youth in the community. Yes, certainly on our knees praying for them, but then on our feet investing in them as a believing church community. It begins with your pastor and elders (it is OK to remind them). It extends through every adult member of your congregation. Its ultimate conclusion being that God is real, and He is known in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Regardless of what one thinks about postmodern culture, what matters is how we choose to be the Church within that culture.

A teacher and DCE, Dr. Craig S. Oldenburg (craig@mtcross.org) is executive director of Lutheran Outdoor Ministries of Northern California, Ben Lomond, Calif. With Dr. Adam Francisco, he participated in "What's Your Worldview?"—the 2010 LCMS Youth Ministry Symposium Jan. 8–10 in Houston, Texas.



Gardening East of Eden

**Doubts about our life
or vocation do not negate
the fact that God plants
His people with purpose.**

For the longest time, I thought *feng shui* was a type of Japanese maple. My confusion began while I was gardening for an elderly woman with an insatiable eye for order. Everything had to be planted with the utmost precision; angles were measured and re-measured. Leaf size had to be compared with neighboring leaf size. Every plant had a purpose—from the biggest elm tree to the smallest dandelion.

A few hours into a long day of working, I had been given a few hydrangeas to plant while she went to the kitchen to make lemonade. In the absence of her supervision, I began haphazardly digging holes for the plants. In hindsight, I probably should have thought a little more about what I was doing. Then again, she probably should have realized that I was a 23-year-old male that could either dig holes or think—but not both at the same time.

Either way, my careless digging came to an abrupt halt when she came running out of the house, yelling and arms flailing. She frantically informed me that I had completely ruined her garden's *feng shui*. Already

feeling a bit sheepish about my careless planting, I didn't dare ask which plant the *feng shui* was. Only much later, walking through a local bookstore, did I come to realize that *feng shui* was actually not a plant at all, but rather a system of aesthetics based on ancient Chinese Taoist beliefs.

I began gardening as an impoverished seminary student. I moved to St. Louis to enroll in the seminary and realized that I would need a job to help pay for the staggering tuition costs. To my dismay, I found that a major in English only qualified me to say, 'Would you like fries with that?'

**When I left
Michigan, I had
reduced God to a
careless gardener much
like myself. I failed to
realize that God does
not garden like I do—
He has purpose behind
His planting.**

In desperation, I responded to a flyer looking for someone to help an elderly lady tend her garden. Now I spend my mornings in class and my evenings with worms.

When I began at the seminary, my life was completely uprooted. I left Michigan to go halfway across the country to a town I had never been to. With my fiancée and family three states away, doubt increasingly crept into my thoughts. Maybe the ministry was not God's plan for me. Perhaps I could have stayed in Michigan and become a teacher instead of being a pastor. Thoughts of my faith withering and dying in a foreign city increasingly occupied my mind.

That was all more than a year ago, and I am now firmly planted in St. Louis. When I left Michigan, I had reduced God to a careless gardener much like myself. I failed to realize that God does not garden like I do—He has purpose behind His planting. Like the meticulous lady that I used to work for, God has a master plan when He plants His people in a new place.

The Book of Exodus is all about God's purposeful planting of His people. When God delivered the Israelites from out of Egypt, they sang, "You will bring them in and plant them on



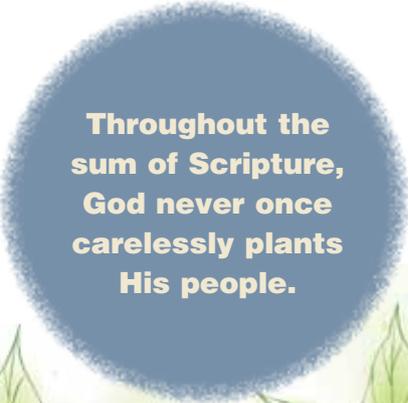
Your own mountain, the place, O Lord, which You have made for Your abode, the sanctuary, O Lord, which Your hands have established" (Ex. 15:17 ESV).

Israel's story is the same as ours. Israel was saved through water just as we have been delivered from our bondage through Baptism (1 Cor. 10:2; Rom. 6:4). By this water Israel was planted in the land just as we have been planted in Christ. We are grafted into the Church by the Holy Spirit and fertilized through Word and Sacrament. Just as roses love the warm sun, we crave the radiant presence of God in all its forms (Ex. 34:29).

Still, even though we have been planted with intention by God, we have our doubts. Fortunately, doubt does not negate the fact that God plants His people with purpose. Israel's doubt did not put them back in Egypt. Israel's doubt did not cause the sea to come crashing over their heads. God had a purpose for Israel just as He has a purpose for all of His people. Throughout the sum of Scripture, God never once carelessly plants His people.

To this day, the elderly lady's garden remains meticulous—no thanks to me, of course. Sometimes I still visit it, admiring each plant's purpose. She lives for that garden, and she loves each and every plant. Every time I go to the garden, Exodus comes to mind. I have heard many learned professors lecture on that part of Scripture. Still, I never understood what God was doing in Exodus until I began gardening.

A. Trevor Sutton (suttona@csl.edu) is a second-year student at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.



**Throughout the
sum of Scripture,
God never once
carelessly plants
His people.**



Practicing Hospitality: Together through Cuisine

Each Wednesday they gather. The smells of food waft in, welcoming new members with a sense of comfort and camaraderie. They stand in an oblong kitchen, the décor reminiscent of the 1970s. The walls are white; the cabinets have a light maple stain. The women cluster in small groups around a large island that is slightly off center. The meat on the stove sizzles.

During a St. Paul's cooking class, Magen Lin (left) and Deaconess Angie Carriker make gravy.

From outward appearances, it looks like any church gathering. The women wear ribbed sweaters in spite of the heat emanating from the kitchen. They push their sleeves above their elbows in an effort to cool down. Their hair is neat, and many have it pulled back with barrettes.

On Wednesdays, between 10 and 15 women gather to cook in the basement of St. Paul's Lutheran Chapel and University Center in Iowa City, Iowa. These women are wives of international Ph.D. students at the University of Iowa. Their ages range from mid-30s to early 50s. They are Korean, Chinese,

Taiwanese, and Russian. They are Christian, Buddhist, and atheist. Some arrived in Iowa City only a few months ago; some have been here for two years. They are unable to work because of green-card restrictions. Food provides them a link to friendship in a new community, as evidenced by the chatter that fills an otherwise quiet church.

One woman begins to speak and the room falls silent. Deaconess Angie Carriker talks in a commanding voice. With a smile that can be understood in any language, she asks how everyone's week was. She speaks slowly, deliberately, making sure her message gets across.

Carriker, a 2009 graduate of the deaconess program at Concordia



In the spirit of Heb. 13:2, an Iowa congregation invites international visitors to build relationships through food and cooking.

stuffed bell peppers, bananas foster, and French bread. On this Wednesday, they make spaghetti and meatballs. They read the recipe aloud, slowly sounding out each ingredient, asking what "thyme" and "rosemary" are.

Many of these women have never had spaghetti or made meatballs before. They watch Carriker demonstrate how to make a meatball, and each replicates it with ease before dropping the rounded clumps into a skillet.

nary skills, they converse. English is the medium.

Not only is Carriker's class a way to learn about food, it is a way to practice English and meet others who are in the same situation.

Eunhee is from South Korea and has been in Iowa City since August. She learned about St. Paul's program through a friend.

Eunhee likes Iowa City. She likes that there are more parks and trees



As an annual part of St. Paul's cooking class activities, Rev. W. Max Mons, St. Paul's pastor (above, in baseball cap), introduces international students to American-style grilling.



Cooking-class participants Carol Chen and Dalyai Sohn prepare dough.

Seminary, St. Louis, runs the International Student Ministry for St. Paul's. The program began four years ago and has grown steadily since. Weekly, about 40 women attend a variety of classes. According to Carriker, options such as writing, conversation, and Bible study offer these women a chance, not only to build relationships, but also, if they are non-Christian, to learn about the Christian faith. The cooking class is one of the most popular.

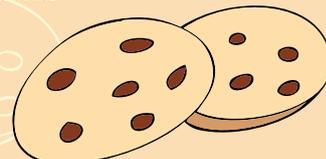
In the past, the group has made

Another Wednesday, they make a Korean dish named beef bulgogi. This is a new part of the program. Not only are American dishes being prepared, but now each woman takes a turn and teaches the group about a dish from her home country.

Clearly, food unites. Without much direction, each woman grabs an ingredient, and washes, chops, or slices it. The rice cooks, the meat marinates, and the kiwi and pears are blended for the sauce. As they practice their culi-

than in South Korea, and fewer buildings and less pollution. She does not like the food.

Eunhee has attended two other cooking classes. She has learned to make apple pie and chili. But with a knowing smile, she admits she would not make them for her family. She likes Korean food better.





Left to right: Deaconess Angie Carriker and cooking-class participant Dalyai Sohn prepare dough; Carriker in her office; cooking-class participants Carol Chen, Megan Lin, and Dalyai Sohn.

It is Olga's first class. She is from Moscow and has been in Iowa City for a year. She is timid at first, perhaps because the rest of the women know each other and many converse in their native tongue. Her English isn't as well developed as the others, but that doesn't stop the group from taking her into the fold. To describe oyster sauce they draw a picture and use their hands, mimicking the opening and closing of the shell.

Olga smiles. She is now part of this group.

A few Wednesdays later, the weather turns colder, and Christmas approaches. This week, the class will be making Christmas cookies. On the island sits the usual holiday cookie cutters: a Christmas tree, a bell, a star.

The women, per usual, take turns reading out the list of ingredients, and become stumped when it comes to "molasses."

What is it? Won't a whole jar be too sweet? Is this honey?

The jar of molasses is passed around, and everyone takes a turn smelling and tasting it.

As they mix the ingredients for the gingerbread cookies, they talk of Christmas traditions back home.

Carol Chen, from Taiwan, says Christmas is for the kids. She doesn't celebrate the holiday, but the kids do. The teens go to pubs, parties, and the movies. The little ones want presents.

As the cookies are put into the oven, the group talks about what they did for Thanksgiving. The heat of the kitchen now has a pleasant feeling. It smells of cookies baking.

The snickerdoodles have 10 minutes left, so the group tackles the gingerbread. Carriker flours the counter, but it doesn't stop the dough from sticking to any surface it comes in contact with. The gingerbread men are glued to the counter and are freed only after being manhandled by a spatula. Many of the gingerbread men are missing limbs, the stars look more like starfish, and the trees are misshapen. They still taste good.

With the gingerbread cookies in the oven, the women clean up. It is organized. They each clean the dishes or wipe off a counter.

As these women sit around a table together, it is apparent that this is a thriving community.

They have found a place they can gather together.

Together, their English improves. Together, they joke with each other. Together, they learn about a new country.

Carriker loves her job. She sees each woman's confidence improve. In the beginning, many are shy and unsure of their English. But through attendance of these classes, they open up. Slowly, they begin asking deeper questions or telling stories about their lives.

The classes offered at St. Paul's provide a medium to build relationships, not only with one another, but with God, Carriker explains. She feels her job is to be a support system. Through the relationships Carriker has built with each woman, she is able to share the Gospel. If the women miss their home countries or feel stressed, Carriker is able to say, not only are their friends and family there for them, but God is right there, too.

Before the women delve into the meal before them, they bow their heads for prayer.

*Come, Lord Jesus,
Be our guest,
And let these gifts to us be blessed.
Amen.*

Laura Wonderlin (laura-wonderlin@uiowa.edu) is a journalism student at the University of Iowa.



Clearly, food unites. Without much direction, each woman grabbed an ingredient, and washed, chopped, or sliced it. The rice cooked, the meat marinated, and the kiwi and pears were blended for the sauce. As they practiced their culinary skills, they talked with each other. English provided the medium.

Official Notices—Nominations—2010 Synod Convention

The following report of the Committee for Convention Nominations provides nominees for many of the officer, board, and commission positions to be filled by the 2010 convention of the Synod. District membership or origin is also provided. The elections will take place during the July 10–17 convention in Houston, Texas.

The Committee for Convention Nominations expresses its appreciation to all who submitted names and all who allowed their names to be considered for nomination.

Raymond L. Hartwig
Secretary, LCMS

SECRETARY

Ordained Ministers

1 ordained minister

Raymond Hartwig, MO; Larry Harvala, IN

VICE-PRESIDENT—FINANCE—TREASURER

1 layperson

(Nominated by the LCMS Board of Directors)
Paul Pettit, NEB

BOARD OF DIRECTORS, LCMS

2 ordained ministers, 4 laypersons

Ordained Ministers

Victor Belton, FG; Norbert Oesch, PSW;
Curtis Peters, IN; Jeffrey Schrank, EN;
Gregory Wismar, NE

Laypersons

James Carter, NI; Ed Everts, IE; Keith Frndak, EA;
David Piehler, NW; Warren Puck, IW; Roy Schmidt, MI;
Walter Tesch, SW; Lloyd Wardley, AT

BOARD FOR DISTRICT AND CONGREGATIONAL SERVICES

1 ordained minister, 1 commissioned minister serving a congregation or Lutheran school, 2 laypersons

Ordained Ministers

Juan Gonzales, AT; William Kilps, SW;
James Wiggins, Jr., SE

Commissioned Ministers

David Bangert, TX; Martha Milas, CI

Laypersons

David Bruns, KS; Carla Claussen, MNS;
Noreen Linke, TX; Phillip Magness, NI;
Thomas Reagin, FG

BOARD FOR MISSION SERVICES

2 ordained ministers, 2 laypersons

Ordained Ministers

Ronald Biel, FG; Lonnie Eatherton, MO; Thomas Engler, EA; Andrew Fields, FG; Michael Lange, CNH

Laypersons

Paul Flakne, MNS; Carolyn Holbird, OK; Janis McDaniels, SE; Robert Van Gundy, MNS;
Virginia Von Seggern, NEB

BOARD FOR PASTORAL EDUCATION

2 ordained ministers (at least one a parish pastor), 4 laypersons

Ordained Ministers

Steven Briel, MNS; Thomas Krause, KS;
David Ritt, EN; Jeffrey Shearier, RM

Laypersons

Johnny Buck, MT; Jonathan Dorr, SD;
Ernest Garbe, CI; Jeffrey Hesterman, SO;
Glenn Hurta, TX; Marty Lindvedt, SI;
Richard Schaefer, AT

BOARD FOR UNIVERSITY EDUCATION

1 ordained minister, 1 commissioned minister, 2 laypersons

Ordained Ministers

William Ameiss, NI; Daniel Jastram, EN

Commissioned Ministers

John Mierow, SW; Lee Schluckebier, NEB

Laypersons

James Gruetzner, RM; Richard Peters, PSW;
Nancy Petrie, NOW; Lisa Spence, FG

COMMISSION ON THEOLOGY AND CHURCH RELATIONS

1 ordained minister (parish pastor), 1 commissioned minister (parish teacher), 1 layperson

Ordained Ministers

Armand Boehme, MNS; Arlo Pullman, MT;
John Ramey, SE; Robert Steinke, FG

Commissioned Ministers

Timothy Hardy, MI; Gail Hein, RM

Laypersons

Bryan Campbell, MO; Mark Dowell, MO;
Ray Moldenhauer, MNN; Jeffrey Schwarz, SI

CPH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1 ordained minister, 1 commissioned minister, 3 laypersons

Ordained Ministers

Michael Ernst, EN; Scott Klemsz, CNH;
Alvin Schmidt, CI

Commissioned Ministers

Mark Bender, MO; Kelly Bailey-McCray, NOW

Laypersons

Michael Besch, EN; David Domsch, MO; Katerine Hallock, EA; Ruth Koch, RM; Natalie Oleshchuk, MO;
Gretchen Roberts, MDS; Stanley Scheumann, EN

LCEF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

1 ordained or commissioned minister, 2 laypersons

Ordained or Commissioned Ministers

Albert Anling, EN; David Bahn, TX;
Mark Hansen, IW; William F. Meyer, MO

Laypersons

Chris Anderson, KS; Christopher Bannwolf, TX;
Thomas Buuck, NOW; Susan Elsholz, EN;
J. Phillip Morrow, SE; David Wuenschner, MO

BOARDS OF REGENTS

Concordia University at Ann Arbor, MI

1 ordained minister, 1 commissioned minister, 2 laypersons

Ordained Ministers

Norman Koy, MI; Martin Moehring, IN;
John Rutz, OH; Wayne Wentzel, MI

Commissioned Ministers

Robert Froerster, EA; Robert Reisenbichler, OH;
Wesley Wrucke, IN

Laypersons

Christian Preus, MNS; Leslie Sramek, SI;
Tom Staack, IE

Concordia University at Austin, TX

1 ordained minister, 1 commissioned minister, 2 laypersons

Ordained Ministers

Richard Cody, MO; Michael Dorn, TX;
Jamison Hardy, EN

Commissioned Ministers

Paul Brandt, PSW; David Sommermeyer, TX

Laypersons

Paul Feucht, TX; James Holste, TX; Kristi Matus, TX;
Estefanos Taamrat, TX

Concordia College at Bronxville, NY

1 ordained minister, 1 commissioned minister, 2 laypersons

Ordained Ministers

William Harmon, SE; Arthur Scherer, SE

Commissioned Ministers

Ben Herbrich, AT; Jonathan Laabs, NI

Laypersons

Chester Edelman, Jr., AT; Heidi Fields, FG;
James Jahnke, AT; Robert Weber, SW

Concordia Theological Seminary—Fort Wayne, IN

1 ordained minister, 2 laypersons

Ordained Ministers

Ronald Garwood, WY; Daniel Harmelink, PSW;
John Kieschnick, TX

Laypersons

Miriam Hoelter, NOW; Leo Mackay, SE; Christian Rieddle, MI; Bethel Sine, IN; David Stephens, CI;
Bradd Stucky, SW

Concordia University at Irvine, CA

1 ordained minister, 1 commissioned minister, 2 laypersons

Ordained Ministers

Michael Morehouse, EN; J. L. Precup, PSW;
Elroi Reimnitz, PSW; S. T. Williams, PSW

Commissioned Ministers

Donald Berlinski, RM; Heather Manning, PSW;
Wendell Robson, PSW

Laypersons

Elmer Gooding, PSW; Peter Lee, PSW;
Sandra Ostapowich, RM; Glen Piper, IN

Concordia University Wisconsin at Mequon, WI

1 ordained minister, 1 commissioned minister, 2 laypersons

Ordained Ministers

Stephen Bartelt, NEB; Wayne Braun, TX;
Nathan Meador, SW

Commissioned Ministers

David Burgess, SW; Lynnette Fredericksen, NW;
Dwayne Jobst, SW

Laypersons

Frederick Anderson, SW; Mary Dittmar, SW;
Robert Knox, NI; Craig Schmidt, SW

Concordia University at Portland, OR

1 ordained minister, 1 commissioned minister, 2 laypersons

Ordained Ministers

Stewart Crown, CNH; Steve Eaton, NOW;
Orlando Trier, NOW

Commissioned Ministers

Keith Brosz, NOW; Robert Christian, NOW;
Laypersons

Lois Banke, NOW; Roy Kravitz, NOW;
Kathy Schulz, EN; Andrew Wihhte, NOW

Concordia University Chicago at River Forest, IL

1 ordained minister, 1 commissioned minister, 2 laypersons

Ordained Ministers

Matthew Bean, SE; Kent Tibben, CI;
William Weedon, SI

Commissioned Ministers

Mark Muehl, IN; Mark Thoeelke, MO

Laypersons

Kirk Farney, NI; Deborah Grime, IN;
Clifford Meints, IW; Mark Stern, NI

Concordia Seminary—St. Louis, MO

1 ordained minister, 2 laypersons

Ordained Ministers

Ralph Blomenberg, IN; Michael Eckelkamp, RM;
Harold Senkbeil, SW

Laypersons

Albert Allen, TX; Hubert Dellinger, Jr., MDS;
John Eckrich, MO; Paul Hegland, SW;
Louis Pabor, TX

Concordia University at St. Paul, MN

1 ordained minister, 1 commissioned minister,

Nominations (continued on page 22)

Nominations *(continued from page 21)*

2 laypersons

Ordained Ministers

Joel Dietrich, CI; Christopher Dodge, MNS;
Karl Weber, MNN

Commissioned Ministers

Paul Crisler, MO; Angela Hublick, IN

Laypersons

Kenneth Behm, MNN; Carol Fehrmann, MNS;
Gregg Hein, MT

Concordia College at Selma, AL

1 ordained minister, 1 commissioned minister,

2 laypersons

Ordained Ministers

David Mommens, IN; Curtis Peters, IN;
Dien Taylor, AT

Commissioned Ministers

Lawrence Sohn, SW; Jane Wilke, MO

Laypersons

Greg Durgin, FG; James Sandfort, MO;
Maria Saunders, FG; Ellen Ziehr-Lange, PSW

Concordia University Nebraska at Seward, NE

1 ordained minister, 1 commissioned minister,

2 laypersons (2 from Seward County)

Ordained Ministers

Timothy Gierke, NEB; Keith Grimm, NEB;
Scott Schmieding, MO

Commissioned Ministers

Robert Cooksey, MO; Kyle Karsten, CI;
Greg Pinick, PSW

Laypersons (Seward County)

Shirley Liesener, NEB; Timothy Moll, NEB;
Karen O'Dell, NEB; Jill Wild, NEB

Note: The "official notices" are published for a single purpose only: giving notice of a result, namely, changes in the Synod's membership rosters by the addition or deletion of the names of individuals and congregations. It is not always appropriate that reasons for the changes be identified in the published notices. Since a change can occur for any of a variety of reasons, no assumptions may be made merely from the fact that a change has occurred.—Ed.

Official Notices— From the Districts

MR. ROBERT ZIEGLER was reinstated to the Ministers of Religion—Commissioned roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod at the November 2009 Council of Presidents meeting.—Rev. Randall L. Golter, President, LCMS Rocky Mountain District.

REV. JOHN P. NELSON, Greendale, Wis., resigned from the Ministers of Religion—Ordained roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (Bylaw 2.11), effective Jan. 12. EMILY SCHMIDT, St. Paul, Minn., resigned from the Ministers of Religion—Commissioned roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (Bylaw 2.11), effective May 8, 2009. LESLIE D. KURTH, Milwaukee, Wis., resigned from the Ministers of Religion—Commissioned roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (Bylaw 2.11), effective Jan. 15. RALPH G. GRIENKE, Wauwatosa, Wis., was removed from the Ministers of Religion—Commissioned roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod by action of the district president (Bylaw 2.11), effective Dec. 28, 2009.—Rev. John C. Wille, President, LCMS South Wisconsin District.

REV. OTTO L. WOOD, Huntsville, Ala., was removed from the Ministers of Religion—Ordained roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and is, therefore, no longer eligible to receive a call. REV.

BRYCE P. WANDREY, London, England, resigned from the Ministers of Religion—Ordained roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and is, therefore, no longer eligible to receive a call. REV. KEITH A. SPEAKS was appointed counselor of Circuit 14, replacing REV. JOSEPH M. DZUGAN.—Dr. Jon T. Diefenthaler, President, LCMS Southeastern District.

Official Notices—Colloquies

CHI MIN JUN, Irvine, Calif.; CHUNG HWAN KIM, Corona, Calif.; DAVID M. COUCHMAN, Victoria, Texas; SHAUN M. DAUGHERTY, The Colony, Texas; AFZAAL FIRDOUS, Centerville, Texas; TIMOTHY M. PAILE, Fort Wayne, Ind.; SEUNGWOONG OK, Houston, Texas; LUCIANO VEGA-AYALA, Houston, Texas; BRADLEY A. VARVIL, Federal Way, Wash.; and DENTON W. WHITE, Fuquay Varina, N.C., have completed all requirements for the Pastoral Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Dr. William R. Diekelman, Chairman, Colloquy Committee, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

CHRISTINE C. FLOHRA, Fullerton, Calif.; MICHELLE Y. KIDD, Fort Wayne, Ind.; RACHAEL L. JOHNSON, New Haven, Ind.; SANDY ARMSTRONG, Fenton, Mo.; VICTORIA A. PILLER, Manchester, N.H.; ANNA SELZER, New Haven, Ind.; JULIE SMITH, Decatur, Ind.; JULIA S. HEINZ, E. Dundee, Ill.; and BRANDI K. SPREEMAN, Sterling, Ill., have submitted their applications for the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod through CUEnet. Correspondence regarding their applications should be directed within four weeks after publication of this notice to Dr. William R. Diekelman, Chairman, Colloquy Committee, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

JEANNE M. HOWKE, Kalispell, Mont., has completed the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and is, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Dr. Norman Metzler, Chairman, Colloquy Committee, Concordia University, Portland, 2811 N.E. Holman St., Portland, OR 97211.

BRENDA S. HANCOCK, Carol Stream, Ill.; GAYLE L. GALLOWAY, Wheaton, Ill.; and SARAH E. DIEKMANN, Evansville, Ind., have completed the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Mark A. Waldron, Director of Teacher Colloquy, Concordia University Chicago, 7400 Augusta St., River Forest, IL 60305-1499.

BILL HONECK, Tomball, Texas; PAMELA RASMUSSEN, Tomball, Texas; LISA NEMEC, Klein, Texas; and RHONDA FEINBERG, Spring, Texas, have completed the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Dr. Jim McConnell, Dean, College of Education, Assistant Colloquy Program Director, Concordia University Texas, 11400 Concordia University Drive, Austin, TX 78726.

Official Notices—Requests for Reinstatement

MARTIN E. BERGSTROM, Bentonville, Ark.; and BARRY R. SOMMERFIELD, Sturgis, Mich., have applied for reinstatement to the Ministers of Religion—Ordained roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. AMY CARRIER, Warren, Mich.; and PAUL LINDBLAD, Des Plaines, Ill., have applied for reinstatement to the Ministers of Religion—Commissioned roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Correspondence regarding these applications should be directed to the undersigned for

receipt no later than May 5.—Dr. Raymond L. Hartwig, Secretary, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

Official Notice

The Board of Regents of Concordia University, Neb., recently endorsed the recommendation of the Concordia faculty in naming 2010 honorary award recipients. Those to be honored are: DOCTOR OF LAWS: Gen. Merle Freitag, Eureka, Mo. DOCTOR OF LETTERS: Martin Barlau, Loveland, Colo. MASTER EDUCATOR: Ron Brandhorst, Denver, Colo. CREST OF CHRIST AWARD: Col. James Bode, Union City, Ga.; Faye Hall, Newark, Calif. DISTINGUISHED SERVICE AWARD: Dennis Berens, Lincoln, Neb.

Positions

The Lutheran Witness *welcomes notices for positions available at affiliated entities and Recognized Service Organizations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The deadline for receipt of such notices is the 20th of the month two months prior to the publication month (e.g., April 20 for the June/July combined issue). Send notices to karen.higgins@lcms.org.—Ed.*

Lutheran Hour Ministries (LHM), St. Louis, Mo., seeks to fill an immediate vacancy for the position of **division director of International Ministries**. Sought for this position is an experienced manager to direct the operation of all international LHM offices, project centers, and contact offices around the world.

Duties include leading the International Ministries Division by setting vision and planning, and by evaluating programming, staff performance, and training. This includes: supervising area counselors and other selected staff team members to prepare and empower the international offices to proclaim the Gospel message appropriately to their local populations; stimulating healthy growth of local support in each country where LHM has an office; controlling division budget by reviewing spending on a regular basis; maintaining productive working relationships with local board and partner church leadership; and interfacing with the Ministries Committee, Board of Governors, international staff leadership, and LHM headquarters staff. Qualifications:

- bachelor's degree required; advanced degree preferred;
- experience working with international cultures and laws;
- background in non-profit management and understanding of administering off-site work facilities;
- capability to lead employees to create a high functioning team;
- ability to travel and work effectively with employees at all levels;
- background in fund-development very helpful;
- active membership in a Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod congregation or partner church;
- a love for ministry;
- an empowering and positive "can do" attitude and team spirit.

Promptly send nominations, along with contact information or resume of applicant with cover letter, to Jackie O'Guin, Human Resources, Lutheran Hour Ministries, 660 Mason Ridge Center Drive, St. Louis, MO 63141-8557; fax: 314-317-4291; E-mail: lhjobs@lhmo.org; Web site: www.lhm.org.

The following institutions of the **Concordia University System** are seeking candidates for positions:

Concordia College—New York, Bronxville, N.Y., seeks to fill the following faculty position: **Teacher Education**.

(continued on page 24)

(continued from page 22)

Concordia University Texas, Austin, Texas, seeks to fill the following faculty positions: **Education in Middle/Secondary Math or Science; Biology; History; Political Science.**

For more information about these and other CUS positions, including complete job descriptions, qualifications, and application process, visit <http://www.lcms.org/cusjobs> and click on "Positions Available at Our Campuses."

Anniversaries

The Lutheran Witness welcomes notices of no more than 50 words from LCMS congregations about their upcoming "milestone" anniversaries. The deadline for receipt of such notices is the 20th of the month two months prior to the publication month (e.g., **April 20 for the June/July combined issue**). Send notices to karen.higgins@lcms.org.—Ed.

St. Luke's, Covington, Ill., will celebrate its 125th anniversary at the 10 a.m. service April 11, with District President Herb Mueller as speaker. A catered meal will follow. For reservations, call 618-478-5544. Theme: "125 Years of God's Grace: One Generation to Another."

St. Paul, Cullman, Ala., will celebrate its 125th anniversary throughout the year, beginning April 11 with Rev. Harold Hermetz as guest preacher; Sept. 12 with Rev. Kurtis Schultz as guest preacher; and Dec. 5 with Dr. Gerald Kieschnick as guest preacher. For more information about these events, contact Rev. Warren Ruland at 256-734-3575.

Christ Lutheran Church and School, Albuquerque, N.M., will celebrate its 50th anniversary at a special 3 p.m. service April 18, with Rev. Randall Golter, Rocky Mountain District president, as preacher. A reception will follow. Dr. Brian Friedrich, president and CEO of Concordia University, Seward, Neb., will lead a Bible study at 9:45 a.m. and preach at the 8:15 and 11 a.m. services. Visit www.clc-s.org or call 505-884-3876, ext. 120.

Trinity, Millersburg, Iowa, will celebrate its 75th anniversary at the 10 a.m. service on April 18, with fellowship and a meal to follow. Anniversary books may be purchased for \$10 by contacting Martha Gorsch at 641-295-2105 or gorshj@netins.net.

Mount Calvary, Franklin Park, Ill., will celebrate the 50th anniversary of its building dedication and its 60th congregation anniversary at the 11 a.m. service April 18, with former pastor Rev. Paul Mumme as guest preacher. A reception will follow. RSVP current pastor Rev. Mark Post at 630-832-2685 or revmarkdpost@yahoo.com.

St. John's, Portage, Wis., will celebrate its 150th anniversary on April 25 at the 10 a.m. service with a guest preacher, followed by a luncheon. The theme for the celebration service is "This Far by Faith." Contact the church office at 608-742-2387.

St. James, Victor, Iowa, will celebrate its 100th anniversary at the 10 a.m. special thanksgiving worship service May 2, followed by an outside catered picnic at noon. For reservations, contact Pastor Michael Kolesar at 319-647-3375 or stjlc@netins.net.

Good Shepherd, Tehachapi, Calif., will celebrate its 50th anniversary with an 11 a.m. special worship service May 2, with Dr. Larry Stoterau, Pacific Southwest District president, as guest preacher. At 2:30 p.m., a catered dinner will be served at the Jacobsen Middle School. For reservations, call the church office at 661-822-6817 or e-mail Pastor Daniel Alsop at goodshpehtehachapi@att.net.

St. Trinity Lutheran Church, Clarkston, Mich., will celebrate its 125th anniversary May 23. Dr. Wallace Schulz, former Lutheran Hour speaker, will preach at a special worship service at 3 p.m. A buffet-style dinner will follow. For more information, visit <http://saintrinitylutheran.com>.

Good Shepherd, Leadville, Colo., will celebrate its 50th anniversary June 6 at the 8:30 a.m. Matins Service, with Pastor Bernhard Seter as preacher, and the 4 p.m. Divine Service, with Pastor Dwight Hellmers as preacher. A dinner will be served after the 4 p.m. service. Contact the church office at 719-486-0280 or leadvillelutheran@gmail.com.

Christ The King, Redlands, Calif., will celebrate its 40th anniversary at the 9 a.m. Divine Service, June 6, followed by a luncheon and special events. Contact the church office at 909-793-5703 or ctkchurchoffice@verizon.net.

Beautiful Savior, Tempe, Ariz., will celebrate its 50th anniversary the weekend of Oct. 23-24. For more information, e-mail besavioluchu1001@qwstoffice.net.

In Memoriam

Obituary information is provided by district offices to the Synod's Office of Rosters and Statistics. Any questions about content should be referred, therefore, to the appropriate district office.—Ed.

ORDAINED

GRENINGER, FREDERICK C., Jan. 13, 1930, Altoona, Pa., to Dec. 25, 2009, Corning, N.Y.; son of Frederick and Martha (Cutler) Greninger; colloquy 1962. Served 1962-1984, 1986-1996. Ministries/parishes: Corning, N.Y.; Johnson City, Tenn.; Tuscola, Ill.; retired 1996. Survivors: Rose (Haudenschild) Greninger; sons: Raymond, Howard; daughters: Jonna Holden, Helene, Pamela Woodson. Memorial service: Dec. 30, 2009, Corning, N.Y.; cremation.

HILLMER, GERHARDT RAYMOND; Sept. 23, 1918, Sodus, Mich., to Jan. 23, 2010, Madison, Wis.; son of Rev. E. Walter and Martha (Wietzke) Hillmer; graduated Thiensville, 1942. Served 1963-1983. Ministries/parishes: Evansville, Ind.; Madison, Wis.; retired 1983. Survivors: Betty (Grunewald) Hillmer; sons: David, James; daughter: Beth Harris. Memorial service: Jan. 30, 2010, Madison, Wis.; cremation.

KLENK, ELMER ELVIR; Feb. 5, 1915, Olney, Texas, to Nov. 23, 2009, San Antonio, Texas; son of Rev. Peter and Alwine (Kunkel) Klenk; graduated St.

Louis, 1938. Served 1939-1982. Ministries/parishes: Sparenberg, Dallas, Texas; Van Nuys, Santa Ynez, Calif.; Texas District circuit counselor: 1946-1954; Southern California District circuit counselor: 1963-1964; retired 1982. Preceded in death by his wife, Alma (Holderrieth) Klenk. Survivors: daughters: Cynthia Woodlee, Kathleen Goecker. Funeral: Nov. 28, 2009, Tomball, Texas; interment: Nov. 28, 2009, Pinehurst, Texas.

LEMKE, MARLO DEAN; Sept. 5, 1937, St. Cloud, Minn., to Jan. 31, 2010, Birmingham, Ala.; son of Rev. Waldemar and Esther (Behrens) Lemke; graduated St. Louis, 1963. Served 1963-2005. Ministries/parishes: Appleton, Holloway, Minn.; Vicksburg, Starkville, Miss.; Birmingham, Ala.; retired 2005. Survivors: Marlene (Winter) Lemke; son: Derek; daughter: Dawn Anderson. Memorial services: Feb. 13, 2010, Birmingham, Ala.; Feb. 20, 2010, Starkville, Miss.; cremation.

MOYER, JOHN V.; April 24, 1930, Philadelphia, Pa., to Jan. 12, 2010, Branson, Mo.; son of Earl and Kathryn (Meyer) Moyer; graduated Springfield, 1961. Served 1961-1995. Ministries/parishes: Wauseon, Toledo, Ohio; Topsfield, Mass.; Brownstown, Ind.; retired 1995. Survivors: Eileen (Morrison) Moyer; sons: Rev. Thomas, J.V.; daughters: Janet, Kim Onnen, Susan. Memorial service: Jan. 23, 2010, Branson, Mo.

REINBOLT, RAYMOND HENRY; July 28, 1940, Wilson Township, N.Y., to Nov. 5, 2009, Columbus, Ohio; son of Roy and Dorothy (Mislin) Reinbolt; graduated St. Louis, 1971. Served 1971-2008. Ministries/parishes: Royalton, Dixville, Minn.; Liberty Center, Ohio; Bourbon, Mo.; Fairfield, Mount Carmel, Ill.; Lidderdale, Iowa; retired 2008. Survivors: Barbara (Kammeyer) Reinbolt; sons: Mark, Lucius; daughter: Roxanna Neely. Memorial services: Nov. 12, 2009, Dublin, Ohio; and Nov. 13, 2009, Newfane, N.Y.; interment: Nov. 13, 2009, Newfane, N.Y.

RUSSOW, HOWARD E.; March 4, 1915, Monroe, Mich., to Dec. 26, 2009, Harvey, Ill.; son of Ernest and Susan (Miller) Russow; graduated Thiensville, 1939. Served 1940-1966. Ministries/parishes: Florence, Garden City, Dupree, S.D.; Racine, Iron Ridge, Wis.; Woodland, Calif.; retired 1991. Preceded in death by his wife, Lillian (Schultz) Russow. Survivors: sons: William, Michael, Rev. James, Timothy, David, Robert, Richard; daughters: Linda Hulberg, Lori Moeller. Funeral and interment: Dec. 31, 2009, Hales Corner, Wis.

SCHRADER, DAVID L.; July 25, 1942, Seymour, Ind., to Jan. 28, 2010, Green Bay, Wis.; son of George and Edna (Stuckwisch) Schrader; graduated Springfield, 1969. Served 1970-2005. Ministries/parishes: Alpha, Litchfield, Minn.; Decatur, Ill.; Dearborn, Mich.; retired 2005. Survivors: Sharon (Reinke) Schrader; sons: Lukas, Alexander; daughter: Aiana Prusak. Funeral: Feb. 1, 2010, Shawano, Wis.; interment: Shawano, Wis.

SCHULTZ, DALE E.; Nov. 10, 1915, Boyd County, Neb., to Jan. 9, 2010, Yuma, Ariz.; son of Erwin and Lois (Tarr) Schultz; graduated Springfield, 1954. Served 1954-1978, 1979-1983. Ministries/parishes: Burlington, Stratton, Cortez, Colo.; Moab, Cedar City, Utah; Rocky Mountain District circuit counselor: 1991-1994; retired 1983. Preceded in death by his wives, Ruth (Ballantyne) Schultz and Shirley Schultz; preceded in death by his daughter, Margaret Corrales; and preceded in death by his step-daughter, Wilma Heiserman. Survivors: son: David; daughters: Neoma, Carol, Gail; step-daughters: Judy Lind, Jana Lohrenz.

STELMACHOWICZ, MICHAEL J. JR.; Sept. 18, 1927, St. Louis, Mo., to Dec. 30, 2009, Wauwatosa, Wis.; son of Michael Sr. and Esther (Boylan) Stelmachowicz; graduated St. Louis, 1957. Served 1957-1992. Ministries/parishes: St. Louis, Mo.; Seward, Neb.; Detroit, Mich.; Winfield, Kan.; retired

(continued on page 26)

OFFICE SPACE FOR LEASE

3558 S. Jefferson Ave.
St. Louis, MO

Contact: Anthony Shimkus,
Director of Facilities
for appointment to view facility
314-268-1262

Amenities Available

- Lobby Receptionist 7:00 A.M. to 5 P.M.
- Full Service Cafeteria for Breakfast/Lunch
- Free Secure Parking
- Direct Marketing Services
- Mail Services
- Shipping Services
- Security Card Access for Your Employees
- Telephone Service
- Internet Connection
- Janitorial Services
- In-house Printing

How Many Times Did Lazarus Die?

In John 11, Jesus raised Lazarus from death. Did Lazarus die a second time? Do the Scriptures answer this question?

Only the Gospel of John gives us any information about Lazarus, including brief mention of him after Jesus raised him from death. In chapter 12, John tells us that after his resurrection Lazarus was living in Bethany (12:1). He was present at a dinner there given to honor Jesus and was among those “reclining with Him [Jesus] at table” (12:2 ESV). When the Jews heard that Jesus was there, they came to see Him, but “also to see Lazarus.” In fact, they were making plans, not only to kill Jesus, but “to put Lazarus to death as well” (12:10). This is the last we hear of Lazarus in the Bible, but it appears that he returned to the kind of life that he had before as a mortal human being.

Two important considerations need to be kept in mind when seeking an answer to the question.

First, the resurrection of Jesus—whom the Scriptures call “the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep” (1 Cor. 15:20; cf. v. 23)—was of an entirely different order than what we see in the case of Lazarus. St. Paul writes in Philippians 3 that when Jesus comes and raises us from the grave, He “will transform our lowly body to be like His *glorious body*, by the power that enables Him even to subject all things to Himself” (Phil. 3:21). On the day of resurrection believers will receive bodies like the resurrected and glorious body of Jesus. They will be bodies radically and wonderfully different from the natural bodies they now possess (1 Cor. 15:38–49), imperishable bodies suitable for life in heaven. Even Lazarus had yet to experience this powerful transformation guaranteed by Christ’s resurrection.

Second, we must bear in mind the significance of miracles in John’s Gospel. John speaks of Jesus’ miracles as “signs,” indicating that His powerful acts signify deeper realities. They are, so to speak, “signposts” of who Jesus is and what is to come. John tells us that he is reporting the “signs” that Jesus performed “so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in His name” (John 20:31). Lazarus’s resurrection, a climactic miracle in Jesus’ ministry, manifested His glory (John 11:40) and pointed to what He will do in the future.

One can imagine that Lazarus found hope and comfort in what happened to him when Jesus came to his grave. We, too, can have this hope and consolation as we look forward to the day of our resurrection.

Until his retirement, Dr. Jerald C. Joersz was an associate executive director of the LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations.

Send your questions to Q & A, *The Lutheran Witness*, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295; or send them via e-mail to lutheran.witness@lcms.org. Please include your name and address. While we look for questions that have broad interest among our readers, no question is unimportant. Unfortunately, the volume of questions we receive makes it impossible to answer every question individually.

Taking Responsibility

My daughter will graduate from high school in June. She's a good kid, but doesn't help much around the house. It seems I am either nagging her or picking up after her. She'll go away to college next year, and I know I'll miss her terribly. How do I balance the challenge of loving her now, when she is sometimes not very lovable, so that I won't have remorse next year?

Indeed, you have a big job ahead to help your daughter transition to adulthood. The role of parents essentially is to work themselves out of a job. That means giving their children roots and wings by teaching them what is important, and letting them gradually practice responsibility and freedom so they will be ready for more independent living when the time comes. Sometimes, parents value a conflict-free relationship over one that has the limits and expectations that bring necessary growth and maturity. Allowing your daughter to not take responsibility in those tasks where she is clearly capable is not giving her what she needs. When she sees you picking up after her, she has learned that she doesn't have to pull her own weight. You can serve her better by giving her a clearer picture of the real world, which will include roommates, professors, and bosses who will not give her a pass on her responsibilities.

You can move in a more helpful direction. While this may be a difficult step, begin by apologizing to her for not having done the job you hoped in preparing her for adult-

hood. Tell her you need to make some changes, since the current arrangement isn't working for either of you. Communicate your household expectations, asking for her input about what she feels is reasonable, but be clear that you have the final say. Let her know that you want her to enjoy the privileges she has had up to this point (driving, texting, etc.), but that, by her actions, *she* is choosing whether or not she retains them. If she slips up, tell her the consequences in a matter-of-fact tone, and remind her she'll have more opportunities in the future. Consistency is critical.

Balance your clear and consistent expectations with liberal reminders about why you think she's a great daughter and how much you love her. If you're feeling stuck, seek the help of your pastor or a Christian counselor. A good resource is *Boundaries with Teens* by John Townsend.

Theresa M. Shaltanis, M.A., L.P.C., is a marriage and family therapist and a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Falls Church, Va.

Send your questions to Family Counselor, *The Lutheran Witness*, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295; or send them via e-mail to lutheran.witness@lcms.org. Please include your name and address. While we look for questions that have broad interest among our readers, no question is unimportant. Unfortunately, the volume of questions we receive makes it impossible to answer every question individually.

NOTICES

(continued from page 24)

1992. Preceded in death by his wife, Betty (Rivers) Stelmachowicz. Survivors: son: Cary; daughters: Candyce Seider, Cheryl Wawrzyniak, Crystal Welter, Corrie Klatt. Funeral: Jan. 6, 2010, Austin, Texas; interment: Jan. 6, 2010, Pflugerville, Texas.

COMMISSIONED

COBURN, WAYNE EMMETT; Sept. 10, 1948, St. Paul, Minn., to Jan. 1, 2010, Coon Rapids, Minn.; son of James and Delores (Bakke) Coburn; graduated St. Paul, 1972. Served 1975–2010. Schools/ministries: Spring Lake Park, Eagan, Minn. Survivors: Peggy (Pawelk) Coburn; sons: Chad, Brandon; daughters: Jennifer Ehnstrom, Megan. Funeral and interment: Jan. 7, 2010, Eagan, Minn.

DUNK, WILLIAM F.; Nov. 1, 1944, Denver, Colo., to Jan. 5, 2010, St. Francis, Minn.; son of Carl and Elinor (Kasper) Dunk; graduated Seward, 1966. Served 1966–2009. Schools/ministries: Milwaukee, Wis.; Schaumburg, Ill.; Cedar Rapids, Iowa; St. Francis, Minn.; retired 2009. Survivors: DeLoris (Pufahl) Dunk; son: Jonathan; daughter: Stacey Hansen. Funeral and interment: Jan. 16, 2010, St. Francis, Minn.

DUNKLAU, ESTHER MAY (HAUER); July 20, 1921, Perry, Okla., to Oct. 25, 2009, Clinton Township, Mich.; daughter of Rev. Edward and Rose (Zerbe) Hauer; graduated St. John College, 1940. Served 1974–1978. School/ministry: Kansas City, Mo.; retired 1978.

Preceded in death by her husband, Harold Dunklau. Survivor: son: Edward. Funeral: Oct. 28, 2009, Macomb, Mich.; interment: Arlington, Neb.

HASS, VERNON FREDERICK WILLIAM; Jan. 16, 1929, Little Falls, Minn., to Jan. 5, 2010, Topeka, Kan.; son of Rev. Walter and Johanna Hass; graduated Seward, 1953. Served 1961–1994. Schools/ministries: Reed City, Muskegon, Mich.; Omaha, Neb.; Stuttgart, Ark.; Topeka, Kan.; retired 1994. Survivors: Donna (Kellner) Hass; son: Jon; daughters: Janet Johnson, Meridee Westjord. Memorial service and interment: Jan. 11, 2010, Topeka, Kan.

HOFFMANN, ELAINE D. (BICKER); Sept. 6, 1941, Warsaw, Ill., to Jan. 10, 2010, Greencastle, Ind.; daughter of Edward and Helen (Metzger) Bicker; graduated River Forest, 1964. Served 1982–1996. Schools/ministries: Lansing, Chicago, Ill.; Greencastle, Ind.; retired 2004. Survivors: Rev. Peter Hoffmann; sons: Carl, Thomas, Paul, George; daughter: Marcy Moore. Funeral: Jan. 16, 2010, Greencastle, Ind.; cremation.

KIRCH, GLEN W.; Nov. 10, 1933, Willsten, Okla., to June 18, 2009, Denver, Colo.; graduated Seward, 1960. Served 1960–1996. Schools/ministries: Denver, Colo.; Seward, Neb.; Honolulu, Hawaii; retired 1996. Survivors: Susan Kirch; sons: Timothy, Jay; daughter: Stacy. Memorial service: June, 30, 2009, Denver, Colo.

REINCKE, J. NEIL; Dec. 21, 1936, Fort Wayne, Ind., to Jan. 9, 2010, LaGrange, Ind.; son of Lester and Thelma (Scherer) Reincke; graduated River Forest, 1961. Served 1961–1999. Schools/ministries: Fort Wayne, Ind.; retired 1999. Preceded in death by his son, Mark. Survivors: Carolyn (Scheiderer) Reincke; sons: John, Doug; daughter: Tami Fisher. Funeral and interment: Jan. 13, 2010, Fort Wayne, Ind.

WERLING, ARTHUR C.; Sept. 5, 1915, New Haven, Ind., to Oct. 1, 2009, Fort Wayne, Ind.; son of Henry and Anna Werling; graduated River Forest, 1938. Served 1942–1980. Schools/ministries: Allen Park, Taylor Center, Mich.; Fort Wayne, Ind.; retired 1980. Preceded in death by his wife, Edna Werling. Survivors: son: James; daughters: Lennis Scheiman, Ellen Young. Funeral and interment: Oct. 6, 2009, Fort Wayne, Ind.

WINTERSTEIN, BARBARA RUTH (TURCOTT); March 17, 1943, Seattle, Wash., to Sept. 26, 2009, Puyallup, Wash.; daughter of Lester and Margaret Turcott; graduated River Forest, 1965. Served 1979–1991. School/ministry: Fremont, Calif.; retired 1991. Survivors: George Winterstein; sons: Richard, Michael; daughter: Joanne. Funeral: Oct. 3, 2009, Lakewood, Wash.; interment: Oct. 2, 2009, Puyallup, Wash.

Not Really a Secret

It was that time of the year, late April, and my Sunday school class of 15, including my own girls, Jeannie, 14, and Cindy, 8, were with me, walking along the side of a road and picking up a winter's worth of litter. Our trash bags were almost full when Cindy asked why we were picking up other people's junk.

Jeannie, who was on her knees trying to gather up a pile of cigarette butts, looked up at Cindy and said, "The secret to being grown up, Sis, is to show God you're willing to do things even when you don't really want to do them." Then Jeannie spotted more trash in some nearby bushes. She stood up and hurried over to pick it up.

Cindy smiled at me with her big brown eyes. "But, Mom," she asked, "why does it have to be a secret?"

Janett L. Grady
Palmer, Alaska

A Swell Occasion

A few minutes into our Easter sunrise service last year, a pipe on our organ began to stick and emit a continuous, irritating squeak. With an adept adjustment of stops, our organist, Paul Schmalz, fixed the problem and played all three services without any further interruptions. Appropriately, and with a typical sense of choral humor, several choir members later commented that Paul played "swell" but not "great."

Lawrence Aurich
Belton, Mo.



"Once again we would like to thank Mussberger Florists for their generous donation of Easter lilies."

LETTERS

(continued from page 5)

only by their own. Example: What does "The pump lost its prime," mean? Is it proper grammar? Or, "The rose boxes in holds 2 and 4 were stopped up."

We are not speaking of a malfunctioned pump but the inability of a pump to perform due to a lack of inlet fluid. "Rose box" is a term used to describe a device designed to screen out debris from blocking the flow of bilge water to the bilge pump. These terms may mean nothing to the general public, but they are used on a regular basis by maritime personnel.

All too often a speaker or writer uses words or experiences foreign to

the reader—pew-sitter. The pew-sitter naps!

All pew-sitters are not theologians.

All pew-sitters are not court recorders.

Every writer-speaker *must* keep in mind 1 Corinthians 14.

While on active duty (February 1943–February 1967), I had two tours as a supervisory instructor at the Army's Transportation School, Fort Eustis, Va. Instructors who "talked down" to the students were relieved on the spot.

Henry A. Shave
Peach Bottom, Pa.

We welcome letters that comment on articles in *The Lutheran Witness*. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. Send letters to "Letters," c/o *The Lutheran Witness*, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295; or send them via e-mail to lutheran.witness@lcms.org. Please include your name, postal address, and telephone number.

Read more letters to the editor at lcms.org/witness.



Recipients of God's *Miraculous Grace*

Each Sunday, our church was providing bookmarkers with information about people from our history. On the opposite side of the marker was a brief excerpt from our church history. Our members looked forward to and enjoyed receiving the markers, which were being designed and donated by a member.

One week, the machine the member used to cut and laminate the markers was broken. She took the markers to a local office-supply store, where she was quoted a price our church could not afford. A customer standing in line asked what she was making the markers for. She told him the church. He then volunteered to pay for the work.

What a surprise! What a wonderful gift! We took that experience as one of God's miracles in the life of Grace Lutheran Church.



The celebration of Easter is a reminder that the God who saved us on the cross of Calvary is the God of miracles in our everyday lives.

Read John 20:1-18. Who arrives at the tomb of Jesus?

What do they encounter?

Has God ever "surprised" you? The apostle John's resurrection account provides us another example of God's miraculous surprise for those who went to the tomb of Jesus early on that first Easter.

Although Mary arrives first, she does not enter the tomb. Notice what she sees when she finally looks into the tomb.

What conclusions might Mary and the other disciples draw after seeing the strips of cloth still in the tomb?

The empty tomb is a reminder of God's miraculous intervention in the lives of His people.

Read Luke 5:1-10. What miraculous event does Peter experience? How is Peter changed?

Read Luke 5:12-14. What is this man's physical condition? How does Jesus heal him?

Think of ways God has miraculously touched you when others shunned you.

Read Luke 9:10-17. Why is there such a large crowd of people following Jesus?

Although the disciples want to send the hungry crowd away, what are the instructions of Jesus?

The apparent food supply is limited, but Jesus gives thanks to God and uses what is available. Although only the men are identified in the text, do you think the women and children are left out? Who benefits from this miraculous feeding?

Today, we are still recipients of God's miraculous grace. We are invited to the waters of Baptism, and there God washes us clean of our sin and adopts us into His royal priesthood of believers forever. Resurrection Sunday after Sunday, the Word of God is proclaimed, sins are forgiven, the true body and blood of Jesus is distributed, and our faith is strengthened. We rejoice again this season as we peer into the empty tomb and believe that our Savior is risen. *He is risen indeed!*

Rev. Donald Anthony (lebuick@aol.com) is chairman of the LCMS Board for Black Ministry Services and pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, Concord, and Crown in Glory Lutheran Church, Salisbury, N.C.





Easter and the Promise of Life

The Easter season, which continues for the 50 days from Easter Sunday until Pentecost, proclaims yet again that life is ours forever.

At this time of year, there are fresh signs of life all around us. Flowers are blooming, trees are budding, and grass is greening. These are most welcome sights—a relief, really—following the especially cold and difficult winter months that many parts of our country, including St. Louis, have endured. Now, the mountains of snow and ice are melted by the warmer temperatures, providing the ground with much-needed moisture for the support of reemerging life.

All the beauty and new life that comes with spring are but pale reminders and symbols of the life that is now ours in Jesus Christ. How joyous it is to recall that above all else, Easter, the festival of our Lord's resurrection, gives us the assurance of eternal life in Jesus Christ and the certainty of our own resurrection.

The apostle Paul says it so clearly: "And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile and you are still in your sins. Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. But in fact Christ has been raised from the dead, the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep. For as by a man came death, by a man has come also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15:17–22).

These Holy Spirit-inspired words emphasize with great power the miracle of life, even life after death.

In my limited understanding as a human being—having experienced the death of friends, acquaintances, and loved ones over the years—my human brain can't compute how a cold, lifeless body can experience life again. But

God, who brought human life into the world through the creation of Adam and Eve and continues to bring life into being through procreation, also promises to restore life to human beings in a way that transcends our comprehension.

"For now we see in a mirror dimly," as Paul puts it. But when Christ returns and we, too, are raised to eternal life, we will see God "face to face." Paul continues, "Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I have been fully known" (1 Cor. 13:12).



How joyous it is to recall that above all else, Easter, the festival of our Lord's resurrection, gives us the assurance of eternal life in Jesus Christ and the certainty of our own resurrection.

So, as you experience and enjoy all the new life in flora and fauna around you—symbols and reminders of the life that is ours in Jesus Christ—hold closely in your heart the promises of Jesus. He says, "Because I live, you also will live" (John 14:19) and "I am the Resurrection and the Life. Whoever believes in Me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in Me shall never die" (John 11:25–26).

Jerry Kieschnick
John 3:16–17

Lives Transformed through
Christ, in Time . . . for Eternity!
e-mail: president@lcms.org
Web page: www.lcms.org/president