



# THE LUTHERAN WITNESS™

VOL. 127 NO. 10 OCTOBER 2008



## *The 'Genius' of Luther's Thinking*

7

A NEW ERA

16

RECHARGING  
WITH GRACE

19

HAPPY  
CAMPERS

[www.lcms.org/witness](http://www.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.

## FEATURES

### 7 A NEW ERA by Roland Lovstad

Our Synod is engaging 21st-century mission with an international force.

### 11 HELPING BLIND PEOPLE SEE JESUS by Paula Schlueter Ross

Over the past 85 years, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod’s ministry to blind and visually impaired people has evolved from simply producing Braille materials to training blind people as missionaries.

### 13 THE ‘GENIUS’ OF LUTHER’S THINKING by Robert A. Kolb and Charles P. Arand

The ancient Romans called the spirit that guides and directs something and gives it its distinctive character a “genius.” [Luther’s] defining view of God and human beings served as the “genius” for his way of thinking.

### 16 RECHARGING WITH GRACE by Kim Plummer Krull

An LCMS Recognized Service Organization, Grace Place Lutheran Retreats offer church workers and their spouses an opportunity to recharge spiritually, physically, and emotionally.

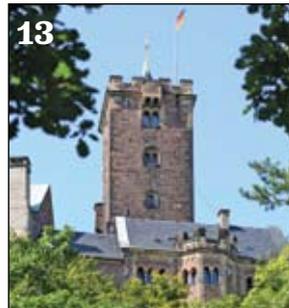
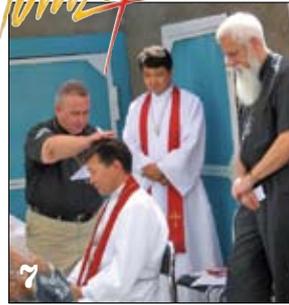
### 19 HAPPY CAMPERS by Kim Plummer Krull

Concordia University Wisconsin shines as an NFL training site.

### 22 PRIESTS IN VOTING BOOTHS Opinion by Uwe Siemon-Netto

What’s a Christian to think of politics and the upcoming elections? For Christians in their role as “voter-priests,” it’s a serious business, says Uwe Siemon-Netto, and considering the world’s thirst for oil, there’s much at stake.

*Ablaze!*



## DEPARTMENTS

- 3 LIFELINE
- 4 LETTERS
- 25 NOTICES

- 27 SHEDDING SOME LIGHT
- 28 SEARCHING SCRIPTURE
- 29 FROM THE PRESIDENT

### TO THE READER

As with last month, we are overflowing with feature stories, beginning with our Reformation cover story by Dr. Robert A. Kolb and Dr. Charles P. Arand. Also in this issue: Roland Lovstad looks at the new face of missions, Paula Schlueter Ross celebrates the work of Lutheran Blind Mission, and Kim Plummer Krull profiles Grace Place Lutheran Retreats and catches up with staff and students at Concordia University Wisconsin, who helped engineer a successful training camp for an NFL team. Finally, Dr. Uwe Siemon-Netto reflects on the role of Christians as “voter-priests” in this election year. We hope you enjoy this issue and find it informative and helpful.

J.H.H.



## Prodigal Daughter in Muck Boots and Pearls

An unpleasant farm chore on a wet afternoon leads to thoughts about the prodigal son and the saint-sinner tension in our Christian lives.

Returning from an afternoon event at church, I arrive home just in time for evening chores outdoors. I change clothes quickly, don my tall boots, and rush out to muck out the horse's stall and paddock. I slog through the mud as I work in a cold, drizzling rain. The work is hard and dirty, and I am tired. I wonder: "Is this the kind of day the infamous prodigal of Luke 15 experienced when he first considered returning home?"

Halfway through my task, I reach up to adjust my collar—and touch cool beads. In my haste to get to my chores, I forgot to remove the double strand of cultured pearls I had hung around my neck that morning. I can't help grinning about the irony. "Here I am," I say aloud, "God's prodigal daughter in muck boots and pearls."

The image stops me in my tracks. I am simultaneously God's prodigy and prodigal. I am both saint—a true daughter of the King through water, Word, and Spirit—and sinner, falling short in thought, word, and deed.

I am, indeed, a daughter of the heavenly Father, who loves me unconditionally. Through the sacrifice of His Son, Jesus, God secured for me an amazing inheritance. I have immeasurable spiritual wealth at my fingertips; I need only to open the Word or utter a

word of prayer. My Father has an open-door policy, giving me access to His ear at any moment of my need. I am granted a huge bankroll of promises, guidance, and empowerment from the Holy Spirit, and more good gifts of physical provision than I can count.

I am also a prodigal. I do not always make wise use of my Father's prodigious provisions of grace and love and mercy.

Without being aware of asking for it, at my Baptism I received an early inheritance: I gained immediate access to every promise God ever made to me as a believer—and I got to start eternity early.

What have I done with my astounding early inheritance? I could put on my best pharisaical face and say that I've led a "pretty good" life. Sure, I've done some things wrong, but I certainly haven't killed anyone. I don't remember seriously disrespecting my parents or stealing much more than an office paperclip or bank pen when I walked off with it without thinking. I don't covet much, and I took my marriage vows seriously. I rarely miss church.

Yet I "leave home" every time I lose my patience, act without compassion, or do anything that does not honor God's name. I squander God's riches every time I hold onto my guilt, fail to make a daily withdrawal from the treasure of God's Word, or hesitate to share the Good News of God's love

with others in need of it. The incongruity of pearls in one hand and a muck rake in the other is for me a powerful picture of the saint-sinner tension of my Christian life.

*I leave home' every time I lose my patience, act without compassion, or do anything that does not honor God's name. I squander God's riches every time I hold on to my guilt, fail to make a daily withdrawal from the treasure of God's Word, or hesitate to share the Good News of God's love with others in need of it.*

It occurs to me, however, that in another way, the "muck boots and pearls" image is not incongruous at all for one of God's daughters. I am, after all, a follower of Christ, who came "not to be served, but to serve." I am called to use all the resources available to me as a daughter of the King to serve others, whether I'm washing feet, ladling soup in a homeless shelter . . . or mucking out a paddock in a cold, drizzling rain.

**Edith M. "Edie" Sodowsky is a member of Peace in Christ Lutheran Church, Walkersville, Md.**



## God's design for marriage

Christopher Mitchell's article, "God's Design for Marriage" (August), was very good and a much-needed perspective of God's will for our married lives.

However, Dr. Mitchell misquoted when he wrote that "one holy catholic and apostolic church" comes from the Apostles' Creed. It is, as Dr. Mitchell would agree, from the Nicene Creed.

Thank you, Dr. Mitchell, for an article that is very relevant to the times we live in.

Linda Bettis  
Trinity Lutheran Church  
Tyler, Texas

(Ed. note: Re Apostles'/Nicene Creed—please blame the editor, not the author. This is an infelicity we should have caught, or perhaps not created.)



primarily through television. It has led to homosexual and cohabitating couples being seen as the norm. It also has led to obviously devout Christians being labeled as simply "spiritual" in news stories. If conservative Christians moved back into the cities, we could begin to take back the national culture.

The public school system is the most significant force shaping culture on the local level. As a volunteer youth leader, I have to deal with the effects of this every week. In the town in which I live, the impact is not so much families retreating to parochial schools but parents who do not take an active role in what is being taught to their children. Many high schoolers spend 35 or 40 hours a week in school and close to an equal amount of time watching television, all absorbing secular culture. That is more than 20 times as much as youth spend at church on Wednesday nights and Sunday mornings. It is an

Christopher Mitchell's article, 'God's Design for Marriage,' was very good and a much-needed perspective of God's will for our married lives.

Linda Bettis  
Tyler, Texas

I was struck by the opening line of President Kieschnick's "Statement of Disagreement with California Ruling": "In the face of such moral decline . . ." As I was thinking about that line, it made me wonder if we as members of the LCMS and the wider conservative (theologically, not politically) Christian community are not partly responsible for this moral decline. Our responsibility in this decline is the result of our retreat from culture. We retreated from the city to the suburbs and from public to parochial schools. Our retreat from the cities left a vacuum that was filled by liberal Christians, gays and lesbians, and other progressive communities. They then shaped American culture,

uphill battle to be sure. If each LCMS parent took an active role in his or her children's education, I am sure it would have an immediate impact on what is taught.

Until we begin to engage the culture again, I fear that we will be dismissed as fundamentalists issuing statements "in the face of such moral decline."

Andrew Pugh  
Fairbanks, Alaska

## Preventing child abuse

"What about the Children" in the August issue reminded me that a few years ago one of our congrega-

tion members, Baker Kittelson, in cooperation with Director of Christian Education Bob Brantsch, was instrumental in forming a Prevention of Abuse of Children (PAC) Committee, which resulted in a policy manual for our congregation. I would invite other congregations to investigate the manual at [gloriadeihudson.org/documents/PAC\\_Policy\\_Manual.pdf](http://gloriadeihudson.org/documents/PAC_Policy_Manual.pdf) or contact Bob Brantsch at [GloriaDeiDCE@windstream.net](mailto:GloriaDeiDCE@windstream.net) for information about this timely program to protect the children of our congregations.

Robert A. Dill  
Gloria Dei Lutheran Church  
Hudson, Ohio

## A wrong note!

Your article in the August issue on inspiring children to make music in the church was well done for the most part. I saw the DVD that was produced by the Commission on Worship and have only positive things to say about it.

However, I take issue with you bringing into the article the "decline" and resurgence of an adult choir of a large LCMS congregation. This has nothing to do with the premise of your article of inspiring the love of music into children's lives. It should never have been included. For the sake of truthfulness, I would like to point out that the statement that "the choir had dwindled to eight members—on a good Sunday" is totally false. As a member of that "dwindling" choir, I would like to point out that the smallest number the choir reached was an active roster of 21. These were faithful, dedicated members who loved music and served their Lord with the best they had to give. Throughout the years, this congregation has had an active music ministry of multiple choirs, hand bells, carillon, and instrumentalists contributing to dynamic liturgical worship. It continues to be known as an excellent singing congregation—primarily due to the leadership of a faithful choir throughout the years (whether the choir was small or large).

Name and address  
withheld by request

## *So, this is sainthood?*

I read with interest "So, This Is Sainthood?" (*Searching Scripture*, August). August 29, the beheading (martyrdom) of St. John the Baptist, is Sept. 11 on the Julian calendar. My paternal grandmother's family is from the Carpathian Mountain region of present-day Slovakia, where that calendar is still used for liturgical dates. This date (Gregorian, Aug. 29/Julian, Sept. 11) is historically a day of much piety. The villagers wait in long lines for confession and absolution. For centuries it has been a day set aside to remember St. John's witness and death, but also to recognize the works of Satan in the world. The faithful from that region saw great significance in our tragedy on that same day in 2001. Let us remember that many Eastern Christians are commemorating John the Baptist on Sept. 11, and draw from it assurance of God's great design for us.

*John Froebel-Parker  
New Baltimore, N.Y*

*continued on page 26*



Official periodical of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod through the Board for Communication Services, Dennis A. Clauss, chairman; David L. Strand, executive director.

Staff: David L. Strand, interim executive editor; James H. Heine, managing editor; Vicky Schaeffer, senior designer; Robert Sexton, marketing manager and advertising sales; Jim Stange, coordinator; Carla Dubbelde, editorial manager, district editions; Karen Higgins, editorial assistant; editorial office: 1333 S. Kirkwood Rd., St. Louis, MO 63122-7295; (314) 996-1202, Ext. 1228.

© 2008 The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Reproduction of a single article or column for parish use only does not require permission of THE LUTHERAN WITNESS. Such reproductions, however, should credit THE LUTHERAN WITNESS as the source. Cover images are not reproducible without permission. Also, photos credited to sources outside the LCMS are not to be copied.

Published 11 times per year by Concordia Publishing House, 3558 S. Jefferson Ave., St. Louis, MO 63118-3968. Individual subscription \$22.00 per year. Organized congregation subscriptions and district editions offered at reduced rate if submitted through local churches.

To subscribe, renew, or to give a gift subscription, call Concordia Publishing House at 1-800-325-3381.

For subscription information or address changes, e-mail: [cphorder@cph.org](mailto:cphorder@cph.org)

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod  
1-888-THE LCMS (843-5267) [www.lcms.org](http://www.lcms.org)  
e-mail: [LUTHERAN.WITNESS@lcms.org](mailto:LUTHERAN.WITNESS@lcms.org)

Member: Associated Church Press  
Evangelical Press Association  
October 2008 (ISSN: 0024-757X) Vol. 127, No. 10

**About the cover: Luther's room at Wartburg Castle.  
Images from istockimages.com.**

Our Synod is engaging  
21st-century mission with  
an international force.



**F**rom planting churches in remote West Africa to guiding independent churches as they send their own missionaries, Dr. Paul Mueller can trace a major transition in world mission, the role of missionaries, and the people they serve.

Mueller, now LCMS World Mission's regional director for Africa, describes his first assignment in Liberia as "very local, very up in the bush, seven years of church planting" during the 1980s. From 17 churches, he says, there is now a national church with 135 congregations and about 25,000 members.

"Mission work in most places in Africa is at a different level than the traditional missionary idea that we grew up with—you go overseas and live in the jungle like Tarzan," Mueller says. "Now we don't go and plant churches; we go and partner with the national church that is there."

# A New Era

Bishop Walter Obare of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya (ELCK), ELCK clergy, LCMS Regional Director Dr. Paul Mueller, and LCMS missionary Rev. Claude Houge bless Rev. Dr. Carlos Walter Winterle, the former president of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil, as he is installed as the English-speaking pastor of Uhuru Highway Lutheran Church in downtown Nairobi. This marked the first time LCMS World Mission had worked with two partner churches (Brazil and Kenya) to send a missionary from one country to another.





Rev. Gustavo Lavia, his wife, Rosanna, and their two daughters moved from Argentina to Madrid, Spain, in 2006 to serve the young Evangelical Lutheran Church of Spain. He joined fellow Argentine missionary Rev. Walter Ralli and family to work in Spain's "post-Christian" culture.

**Below: Members of Concordia International School—Shanghai (CISS) elementary school Orff ensemble provided entertainment during the 2007 dedication of the school's building and fine-arts center. CISS was founded in 1998 with only 22 students and 14 faculty members. Today, the CISS family includes more than 1,200 students and 100 teachers.**

In Africa and around the world, millions of people are still without Christ, but as one-time missions become full-fledged church bodies, they grow in their capabilities to handle their own outreach. As that growth continues, LCMS missionaries, in addition to planting churches, train evangelists, teach in seminaries, administer health and agriculture programs, and otherwise support partner churches in their development.

One of the results is that reaching people with the message of God's salvation through Jesus Christ finds partnerships such as a Brazilian and an American working together in the Dominican Republic, a Nigerian serving in Jamaica, or Latin Americans in Spain and Portugal. Meanwhile,

seminaries and training programs for pastors, deaconesses, and lay evangelists cross boundaries of nations and church bodies, and local leaders apply ingenuity to introduce people to Jesus.

"We're discovering that the missionary force of the 21st century is an international Lutheran community," observes Dr. David Birner, associate director of LCMS World Mission and head of the International Mission Team. "The LCMS is joined by Asians, Africans, Latin Americans, Europeans. We're starting to get side-by-side with our partners from other parts of the world. We're trying to connect and organize so that our missionary efforts cross more than gender and age groups, but also national boundaries where we have different cultures."

Africans have a strong missional attitude, and churches are forming their own partnerships, Mueller observes. Their outreach is effective because they know the people, the language, and the culture. "Some of the emerging churches are still learning, but the more they send missionaries—and as we help them get things going—they end up as sustainable, reproducible, independent church bodies."

Mueller adds: "It really is exciting for the national church that sends. And it's great for the receiving church as well. They see their African brothers concerned about them."

Today, a Nigerian serves in The Gambia, a Ghanaian in Uganda, and a Nigerian in Jamaica. And the church in Brazil is providing a missionary in Kenya. While the LCMS assists as a funding church, the sending and receiving churches also identify their support for housing and other



## God's Word shapes strategies, training, and assembling of new believers.

needs. "The bottom line is when we all sit around the table and everybody says, 'This is what we can do,' we're all happy," Mueller says.

### Teaching the Word

Rev. John Mehl, LCMS World Mission regional director in Asia, observes that foreign mission for all U.S.-based Christian mission organizations has changed since the 1970s. "Much of this is the result of the wonderful efforts of those missionaries who have gone before us and scattered the seed of the Gospel, and watered and tended small churches," he adds.

Mehl believes a good witness does not break laws to spread the Gospel in limited-access Asian countries, but the LCMS, with its solid theology and teaching, can work in other ways.

"Often, the role of the LCMS is to help partner churches spread the Gospel where we cannot," Mehl says. "The LCMS is known around the world for teaching the Word of God without any funny business, and our partners want that teaching for their own workers."

He observes that Asians think collectively and like a longer process of discussing options as compared to Westerners, who prefer quick decisions. "As we consider how we work with partners, we need to be careful to be true partners, remembering the need to allow the Asian process to work, even if it takes more time," he says.

Worldwide, companies are tapping the labor market of Asia, and the LCMS is responding through its strength in education. The LCMS Hong Kong International School has a strong reputation for serving the children of international business representatives and diplomats. LCMS World Mission tapped that model 10 years ago when it opened Concordia International School in Shanghai, China. It now enrolls more than 1,200 students.

God's Word shapes strategies, training, and assembling of new believers as work progresses in Russia and other countries of the former Soviet bloc. "Just as the apostle Paul became all

things to all people, today missionaries are studying the language, laws, culture, and communities. They are incorporating that knowledge in the proclamation of the Gospel," says Rev. Brent Smith, regional director in Eurasia.

Partners in Eurasia are moving into the public arena, he adds. Leaders of the partner church in Latvia helped craft parts of the religious curriculum taught in schools. Their youth recently completed a "prayer walk" as part of their youth gathering, singing hymns as they stopped for public speeches and made their way to an open-air Christian concert. Some leaders from partner churches are delivering Christian lectures at universities in Russia and Turkey.

Smith cites another example of world partnerships—dozens of LCMS service organizations and auxiliaries. In Kyrgyzstan, mobile medical trailers, community health education, and agricultural development provide Christian care and opportunities to share the Gospel. Partners who aid in the work include the Concordia Mission Society, Orphan Grain Train, the Lutheran Women's Missionary League, the Tian Shan Mission Society, Hope Seeds, and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

"After less than 10 years of work in the Muslim majority context of

Kyrgyzstan, the Spirit has assembled 45 churches with more than 300 baptized and approximately 2,000 people in regular study of the Word," Smith reports.

### 11,000 'Hits'

The partnerships have benefited from developments in technology, communication, and transportation. Christian and Kazakh folk songs, played on the *dombra* (a two-stringed, long-necked lute), recently received 11,000 hits when they were uploaded on YouTube, the popular Internet site. The Central Asian Lutheran Seminary provides distance learning using DVDs, accompanied by small-group seminars with missionary mentors.

During his early service in Africa, Mueller relied on mail that took six weeks to be delivered and sent. "So it would be three months before we could actually exchange letters," he says. "Now there are people standing outside where I used to live, using cell phones and calling internationally."

**Many congregations in the India Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELC) are experiencing rapid growth and are outgrowing their church buildings. In 1895, the LCMS sent its first overseas missionary to India. The IELC later became an independent church body and the first LCMS partner church in 1958.**



**‘The LCMS is known around the world for teaching the Word of God without any funny business, and our partners want that teaching for their own workers.’**

Rev. John Mehl  
Regional Director, Asia  
LCMS World Mission

In Eurasia, Web-based individual and team calendars and automated e-mail help missionaries plan events and track activities across 22 countries. Smith says almost all documentation is filed online with high-security encryption. He adds that resources such as Luther’s Works and the Concordia Electronic Library from Concordia Publishing House enable missionaries to carry “a truckload of books” across borders on their laptop computers or personal data assistants.

Missionaries stay in touch with inexpensive Web-based telephone service. Sometimes Web cams are used for face-to-face communication.

## Working Together

Another component in the partnerships is the increasing role of short-term mission teams, as members of LCMS congregations travel to mission fields to build or remodel facilities, provide medical clinics, teach Vacation Bible School, and offer other service. Birner says LCMS World Mission is trying to serve as a channel for productive cooperation that allows continuity that complements the work of long-term missionaries.

“We talk today about our missionary force being all of us,” Birner says. “LCMS work is only one part. We’re seeing an added dimension in learning to work together as we gear up to face a largely Muslim-Christian world. That’s going to be our major issue in the next 20 to 30 years.”

Smith notes that about 2 billion Christians live in a world of 6.7 billion people—of whom God will not one be lost, so LCMS congregations are also in partnership with their missionaries in a daily task—“namely, to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with the unreached and uncommitted” while they themselves live in the Lord’s forgiveness given through Word and Sacrament.

**Roland Lovstad is a freelance writer and a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church, Perryville, Mo.**



**Web EXCLUSIVE!**

## World Mission Includes the U.S.



*Ablaze!*

Distinctions between U.S. and international missions are diminishing, says Dr. Robert Scudieri, LCMS World Mission associate executive director of National Mission. “In the 21st-century, we should be thinking about this as a circle, with immigrants to the United States reaching back to their homelands and then receiving gifts of talents and treasures for their work here.”

To further explore this concept, visit [lcms.org/witness](http://lcms.org/witness) and click on the link for this story.

**Over the past 85 years, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod’s ministry to blind and visually impaired people has evolved from simply producing Braille materials to training blind people as missionaries.**

Rev. Dave Andrus, executive director of Lutheran Blind Mission, often cautions well-meaning “sighted” people to ask before trying to help a blind person.

Using the acronym SALE, Andrus advises to *stop* before you do what you think needs to be done; *ask* how you can help; really *listen* to the person’s response; and then *evaluate* the situation—if you are told that no help is needed but the blind person is in danger, approach that person again, describe what you see, and ask what you can do.

This approach “gives the blind or visually impaired person some control, independence, and self-dignity”—the three things people lose when they lose their sight, Andrus explains.

And he should know: he’s been blind since age 11.

But you won’t find Andrus feeling sorry for himself. As a Lutheran minister and director of the Synod’s blind mission work, Andrus knows the contributions blind people can make—especially to the church.

“People who are blind are no longer passive recipients of materials,” he says. “They are active participants in the work of reaching out and sharing the Gospel.”

Indeed, the ministry has come a long way since The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod vowed in 1923 to serve blind Lutherans and began by producing devotional materials in Braille.

Sixteen years later the Synod started its Library for the Blind, which offers free, on-loan, Braille, large-type, and audio materials to those with limited or no sight. Today, with more than 6,500 total items available (including *The Lutheran Witness*), it is the world’s largest Christian lending library for people who are blind, Andrus says.

In 1999, the first “outreach center for the blind” opened in Pittsburgh; today, 58 LCMS congregations have started such centers in 23 states. Blind and visually impaired people are involved in the ministries of all currently operating outreach centers, and actually lead the work at most.

Started with the assistance of Lutheran Blind Mission, the centers are designed to assist blind and low-vision people by offering such things as computer and job training, lessons on reading Braille, workshops on topics of interest, Bible studies and devotions, and a free monthly meal for attendees and their families.

Perhaps most important, though, is the fellowship.

Kathy McCracken was born blind and attends outreach-center meetings with about 40 others each month at Concordia Lutheran Church in Maplewood, Mo. McCracken and her guide dog, a chocolate labrador named “Lance,” get a free ride from church volunteers, but even if they didn’t, she says she would still somehow make it because “I need the fellowship of being with people.”

It’s “wonderful,” McCracken says. “It gets you out of the house, you get spiritually uplifted, and I like meeting new people.”

Rev. Dave Andrus, executive director of Lutheran Blind Mission, talks with Lisa L. Watts, the ministry’s director of outreach centers, in his office in St. Louis. Andrus, who is blind, says many blind Lutherans today are “reaching out and sharing the Gospel” with others.

# Helping Blind People See Jesus



**Large-type materials are available free, on loan, from the Synod's Library for the Blind, along with Braille books and audiocassettes. With more than 6,500 items, it is the world's largest Christian lending library for people who are blind or visually impaired.**

Annually, each blind outreach center touches an average of 25 more visually impaired people—"a group of people often forgotten and isolated," says Lisa L. Watts, director of outreach centers with Lutheran Blind Mission.

"Many blind people feel alone, unloved, and broken by a society that can be cruel and cold," explains Watts, who has limited vision. Congregations that operate such centers "reach out with love, compassion, resources, support, and, of course, most importantly, the unconditional love of Christ for each of us." They make a "dramatic difference" in peoples' lives, she adds.

Watts knows firsthand how the centers can bring people to faith: She became a Lutheran and joined Messiah Lutheran Church in Grand Junction, Colo., after becoming involved in its outreach center, now in its eighth year.

She also has trained as a missionary through the Christian Blind Institute, a 10-course correspondence program supported by Lutheran Blind Mission that prepares blind and low-vision people to reach others for Christ.

Watts is just one example of someone who came to faith through Lutheran Blind Mission (LBM) and now is a vital part of that ministry, observes Andrus. Because people like her are involved, the work of LBM "continues to grow and expand."

The primary focus of the ministry, he says, is "to help blind people see Jesus." The blind and visually impaired "are everywhere, in every community"—some 12 million strong, according to Andrus, but, because of their isolation, 95 percent of them are "unchurched."

To raise awareness of—and support for—blind ministry, Lutheran Blind Mission is sponsoring a Synodwide anniversary campaign this year that includes:

- a "Lutheran Blind Mission Sunday" observance in October.
- an "85th Anniversary Thankoffering" in November.
- sales of a commemorative Christmas ornament, available for \$15, including shipping.

Congregations also can get involved by:

- offering appropriate worship materials to blind and low-vision members.
- "being a friend" to those with vision problems by offering to take them shopping, help them pay bills, or address their Christmas cards. "They can't come to you, so you've got to approach them," Andrus says.
- providing financial support to Lutheran Blind Mission, since 2003 an independent mission society that "gives everything away free" and is totally dependent on donors.

For more information about any of these ideas, contact Lutheran Blind Mission, 7550 Watson Road, St. Louis, MO 63119-4409, at (888) 215-2455 or [blindmission@blindmission.org](mailto:blindmission@blindmission.org). Or, visit its Web site at [blindmission.org](http://blindmission.org).

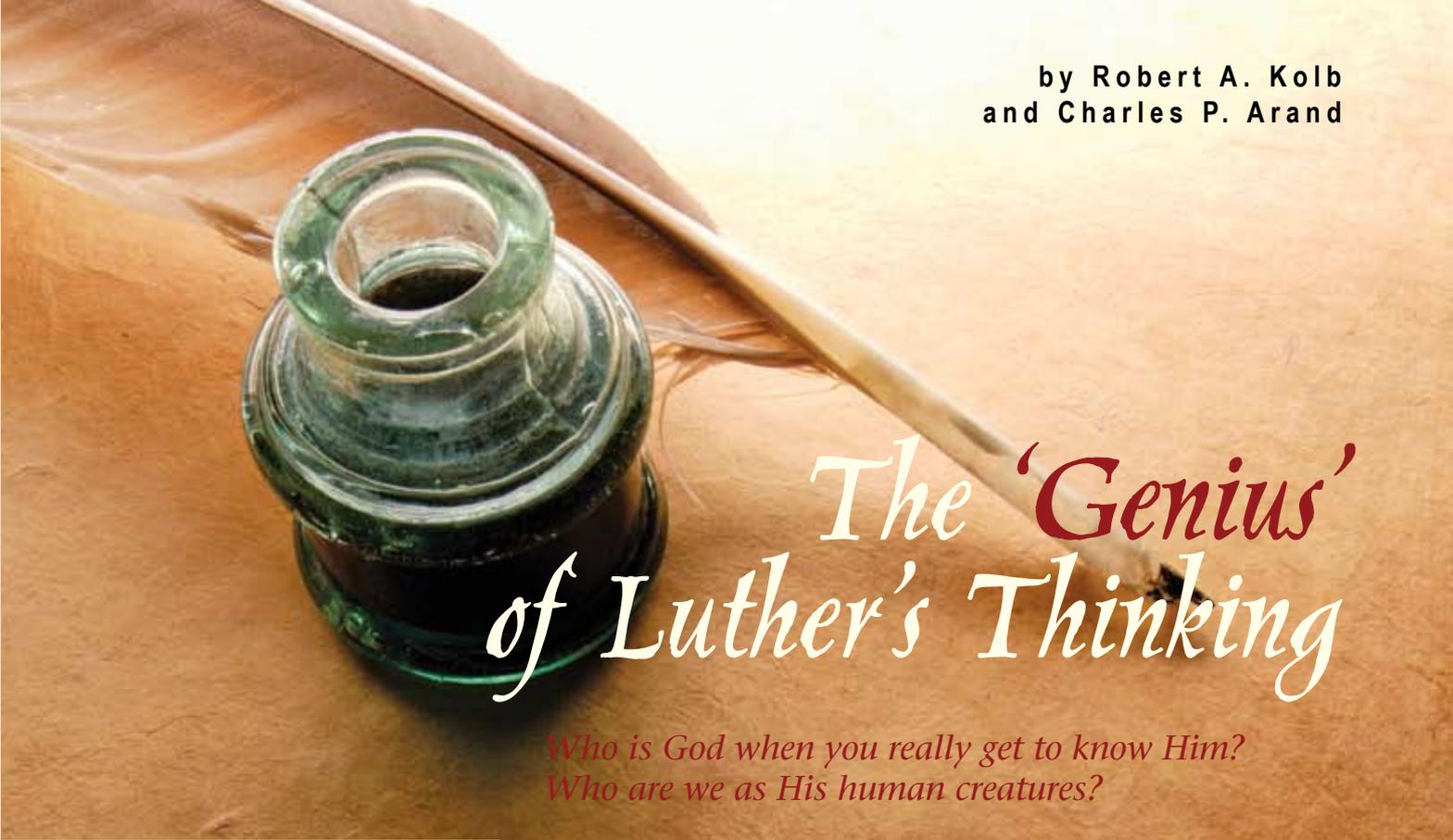
**Paula Schlueter Ross is a staff writer for the LCMS Board for Communication Services and a contributing editor for *The Lutheran Witness*.**



**Top:** Kathy McCracken gives a kiss to her guide dog, Lance, during an "outreach center" meeting. She said she looks forward to the monthly meetings because she "needs the fellowship of being with people." (Photo by Paula Schlueter Ross)

**Middle:** Rick Grove, center, teaches Larry Roser, left, and Arthur Jackson, right, how to use a computer with the speech function during a Christian Blind Institute conference in 2005. (Photo by Tony Jacobs)

**Bottom:** Two sighted, but blindfolded, people take part in a "Dinner in the Dark" at a Lutheran congregation as a way of experiencing the everyday struggles of those who are blind. Directions for hosting such a dinner are available from Lutheran Blind Mission. (Photo courtesy Lutheran Blind Mission)



# The 'Genius' of Luther's Thinking

*Who is God when you really get to know Him?  
Who are we as His human creatures?*

**T**he ancient Romans called the spirit that guides and directs something and gives it its distinctive character a 'genius.' [Luther's] defining view of God and human beings served as the 'genius' for his way of thinking.

Martin Luther spent agonizing hours over several years wrestling with these two questions. He never commented on his state of mind during the time he was struggling with the dilemma of God's identity and his own. But two things are certain: He saw God as the angry judge depicted on many of the altars he had stood before in devotion and fear. He saw Christ as the One who comes on the clouds with a much bigger sword of judgment in His left hand than a lily of peace in His right. He also saw himself as a sinner who had to earn God's favor through his own efforts. He had to become a self-made man if he were to escape the fires of God's eternal wrath.

## *A Path to Salvation?*

Like many others of his day, Luther thought that becoming a monk could provide a path that would lead to the solution of his problem. It only made things worse. His anxiety and uncertainty grew more and more unbearable. But becoming a monk inadvertently drove him to study Scripture. The God who revealed Himself in its pages confronted Luther with the message of Christ on the cross. Coming face to face with God on the cross overpowered Luther's conceptions of both God and himself. At the foot of the cross he discovered new answers to his questions about who God was and about who we are as human creatures.

To be sure, Martin Luther recognized that both God's goodness and our humanity will always remain somewhat mysterious. Yet now for the first time, Luther began to see what God is really like and what it means to be His human creature. God takes the initiative and introduces Himself to us through the gift of Christ on the cross. Thus God cannot be known by us apart from His relationship with us in Christ. By the same token, human beings do not fully enjoy their humanity apart from fearing, loving, and trusting in the God who has come to converse with them as Jesus Christ.

His encounter with the God of the cross gave Luther some distinctive insights into our relationship with God. These insights might be called his genius.



Like many others of his day, Luther thought that becoming a monk could provide a path that would lead to the solution of his problem. It only made things worse. His anxiety and uncertainty grew more and more unbearable. But becoming a monk inadvertently drove him to study Scripture. The God who revealed Himself in its pages confronted Luther with the message of Christ on the cross.

The ancient Romans called the spirit that guides and directs something and gives its distinctive character a “genius.” The Reformer’s defining view of God and human beings served as the “genius” for his way of thinking.

### *Two Important Insights*

Two insights in particular permeated Luther’s thinking about God and guided his reading of Scripture. One of the insights into what it meant for God to be God and what it meant to be a human creature came to be called the “two kinds of righteousness,” or two dimensions of being human. The other insight concerned how those two dimensions of a human being were established and guided. Here Luther contended that God engages His human creatures in conversation as He comes to talk with us through the Word made flesh, Jesus of Nazareth, and through His Word as it addresses us in oral, written, and sacramental forms.

The distinction between the two kinds of righteousness arose as Luther grappled with the question, “What does God think of me?” For a long time, he gravely doubted whether he could ever find haven in the identity of being God’s beloved child. Why? Most Christians in his day believed that our identity rests on how well we carry out God’s will in daily life. They knew that in some sense we are sinners, but they also believed that God gives grace (like spiritual steroids) so that we can lay aside our former sins and then live in such a way as to please Him with the good we do. God regards His people as His people because they behave like His people.

Luther’s instructors taught him that God gives grace only to those who do their best by their own effort (in other words, God helps those who help themselves). His focus on

how well he performed placed a crushing burden on Luther. That burden destroyed his hope and his joy, his ability to love God, and his ability to serve other people for their sake. Instead, he was always calculating how his helping others might make him look good to God. He could not trust his own efforts at becoming right, or righteous, in God’s sight. His attempts at doing God’s will always fell short. That sent him into terror and panic.

God spoke to Luther from Scripture’s pages with a message in sharp contrast to what he had learned at the university. As a typical medieval monk, Luther had a lot of contact with the Bible. The monks daily recited the psalms and heard passages from other books read in worship and at mealtime. Light dawned for Luther, as on the first morning, when his reading of Scripture revealed that God creates and redeems His human creatures without condition or requirement, simply because He is gracious and loves them.

Luther interpreted that Gospel message in such a way that drove him to distinguish two dimensions of human life. In his relationship to the Creator, he could only receive the gift of identity as a beloved child from his heavenly Father. In his relationship to the rest of creation, he was called by God to act like a brother.

He called that gift of identity as God’s child *passive righteousness*, “the righteousness given by someone else.” God gives us a new identity as His children when He loves us in Christ Jesus and we trust in Him because of that love. Luther called the performance that God expects from His children *active righteousness*, “the righteousness that I do myself.” God guides our life within creation by giving us instructions about how we should deal with His creaturely gifts within the callings or places where He wants us to serve.

God has set both dimensions of our humanity in place through His Word. He first did so through His creative Word as it shaped human life. He then re-established our humanity through His re-creative Word that comes in Christ and is delivered to us through the Word. This Word takes shape in our proclamation and witness, in Scripture itself, in other writings which repeat and echo biblical teaching, and in the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper. God is by nature a creating God, and He creates through speaking. Thus, His human creatures only know Him as He comes to converse with them. The Word Made Flesh (John 1:14) came to us as both "gift" and "example," Luther taught.

## *A New Identity*

Through the cross and resurrection of Jesus, God bestows a new identity on us. When God's Word calls us away from basing our lives on something He has made (the temporal things of life) rather than on our Creator Himself, Christ takes us with Himself into His tomb. This death to sinful ways happens decisively when the Gospel of Christ first claims us, whether that happens when we are listening to a friend's witness or being baptized as a baby. Through the Word, Luther taught, God lays our old, sinful identity in Christ's tomb. Through the Word, God also gives us new birth (John 3:5) and unites us with Christ in His resurrection. That promise of a new life through Christ now determines our new existence. We are raised to walk in His footsteps (Rom. 6:4). For Luther believed that Jesus not only reveals God to us (John 1:18), He also reveals what it means to be human. That means following His example.

Therefore, Luther had two goals when he mounted the pulpit: He wished to teach and to admonish. By teaching, he sought the application of God's Law (that demands our righteousness) and the application of God's Gospel (that delivers us from sin and delivers God's promise of new life in Christ to us). By admonition, he sought to move people to trust in Christ as their Savior and to live like children of God who had the assurance of His promise. Teaching brought God's conversation about new life into his parishioners' ears. Admonition translated God's promise into the daily lives of God's people as they lived out His love for others.

As he and his students proclaimed this message of Jesus Christ to their parishioners, the spirit, the "genius" of Luther's twin insights into the nature of God and human nature, guided and supported their interpretation of God's Word in Scripture. Luther discovered who he was as God's child when he discovered who God was when God went to the cross and reclaimed His human life through His resurrection. In Christ, Luther came to the realization that he was God's own child. Therefore, he was determined to live under Him and under His rule, and to serve Him in the everlasting peace and joy that comes from knowing he belonged to God through Christ Jesus.

**Dr. Robert A. Kolb is mission professor of systematic theology and director of the Institute for Mission Studies at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Dr. Charles P. Arand is chairman of the Department of Systematic Theology and the Waldemar A. and June Schuette Professor of Systematic Theology at Concordia Seminary. They are the co-authors of *The Genius of Luther's Theology: a Wittenberg Way of Thinking for the Contemporary Church* (Baker Academic, 2008).**



**M**ost Christians in [Luther's] day believed that our identity rests on how well we carry out God's will in daily life. They knew that in some sense we are sinners, but they also believed that God gives grace (like spiritual steroids) so that we can lay aside our former sins and then live in such a way as to please Him with the good we do.

# Recharging with Grace

An LCMS Recognized Service Organization, Grace Place Lutheran Retreats offer church workers and their spouses an opportunity to recharge spiritually, physically, and emotionally.



When Rev. Robert Wiest told the secretary at Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Staplehurst, Neb., that he and his wife, Kathy, planned to attend a Grace Place Retreat, the alarmed secretary asked, “Are you sick? Is there a problem?”

Wiest spoke with the church elders and ran a brief explanation in the newsletter. But he suspected many in the congregation had misconceptions. Some wrongly assumed that going to Grace Place meant the pastor was going on vacation.

And the folks in the Our Redeemer pews are not alone.

Since 1999, nearly 2,000 LCMS professional church workers and their spouses have taken part in almost 100 Grace Place retreats. Alumni include LCMS President Gerald B. Kieschnick and his wife, Terry; most of the LCMS district presidents; and parish pastors and teachers from throughout the United States.

But despite the Recognized Service Organization’s track record, founder and executive director Dr. John Eckrich calls Grace Place one of the Synod’s most misunderstood ministries—and most urgently needed.

A St. Louis, Mo., physician and life-long Lutheran, Eckrich started Grace Place Retreat Ministries after years of treating a growing number of church workers and their families. “I saw how struggles related to ministry bring on health problems,” said Eckrich, whose gastroenterology practice at that time sat two blocks from the LCMS International Center. “Our clergy were burning themselves out while they cared for others but did not take care of themselves.”

Working with pastoral-care professionals and Lutheran leaders, Eckrich developed his vision for a continuing-education ministry to offer a “pause point” or “minisabbatical” for church workers and their spouses—an opportunity to recharge spiritually, physically, and emotionally.

Concerned about growing church-worker burnout and a dwindling supply of future pastors and teachers, Eckrich and his team designed Grace Place with one main goal. “We need to preserve every shepherd we can preserve,” he said. “Every shepherd is a precious commodity for our church.”

In July, eight clergy couples gathered in Aspen, Colo., the eighth Grace Place retreat in a record year of 19 scheduled for 2008. While retreats vary in length and

Rev. Robert and Kathy Wiest



Eight clergy couples from three states gathered in July in Aspen, Colo., the eighth Grace Place retreat in a record retreat year. "This week is about us caring for you in every sense of the word," said Dr. John Eckrich (middle row, third from right), who founded the ministry out of concern for professional workers "burning themselves out while they cared for others but did not take care of themselves."

location (Mackinac Island, Mich., the Pocono Mountains in Pennsylvania), this was a typical gathering—five nights amid a beautiful setting.

The group included couples from Nebraska, Montana, and Texas. Ages ranged from 30s to 60s; ministry tenures ran from five to 30-plus years.

"This is a wonderful opportunity to spend time with fellow pastors and realize that they are going through some of the same things," said Rev. Allen Bergstrazer, pastor at St. Paul Lutheran Church, Chambers, Neb., at the retreat with wife Carol. "Everyone needs personal renewal time and time to be with your spouse."

The first full retreat day begins with devotions, followed by stretching to soothing music. Eckrich leads both.

"This week is about us caring for you in every sense of the word," said Eckrich in his relaxed, reassuring manner. "We want you to feel completely cared for. I know that you pastors are accustomed to caring for others, but this week, I ask that you allow us to care for you."

Educational sessions follow, with professionals sharing biblically based strategies to help couples cope with ministry challenges. Topics include physical health, healthy marriages and relationships, and fiscal health.

A Grace Place clergy couple serves each retreat, guiding sessions and offering private consultations. "What we want a pastor and his wife to take away is that the foundation of his ministry begins with his marriage and home life. The healthier they are as a couple, the better able they are to bring that health to their congregation," said Dr. David Ludwig, a licensed therapist, author, and associate pastor at Christ Lutheran Church, Hickory, N.C.

Ludwig and his wife, Kathy, helped develop the Grace Place curriculum and lead most retreats with Eckrich. In Aspen, Rev. Darwin Karsten, a veteran parish pastor and mission coordinator in the Missouri Ozarks, and his wife, Jan, served as the clergy couple.

The Grace Place day is built around four prayer times. With the *Lutheran Service Book* in hand, couples gather for early-morning, noon, early-evening, and close-of-day devotions. One of the most appreciated retreat features: ample time for Bible reading and reflection.

"I would like to spend more time in the Word, but then the phone rings, and I'm jumping in the car and racing to the hospital," said Wiest. "Here, you get that time."

Afternoons in Aspen featured recreational activities—hiking, biking, rafting. Napping was another option.

At the Colorado retreat, "date night" was a highlight. "What a great opportunity to pause and focus on topics we don't get to when we're at home, [topics] other than work and the kids," said Rev. Scott Bruick, pastor at St. John Lutheran Church, Seward, Neb., attending the retreat with spouse Jan. "At dinner, we actually talked about our relationship."

Clergy wives say they benefit as much as—if not more than—their spouses.

"Grace Place is a safe place, a place where women who understand the unique role each other is in can laugh together, cry together, and pray together," said Terry Kieschnick, who, with the LCMS president, took part in a retreat for the LCMS Council of Presidents in June in New Haven, Mo.

President Kieschnick appreciates how Grace Place helps strengthen a critical component of congregations—ministerial health. "With all the stresses and pressures experienced by



LCMS President Dr. Gerald B. and Terry Kieschnick (photo by David Mahsman)

pastors and their spouses, Grace Place is a great opportunity to build strength and maintain health," he said. "Healthy pastors make for healthy congregations."

Originally designed for Lutheran pastors, Grace Place has expanded to serve other church workers: Christian educators, parish nurses, ministers of music, and fourth-year seminary students.

The ministry now reaches beyond the U.S. This spring, Eckrich and his staff guided clergy couples from the Australian Lutheran Synod in retreats "Down Under."

Next August, the Grace Place team will lead a retreat in conjunction with the International Lutheran Council conference in Seoul, Korea, including leaders from 34 confessional Lutheran church bodies from six continents.

In addition, 19 retreats already are on the Grace Place 2009 calendar.

Wherever the location, a Grace Place gathering ends with a beautiful divine service and a celebration of health and healing, including the Sacrament of Holy Communion and anointing with oil. LCMS leaders and spouses embraced after the closing service in New Haven. Many dabbed tears of joy.

"This has been a time of spiritual renewal for my wife and me, a time to connect with the Lord and with each other in a way that we don't always have time for in everyday life," said Synod First Vice President William R. Diekelman, at the retreat with wife Carol. "Ultimately, what happens here can be replicated throughout the Synod."

"It's all about grace," Vivi Diefenthaler, wife of Southeastern District President Rev. Jon Diefenthaler, said about her Grace Place experience. "You are renewed spiritually so you can spread the Gospel wherever you are."

**Kim Plummer Krull is a St. Louis editor and writer and a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Des Peres, Mo.**



Jan Karsten (center, in green) leads a "girls talk" session with pastors' wives at the Grace Place retreat in Aspen. "We've been where these pastors and their wives are," said Karsten, who, with husband Rev. Darwin Karsten, helped lead the gathering. "We're well aware of the challenges they face in their marriages, their families, and in their ministries." (photo by Kim Plummer Krull)

Dr. John and Kathy Eckrich



## *Appreciating Our Shepherds*

**October is traditionally Pastor Appreciation Month on the Synod calendar. But for Grace Place Retreat Ministries founder and Executive Director Dr. John Eckrich, appreciating our LCMS church workers and helping them "appreciate" in value and service to their ministries is a year-round mission.**

"Pastors are very hesitant to ask their congregation for anything that could be seen as asking for something for themselves. But there's a ripple effect; the congregation benefits, too," said Eckrich, who operated Grace Place on a part-time basis until 2007, when he retired from his medical practice to focus full time on the ministry. "We can't give this gift [of retreat participation] to our pastors without our generous donors who share our vision."

In 1999, Eckrich created that vision, building on the family retreats he and wife Kathy coordinated at their congregation, Concordia Lutheran Church, in the St. Louis suburb of Kirkwood. Thrivent Financial for Lutherans and the Lutheran Foundation of St. Louis (formerly Lutheran Charities Foundation of St. Louis) provided grant money for the pilot retreat.

Today, Grace Place depends on grants and donations to make retreats affordable. Clergy couples pay \$300 for a week's retreat, plus travel expenses. The actual week's cost is about \$2,000 per couple.

Lutheran businessman Gregg Smith supports the ministry commitment to "shepherding our shepherds."

"I see the challenges and the attrition in the ranks of our pastorate, and something preventative must be done," said Smith, who worships at Messiah Lutheran Church, Carrollwood, Fla., and has taken part in Grace Place programs. "These retreats are faith-driven, Spirit-driven, renewing experiences."

"So much is required of our pastors and their wives today," said Rupert Dunklau, a member of Trinity Lutheran Church, Fremont, Neb., and president of the Rupert Dunklau Foundation. "I love my Savior. If my foundation can be of assistance to strengthen our clergy, that's what I want to do."

To learn more about Grace Place, visit [graceplaceretreats.org](http://graceplaceretreats.org) or call (314) 842-3077.

# Happy Campers

Concordia University Wisconsin shines as an NFL training site.

CUW got the football rolling when administrators read that the Rams were scouting training sites in Wisconsin. The team primarily focused on large state universities, but Concordia persuaded the search committee to visit Mequon as the last stop on a whirlwind campus tour.

by Kim Plummer Krull



Quarterback Trent Green (in gold jersey) prepares to take a snap at a Rams scrimmage during the first-ever NFL training camp hosted this summer by Concordia University Wisconsin in Mequon.



**Donna Ellis and Joel Bahr. Bahr, who plans to become a Lutheran school teacher, served as Ellis' assistant during the Rams' training camp.**

Special relationships always sprout at summer camp. So it's no surprise that Concordia University Wisconsin student Joel Bahr, an elementary-education major from Grand Rapids, Mich., is making plans to visit his new friends from a first-ever camp at his Mequon campus.

But Bahr admits he "still can't fathom" that he now knows Dante Hall, Chris Long, and other St. Louis Rams football players.

"Never in my life did I think something like that would happen," said Bahr, 20, who worked as a "boy Friday" when the university, owned and operated by The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, hosted a three-week National Football League pre-season training camp.

Bahr is one of about 25 student employees who "rubbed shoulder pads" with Rams players after team officials made C UW its last-minute, surprise pick for their July 25–Aug. 15 camp.

C UW "got the football rolling" when administrators read that the Rams were scouting training sites in Wisconsin. The team primarily focused on large state universities, but Concordia persuaded the search committee to visit Mequon as the last stop on a whirlwind campus tour.

The school made its pitch to the Rams much as it approaches prospective students. "Our experience is that once students visit us on campus, we have a strong chance of seeing them enroll here," said C UW President Dr. Patrick T. Ferry. "We are blessed with a beautiful setting, wonderful facilities, and wonderful people."

Jeff Horton, offensive assistant/special assistant to Rams Head Coach Scott Linehan, agrees. Concordia, he says, "ended up being the last place we visited, and I wish we had started there."

## Rooms with a View

C UW began a series of major renovations several years ago to enrich programs and attract students. But administrators realized their school's picturesque perch on Lake Michigan and state-of-the-art facilities also might appeal to NFL teams looking for pre-season campsites.

Nearly 400 miles south of Mequon, Linehan decided his team might benefit from training away from St. Louis—where summertime heat and humidity can feel overbearing.

C UW's top-notch practice and training facilities immediately scored a touchdown when Rams officials visited in April. Adding an extra point for the university was the new \$22 million Coburg Residence Hall. The Rams were the debut "roomies" in one wing of the dorm, which features four-bedroom suites, a spectacular view of Lake Michigan, and flat-screen televisions.

"The guys kept saying they didn't have dorms that looked like that where they went to school," Horton said.

Donna Ellis, executive assistant to Linehan, raves how the university transformed the dorm's fifth-floor commons area into her office overlooking the lake. "It was like a little piece of paradise every morning," she said. "The lake is breathtaking and looks like the ocean, with beautiful changing colors. I promise you, the view is like you're on a cruise ship."

Another heavenly feature: the cool Wisconsin weather. To stay hydrated during sweltering afternoon practices in St. Louis, the team might need as many as 20 IVs a day, Horton said. In Mequon, two sufficed for the entire camp.

## 'Like a Family'

But more than the superb climate or facilities, the Rams credit Concordia's staff and students with turning the training camp into a winner.

While the campus sits in the midst of a Green Bay Packers-crazy state, more than 14,000 people turned out for Rams practices—more than the numbers drawn to summer camps on the team's home turf.

Yes, those football fans trekked to Concordia to see an NFL team in action. But C UW's Ken Gaschk notes many also took their first look at the university. "We got great exposure," said Gaschk, vice president of enrollment services. (See sidebar.)

Along with public-relations opportunities, the training camp also provided witness opportunities. One of Joel Bahr's duties was to transport the car-free Rams to stores, restaurants, the airport, and, on occasion, the nearby hospital. Such travels allowed ample talk time—including one discussion the C UW student says he never expected to have with professional football players.

"I can't tell you how many times people asked me about the Lutheran church and what it means to be Lutheran," Bahr said. "They didn't know what we believe and confess. I talked about my faith I don't know how many times."

Bahr also worshiped with players and coaches. Some accompanied him to the Thursday evening service at Concordia's bluff-side amphitheatre on Lake Michigan, hosted by First Immanuel Lutheran Church, Cedarburg. Other Rams attended Sunday service at the university's Chapel of Christ Triumphant.

Several players arrived at worship carrying the Bibles from their dorm rooms, also courtesy of First Immanuel Lutheran.

Although the training camp broke in August, the ties



The view from Donna's office in Coburg Residence Hall.

Wide receivers Derek Stanley and Torry Holt staying loose during practice.

Players signing autographs for fans after practice—left to right—QB Marc Bulger, Rams announcer D'Marco Farr, LB Pisa Tinoisamoa, and tackle Orlando Pace.

between the campus and the team continue. By early September, CUW's Ken Gaschk and his family already had rooted for the Rams at a preseason game. Rams Strength and Conditioning Coach Dana LeDuc told Gaschk he plans to see the Concordia Football Falcons in action.

The text messages have been buzzing between Bahr and several players and staff. In September, the CUW student was planning a drive to St. Louis for a Rams game. "Some of these guys are my friends now," Bahr said. "They've told me to be sure and let them know when I'm coming to a game so we can hang out."

Concordia's mission is to help students develop in mind, body, and spirit. If the St. Louis Rams enjoy a winning season, might the university take a little credit for helping a certain professional football team improve its development?

"Well, you know, we feel we're part of their team now, too," Gaschk said.

Likewise, Horton says, "Concordia felt like a family. They made us feel that accommodating us and doing things right and getting involved was really important. They wanted to make this our best training camp ever."

**Kim Plummer Krull is a St. Louis editor and writer and a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Des Peres, Mo.**



More than two dozen Concordia University Wisconsin students gained valuable experience working with the Rams during the team's time in Mequon. Several, including Lydia Steubs, left, and Samantha Bloxdorf, were invited to return with the team to St. Louis and continue their internships until the start of their fall semester. Steubs and Bloxdorf are students in CUW's athletic-training program. Behind them at an exhibition game in August is Rams' right tackle Alex Barron.



## Opening Doors: For the University and the Church

**R**iding herd on nearly 6,000 college students seems challenging enough.

So why does a small Lutheran liberal-arts university tackle the extra challenge of hosting an NFL training camp that includes about 140 players and staff plus 150,000 pounds of training, practice, and video equipment?

For one answer, thumb through Concordia University Wisconsin President Dr. Patrick T. Ferry's binder stuffed with newspaper and video clips. All note CUW's pick as the St. Louis Rams' new training camp and, overwhelmingly, praise the school's location, facilities, and staff.

"It's all basically free advertising," said Ferry.

In September, the school already was fielding inquiries from prospective students and families who discovered the LCMS campus through the NFL training camp.

"The camp has drawn additional and welcome attention to the campus, from St. Louis, other places, and even our own community," Ferry said. "I can't tell you how often we hear that people didn't know we are here."

Before the Rams arrived on campus, some expressed concern that 300-pound linemen might, well, exert a little "unnecessary roughness" on the new Coburg dorm rooms. Instead, CUW administrators say, the team proved to be "all pro" guests.

"We were very clear with the Rams management from the beginning, and they were clear with us about their expectations," Ferry said. Both the university and team officials set and followed the ground rules.

Since the camp coincided with a relatively quiet time on campus, few academic classes were moved to accommodate the team. About 25 students who served as camp employees gained summer jobs and, in some cases, solid work experience related to majors such as community relations and athletic training.

Elementary education major Joel Bahr worked as a special assistant at the Rams training camp and, with a laugh, says the experience will look good on his resume. "The joke is that if I can take care of NFL players, I can take care of kids," he said.

At the camp's end, the Rams invited three students in CUW's athletic training program—Samantha Bloxdorf, Lydia Steubs, and Chad Moeller—to return with the team to St. Louis and continue working until the start of the fall semester.

Recent Concordia graduate Andy Roeske impressed the Rams so much during training camp that the team hired him for its video crew.

From a budget standpoint, Ferry calls the training camp a break-even operation. "We did a few projects to get things ready, but from a capital perspective, all those things were part of our improvement plans anyway," he said.

Says CUW's Vice President of Enrollment Services Ken Gaschk: "We didn't do this to make a lot of money. But the opportunity to expose more people to Concordia was invaluable." — K.P.K.



# Priests in Voting Booths

What's a Christian to think of politics and the upcoming elections? For Christians in their role as 'voter-priests,' it's a serious business, says Uwe Simon-Netto, and considering the world's thirst for oil, there's much at stake.

**N**ext month, Americans will elect a new government that could face the most dangerous period in U.S. history, primarily because of the global oil crisis that can affect every aspect of public life for decades and centuries to come: war and peace, civil order, foreign affairs, health and medicine, the economy, agriculture, food, possibly even the unity of the nation.

Are we "waiting for the lights to go out," as Bryan Appleyard titled a scary essay in the conservative London newspaper, *The Sunday*

*Times*, four years ago? Appleyard's point merits serious contemplation even if some pundits consider as overly alarmist the prediction of Sweden's Uppsala University that the world will start running out of petroleum in 10 years' time. The prospects of wars over the last barrels of oil, of food riots, of a shortage of petroleum-based medicines in pharmacies and hospitals might not appear all that immediate but seem real enough in our lifetime.

In this situation the Church must remind Christians of the responsibility God has given them as they vote Nov. 4. This responsibility can be summed up in four short sentences:

1. Christian voters will follow nothing less than a divine calling to be a special kind of priest.
2. As voter-priests they will not preach the Gospel.
3. Instead, as in all worldly pursuits, Christians serve God in the voting booth by serving their fellow man.
4. If they do so with love and circumspection rather than for selfish ends, they rank as members of the universal priesthood of all believers.

This is in a nutshell the Lutheran contribution to the debate about faith and politics. It provides a healthy alternative to this campaign season's jabber by "false clerics and schismatic spirits," as Martin Luther called churchmen lecturing government on how to handle its business. Seen from the Lutheran perspective, Christians act as God's masks when they cast their votes. Through them He bestows power on political leaders, and the voters then serve God by holding leaders' feet to the fire.

Church-owned publications cannot endorse political candidates. Of course, we have a clear position on issues of theological concern, such as the sanctity of life and of marriage as the union between one man and one woman. But *The Lutheran Witness* would be wrong to tell Washington how to fight wars in the Middle East, end the immigration quagmire, or salvage Social Security. Such problems cannot be resolved by faith but only by reason, a gift from God to help us function in this world. The church ought to tell secular rulers to use this gift wisely.

However, the Lutheran church has to remind Christian voters of this fact: They are the divinely appointed sovereigns of a democracy and as such compelled to exercise their office by virtue of good sense. In these dangerous times they must have the courage to ask candidates to be brutally truthful about the dire state the world is in, and how they intend to deal with this, even at the risk of proposing unpopular measures. Should voters base their decision on prejudice, ideology, conjecture,

ignorance, selfishness, and a sloppy desire for an easy way out, rather than informed logic and neighborly love, they neglect their priestly duties.

Playing ostrich under these circumstances is not an option. A Christian failing to vote resembles the useless servant who kept the pound entrusted to him laid away in a napkin (Luke 19:20). The same applies to Christians deaf to the calling to run for public office. Some sects tell their followers to shun this fallen world. The Lutheran church teaches the opposite: Christians must engage the world. Never mind that as fallible human beings they are bound to make mistakes; God will ultimately correct those, as Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote in the dark days of Nazi rule.

God's charge to voters in a democracy has chilling implications. Voters can't just say, "It wasn't me," when things go wrong as a result of their choice. Germans who elected Hitler in 1933 didn't get away with this excuse. Biblically speaking, they had received their authority from God (Rom. 13:1) but squandered it by handing power to the wrong rulers. In today's terms, the divine assignment to the voters precludes cop-outs such as, "I didn't realize that the world is running out of oil, and that antihistamines, antiseptics, artificial limbs, aspirin, cortisone, and heart valves are all made from oil," or, "I had

no idea that the infrastructure in America was rotten."

The voters' priestly rank in the secular "left-hand kingdom" involves *noblesse oblige*; it comes with responsibility. Their first responsibility is to ask questions, to inform themselves and reflect on the most significant issues the next government will have to handle.

No other church body is theologically better equipped than the Lutheran to keep hammering on this verity: Priestly service in a democracy consists of an interlocking chain of divine assignments of love.

Thus in Lutheran eyes the view of some liberal and evangelical theologians that the Gospel transforms culture seems utopian. It has caused Christian idealists of the right and the left to see their own country or the Soviet Union and Pol Pot's Cambodia as precursors of the Kingdom of God. But Christ did not die to make society nicer or fairer; He suffered to redeem the believer from sin, thus giving him eternal life.

If Christian voters are priests in the left-hand kingdom, so are Christians as rulers. All secular authorities are ministers of God, according to Rom. 13:6. Paul used the Greek term *leitourgoi*, which is the root of the English word *liturgists*. This suggests that secular rulers and the celebrants in church have parallel assignments in



their respective realms. One of their many assignments is to proclaim truth—the eternal truth, which is Christ, in the case of pastors, and the truth about the state of the world in the case of politicians.

This is particularly important to remember in a situation as unstable as the present one, with nuclear war between Iran and Israel looking plausible; with genocidal wars being fought in Africa; with new armed conflicts shaking the former Soviet Union, where Moscow's leaders, their eyes on natural gas and petroleum deposits in the Caucasus, are attacking once again neighbors they once subjugated; with radical Islamists bent on defeating the West in Afghanistan, and gaining power in other parts of the Muslim world; with booming India and China competing with the United States and Europe over the world's depleting oil supplies.

Which brings us back to oil. In the mid-1970s, when this writer was managing editor of a Hamburg newspaper, the world received its first warning that this fabulous gift to humanity was perhaps not infinite. There were long lines at the gas stations. Politicians, corporations, shipping magnates, scientists, inventors and

private citizens were busy finding alternatives.

But then came another oil glut, and for three decades these new ideas were discarded. America allowed its railroads and public transport systems to degenerate to Third-World levels. Passenger vessels stopped taking people from point A to point B but served instead as floating malls called cruise ships. While the rest of the world developed fuel-efficient cars, Detroit built the Hummer. All this has occurred in bipartisan harmony under the less-than-watchful eyes of legislators more interested in pork than the wellbeing of future Americans. And the voters, the nation's sovereigns, allowed this to happen.

Erich Kaestner (1899–1974), a brilliant German author with a fiendish sense of irony, coined the aphorism, "Whom God assigns power He first deprives of his mind." Kaestner tried to wake people up. Next month, America's sovereigns cannot afford to act mindlessly; they cannot afford to elect leaders without good sense. They must ask candidates: "How serious are you about leading us out of our suicidal enslavement to depleting sources of energy that are almost entirely in the

hands of actual or potential adversaries of the United States?"

The situation requires statesmen willing to acknowledge this and join forces with responsible people from all walks of life—especially industry, finance, and science—in order to end the oil addiction that has brought the world to the brink. "The best solution is to pray," Bryan Appleyard quoted energy financier Matthew Simmons, an advisor to President George W. Bush, as saying.

If he were Lutheran he might have added, "And let's pray that American voters do see themselves as priests in the world and elect leaders who know themselves as ministers of God in the secular realm."

**An international journalist, Dr. Uwe Siemon-Netto has covered everything from the construction of the Berlin Wall and the Vietnam War to the conflict in the Middle East, the civil-rights movement, and U.S. presidential elections. A Lutheran lay theologian and sociologist of religion, he is director of the Center for Lutheran Theology and Public Life, which is affiliated with Concordia Seminary in St. Louis.**



*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

REV. ROBB HOLZRICHTER resigned from the roster of ordained ministers of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. REV. KIRK MCQUILLAN and REV. BRANDON LUFT were removed from the clergy roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. They are, therefore, no longer eligible to receive a call.—Dr. Ray G. Mirly, president, LCMS Missouri District.

SHERYL ESSENBURG, Stuart, Fla., was removed from the Commissioned Minister roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and is, therefore, no longer eligible for a call.—Dr. Gerhard C. Michael Jr., president, LCMS Florida-Georgia District.

TIMOTHY J. BICKEL, Millington, Mich., resigned from the Ordained Minister of Religion roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod as of Aug. 1. He is, therefore, no longer eligible for a call.—Rev. C. William Hoesman, president, LCMS Michigan District.

REV. RAYMOND HENDRICKSON, Sebeka, Minn., was appointed circuit counselor for the Wadena Circuit, replacing REV. TIMOTHY VAUGHAN, who resigned from this position.—Rev. Donald J. Fondow, president, LCMS Minnesota North District.

## Official Notices— Colloquies

KATHERINE HOLDEN, Tucson, Ariz.; LAURIE NELSON, Tucson, Ariz.; DONNA OETTING, Emma, Mo.; SARAH BATEMAN, Oak Creek, Wis.; MELANIE LEELEND, Houston, Texas; SARA MAXON, Omaha, Neb.; MARC J. PAUL, Maplewood, Minn.; CHARLES RODRIGUES, Long Beach, Calif.; AMY SCHWARTING, Omaha, Neb.; JEFFREY SPANGENBERG, Roseburg, Ore.; KRISTEN BRUTCHER, New Palestine, Ind.; MARY LYNN BUCK, Flint, Mich.; and ROY STUCKWISCH, Seymour, Ind., have submitted an application for the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod through CUEnet.

ARLYN MEYER, Bloomington, Ill.; RODRICK LANE, Lincoln, Neb.; CHAD VAN METER, Fort Wayne, Ind.; CATHERINE COZMAS TAPP, New Haven, Ind.; SEAN CHAPMAN, Omaha, Neb.; NICOLE HAYENGA, Golden Valley, Minn.; ERIC STEINKE, Saginaw, Mich.; BROCK CAIN, Waveland, Miss.; and JONATHAN GRAF, St. Louis, Mo., have submitted an application for the Director of Christian Education Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod through Concordia University, St. Paul, Minn.

Correspondence regarding their applications should be directed within four weeks after publication of this notice to Dr. William R. Dieckelman, Chairman, Colloquy Committee, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

DEANNA SCHMIDT, Sioux City, Iowa, has completed the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and is, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Brian L. Friedrich, Concordia University Nebraska, 800 N. Columbia Ave., Seward, NE 68434-1599.

SUSAN K. BURFORD, St. Louis, Mo.; DONNA S. PETERS, Defiance, Mo.; and DONNA E. MULLER, Franklin, Tenn., 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.

DEBORA STARK, Midland, Mich., and STEVE SCHAPER, Rochester, Minn., have completed the Director of Christian Education Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Dr. Stephen C. Stohlmann, Director of Colloquy, Concordia University, 275 Syndicate St. North, St. Paul, MN 55104.

MICHAEL E. YOUNG, Irvine, Calif.; WENDY SIEVERS, Tempe, Ariz.; and ADAM LEE, Tustin, Calif., have completed the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Dr. Becky Peters, Director, Colloquy Program, Concordia University, 1530 Concordia W., Irvine, CA 92612-3203.

## Official Notices— Requests for Reinstatement

JAMES K. STALDER, Galena, Ohio, has applied for reinstatement to the Minister of Religion—Ordained roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. DON L. BADER, Omaha, Neb.; DAVID F. BORCHERDING, Lincoln, Neb.; FREDERICK E. BRAUER, Livermore, Calif.; CHERYL A. BRINN, Conover, N.C.; LINDA A. CHRISTENSEN, Elmhurst, Ill.; LANA ERICKSON, Omaha, Neb.; CATHY KUTZ, Clinton Township, Mich.; LISA MEINZEN, Edwardsville, Ill.; DEBORAH L. REMPFER, Newhall, Iowa; and LAURIE STEINKE, North Port, Fla., have applied for reinstatement to the Minister 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 Nov. 5.—Dr. Raymond L. Hartwig, Secretary, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

## Official Notices— Requests for Recognized Service Organization Status

The following independent service organizations are currently applying or reapplying for Recognized Service Organization status through one of the operating boards of our Synod: LUTHER VILLAGE OF NAPLES, Arlington Heights, Ill.; LUTHERAN LATINO MINISTRIES, Mount Angel, Ore.; and LUTHERAN LIFE COMMUNITIES, Arlington Heights, Ill. Correspondence regarding these applications should be directed to the undersigned for receipt no later than Nov. 5.—Dr. Raymond L. Hartwig, Secretary, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

## 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., Oct. 20 for the December issue). Send notices to karen.higgins@lcms.org.—Ed.*

The following institutions of the Concordia University System (CUS) are seeking candidates for positions described below:

**Concordia University Chicago** seeks to fill the following faculty positions: **theatre/communication; educational leadership; sociology.**

**Concordia University Nebraska** seeks to fill the following faculty position: **contemporary/diverse church music.**

**Concordia University Texas, Austin, Texas,** seeks to fill the following faculty position: **dean, College of Education.**

**Concordia University Wisconsin** seeks to fill the following faculty positions: **clinical psychology; department chairs for pharmacy practice and pharmaceutical 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."

## Manager of Emerging Products

**Concordia Publishing House** (St. Louis, MO) currently has an opening for a **Manager of Emerging Products.** The Manager of Emerging Products is responsible for the research, initial development, refinement, and implementation of potential new electronic products and services for CPH.

Candidates must possess a strong understanding of resources needed by LCMS churches and schools to enhance their ministry; BA/BS in IT, MIS, or a related field, advanced degree preferred; theological education desirable; 3+ years experience in a digital technology position; parish experience preferred.

To apply, candidates may send their resume and cover letter to [cphresume@cph.org](mailto:cphresume@cph.org).

## Notice of Nondiscrimination

The colleges, universities, and seminaries of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod admit students of any race, color, national, and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the college, university, or seminary. While the colleges and seminaries of the Synod give preference to members of the Lutheran faith, they do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of their educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other college- or seminary-administered programs. The colleges and seminaries of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod are Concordia University, Ann Arbor, Mich.; Concordia University Texas, Austin, Texas; Concordia College, Bronxville, N.Y.; Concordia University, Irvine, Calif.; Concordia University Wisconsin, Mequon, Wis.; Concordia University, Portland, Ore.; Concordia University Chicago, River Forest, Ill.; Concordia University, St. Paul, Minn.; Concordia College, Selma, Ala.; Concordia University Nebraska, Seward, Neb.; Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.; and Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Mo.

## Anniversaries

The Lutheran Witness *welcomes notices 50 words or less from LCMS congregations about their upcoming "milestone" anniversaries. The deadline*



I find it sad that we have become so youth-oriented that an ad honestly portraying the elderly is considered disgraceful and out of place in a religious magazine that celebrates God and His creation.

Charlotte Coolidge  
San Antonio, Texas

## Be joyful! Celebrate life!

I am responding to the September letter-writer who took issue with the bathing-suit ad in the June/July issue of *The Lutheran Witness*. In that ad, four elderly women in bathing suits are enjoying the water. I am disappointed that the letter-writer failed to see the significance of such joy.

As an employee of a major health-insurance company who speaks on a daily basis with elderly members, I can imagine how many of them would love to be able to prance in water, let alone wear a swimsuit. What a celebration of

life that these four women could join hands with one another and walk on their own into the water! Yes, it may be an ad, but it's not Hollywood portraying age, it's true women.

I find it sad that we have become so youth-oriented that an ad honestly portraying the elderly is considered disgraceful and out of place in a religious magazine that celebrates God and His creation. The pictures of the women and the baptized infant are bookends to the fullness of life that God can grant us. May the infant realize the joy the elderly ladies show!

Charlotte Coolidge  
San Antonio, Texas

## Simple gifts

"Shedding Some Light" in the August issue reminds us of the importance of a nativity set in our home at Christmas. Does your church give gifts to the poor at Christmas—toys, food, or clothing? Why not purchase an inexpensive nativity set at a craft store or dollar store and add it to the family's gifts? This is a simple and effective witness we all can do. See *NativitySetMinistry.org*, a ministry of the Lakeshore, Mich., LWML.

Rose Fremer  
St. James Lutheran Church  
Montague, Mich

Read more letters to the editor at *lcms.org/witness*. 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](mailto:lutheran.witness@lcms.org). Please include your name, postal address, and telephone number.

## NOTICES

for receipt of such notices is the 20th of the month two months prior to the publication month (e.g., Oct. 20 for the December issue). Send notices to [karen.higgins@lcms.org](mailto:karen.higgins@lcms.org).—Ed.

**Trinity, Wausau, Wis.**, will celebrate its 100th anniversary with a special service at the Grand Theater, Wausau, at 10 a.m., Oct. 5. Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick, president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, will serve as guest preacher. Contact the church office at (715) 842-0769 or visit online at [www.trinitynet.org](http://www.trinitynet.org).

**Grace, San Francisco, Calif.**, will celebrate its 100th anniversary at the 10:30 a.m. worship service Oct. 5, followed by a 4 p.m. restaurant banquet. Contact the church office at (415) 468-2937.

**Peace, Great Falls, Mont.**, will celebrate its 50th anniversary at the 4 p.m. special worship service Oct. 12, followed by a catered meal. Dr. Mark Nicolaus will be guest preacher and Rev. Robert Eckelman will be liturgist. Both are former pastors. Contact the church office at (406) 761-7343 or <http://www.atpeace.net>.

**Peace, Fresno, Calif.**, will continue its 50th anniversary celebration Oct. 19, with Rev. Ken Klaus, Lutheran Hour speaker, as guest preacher. A catered meal and program will follow. Contact the church office at (559) 222-2320.

**Christ, Albertville, Ala.**, will celebrate its 25th anniversary throughout November. Guest speakers are Southern District President Rev. Kurtis D. Schultz and Rev. Harold Hermetz, emeritus, of Cullman, Ala. Rev. Gary J. Faith, executive assistant of parish ministries, will speak Nov. 16. A potluck

dinner and program will follow.

**St. John's, Newkirk, Okla.**, will celebrate its 100th anniversary with special services and a dinner Nov. 2. RSVP by telephone at (580) 362-3750.

**Immanuel, Hillside, Ill.**, will celebrate its 150th anniversary with a special fellowship and reception at 10 a.m. and worship at 11 a.m., Nov. 16. Dr. William Diekelman, first vice president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, will be guest preacher. A banquet luncheon will be held at 1 p.m. For more information, call (708) 562-5590.

**Shepherd of the Valley, Perrysburg, Ohio**, will celebrate its 40th anniversary Jan. 24–25, 2009. Rev. Terry Cripe, Ohio District president, will be the main speaker at the Jan. 24 dinner. A 10:15 a.m. celebration worship service is planned for Jan. 25, followed by fellowship. Contact Fred Chatos at [fchatos@roadrunner.com](mailto:fchatos@roadrunner.com) or the church office at [sovlcms@att.net](mailto:sovlcms@att.net) or (419) 874-6939.

## 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

**BRANDT, MAYNARD HENRY**; Aug. 5, 1927, Avon, S.D., to July 14, 2008, Sedalia, Mo.; son of Behrend and Lilly (Heins) Brandt; graduated Springfield, 1954. Served 1954–1992. Ministries/parishes: Correctionville, Quimby, Wiota, Fort Dodge,

Iowa; Plainview, Neb.; Emma, Mo.; Iowa District West circuit counselor: 1960–1961; Iowa District West education committee chairman: 1966–1973; retired 1992. Preceded in death by his daughter, Mary Ellen Brandt. Survivors: Mary (Pauling) Brandt; sons: Rev. Nathan, Rev. Christopher, Benjamin, Rev. Phillip; daughters: Rebecca Tieman, Lisa Brack. Funeral: July 18, 2008, Concordia, Mo.; interment: July 19, 2008, Wiota, Iowa.

**CLARK, MOSES JULIUS SR.**; July 4, 1924, Catherine, Ala., to June 30, 2008, Mobile, Ala.; son of Madison and Lola (Farnish) Clark; graduated Greensboro, 1955. Served 1955–1990. Ministries/parishes: Arlington, Lamison, Midway, Oak Hill, Rosebud, Hamburg, Acherville, Atmore, Ala.; Alexandria, Mansura, La.; retired 1990. Preceded in death by his wife, Lucile (Dale) Clark. Survivors: sons: Moses Jr., David; daughters: Miriam Cox, Lydia Clark, Cynthia Coker, Rachel. Funeral: July 5, 2008, Atmore, Ala.; interment: July 5, 2008, Centre, Ala.

**FETT, LARRY C.**; April 17, 1951, Cherokee, Iowa, to Aug. 1, 2008, Branson, Mo.; son of Vernon and Martha (Boettcher) Fett; graduated Fort Wayne, 1983. Served 1983–2008. Ministries/parishes: Kansas City, Mo.; Le Mars, Iowa; Iowa District West circuit counselor: 1990–2008. Survivors: Margaret (Watkins) Fett; sons: Jeffrey, Terry, Timothy; daughter: April Reed. Memorial service: Aug. 6, 2008, Le Mars, Iowa; cremation.

**GIESEKE, HAROLD JULIUS**; May 1, 1910, Yakima, Wash., to July 5, 2008, Eugene, Ore.; son of Louis and Emelena (Hunziker) Gieseke; graduated St. Louis, 1934. Served 1936–1978. Ministries/parishes: Endicott, Tacoma, Wash.; Sandy, Corvallis, Eugene,

**Text Me?**

During Lenten family devotions, we shared with our grandchildren the story of Jesus' appearance before the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate. Our son led the devotion, and he included the story of Pilate washing his hands before the crowd and saying he wanted nothing more to do with Jesus. During discussion time, Cory, age 4, asked to hear part of the story one more time: "Tell me again," he said, "What did Palm Pilate say?"

**Sharon Willweber**  
Terra Bella, Calif.

**Play It Again, Sam!**

Some years ago a congregation I served was the mother church for a mission start. Some of our good members lived near the new start. One family in particular was torn: Should they join the mission congregation or continue as members of our own? They couldn't decide what course of action was the "right" thing to do. They attended our early service and then the late service at the mission congregation.

Finally, they decided to become members at the new location. "The sermons are so similar to your own," they said. "The words sound so familiar. It makes us feel right at home."

What they didn't know at the time was that the mission's pastor frequently didn't begin work on his sermon before Saturday evening, sometimes rather late Saturday



evening. I often took pity on him and discussed with him what I knew about the text. On this particular Sunday, his sermon was the result of an extended Saturday-night telephone conversation that he relied on heavily the next morning.

Now wonder the words sounded familiar!

**Rev. Phillip Bohlken**  
Caldwell, Idaho

Ore.; Northwest District circuit counselor: 1947–1954; retired 1978. Survivors: Irma (Schmidt) Gieseke; son: Jonathan; daughters: Mary Brunton, Kathleen Jellison, Claudia Blair, Tamara De Marco. Memorial service: July 11, 2008, Eugene, Ore.; interment: July 9, 2008, Eugene, Ore.

**JOLLIFF, BRUCE HOLDEN**; June 12, 1927, Petersburg, Va., to July 9, 2008, Knoxville, Tenn.; son of Elliott and Ethel (Steere) Jolliff; colloquy Fort Wayne, 1983. Served 1983–1991. Ministries/parishes: Wolcottville, Richmond, Ind.; retired 1991. Survivors: Lelah (Wear) Jolliff; sons: Travis Sr., Leland; daughters: Melinda Beck, Nancy Jenkins. Funeral: July 14, 2008, Knoxville, Tenn.; interment: July 15, 2008, Knoxville, Tenn.

**KEENAN, JACK WAYNE**; Feb. 26, 1939, East Moline, Ill., to June 22, 2008, Chandler, Ariz.; son of Carl and Cora (Conn) Keenan; graduated Springfield, 1965. Served 1965–1976, 1981–1985. Ministries/parishes: Peoria, Ill.; Cisco, Lubbock, Texas; Imperial Beach, Granada Hills, Reseda, Calif.; retired 1990. Survivors: Marlys (Widmark) Keenan; sons: Sean, Troy. Funeral: June 27, 2008, Chandler, Ariz.; interment: June 28, 2008, Scottsdale, Ariz.

**KLENZ, HOWARD ROLAND**; March 19, 1934, Milwaukee, Wis., to July 27, 2008, Milwaukee, Wis.; son of Charles and Gertrude (Jensen) Klenz; graduated St. Louis, 1959. Served 1959–1986, 1987–1988, 1989–1991. Ministries/parishes: Hurst, Texas; Milwaukee, Wis.; retired 1991. Survivors: Darlene (Benner) Klenz; sons: Mark, Nathan; daughters: Tammy Gassner, Tracey Markut. Funeral and interment: July 31, 2008, Milwaukee, Wis.

**MARQUARDT, OSCAR AUGUST**; April 13, 1928, Dodge Center, Minn., to Aug. 4, 2008, Portland, Ore.; son of August and Anna (Maass) Marquardt; graduated Springfield, 1952. Served 1952–1990. Ministries/parishes: Wheatland, Douglas, Wyo.; South Sioux City, Ponca, Neb.; Cherokee, Iowa; Portland, Ore.; Northwest District circuit counselor: 1963–1964, 1990–1991; retired 1990. Preceded in death by his son, Craig. Survivors: Gladean (Grunklee) Marquardt; sons: Steven, Scott, Rev. Jeffrey, Jon; daughters: Barbara, Julia. Memorial service: Aug. 8, 2008, Portland, Ore.; interment: Aug. 8, 2008, Gresham, Ore.

**MAYER, MARTIN EMMANUEL JR.**; April 25, 1912, Burns, Wyo., to June 30, 2008, Stanton, Calif.; son of Rev. Martin Sr. and Elizabeth (Brauer) Mayer; graduated St. Louis, 1936. Served 1937–1977. Ministries/parishes: Fort Lupton, Hudson, Grand Junction, Lakewood, Colo.; Wausau, Wis.; Minneapolis, Minn.; Layton, Utah; retired 1977. Preceded in death by his wife, Ruth (Eggers) Mayer. Survivors: sons: David, Timothy; daughter: Lois Koch. Memorial service: July 11, 2008, Cerritos, Calif.; cremation.

**MUSKE, CLARENCE JALMAR**; July 23, 1914, La Moure, N.D., to March 9, 2008, Springfield, Minn.; son of Herman and Martha (Wetzel) Muske; graduated St. Louis, 1940. Joined LCMS as emeritus, 1990. Preceded in death by his wife, Norma (Kaphingst) Muske. Survivors: sons: Paul, John; daughters: Clarice Anderson, Linda Reiter, Susan Frederick. Funeral: March 14, 2008, Springfield, Minn.; interment: Grand Rapids, N.D.

**STEFFEN, LEE WILLIAM**; March 8, 1921, Sioux Falls, S.D., to July 22, 2008, Franklin, N.C.; son

of William and Arvilla (Forsyth) Steffen; graduated St. Louis, 1945. Served 1945–1985. Ministries/parishes: Jamison, Clearwater, Neb.; Spencer, Iowa; Lakeland, Fla.; retired 1985. Survivors: Dorothy (Hertlein) Steffen; sons: William, Frederick, Paul, Mark. Funeral and interment: July 26, 2008, Franklin, N.C.

**COMMISSIONED**

**RAMSEY, DAVID ALLEN**; Aug. 27, 1949, Hastings, Mich., to Oct. 9, 2007, Fort Wayne, Ind.; son of Glen Sr. and Elise Ramsey; colloquy Ann Arbor, 1987. Served 1987–1996, 2002–2007. Schools/ministries: Marysville, Ohio; Decatur, Ind. Survivors: Suzanne (Britton) Ramsey; son: Vincent; daughter: Leigh Anne Canada. Funeral: Oct. 13, 2007, Fort Wayne, Ind.; interment: Oct. 13, 2007, Decatur, Ind.

**SUHR, HOWARD R.**; April 11, 1930, Oak Park, Ill., to June 8, 2008, Elgin, Ill.; son of Paul and Gertrude (Kunstman) Suhr; graduated River Forest, 1952. Served 1952–1995. School/ministry: River Grove, Ill.; retired 1995. Preceded in death by his wife, Linda Suhr. Memorial service: June 14, 2008, Huntley, Ill.; interment: June 21, 2008, Hillside, Ill.

**TOSO, JUDITH ANN (REMTER)**; Dec. 23, 1940, Burke, S.D., to March 23, 2008, Sioux City, Iowa; daughter of Louie and Lois (Jones) Remter; colloquy Seward, 1995. Served 1995–2005. School/ministry: Sioux City, Iowa; retired 2005. Survivors: Harvey Toso; sons: Jonathan, David. Funeral and interment: March 29, 2008, Sioux City, Iowa.



## Gospel: One Word Is Worth a Thousand Pictures

by Terence Groth

The old saying proposes: “One picture is worth a thousand words.” True enough. At the same time, some words of Scripture are so rich that it may take a thousand “pictures” to display their richness and depth.

The word *Gospel*, the shorthand term for Scripture’s teaching of what God has done in Christ Jesus to forgive sinners and give them eternal life, is the premier example. The biblical writers use multiple pictures to communicate this central message brought to light by the Reformation. So, what does the Gospel look like? Let’s see.

One of St. Paul’s (and Martin Luther’s) favorite descriptions of the Gospel is the picture of justification. This picture uses the language of the courtroom.

In this scene, who is the judge? (Eccl. 12:14; 1 Peter 1:17)

---



---

Who is the defendant? (Acts 17:31; Heb.12:23b)

---



---

What is the accusation? (Rom. 3:10–18, 23; James 2:10)

---



---

What unexpected sentence does God pronounce? (Micah 7:18; Rom. 8:1; 2 Cor. 5:19)

---



---

This proclaims our *reality* in Christ. We guilty sinners *actually* have been pronounced “not guilty” before God, our Judge, because Christ took the punishment we deserve!

Another prominent description of the Gospel uses the language of business. This is the picture of *redemption*. In our commercial world, it’s one we can apply readily.

In this picture, who owns believers? (Eph.1:14; 1 Peter 2:9)

---



---

What has God paid for us? (Matt. 20:28; Acts 20:28b; 1 Peter 1:18–19)

---



---

The issue of the Christian’s worth is settled once and for all in the price God paid to own each of us—the precious life and death of His beloved Son.

The prevalence of addictions to drugs, alcohol, sex, gambling, etc., testifies that slavery to sin is not a pretty picture. Thus, the good news described as *salvation*, or rescue, is a powerful message.

When sinners are set free from sin, death, and the devil, how do they use their freedom? (Rom. 6:18, 22; Gal. 5:13; Eph. 6:6; 1 Peter 2:16)

---



---

Now here is an inspiring picture—former slaves of sin and the devil freely serving Christ and their neighbor because Christ has set them free through forgiveness and the power of His Spirit. Free indeed!

Yet one more Gospel metaphor, using the language of healing, depicts salvation as *health*, or wholeness. This, too, is a picture that may speak powerfully to contemporary culture.

How is the condition of sin diagnosed in the following passages? (Ps. 38:3; Is. 1:5–6; Jer. 8:22; 2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:1)

---



---

*Literally*, what healing did Jesus bring in these accounts as signs of His new creation? (Matt. 4:23–24; 9:27–33; Mark 3:1–5; Luke 4:38–39; John 11:38–44)

---



---

How is Jesus’ saving work described in these passages? (Is. 53:3–5; Luke 5:31–32; John 6:48–51)

---



---

How does Revelation depict the wholeness of Jesus’ new creation? (2:7b, 11b; 7:16–17; 21:4; 22:2–3)

---



---

Perhaps the shortest way of depicting the Gospel is “Jesus heals!”

John concluded his story of Jesus by saying: “Jesus did many other things as well. If every one of them were written down, I suppose that even the whole world would not have room for the books that would be written” (21:25 NIV). Likewise, I suppose if all possible pictures were painted to unravel the meaning of the Gospel, no gallery or poetry library could hold them. But here’s a good start—and a good way to celebrate the Reformation! *Can you picture that?*

**Rev. Terence Groth is an assistant professor of theology at Concordia University Nebraska.**





## Those Who Labor among You

The article about Grace Place Lutheran Retreats in this issue of *The Lutheran Witness* highlights the importance of “wholistic” health among pastors (and other church workers) and their spouses for the vitality of the local church. Holy Scripture addresses the relationship between “those who labor among you” and those with whom this labor is accomplished. More on that in a moment.

In my travels across the Synod and in conversations with district presidents and others, I hear many, many reports of strong, positive working relationships between pastors and people. At other times, I hear reports that indicate a need for improvement in those relationships. In a world where “your enemy, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8), this should come as no great surprise. Satan no doubt rejoices when the relationship between pastor and people is interrupted by disharmony, disagreement, and disgruntlement.

The apostle Paul addresses this very important relationship. He writes, “Now we ask you, brothers, to respect those who work hard among you, who are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live in peace with each other” (1 Thess. 5:12–13).

While this may be easier said than done, it behooves us nonetheless as Christian people to take seriously these words inspired by the Holy Spirit.

Lest we misunderstand the words “who are over you . . . and who admonish you,” it is good for us to hear what was said years ago by one who is esteemed highly among us. The Synod’s first president, Dr. C. F. W. Walther, wrote in a letter to church members that “no pastor dare lord it over his congregation (1 Peter 5:2–3).” In an 1878 installation sermon on 1 Cor. 4:1–5, he said, “The apostle in our text does not call true pastors lords, nor rulers, nor masters, nor authority figures of Christ, but ‘Servants of Christ.’ . . . A true pastor, over whose coming a congregation may rejoice, is therefore only that person who comes not to rule over her but to serve her, not as her master but as her brother.”

No pastor is perfect, of course, nor is any congregation. Yet, what a blessing it is when those who labor among us

and those among whom that labor is accomplished live and work peacefully among one another. Such peace is a gift from the hand of our gracious heavenly Father. And when that gift is “opened” and put to use, the blessing of God abounds.

Wouldn’t it be wonderful if the working relationship between pastor and people were always free from the tensions, disagreements, and struggles that sometimes characterize such relationships? While we don’t live in a perfect world, isn’t it great when pastor and people share a common vision of mission and ministry in their community?

What a blessing it is when those who labor among us and those among whom that labor is accomplished live and work peacefully among one another.

How wonderful it is when people of all ages look forward to congregational activities—especially worship and God’s gifts of Word and Sacrament that touch the hurting heart with the healing hand of Christ. Those who receive God’s grace through these means are energized to fulfill their calling “vigorously to make known the love of Christ by word and deed within our churches, communities, and the world,” to use the words of our Synod’s mission statement.

As president of the Synod, I assure you of my fervent and regular prayers that the respect and esteem of which Paul writes will always characterize the relationship of the people in your congregation with “those who labor among you.”

**Jerry Kieschnick**  
John 3:16–17

Lives Transformed through  
Christ, in Time . . . for Eternity!  
e-mail: [president@lcms.org](mailto:president@lcms.org)  
Web page: [www.lcms.org/president](http://www.lcms.org/president)