



THE LUTHERAN WITNESS™

VOL. 128 NO. 11 NOVEMBER 2009

On Contentment



10

1001 ORPHANS

17

OPERATION
BARNABAS

20

'LISTEN TO HIM!'



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

6 ON CONTENTMENT by William Utech

Sometimes in the pursuit of the things of this world, we risk sacrificing the good gifts our heavenly Father has already given.

10 1001 ORPHANS by Kim Plummer Krull intro by Matthew Harrison

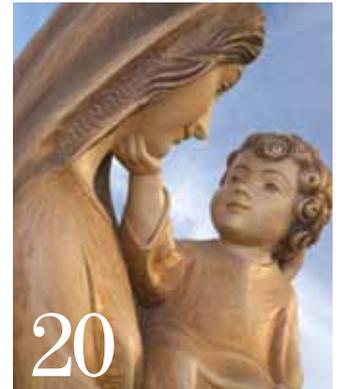
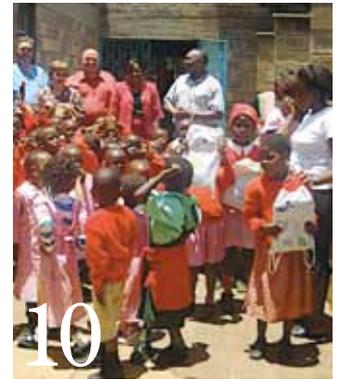
Giving young Kenyans “what we want every child to have.”

17 OPERATION BARNABAS by Sandy Wood

An LCMS program to help chaplains expand its ministry to reach more National Guard, Reserve, and veterans’ families.

20 ‘LISTEN TO HIM!’ by Terry Forke

Advent is a time to prepare for the coming of God’s Son by listening to Him.



TO THE READER

For many of us, the past 18 months have been a roller-coaster ride. We’ve lost jobs, our home values and retirement funds have tanked, and the immediate prospects for a brighter future often seem dimmed by yet another glum round of “expert” pronouncements.

Yet, as our authors this month remind us, we have much to be thankful for, not only in the temporal sense—from the perspective of the rest

of the world, we are blessed beyond measure even in these difficult times—but also in the spiritual sense, for we have been redeemed by Christ, sanctified by the Holy Spirit, and counted as our heavenly Father’s own dear children.

As we once again anticipate Thanksgiving and look forward to the season of Advent, may we rejoice in all the blessings that have been showered upon us—house, home,

family, and all that we have—and, in the words of Paul Gerhardt, pray,

*O kindle, Lord most holy,
Your lamp within my breast
To do in spirit lowly
All that may please You best*

(LSB 334).

May you have a joy-filled Thanksgiving and a blessed Advent.

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

DEPARTMENTS

3 LIFELINE
4 LETTERS
23 NOTICES
25 Q & A

26 FAMILY COUNSELOR
27 SHEDDING SOME LIGHT
28 SEARCHING SCRIPTURE
29 FROM THE PRESIDENT

COMING IN DECEMBER

- Christmas Is Christ
- The Invitation
- Out of Ashes, Kindness

Joy!

You're Never Too Old to Share It!



This down-to-earth lady who loved God, her church, her family, and international students at SRU is proof that we are never too old to serve our Lord.

At an age when many of us think it is time to stop serving others, Fern Fitzpatrick was in her prime. The countless photographs of Fern in our albums here at All Saints Lutheran Church and Student Center in Slippery Rock, Pa., highlight the service she gave even though she was in her eighties. The photos show the joy she found in serving others. This was true when I first met her, and it was true until she was called home to her heavenly Father earlier this year. I cannot think of Fern without remembering Gal. 5:22, which lists the fruits of the Spirit: love, joy, peace, and so on. For Fern, the fruit was joy, abiding joy.

In her senior-living complex, Fern was the first to volunteer to drive those without cars to the grocery store, the doctor's office, and McDonalds, where she treated everyone to her favorite coffee. She didn't share grudgingly. She gave of herself with pleasure, happy to know she'd helped others.

Fern brought that same loving spirit to our campus-ministry student center, where she was a vital presence. In our congregation, she made teddy-bear afghans for all the new babies. One member still remembers how much Fern's gift meant, especially since her husband was leaving for Iraq. Fern crocheted hundreds and hundreds of small white starched angels to be hung on Christmas trees. She gave them to our campus ministry, and we made them available at Slippery Rock University (SRU) student orientations. Students and their families prized these angels, often coming back to our fellowship table. "One more, please!" they would say.

Fern never pretended to be a "saint." Yet, her generosity and joy spilled over onto everyone, especially SRU's international students. She doted on them, listened to their

stories, encouraged them, and talked about her faith with them, and they remembered her. When Madeliene from Bulgaria learned of Fern's death, she called to say how much Fern had touched her life when she attended SRU. (Madeliene is now a first-year medical student at the University of Iowa.) Linda from Kenya, Malindra from Sri Lanka, and Sophal and Pitou from Cambodia all experienced her care and Christian concern through acts of friendship, all-you-can-eat pizza outings, and transportation to the grocery store and the malls. By her actions, Fern showed that all of us, no matter our age, can make a difference in serving our Lord. Countless students experienced Christ's love through Fern.

Even in her last summer of life at Concordia Lutheran Ministries in Cabot, Pa., when Fern couldn't remember how to knit or the names of the people she loved so much, she made a deep impression on the SRU students who visited her. Even in her old age, full of aches and pains, she shared her love—and also Jesus' love—with them.

Thanksgiving is just around the corner, and among all the blessings that have been bestowed on me, my family, and All Saints Church, I am especially thankful for having had the opportunity to know Fern. What a blessing, and what a wonderful Christian inspiration she has been for me and all of us. This down-to-earth lady who loved God, her church, her family, and international students at SRU is proof that we are never too old to serve our Lord. Fern is an example of how the Christian life can be lived, even as long as 86 years. Thank You, God, for Fern.

Augusta R. Mennell is campus ministry director at All Saints Lutheran Church and Student Center, Slippery Rock, Pa.



LETTERS

In the public eye

Sandy Wood's "In the Public Eye" articles in the September issue of *The Lutheran Witness* have given me new hope. Too much news today tells us of problems in our government. I have stopped reading much of it, as it leaves me feeling "down."

The LCMS people you profiled are in places of employment as leaders working for our Christian spirituality and for our Lord. I also feel now that there are probably more who need to be thanked and prayed for.

God bless you and your work.

*Helen W. Wheeler
Joliet, Ill.*

Just a quick note to say "thanks" for the profiles of well-known Lutherans. I was surprised to see my husband's boss first on the list, and it made me realize how the contentious climate at American Airlines right now between employees and management is only a temporal issue, and that our common faith is more important than salary negotiations!

I also appreciated reading about the congressional representatives, and others, in Washington D.C., and how they are always mindful of their commitment to Christ in their daily work.

As always, we appreciate your good work on your Web site!

*Gretchen Olson
Roscoe, IL*

Where were the Democrats?

I just received and read the September issue of *The Lutheran Witness*. While there are many excellent articles, I as a Democrat and a Lutheran pastor am offended that *The Lutheran Witness* chose to *only* feature Republicans in the "[Lutherans] in the Public Eye" story.

My question: Since when did our LCMS church body decide to become "just another" who appears to believe that *only* Republicans have the correct knowledge to be called a Christian?

*Rev. James E. Fleming, Emeritus
Rochester Hills, Mich.*

I enjoyed the article about the eight Lutherans in the public spotlight. However, I was a little confused why four Republican representatives were highlighted and no Democrats. It got me to thinking—maybe there are no Lutheran Democrats. I was really wrong. There are quite a number that represent citizens in both the Senate and House of Representatives.

Here is a short list:

- Senator Byron Dorgan, North Dakota
- Senator Sherrod Brown, Ohio
- Rep. Gary Peters, Michigan
- Rep. Erik Paulsen, Minnesota

I am not sure what criteria were used to determine who got in the story, but I trust it was a thoughtful decision. I do think it is vital that your readers finish the article with the knowledge that God is neither a Republican nor a Democrat. God has complete sovereignty. The last administration was part of God's plan, and so is the current.

*James Jackson
Blue Springs, Mo.*

We received many letters and telephone calls about our September cover story. They were about equally divided between "Thank you for a wonderful, informative, and inspirational story" and "Why did you ignore Democrats



It is encouraging to know of the important work of these Missouri Synod Lutherans, especially when you live in a place like Maine, where relatively few share your LCMS faith.

*Mike Hein
Augusta, Maine*

Thank you for Sandy Wood's "[Lutherans] in the Public Eye" article! It is amazing to know of our LCMS presence in Congress and of the work Timothy Goeglein does on behalf of us citizens of faith in Christ. It is surprising (and humbling) even more to me than most due to my employment with the Maine Family Policy Council, which has been associated with Focus on the Family since 1990.

It is encouraging to know of the important work of these Missouri Synod Lutherans, especially when you live in a place like Maine, where relatively few share your LCMS faith.

*Mike Hein
Augusta, Maine*

Concerning "In the Public Eye" in the September *Lutheran Witness*: If you were attempting to honor work for Labor Day, did you have to feature only professional people? Were there no LCMS waitresses, plumbers, or mechanics? If your car breaks down, are you going to call your congressman? If your washing machine quits, are you going to call Miss America? Also, you made it sound like it is an honorable thing to work 12 to 18 hours a day. If some of these professional people really do work that much, you can't tell me they are paying much attention to their families, or even getting enough sleep. Please try to get in touch a little more with the real world.

*Dwight M. Henderlong
Michigan City, Ind.*

and the Democratic Party?” As noted in the introduction to the story, we limited our profiles to active members of LCMS congregations whose vocations placed them in the national arena or on the national stage. Where our 111th Congress is concerned, to the best of our knowledge, we have only the four U.S. representatives mentioned in the story. As Mr. Jackson correctly points out in his letter, there are many other Lutherans, both Democrats and Republicans, serving in Congress, but they are members of either the ELCA—e.g., Senators Dorgan and Brown, mentioned by Mr. Jackson—or the Wisconsin Synod. (On his Facebook page, Rep. Gary Peters lists his denomination as Episcopalian, and Rep. Erik Paulsen was one of the individuals we profiled.) Regarding other vocations, we attempted to include as many notable LCMS public figures as time and space would allow. If you believe we’ve missed someone, or overlooked someone, please let us know.
—Ed.

Too narrow a focus

After reading the lead articles in the September issue (“Planting New Churches” and “In the Public Eye”), I

(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, editor; Vicky Schaeffer, senior designer; Robert Sexton, marketing manager and advertising sales; Jim Stange, production coordinator; Carla Dubbelde, editorial manager, district editions; Karen Higgins, editorial assistant; editorial office: 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295; 314-996-1202.

© 2009 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

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

Member: Associated Church Press
Evangelical Press Association
November 2009 (ISSN: 0024-757X) Vol. 128, No. 11



On Contentment

Sometimes, in pursuit of the things of this world, we risk sacrificing the good gifts our heavenly Father has already given.

There's a beaver living in the manhole of the storm sewer in my backyard.

This is noteworthy for two reasons. First, there's the historical significance. Given the thousands and thousands of *Lutheran Witness* articles that have been printed over the years, this is most likely the first and only one of them that has begun with the sentence, "There's a beaver living in the manhole of the storm sewer in my backyard."

In other words, you're reading history as it is being made!

Second, there's the contextual significance. You see, although it might seem irrelevant at first glance, the fact that there's a beaver living in the manhole of the storm sewer in my backyard is extremely important for what we will be talking about here. Allow me to explain.

A Root of Evil

I have a beautiful and talented six-year-old hunting dog named Lucky. Lucky is an English setter, and, much to my joy and satisfaction, she is extremely proficient at doing and being what our heavenly Father created her to do and be. She is a bird-hunting machine, and every fall she and I and usually one of my seminary colleagues, enjoy one another's company, companionship, and cooperation as we successfully hunt the wily ring-necked

pheasant, the explosive bob white quail, and the illusive northern ruffed grouse. Lucky was made for bird hunting. That's her God-given vocation. So it should come as no surprise that she is most happy and most content when she is doing what she was made to do.

And then a beaver moved into the manhole of the storm sewer in my backyard, and it would appear that for a hunting dog, at least, the aroma of a nearby beaver is both enticing and addictive—a sort of doggy crack cocaine, if you will. That beaver is on Lucky's mind all the time! She doesn't want to eat. She doesn't want to sleep. She doesn't even want to come inside where she can hang out with her family. She just wants to sit next to that manhole and smell that beaver and think about that beaver and dream about getting that beaver. Never mind that that beaver is living in an impregnable concrete pillbox. Never mind that it is always just out of her reach. She is focused on it. She is obsessed with it. She is target-locked on it, and life is passing her by.

Sound familiar?

"People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs" (1 Tim. 6:9–10 NIV).

It could happen to you. It could happen to me. In this country and in this culture we are *all* at risk. Oh, sure, during times of economic downturn when historically rock-solid businesses are filing for bankruptcy and people are losing their homes and their jobs and money is hard to come by, it's tempting to think that we're above temptation. But it is precisely at times like these that a sinful love of money can lay hold of us.

We look at our 401Ks and 403Bs and we see how much we've lost, and we're sick about it. There's red ink everywhere, and it doesn't seem possible that a whole decade of hard work and disciplined planning for the future could disappear just like that! "It's not right, and it's not fair," we say to ourselves. And we feel cheated and put upon.

In this country and in this culture we have more than most, and the problem with that is that when fallen, sinful people *have* more, they also tend to *want* more.





Our heavenly Father . . .
gives us our deepest
desires, but He does so
in a way that resources
our faith, our relationships,
and our vocations in just
the right way and at just
the right time.

But are we? Really? In *Jesus Wants to Save Christians*, Rob Bell offers some startling statistics about America's affluence:

- America controls nearly 20 percent of the world's wealth. There are around 6 billion people in the world, and there are roughly 300 million people in the U.S. That makes America less than 5 percent of the world's population. And this 5 percent owns a fifth of the world's wealth.
- Every seven seconds, somewhere in the world a child under age five dies of hunger, while Americans throw away 14 percent of the food we purchase.
- Nearly a billion people in the world live on less than an American dollar a day. Another 2.5 billion people in the world live on less than two American dollars a day.
- More than half of the world lives on less than two dollars a day, while the average American teenager spends nearly \$150 dollars a week.
- Americans spend more annually on trash bags than nearly half of the world does on all goods.

We've been cheated? I don't think so. We're disadvantaged? Not likely. We're put upon? Not hardly. On the contrary, in this country and in this culture we have more than most, and the problem with that is that when fallen, sinful people *have* more, they also tend to *want* more.

Wanting More

It happens every spring. I go to the St. Louis Auto Show. I see the shiny new cars. I run my hands across their curvaceous and beautifully sculpted flanks. I plop my backside

down on firmly bolstered seats. I carefully caress the steering wheel and close my eyes. The heady aroma of leather and wood fills my nostrils. My heart palpitates. And it's not long before I'm thinking—no, I'm planning—no, I'm plotting—no, I'm scheming, "How I can get me one of these for myself?"

And you are just like me. It may not be cars, but it *is* something. You, me, all of us have this innate ability to be dissatisfied with what we have and to always want more. In a recent Christmas movie based on Dr. Seuss' book, *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, there's a scene where the Grinch, who lives up on the same mountain that also serves as Whoville's landfill, confronts all the Whovillians with their sinful need for more.

"Gifts!" the Grinch shouts. "Gifts! Gifts! Gifts! Gifts! Gifts! Do you want to know what happens to your gifts? They all come to me in your garbage. You see what I'm saying? In your garbage! I could hang myself with all the bad Christmas neckties I found at the dump! The avarice! The avarice never ends! 'I want golf clubs. I want diamonds. I want a pony so I can ride it twice, get bored, and sell it to make glue!'"

The avarice never ends. And if that wasn't true about you and about me and about all of us, then it wouldn't get so deathly quiet in our worship services whenever our pastors talk about tithing. Just like my dog, Lucky, we get so focused, so obsessed, so target-locked on stuff, that it hardly occurs to us that the good life God wants for us may be passing us by. For example, the joy of being a son or a daughter, the joy of being a husband or a wife, the joy of



being a mother or a father, the joy of being a friend and colleague, the joy of being part of a Christian church that changes hearts and changes lives for eternity, the joy of being a child of God. Are you missing out on the joy of life—on the joy of all your God-given vocations—because you want more stuff?

C.S. Lewis observes that “prosperity knits a man to the world.” St. Paul, as we’ve noted, said it like this: “People who want to get rich fall into temptation and a trap and into many foolish and harmful desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. Some people, eager for money, have wandered from the faith and pierced themselves with many griefs.”

And the answer, the antidote, for all of this? It is, as St. Paul says in 1 Timothy, the great gain of godliness with contentment.

Everything We Need

Now the godliness part, as you well know, comes from the person and work of Jesus, who, as St. Paul sings, “appeared in a body, was vindicated by the Spirit, was seen by angels, was preached among the nations, was believed on in the world, was taken up in glory” (1 Tim. 3:16).

This Jesus did all of this for you so that you have life, and have it to the full. By Him and through Him the God of gods and Lord of lords, the Creator and Master and omnipotent Ruler of the whole universe is your heavenly Father, and you are His own dear child. You can wake up every day and say to Him, “Good morning, Dad, it’s me,” and He loves it! He absolutely loves it! Because He absolutely loves you!

So, I have a question for you: “He who did not spare His own Son, but gave Him up for us all—how will He not also, along with Him, graciously give us all things?” (Rom. 8:32).

The dictionary defines the word *concupiscence* as “powerful feelings of physical desire.” Following St. Paul’s lead, St. Augustine goes farther and defines *concupiscence* as “a misplaced love of God, a disordered desire for earthly things, which, though good, become evil when they are wrongly loved.”

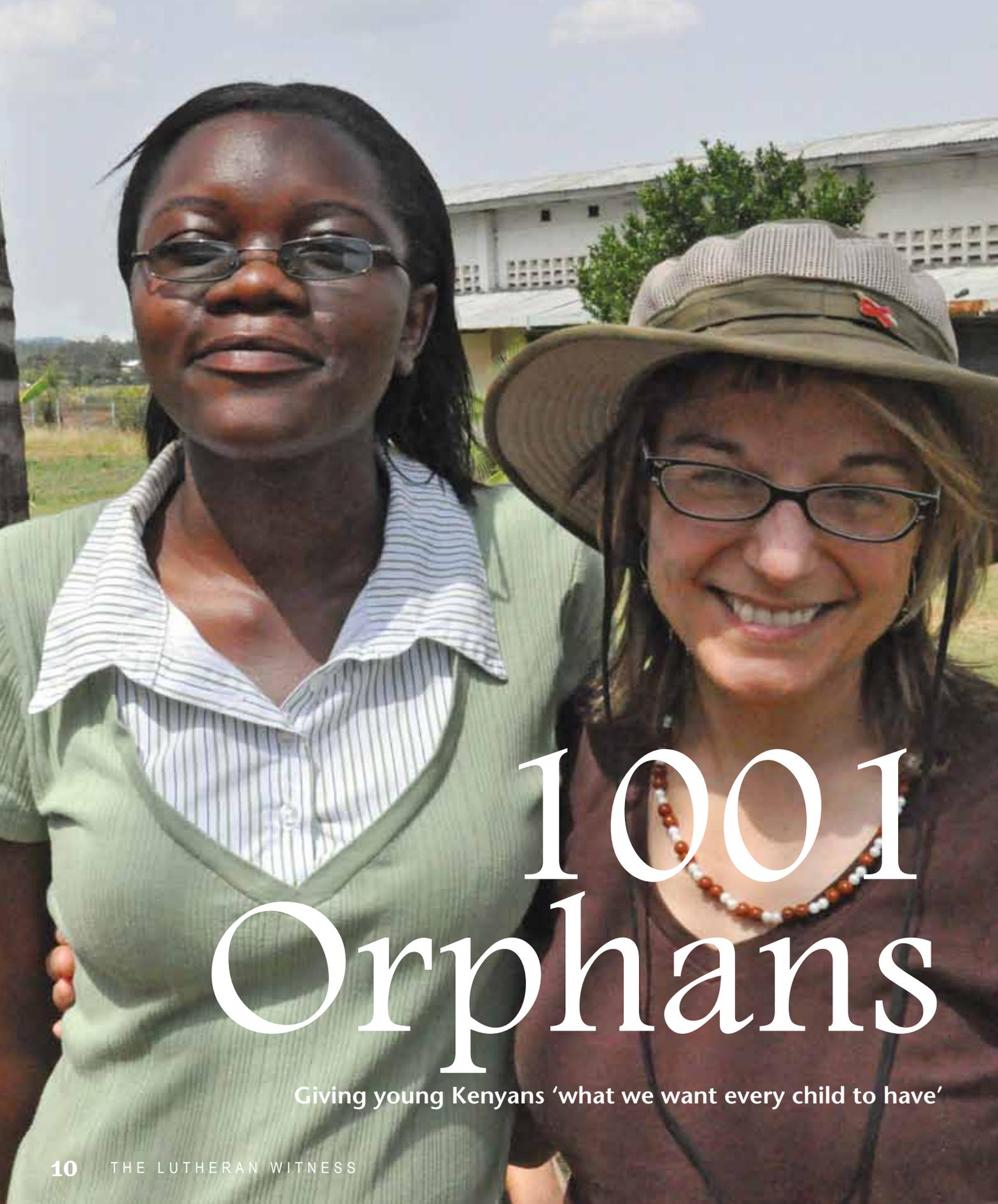
Brothers and sisters, our heavenly Father simply loves us too much to allow this to happen to us, so He gives us our deepest desires, but He does so in a way that resources our faith, our relationships, and our vocations in just the right way and at just the right time. No, we won’t get everything we want, but we *will* get everything we need.

And that is all we really need to be content, whether in times of economic uncertainty, this season of Thanksgiving, or all the days appointed for our earthly life.

Dr. William Utech (utechw@csl.edu) is associate professor of practical theology and director of resident field education at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.



This Jesus did all
of this for you,
so that you
would have life
and have it to the fullest.



1001 Orphans

Giving young Kenyans 'what we want every child to have'



LCMS World Relief and Human Care's Life and Health Ministries director Maggie Karner, right, meets Phenny Awuor Onyalo, a young Kenyan woman who was one of the first orphans assisted by the Synod's mercy arm. Photo courtesy Rev. David Chuchu.

by Kim Plummer Krull

God Loves a Cheerful [Joyous] Giver

introduction by Matthew Harrison

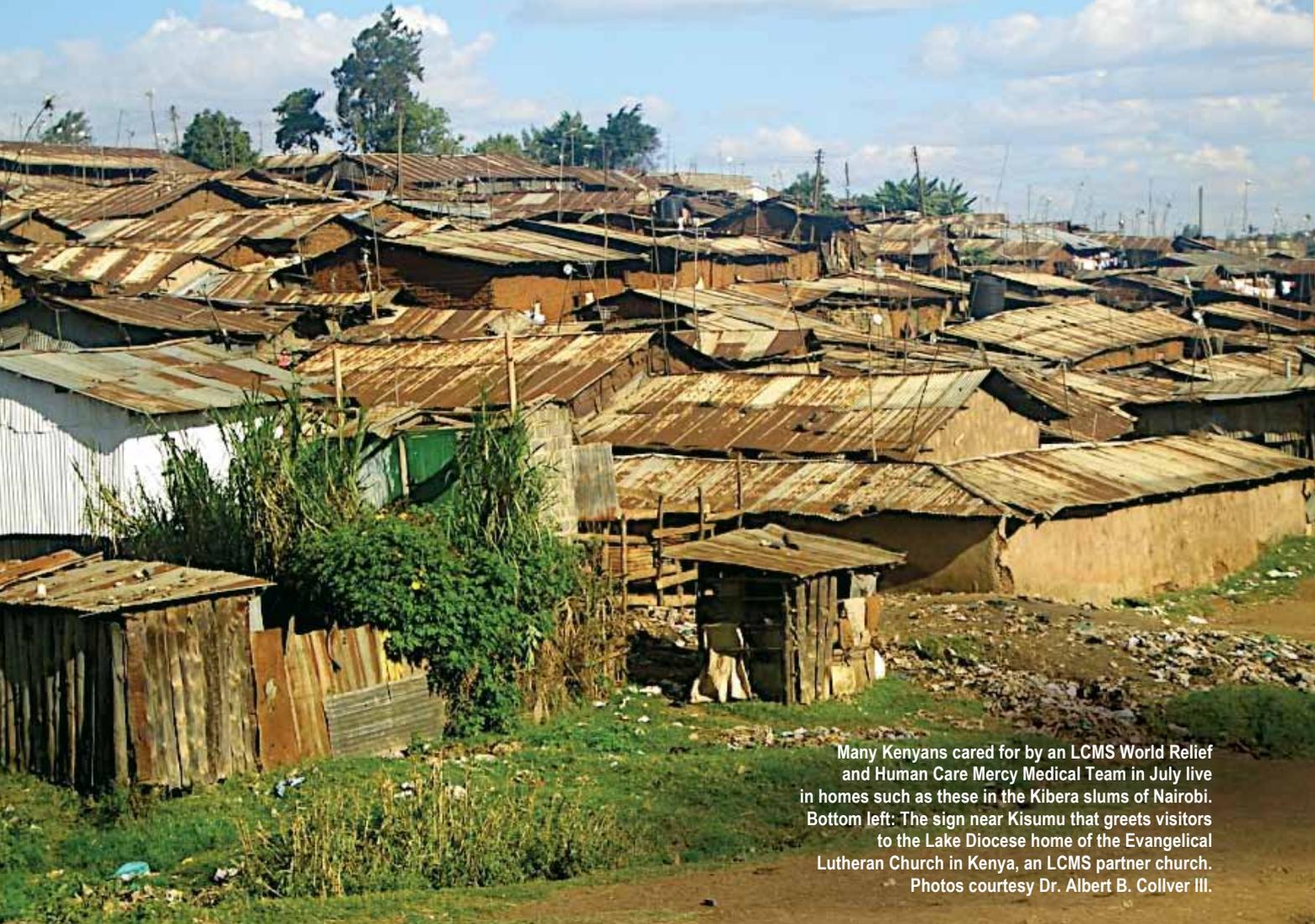
At first, the prospect of studying “joy” in the Bible presented me with no joy at all. Yet I was offered the suggestion by a dear friend in Christ. I could not put his suggestion out of my mind, try as I might. Trying to duck his joyous advice, the apostolic words reverberated ever more loudly in my mind: “Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice” (Phil. 4:4 ESV). I have run through the inspired Scriptures, shaking loose every available shred of information on topics such as cross and suffering, faith and mercy, but joy? Really? Would a serious and sober Christian really concentrate on joy? Isn’t joy merely a byproduct of faith in Jesus? Isn’t joy a subject more like the “froth on the beer” than the brew itself? Nevertheless, disarmed and hardly exuberant, I resolved to look at the Bible.

With the help of memory and concordances, I began inspecting the texts. Soon I was racing through the pages, Genesis to Revelation. It was all gift and joy over the gifts. All the while, the words of my friend bounced about my brain like a pinball. And the more texts I encountered, the longer the ball stayed in play. One part of me wished to see the happy little chrome ball slip into the pocket of despair, joy presumed, assumed, consumed, subsumed, and entombed. Game over, I could simply walk away from the table, back into the world of my less joyous, undisturbed prejudices. “So many churches, so many pastors and Christians have so little joy today,” my friend observed. “These are difficult times.”

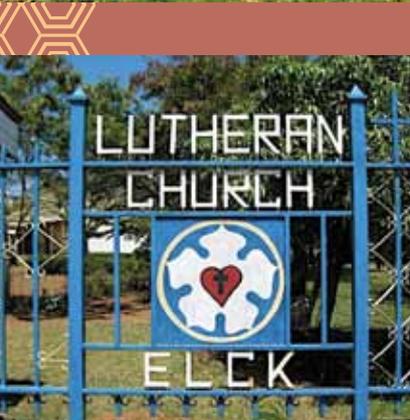
I knew he was on to something. I raced through the Psalms and found joy and rejoicing everywhere, even in the penitential Psalms. I found joy in the Old Testament, in Moses, in the prophets, in the books by Solomon. I found joy in the Gospels. I found joy on the lips of Jesus and in the lives of those whom He touched, again and again and again. I found joy on the lips of Mary and Zechariah, in the womb of Elizabeth, on the lips of angels. I found joy at the manger. I found joy at the resurrection. I found joy over life, joy in the midst of death, joy in worship. I found joy in persecution and suffering. I found Paul’s letters packed with joy and rejoicing. I found joy in references to faith and hope and love. I found joy over the simplest gifts of friends, work, family, food, children, and marriage. Stranger still to me was that, as I contemplated these texts in rapid fire, one after another, I—even I—began (dare I admit it?) to rejoice. I found myself “surprised,” encouraged, and even delighted by joy in Christ. And wonder of wonders, I found in the Bible reference after reference to the Lord’s joy over me: “More rejoicing in heaven over one sinner [a.k.a. crusty Lutheran] who repents” of his aversion to joy (Luke 15:7, 10).

Why mention joy here? “God loves a cheerful [joyful] giver” (2 Cor. 9:7). In fact, God Himself is a cheerful giver. And in Jesus, He gives us joyous, generous hearts after His own.

Rev. Matthew Harrison (<http://mercyjourney.blogspot.com>) is executive director of LCMS World Relief and Human Care.



Many Kenyans cared for by an LCMS World Relief and Human Care Mercy Medical Team in July live in homes such as these in the Kibera slums of Nairobi. Bottom left: The sign near Kisumu that greets visitors to the Lake Diocese home of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya, an LCMS partner church. Photos courtesy Dr. Albert B. Collver III.



When an LCMS World Relief and Human Care Mercy Medical Team trekked to Kenya in July, health-care volunteers treated hundreds of Africans. Many parents came to the clinics with their own children as well as orphans suffering from malnutrition and parasites. “In Kenya, you see

children everywhere, playing in piles of rotting trash, toddling through the streets,” says Maggie Karner, LCMS World Relief and Human Care (WR-HC) director of Life and Health Ministries and a Mercy Medical Team leader. “One little boy, maybe 15 months, waddled up to me and put out his arms. I looked around, and no one seemed to be with him. It’s common to see kids all alone.”

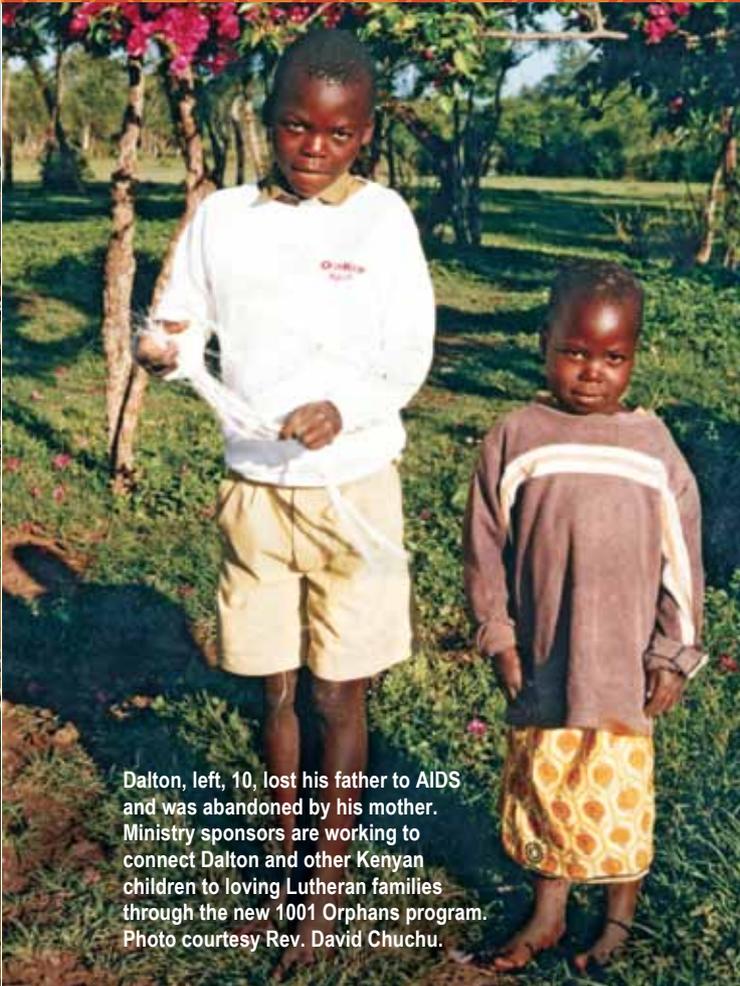
But amid these heartbreaking sights, Karner also saw hope, and yes, even joy. And one of the most dramatic examples introduced herself as Phenny Awuor Onyalo, a young Kenyan woman who, as a child, had been one of the first orphans assisted by the Synod’s mercy arm. Onyalo told Karner how WR-HC support to the

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya (ELCK) enabled her to attend a vocational school in Kisumu operated by the church.

Onyalo proudly explained that she had graduated and now works on the staff at that same Lutheran school. “You could see in her face and in her demeanor that she had a real sense of accomplishment, especially considering where she had come from,” says Karner, who was surprised and touched when the Kenyan asked for her picture to be taken and her story shared. “She wanted people to know how their support had made a difference in her life.”

Over the years, WR-HC has worked with the ELCK to sponsor orphan-support programs and build orphan-rescue centers (a more acceptable term in Kenya than orphanages). Each effort was made possible by WR-HC ministry partners and generous donors.

Now WR-HC is expanding orphan support with a new opportunity to reach out with Christ’s love to more young Kenyans—1,001, in fact. Connecting children with Christian families is the goal of “1001 Orphans,” a home-based care program developed in partnership with the ELCK (an LCMS partner church) and Concordia Lutheran Ministries (CLM), an LCMS Recognized Service Organization in Pennsylvania.



Dalton, left, 10, lost his father to AIDS and was abandoned by his mother. Ministry sponsors are working to connect Dalton and other Kenyan children to loving Lutheran families through the new 1001 Orphans program. Photo courtesy Rev. David Chuchu.

DID YOU KNOW?

Kenya

- lies across the equator, on Africa's east coast;
- covers about the same square mileage as Texas;
- has an estimated population of some 34 million;
- is the home of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya, an LCMS partner church since 2004.



Illustration by shutterstock.com
Photo courtesy Dr. Albert B. Collver III.

CLM introduced the idea for the program as a way to help the growing number of Kenyan orphans that CLM president and chief operating officer Keith Frndak calls “an absolute human crisis.”

“Children are traveling in packs and being exploited for the sake of a meal,” Frndak says. “We know from our conversations [with ELCK leaders] that the spiritual support of a Christian family and the opportunity for an education can save children from all sorts of vices, including childhood prostitution and forced marriages to older men.”

Kenya is in the throes of a three-year drought that has seriously diminished the country's food supply. Along with hunger, the AIDS pandemic has hit families hard, especially children who must fend for themselves. Some 1.4 million of the country's youngsters have lost parents to AIDS, and an estimated 8 percent of Kenyan adults are living with the HIV virus, according to Rev. David Chuchu, Diakonia Compassionate Ministry project coordinator for the ELCK.

Extreme poverty affects more than half the country, Chuchu says, and about 65 percent of Kenyans struggle to live on less than a dollar a day. “The waters have so far dried up, resulting in the disastrous death of cattle, camels, sheep,” Chuchu said in an e-mail. “This has also translated into [a] dilapidated household economy, resulting in famine, diseases, and insecurity.”

Without parents, Kenyan children face a bleak future. Most drop out of school because they cannot pay the country's mandatory tuition. Many orphans are forced into child labor or sexual exploitation.

Through 1001 Orphans, ministry partners aim to guide at-risk children into the homes of loving families and under the wing of ELCK congregations that can help youngsters become educated, responsible Christian adults. “1001 Orphans is an opportunity to reach out with mercy and give orphans what we want every child to have—a loving family and the love of Christ,” says Dr. Albert B. Collver III, LCMS WR-HC executive pastoral assistant. “It helps meet physical needs, such as hunger and education, but also provides spiritual nourishment.” (To learn how you can participate, see the “Help Change a Life” sidebar to this story.)

1001 Orphans builds on two foundations: the ELCK's commitment to human care and the Kenyan culture's devotion to family and children, a devotion so strong that many Kenyans already struggling to feed their own children take in orphans. The goal is to ease the financial burden on these Kenyan families and provide each orphan:

Family and spiritual-care support, by placing each child with a Christian family with ties to a local ELCK congregation.

Economic support, by providing money or food to supplement the already stretched-thin resources of a Kenyan family caring for an orphan.

Education support, by providing funds so each orphan can attend school.

ELCK leaders and deaconesses operate the program, which connects children in 20 parishes with ELCK families. (In Kenya, one parish includes four or five congregations.) A deaconess works with each parish and oversees the care of about 50 orphans.

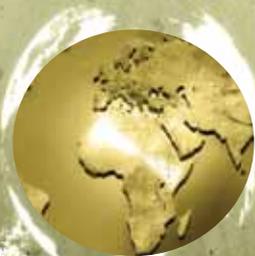
DID YOU KNOW?

Since 2006, Mercy Medical Teams have treated more than 10,000 people in some of the world's poorest communities in Kenya and other countries, in the name of Christ and under the ministry banner of a local Lutheran church.

Coordinated by LCMS World Relief and Human Care, these volunteers include doctors, nurses, pharmacists, and other clinical workers. LCMS

pastors (who serve as team chaplains) and hard-working laity also are needed. Six teams are on tap for 2010.

Learn more at www.lcms.org/mercyteams.



ELCK pastors “are so thankful for this program,” Collver says. “There are so many children who need help. This is only scratching the surface.”

The “1001 Orphans” name reflects Concordia Lutheran Ministries’ roots. The Cabot-based ministry now serves older adults, but it began as an orphanage. From 1881 through 1954, Frndak estimates CLM cared for 1,000 orphans.

CLM and ministry partners seek to reach 1,000 Kenyan children—“plus one lost sheep,” Frndak says. “We made the number 1,001 as a reminder that there’s always another person who needs care, and that the church’s work is never done.”

Looking ahead, Frndak and ministry partners hope the Kenya program is so successful they can consider expanding it into other regions of the world to help more orphans and disadvantaged children.

But even as the program begins, LCMS WR-HC executive director Rev. Matthew Harrison already has seen the difference caring Christians can make in the lives of hurting children. In 2006, he attended the dedication of a new Lutheran rescue center in Othoro, built by WR-HC donors and the ELCK. While most attention focused on the boys moving from an old mud-hut orphanage into the new facility, Harrison says he will never forget another young African.

Both of Samwel Omondi Ogutu’s parents died from complications of HIV and AIDS when he was a child. After

Most Kenyan orphans are forced to drop out of school because they have no parents to provide the required tuition and school uniform. The 1001 Orphans program covers funding for a child’s education and also connects orphans with a Christian family and spiritual care.

Photo courtesy Rev. Jamison Hardy.



Some 1.4 million of Kenya's children have lost parents to AIDS, and an estimated 8 percent of Kenyan adults are living with the HIV virus, according to Rev. David Chuchu, Diakonia Compassionate Ministry project coordinator for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya. Photo courtesy Rev. Jamison Hardy.

his grandmother could no longer provide for him and his siblings, the boy was taken in by an ELCK orphan-support program. That support helped Ogutu graduate from high school and continue his education at a university.

In a recent e-mail, Ogutu says he is now enrolled in the Advocates Training Program at the Kenya School of Law and plans to use his training to serve others through the church. He expressed his appreciation for sponsors "who didn't even know [me]," but changed his life.

Samwel Ogutu and Phenny Onyalo are just two young Kenyans who tragically lost their parents but found hope through Christ's mercy. While many programs assist orphans, Harrison urges fellow Lutherans to consider the importance of caring for children's physical needs as well as reaching out spiritually.

Says Harrison: "When we do both, that's when we can make a truly lasting difference."

Kim Plummer Krull (kimkrull@sbcglobal.net) is an editor-at-large for *The Lutheran Witness* and a member of St. Paul's Lutheran Church, Des Peres, Mo.



Your Opportunity to 'Help Change a Life'

Since Dalton's father died of AIDS and his mother abandoned him, the Kenyan boy, 10, has been making and selling rope to help his grandmother buy food.

Lillian, 13, works hard in school despite worries that her mother can barely feed her and her brothers since their father died, also of AIDS.

These young Kenyans are only two children LCMS ministry partners are working to connect with Christian families, educational support, and spiritual care through this phase of the 1001 Orphans program coordinated by LCMS World Relief and Human Care (WR-HC), supported by Concordia Lutheran Ministries (CLM), and carried out by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Kenya (ELCK).

CLM provided start-up funds for the first year of 1001 Orphans. ELCK church leaders oversee the program, connecting each orphan to a family with ties to a local Lutheran congregation.

1001 Orphans sponsorships are now available. A gift of \$400—just a bit more than \$33 a month—provides home-based care, food, education support, and spiritual care for one child for one year. Each sponsor receives a picture and information about "their" child.

In Kenya, \$400 "can make a huge difference," says Rev. Jamison Hardy, a CLM board member and pastor at Peace Lutheran Church, McMurray,

Pa., who has traveled to Africa 10 times over the years. "This is an opportunity for God's people to put their faith into action and help change a life."

To become a 1001 Orphans sponsor, send your gift to:

LCMS World Relief and Human Care
P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

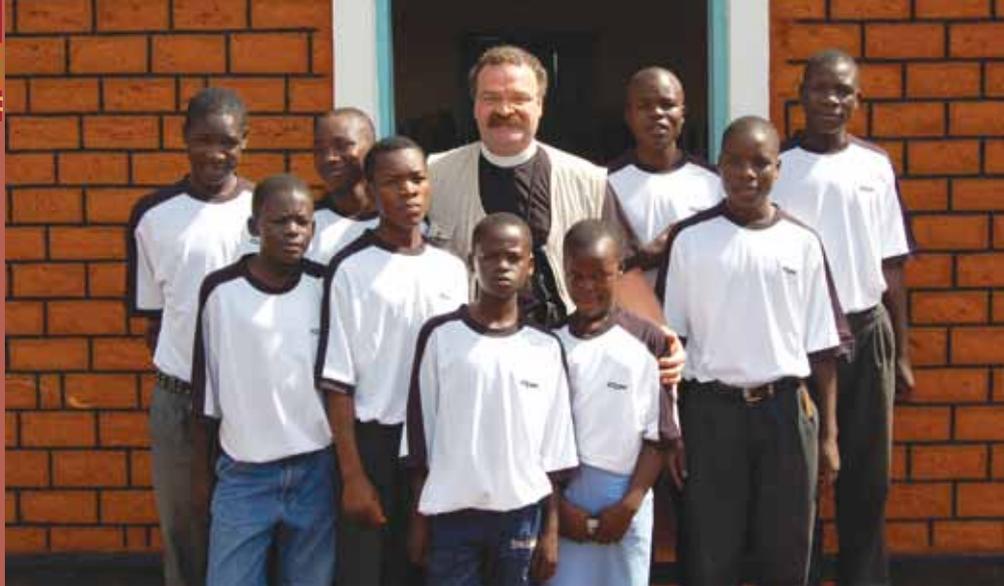
(If writing a check, designate "1001 Orphans" in the memo line.)

You also can make a credit card gift by calling toll-free 888-930-4438 or online at www.lcms.org/1001. For more information, call LCMS WR-HC toll-free at 800-248-1930, ext. 1380, or visit www.lcms.org/worldrelief.

—KPK



LCMS World Relief and Human Care executive director Rev. Matthew Harrison (center) at the 2006 dedication of a new orphan rescue center in Othoro, Kenya. Photos courtesy of LCMS World Relief and Human Care and Dr. Albert B. Collver III.



Sharing Your Blessings on WR-HC Sunday— and Beyond!

You can't invite everyone who needs a helping hand to Thanksgiving dinner, but many LCMS members and congregations joyfully share their blessings worldwide through LCMS World Relief and Human Care. One traditional opportunity is by observing LCMS WR-HC Sunday, this year on Nov. 22.

The 1001 Orphans program is only one way WR-HC strengthens local Lutheran partners and reaches out to people in need with Christ's mercy in 70 countries, including the United States. Other "body and soul" work includes:

- disaster response
- medical assistance
- food and clean-water programs
- crisis pregnancy services and other sanctity of life efforts

LCMS WR-HC receives no funds from the Synod's unrestricted operating budget and depends completely on your generous gifts. Because needs and ministry opportunities constantly change,

the most efficient, effective way you can lend a hand through the Synod's mercy arm is to designate your gift "where needed most." To make a gift:

LCMS World Relief and Human Care
P.O. Box 66861
St. Louis, MO 63166-6861

(Make checks payable to LCMS World Relief and Human Care.)

Call toll-free 888-930-4438 to make a credit card gift.

Give online at <http://givenowlcms.org>.

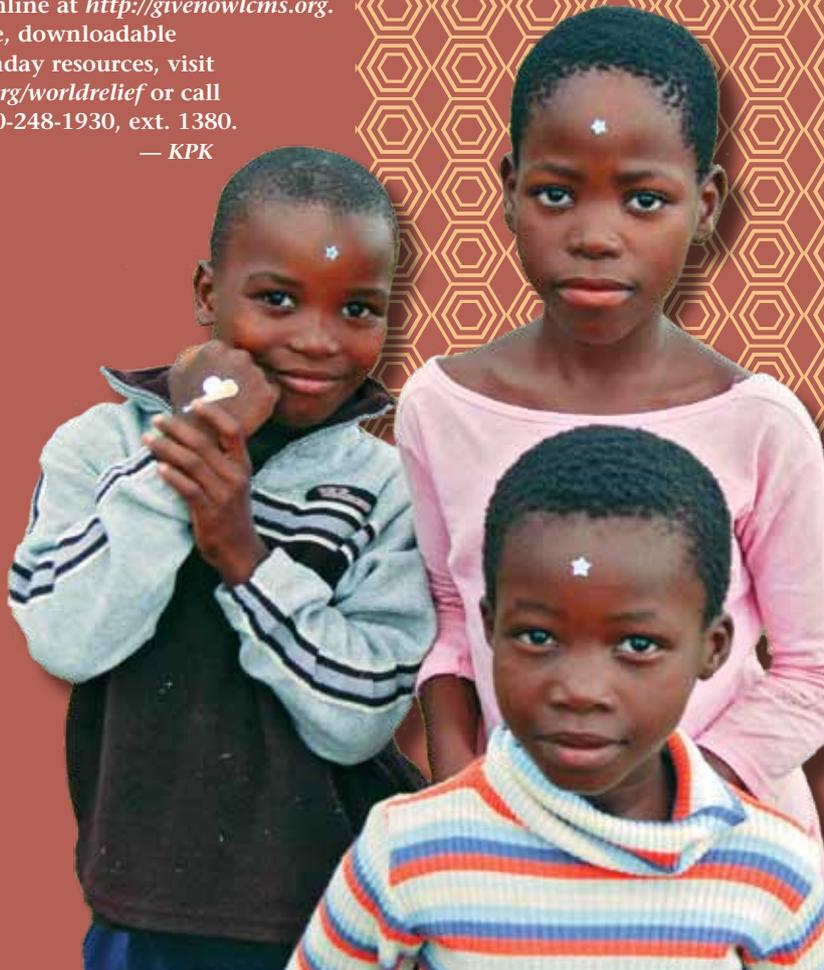
For free, downloadable WR-HC Sunday resources, visit www.lcms.org/worldrelief or call toll-free 800-248-1930, ext. 1380.

— KPK



LCMS World Relief
and **Human Care**

Mercy forever.





A New Phase for Operation Barnabas

An LCMS program to help chaplains expand its ministry to reach more National Guard, Reserve, and veterans' families.

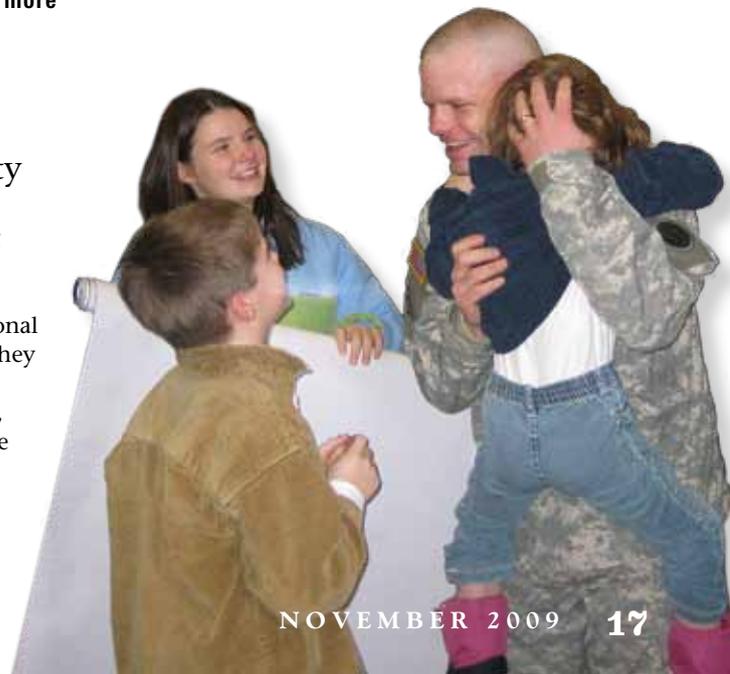
Somewhere in your congregation there's a good chance a mom struggles with sleep at night because she fears for her son's safety in Afghanistan.

Somewhere in your community it's likely there's a child feeling isolated from his friends because he lives with the fears and stresses of war every moment that his dad—or mom—is away.

No matter where you live, the families of members of the National Guard and Reserve are all around you, though you may not know they are there. And since 9/11, National Guard and Reserve members are no longer just "weekend warriors." They are in Afghanistan, in Iraq, on assignment around the world, leaving families behind to struggle with the profound impact of separation.

Above: Chaplain Alexander Knowles (center) with fellow soldiers in Afghanistan. **Right:** Chaplain Knowles and his children, Danae, 13, Alexander, 11, and Abigail, 5, celebrate his return from Afghanistan.

Photos courtesy Susan Knowles



Now, the LCMS program begun two years ago to minister to reserve chaplains—Operation Barnabas—is rolling out a second phase with an opportunity for LCMS congregations to become part of a network to minister to all reservists and veterans.

Great Potential

Susan Knowles says the Operation Barnabas network has the potential for impact for Guard, Reserve, and veterans' families like nothing else she has seen, even in the military community.

She knows because her congregation in upstate New York, St. Peter Evangelical Lutheran Church,

'During the first deployment my heart cried out for anyone to have an effective response to the needs of the military families isolated and scattered across our country. During this deployment it was my privilege to watch God create a new thing.' — Susan Knowles

Lockport, was part of the pilot program for Operation Barnabas, and she has seen firsthand the dramatic effect it has had on lives.

And she knows because her husband, Rev. Alexander Knowles, pastor of St. Peter, is also a chaplain in the New York National Guard, and she and her children have been through his two deployments, first in Iraq and last year in Afghanistan. "During the first deployment my heart cried out for anyone to have an effective response to the needs of the military families isolated and scattered across our country," Knowles says. "During this deployment it was my privilege to watch God create a new thing."

Operation Barnabas is an initiative by the Ministry to the Armed Forces, operated under the auspices of LCMS World Mission.

Heading the Operation Barnabas effort is Chaplain Mike Moreno, who worked with congregations through the first phase designed to support military chaplains. Now, he is traveling the Synod, providing workshops to equip congregations to support all reservists and veterans.

In military families, "war never leaves their consciousness," Moreno says. They wake up with it; they go to bed with it.

Moreno is an LCMS pastor who spent 10 years in parishes before active duty in the Navy. He was deployed in Iraq and taught at the Naval Chaplains School in Rhode Island. Now he is teaching congregations to use the resources they already have to minister to reservists and their families.

"Military families are actively looking for help," observes

Chaplain Mark Schreiber, director of Ministry to the Armed Forces. Their lives are on a rollercoaster, before, during, and after a deployment, he explains. "Neighbors can send care packages filled with hygiene items and snacks, but the Church has the greatest Care Package ever given, the Gospel of Christ Jesus, our Lord and Savior. We

are reaching out to our military community in the name of Jesus Christ with love, concern, forgiveness, and the certain hope of salvation. This Care Package from God is able to withstand all the strains of military life."

The net effect is more than congregations just doing what they already do. The connections to military resources in the Operation Barnabas network allow churches to make what they already do best into something with broader impact. Congregations in the network also can share resources for the deployed and their families.

"We have had a far greater impact than we expected," Knowles says. "Chaplain Moreno can give personal help in assessing the current resources and helping a congregation choose outreach that fits them and the local military community," she adds. "He can help them become knowledgeable about what does and does not help the service members and their families. Then he can help them connect in a professional manner to the local military community so the military contacts can feel comfortable referring families to the congregation."

That means, for example, if a mother of four breaks her arm while her husband is deployed, the military community can contact a congregation that belongs to the Operation Barnabas network, knowing that it has been trained, and get help to the family more quickly than if it had to search several places for help. And the congregation has an opportunity for ministry it otherwise might not have known about.

"When a service member needs help, there is often not time to go from person to person or church to church to find the resources in time," Knowles says.

Complementing Other Efforts

An important emphasis of the Operation Barnabas network is to complement, not compete with, what the military is already offering.

Houston Crum is a team leader at the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs' Buffalo Vet Center. He is experienced in helping families of those deployed.

Susan and Alexander Knowles



Military families at St. Peter Lutheran Church, Lockport, N.Y., frost Christmas cookies at a December 2008 Take-A-Break event.

Photo courtesy Susan Knowles.

“Operation Barnabas can uplift spirits, provide for social and recreational activities, and enhance a sense of belonging for those who feel alone and disconnected,” Crum says. “Most other programs are limited to information and instruction, neither of which is especially uplifting. At its best, it can reach those people who would otherwise not use the resources they need to help themselves.

“The true value of Operation Barnabas is that it allows isolated

families to be part of something. That inclusion is a wonderful antidote for feelings of abandonment,” Crum says.

And that’s what members of Knowles’ congregation established during the initial phase of Operation Barnabas. They called it Operation Enduring Comfort, and it began with a T-shirt.

Darla Bubar, the wife of an Iraqi War veteran, says, “This project began after my mom (Dianne Schultz) got the idea to make my daughter a T-shirt

with her dad’s picture on it while he did his first tour in Iraq in 2003.”

From that idea came pillowcases with deployed soldiers’ pictures on them, Comfort Buddy dolls in likenesses of deployed loved ones, and, perhaps most important, Take-A-Break events, where families gather and children can bond in supervised activities while adults can relax with others who share their experience.

“I think it is critical that our LCMS congregations understand how valuable the Operation Barnabas network is to military families if we just take the effort together to be knowledgeable and be ready,” Knowles says. “Even a congregation that does nothing more but participate in the training and agree to be part of the network can have a big impact on one family because of the connections we can make.”

A reporter and editor, Sandy Wood is a member of Chapel of the Cross Lutheran Church, St. Louis, Mo.



A ‘Greatest Generation’ Servant of Christ

The Department of Veterans Affairs tells us that of the 16.5 million World War II veterans, only around 2.8 million remain. Journalist Tom Brokaw referred to them as the “greatest generation.” LCMS Chaplain Eric Erkinen notes that one such servant of Christ is Chaplain Robert F. Rolf.



Operation Enduring Comfort

How a New York congregation helps ‘keep the home fires burning’ and serves as an example of the work of Operation Barnabas.



To Get Involved

For more information on Operation Barnabas and Chaplain Mike Moreno’s (above right) upcoming workshops, visit <http://barnabas.lcmsworldmission.org>

For more information on Operation Enduring Comfort, visit www.enduringcomfort.org. For more stories about the program’s effect on Reserve and National Guard families, visit lcms.org/witness and click on the link for this story.



'Listen to Him!'

Advent is a time to prepare for the coming of God's Son by listening to Him.

The wind whistled sharply out of the southwest. It had been a cool evening, and this wind set the young woman's nerves on edge. Or maybe it wasn't the wind at all. More likely, it was the crying. There had been a lot of commotion in the neighbor's stable last night, strange lights, muffled voices, and then the crying. A baby's cry had pierced the darkness of her room.

We do know that when the Word became flesh, He came to speak Good News of forgiveness in His name.

It was a plaintive, powerful cry for one so young, almost as if he were struggling for his voice to be heard above the noise of his birth. She had been up early and discovered that a young couple had settled in the stable for the evening because the town had been so full.

"I suppose it was the best they could find," she thought. "And none of my concern. But why can't she keep the child quiet? It must be her firstborn."

The woman had plenty of her own work. She was too busy to bother with the nighttime distraction further. Because of the tax enrollment, she had many relatives staying with her, and they required a lot of attention.

Yet, the voice of that child . . .

"It's a baby!" Her son burst through the door, his face aglow.

"A baby?" she replied. "Yes, I know. I have ears."

"But this baby is different somehow!" He had been peeking in the stable door. "He is different than any other baby I have ever seen."

"He is different, all right," the woman answered curtly. "He makes a lot of noise about his birth. Now, get to your chores." With that, she turned to her work and put the voice of the child out of her mind.



Some 20 centuries later, many people think little more of Christmas than that, a lot of noise about the birth of a child. It does get noisy in the weeks before Christmas. Much of the noise is static. It is frayed, unfocused noise that muffles the voice of Jesus. When does Wal-Mart cue up the Christmas carols, right after Halloween? The Salvation Army bell is clanging. Clerks are wishing us a politically correct "Happy Holidays." Children are chattering about this year's sensational toy. Hollywood is barking over its year-end offerings. The family is arguing about where Christmas dinner

will be consumed. And Wall Street is whining that we haven't spent enough this season. Amazingly, we are rarely cognizant of this noise. It is all in the background. We live with it, without taking stock of its spiritual toll.

There are other, less subtle, sources of noise. A few voices pipe up during Advent that directly compete with the voice of Jesus. Take, for example, well-worn Christmas card clichés: "During this season of peace, may quiet joys fill your heart." We are all for peace and quiet joys, but notice how the voice has been changed. It is no longer the voice of a Savior calling us to exclusive faith in Him. The world has turned the message of Christmas into something to which it can listen. Everyone desires peace in the world and in their lives. In this context, the message of "peace" directly opposes the voice of Jesus.

Santa's voice is jolly. He beckons us to experience the joy of giving. He speaks of laughter, of tradition, of suspense and of good little boys and girls. All these things are fun, but they are not the Savior of the world. Santa's voice is very loud. He is not just another voice. He is the voice of Christmas for the majority of listeners. The world can save its Christmas conscience by listening to him instead of Jesus. The Savior comes to speak to us, but we readily change the channel and listen to someone else.

The season of Advent is just around the corner. You know the Christmas clamor will soon begin to rise in your ears. Do you run away? Do you put your head under a pillow and not come out until after Christmas? Do you forswear all traditions and strip Christmas down to the bare minimum? These are Advent questions, rarely asked.

The word *advent* is instructive. It means "coming." God Himself is coming. Jesus is coming. The Word of God is coming. He comes with a message of Good News.

The coming of such a message anticipates preparation on our part. This is how we usually think of Advent, as a time of preparation for the coming of Jesus. Care must be taken, however, so that this preparation does not drown the voice of Jesus as we try to find things to do to make Christmas more Christmassy.

The voice of Jesus was first heard as the cry of a little baby. Later, His Father revealed Jesus to the disciples at His transfiguration with these words, "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. *Listen to Him.*" Despite the contrary voices, Jesus will not be silent. He didn't stay in the stable. His message became more articulate than the cries of a newborn. He grew up on a cross. In His death and resurrection, we most clearly hear the message of Jesus. All the other voices of the world cannot save us. He does save us by taking our sin and giving us His righteousness. His is a unique voice. There is no other message like this: "Through faith in Me you are forgiven, and you have life with God forever."

Perhaps it would be good to think of Advent less as a season of preparation and more as a season of passivity, of receiving, of listening. God is the speaker. We are the listeners. We hear what God has to say to us through the Word and the Sacraments. The tradition of adding a midweek service during the season of Advent makes sense then. It is not just another obligation, more noise. It is an opportunity to listen to Him.

Of course, no one knows how much noise the newborn baby Jesus actually made. We do know that when the Word became flesh, He came to speak Good News of forgiveness in His name. During the season of Advent we prepare for His coming as we listen to Him.

Rev. Terry Forke (forke@mtdistlcms.org) is president of the LCMS Montana District.



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. HADY Z. MURPHY, formerly of Lexington, Ky., now of Ames, Iowa, resigned from the Ministers of Religion—Ordained roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. He is, therefore, no longer eligible for a call.—Dr. Daniel P. May, President, LCMS Indiana District.

Official Notices— Colloquies

ROBBIE F. TAYLOR, Kent, Ohio; JOSEPH W. HUGHES, Springfield, Ill.; and PHILIP E. MANN, Scappoose, Ore., have completed all requirements for the Pastoral Colloquy Program through The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Dr. William R. Diekelman, Chairman, Colloquy Committee, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

JOANNA I. GELLERMANN, Renton, Wash.; MATTHEW T. DICKINSON, Traverse City, Mich.; AMY MANLEY, Fort Wayne, Ind.; LISA NEMEC, Spring, Texas; and PATTI A. MAISANO, West Covina, Calif., have submitted their applications for the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod through CUEnet. Correspondence regarding their applications should be directed within four weeks after publication of this notice to Dr. William R. Diekelman, Chairman, Colloquy Committee, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

ELIZABETH JOYNT, Yuma, Ariz., has completed all requirements of the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and is, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Dr. Becky Peters, Director Colloquy Program, Concordia University, Irvine, 1530 Concordia West, Irvine, CA 92612-3203.

JODI ANGELI, Shawano, Wis., has completed all requirements of the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and is, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Rev. Albert L. Garcia, Ph.D., Concordia University Wisconsin, 12800 N. Lake Shore Drive, Mequon, WI 53097-2418.

KAREN TATE, Louisville, Ky.; GAIL HOLZER, North Huntingdon, Pa.; JILL ERLÉNBECK, Millington, Mich.; and ANNIE BUCHANAN, Portage, Mich., have completed all requirements of the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Dennis Genig, Dean, School of Education, Concordia University, Ann Arbor, 4090 Geddes Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48105-2797.

DONI DOUGLASS, Christ Schools, Lincoln, Neb., and ALAN RUNGE, Provost, Concordia University Texas, Austin, Texas, have completed all requirements of the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Brian L. Friedrich, President and CEO, Concordia University, Seward, 800 N. Columbia Ave., Seward, NE 68434-1599.

Official Notices—Notice of Accreditation Visit

Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., seeks comments from the public in preparation for its periodic evaluation by two accrediting agencies: the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools and The Association of Theological Schools. The teams will review the institution's ongoing ability to meet the criteria for accreditation during a comprehensive evaluation visit March 15–18, 2010. The school has been accredited by the Commission since 1981 and by the Association since 1968.

The public is invited to submit comments regarding the seminary to the following addresses:

Public Comment on Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana
The Higher Learning Commission
30 N. LaSalle St., Suite 2400
Chicago, IL 60602

Public Comment on Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana
The Association of Theological Schools
10 Summit Park Drive
Pittsburgh, PA 15275

Comments must address substantive matters related to the quality of the institution or its academic programs. Comments must be in writing, signed, and cannot be treated as confidential. All comments must be received by Feb. 15, 2010.

For more information, contact Prof. Robert Roethemeyer, Self-Study Coordinator, at 260-452-2146 or at robert.roethemeyer@ctsfnv.edu.

Official Notices—Requests for Reinstatement

ROBERT D. MACINA, Denver, Colo., and DAVID H. ZIMDARS, Beloit, Wis., have applied for reinstatement to the Ministers of Religion—Ordained roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. CHERYL ALLES, Waukesha, Wis.; DONNA (CALVIN) AUER, St. Louis, Mo.; DEBRA BIRD, Canon, Ga.; HEATHER ANN LIENEMANN, Bloomington, Minn.; REBECCA ANN MCARTHUR, New Braunfels, Texas; LINDA (MUELLER) NOYD, Richmond, Texas; and GAIL ANN SCHMIDT, Asheville, N.C., have applied for reinstatement to the Ministers of Religion—Commissioned roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Correspondence regarding these applications should be directed to the undersigned for receipt no later than Dec. 5.—Dr. Raymond L. Hartwig, Secretary, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

Call for Nominations/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., Nov. 20 for the January 2010 issue). Send notices to karen.higgins@lcms.org.—Ed.

Concordia International School Shanghai, Shanghai, China, seeks to fill the position of elementary school principal. Application deadline is Nov. 30. For more information about this position, including job

description, qualifications, and application process, visit www.ciss.com.cn/employment, and then click on "Job Postings."

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

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

Concordia University, Ann Arbor, Mich., seeks to fill the following position: **Head football coach**.

Concordia University Texas, Austin, Texas, seeks to fill the following faculty positions: **Dallas/Fort Worth Regional Graduate Program coordinator for Education; Undergraduate Teacher Certification**.

Concordia University Wisconsin, Mequon, Wis., seeks to fill the following faculty positions: **Pharmaceutical and Administrative Services (two positions); Director of Graduate Counseling**.

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

Anniversaries

The Lutheran Witness welcomes notices of no more than 50 words from LCMS congregations about their upcoming "milestone" anniversaries. The deadline for receipt of such notices is the 20th of the month two months prior to the publication month (e.g., Nov. 20 for the January 2010 issue). Send notices to karen.higgins@lcms.org.—Ed.

St. Mark, Conroe, Texas, will celebrate the 50th anniversary of its present church building at the 10 a.m. special service Nov. 1. Former Pastor Herbert C. Graf, emeritus, will be the guest preacher. Helium-filled balloons will be launched and a catered barbecue will be served after the service. Contact the church office at 936-756-6335.

Zion, Norridge, Ill., will celebrate its 100th anniversary at the 3 p.m. worship service Nov. 8, with Dr. William Diekelman, LCMS first vice president, as guest preacher. The celebration will continue with a banquet. The theme is "Forever in God's Hands." Contact the church office at 708-453-3514.

Forest Oaks, Spring Hill, Fla., will celebrate its 25th anniversary on Nov. 15 with the theme "Our God, Our Help, Our Hope." A Communion service, followed by a catered dinner, is planned. Dr. Arnold Kromphardt, past president of the LCMS Eastern District, will be guest preacher. Contact the church office at 352-683-9731.

St. John, Glen Arm, Md., will celebrate its 160th anniversary with Communion worship services at 8:45 and 10:30 a.m., Nov. 15. Rev. Paul Richter will officiate. A dinner will be served at 5 p.m. at the Hillendale Country Club. The official 160th anniversary date is Nov. 19. Contact the church office at 410-592-8018.

Bethany, Ewing, N.J., will celebrate its 75th anniversary with pre-service music at 3 p.m. by children, hand-bell, and chancel choirs, and a 4 p.m. service. Bishop David Stechholz will be guest preacher. A congregational dinner will follow. Contact the church office at 609-883-2860.

Trinity, Delray Beach, Fla., will celebrate its 105th anniversary at 4 p.m., Nov. 22, with an organ concert by Dr. Kirsten Hellman, the rededication of the 1904 chapel, and the presentation of the new history book *100 Years of God's Grace*. A reception will follow. Contact the church office at 561-278-1737.

Our Savior, Indianapolis, Ind., will celebrate its 70th anniversary with a welcome reception Dec. 11, a celebration gala at 5 p.m., Dec. 12, and an 11 a.m. worship service Dec. 13. Contact the church office for reservations for the celebration gala at 317-925-3737.

St. Paul, Kankakee, Ill., will begin a year-long celebration of its 150th anniversary with a 10 a.m. service, Dec. 13. Dr. Dale A. Meyer, president of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, will be guest preacher. LCMS Northern Illinois District President Dan Gilbert will be guest preacher May 9, 2010. LCMS President Gerald B. Kieschnick will be guest preacher Dec. 12, 2010. Former pastors will preach the second Sunday of each month in 2010. Contact the church office at 815-932-0312.

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

BAUMAN, HERMAN EDWARD; Oct. 31, 1926, Elberta, Ala., to June 14, 2009, Elberta, Ala.; son of Rudolph and Frieda (Herrmann) Bauman; graduated Springfield, 1952. Served 1952–1983. Ministries/parishes: Abilene, Schulenburg, Hallettsville, Texas; Alva, Okla.; Hermitage, Tenn.; Illmo, Mo.; Fairhope, Ala.; retired 1983. Survivors: Gertrude (John) Bauman; sons: Christian, Seth, Rudi; daughter: Priscilla. Funeral and interment: June 17, 2009, Elberta, Ala.

BISCHOFF, WILLIAM H.; June 28, 1932, Floral Park, N.Y., to June 10, 2009, Bridgeton, Mo.; son of William and Henrietta Bischoff; graduated St. Louis, 1957. Served 1957–1962, 1975–1997. Ministries/parishes: Sebring, Fla.; Elmhurst, N.Y.; Bridgeton, Mo.; retired 1997. Survivors: L. Joyce (Ellerbrock) Bischoff; son: Mark; daughter: Linda Wittmaier. Funeral: June 15, 2009, Bridgeton, Mo.; interment: June 15, 2009, St. Louis County, Mo.

FREED, JOHN WILBURN; June 5, 1926, Hickory, N.C., to July 26, 2009, Sykesville, Md.; son of Rev. Frederick and Ilah (Hunsucker) Freed; graduated St. Louis, 1951. Served 1951–1982, 1982–2002. Ministries/parishes: U.S. Air Force Military Chaplain; Crestview, Fla.; Florala, Ala.; Hopewell, Va.; Baltimore, Md.; retired 2008. Survivors: Anna (Zins) Freed; son: Jason; daughter: Kathryn. Memorial service: Aug. 2, 2009, Eldersburg, Md.; cremation.

GLAMMEYER, THOMAS H.; Nov. 11, 1929, Centralia, Ill., to July 10, 2009, Houston, Texas; son of William and Emma (Koenig) Glammeyer; graduated Springfield, 1955. Served 1955–2009. Ministries/parishes: Mobile, Ala.; Pittsburg, Pa.; Youngstown, Ohio; Houston, Texas. Preceded in death by his daughter, Deborah Balgeman. Survivors: Martha (Tangman) Glammeyer; son: Timothy; daughters: Diane Muhoburac, Rachel Puccio. Funeral and interment: July 13, 2009, Houston, Texas.

GORRELL, LARRY N.; Feb. 11, 1933, Iola, Kan., to July 24, 2009, Hemet, Calif.; son of Walter and Grace (Orcuit) Gorrell; graduated Springfield, 1971. Served 1971–1998. Ministries/parishes: Hemet, Glendora, Calif.; Southern California District circuit counselor: 1966–1992; retired 1998. Survivors: Frances (Schock) Gorrell; son: Matthew; daughters: Rebecca Rawlings, Kerry Moreland. Funeral: July 30, 2009, Hemet, Calif.; interment: July 30, 2009, Soboba Hot Springs, Calif.

HAASE, DONALD R.; Nov. 11, 1946, Newton, N.C., to Aug. 13, 2009, Carmel, Ind.; son of Rev. Roland and Marie Haase; graduated St. Louis, 1972. Served 1972–2001, 2004–2009. Ministries/parishes: Inglewood, Calif.; Cushing, Okla.; Tucson, Ariz.; Carmel, Ind. Survivors: Joan (Marchhausen) Haase; daughters: Julie, Lara Sales, Alisa Duffey. Memorial service: Aug. 16, 2009, Carmel, Ind.; cremation.

HEISERMAN, HARLAN JAMES; Jan. 6, 1955, Manchester, Iowa, to June 11, 2009, Lillian, Ala.; son of Erwin and Dorothy (Fischer) Heiserman; graduated Fort Wayne, 1983. Served 1983–2009. Ministries/parishes: Crestview, Titusville, Fla.; Cullman, Lillian, Ala.; Columbia, Tenn. Survivors: Elizabeth (Suters) Heiserman; sons: Joel, Jason. Memorial services: June 22, 2009, Lillian, Ala.; July 11, 2009, Manchester, Iowa; interment: July 11, 2009, Manchester, Iowa.

JOHNSON, JOHN FREDERICK JR.; Aug. 18, 1922, Niles, Mich., to July 18, 2009, St. Petersburg, Fla.; son of John and Helen (Libbert) Johnson; gradu-

A Second Judgment?



At death I believe that Christians, while absent from the body, are present with the Lord (2 Cor. 5:8). At death unbelievers are forever lost. So judgment came at death. So how can there be any judgment at Christ's second coming (Matt. 25:31-46; 2 Cor. 5:10)?

For all human beings, physical death—which is the penalty for sin (Rom. 6:23)—is “the point of no return,” “life’s last portal” (*LSB* 797). The opportunity for repentance and faith comes to an end. As the writer to the Hebrews puts

it: “It is appointed for man to die once, and after that comes judgment” (Heb. 9:27 ESV).

Those who die believing in Jesus Christ as their Savior will receive the gift of eternal life. To the believers in Smyrna the apostle John wrote: “Be faithful unto death, and I will give you the crown of life” (Rev 2:10). At the moment of death, believers can be certain they will be “with Christ” (Phil. 1:23) as they await the resurrection. No such promise is given to those who remain in unbelief until they die. Rather, we hear the sobering words of Jesus: “Whoever

does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God” (John 3:18; see 3:36). “When the wicked dies, his hope will perish,” says Proverbs (11:7). Although the New Testament does not use precisely this language, physical death for each individual sets in concrete God’s judgment regarding that person’s eternal destiny.

But the formal, public pronouncement of God’s verdict and sentence will take place in the final judgment when Jesus returns. “He is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead,” the apostle Peter declared in Caesarea (Acts 10:42). On that final day, following the resurrection of the dead, all people must appear before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10). To those who have believed in Him—having produced by the Spirit the good works that follow faith—Jesus will say, “Come, you who are blessed by My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matt. 25:34). To those who have not believed in Christ and His Gospel (thus failing to do works that please God; cf. Rom. 4:22–23), the Righteous Judge will speak the frightening words, “Depart from Me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels” (Matt. 25:41). The door has been forever shut (Matt. 25:10).

The Bible’s breathtaking promise that “He who raised the Lord Jesus will raise us also with Jesus and bring us . . . into His presence” (2 Cor. 4:14) brings hope and peace to Christians who face death.



NOTICES

ated Springfield, 1946. Served 1946–1986. Ministries/parishes: Horicon, Fond du Lac, Milwaukee, Wis.; Springfield, Ill.; Frankenmuth, Mich.; St. Petersburg, Fla.; retired 1986. Survivors: Catherine (Koopman) Johnson; sons: John, Gary; daughters: Janelle Lang, Carlene Sippola. Memorial service: July 25, 2009, St. Petersburg, Fla.; cremation.

KLATTENHOFF, WILBUR HENRY; Feb. 9, 1919, Joplin, Mo., to June 9, 2009, Albuquerque, N.M.; son of George and Ella (Hoener) Klattenhoff; graduated St. Louis, 1944. Served 1944–1984. Ministries/parishes: Greenleaf, Kan.; Alamosa, Colo.; Carlsbad, Albuquerque, N.M.; Rocky Mountain District circuit counselor 1985–1988; retired 1984. Preceded in death by his wife, Alma (Meyr) Klattenhoff. Survivors: daughters: Carol Mullen, Susan Weber, Linda Parmeter, Nancy Lacher, Kathy DeLucas. Funeral and interment: June 12, 2009, Albuquerque, N.M.

MUELLER, DONALD H.; July 5, 1942, Glencoe, Minn., to Aug. 2, 2009, Vestal, N.Y.; son of Herman and Nelda (Graupman) Mueller; graduated St. Louis, 1968. Served 1968–1971, 1981–1984, 1986–2002. Ministries/parishes: Vassar, Kan.; Liberia, Africa; Vestal, N.Y.; retired 2002. Survivors: Ruth (Feddor) Mueller; son: Niklaus; daughter: Nan Mueller. Funeral and interment: Aug. 7, 2009, Vestal, N.Y.

PAYNE, CARLTON EDWARD III; Oct. 12, 1963, Royal Oak, Mich., to Aug. 15, 2009, McHenry, Ill.; son of Carlton Jr. and Barbara (Hatcher) Payne; graduated Fort Wayne, 1989. Served 1989–2009. Ministry/

parish: Lake Zurich, Ill. Survivors: Megan (Nelson) Payne; sons: Carlton IV, Miles, Mitchell. Funeral: Aug. 20, 2009, Hawthorn Woods, Ill.

PEPOON, JOHN MARK; Oct. 13, 1927, Huntingdon, Pa., to July 21, 2009, Lewisville, Texas; son of Rev. Charles and Margery (Mills) Pepon; graduated Springfield, 1961. Served 1961–1992. Ministries/parishes: Plant City, Bartow, Fla.; Tucker, Ga.; Granbury, Texas; retired 1992. Survivors: Lidia (Tertel) Pepon; son: Jonathan; daughters: Vivian Cronk, Miriam Cronin, Jeanette Hill. Memorial service: July 23, 2009, Carrollton, Texas; interment: July 23, 2009, Dallas, Texas.

PETERSEN, LORMAN MILTON; Dec. 1, 1915, Avon, S.D., to July 11, 2009, Appleton, Wis.; son of Jedokes and Florence (Perrett) Petersen; graduated St. Louis, 1940. Served 1942–1983. Ministries/parishes: Perkin, Peoria, Springfield, Ill.; Appleton, Wis.; Central Illinois Board of Directors: 1948–1949; retired 1983. Preceded in death by his wife, Adele (Nommensen) Petersen. Survivors: son: David; daughters: Karen Johanson, Janet Hugger, Joyce Mol. Funeral and interment: July 15, 2009, Appleton, Wis.

PLITT, CARVEL VERNON; Feb. 20, 1924, Baltimore, Md., to May 29, 2009, Willits, Calif.; son of Carl and Gertrude (Ege) Plitt; graduated Springfield, 1952. Served 1952–1954, 1968–1972, 1981–1991. Ministries/parishes: Del Rio, Texas; Tonasket, Republic, Oroville, Wash.; Chester, Greenville, Ukiah, Calif.; retired 1991. Survivors: Ethel (Novak) Plitt; son:

Peter; daughters: Glori, Joy. Memorial service: June 19, 2009, Laytonville, Calif.

POTRATZ, KENNETH JOHN; May 29, 1934, Shawano, Wis., to July 24, 2009, Menomonee Falls, Wis.; son of Rev. John and Ida (Jossi) Potratz; colloquy 1967. Served 1968–1999. Ministries/parishes: Sussex, Wauwatosa, Wis.; retired 1999. Survivors: Eleanore (Arndt) Potratz; sons: Timothy, John, Thomas. Memorial service: July 30, 2009, Brookfield, Wis.; cremation.

SCHOLZ, HARRY GUSTAV; Oct. 2, 1921, Berlin, Germany, to July 9, 2009, Portland, Ore.; son of Hermann and Margareta (Bachmann) Scholz; graduated Springfield, 1956. Served 1956–1988. Ministries/parishes: William Penn, Texas; Thermopolis, Wyo.; Orange, Calif.; Pleasant Hill, Portland, Ore.; Seattle, Wash.; retired 1988. Preceded in death by his son, Steven. Survivors: Hildagard (Paustian) Scholz; son: Ronald; daughter: Pamela Humpart. Funeral: July 16, 2009, Sherwood, Ore.; cremation.

STOLL, HENRY LOUIS; March 20, 1928, Memphis, Tenn., to July 6, 2009, Jonesboro, Ark.; son of Alfred and Laura (Jones) Stoll; graduated Springfield, 1963. Served 1963–1991. Ministries/parishes: McGregor, Creston, Schaller, Iowa; Hooper, Neb.; West Memphis, Ark.; Memphis, Tenn.; retired 1991. Preceded in death by his sons, Alfred and Grant. Survivors: Ruth (McGee) Stoll; sons: Paul, Mark. Memorial service and interment: July 9, 2009, Paragould, Ark.

(continued on page 27)

True Repentance



As a sunflower turns its face to the sun for light and growth, so we, when we repent, turn from our sinful selves and *turn* to the face of God enfleshed in Jesus.

Every once in a while I hear our pastor say how we all sin much daily. What does he mean? What does it mean to repent of our sin?

I commend you for posing a question that, I suspect, many worshipping Christians ask themselves but feel hesitant about asking their pastor. To say “I sin daily” does not mean God does not love you or that you have no possibility of life with Him. Rather, it is to be honest with God and with yourself about your need for the forgiveness and life God offers by grace through Jesus Christ. People sometimes restrict the word *sin* to mean only wrong *behaviors*—words or actions that are morally and socially unacceptable, reprehensible, and destructive to self or others. Thus, one might say, “I am a moral person, I treat others well, and I live a decent life,” and by those standards believes he (or she) does not sin. Such is not the case.

Scripture teaches that we cannot *not* sin, that our natural human condition, apart from God’s grace and the faith He creates, is a life separate from and hostile to God. In this state, we pursue only self-preservation, self-gratification, and self-exaltation. In his vivid words, Martin Luther described it as having a heart “curved in on itself.” As such, we are unable to live in complete obedience to God’s command to love Him with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength, and to love our neighbors as ourselves. The Holy Spirit, working through that holy but unattainable expectation, brings us to cry, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us” (1 John 1:8 ESV). This is being honest about the reality of our condition, and leads to repentance.

In Scripture, the word *repent* means to “turn.” As a sunflower turns its face to the sun for light and growth, so we, when we repent, *turn* from our sinful selves and turn to the face of God enfleshed in Jesus. We no longer perceive ourselves as self-sufficient, but as being in desperate need of the sufficiency of Christ’s sacrifice on the cross. And God hears and answers our cry: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). The bad news is that we do sin daily. The good news is that God forgives freely!

Dr. William B. Knippa is pastor of Bethany Lutheran Church, Austin, Texas, and a licensed psychologist.



Send your questions to Family Counselor, *The Lutheran Witness*, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295. Please include your name and address.

LETTERS

(continued from page 5)

reflected once again on how easy it is to have too narrow a focus even as “we” are highlighting our broadness.

Here’s a case in point from each article:

First, while demonstrating the diversity of new mission congregations, the language employed dealt primarily with starting *a new church*. I know that such usage is commonplace, but I believe it makes “us” lose sight of the continuity and catholicity of *the Church*, throughout the ages and throughout the world, which we state as *belief* in the creeds. I find equally troubling referring to congregations that *worship* “as many as 600 on Sunday,” because that service-sector shorthand cuts God out of

the picture as the *object* of worship—grammatically at least. How we *speak* reflects our understanding of identity and purpose.

Second, wouldn’t focusing on one or two congressional representatives have been enough instead of four? Missed was the opportunity to acknowledge someone like Art Simon, a rostered LCMS clergyman who has lobbied Congress for 35 years on behalf of the neediest and hungriest of our nation and world. As the founding president and president emeritus of Bread for the World, Simon is a fine example of one whose faith not only informs his work but also propels him to cross denominational, political, and national lines.

Let’s keep our focus as steady and wide as the net our Lord throws out!

Rev. Joel R. Kurz
Warrensburg, Mo.

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. Please include your name, postal address, and telephone number. Letters without this information cannot be considered for publication.

Practical Advice

On starting out on a gloomy day: First, realize that it is the day that is gloomy, not you. If you want to be gloomy, too, that's your business, but it's not mandatory.

George Kottwitz
Trinity Lutheran Church
Edwardsville, Ill.

Poor Pastor?

In 1969, I was serving Trinity Lutheran Church in Alice, Texas. As a mother and her 5-year-old daughter left church one Sunday morning, I overheard the little girl say to her mother, "Poor Pastor! He has to wear the same dress every Sunday."

Rev. Richard Thur
Trinity Lutheran Church, Louisiana, Mo.
Good Shepherd Lutheran Church,
Bowling Green, Mo.

Just When You Thought You Heard It All

My 5-year-old son, William, loves to quote the Bible verses he learns at school. Also, he always, always wants his own way, no matter what. One day he came home after school and announced that he wanted a snack. "No," I replied, "not until after dinner."

"But Ma," he countered, "God said, 'Be kind to one another,' and when kids say please, you're supposed to let them have their way. So please, you have to do what God says and let me have a snack."



I give thanks for the turkey, dressing, and sweet potatoes, but to be honest, I'm struggling with the green beans.

"God also said, When your mother tells you no, you have to listen," I replied, "and no means no."

William paused, deep in thought, it seemed. Then he said brightly, "But I didn't hear God say anything."

I couldn't help but smile. Yes, William got his snack—and some further instruction on Scripture.

Lisa Young
Mount Calvary Lutheran School and Church
Milwaukee, Wis.

NOTICES

(continued from page 25)

WAGNER, CHARLES EDWARD; Oct. 6, 1939, Knoxville, Tenn., to May 29, 2009, Birmingham, Ala.; son of Victor and Catherine Wagner; graduated St. Louis, 1965. Served 1966–1981, 2004–2009. Ministries/parishes: Wickenburg, Ariz.; Highland, Calif.; Birmingham, Ala. Survivors: son: Vernon. Funeral and interment: June 3, 2009, Birmingham, Ala.

WAGNER, OSWALD FREDERICK; Dec. 3, 1919, Terril, Iowa, to July 4, 2009, Portland, Ore.; son of Rev. Hans and Emilie (Kliwer) Wagner; graduated St. Louis, 1944. Served 1944–1984. Ministries/parishes: Hobson, Great Falls, Harlowton, Hardin, St. Xavier, Bozeman, Mont.; Salem, Portland, Ore.; Montana District circuit counselor: 1950–1959; retired 1984. Survivors: Dorothy (Klepatz) Wagner; son: Mark; daughters: Linda Schmoltd, Gretchen Rist, Christa. Funeral: July 17, 2009, Portland, Ore.; cremation.

VOLMER, ALFRED FRANK; June 22, 1920, Draper, S.D., to April 14, 2009, Sacramento, Calif.; son of Frank and Mary (Rubin) Volmer; graduated Springfield, 1946. Served 1946–1983. Ministries/parishes: Waco, Neb.; Willows, Fresno, Rancho Cordova, Los Gatos, Calif.; retired 1983. Preceded in death by his wife, Thelma (Stoltz) Volmer, and his son, Richard. Survivors: sons: David, Phillip, Steven. Memorial ser-

vice: May 2, 2009, Fair Oaks, Calif.; interment: April 17, 2009, Los Gatos, Calif.

COMMISSIONED

EVANS, EVELYN LOUISE (GRIESSE); June 2, 1946, Kearney, Neb., to July 26, 2009, Bay City, Mich.; daughter of Richard and Eleanor (Bell) Griesse; graduated Seward, 1968. Served 1987–2008. School/ministry: Bay City, Mich.; retired 2008. Survivors: Richard Evans; son: Matthew; daughters: Sarah Prahler, Annette. Funeral: July 31, 2009, Bay City, Mich.; cremation.

MEYER, GERHARDT VICTOR; April 11, 1926, Elk Creek, Neb., to Aug. 10, 2009, St. Paul, Minn.; son of Martin and Elsie (Klipp) Meyer; graduated Seward, 1947. Served 1947–1993. Schools/ministries: Atchison, Kan.; Omaha, Neb.; Ponca City, Okla.; Minneapolis, St. Paul, Minn.; retired 1993. Survivors: Loma (Meyerhoff) Meyer; son: Martin; daughter: Miriam Heinert. Funeral: Aug. 13, 2009, St. Paul, Minn.

OLBETER, CARLA LYNN; Sept. 20, 1957, New Kensington, Pa., to Feb. 26, 2009, Lower Burrell, Pa.; daughter of Herbert and Rosann (Uncapher) Olbeter; graduated River Forest, 1992. Served 1992–1998. Schools/ministries: Cincinnati, Ohio; retired 1998. Funeral: March 2, 2009, New Kensington, Pa.; inter-

ment: March 2, 2009, Lower Burrell, Pa.

THEMER, HUGO DAVID; Aug. 3, 1930, Kankakee, Ill., to April 28, 2009, Columbus, Ind.; son of Hugo and Violet (Bedeker) Themer; graduated River Forest, 1951. Served 1952–1992. Ministries/parishes: Louisville, Ky.; retired 1992. Survivors: Judy (Probst) Themer; son: David; daughters: Susie, Linda. Memorial service: May 2, 2009, Waymansville, Ind.; cremation.

We Are Where You Are...
KFUO
AM RADIO
Proclaiming the Truth
of Jesus Christ
to the world
AM 850 - St. Louis | WWW.KFUOAM.ORG



Maranatha! Our Lord, Come!

Advent celebrates three comings of our Lord: *historical, mystical, and final*. The hymn, “Once He Came in Blessing” (LSB 333), opens a way for us to ponder these:

*Once He came in blessing,
All our sins redressing;
Came in likeness lowly,
Son of God most holy;
Bore the cross to save us;
Hope and freedom gave us.*

Read Luke 4:16–21. What was our Lord’s custom on the Sabbath?

If our Lord so honored the reading and hearing of the Word, what implications does that have for our lives?

What book does our Lord read from, and what do the prophet’s words promise? When does the Lord teach these promises will be fulfilled?

How were the cross and the resurrection the greatest fulfillment of this promise?

From Bethlehem to Calvary, we see that Christ came to bring *blessing*. His entire earthly pilgrimage was lived as the fulfillment of the promise given to Abram (Gen. 12:1–3): By His historical coming, Christ our Lord has brought blessing to every family of the earth.

If you have a *Lutheran Service Book* available, read or sing stanza 2 of LSB 333. Then read John 6:35–59 and answer the following: What does Jesus call Himself? What does this mean?

Why did Jesus come down from heaven? (vv. 38–40)? Why did the Jews grumble at Him calling Himself “bread from heaven”?

Who has eternal life (v. 47), and what is the bread that Jesus gives for the life of the world?

What promise does He make to whoever eats His flesh and drinks His blood?

Every time we receive the Lord Jesus in His Word, in Baptism, in Absolution, in the Supper, we receive *life*: the living bread from heaven! Christ’s mystical coming brings the peace of sins forgiven and the promise of deliverance from death, and helps us look forward with joy to His final coming.

Now read or sing stanza 3 of LSB 333. Then read Luke 21:25–33 and answer the following: How does our Lord describe the events surrounding His final coming?

What is the reaction on the part of most people to the collapse of their world? What will everyone see on that day?

What is the different reaction of Christ’s holy people when these events begin to occur? Why? How can you be prepared for that day so it will be joy for you?

What sure thing can we hold onto when everything is falling apart?

Christians look forward with joy to the glorious appearing of the Savior in His final coming. His appearing will bring about the end of all sin, all sorrow, and death’s ultimate destruction. As we await our final deliverance, we pray for grace to confess the good news of the Savior’s blessings and to confess to others boldly the joy of both His historical and His mystical comings:

*Come, then, O Lord Jesus,
From our sins release us.
Keep our hearts believing,
That we, grace receiving,
Ever may confess You
Till in heaven we bless You.*

LSB 333:4

Rev. William Weedon (weedon.blogspot.com)
is pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church,
Hamel, Ill.





Orphans, Widows and Giving Thanks

‘Through Christ, God has adopted us into His family. This is the greatest reason of all for us to give Him thanks “at all times and in all places”’

Giving thanks is not just for Thanksgiving. As we say in our Communion liturgy, “It is truly good, right, and salutary that we should *at all times and in all places* give thanks to You, holy Lord, almighty Father, everlasting God, through Jesus Christ our Lord”

And yet, I think it’s a good and godly thing that we celebrate Thanksgiving Day every year to focus our attention on giving thanks and to remind ourselves and others of the manifold blessings showered upon us by our gracious and loving Father in heaven.

Speaking of blessings, just off the top of my head, I think of faith, forgiveness, freedom, home, health, happiness, life, love, and livelihood. I thank God also for our wonderful church body and for its congregations, where the Gospel is proclaimed, the Sacraments are administered, and faith is nurtured.

The topics addressed by two of the articles in this issue of *The Lutheran Witness* remind me, too, that life can be challenging and that our gratitude for God’s blessings motivates us as Christians to reach out in loving care to others. The articles of which I speak are those addressing care for orphans in Kenya and for American servicemen and women and their families.

Orphans, of course, face a multitude of challenges, beginning with safety, security, and the provision of basic needs for sustaining life. Sadly, there are many orphans—especially in Third World countries—who go without those basic needs. One estimate I’ve seen says that there may be as many as 35 million *homeless* orphans worldwide.

So, thank God for the care provided by individuals and ministries who take seriously these words of James: “Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress” (James 1:27a).

We thank the Lord also for our Synod’s Ministry to the Armed Forces and particularly for Operation Barnabas, which aims to help military families.

Operation Barnabas was developed out of a need to support chaplains, congregations, and individuals before, during, and after active duty and deployment. One of its initiatives is to help congregations whose pastors are called up for active duty as chaplains. A second is to help military families during deployment, especially those who live far from services provided by the military. This can include ministering to families who suffer the death of a loved one in service to our country.

Orphans and widows (and widowers) are not only overseas or in military families, of course. My dear wife, Terry, and I have our own family experience of adopting our son more than 30 years ago. We know firsthand the joys, challenges, and blessings of providing a Christ-filled home for a small child who lived his first two years without those blessings. Also, like many of you, my mother has been without my father for quite some time. For 26 years now, I’ve seen some of the challenges of life that she and other widows experience, particularly including loneliness, especially during nights, weekends, and holidays. As Christian people, we have many opportunities to reach out in love and concern to those with these and other special needs.

Many LCMS congregations take seriously such needs and other circumstances of those who have lost spouses. And through Lutheran social service agencies, orphans are cared for and connected with adoptive parents. For example, the Web site of Lutheran Services in America—members include agencies related to the LCMS, to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, or to both church bodies—lists 171 locations throughout the United States that offer adoption services.

In fact, we all are adopted—adopted children of God. Paul writes, “But when the time had fully come, God sent His Son, born of a woman, born under Law, to redeem those under Law, that we might receive the full rights of [adoption as] sons” (Gal. 4:4–5).

Through Christ, God has adopted us into His family. This is the greatest reason of all for us to give Him thanks “at all times and in all places” and to be mindful of orphans, widows, and all who are in need of any kind. A blessed Thanksgiving to each of you!

Jerry Kieschnick
John 3:16–17

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