



# THE LUTHERAN WITNESS™

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## New Life, New Hope, New Challenges

April is more than the month in which we Americans file our income-tax returns.

For me, April is a reminder of the importance certain people play, and have played, in my life.

This is because April is the month that my dear wife, my mother, my daughter, and my mother-in-law—all the women close to me except for my granddaughter—celebrate their birthdays.

Think about the people who are important in your life. These are the people who have helped mold you and shape your values. Without them, you would not be who you are today. They are gifts of God, and I encourage you to give thanks to Him for them.

April also marks the beginning of spring.

As this column is prepared, it's cold and gray outside. When I drove recently from St. Louis to Fort Wayne, which is farther north, the weather was dreary and misty, and the landscape seemed to have no color at all.

In April, though, we can look forward to the grass turning green again, and in St. Louis at least, to dogwood trees, azaleas, and tulips bursting into a colorful display of God's ongoing providence. The combination of springtime sights, sounds, and smells in God's creation reminds us of new life and new hope.

This leads me to thoughts of the new opportunities we have in this period of our Synod's history to bring new life and new hope in Jesus Christ to those around and among us who are without Christ in their lives. I think of our culture and society, which increasingly disregard, or give no thought to, God as He reveals Himself in Holy Scripture.

How do we come to grips with the changing cultural landscape in America?

When our Synod was founded 160 years ago and for generations since then, we have defined

ourselves as a confessional, orthodox, Lutheran, Christian church body over against other Christian church bodies—those that do not teach fully in accord with Scripture, and Scripture alone.

I thank God that The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod remains a confessional, orthodox, Lutheran, Christian church body. In this time of our history we face the challenge of defining ourselves not only in relation to heterodox Christian church bodies but also over against new challenges to the Christian faith from *outside* Christendom—for example, from Islam, Mormonism, even the so-called “New Atheism”—that are indifferent to or deny the Gospel and even are hostile to biblical Christianity.

We are moved by the Gospel to proclaim the Good News about Jesus boldly and intentionally in the face of a culture that today opposes the faith—not for the sake of an institution, but because God loves all people and would have them to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth (1 Tim. 2:4). It is through us, His people, that God brings the Gospel of salvation in Christ alone to a lost world (2 Cor. 5:18–21).

May God grant us hearts that long for the salvation of people in our society so that we do what it takes to reach them with the Good News that God loves them and through the merits of Jesus Christ offers them the free gift of eternal life!

We are moved by the Gospel to proclaim the Good News about Jesus boldly and intentionally in the face of a culture that today is indifferent to and even opposes the faith....

Jerry Kieschnick  
John 3:16–17

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## TO THE READER

Rural America—a mission field. The white-painted clapboard church along a quiet county road—a mission outpost. A small-town congregation—an out-reach center.

If those descriptions surprise you, you're not alone. Many of us retain a Norman Rockwell-like image of small-town America as a bulwark of wholesome values and the Christian faith, in our case, the Lutheran Christian faith. While in some communities that remains a correct impression, it's also true, as Dr. Ralph Geisler and others point out in our cover story, "Revitalizing Rural Churches," that

today in many rural areas, as many as half our neighbors may have no regular church home. So just as in communities far away, or in large metropolitan centers, the fields of rural America are ripe for harvest, and not just wheat, rye, or oats, or corn and soybeans, but souls.

As the interim director of the Saint Paul Institute for Education, Geisler and his colleagues help rural congregations see the opportunities around them and reach out to their friends and neighbors with the Good News of Jesus. While the challenges of small-town congregations are many—declining rural populations, aging members, the drift of

young members to suburban America (where the jobs and career opportunities are)—nevertheless, there remain many Spirit-given opportunities to share the Gospel, to grow, and to be ablaze with the desire to share the faith with which we have been blessed.

In this season of renewal and new life, may the Holy Spirit guide us to see and embrace the opportunities He gives us to share the great Good News of eternal life that Jesus, our Lord and Savior, has won for us by His death and resurrection.

*James H. Heine, Managing Editor  
The Lutheran Witness*

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# In My Savior's Healing Hands

Among the oncologists treating my bone-marrow cancer, I am considered a relic, an artifact, something suitable for a museum. Because in May 2007, I celebrated 15 years of God-given life, they fight over me to claim credit for my longevity. But the real truth is that my Lord has been good to me, just as He was good to King Hezekiah (see Isaiah 38).

In May 1992, I was given 18–24 months to live. Hearing this, I put myself entirely in my Savior's hands and turned to Him for comfort and healing. It could not have been a wiser choice, as I explained on this page in March 1999.

Once I got my second wind from all the cancer therapies, I felt as though my Savior had plans for me—especially witnessing opportunities, it seemed. So my constant prayer to the Holy Spirit was that He'd give me the right words at the right time and to be alert when He provided opportunities.

Recently in an oncology waiting room, I noticed a young man sitting by himself. He appeared quite ill. Although the room was crowded, no one chose to sit next to him, so I did. His name was Jim, and he wanted to talk, even though it was difficult for him. His wife was with the oncologist, getting his meds for their trip home to visit his family one final time. (It was also where he wanted to be buried.) Jim was at peace because he knew he'd be with his Savior. I put my hand on his thin arm and said, "Jim, I'm going to pray for travel mercies for you and your wife, and that our Lord will bless and keep you in His arms forever." His eyes lit up, he reached for my hand, and he said, "And I'll pray for you, too, Shay." It was the best and only gift he could give me, and he knew it.

In 2002, Roland, my husband, and I began a Christian cancer support group at Redeemer Lutheran Church in Englewood, Fla. At times, we had only one attendee. Sometimes our group comprised as many as

10 or 12. At each meeting, there would be a devotion, discussion, prayers, and opportunities for each person to learn from others. To Roland and me, it was the ultimate opportunity for witnessing for our Lord. Truly, the group gave us more than we could ever give back. We know there are many support groups out there, but often our healing Savior is not a topic for discussion.

Sadly, two years ago my cancer returned with a vengeance. Because of this, Roland and I moved to Ocala, Fla., to be near our daughter and son-in-law. We have become members of St. John in Ocala and have been welcomed into our new church home. During a recent Sunday worship, we sang verses 3 and 4 from

Hymn 856, "O Christ, Who Called the Twelve," in the *Lutheran Service Book*. The lyrics brought tears to my eyes, not only because they're so beautiful, but also because they remind me of the assurance we have in our Savior—and the assurance that in sickness or in health, we can witness daily to our faith and to the blessing of eternal life we have all received.

O Christ, who led the Twelve  
Among the desolate  
And broke as bread of life for all  
Your love compassionate:  
Lead us along the ways  
Where hope has nearly died  
And help us climb the lonely hills  
Where love is crucified.

O Christ, who sent the Twelve  
On roads they'd never trod  
To serve, to suffer, teach,  
    proclaim  
The nearer reign of God:  
Send us on ways where faith  
Transcends timidity,  
Where love informs and  
    hope sustains  
Both life and ministry.



In sickness or in health, we  
can witness daily to our faith  
and to the blessing of eternal  
life we have all received.

Shay Southwick Thurow is a member of St. John Lutheran Church, Ocala, Fla. She is the author of the Lifeline feature "Thy Will Be Done" in the March 1999 issue of *The Lutheran Witness*.



# LETTERS

## Be reconciled

The article on restoring broken relationships (February) is wonderful and timely. Every Lutheran, and every Lutheran congregation, should use this to help reconciliation. We all have those we struggle with in our walk together. Thank you, Ted and Eric.

However, I am a bit concerned regarding how the Lord's Supper was talked about, and how Matt. 5:23–24 plays into it. One should never think that the Lord's Supper is something we earn. I don't believe

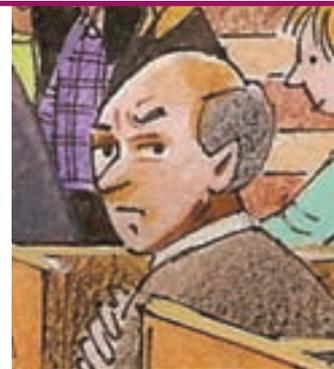
## A blessing, but is something missing?

It was so refreshing and stimulating to read "The Little Church That Could" in the February 2008 *Lutheran Witness*. The article gave me a thrill.

May Living Water Community Church continue to be a blessing to many more!

By the way, many articles written by Paula Schlueter Ross have impressed me.

*Lois Schumacher  
Fort Wayne, Ind.*



The article on restoring broken relationships is wonderful and timely. Every Lutheran, and every Lutheran congregation, should use this to help reconciliation. We all have those we struggle with in our walk together.

*Rev. Howard Gleason  
St. John Lutheran Church  
Burlington, Ill.*

that coming to offer our gift at the altar has anything to do with taking the Lord's Supper. Communion is a gift from God to us, not the other way around.

Yes, confession and reconciliation are extremely important for unity in the Body of Christ. But more often than not, a person may know in their heart that they need to go and reconcile with someone. They know it is what God wants and calls us to do. But that person cannot yet do it. It is at that point a person should come and take the gift of our Lord's Body and Blood for forgiveness, strength, and the resolve to go and reconcile.

Thank you, *Lutheran Witness*, for providing us with such a wonderful periodical.

*Rev. Howard Gleason  
St. John Lutheran Church  
Burlington, Ill.*

I very much enjoyed "The Missionary Who Never Left Home" by Rev. John T. Pless. Before I read this excellent article, all I knew about Wilhelm Loehe was his name. I especially appreciated Loehe's understanding of the "Divine Service as the place where the Heavenly Bridegroom meets His Bride." Such beautiful imagery.

No less edifying was Loehe's assertion that "the missional church [is] a liturgical church."

Little wonder, then, that reading "Sharing Your Faith: The Little Church That Could" in light of the Pless article so horrified me. A mission congregation of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod named Living Water Community Church? What faith is being shared? Community faith? What is that? To paraphrase Bill Cosby: I know what I think of when I hear "community church."

In my town there is a community church known informally, and not particularly respectfully, as "the yellow box church." One of their selling points, for lack of a better term, is their coffee shop, where, presumably, a barista serves up the modern-day sacramental meal of espresso and scones.

When I hear "Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod" I know it is the place where the forgiveness of sins is available to me, a poor, miserable sinner, and my Heavenly Bridegroom will come to me in His holy Word and His very Body and Blood. A place where God's Word is sung and prayed in the liturgy, as it has been for centuries, with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven, an unbroken thread across time and place. At least this is my fervent hope and prayer, that the LCMS will continue to be that church.

*Elaine Gavin  
Naperville, Ill.*

## Be concerned for the truth

The reply in the February 2008 Q&A concerning who should receive the privilege of church rites promotes a "Gospel only—no Law," attitude toward the local congregation's relationship to the world, and in so doing promotes a ministry that contradicts God's desire for true worship.

Focusing on funeral services, Note 1 of the *Lutheran Service Book* order states the following: "The funeral service is intended for the burial of those who departed this life in the Christian faith." The Collect of the Day begins, "O God of grace and mercy, we give thanks for Your loving-kindness shown to [name] and to all Your servants who, having finished their course in faith, now rest from their labors."

When the church buries people, we are saying, within the limits of human knowledge, that the departed was a believer in Christ and their soul now rests with Christ. To conduct public funeral services for people outside the congregation about whose

faith we have little or no knowledge is to fail to speak the truth.

Denying the bereaved a Christian burial for their departed loved one is to speak the Law in a very difficult way. But the alternative is to make our truth meaningless and so reject God's ordained way of worship. The Gospel cannot be heard until the Law does its work; we cannot love the world unless we are willing to tell the world the truth.

The decisions concerning for whom we should do funerals, conduct weddings, and baptize are certainly difficult and often gray, but without a concern for the truth, the church in the end will have nothing to offer the world.

*Rev. David Warner  
Trinity and St. John  
Lutheran Churches  
Sidney and Fairview, Mont.*

*(Continued on Page 26)*



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# Revitalizing Rural Churches



Sometimes we discover the most striking information in our own backyards.

At a conference last fall, Dana Spry, a member of Trinity Lutheran Church in Appleton, Minn., heard that, on average, half the people in rural communities across the country are unchurched. So he tested the information. Spry contacted all the churches in Appleton, a community of 2,800 about 150 miles west of Minneapolis, and tabulated their worship attendance. He discovered that only a third of Appleton's residents attended church on any given Sunday.

"There is an age-old attitude that this is Minnesota, where everybody goes to church," says Trinity's pastor, Rev. Tim Renstrom. "The truth is different than that: The truth is that at least half the people we see have no church connection."

In Missouri, Rev. Timothy Brown describes a meeting of pastors from rural and small-town congregations. The topic of conversation: Often, small-town churches see themselves as having little value, especially when attention seems focused exclusively on the activities of suburban megachurches with thousands of members.

Brown, now serving his fourth small-town congregation during his 19-year career, recalls such a "down" attitude when he came to St. John in Beaufort nearly seven years ago. "Every time a family left, it was 'we're going downhill.' It was kind of in the air. No one said anything, but you knew," he recalls.

The experiences in congregations such as Trinity and St. John are reminders of the potential for mission and ministry in rural and small-town congregations. A statistical study of 24 "heartland districts" of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod found that 60 percent of LCMS congregations are in communities of less than 15,000. The information was gathered from the 2008 *Lutheran Annual* by the Saint Paul Institute for Education (SPIFE) in Concordia, Mo.

"The primary challenge is change and transition," explains Dr. Ralph Geisler, SPIFE interim director. Geisler presents the rural ministry leadership-training program SPIFE offers at its learning center at Saint Paul Lutheran High School in Concordia, where the institute has its headquarters. He also takes the program "on the road" throughout the heartland.

The program for rural and small-town congregations is divided into modules that can be presented separately or as part of a complete cycle.

"The challenge is more the restoration of a positive attitude," observes Geisler. "We are all created by God and someone for whom our Savior died. Regardless of where we live, we are valued, and the ministry of every congregation, however limited, is to be treasured."

Geisler developed the modules with Rev. Keith Christiansen, then SPIFE executive director, after conducting "listening posts" in 2001 with leaders from five heartland districts.

Geisler believes self-esteem issues can be strong inhibitors in rural or small-town congregations, especially when congregations fall into a survival mode of thinking. Congregations need to validate their role of ministry in their communities, he says. The SPIFE workshops strive to shift attitudes from survival and maintenance to mission-outpost thinking.

"If you consider that half your neighbors may have no regular church home, then your hometown may be just as much a mission field as a community half a world away," Geisler says.

The SPIFE modules also focus on relationships, especially nurturing





Rev. Tim Renstrom, pastor of Trinity Lutheran Church, Appleton, Minn.

open communication in congregations and towns where families are often very connected. Other modules focus on stabilizing pastoral and lay leadership and on service.

Renstrom concurs: "Often, in small towns, we associate families with a particular church home. What we discover is that, while Grandpa and Grandma may have attended the Methodist church, or the Baptist church, or another congregation in town, the kids haven't set foot inside a church in 20 years, and the grandchildren have no church affiliation whatsoever."

"That's something that is very hard for people to grasp," Geisler says.

While demographic studies can make that point, Geisler also asks his workshop participants if they have brothers, sisters, or family members who don't attend church regularly. "It's pretty eye-opening when they all say 'yes,' and we ask, 'How do we work with that?'" he observes.

Renstrom says Trinity has taken a while to recognize its unchurched community. Witnessing workshops and mission trips have helped members become more comfortable sharing their faith. "It's easier to practice where nobody knows us and then come back here and try to do it," he says.

In addition to Renstrom and Spry, Trinity member Dennis Munsterman also attended the SPIFE conference on rural and small-town ministry last fall. "So it's two people, not just the pastor, saying these kinds of things," he says. "God is putting these pieces together to slowly, but firmly, move us to be an inviting congregation where people will gladly come to hear and learn God's Word."

Sometimes, Renstrom admits, he would like to see things move faster. Then, he says, he prays, "Lord forgive me my sins, especially when I have tried to move Your people when they're not ready, and I have been cross when You, Yourself, are moving them."

At such times, Renstrom adds, we also need to remember that, ultimately, it is the Holy Spirit who brings people to faith in Jesus Christ.

In Missouri, Brown says his congregation is beginning to understand that it is a vital part of Christ's mission in its community and a vital part of the larger church.

"I don't like to see people leave, but it's the people here who are important," he adds. "We developed an attitude that the church is not here for me; we're here for each other. This is not a place to feel bad; it's a place where you will feel good."



Brown says St. John emphasizes that people have a daily opportunity to witness to the ongoing love of Jesus Christ and to tell of what God has done for them. "You balance inreach and outreach. If you're only serving yourselves, you're falling short.

"It's not a one-man show," Brown continues. "It takes everybody, and we have worked at it. We understand we are working for the good of the church, the good of the members. A pastor can destroy a congregation, but a pastor cannot build up a congregation by himself; it takes people. We strive to plant the seed, and we pray that the Holy Spirit will use our work to make that seed grow in the hearts of our friends and neighbors, and our community."

**Roland Lovstad is a free-lance writer and a member of Immanuel Lutheran Church in Perryville, Mo.**



## On the Web: A District President Looks at Rural Challenges

Regardless of whether rural communities are growing or declining, there is an increase in the number of unchurched or uncommitted people, observes Rev. Russell Sommerfeld, president of the Synod's Nebraska District.

"The challenge is connecting with many of these people," says Sommerfeld (at computer), pictured here with Minnesota South and Missouri District presidents Lane Seitz (back) and Raymond Mirly. While young residents may move to larger cities, other families move into small communities where they are not related to anyone. Frequently, both husband and wife commute to jobs in larger communities, so congregations have to engage these families on evenings and weekends, Sommerfeld says.

For an expanded look at Sommerfeld's observations, as well as a snapshot of the *Saint Paul Institute for Education*, visit [www.lcms.org/witness](http://www.lcms.org/witness) and click on *Web-exclusive Stories*.

Photo by Joe Isenhower, Jr./Board for Communication Services



At St. John Lutheran Church, Beaufort, Mo., students gather at the foot of a cross (not pictured) to hear the Easter story during St. John's 2007 Vacation Bible School. Rev. Timothy Brown, pastor of St. John, says the congregation actively promotes its VBS as a way of reaching out to the community and usually draws half its VBS attendance from beyond the congregation.

Beaufort photo courtesy St. John Lutheran Church, Beaufort, Mo.



# Making 'Saints'



Bordered by farmland in rural Concordia, Mo., Saint Paul Lutheran High School is both intimate and surprisingly international. This year, the Synod's only boarding high school is celebrating 125 years of 'providing Christ-centered experiences in learning, for living.'

It was a shock to Sarah Gifford when her 16-year-old brother, "C.J.," who was attending school 170 miles away, called her at home to wish her a happy 13th birthday. Typical siblings, Sarah and C.J. often fought, teased, and ignored each other at home in Ellisville, Mo.

So it was even more shocking, she says, when he added, "I love you."

But that's the interesting thing about living away from home, Sarah notes: Relationships with parents and siblings become "so much closer."

"I really think it brings families together," says Sarah, now a 17-year-old junior at that same school, Saint Paul Lutheran High School in Concordia, Mo.

That sentiment is shared by Rev. Paul Mehl, executive director of Saint Paul, the only residential high school of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

"Your relationship with your parents becomes closer" when you're living away from home, Mehl says, and when "you *do* go home, it's awesome."

Mehl, himself a “Saint”—as Saint Paul students, graduates, and sports teams are known—grew up in Concordia while his father, Dr. Lambert Mehl, served as president of the school from 1954 to 1971. Paul Mehl met his wife, Luci, as a student there, and three of the couple’s children also are Saints. The fourth, a sixth-grader, will be in a few years.

The two older Mehl children attended Saint Paul while their father was serving a parish in Arkansas, so Mehl and his wife have experienced the parent-child separation firsthand.

In the “old days,” Mehl says, Lutheran parents considered a Saint Paul boarding-school education as a “gift” to their children. But today’s parents are hesitant to be apart from their teenagers, so the school is seeing fewer American teens on its college-style campus.

And in Mehl’s eyes that’s a shame, since he believes the school does a great job of preparing its students for any number of vocations, as Christians in service to the world.

Indeed, that’s the reason Saint Paul was established by the Synod’s German forefathers in 1883 as a preparatory school. In addition to its primary focus of educating men as future pastors and teachers, the school’s first administrators promised to “give due prominence to the studies calculated to serve a person in the various stations of life outside the ministry.”

Since its founding, Saint Paul has “put over 1,000 pastors and almost as many teachers into the ministry,” Mehl says, and, even today, is probably the Synod’s biggest “feeder” high school for professional church workers.

Over the years, the school has evolved—from a four-year “pro-gymnasium” (high school) for men, to a six-year gymnasium (four-year high school and two-year college) for men and women, to its present-day operation as a co-ed high school with 183 students in Grades 9 through 12.

The face of the once-German student body has changed dramatically—nearly half of this year’s students are from countries other than the United States: Korea, Norway, Taiwan, Guatemala, Hong Kong, Japan, South Africa, and Vietnam.

“I think that is God opening a door for us, saying ‘Let’s do something different now,’” Mehl says.

Most international students come to Saint Paul through private referral and partnerships with churches and schools in Korea, Norway, and Taiwan. Others are looking for a quality American education in a safe area for the right price, and Saint Paul fits the bill.

Twenty-five students from a public school in Norway are spending their junior year as Saints. Four of them, working on precalculus homework in the library, admitted that Saint Paul is stricter than their Norwegian school, but said their experience is “definitely” a good one. What





Since its founding, Saint Paul has 'put over 1,000 pastors and almost as many teachers into the ministry.'

—Rev. Paul Mehl  
Executive Director  
Saint Paul Lutheran High School

do they like best? "The people"—students, teachers, and staff alike.

That's no surprise to Gloria Burrow, a 1982 Saint Paul grad who now serves as the school's director of recruitment. "This is family," she says, and "a Christ-filled campus."

The 50-acre campus features an imposing statue of St. Paul and 10 buildings, including the original two-story frame house that served as both a professor's home and a classroom for the college's first class of three students.

A multiyear capital-funding campaign, now in its second phase, has a current goal of raising \$2.55 million, which will be used, in part, to remodel Kaepfel Hall as a worship, performing arts, and conference center.

At \$11,300 per year for tuition and room-and-board for domestic students, the high school is priced below the \$32,000-per-year average U.S. prep-school cost, and it is a great bargain, notes Mehl. Local students who don't board pay \$7,150, which includes weekday lunches. Several sources of financial aid are available, and administrators say they will do everything in their power to assist potential students and their families with costs.

Saint Paul offers more than 80 college-prep courses, and students who qualify may take up to 20 hours of college credit. Extracurricular activities include baseball, basketball, football, soccer, track, and an award-winning math team.

Principal Bill Lemmons says the typical student is "excited, eager, and ready to be challenged," and the school rarely has to ask students to leave because of behavior problems.

All faculty members and administrators are LCMS trained and most worship at the local LCMS congrega-

tion, St. Paul's Lutheran Church, just two blocks from campus, so Lutheran values are "woven through the fabric of who we are," says Lemmons.

St. Paul's pastor, Lee Hagan, calls the high school "unique" because its students come from the Concordia area, a dozen states, and eight countries.

"When we see the growing diversity in our nation, what a blessing to have a school that is sharing the love of Christ with students from across the globe," says Hagan, noting that many of those international students will one day return to their home countries, perhaps with a newfound Christian faith.

One such student is Ngan Thi Kim "Monica" Nguyen, a 17-year-old senior from Vietnam whose family found Saint Paul through an Internet search. Monica, who was baptized March 2, says her Christian faith makes her "feel safe."

While she hasn't yet settled on a career choice, Monica says she wants to "save the world" and "do something big." Right now, she's considering teaching and has applied to Concordia University Chicago for the fall term.



'When we see the growing diversity in our nation, what a blessing to have a school that is sharing the love of Christ with students from across the globe.'

—Rev. Lee Hagan  
St. Paul's Lutheran Church  
Concordia, Mo.

"Every child who comes through here is changed in some amazing ways," acknowledges Burrow. After all, Saint Paul's mission, she says, is to "embrace, equip, and empower" students "to fulfill that ministry that God has planned for them."

**Paula Schlueter Ross is a contributing editor for *The Lutheran Witness* and a staff writer for the Board for Communication Services. For more information about Saint Paul Lutheran High School, visit its Web site at [www.splhs.org](http://www.splhs.org) or call (660) 463-2238, ext. 231.**



# What's So Great about Saint Paul?



We asked current students to tell us what they like about Saint Paul Lutheran High School. Here are their responses:

Sophomore **Louisa Mehl**, 16, a fourth-generation member of her family to attend Saint Paul, said she knows she will be prepared for college—and life—as a result of attending the boarding school.

“You have a better understanding of how it’s going to be when you’re older because you’re not with your parents all the time,” Louisa says. “You aren’t all on your own, but you learn how to live—do your laundry, make sure you get out of bed and eat breakfast, make sure you sign up for the Wal-Mart trip if you run out of shampoo.”

Louisa, a “missionary kid,” spent most of her life in Russia. Her father, Rev. John Mehl, is regional director for Asia with LCMS World Mission. Saint Paul executive director Paul Mehl is her uncle.

Senior **Esther Johnson**, 17, a Liberian from South Africa, says she likes “everything about” Saint Paul. “Mostly I like how it’s so diverse,” she explains.

Esther says she will tell her 6-year-old sister to “definitely come here. . . . I’ll tell her that this is where she can truly meet God. If she wants a strong spiritual base, this is where she can get it.”

Sophomore **Jordan Bredehoeft**, 15, a lifelong Lutheran from nearby Blackburn, Mo., says he likes the diversity of the school, which gives students an opportunity “to learn about different people” and “meet new people.”

Jordan says he and his classmates “learn a lot more” than their public-school counterparts. “I just think the classes are harder; they push you more at Saint Paul.”

Senior **Sung Hyun “Paul” Joo**, 18, from Seoul, Korea, says there are “more opportunities to get involved

in extracurricular activities” at Saint Paul than at a typical large public school. Paul, who will be a premed student at Johns Hopkins University next fall, is student-body president, a member of the National Honor Society, captain of the soccer team, and a member of the math team.

“When I first came here, I thought to myself, ‘I’m never going to go to a real good college from this school.’

“But as I got more involved in school activities, I figured out that it’s not just about Christian education, but it’s about preparing [for] your life *after* high school.”

(For a family look at Saint Paul, click on *Web-exclusive Stories* at the link below.)

—P.S.R.

to read more, go to [www.lcms.org/witness](http://www.lcms.org/witness)



# Seeing what

The shadow of a telephone pole.  
A reflection in a puddle.  
Airplane contrails crisscrossed in the sky.  
Images that are part of everyday life—  
often not even noticed at all.

But through the lens of his digital camera, Walter “Walt” Timm sees much more. The Jefferson City, Mo., resident sees the cross of Jesus. He’s taken thousands of photographs to share that image with others—if they care to see it.

For many years, Walt’s friend, Will, didn’t want to see the cross at all. He didn’t want to hear about it, either. Walt didn’t push the issue—but neither did he let it rest.

## A ‘Spirit-Bred, Lord-Led’ Friendship

Walt met Will in February 2003. As executive director of the Heit’s Point Lutheran Camp in Lincoln, Mo., Walt was greeting participants arriving at a weekend retreat for recovering alcoholics when Will appeared.

“It was clear he didn’t want to be there,” Walt recalls. “Even though the camp’s no-smoking policy was posted everywhere, Will walked in the door with a cigarette hanging out of his mouth.” The receptionist quickly reminded Will about the policy.

“The smile on his face was all I needed to see,” Walt remembers. “I could sense the rule being his ticket home. I reacted impulsively, spouting off something about the policy being waived for this particular weekend.”

Will reluctantly stayed for the retreat.

Surprisingly, Walt’s intervention at the reception desk was the beginning of what he calls a “Spirit-bred, Lord-led friendship.” Walt learned that Will was divorced, estranged from his sister and his children, and had few friends. He also learned that Will was alienated from God.

That summer, Will asked if he could help the camp staff by doing odd jobs such as mowing grass and repairing equipment. His skilled hands and outstanding work ethic were quickly noticed and appreciated. Often, Walt would join him. And while they worked, they talked, joked, and argued.

“Will was very intelligent, with a great sense of humor, but he always had to be right or have the last word,” Walt says. It was one reason Walt found it difficult to talk to Will about his faith.

“Trying to witness to Will was like speaking to him in a foreign language. He heard the words but none of it made any sense,” Walt says. “And if things didn’t make sense to Will, they didn’t make sense—period!”

# God wants us to see



The summer and the friendship were progressing nicely when Walt fell while horsing around with young campers and camp counselors. His back seriously injured, he was unable to work the rest of the summer. It could have been the end of the story.

"I went home to heal, but Will hung around camp and finished out the summer," Walt says. "I couldn't do much driving, but he'd travel 90 minutes to visit me. And his e-mails or phone calls always came at just the right time."

## Focusing on the Cross

Despite three surgeries and months of physical therapy, Walt's injury forced him to retire. With his physical activities limited, he expanded his interest in photography, focusing mostly on architectural crosses on church buildings.

"Pretty soon I'd taken a picture of just about every cross in town, along every road that I normally traveled—even some of the back roads," Walt says.

Then one day he saw something unexpected. "There were two boards coming together at a fence post, but I saw a cross," Walt says. "From then on, no more 'simple' crosses. Now the pictures I wanted to take were found in the beauty of God's creation."

With his new focus, Walt realized how much he wanted Will to "see" the cross. He kept talking—early in their friendship Will dubbed him "Preacher Man"—and kept trying. They played a lot of cards, drank a lot of coffee, and had a lot of conversations. Often, on Wednesday nights, they'd meet at one of the local hangouts in Sedalia, Mo., halfway between their respective homes. They would drink nothing stronger than ginger ale and sing Karaoke.

"Before Christmas, I gave Will an inspirational book and a CD with some worship songs," Walt says. "He acted like he didn't want the stuff, but in the end he took it with him."

## The Phone Call

In early January, Will called to

talk. It was just an ordinary conversation between friends until Will, in his matter-of-fact way, asked for a favor.

"He asked me if I'd do him a service," Walt explains. "I asked him, 'You mean a favor, right?' 'No,' Will said. 'I mean a service.' There was a long pause before he said anything else. By then I believed I knew what he meant: a funeral service."

Will told Walt that he had been diagnosed with inoperable cancer. That his oncologist said he had no more than six months to live. That he wanted Walt, his closest friend, to speak at his memorial service.

"I remember wondering what you could really say in that situation if you don't know where the person is at with his faith," Walt observes.

A few days later, Walt's copy of *The Lutheran Witness* arrived in the mail, a special issue focusing on witnessing to those who don't know Jesus.

"There it was, right there on the cover: 'Sharing Your Faith,'" Walt says. "That image and the articles inside motivated me to keep talk-



ing to Will. It also provided me with something for Will to read.”

## Beyond Small Talk

When he arrived at Will’s house, magazine in hand, Walt was shocked by his friend’s appearance.

“Will looked terrible, like he had less than *six days* to live,” Walt recalls. After the usual small talk, Walt knew he had to ask the question he’d wanted to ask for more than three years.

“I said, ‘Will, as a Christian, I just have to know where you’re at so I know how to do what you’ve asked me to do.’ I asked him, ‘Do you believe that Jesus Christ is your personal Savior? Do you believe, Will, that He came to die just for you?’

“Nope,” Will replied.

Walt continues the story: “Well, I thought, ‘That’s not quite the answer I want to hear.’ Then, knowing Will like I do, and knowing how much he loves to argue, I said, ‘Would you refute that what I said isn’t true?’

“‘Nope.’

“‘So ... where are you at, Will?’ I asked.

“He said, ‘I believe in God, I believe in Jesus as my Savior, but I don’t understand it.’

“I said, ‘Will, that’s where faith comes in. That’s what I’ve been trying to tell you all along.’

“He told me, ‘Now don’t go asking me how I can explain this to you, Preacher Man. I don’t understand any of it, and I don’t know how I believe it either. I just know that now I believe it.’”

## Coming Together

Walt notes that in his last days Will revealed a side he had not seen before. He was reunited with his son, his daughter, and his sister, and seemed to radiate peace.

“Will’s normal personality often agitated everyone around him,” Walt recalls. “He could have kept that up—lying in a hospice room would have been an excellent place to feel sorry for one’s self and be bitter because the end was near.” Instead, Walt says he saw what could only be the Holy Spirit working in Will’s life to bring about a sense of peace, a peace noticed by everyone who came in contact with him before he died.

“He said, ‘Preacher Man, I can’t believe or understand why this is happening to me, but I’m not being mad, or angry with God. Who woulda thunk it?’

“I saw that, finally, God’s grace was sufficient for Will. It was all he needed to go ‘home,’ to meet the God he had denied for most of his life.”

The light had gone on for Walt as well. He identified strongly with an article by Dr. Reed Lessing in the January *Lutheran Witness* that used the story of Jonah and Nineveh as a metaphor for the people and situations we normally try to avoid.

“I’ve had a lot of ‘Ninevehs’ in my life—I could see the purpose for most situations after I left, but I could never figure out why I was there to begin with,” Walt says. “But this business with Will—it’s been so clear that this was the most important ‘Nineveh’ I needed to face.

I was supposed to meet Will, be his friend, help him think about faith, and pray for him.”



At 61, Walt feels he’s finally beginning to see what God wants him to see. Not just the barbed wire on a fence, but a cross. Not just strands of wheat blowing in the wind, but a cross. Not just an ornery guy with a penchant for cigarettes and argument, but a lonely man in need of a friend and a Savior. It’s the kind of vision that changes lives forever, Walt says.



*Will Collier passed away on Tuesday, Feb. 19, 2008, leaving his body to science. Walt Timm spoke at his friend’s “victory celebration” on March 8.*



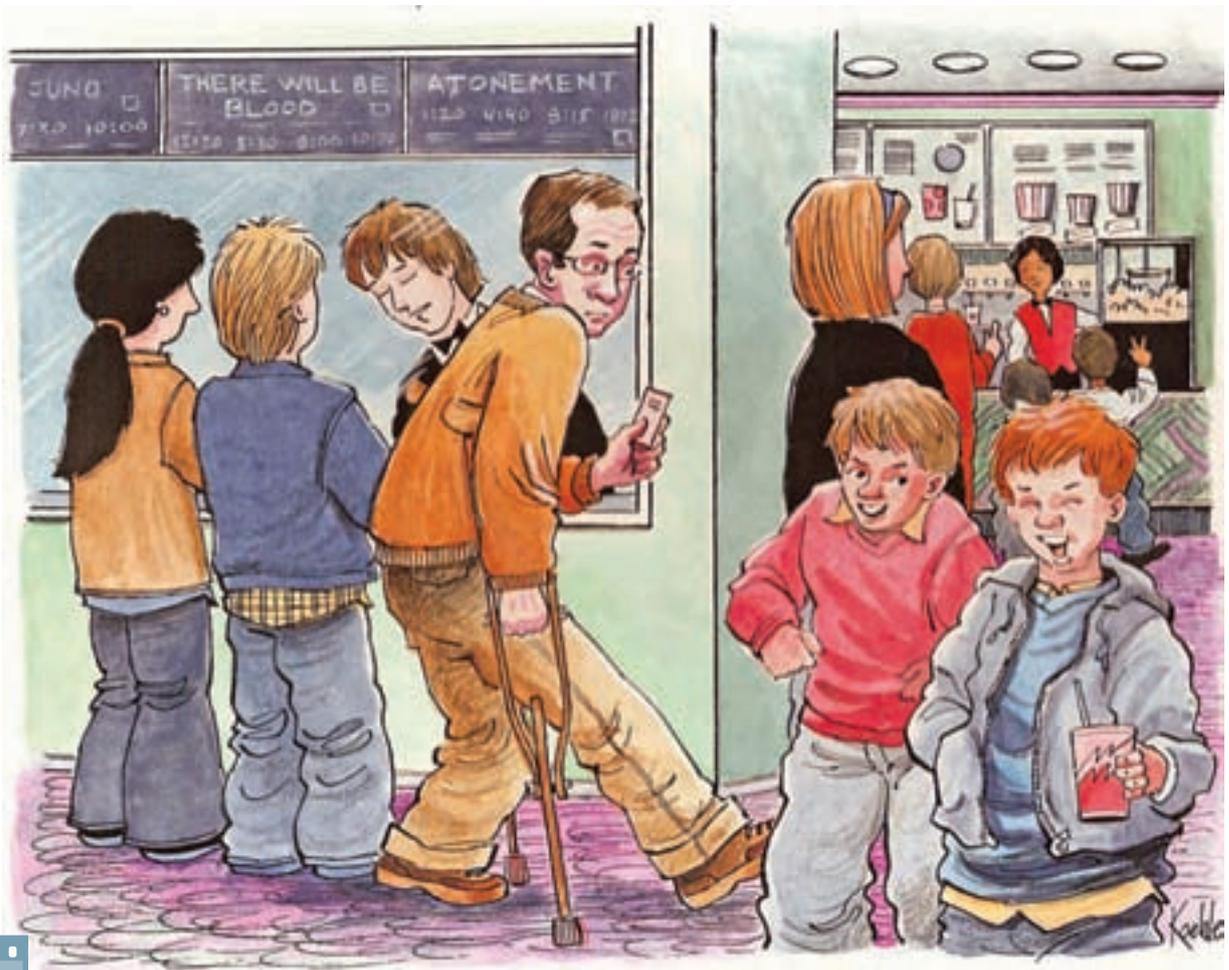
**Diane Strzelecki is a Chicago writer and a member of Prince of Peace Lutheran Church in Palatine, Ill. Walt Timm and his wife, Roz, are members of Faith Lutheran Church in Jefferson City, Mo.**



Insert (above): Walt Timm and his friend, Will.

# FINDING INSIGHT IN A MOVIE BLUNDER

A momentary distraction at a cinema box office leads to an important reminder about atonement and reconciliation.



To fully understand my blunder, you must first realize two things about me. First, I am a pastor. Second, I recently had knee surgery, and I had been cooped up in my house for several weeks. That's why, when a good friend offered to take me to a movie, I jumped (though not literally) at the opportunity. The cinema would be a good antidote for my cabin fever.

We decided to see the Golden Globe and Academy Award nominated *There Will Be Blood*. "It's gotten great reviews," we reasoned, "and it promises to be a gritty oil-field tale of a bygone California era."

So far, so good.

We drove to the cinema, and I hobbled to the ticket booth somewhat distracted by my crutches. Tickets in hand, we shuffled to our seats. This, too, took some effort, but finally we were set for our afternoon entertainment.

The movie began in England. "This is a bit odd," I thought. "Had this oil baron come from across the Atlantic?"



There Will Be Blood



Atonement



Atonement

The protagonist was a 13-year old girl, which also caused me consternation. “I wonder where this plot device is going?” I asked myself.

Twenty minutes into the tale, it was clear that the plot was never going to end up in the American West. By this time, my eyes had adjusted to the darkness, and so I looked around at the other patrons in the theater. They seemed more like Jane Austen aficionados than “gritty film” types. It was then that I realized my mistake. We were in the wrong movie.

Now here is where the first fact about who I am comes into play. As a pastor, I confused *There Will Be Blood* with *Atonement* (the name of the movie we were actually seeing). Don’t laugh! I know only an idiot would confuse these two very different movies, but in a distracted moment at the ticket booth, I had conflated the two titles. It was an honest theological mistake.

For Christians, there is no atonement without the shedding of blood. Rom. 3:21–25 tells us, “But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. God presented Him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in His blood” (NIV).

After the movie, I embarrassingly pondered my blunder and realized that all was not lost. Because of my “ministerial mistake,” I had gained a unique insight into screenwriter Christopher Hampton and director Joe Wright’s movie (which itself is based on the novel of the same name by Ian McEwan).

The insight? The nature of the atonement being attempted.

As the story unfolds, we are led to believe that Robbie Turner is the one who must seek atonement. Though falsely accused and imprisoned, his life’s ambition is to be reunited with his true love Cecilia. His driving motivation is to seek “at-one-ment” with the woman he loves.

As the story ends, however, we realize that the movie really isn’t about Robbie and Cecilia after all. It’s about overly imaginative 13-year-old Briony, who fabricates the false story of Robbie’s crime, which ultimately separates the two lovers. Five years later, as an 18-year-old nurse-in-training, Briony fully understands her mistake, and she has a chance to set things right. She contemplates going back to the authorities to retract her testimony and clear Robbie’s name. But fear makes her impotent. Atonement means that there will be blood. True atonement involves personal confession and sacrifice. Whether it’s seeking to avoid humiliation or desiring to preserve her own good name, Briony never acts on her good intentions. She chooses silence over confession. Tragically, both Robbie and Cecilia die while still separated, never to be reunited.

Many years later, Briony finally tries to make amends. Now a best-selling author, she writes an account of the Robert-Cecilia love story. It is a fictional account, however, because the end of her novel departs from fact. In her book, the two lovers are reunited and live happily ever after. This is Briony's attempt at atonement. Although she remained silent in life, through her novel she finally speaks out and gives Robbie and Cecilia the life they deserve.

One certainly feels compassion for Briony, whose mistake as a young teenager will haunt her all of her days. Yet, when she finally seeks to atone for her wrongdoing, it's decades too late and amounts to nothing more than romantic sentimentality.

Jesus teaches us in the Sermon on the Mount, "If you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift" (Matt. 5:23-24 NIV). As Lutherans, we have often used this Scripture passage in connection with the Lord's Supper. Yes, the body and blood of Jesus first and foremost atones for our sins, but it also compels us to seek communion with one another.

One certainly feels compassion for Briony, whose mistake as a young teenager will haunt her all of her days. Yet, when she finally seeks to atone for her wrongdoing, it's decades too late and amounts to nothing more than romantic sentimentality.

Briony's life, therefore, serves as an important reminder that when seeking reconciliation, there will be blood. "At-one-ment" involves personal sacrifice, and the window of opportunity to make things right is often so short that we dare not hesitate to reach out to others with humility, contrition, and grace.

**Rev. Steven B. Borst serves as a campus pastor at Concordia University, Irvine, Calif.**



*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

LAUREL A. KRAUSE, Gillett, Wis.; REBEKAH L. DREWISKE, Wisconsin Rapids, Wis.; and SUSAN MICHELLE COUR, Nekoosa, Wis., were removed from the roster of Commissioned Ministers of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, effective Jan. 31, due to failure to apply for inactive status per Bylaw 3.11.2.b of the *2007 Handbook*. They are, therefore, no longer eligible to receive a call. SALLY A. RECKELBERG, Luxemburg, Wis., resigned from the roster of Commissioned Ministers of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, effective June 15, 1997. The paperwork was not submitted at the time of her resignation, therefore, she is no longer eligible for a call.—Rev. Joel Hoelster, president, LCMS North Wisconsin District.

REV. RONALD B. STAPLES has been removed from the roster of Ordained Ministers of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, effective Jan. 18, and is, therefore, no longer eligible for a call. DANIELLE BAMESBERGER, KIM BECERRA, ADAM CONNORS, JOYCE COOKS, CHRISTINE HEERBOTH, JENNIFER HOTOPP, CHRISTOPHER KAMPFRATH, JENNIFER LINK, DAVID LUTZ, EMILY NAUMANN, JESSICA SCHWENTKER, DOUGLAS URBAN, and JENNIFER VON BEHREN have been removed from the roster of Commissioned Ministers of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are, therefore, no longer eligible to receive a call. LISA CHAPMAN, RUTH JEFFRIES, JEFFREY KOHLS, JULIE OSTROM, VELMA WALKMASTER, and MELISSA WOLF have resigned from the roster of Commissioned Ministers of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are, therefore, no longer eligible to receive a call.—Rev. Ray G. Mirly, president, LCMS Missouri District.

REV. KEITH ENKO, Hermitage, Tenn., has been placed on restricted status and is, therefore, not eligible to accept a call to any other congregation in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod at this time.—Rev. Ken Lampe, president, LCMS Mid-South District.

## Official Notices“ Colloquies

REV. ROBERT H. FEDDE, Sioux Falls, S.D., has submitted his application for the Pastoral Colloquy Program through The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Correspondence regarding his application 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.

ASSEFA GUGSA ZELELEW, Pasadena, Calif.; REV. ALAN L. DAUGHERTY, Spokane, Wash.; REV. MIGUEL F. LUNA, Salem, Ore.; REV. C. DAVID DARLING, Sun City, Ariz.; and THEODORE W. BEIDERWIEDEN III, Arcadia, Mich., have completed all requirements for the Pastoral Colloquy Program through The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are, therefore, eligible for a call.—

Dr. William R. Diekelman, Chairman, Colloquy Committee, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

MARY ANNE SCHNEIDER, Seymour, Ind., has completed the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. DAVID CHRISTIANSEN, Park Ridge, Ill., has completed the Director of Parish Music Colloquy of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. They are, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Mark A. Waldron, Director of Teacher Colloquy, Concordia University Chicago, 7400 Augusta St., River Forest, IL 60305-1499.

RACHEL SOO, Irvine, Calif., has completed 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, 1530 Concordia West, Irvine, CA 92612-3203.

## Official Notices“ Requests for Reinstatement

ROBERT B. SCHAEFFER, Rockford, Ill., has applied for reinstatement to the Minister of Religion—Ordained roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. JENNIFER A. DUTSMAN, Lincoln, Neb.; KAREN GREVE, Macomb, Mich.; AMY KRENGEL, Jackson, Mich.; SCOTT NEUMEYER, Saginaw, Mich.; and BRENDA K. PAULSEL, Sioux Falls, S.D., have applied for reinstatement to the Minister of Religion—Commissioned roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Correspondence regarding these applications should be directed to the undersigned for receipt no later than May 5.—Dr. Raymond L. Hartwig, Secretary, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

## Notice to Promote to Continuing-Level (Tenure)

The Board of Regents of Concordia University Wisconsin, Mequon, Wis., herewith gives notice of intent to promote to a continuing-level appointment the following: DR. CARLYNN ALT, DR. THERESA KENNEY, DR. VAN MOBLEY, DR. CHERYL PETERSEN, and DR. MICHAEL UDEN. Any comments concerning this intent should be addressed within six weeks after publication of this notice to Rev. Patrick T. Ferry, Ph.D., President, Concordia University Wisconsin, 12800 N. Lake Shore Drive, Mequon, WI 53097-2402.

## Call for Nominations

The Board for Communication Services (BCS) is seeking nominations for the position of **Director of News and Information**. This position reports to the Executive Director of Communications and is responsible for serving as the executive editor of the Synod’s official periodicals and providing for the gathering of appropriate news and information and the dissemination thereof, through appropriate media, to the church and its publics for the purpose of strengthening ministry at all levels of the Synod. Specifically he/she will assist the Executive Director in implementing and evaluating the programs and performing the functions of the department as articulated in the synodical bylaws and policies and procedures of the BCS; supervising the day-to-day administration of the Division of News and Information; serving as a chief spokesperson for the Synod and/or its ministries; maintaining liaison with departments, institutions

and agencies for the purpose of news gathering; monitoring public and ecclesiastical developments and events; assuming editorial responsibility for the Synod’s official periodicals, providing for their publication and distribution and providing for news releases through the various media; assuming oversight responsibility for the corresponding Web sites of the Synod’s official periodicals; contributing to the ongoing content, look and feel of the Synod’s Web site; establishing and maintaining a news bureau at Synod conventions; overseeing the staff of the department’s Editorial Services division; and developing and maintaining relationships with appropriate and significant professionals and groups involved in news and information services outside of the Synod.

Qualified nominees must have a minimum of five years of practical experience in communication fields; a minimum of a bachelor’s degree in fields related to communications or theology; have the demonstrated ability to effectively communicate Lutheran theology, preferably having a formal theological education; be adept in oral and written communication; have an interest in and possess above average knowledge related to the use of electronic media; be capable and interested in writing and editing as evidenced by published materials or other written materials; be able to travel as needed; be able to work with people both within and without the church; be an active member of a Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod congregation, faithful to the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, and supportive of the Synod’s Constitution, Bylaws and policies.

Nominations should be submitted by May 15, 2008, to Barbara Ryan, Executive Director of Human Resources at 1333 South Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, Mo 63122 ([Barbara.Ryan@lcms.org](mailto:Barbara.Ryan@lcms.org)) or faxed to 314/996-1121.

## Positions

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

**LCMS English District**, Farmington, Mich., seeks to fill the position of **development director**.

The development director will be responsible for creatively visioning, administering, promoting, evaluating, and maintaining a comprehensive, ongoing development ministry that will generate the revenue needed to implement the Funding Faith in Action Campaign of the English District.

The development director will

- be a spiritually mature Christian who is an active communicant member in good standing of a Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) congregation;
- be a team player with a positive attitude who sees opportunities and challenges rather than problems;
- be gifted in the areas of administration, exhortation, hospitality, and leadership;
- be self-motivated, organized, and flexible;
- be able and willing to travel as needed;
- have at least three years of successful development experience;
- have a high degree of self-sufficiency and ability to function without direct supervision;

- have excellent interpersonal and communication skills;
- demonstrate skills in personal time management, task management, and strategic planning;
- have an understanding of financial matters (e.g., budgets, financial statements);
- have an understanding of, and ability to use, office and presentation software (e.g., Microsoft Office Professional) and desktop publishing software (e.g., Microsoft Publisher); and
- have at least a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university in a related field (e.g., marketing, public relations, business, finance).

Because the English District is a district of The Lutheran Church—Missouri, it may, to the extent allowed by state law, give preference in hiring persons who are members in good standing of an LCMS congregation.

The development director will

- openly and willingly strive to put Christ first in all aspects of life and faithfully proclaim the Gospel by reflecting Christ in word and deed;
- establish annual revenue goals with the bishop/president for all development categories;
- plan and implement all aspects of donor identification, solicitation, acknowledgement, and recognition using Christ-centered, Gospel-motivated, relationship-building methodologies;
- provide leadership and direction for the use of the Internet and other technology-based tools to enhance the efforts of the development ministry;
- communicate regularly with donors and prospective donors via face-to-face meetings, phone calls, letters, newsletter articles, e-mails, etc., as is appropriate;
- develop and use appropriate databases and other administrative procedures and systems to track donors' gifts, as well as contacts with donors and potential donors;
- identify, recruit, train, and supervise other members of the development team, including staff and volunteers, within approved policies and procedures;
- develop and implement a planned giving program to include endowment growth in order to help ensure the long-term financial future of the English District's ministry;
- research, prepare, and submit grant proposals for funding from foundations, corporations, congregations, organizations, individuals, and other appropriate sources;
- evaluate all development efforts;
- represent and promote the English District at conferences, conventions, workshops, meetings, and other functions;
- develop and administer the annual development and public-relations budgets;
- meet regularly with the bishop/president of the English District and staff;
- participate in approved continuing education and other training opportunities;
- perform other related tasks as assigned by the bishop/president of the English District.

The development director is accountable to the bishop/president of the English District. Salary and benefits will be commensurate with experience and education.

An up-to-date resume, along with a one-page cover letter, must be received no later than April 30. A cover letter should include current compensation and/or compensation requirements and the available start date to begin duties as development director, as well as any other information pertinent to holding this position. Send a resume and cover letter by mail, e-mail, or fax to Bishop David Stechholz, LCMS English District, 33100 Freedom Road,

Farmington, MI 48336-4030; [EDPres1@englishdistrict.org](mailto:EDPres1@englishdistrict.org); fax: (248) 476-0188.

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

**Concordia College—New York** seeks to fill the following staff position: **Director of Residence Life and Student Activities.**

**Concordia University Nebraska** seeks to fill the following faculty position: **Associate Provost, Music (Piano), Vice-President of Enrollment, Student Services, and Athletics; Director of Graduate Secondary Teacher Certification.**

**Concordia University—Portland** seeks to fill the following faculty position: **Teacher Education Middle or High School Level.**

**Concordia University Wisconsin** seeks to fill the following faculty position: **Dean of the School of Education.**

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

## Anniversaries

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

**St. John, Athens, Texas**, will celebrate its 25th anniversary at the 10:30 a.m. worship service on April 13, followed by lunch and fellowship. Contact the church office at (903) 675-9598.

**Concordia, Conover, N.C.**, will celebrate the dedication of its sanctuary 50 years ago during its now 130th year as a congregation. Rev. Larry Lineberger will be guest speaker at the rededication service at 3 p.m., April 20. A reception will follow. Contact the church office at (828) 464-3324.

**Mount Olive, Irmo, S.C.**, will celebrate its 75th anniversary from 3 to 5 p.m. during an open house, reception, and tour of the church on April 19; and at a 10:30 a.m. special worship service on April 20. Mount Olive Lutheran Church, 1541 Lake Murray Blvd., Irmo, SC 29212.

**St. John's, Bridgeton, N.J.**, will celebrate its 150th anniversary at the 10:15 a.m. service on April 20. New Jersey District President William Klettke and Rev. Dale R. Johnston will take part in the service, with Pastor Gary Hall Jr. as preacher. A catered lunch will follow. Contact the church office by April 16 at (857) 451-0141.

**Bethlehem, Columbus, Ga.**, will celebrate its 45th anniversary, beginning April 21 at the 11 a.m. service, and also with special services on Nov. 17. Both celebrations will be followed with a time of fellowship and lunch. Contact the church office at (706) 327-8756.

**Trinity, Tyler, Texas**, will celebrate its 75th anniversary throughout the year, beginning April 27 with a special service, luncheon, and program. Rev. Steve Henze will be guest preacher. Other dates include services and festivities on July 19–20

and Oct. 11–12. Contact the church office at (903) 593-1526.

**Pentecost, Racine, Wis.**, will celebrate its 100th anniversary at the 9 a.m. service on May 4. Pastor Emeritus Rev. Milan J. Babel will be the preacher, and spiritual sons Revs. Carlos Puig and Thomas Konz also will participate. A banquet will follow. Contact the church office at (262) 633-9674; [www.pentecost-racine.org](http://www.pentecost-racine.org).

## 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

**AHL, DENNIS C.**; Aug. 11, 1942, Mankato, Minn., to Nov. 20, 2007, North Mankato, Minn.; son of Harold W. and Lillian (Flitter) Ahl; graduated St. Louis, 1968. Served 1970–2003. Ministries/parishes: South Effington (Parkers Prairie), Leaf Valley (Alexandria), Minneapolis, Minn.; Minnesota South District circuit counselor: 1994–2000, 2001–2003; retired 2003. Funeral and interment: Nov. 24, 2007, Mankato, Minn.

**BORN, CHARLES H.**; Sept. 24, 1925, Cumberland, Wis., to Jan. 11, 2008, Round Rock, Texas; son of Rev. Paul H. and Sophia (Zarling) Born; graduated St. Louis, 1949. Served 1950–1990. Ministries/parishes: Cordova, Goehner, Lincoln, Neb.; Austin, Texas; retired 1990. Preceded in death by his wife, M. Jean (Hart) Born. Survivors: son: Paul E.; daughter: Charlean Ann Gonzalez. Funeral and interment: Jan. 15, 2008, Austin, Texas.

**BRUMMETT, BELVIN R.**; Dec. 14, 1945, Menard, Texas, to Nov. 29, 2007, Bowie, Texas; son of James P. and Ann W. (Ivy) Brummett; graduated St. Louis, 1988. Served 1988–2007. Ministries/parishes: Spring Valley, Minn.; West Sinton, Dumas, Bowie, Texas. Survivors: Wanda Gail (Cole) Brummett; son: Steven; daughters: Sherri Wilson, Melissa Matheson. Funeral and interment: Dec. 3, 2007, Bowie, Texas.

**BURGET, FRANKLIN (FRANK) W.**; May 30, 1923, Seymour, Ind., to May 28, 2007, Central Point, Ore.; son of George and Bertha (Hildebrand) Burget; graduated Springfield, 1963. Served 1963–1991. Ministries/parishes: Reedsport, Klamath Falls, Ore.; retired 1991. Survivors: Erna (Schindler) Burget; sons: William, Gary; daughter: Cheryl. Funeral: June 2, 2007, Medford, Ore.; cremation.

**CLAUSEN, ROBERT H.**; Dec. 12, 1927, Cincinnati, Ohio, to Jan. 29, 2008, Palatine, Ill.; son of Walter and Lydia (Becker) Clausen; graduated St. Louis, 1952. Served 1953–1961, 1964–1993, 1999–2008. Ministries/parishes: U.S. military chaplain; Gary, Ind.; Bensonville, Elmwood Park, Palatine, Ill.; Seward, Neb.; Northern Illinois District circuit counselor: 1990–1994; retired 1993. Survivors: Elsbeth (Wockenfuss) Clausen; son: Christopher; daughters: Kristen, Kara. Funeral: Feb. 1, 2008, Palatine, Ill.; interment: No information provided.

**EDDLEMAN, JAMES L.**; July 30, 1930, Rockwell, N.C., to Jan. 8, 2008, Memphis, Tenn.; son of Louis and Mamie (Ephan) Eddleman; graduated Immanuel Seminary, Greensboro, N.C., 1955. Served 1955–1990, 1991–1995. Ministries/parishes: Port Arthur, Texas; Memphis, Tenn.; Grady, Ark.; retired 1995. Preceded in death by his daughter, Estella. Survivors: Gertie (Ghaskin) Eddleman; son: James Jr.; daughters: Vernetta, Misty, Lydia. Funeral and interment: Jan. 14, 2008, Salisbury, N.C.

**ESALA, TOIVO A.**; March 23, 1922, Virginia, Minn., to Jan. 9, 2008, New York Mills, Minn.; son of Jacob and Hilma (Ruuth) Esala; graduated Springfield 1945. Served 1945–1984. Ministries/parishes: Cleveland, Ohio; North Queensland, Australia; Virginia, New York Mills, Minn.; Fitchburg, Mass.; Hollywood, Fla.; retired 1984. Survivors: Ardis (Aho) Esala; sons: Darrell, Jacob, Keith, Gregory; daughter: Marsha Maki. Funeral and interment: Jan. 14, 2008, New York Mills, Minn.

**FARINA, CHRISTOPHER L.**; Oct. 11, 1956, Chicago, Ill., to Jan. 18, 2008, Chicago, Ill.; son of Charles and Sylvia (Mendoza) Farina; graduated Fort Wayne 1999. Served 1999–2006. Ministry/parish: Chicago, Ill. Survivors: Beverly (Boyd) Farina; daughters: Brenda Rhodes, Heidi Sliwka. Funeral: Jan. 24, 2008, Chicago, Ill.; interment: Jan. 24, 2008, Forest Park, Ill.

**FRANK, PAUL LOUIS SR.**; June 6, 1925, Portland, Ore., to Oct. 24, 2007, Portland, Ore.; son of Louis and Mollie (Hiegel) Frank; graduated St. Louis, 1949. Served 1949–1976. Ministries/parishes: Fort Scott, Iola, Kan.; Moses Lake, Wash.; Portland, Ore.; retired 1981. Preceded in death by his wife, Nedra Jean (Kezar) Frank. Survivors: sons: Paul L. Jr., Gary R.; daughters: Nancy Inez, Lisa Marie. Funeral: Oct. 28, 2007, Portland, Ore.; interment: Florence, Ore.

**FRIEDRICH, CARL H.**; Nov. 9, 1912, Glencoe, Minn., to Dec. 4, 2007, Waconia, Minn.; son of F. William and Elizabeth (Hertwig) Friedrich; graduated St. Louis, 1937. Served 1940–1978. Ministries/parishes: Bagley (Zerkel), Wright, Rosemount, Minn.; Lane, Wessington Springs, S.D.; Turtle Lake, Clayton, Bear Creek, Wis.; retired 1978. Preceded in death by his wife, Emma (Schneuer) Friedrich. Survivors: sons: Rev. James, William; daughters: Karen Finne, Janice Ladendorf. Funeral: Dec. 7, 2007, Waconia, Minn.; interment: Dec. 7, 2007, St. Paul, Minn.

**GERKEN, ERWIN AUGUST**; June 29, 1921, Monroeville, Ind., to Nov. 26, 2007, Puyallup, Wash.; son of Rev. August F. and Alma (Kramer) Gerken; graduated St. Louis, 1945. Served 1945–1986. Ministries/parishes: Beaverton, Ore.; Puyallup, Wash. Northwest District circuit counselor: 1991–1997; retired 1986. Survivors: Willene E. (Kerkman) Gerken; sons: Norman, Rev. Daniel, Charles, Douglas. Memorial service: Dec. 2, 2007, Tacoma, Wash.; interment: Nov. 30, 2007, Sumner, Wash.

**HALDEMAN, KEITH R.**; June 6, 1968, Staten Island, N.Y., to Oct. 18, 2007, St. Cloud, Fla.; son of Joseph and Lois (Palsay) Haldeman; graduated St. Louis, 1994. Served 1994–2007. Ministries/parishes: Deltona, St. Cloud, Fla.; Wausau, Wis. Survivors: Tara E. (Miller) Haldeman; sons: Alec, Addison Pierce; daughter: Abrianna. Funeral: Oct. 22, 2007, Montverde, Fla.; cremation.

**HECKMANN, EUGENE EDWIN**; June 24, 1934, Riesel, Texas, to Dec. 2, 2007, Houston, Texas; son of Dr. Edwin and Concordia (Mueller) Heckmann; graduated St. Louis, 1958. Served 1958–1998. Ministries/parishes: Orange, Houston, Texas; retired 1998. Survivors: Joyce (Gascamp) Heckmann; sons: Rev. John, Rev. Peter; daughters: Connie Cuming, Monica Ehrhardt, Karen Leicht. Funeral: Dec. 6, 2007, Houston, Texas; interment: Dec. 6, 2007, Tomball, Texas.

**HETT, ROGER W.**; Jan. 6, 1941, Humboldt, Iowa, to Jan. 25, 2008, Spirit Lake, Iowa; son of Harold W. and Laura (Niemeyer) Hett; graduated St. Louis, 1966. Served 1966–2006. Ministries/parishes: Papua New Guinea; New Germany, Jackson, Minn.; Minnesota South District circuit counselor: 1991–1997; retired 2006. Survivors: Rosalie Ann

(Schultz) Hett; sons: Stephen, David; daughters: Lora Wade, Kristin Wrolstad. Funeral: Jan. 28, 2008, Spirit Lake, Iowa; interment: Jan. 28, 2008, Fort Dodge, Iowa.

**HUBER, ROLAND WALTER**; March 11, 1922, Great Falls, Mont., to June 12, 2007, Shelton, Wash.; son of Rev. Edwin and Elsie (Kapps) Huber; graduated St. Louis, 1946. Served 1946–1989. Ministries/parishes: Wheeler, Ill.; Alliance, Neb.; Crescent City, Calif.; Shelton, Wash.; Nebraska District circuit counselor: 1955–1959; retired 1989. Survivors: sons: Ronald, Norbert; daughters: Norma Hashimoto, Lori Schmidt. Funeral and interment: June 16, 2007, Shelton, Wash.

**KIEHL, PAUL G.**; Aug. 18, 1918, Bunceton (Lone Elm), Mo., to Dec. 7, 2007, Huntsville, Ala.; son of Henry G. and Clara (Kuecker) Kiehl; graduated St. Louis, 1945. Served 1946–1973, 1978–1985, 1987–1998. Ministries/parishes: St. Louis, Bellefontaine Neighbors, Florissant, Mo.; retired 1986, 1998. Survivors: sons: James, Robert, John; daughters: Linda, Martha, Christina. Funeral: Dec. 17, 2007, Florissant, Mo.; interment: Dec. 17, 2007, Bellefontaine Neighbors, Mo.

**KRENGEL, GEORGE A.**; Dec. 15, 1923, Marion, N.D., to Jan. 18, 2008, Omaha, Neb.; son of William L. and Hilda (Meyer) Krengel; graduated Springfield, 1948. Served 1948–1994, 1997–2006. Ministries/parishes: Mason City, Bowen, Golden, Ill.; Oskaloosa, Atlantic, Ogden, Anita, Iowa; Iowa East District circuit counselor: 1958–1961; Iowa West District: 1961–1964, 1988–1994; retired 1994, 2006. Survivors: Vera (Wallner) Krengel; sons: Thomas, Mark, John; daughter: Barbara Fremder. Funeral: Jan. 21, 2008, Atlantic, Iowa; interment: to be announced, Ogden, Iowa.

**LAVCEK, EMIL**; Jan. 24, 1919, Chicago, Ill., to Nov. 21, 2007, Lower Burrell, Pa.; son of Michael and Anna (Salat) Lavcek; graduated St. Louis, 1945. Served 1945–1984. Ministries/parishes: Joliet, Ill.; Arnold, Duquesne, Pa.; retired 1984. Survivors: Ilan (Kossuth) Lavcek; daughters: Rebecca Cappo, Ruth Marietti, Lydia Willig. Funeral: Nov. 24, 2007, Oakmont, Pa.; interment: No information provided.

**MCBRIDE, LORENZO SR.**; April 23, 1941, Mobile, Ala., to Jan. 16, 2008, Mobile, Ala.; son of Willie Jackson and Lucretia McBride; colloquy, 1994. Served 1995–2008. Ministries/parishes: Moss Point, Miss.; Mobile, Ala. Survivors: Eleanor McBride; son: Lorenzo Jr. Funeral and interment: Jan. 21, 2008, Mobile, Ala.

**MUELLER, RAYMOND ALVIN**; June 17, 1929, Kodaikanal, British South India, to Dec. 26, 2007, Goodland, Ind.; son of Rev. Alvin A. and Agnes E. (Loesch) Mueller; graduated St. Louis, 1954. Served 1954–1994, 1994–2001. Ministries/parishes: Gladwin, Oberlin, Battle Creek, Mich.; Bremen, Syracuse (North Webster), Ind.; St. Louis, Mo.; Rocky River, Ohio; retired 1994, 2001. Preceded in death by his son, Mark. Survivors: Vivian (Naef) Mueller; son: Rev. David; daughters: Mary, Rebekah Miller. Funeral and interment: Dec. 31, 2007, Bremen, Ind.

**PFLIEGER, RICHARD C. SR., DR.**; Aug. 6, 1936, Chicago, Ill., to Dec. 4, 2007, Albuquerque, N.M.; son of Bernice (Holt) and William C. Pflieger; graduated St. Louis, 1961. Served 1961–1989, 1989–1994, 1996–1998. Ministries/parishes: Guntersville, Auburn, Ala.; Jackson, Mich.; Seward, Neb.; Altoona, Iowa; Denning, N.M.; retired 1998. Survivors: sons: Charlie, Paul, Daniel, Timothy. Funeral: Dec. 10, 2007, Albuquerque, N.M.; cremation.

**POPP, KEVIN PAUL**; Dec. 25, 1955, Cape Girardeau, Mo., to Sept. 26, 2007, Bridgeton, Mo.; son of Kenneth and Vera (Lewis) Popp; graduated St. Louis, 1981. Served 1981–2000, 2003–2007.

Ministries/parishes: Concordia, Overland, Mo.; Ottumwa, Iowa; Champaign, Ill.; Cincinnati, Ohio. Survivors: Karen (Medhus) Popp; sons: Martin, Nathan, Andrew; daughters: Heidi, Lydia. Funeral and interment: Sept. 29, 2007, St. Louis, Mo.

**SCHMIDT, ROBERT A.**; Dec. 8, 1924, Ireton, Iowa, to Jan. 7, 2008, Fitchburg, Wis.; son of Rev. J.E. Richard and Clara (Zwemke) Schmidt; graduated St. Louis, 1948. Served 1948–1991. Ministries/parishes: Willowick, Ohio; Evansville, Elberfeld, Ind.; New Berlin, Milwaukee, Cascade, Burnett, Wis.; retired 1991. Survivors: sons: Steven, David, John; daughters: Marilyn Vandenberg, Virginia Benjamin. Funeral: Jan. 11, 2008, Monona, Wis.; interment: Jan. 11, 2008, Brookfield, Wis.

**SIMON, HENRY E. DR.**; April 25, 1919, Zachow, Wis., to Jan. 25, 2008, Appleton, Wis.; son of Traugeott and Eleanor (Elbert) Simon; graduated St. Louis, 1944. Served 1944–1985. Ministries/parishes: Lily, White Lake, Appleton, Wis.; North Wisconsin District president 1974–1985; retired 1985. Survivors: sons: Rev. Henry A., James; daughter: Lois. Funeral: Jan. 30, 2008, Appleton, Wis.; interment: Jan. 30, 2008, Bonduel, Wis.

**STREFLING, ALLEN R.**; Oct. 2, 1948, Galien, Mich., to Dec. 30, 2007, Kalamazoo, Mich.; son of Paul and Helen (Rudlaff) Strefling; graduated Fort Wayne, 2005. Served 2005–2007. Ministry/parish: Coloma, Mich. Survivors: Sandra K. (Good) Strefling; son: Scott; daughter: Jessica. Funeral: Jan. 4, 2008, Coloma, Mich.; interment: Jan. 4, 2008, New Troy, Mich.

**WOLKENHAUER, RICHARD H.**; Jan. 24, 1933, Oakland, Calif., to Dec. 24, 2007, Concord, Calif.; son of Herman Jr. and Frieda (Hunrick) Wolkenhauer; graduated St. Louis, 1957. Served 1957–1996. Ministries/parishes: East Detroit, Mich.; Oakland, Concord, Calif.; retired 1996. Funeral: Jan. 6, 2008, Concord, Calif.; interment: Jan. 6, 2008, Walnut Creek, Calif.

**ZIMMERMAN, LEON E.**; June 15, 1933, Jamison, Neb., to Feb. 2, 2008, Loup City, Neb.; son of Harry and Martha (Ullrich) Zimmerman; colloquy, 1993. Served 1993–2000, 2001–2008. Ministries/parishes: Loup City, Merna, Neb.; retired 2000. Preceded in death by his daughter, Leanne. Survivors: Emma (Hauser) Zimmerman; daughters: Linda, Linett Obermiller, LaRae Oswald. Funeral and interment: Feb. 2, 2008, Loup City, Neb.

## COMMISSIONED

**BERNDT, ROSALIE S. (SALMON)**; Sept. 3, 1941, Fergus Falls, Minn., to Aug. 30, 2007, St. Louis, Mo.; daughter of Edwin O. and Ethel E. (Maack) Salmon; graduated Seward, 1965. Served 1986–2004. Schools/ministries: Lansing, Mich.; Arnold, Mo.; retired 2004. Preceded in death by her daughter, Julie Elizabeth. Survivors: Clarence Berndt; son: Jonathan F.; daughter: Sara Ellen. Funeral and interment: Sept. 4, 2007, Arnold, Mo.

**FREUDENBURG, DON L.**; Dec. 19, 1939, Louisville, Ky., to Aug. 29, 2007, Monroe, N.Y.; son of Victor and Erna (Firnhaber) Freudenburg; graduated Seward, 1961. Served 1961–2005. Schools/ministries: Independence, Mo.; Glendale, Queens Village, Monroe, N.Y.; retired 2005. Survivors: Linda (Blunk) Freudenburg; daughters: Kirsten, Leigh, Heather. Funeral: Sept. 8, 2007, Monroe, N.Y.; cremation.

**GRABAU, HERBERT E.**; May 29, 1924, Chester, Neb., to Feb. 6, 2008, Omaha, Neb.; son of Ernest and Clara (Pieschke) Grabau; graduated Seward, 1945. Served 1945–1987. Schools/ministries: Detroit, Mich.; Leigh, Omaha, Neb.; Rock Island, Ill.; retired 1987. Preceded in death by his first wife, Amanda (Poppe) Grabau. Survivors: Ingeborg Rau (Perlebach) Grabau; daughter: Angelynn; stepson:

## Rose Again?

I am a lifelong Lutheran, have been confirmed, attended a Lutheran college, and teach in a Lutheran high school. In all my years of asking I have yet to receive an adequate answer to the question about one simple word: “again.”

In the Apostles’ Creed, we say that Jesus “rose again from the dead.” My question is simple: “When was His first rising?” I have had several responses but none seems to satisfy my simple, logical mind. One person said it was like getting up every morning; He just did it again. Another said that Jesus was being born again after His death and subsequent resurrection. While my faith does not depend on this word, I am, nevertheless, curious. —K.S., California.

Sometimes our use of language may seem strange and give impressions that can lead to false conclusions. The use of the word “again” in the context described is one such example.

While the word “again” can sometimes be used to describe an action or event that occurred at least once before, that is not always the case. One could think of numerous situations where, in colloquial usage, the word “again” would not be used in that manner, e.g., “The boy fell down and got up again.”

If one were to describe what took place in the miracle that Jesus performed with respect to the dead daughter of Jairus (Luke 8:41–42, 51–56; Mark 5:22–24, 35–43) or the dead young man of Nain (Luke 7:11–15), one could simply say they came to life, or rose again. It would not imply they had died another time before, had also come to life at that time, and now had died again and come back to life.

The meaning of the phrase in the Apostles’ Creed is exactly like that. It simply means that Jesus died and that He came to life again. He lived once. He died once. Now He is living again. There is no reason to read anything more than that into those words of the Creed.

The FAQ section of our Synod’s Web page also answers this question nicely. For that explanation, referenced in part here, visit [LCMS.org](http://LCMS.org) and, in order, click on *FAQs*, *Doctrinal Issues*, *The Creeds*, and *He Rose Again*.

*Editor’s note: As our LCMS.org FAQ page notes, this is a common question, one that The Lutheran Witness also addressed in August 1997. For our answer then, visit [LCMS.org/Witness](http://LCMS.org/Witness), and click on Web-exclusive Stories on our April 2008 home page.*

Send your questions to “Q&A,” c/o *The Lutheran Witness*, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295. Please include your name and address. All questions will be considered, but none can be answered individually.

## NOTICES

Dr. George Perlebach; stepdaughter: Camilla Plock. Funeral: Feb. 11, 2008, Omaha, Neb.; interment: Feb. 11, 2008, Lincoln, Neb.

**HELMKAMP, BARBARA (BRAND)**; June 30, 1947, Seymour, Ind., to Dec. 9, 2007, Bethalto, Ill.; daughter of Alfred W. and Eleanor A. (Schneider) Brand; graduated Seward, 1969. Served 1992–2007. School/ministry: Bethalto, Ill. Survivor: Lyndel Helmkamp. Funeral and interment: Dec. 13, 2007, Bethalto, Ill.

**LUEBKE, MARTIN F. DR.**; Oct. 2, 1917, Concord, Wis., to Jan. 26, 2008, St. Louis, Mo.; son of Frederick and Martha (Kretzmann) Luebke; graduated River Forest, 1938. Served 1938–1980. Schools/ministries: Chicago, Springfield, Ill.; Grand Rapids, Mich.; Fort Wayne, Ind.; retired 1980. Preceded in death by his wife, Dorothy (Kutschinski) Luebke. Survivors: son: Charles; daughter: Judith Kooi. Funeral and interment: Jan. 30, 2008, St. Louis, Mo.

**NIEDNER, NORMA LEE (VAN STROH) (SUMMERS)**; July 13, 1938, Lamar, Mo., to Jan. 3, 2008, Overland Park, Kan.; daughter of Edward and Hulda (Mein) Von Stroh; graduated Seward, 1960. Served 2000–2003. School/ministry: Overland Park, Kan.; retired 2003. Survivors: W. William Niedner; son: Nathan Summers; daughter: Carrie Hunt. Funeral and interment: Jan. 7, 2008, Overland Park, Kan.

**SCHUTZLER, SHARON L. (HASSO)**; Jan. 22, 1941, Bay City, Mich., to Aug. 31, 2007, Cadillac, Mich.; daughter of Ernest and Dorothy (Pickelmann) Hasso; colloquy: Ann Arbor, 1994. Served 1994–2003. Schools/ministries: Sebawaing, Reese, Mich.; retired 2003. Survivors: Roy Schutzler; son: Stephen; daughter: Kathie Jo Wright. Funeral and interment: Sept. 5, 2007, Cadillac, Mich.

**SIEGMEIER, SCOTT R.**; March 29, 1956, Freeport, Ill., to Nov. 16, 2007, Shawano, Wis.; son of Leon and Peggy (Beck) Siegmeier; graduated Mequon, 1998. Served 1999–2007. School/ministry: Shawano, Wis. Funeral: Nov. 20, 2007, Shawano, Wis.; interment: Nov. 24, 2007, Freeport, Ill.

**SPRINGER, JAMES A.**; Nov. 20, 1940, Fort Wayne, Ind., to April 6, 2007, Fort Wayne, Ind.; son of Arnold W. and Marvene (Heckler) Springer; graduated River Forest, 1966. Served 1966–2004. Schools/ministries: Hobart, Fort Wayne, Ind.; retired 2004. Survivors: Vera A. (Bobay) Springer; sons: Matthew J., Joel W.; daughter: Kristin K. Lahey. Funeral and interment: April 10, 2007, Fort Wayne, Ind.

**STOPPENHAGEN, ARNOLD C.**; April 3, 1913, Adams County, Ind., to June 26, 2007, Fort Wayne, Ind.; son of Herman and Hannah (Ewell) Stoppenhagen; graduated River Forest, 1935. Served 1936–1978. Schools/ministries: Davenport, Iowa;

Fort Wayne (Soest), Ind.; Auburn, Conklin, Saginaw, Mich.; retired 1978. Survivors: Margaret (Reinking) Stoppenhagen; sons: Robert, David, Kenneth; daughters: Karen Klemm, Mary Bayes. Funeral and interment: June 20, 2007, Fort Wayne, Ind.

**TIMM, TIMOTHY N.**; April 14, 1942, Milwaukee, Wis., to Aug. 1, 2007, San Diego, Calif.; son of Edward and Viola Timm; graduated Seward, 1965. Served 1965–2005. Schools/ministries: Kalispell, Mont.; Seward, Neb.; Fallbrook, Calif.; retired 2005. Funeral: Aug. 11, 2007, Fallbrook, Calif. interment: At sea.



## Ashes to Ashes, Dust to Dust

My husband and I are in our late seventies and are preparing what we think will be our last will. Regarding our funeral plans, one daughter thinks we should be cremated (it's less expensive, less stressful for family, etc.), but our other daughter wants us to be buried. Neither of us feels comfortable with the idea of cremation, but we can't put our finger on why. Does the Bible say anything about it?

You are wise to talk with your daughters about your will and your funeral plans. Since there are differences of opinion, it is best that these be shared and addressed now. I encourage you to continue the conversation, being clear that you and your husband are the ones responsible for pre-funeral planning. Assure your daughters that, while you are open to their thoughts and suggestions, you will make the final decision. In this way, you avoid appearing to take sides.

At present, cremation is increasing in favor because of space limitations in cemeteries, and also because of the rising costs of a traditional burial. For a historical and scriptural perspective, I suggest that you look at [www.lcms.org](http://www.lcms.org). There, under the FAQ section (click on *Moral and Ethical Issues* then *Life Issues*), it is noted, "The LCMS has no official position on cremation," and "in itself, the

practice has no theological significance and may be used in good conscience." It further notes that cremation, "which used to be viewed negatively by the church, is now being viewed more favorably."

The negative view came out of a historical context that generally associated cremation with non-Christian religious practices that denied the resurrection of the dead, specifically the notion that God cannot "reconstitute" a body that no longer exists. The fact is that God is not limited by physical laws. Indeed, the phrase "ashes to ashes and dust to dust" spoken at many Christian burials describes the reality of physical death. But the greater reality is the resurrection of the dead, promised to God's people in Christ, regardless of the disposition of your physical body at the time of your death—buried in the ground or at sea, incinerated in fiery crashes or crematoriums, abandoned on battlefields, or otherwise destroyed. May your faith in the risen Christ dispel any doubts you have as you continue your funeral-planning.

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

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

## LETTERS

(Continued from Page 7)

### Sharing our faith

Thank you for stressing the importance of evangelism in the January issue of *The Lutheran Witness* ("Sharing Your Faith"). Only one problem: Your cover photo spoke to women—but not to men.

As a Christian man, I can tell you that when called to share my faith with another man, I would never curl my legs up on a bench and look longingly into his eyes. I wonder how many men saw this image and reacted by handing the magazine to their wives or girlfriends, thinking that "sharing your

faith" is an Oprah-fied female activity. You could just as easily have used a photo of two men talking on a golf course or over a backyard barbecue grill. Please remember that men generally absorb visual images more intensely than women.

The LCMS should consider that amid our feminized popular culture, it is the men, not the women, who need direction in communicating our faith in Christ to nonbelievers. On any given Sunday in America, there is about a 62 percent to 38 percent split among women and men in the pews. The LCMS is a denomination blessed with a solid foundation in Scripture, the clarity of the Triune God, and a firm grasp of Law and Gospel. Now let us use

these gifts to embolden our men in Christian faith and exhort them to develop spiritual leadership so they can effectively interact with the secular world.

Martin Romjue  
Immanuel Lutheran Church  
Redondo Beach, Calif.

### Doing penance

I just opened the much-anticipated February issue of *The Lutheran Witness*. As penance for my procrastination in not writing a letter praising Dr. Siemon-Netto's November 2007 courageous and thought-provoking article, "On Words and Vocations," I must comment on the rancorous letters printed in the

## Running the Race

Angela, dressed in her springtime Sunday best, was running as fast as she could, trying not to be late for Sunday school. As she ran, she prayed, “Dear Lord, please don’t let me be late! Please don’t let me be late!”

Dashing across the church parking lot, she tripped on the parking-lot curb and sprawled head-first onto the lawn, staining her dress and knees with the first green grass of the season.

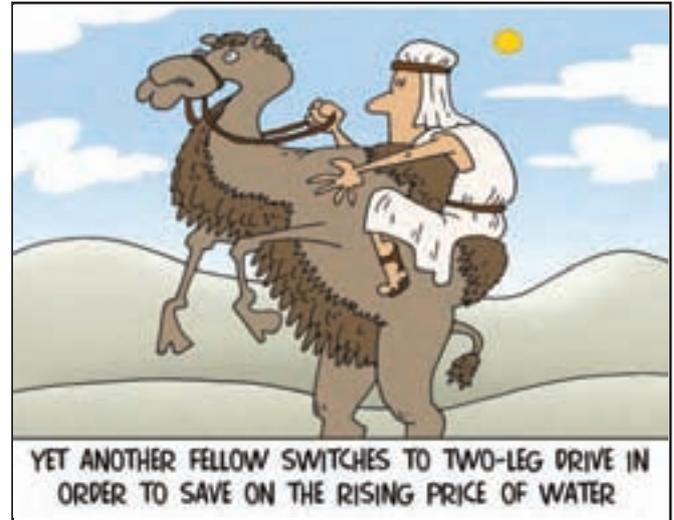
Not to be deterred, Angela got up, brushed herself off, and started off briskly again. “Dear Lord, please don’t let me be late,” she prayed once more. “But don’t shove me either!”

Ron Hollander  
Boca Raton, Fla.

## A Work of Art

An elementary-school teacher was observing his class while they took part in an art lesson. Occasionally, he would circulate around the room and check the work of his students, encouraging them, offering praise, or sometimes asking a question.

Approaching Emily, he observed that the earnest second-grader was diligently at work with markers and pencils.



“What are you drawing, Emily?” the teacher asked.

“I’m drawing God,” Emily replied.

“But we don’t know what God looks like,” the teacher observed.

Without stopping her work, Emily replied, “We will now.”

Jean Carroll  
via email

issue. I believe that the negative comments directed at Dr. Simon-Netto and his wife were closely akin to throwing a rock and hiding one’s hands.

I found the letters disturbing. We seem to have lost the ability to disagree agreeably, or to formulate a cogent argument without personal attacks. Paradoxically, while the letters were denigrating, the issue’s banner article was entitled “Restoring Broken Relationships,” and “Searching Scripture” mentioned Luther’s explanation to the Eighth Commandment, which directs us to defend our neighbor, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way (Phil 4:8–9).

As a black woman, I know that it’s not what people call you; it’s what you answer to that’s more important (Tyler Perry). But I can also attest to the searing hurt that words can cause, especially to, or about, someone’s mate.

Jan Ellison  
Atlanta Ga.

## In the eye of the beholder

I so enjoyed Paine Proffitt’s artwork in the December *Lutheran Witness*. What wonderful Christmas cards the art would make—or are they already?

Janette C. Borst  
Emporia, Kan.

Those weird paintings by Paine Proffitt are an insult to our heavenly Father and Son. Jesus looks like an Egyptian mummy. And Joseph and Mary need neck therapy.

Paine is a painful artist and should stop painting.

John Knuppel  
Carmel, N.Y.

We welcome letters that comment on articles in *The Lutheran Witness*. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. Send letters to “Letters,” c/o The Lutheran Witness, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295; or send them via e-mail to [Lutheran.Witness@LCMS.org](mailto:Lutheran.Witness@LCMS.org). Please include your name, postal address, and



## The Emmaus Disciples: Walking in the Faith

by Jeffrey Sippy

Luke 24:16 asserts that the disciples were kept from *recognizing* Jesus. In what ways might we be kept from recognizing Jesus even in the midst of the Divine Service, the Word proclaimed, and the Sacrament? (1 Cor. 10:14–22; 11:17–32)?

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Read Mark 8:31–32; Luke 9:22–27; Matt. 16:21–28. What had Jesus said all along? How would the disciples’ speech have been shaped had they remembered and believed Jesus’ word?

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What is Jesus’ straightforward conclusion of their dialogue (vv. 25–26)? In what other ways does Jesus confront the faith and speech of His followers? (See Mark 16:16; Luke 9:41; John 12:1–7.)

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In Luke 24:27–29, Jesus walks with the disciples. He opens the Scriptures. He teaches everything from Moses and the Prophets to what the Scriptures say of Himself. What is the power of the Word proclaimed according to Is. 55:8–11; Ps. 119:105; Rom. 10:17; and 2 Tim. 3:15–16?

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Luke 24:30–31 reveals how Jesus sits with the disciples and *eats* with them. What do the following

Scripture passages tell us about Jesus’ desire to sit with sinners and eat with them: Matt. 8:3; 21:31b; Luke 15:1–2; 23:43?

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Luke 24:32 declares the work of this Word in the lives of the disciples: “Were not our hearts burning within us?” How does the Word of God affect, impress, or stir you in your faith and in your life?

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Luke 24:33–35 records the response, or movement, this Word of God had in the disciples’ lives. They *walked* in faith. They *talked* of what they had seen and heard. How might the response of the Emmaus disciples be a model for us as we see, hear, and taste the Gospel?

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Walking is an integral part of the Christian life. Jesus invites us to walk with Him and to walk together in faith. When we stumble along the path or when we walk in doubt and darkness, Jesus comes and opens His Word to us. His Word lights our path and restores our faith. His Word causes our hearts to burn within us and to boldly proclaim what He has revealed to us: He is the Christ and our sins are forgiven in Him.

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**E**noch walked with God; then he was no more” (Gen. 5:24 NIV). The Psalmist walks through the valley of the shadow of death, yet fears no evil (Ps. 23:4). The paralyzed man got up, took his mat, and walked home (Mark 2:9). How we walk, where we walk, and with whom we walk are vital aspects of the Christian faith.

In Luke 24:13–35, on Easter Sunday, two disciples walk toward Emmaus. They are also walking in doubt and darkness. Graciously, Jesus walks toward them and with them. Jesus opens the Scriptures, opens their eyes, and opens their mouths to proclaim Him.

Luke 24:14–15 states that the disciples talked about all that had happened during Passion Week. Read Deut. 6:4–9; Eph. 4:29; 1 Thess. 5:11; and 1 Cor. 1:23. How do the Scriptures direct our speech?

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