



THE LUTHERAN WITNESS™

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'We Believe' <

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A Way of Forgiveness <

In Praise of Work

A Lutheran Look at Labor Day

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A Lamp and a Light

*“Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet,
and a light unto my path.”*

These words from the Book of Psalms have been spoken and sung frequently, especially after they were put to music by Amy Grant.

I was curious as to why my husband chose these particular words for our devotion the night after he came home from a stay in the hospital. Afflicted with Huntington’s Disease, my husband often doesn’t have much to say about things. However, he knew that I was seldom at a loss for words, so after he read the verse, he dropped it there for me to play with.

“Well,” I said, “I’ve sung that verse a number of times, but I still don’t have it memorized. I can never remember whether the lamp is for my feet or for the path. And I’m never sure which comes first—my feet or the path. And why do I need both a lamp and a light? Aren’t they the same thing?”

I never did learn why my husband chose that scriptural passage, but I was glad he did, for not only do I now have it memorized correctly, but it has afforded me interesting food for thought. As a matter of fact, I have come to the conclusion that, for me, this is one of the most beautifully poetic passages in the Bible.

The first picture that came to my mind was of a path—like something from a Thomas Kinkade painting—shrouded in shadows with a muted light coming from the distance to show the way. It made me think of the walk I had taken a couple weeks before. The mid-August days were growing shorter. Nevertheless, I delayed setting out until after 9:30, hoping that the burning heat of the summer day would have dissipated. As I turned the corner heading away from our house, I realized that it was really a very dark night. As a matter of fact, when I looked down, I could barely see my white tennis shoes, let alone the sidewalk. However, I was just going around the block and knew the way well. Our neighborhood is pretty safe, so I wasn’t afraid.

However, when I reached the other side of the block, everything was very dark, and no moon was visible. All I could see were a few porch lights shining in the distance. I felt kind of excited at being all by myself on such a dark path. It’s true, I did feel a smidgen of guilt at forgetting to take my cell phone just in case something happened. Over here, everyone in the neighborhood seemed to be in bed, just like my husband, so if something were to happen to me, help would be a long time in coming.

I decided it was best to keep my stride, and so I walked on confidently at a fast clip. I could sense the sidewalk and really didn’t need light. I knew right where I was by the feel

of things. I would be fine if I kept my eyes on the lights in the distance. But then . . . suddenly my toe caught on an uneven piece of sidewalk. I realized in that instant that I was going to go down with my full weight, for I reeled forward and could not correct my balance. Not wanting to come up all scraped and bleeding, or risk breaking some bones, I dove toward the drought-hardened lawn beside the sidewalk, hoping that the grass would cushion my fall. I landed hard with the wind totally knocked out of me. After a few moments, I summoned the courage to check my knees. I couldn’t feel any wetness of blood, and although I felt stiff, nothing seemed broken.

I limped home, still pretty shaken, and found my husband sleeping peacefully. I thanked God for protecting me and realized afresh that, indeed, there are angels watching over me.

The next day, I checked where I had gone down and discovered that there was a large decorative boulder on the lawn next door to the one where I had fallen. Had I hit that full force, I would have had a severe head injury and probably few teeth left. However, all I had to show for my little mishap was a nasty bruise on my hip.

I surely could have used a lamp for my feet on that night. Even though there were lights in the distance to keep me on the path, I couldn’t see my feet in the dark, let alone any uneven spots or debris on the sidewalk. That’s sort of how I walk through life. I know where the path is, but because I am gawking at the scenery or because it’s too dark where I look down, I sometimes don’t see the pitfalls until it’s too late.

Now I understand why God’s Word is both a lamp and a light. It’s not redundant after all. The light of God’s Word shines to illumine the path to heaven and keeps me going in the right direction. However, I also need something to shine by my feet to keep me from falling. As a lamp unto my feet, God’s Word highlights and warns me of immediate danger spots in my life.

How I love the light of the Gospel that draws me toward heaven, just as I love the muted light in a Thomas Kinkade painting. But I need the lamp of the Law to shine at my feet, helping me avoid mishaps and injury as I walk along the path of my life. Like a moth, I tend to flit along the path of life drawn by the promise of the Word of God and the presence of my Savior shining at the end of my path. But it is the lamp of His Word and His daily presence in my life through Holy Baptism that keep me from getting badly bruised or severely injured on the way there. The lamp and the light of His Word keep me safe, both for now and for eternity.

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



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September is a month of change. School has started and summer is nearly over. The temperatures are cooling off, but there's still time for one last warm-weather hurrah over Labor Day. Leaves are changing their colors, too, but there's still a plate of burgers to grill, time to get a mosquito bite or two, and a pitcher of lemonade to enjoy with friends.

As the summer draws to a close, we look with anticipation to the transitions of fall. So while we can't provide you with hot dogs and coleslaw, we can, in this issue of *The Lutheran Witness*, offer you a variety of fascinating articles to whet your theological appetite.

Speaking of Labor Day, have you ever wondered why we celebrate it in the first place? Check out Dr. Gene Veith's article, "In Praise of Work." There you'll find the real meaning behind the holiday, what the word *vocation* means for you as a Lutheran, and what work our Lord, Jesus Christ, has already done for you on your behalf.

Interested in how The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is sharing the Gospel of Christ overseas? Take a look at "Surprised in Shanghai," an article by Dr. Paul L. Maier on Concordia International School Shanghai. This new and thriving LCMS school is located in the heart of China's great cosmopolitan coastal metropolis, and you get a firsthand glimpse at both the academic standards and Christian values being instilled in its students.

Also, be sure to read "A Way of Forgiveness," the compelling story of Rev. Hicham Chehab, who bears witness to the fact that our Lord has a good plan and a good purpose for each life. Trained as a Muslim sniper in war-torn Lebanon, Chehab laid down his rifle, was baptized, and recently was ordained into the Office of the Holy Ministry as an LCMS pastor. (In its own way, Chehab's story reminds us of the story of St. Paul.)

Finally, see the end of this issue. There you'll find the first letter addressed directly to you, the laypeople and church workers of the LCMS, from the Synod's new president, Rev. Matthew C. Harrison. He has a word of reassurance and joy for each of you, pointing you to Christ's death on the cross and the salvation that is freely yours because of it.

The summer is nearly over, but the beauty of fall awaits. As you enjoy those final sips of lemonade, also take comfort in God's deep, enduring love and mercy in Christ. Those are the lasting treasures that truly know no season!

Adriane Dorr, Managing Editor
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- For the latest Synod news, visit lcms.org/reporter. This month, see especially *Reporter's* online coverage of the Sept. 11 installation of the Synod's new officers and a commentary on confirmation by Dr. Marvin Bergman, professor emeritus, Concordia University Nebraska.
- At lcms.org/witness, see also "The Message of Confirmation," a *Classic Witness* story from July 2006 by Rev. Tim Pauls.

A Sardine in the Tin

by TIMOTHY C. CARTWRIGHT

Insanity has been defined as doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result. Sanity is being willing to attempt something new in order to change a broken situation.

There are moments when new things must be done. For me, a prime example occurred on a recent airplane trip.

The plane was crowded. The orderly progression of passengers to their seats had broken down. People were pushing to get to their assigned seats. Frequent flyers were cramming carry-on luggage into overhead bins. We all looked as if we were fighting for the last sausage at an Iron Curtain meat market.

We found our seats. Many were making final cell-phone calls prior to being instructed to power down all electronic devices. The emergency-exit-plan brochure “located in the seat pocket in front of you” was explained. Of course, everybody was giving the attendant their undying attention (sarcasm mine).

One of the attendants trudged down the aisle, looking for tray table infractions. “She looks like Nurse Ratchet from *One Flew over the Cuckoo’s Nest*,” I thought to myself. She spied a piece of luggage protruding beyond the edge of an overhead bin. The compartment door had yet to be shut. She glanced at the filled-to-capacity fuselage. We were all seated like sardines in a tin. When she glared at us, we averted her stare by returning to the boring exit brochure. Nobody dared to look her way. Nobody claimed the oversized bag, the object of her scorn.

She turned her attention back to the bag. With a grunt, she gave the bag a shove. It didn’t move. She made a fist.

She slugged the bag. Then she tried the compartment door. It wouldn’t shut. She glanced at the sardines. She muttered something under her breath. She took both hands and pushed. She smacked the bag. Frustrated, she retreated to the tail of the plane.

What now?

Another flight attendant came from the front of the plane. She floated up to the site of the luggage crime. She simply turned the bag a half of a rotation with her dainty, manicured hands. She reached up like a ballerina executing a pirouette. She gently closed the door. The plane erupted in applause. Who needs in-flight movie entertainment?

How many times have I been like that first flight attendant? Tired, frustrated, at my wits’ end, I keep trying to do the same thing, expecting a different result. I pound my fist. I pound my chest. Exhausted, I give up.

Life is like that sometimes. In front of a crowd we make a fool of ourselves. How many times have I been shown up by perfect people with perfect solutions!

Not that I have already been made perfect . . . but I press on . . . knowing Christ Jesus has taken hold of me—an imperfect “flight attendant”!

Rev. Timothy C. Cartwright is pastor of Grace Lutheran Church, Ashland, Ore.

‘Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already been made perfect, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.’

—Phil. 3:12 NIV



Bigger and better!

In the opening paragraph of your story on the LCMS' Houston convention, you described Houston as the "fourth-largest metropolitan area in the United States." Unfortunately, you are misinformed. The fourth-largest metropolitan area in the United States, behind New York (19,069,796), Los Angeles (12,874,797), and Chicago (9,580,567), is Dallas–Fort Worth (6,447,615). Houston (5,867,489) comes in at number six behind Dallas and Philadelphia (5,968,252). This can be easily confirmed by the most recent numbers (7/1/2009) on the Census Bureau website.

*Eric Matthaei
Irving, Texas*

We stand corrected. Houston is the fourth-largest city in the U.S. Dallas–Fort Worth is the fourth-largest metropolitan area. Blame the editor, not the author.—Ed.

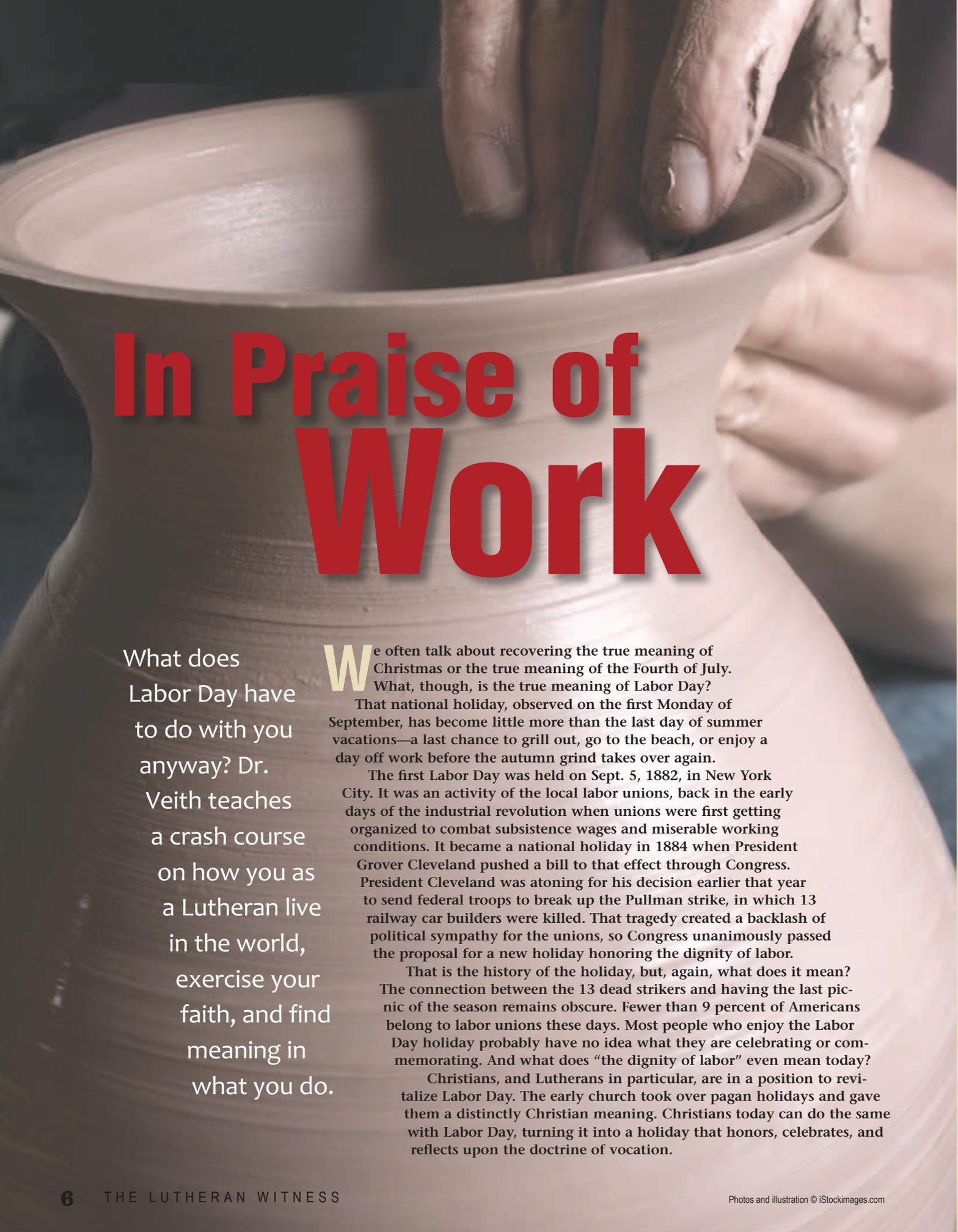
The way ahead

While I was not a delegate to the Synod convention, I was looking forward to action on the Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance's exhaustive study of the need for reorganizing the LCMS, as brought to the convention by Floor Committee 8. Now that the convention addressed only about 50 percent of the floor committee's proposed resolutions, I am deeply concerned that the job of reorganization has been left "half done." I believe *The Lutheran Witness* should undertake a major effort to inform all LCMS members (1) what organization changes have been made and why, (2) what has been left unaddressed and the potential problems this may cause for the organization changes approved, and (3) the pros and cons for completing the work of Floor Committee 8, which I thought went to extreme efforts to study and communicate the issues for change.

While I support giving each congregation a feeling of greater involvement in the direction of the LCMS, we have not acknowledged the major contributions of large urban congregations, with multiple pastors, and memberships that can support greater Christian-education opportunities.

*Bob Wiesenborn
Friendswood, Texas*

continued on page 26



In Praise of Work

What does Labor Day have to do with you anyway? Dr. Veith teaches a crash course on how you as a Lutheran live in the world, exercise your faith, and find meaning in what you do.

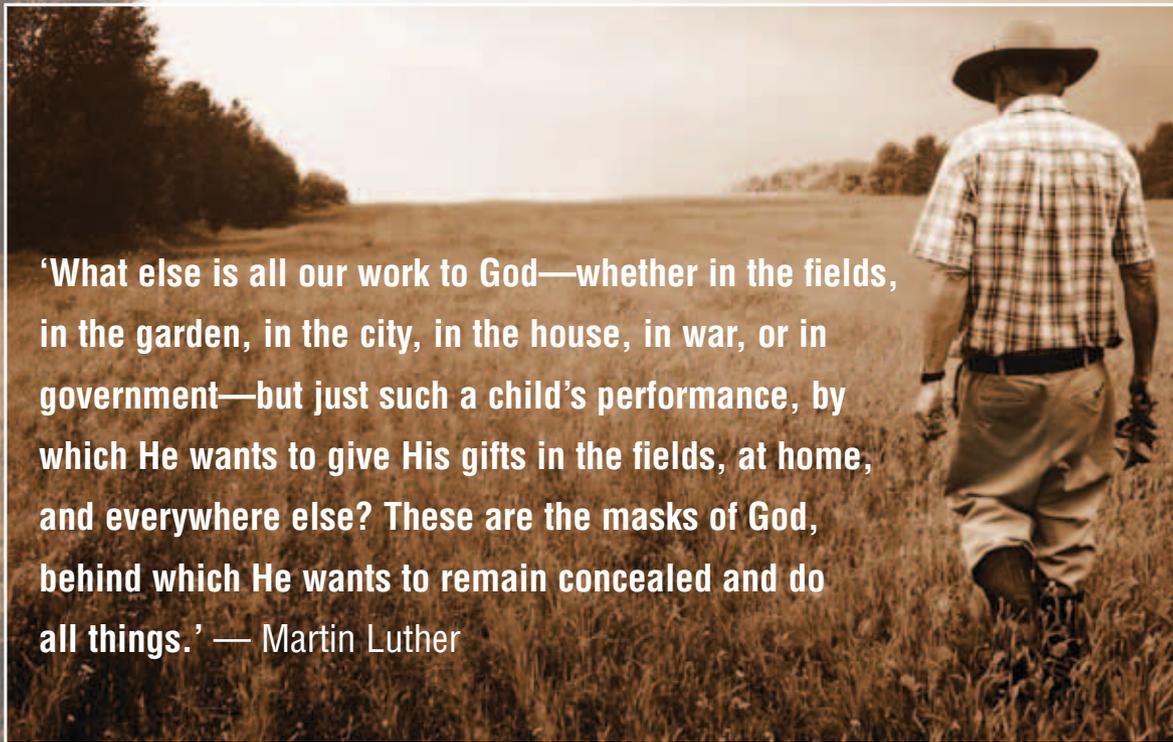
We often talk about recovering the true meaning of Christmas or the true meaning of the Fourth of July. What, though, is the true meaning of Labor Day?

That national holiday, observed on the first Monday of September, has become little more than the last day of summer vacations—a last chance to grill out, go to the beach, or enjoy a day off work before the autumn grind takes over again.

The first Labor Day was held on Sept. 5, 1882, in New York City. It was an activity of the local labor unions, back in the early days of the industrial revolution when unions were first getting organized to combat subsistence wages and miserable working conditions. It became a national holiday in 1884 when President Grover Cleveland pushed a bill to that effect through Congress. President Cleveland was atoning for his decision earlier that year to send federal troops to break up the Pullman strike, in which 13 railway car builders were killed. That tragedy created a backlash of political sympathy for the unions, so Congress unanimously passed the proposal for a new holiday honoring the dignity of labor.

That is the history of the holiday, but, again, what does it mean? The connection between the 13 dead strikers and having the last picnic of the season remains obscure. Fewer than 9 percent of Americans belong to labor unions these days. Most people who enjoy the Labor Day holiday probably have no idea what they are celebrating or commemorating. And what does “the dignity of labor” even mean today?

Christians, and Lutherans in particular, are in a position to revitalize Labor Day. The early church took over pagan holidays and gave them a distinctly Christian meaning. Christians today can do the same with Labor Day, turning it into a holiday that honors, celebrates, and reflects upon the doctrine of vocation.



‘What else is all our work to God—whether in the fields, in the garden, in the city, in the house, in war, or in government—but just such a child’s performance, by which He wants to give His gifts in the fields, at home, and everywhere else? These are the masks of God, behind which He wants to remain concealed and do all things.’ — Martin Luther

God’s Labor and Our Labor

“Only let each person lead the life that the Lord has assigned to him, and to which God has called him” (1 Cor. 7:17). The word *vocation* comes from the Latin word for “calling.” It means that God assigns us to certain courses of life and then calls us to different tasks, offices, and avenues for service.

The doctrine of vocation is Luther’s theology of the Christian life. It has to do with how Christians are to live in the world, how they exercise their faith, and how their ordinary lives are charged with meaning.

More specifically, vocation addresses how God works through human beings. He gives us our daily bread through the vocation of farmers, millers, and bakers. He protects us by means of the governing authorities. He grants healing by means of the medical vocations. He creates works of beauty by working through artists and musicians. He creates new life and cares for children by means of mothers and fathers.

God is at work in all of the people who do things for us—the ones who built our houses, made our clothing, prepared our food, picked up our trash, designed the technology that we enjoy, worked in the factories to manufacture what we need, gave us services to make our lives easier—and He is at work through us. Luther goes so far as to say that vocation is a “mask of God,” that behind the server in the restaurant who brings us our food, behind the shopkeeper, behind the business executive, and behind us in the things that we do for others, God Himself is hidden.

Luther writes, “What else is all our work to God—whether in the fields, in the garden, in the city, in the house, in war, or in government—but just such a child’s performance, by which He wants to give His gifts in the fields, at home, and everywhere else? These are the masks of God, behind which He wants to remain concealed and do all things. . . . He could give children without using men and women. But He does not want to do this. Instead, He joins man and woman so that it appears to be the work of man and woman, and yet He does it under the cover of such masks. . . . God gives all good gifts; but . . . you must work and thus give God good cause and a mask” (*Commentary on Psalm 147*; Luther’s Works 14:114 AE).

When we thank God for our meals and for all of our other blessings, we are acknowledging His labor that is manifested in human labor. Vocation is another example of the Lutheran principle that God works through means. In His spiritual kingdom, God works through the Word and Sacraments. In His earthly kingdom, He works through vocation to care providentially for all of His creation.

Being conscious of vocation makes us appreciate all the people through whom God serves us, helping us see in every laborer the presence of God.

Laboring in God’s Estates

Contrary to today’s usage, the word *vocation* does not just mean “job.” Each Christian has multiple callings that can be categorized into what Luther describes as the three



estates that God has established for human life: the church, the household, and the civil government (*Large Confession 1528*; Luther's Works 37).

All Christians have been "called by the Gospel" and, by virtue of their Baptisms, are made part of the Church. God calls pastors through whom He proclaims His Word and administers His Sacraments. When the pastor, "as a called and ordained servant of the Word," forgives us our sins in the stead of and by the command of Christ, Jesus Himself is forgiving us through the pastor's word of absolution. Laypeople, too, have callings in the Church, as they serve each other in the ordinary work of the congregation: singing in the choir, serving on boards and committees, passing out bulletins, and taking part in the church's ministries.

God has also called us into families, into the vocations of the household. Fathers and mothers, husbands and wives, sons and daughters are all, in the words of Luther's Small Catechism, "holy orders" in which God has placed us. Luther classifies the work by which we make our livings for ourselves and our families—the modern sense of vocation—within the estate of the household, thus subordinating work to family. One might wonder why on Labor Day, we don't work on a day that honors work. For Luther, spending time with our families is one of the most important vocations that we have.

God has also called us into a civil society—into a community, a nation, a culture. Thus, we have the vocation of citizen. Christians should thus exercise the duties of citizenship, which for Americans include voting, deliberating on the issues of the day, and actively participating in the culture where God has placed us.

To these estates, Luther adds a more general category he calls "the common order of Christian love" (*Large Confession 1528*). This is the realm in which we interact with people from all vocations in the course of everyday life. It includes friendships, informal interactions, and the realm of the Good Samaritan. Here too we are called to service.

The Purpose of Labor

The purpose of every vocation, according to Luther, is to love and serve our neighbors. Scripture tells us to love God and to love our neighbors (Luke 10:27). Our relationship to God, though, is not based on what we do. Nor is our love for God anything of our doing. "In this is love, not that we have loved God but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). Our relationship with God is based solely on the gift of His Son. But our faith in

Him bears fruit in love for God, who then sends us into our vocations to love our neighbors (see *The Freedom of the Christian*; Luther's Works 31).

Each vocation has its own neighbors whom we are to love and serve. Marriage presents us with only one neighbor whom we are to love and serve: our spouse. Husbands love and serve their wives, and wives love and serve their husbands. Parents love and serve their children. Children love and serve their parents. In the workplace, laborers love and serve their co-workers, their bosses, and, above all, their customers. In the state, rulers are to love and serve their people, and citizens are to love and serve their fellow citizens.

Notice that even vocations that include the exercise of authority are to do so in love and service. "You know that those who are considered rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. But it shall not be so among you. But whoever would be great among you must be your servant" (Mark 10:42–43). Whereas non-Christians—and many Christians today who have forgotten vocation—turn authority into the exercise of power over others, vocation turns authority into a way of serving them.



'The purpose of every vocation, according to Luther, is to love and serve our neighbors.'



The Priesthood of All Laborers

Of course, we also sin in our vocations. Instead of loving and serving our neighbor, we often despise our neighbor and insist that our neighbor serve us. These sins we confess to God. In the section on Confession and Absolution in the Catechism, we are told to consider "our station in life"—a synonym for vocation—in light of the Ten Commandments. These we confess to our pastor, either privately or in the Divine Service, who then uses his vocation to give us Christ's forgiveness, which we receive from the pastor "as from Christ Himself." At the end of the service, having been built up in our faith through the Word and the Sacrament, we are sent back to our vocations—to our marriages, our parenting, our jobs, and our culture—to bear the fruits of our faith. Next Sunday, we are back again, confessing how we have sinned in our vocations. But then, hearing the Gospel once again, we are sent back into our callings. This is the pattern of the Christian life.

It is in vocation that sanctification happens. It is in vocation that evangelism happens, as when parents bring their children to Baptism and teach them about Jesus and in the natural conversations that take place in the workroom and in the opportunities to bring our friends to church. It is in vocation that Christians become salt and light to the world,



influencing the culture as a whole by living out their faith in every profession.

Vocation is part of the priesthood of all believers. That does not mean that every Christian is a pastor. It means that Christians do not have to be pastors to be priests. A priest is a member of a “holy order,” which is how the Table of Duties in the Catechism describes marriage, parenthood, and laboring in the workforce. To be specific, a priest is someone who offers a sacrifice. This does not mean replicating the sacrifice of Christ, which is a once-for-all propitiation for the sins of the world. Rather, those who know Christ’s sacrifice are called to present their bodies as “a living sacrifice” (Rom. 12:1).

This happens in vocation. The laborer in whatever field who comes home from work exhausted has presented his body as a living sacrifice for his family. The wife who submits to her husband and the husband who “gives himself up” for his wife (Eph. 5:22–33) are both offering themselves to each other as living sacrifices. Every vocation involves a sacrifice of the self for the good of the neighbor. But in that sacrifice is the cross of Jesus Christ Himself who works in and through vocation.

Luther on Labor Day

Christians have good reason to celebrate Labor Day, which, in light of vocation, can be an occasion to thank

God for His gifts and His presence in the work that He gives us to do and in the work through which we are blessed by others.

Luther wrote centuries before the institution of Labor Day, but he sums up well the true meaning of the holiday:

If you are a manual laborer, you find that the Bible has been put into your workshop, into your hand, into your heart. It teaches and preaches how you should treat your neighbor. Just look at your tools—at your needle or thimble, your beer barrel, your goods, your scales or yardstick or measure—and you will read this statement inscribed on them. Everywhere you look, it stares at you. Nothing that you handle every day is so tiny that it does not continually tell you this, if you will only listen. . . . All this is continually crying out to you: “Friend, use me in your relations with your neighbor just as you would want your neighbor to use his property in his relations with you.” (*The Sermon on the Mount and the Magnificat*; Luther’s Works 21:237).

Dr. Gene Edward Veith (GEVeith@phc.edu) serves as provost at Patrick Henry College, the director of the Cranach Institute at Concordia Theological Seminary, and is the author of *God at Work: Your Christian Vocation in All of Life*.





Surprised in Shanghai

by Paul L. Maier

Everything in China is different today. Remember the old pictures of a street in a Chinese city with 50 bicycles and only one car? Taken at the same spot today, such a photo would still show the 50 bicycles but wedged between 100 cars. Peasant villages have given way to urban sprawl that sprouts towering office buildings gleaming with glass and whole forests of high-rise apartments.

China backward? This past March, when I was invited to lecture for a week at Concordia International School Shanghai (CISS) and landed at Shanghai's Pudong Airport, I was whisked into the city on a MagLev (Magnetic Levitation) train—the only one in the world. The train rides on a spine of reversed polar electromagnetic plates that eliminate friction and enhance speed. Since it was night, the operators cut the train's speed to a mere 180 mph through the city. (During the day, they approach 260 mph!) And the Ramada Inn, where I stayed in Shanghai, was not a two- or three-floor motel but a 24-story skyscraper!

And still more surprises lay in store. In 1997, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod was invited—by multinational corporations, American expatriates, U.S. foreign-service personnel, and the People's Republic of China itself—to build an international school in Shanghai. But more: Synod not only accepted the invitation, but today the 10-acre campus of CISS boasts a magnificent series of



Left: CISS students try out leading-edge technology.
Center: The rooftop garden of the Concordia International School Shanghai.
Right: CISS's Head of School, Dr. Jim Koerschen, conducts an all-school assembly with students, faculty, and parents.

cutting-edge structures that comprise elementary, middle, and secondary schools with 1,100 students, 140 faculty, four gymnasiums, a handsome concert-assembly hall, a superb student center, and the latest in audio-visual-computer equipment. Oh, and one more near-miracle: it's all paid for—in less than a dozen years!

How Was This Possible?

Too often, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod is regarded as a conservative, traditional church body that catches “the latest wave” only after it has already splashed through other denominations. But this is unfair and largely untrue. The LCMS has been

a world leader in religious radio and television, parochial schools, higher education, and international missions. Gifted leaders in our church have recognized great opportunities as they emerged, ever since Martin Luther used the printing press to reform the church. Radio broadcasting had barely been invented when Concordia Seminary chartered KFUE, which remains the oldest continually broadcasting religious radio station in the world.

The opportunities in China were no exception. In 1967, the LCMS founded Hong Kong International School, which today has a student body of 2,700. Because of this success—and through diplomatic cooperation

with Chinese authorities, American citizens, and U.S. corporations—Lutherans were invited to do the same in Shanghai. It would have been easier and taken much less faith to decline “at this time” in view of unknowns in the future, including the looming Asian economic downturn of the late 1990s, but we were blessed with visionaries like John Schuelke, chief operating officer of the Synod; Richard Peters, a member of our board of directors; and George Horensky, Synod's comptroller, who persuaded the LCMS Board of Directors to advance \$2 million as seed money to plant CISS. With support from Hong Kong International School and LCMS World Mission, pioneers in



the venture included David Rittmann, Earl Westrick, and David Birner, as well as Frederick Voigtmann of Concordia Consulting in Taiwan. LCMS World Mission called educators, including Dr. Allan and Sandy Schmidt and Michael and Louise Weber, who founded the school in 1998 with only 22 students and 14 faculty and staff. They held forth in a government-built temporary building on a piece of land in Pudong, then a new neighborhood of Shanghai.

How, then, can one explain CISS's exponential growth? God's choicest blessings, of course—as well as excellent teachers and a balanced American curriculum with Christian values. China's new openness to the rest of the world was also crucial. Gone are the xenophobic days of Mao Zedong, due largely to the more enlightened economic policies of Deng Xiaoping. Now, as everyone knows, China sells to the entire globe, with the fastest-growing economy in the world. Businessmen, diplomats, teachers, students, and an army of “expats” (expatriates) from across the globe have arrived in China with their families, and they want their children educated in English—or they'd rather not move to China. To accommodate the growth, the Chinese government has developed a large section of northeastern Shanghai and encouraged the establishment of

English-speaking schools there, hence the invitation to the LCMS.

Still, how was it possible for Concordia Shanghai to be in the black less than a dozen years after its founding, even with huge expenditures for its facilities? Simply through academic excellence and charging the going tuition rate for international students—no more, no less—plus the dramatic buying power in China for the American dollar. In the U.S., the cost of one silk tie (made in China, of course) would buy 10 or 15 such ties in China.

The CISS and the LCMS

Since 2007, Dr. James Koerschen, former president of Concordia University, Ann Arbor, Mich., has been the “Head of School” (i.e., headmaster) of CISS. As my genial host during the week in which I was privileged to teach at both the elementary and high-school levels, he proved a justifiably proud guide, showing off some of the finest educational facilities I've seen anywhere. Concordia was the first structure in Shanghai to incorporate a ground-source heat-exchange system from a network of more than 112 miles of polyethylene tubing buried deep under the athletic fields, which cuts heating and air-conditioning costs by more than 20 percent. Even CISS's three gar-

den roofs—one of which is a science observatory—serve a “green” cause through an insulating effect, making CISS one of the most environmentally friendly institutions in China.

A man ablaze with plans for the future, Dr. Koerschen intends to keep CISS in close contact with the LCMS. The outreach of the church through such an institution can hardly be overstated. At Concordia, I saw students from many different nations—not just the English-speaking set—who will become natural leaders in their own countries after finishing their education. The largest groups of non-Anglophone students come from South Korea and more than 20 other countries. One percent of the student body is from the People's Republic of China itself. While there is no preaching in any of the classes, a deep respect for Christian values and culture cannot but be engendered in these future leaders.

The True Measure of a School

Finally, it's not the impressive physical structures of Concordia or even its dedicated faculty and administration that gauge the worth of this institution, but the question of how well its students learn. Here, the report

Far left: All-school chapel service.
 Left: Dr. Paul Maier teaches students at CISS.
 Right: CISS students participate in service activities, such as laying pipe for fresh water in a village in rural China.

card glitters. The SATs taken by CISS seniors show dramatically higher scores than the norm. The class of 2010 scored an average of 2000, while the AP (Advanced Placement) exams exceed the U.S. national averages in 19 out of 20 categories, most by a big margin. Accordingly, CISS has set new standards for academic excellence in East Asia, and its lofty reputation is extraordinary for so young a school. Concordia, in fact, has taken the lead in hosting conferences and competitions among the English-speaking schools in eastern China, such as Shanghai's National History Day event, at which I was the keynote speaker. Credit the vision of its founders, the excellence of its leadership, and, above all, a collegial and youthful faculty with much *esprit de corps* and a firm desire to push the academic envelope.

China and Christianity

China is indeed a nation on the move. Under Hu Jintao, its present president, it is more open than ever before, and perhaps some of our old stereotypes regarding China might need some modification. To be sure, the People's Republic remains a fully secular—and secularist—state that does not espouse religion in general or Christianity in particular. And yet, it was my privilege to preach twice in Shanghai the first Sunday in March, in the morning at a newly founded fellowship that worshiped in a rented clubhouse, and, in the afternoon, at a church built for Protestants by no less than the Chinese government.

Hmmm. China is changing. Perhaps our impressions of China also need a bit of change. The success of our international schools in China is a case in point.

Dr. Paul L. Maier (paul.maier@wmich.edu) is third vice-president of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and professor of ancient history at Western Michigan University, Kalamazoo.



>> CISS: Providing Community and Excellence in Education

BY KARIN SEMLER

If an informal poll of faculty and parents of Concordia International School Shanghai was taken to provide one word that describes the school, the word would be *community*. As families are transferred to the fastest-growing financial hub in Asia, they find a home-away-from-home and new “family” at Concordia in the new Pudong area of Shanghai.

“When I needed PediaCare in the middle of the night, I texted a group of friends who showed up at my door to help me,” explains Christine Freeman, a five-year Concordia parent who is originally from Chicago. “I always reassure new families that there are many Concordia parents who will take them

around to find where to buy things and to share advice.”

At Concordia Shanghai, serving others seems to have been woven into the fabric of the school at all levels. Being “blessed to be a blessing” manifests itself on the micro-level in one-to-one relationships and at the macro-level in the school ethos of caring.

In 2002, three Concordia High School students founded a charity, YEP—the Yunnan Education Project—in response to meeting humanitarian needs of people in rural areas of China. YEP is widely embraced throughout the school with fundraising, project support, and service projects that provide funds and manpower for school buildings, school libraries, school materials,

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"The administration of Concordia Shanghai has provided guidance and leadership in staffing, decision making, budget development, and support," says Steve Winkelman, Head of School at Concordia International School Hanoi (CISH). "The teachers at Concordia Shanghai have provided expertise in curriculum development, instructional strategies, and support. CISH would not be in a position to open in August 2011 without the support of the Concordia Shanghai board of directors, administration, and teaching staff."

"Educators have an amazing opportunity to make a difference in the lives of their students in this unique setting," observes Louise Schini Weber, recently retired elementary school principal and a founding staff member at Concordia Shanghai. "Step out of your comfort zone and become Christ's heart, hands, and feet as an international educator!"

Karin Semler (karin.semler@ciss.com.cn) is the assistant director of admissions for Concordia International School, Shanghai, China.

continued from page 13

English-language instruction, village water systems, and high-school scholarships. "I don't know of any other school which has a student-funded charity like Concordia," says Head of School Dr. James Koerschen. "As a charity, YEP isn't an add-on—it's part of who we are as a school."

As a preeminent Christian international school in the People's Republic of China, Concordia's curriculum combines rigorous academics and solid Lutheran education that has shaped generations of young people in the LCMS. Roughly two-thirds of the students identify themselves as Christian.

Academic excellence is not uncommon among international schools, and Concordia Shanghai consistently stands out on external assessments. The class of 2010 achieved an Advanced Placement passing rate of 96 percent on the college-level courses. While still a young school, Concordia's SAT scores are among the top in Asia. The class of 2010 will begin studies at Notre Dame, Stanford, Cornell, Wellesley, and University of Michigan, to name only a few institutions.

Concordia Shanghai was the first laptop school in Shanghai, with grades 7–12 daily utilizing personal Macbooks on the wireless campus. Most recently, Concordia became the first and only Apple Regional Training Center in Shanghai. Schools from around China and elsewhere in Asia come for training and viewing Concordia's model of integrated technology.

Viewed as a cutting-edge school, Concordia Shanghai is poised to be a blessing and offer assistance on many levels for the start of a new LCMS international school in Hanoi, Vietnam.



>> To Learn More . . .

- **Hong Kong International School, founded in 1966, has an enrollment of 2,700 students: www.hkis.edu.hk**
- **Founded in 1998, Concordia International School Shanghai's student body is represented by 26 passports: www.ciss.com.cn**
- **Concordia International School Hanoi will open enrollment in August 2011.**
- **International schools begin filling vacancies earlier than stateside schools. Interested educators should explore each school's hiring process, as positions usually begin to be filled in the fall and early winter.**

>> Do you know of anyone with an upcoming business-related transfer to Hong Kong, Shanghai, or Hanoi? Be sure to share information about these international schools!



**Our 11th National
LCMS Youth Gathering
makes a big impression
on New Orleans.**

'We Believe'

Over the course of the five-day event, NYG participants followed each of three program paths, tagged 'Look,' 'Listen,' and 'Live.'

by Vicki Biggs

Some 24,000 young people, adult leaders, staff, and volunteers converged in New Orleans July 17–21 for "We Believe," the 11th triennial National LCMS Youth Gathering (NYG). The NYG, which is the Synod's single largest event, brings together young people between the ages of 14 and 20 for worship, learning, and service opportunities.

Not only does the event contribute to the host city's coffers, but the hundreds of servant events performed in and around New Orleans and thousands of donated items brought to the city by NYG participants for area nonprofits and individuals will leave a lasting impression.

"Of course there are the economic benefits such a large group brings to the city with thousands of hotel rooms booked, countless meals consumed, and souvenirs purchased. But our relationship with [the] LCMS runs much deeper with attendees rolling up their sleeves to participate in over 100 service projects," said Jennifer Day, director of communications and public relations, New Orleans Metropolitan Convention and Visitors Bureau.

About half of the NYG participants volunteered at the servant events, which benefited local churches, schools, parks, cemeteries, summer-camp programs and other service organizations, and individual homeowners. The servant events included cleaning, grounds maintenance, home repairs, painting, and assisting at day camps and with neighborhood outreach programs.

Also, in addition to nearly \$140,000 collected for the special gathering offering, NYG participants amassed thousands of items that will be donated to New Orleans-area residents and organizations. This includes:

- > 3,000 personal-care kits for area shelters and community organizations
- > 2,000 placemats for local nursing homes
- > 1,000 units of blood for southeast Louisiana hospitals
- > 400 fleece blankets
- > 50 haircuts for Locks of Love
- > 125 baptismal banners for local churches
- > 3,000 pounds of non-perishable food items for Second Harvest Food Bank
- > 200 batches of play dough for local preschools and Boys & Girls Clubs
- > 2,000 thank-you notes for local oil spill recovery workers

In addition, the LCMS Youth Ministry office sponsored an "Art4Haiti" project. NYG participants spent the first two days of the gathering decorating wooden tiles to be affixed to handcrafted crosses that then were sold during the remainder of the event. All told, 144 crosses were assembled, raising nearly \$5,000. The funds will be donated to LCMS World Relief and Human Care to be used for Haitian relief work.



Servant events are just one of the components of the gathering. Over the course of the five-day event, NYG participants followed each of three program paths, tagged “Look,” “Listen,” and “Live.” Within these tracks, participants experienced hands-on activities, high-impact speakers and performers, and meaningful learning opportunities, including 18 Bible-study options. By the end of the event, all participants had the opportunity to experience each of the tracks. Daytime activities were held at the Ernest N. Morial Convention Center.

Evening mass events, held at the Louisiana Superdome, included Divine Service on Tuesday night. Word, witness, and celebration were key elements of each of the mass events.

“The National LCMS Youth Gathering is an amazing event. When you’re in the middle of it, I am always simply amazed at how God has blessed those thousands of people. It is so encouraging for the youth, and you hear it in the comments over and over, ‘I didn’t know there were so many kids who believe like I do.’ Five days in July were a tremendous confession of faith that ‘WE BELIEVE!’ is a reality expressed in so many wonderful ways,” said Dr. Terry K. Dittmer, director for LCMS District and Congregational Services—Youth Ministry, the office that oversees the National LCMS Youth Gathering. “We look forward to continuing the tradition when we travel to San Antonio in 2013 for the next National LCMS Youth Gathering.”

Vicki Biggs (vicki.biggs@lcms.org) is the LCMS director of public affairs and media relations.





We read and hear about homelessness

on a regular basis, but encountering it

can be an unsettling experience.

Meeting Homelessness Face to Face

by Audrey
Kletscher Helbling

Recently, I came face to face with homelessness for the first time. Sure, I've read the stories and statistics. But in my deepest depths, I never quite believed that homelessness really existed where I live, in Faribault. We are, after all, a city of 25,000 in out-state, not metropolitan, Minnesota. We are a growing, dynamic community. Our official website says so.

However, that naiveté—or perhaps a case of not wanting to believe—changed when I met a woman after Sunday worship at my congregation, Trinity Lutheran Church.

When the middle-aged woman and her companion, a young man in his late 20s or early 30s, walk into our nearly-empty narthex, I can't help but notice them. In their worn attire, they don't fit in.

Even writing that last sentence, I feel profoundly judgmental. I have just come from a contemporary "connection" service where I've sung about embracing others. Although I can't recall the exact words, I remember a line about a strange woman slipping into the pews and the staring glances of faithful worshippers.

I confess that on this particular Sunday morning I am more cautious than welcoming. As the woman enters the narthex, I approach her because, clearly, she is looking for someone.

"Can I help you?" I ask as she walks toward me. Her male friend (maybe he is her son) is already halfway across the room. I keep a distrustful eye on him. Earlier this year, a stranger prowled our church during worship and stole a computer and other items. Since then, we have been watchful.

As I am thinking all of this, the woman asks to speak with the pastor, whom she met months earlier. "Which pastor?" I ask, giving their names.

She doesn't remember. I tell her I will take her to a pastor. As we head toward his office, she explains how she already has been to another church in town that morning, seeking help. She found none there, although, she says, she got a doughnut.

I am surprised that she shares this information—and her first name. Perhaps she is trying to emphasize her desperate situation.

She talks about a man who "tricked" her—and something about the wife he is divorcing and that's why she is without a place to live. I don't understand. It seems complicated and messy. But rather than probe, which is typical of me, I keep quiet. She seems to need a listening ear, and I can at least give her that, I tell myself, and her dignity.

Then she apologizes for her comments. I tell her she's entitled.



We are walking through the gym now. Volunteers are setting out food for an afternoon reception. “Are you having a lunch here?” she asks.

The optimism in her voice is palpable.

“Oh, it’s a reception for someone who is retiring,” I reply, knowing full well that she’s likely hungry. I wish I could offer her some food, but I don’t feel it’s my right to do so.

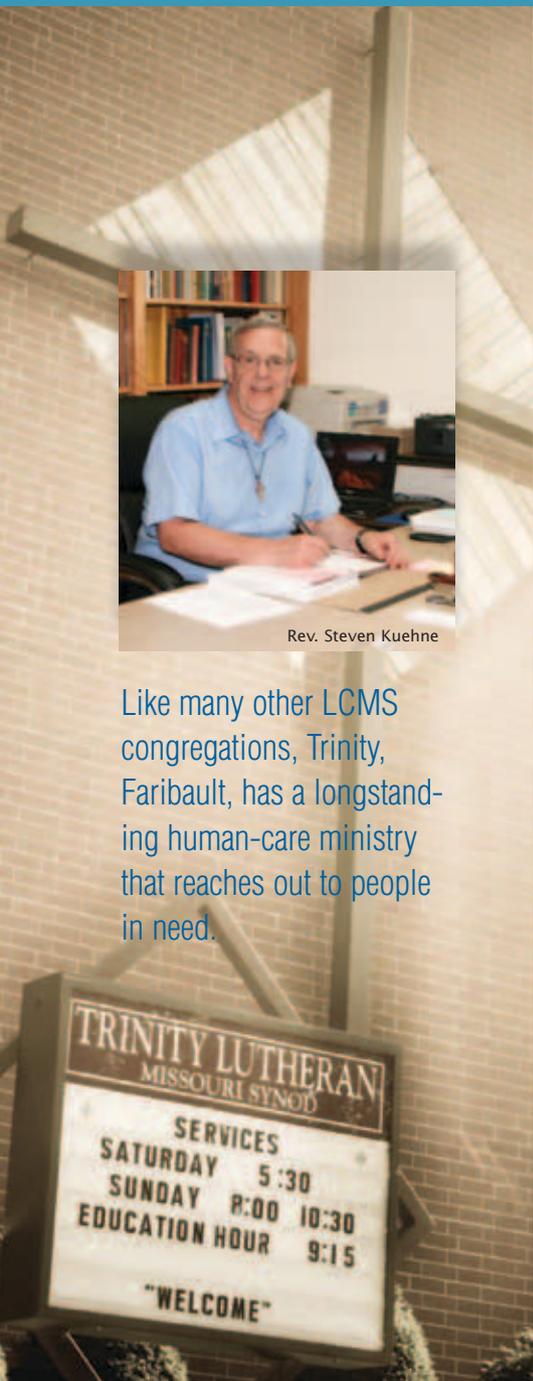
Then we are at the main office, where the pastor is just leaving. “These folks would like to talk to you,” I say, wishing I could remember the woman’s name.

Typically, I am good at recalling names.

As I turn to leave, the pastor unlocks his door and ushers the pair inside. The door closes.

I walk away, the words of Matthew 25 echoing in my head: “I was hungry and you gave me food, . . . I was a stranger and you welcomed me.” *Have I truly done that?* I ask myself. Sure, I took her to see Pastor. But even now, days later, I wonder: By failing to remember her name, will it will be easier for me to dismiss her and her homelessness?

Audrey Kletscher Helbling
(audreykhelbling@gmail.com) is a writer from Faribault, Minn., and a member of Trinity Lutheran Church.



Rev. Steven Kuehne

Like many other LCMS congregations, Trinity, Faribault, has a longstanding human-care ministry that reaches out to people in need.

>> What Happens When the Door Closes?

Trinity Lutheran Church, Faribault, had an active human-care ministry when he was called to the congregation a quarter-century ago, observes Rev. Steven Kuehne, assistant pastor. Begun by lay members, the ministry serves people confronting a variety of issues. Also, Kuehne adds, it is part of a community network that includes other churches and local social-service agencies.

“I was impressed with the ministry when I got here,” he says.

Kuehne notes that the help might be as modest as providing vouchers for gas at local stations or as significant as helping a pregnant young woman whose unborn child was in need of heart surgery.

The young woman had no money for the surgery and no way to get to the out-of-state hospital where the surgery could be performed, Kuehne explains. Trinity, along with its fellow congregations and community partners, found the resources to pay for the surgery and travel expenses.

Because Faribault lies alongside Interstate 35, a major Midwest north-south artery, requests for help come, not only from the community, but also from people passing through, Kuehne says. If the help requested is beyond the scope of Trinity’s ability to assist, individuals are referred to agencies that can provide appropriate resources.

Trinity sponsors a Stephen Ministry also. And at the beginning of the year, the congregation joined other churches and community organizations in establishing Faribault’s Community Cathedral Café, a service that provides a complete evening meal once a week. Kuehne says the meal is free and attendance averages more than 100.

The congregations in Faribault give generously to support human-care efforts, but with the recession, they are finding themselves stretched pretty thin, Kuehne says. At Trinity, however, members still contribute faithfully.

“We have a standing fund for human care, and when that fund drops to a certain level, we ask for donations. We’ve always been able to replenish it.”

ON THE WEB

Helping the Homeless: A Sleeping Mat Ministry

Congregations across the Synod are reaching out with hands of mercy in numerous ways. Writer and editor Sandy Wood explores one imaginative ministry to the homeless: Making sleeping mats out of plastic shopping bags. The mats are versatile and serve as a witness to Christ’s love. To read how Immanuel Lutheran Church and School in Palatine, Ill., is taking part in this ministry, visit lcms.org/witness and click on the “Sleeping Mat” link under “Web-exclusive Stories.” — J.H.H.



Who Communes the Pastor?

We are longtime Missouri Synod Lutherans who believe in the real presence of the body and blood of our Savior Jesus Christ. However, we and other members of our congregation are offended by a practice recently introduced by our pastor. During the Communion service, he communes himself. Is this proper?

The Holy Scriptures give us no direction on the question of self-communion by the pastor. The practice must, therefore, be considered a matter of Christian liberty. Decisions about introducing the practice are to be commended to the good judgment and discretion of Christian congregations and their pastors. Patient, mutual discussion can do much to avoid causing offense and communicating misunderstandings. As St. Paul also reminds us, “All things should be done decently and in order” (1 Cor. 14:40 ESV).

Martin Luther and Lutheran theologians who followed him (e.g., Martin Chemnitz) regarded the practice of a pastor communing himself as permissible, as long as it was done within the public worship service in the presence of the assembled congregation. It should be noted that in the centuries following Luther, Lutherans were not always in agreement regarding the practice. Some considered it improper while others permitted it. Dr. C. F. W. Walther, the first president of the Missouri Synod, took up the question in the 1906 printing of his *Pastoral Theology*, calling attention to Luther’s position in a survey of what other Lutheran teachers said about the topic.

The *Altar Book* of the LCMS’s new hymnal, *Lutheran Service Book*, allows a pastor’s self-communion in the following description present in all the Divine Service settings of the *LSB*: “The pastor and those who assist him receive

the body and blood of Christ first, the presiding minister communing himself and his assistants. Then they distribute the body and blood to those who come to receive” (p. 168).

In recent decades, the practice of asking a lay assistant to commune the pastor during the Communion service has become widespread, is considered the preferred option, and without doctrinal objection has been received well. In his 1945 *Pastoral Theology* textbook (based on Dr. Walther’s earlier work and used at the Synod’s seminaries for many years), Dr. John H. C. Fritz counseled: “Rather than give Communion to himself (which he might legitimately do; of course only in the regular church service and not privately), the pastor should ask the congregation to request a layman . . . to administer the Sacrament to him” (p. 127).

The pastor is a member of the congregation that he serves. He is a Christian and a sinner in need of the Sacrament. The Sacrament, administered according to Christ’s institution, remains valid and beneficial whether the pastor distributes the elements to himself or whether another Christian, such as a lay assistant chosen to do so, distributes it to him.

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



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

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—Colloquies

ROSEMARIE H. DUFFY, Spring, Texas; JANA S. HORN, Franklin, Wis.; AMY M. WILLIAMS, O'Fallon, Mo.; DELORES KESEL, Catawissa, Mo.; BENJAMIN MUELLER, Oconomowoc, Wis.; and JORDAN M. WHITE, Rapid City, S.D., have submitted their applications for the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod through CUEnet. Correspondence regarding these applications should be directed within four weeks after publication of this notice to Rev. Herbert C. Mueller Jr., Chairman, Colloquy Committee, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

MICHELLE A. STEHLE, Naperville, Ill., and HOLLY S. EHLE, New Haven, Ind., have completed all the requirements of the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Mark A. Waldron, Concordia University Chicago, 7400 Augusta St., River Forest, IL 60305-1499.

REBECCA MOTT, Columbia, Mo., has completed all the requirements of the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and is,

therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Brian L. Friedrich, President and CEO, Concordia University Nebraska, 800 N. Columbia Ave., Seward, NE 68434-1599.

Official Notices—Requests for Reinstatement

DENISE DASH, Harlingen, Texas; SHARON HINZ FRAKER, New Braunfels, Texas; KRISTEN (KLEMZ) MCCARTNEY, Indianapolis, Ind.; and CHRISTY JO RAFSON, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, have applied for reinstatement to the Ministers of Religion—Commissioned roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Correspondence regarding these applications should be directed to the undersigned for receipt no later than Oct. 5.—Dr. Raymond L. Hartwig, Secretary, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295.

Positions

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

Vice President and Chief Operating Officer

Concordia Plan Services (CPS) seeks a Vice President and Chief Operating Officer to provide a full range of competitive employee benefits and services to over 6,000 Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod congregations and organizations. There are essentially four plans/trusts to accomplish this—Retirement, Retirement Savings, Disability and Survivor, and Health. With over 32,000 active workers and 58,000 dependents as well as 14,200 retirees receiving pension benefits, CPS has nearly \$3B under management.

This position reports to the CEO of Concordia Plan Services. The COO will assume the responsibility to lead both the existing Operations and Information Technology departments. Responsibilities include executive oversight of all customer service and administrative activities as well as information technology. The successful candidate will be a leading participant in the strategic direction and management of the organization, with primary responsibilities for the execution of the CPS strategy.

The COO will also be proactive in taking responsibility for operational and IT ramifications and their impact on the rest of the organization and especially the impact on customers. The COO will also advise the CEO and his management team on these issues.

Qualifications: Preferably an active member of a LCMS congregation with strong leadership qualities and unquestioned moral compass. Ten plus years of operational experience of similar magnitude and scope in an insurance or other type of financial institution. Confident in leading, defining and documenting operational process and procedure to ensure superior execution and excellent client service outcomes and vendor relationships. Known strategist and proactive leader with strong managerial and people development skills. Able to convert vision into sound operating models; experienced in contingency planning and system re-engineering and implementation. Outstanding project management skills, effective oral and written communication skills, collaborative and a team player. Highly organized, able to work under pressure of time limitations.

Qualified applicants eager to work for a caring Christian organization with a great family-like atmosphere providing excellent benefits, a flexible work schedule, and a convenient loca-

tion—voted as one of the best places to work in St. Louis—should forward resume with cover letter and salary history in confidence—Cindy Kohlbray, Executive Bridge, Inc., ckohlbray@executivebridge.com, no later than Oct. 15, 2010.

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

Concordia College—New York, Bronxville, N.Y., seeks to fill the following positions: **Direct-lending loan processor (part-time); psychology; athletic trainer.**

Concordia University Texas, Austin, Texas, seeks to fill the following position: **SCT Banner analyst.**

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 50 words or less 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., Sept. 20 for the November issue). Send notices to karen.higgins@lcms.org.—Ed.

Peace, Cherokee Village, Ark., will conclude its yearlong 40th anniversary celebration with a community outreach concert at 6 p.m., Sept. 18, with Nancy Schaff from New Jersey, and a 10:30 a.m. combined worship service Sept. 19, with son of the congregation Rev. James Endrihs as guest preacher. A meal and program will follow.

Mount Calvary, Fullerton, Neb., will celebrate its 75th anniversary with a 10 a.m. divine worship service and special Vespers at 2 p.m., Sept.

OFFICE SPACE FOR LEASE 3558 S. Jefferson Ave. St. Louis, MO

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

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- Shipping Services
- Security Card Access for Your Employees
- Telephone Service
- Internet Connection
- Janitorial Services
- In-house Printing

19. Former pastor Rev. Steven Resner will be guest preacher. A luncheon and anniversary program will follow. Contact the church office at 308-536-2635.

St. Trinity, Clarkston, Mich., will celebrate its 125th anniversary with 8:15 and 11 a.m. worship services, Sept. 19, with Michigan District President David P.E. Maier as guest preacher. An informal homecoming party, with traditional family games as well as music by The Polka Lieders, will follow. Visit online at <http://saintrinitylutheran.org> or call the church office at 248-625-4644.

Faith, Collierville, Tenn., will celebrate its 25th anniversary Sept. 25 with a picnic, games and homecoming dance and Sept. 26 with worship services, dedications and a reception. Former pastors Rev. Mark Zender and Rev. Douglas Barnett will be guest speakers. For more information, e-mail pahwardt@bellsouth.net.

Our Savior, Okanogan, Wash., will celebrate its 50th anniversary with a special 2 p.m. service Oct. 2 under the theme "United by God's Grace." Guest preacher will be Rev. Walt Meinhardt; liturgist will be Rev. John Ramsey. A light meal will follow. Contact the church office with an RSVP at 509-422-2652 or deacon@ncidata.com.

Trinity, Plentywood, Mont., will celebrate its 100th anniversary with a special presentation and gathering at 7 p.m., Oct. 2, and with a 10:30 a.m. worship service Oct. 3, with a meal to follow. Dr. Wallace Schulz will be guest speaker. E-mail th@nemont.net or write Jason Rusbult, 601 W. Laurel, Plentywood, MT 59254.

Trinity, Fairfield, Calif., will celebrate its 100th anniversary with a 6 p.m. catered banquet Oct. 9, and a 10 a.m. worship service Oct. 10, with guest speakers Rev. Dan Buringrud and Rev. David Corson. A family barbecue will follow. Contact the church office at 707-425-2944 or visit online at www.tlcp.org.

Zion, Oak Lawn, Ill., will celebrate its 100th anniversary with a 10 a.m. worship service Oct. 10. Rev. Dan Gilbert, president of the Northern Illinois District, will be guest preacher. A noon luncheon will follow. Contact the church office at 708-422-1433.

Holy Trinity, Greensburg, Ind., will celebrate its 75th anniversary with a 10 a.m. service, Oct. 10, with the theme "Lift High the Cross as Onward Christian Soldiers." Dr. Dean Wenthe, president of Concordia Theology Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., will be guest speaker. A potluck dinner will follow the service. Contact Pastor Dennis Wenzel at 812-663-8192 or mail2holyltrinity@gmail.com.

St. John, Corning, Mo., will celebrate its 150th anniversary with a special 10 a.m. worship service Oct. 10, followed by a catered noon meal and 2 p.m. service. Rev. Robert Den Ouden and Rev. Donald Jenkins, former pastors, will officiate. For reservations or more information, contact the church office at 660-442-3414 or triparishlc@gmail.com.

St. Peter's, East Peoria, Ill., will celebrate its 100th anniversary with a 10:45 a.m. celebration service Oct. 17, followed by a 1 p.m. catered lunch. Rev. David Buelmann, president of the Central Illinois District, will be guest preacher. Contact the church office at 309-699-5411 or marsha@stpeters-epil.com.

St. Paul's, California, Mo., will conclude its 150th anniversary celebration at the 9 a.m. service Oct. 24, with Dr. Ken Schurb as guest speaker. A luncheon will follow, as well as a 1 p.m. program. Contact the church office at 573-796-2735.

Ascension, Casselberry, Fla., will celebrate its 50th anniversary at the 10:30 a.m. worship service Oct. 31, with Dr. Tom Zehnder, son of the founding pastor, as guest speaker. A congregational dinner will follow at the Gerald W. Seaman Center.

St. John, Dieterich, Ill., will continue its 150th anniversary celebration throughout 2010. On Reformation Sunday, Oct. 31, Dr. Dean Wenthe, presi-

dent of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., will be guest preacher. Sunday school and Bible class will begin at 9:30 a.m., with worship at 10:30 a.m., followed by a catered meal. For more information about services and the history of St. John, visit online at www.stjohndieterich.com.

Lutheran Church of the Prince of Peace, Menomonee Falls, Wis., seeks former members to join in monthly celebrations of its 50th anniversary in 2011 from January to June. To receive invitations or for more information, e-mail lcpop@execpc.com or call the church office at 262-251-3360.

St. Paul, San Antonio, Texas, requests e-mail addresses of those interested in celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2013. E-mail information to 100yrs@stpaulsa.org.

Grace, Murfreesboro, Tenn., will celebrate its 50th anniversary with a 10 a.m. worship service Oct. 24, followed by a potluck dinner. RSVP to the church office at 615-893-0338 by Oct. 17.

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

BUSH, EUGENE HARDING; Aug. 19, 1934, Brighton, Colo., to May 27, 2010, Bakersfield, Calif.; son of David and Emily (Harding) Bush; graduated St. Louis, 1960. Served 1960–1999. Ministries/parishes: Sykeston, Fessenden, N.D.; Dubuque, Iowa; Lima, Ohio; Bakersfield, Calif.; retired 1999. Preceded in death by his wife, Patricia (Rehfuss) Bush. Survivors:

sons: David, Jonathan; daughter: Rebecca Thomas. Memorial service: June 5, 2010, Bakersfield, Calif.; interment: Bakersfield, Calif.

DISCHER, GERALD ROGER; July 20, 1929, Wausau, Wis., to May 17, 2010, Navasota, Texas; son of William and Lillie (Bloedel) Discher; graduated Springfield, 1961. Served 1961–1994. Ministries/parishes: Apple Valley, Calif.; Navasota, Texas; retired 1994. Survivors: Betty (Halbardier) Discher; son: Stephen; daughters: Claryllie Parker, Cynthia Martin. Funeral and interment: May 22, 2010, Navasota, Texas.

FINCH, ROBERT LEE; Nov. 23, 1928, Washington, D.C., to May 23, 2010, Northfield, Minn.; son of Truman and Nellie (Schaffer) Finch; colloquy, 1993. Served 1993–1994. Ministries/parishes: Lexington, Sumner, Neb.; retired 1994. Survivors: Darlene (Bakken) Finch; sons: Robert II, Steven, James, John, David. Funeral: May 28, 2010, Northfield, Minn.; interment: May 28, 2010, Minneapolis, Minn.

KRAHN, ROBERT ARNO SR.; Jan. 27, 1929, Neudorf, Saskatchewan, Canada, to May 30, 2010, Tahlequah, Okla.; son of Walter and Mathilda (Obenauer) Krahn; colloquy, 1984. Served 1984–1993. Ministries/parishes: Shawnee, Seminole, Okla.; West Plains, Mo.; retired 1993. Survivors: Stella (Darnofall) Krahn; son: Robert; daughter: Judy Girdner. Funeral: June 3, 2010, Muskogee, Okla.; interment: Fort Gibson, Okla.

WEBER, ERHARDT PAUL; Nov. 14, 1917, Racine, Wis., to June 21, 2010, Lake Oswego, Ore.; son of Frederick and Magdalena (Buchholz) Weber; graduated St. Louis, 1941. Served 1942–1983. Ministries/parishes: Gainesville, Fla.; Lafayette, Crawfordsville, Ind.; Portland, Ore.; retired 1983. Preceded in death by

(continued on page 26)

While it might appear that half the job was left undone (of the 41 resolutions drafted by Floor Committee 8, 21 were considered, 18 were approved, 2 were declined, and 1 was referred to The Commission on Handbook), in reality, according to Dr. Larry Stoterau, president of the Pacific Southwest District and chair of the committee, much of the work of the task force was adopted and will result in major changes—most markedly at the national level. As these changes gel, be assured that The Lutheran Witness and Reporter will keep the Synod abreast of developments and their effect on programs, ministries, and congregations.

For a summary of this year's convention actions, see "Big Decisions in a Big City" in the August issue of The Lutheran Witness, as well as the convention stories in the August issue of Reporter, which can be found online also at lcms.org/reporter. Stories at lcms.org/convention remain available too.—Ed.

Variation on a theme

In response to your letters about organists at church I had to share this tidbit: While visiting in Canada a few years ago, we walked into a small church located just off the street. It was very hot and humid that morning and threatening rain. The pianist was playing the prelude when there was a loud clap of thunder followed by a downpour. The pianist very deftly changed from the prelude he was playing and interposed several lines from the song "Stormy Weather." Without stopping, he then returned to his original music. Since I had played that song many times when I was in high school, I recognized it immediately. I am not sure many other people realized what the pianist had done, but I considered it to be a clever and talented move.

Donna Holmquist
Omaha, Neb.

NOTICES

(continued from page 25)

his wife, Joann (Tyson) Weber. Survivors: Nancy (Wear) Weber; sons: Timothy, Andrew; daughters: Jane Lierman, Judy Withrow, Jennifer Seefeld; stepsons: Mark Rosenwinkel, Paul Rosenwinkel; stepdaughters: Ann Rosenwinkel, Jill Skewski. Funeral: June 27, 2010, Portland, Ore.; interment: June 28, 2010, Portland, Ore.

COMMISSIONED

BOLT, LOUISE RENATA (LUEBKE); May 26, 1948, Holland, Mich., to Feb. 21, 2010, Naperville, Ill.; daughter of Rev. Gerhardt and Georgia (Frundt) Luebke; graduated River Forest, 1970. Served 1986–2010. Schools/ministries: Oxnard, Calif.; Naperville, Ill. Survivors: Kirk Bolt; son: Jonathan; daughters: Rachel, Megan Rouland. Memorial service and interment: Feb. 26, 2010, Naperville, Ill.

HALTER, CLIFFORD A.; Nov. 22, 1929, Lakewood, Ohio, to June 13, 2010, Dearborn, Mich.; son of George and Clara (Nehrenz) Halter; graduated River Forest, 1952. Served 1952–1994. Schools/ministries: Grand Rapids, Dearborn, Mich.; Kirkwood, Mo.; retired 1994. Survivors: Barbara (Behl) Halter; sons: David, Richard; daughter: Catherine Caruthers. Memorial service: June 16, 2010, Dearborn, Mich.; cremation.

JIEDE, EDWIN ARTHUR; July 26, 1917, Kearney, Neb., to April 4, 2010, Oviedo, Fla.; son of Rev. William and Elsa (Heller) Jiede; graduated River Forest, 1935. Served 1935–1983. Schools/ministries: Cleveland, Shaker Heights, Cleveland Heights, Ohio; Milwaukee, Wis.; Mineola, N.Y.; St. Petersburg, Fla.; retired 1983. Survivors: Gertrude (Hinze) Jiede; daughter: Andrea Fischer. Memorial service and interment: April 9, 2010, Oviedo, Fla.

SOAT, MARY PATRICIA; July 25, 1958, Waukesha, Wis., to June 9, 2010, Waukesha, Wis.; daughter of Paul and Barbara (Mueller) Soat; graduated Milwaukee, 1980. Served 1980–2010. Schools/ministries: Milwaukee, Waukesha, Wis. Funeral and entombment: June 14, 2010, Waukesha, Wis.

SCHLUCKBIER, ROBERT A.; Jan. 7, 1960, Saginaw, Mich., to June 12, 2010, Cleveland, Ohio; son of Waldo and Loraine (Palmreuter) Schluckbier; graduated Seward, 1983. Served 1983–2010. Schools/ministries: Norfolk, Neb.; North Tonawanda, N.Y.; Reese, Hemlock, Mich. Survivors: Kay (Bremer) Schluckbier; son: Michael. Funeral and interment: June 18, 2010, Richville, Mich.

You Can Go Home Again

Our son is graduating from college, and as parents, we couldn't be prouder. But we are a bit chagrined that he plans to move back home with us while he looks for a job. We've gotten used to being empty-nesters and aren't sure how we can make this work for all of us. Any thoughts?

You will be joining millions of other empty-nesters facing the boomerang phenomenon of kids returning home. In fact, 40 percent of college graduates live with their parents, according to a 2008 Monster.com survey. Saying that you want the new situation to work "for all of us" shows that mutual warmth and respect are among your family's core values. You are positioned to build on those values as you consider how you can address your son's plan. You and your husband have adjusted to a new normal in your son's absence and perhaps prefer not to go back to the way things were.

I suggest that you sit down with your son (well before he graduates) to discuss your mutual expectations for the new arrangement. Talk about how long it will last, any financial obligations involved, boundaries related to privacy and scheduling of activities, and daily responsibilities (meals, laundry, etc.). It is completely reasonable to expect your son to find work, carry his weight in terms of household tasks, respect your schedules and lifestyle, and honor you in his words and actions.

As parents, you have the last word on what happens in your home. Difficulties arise when an older child expects Mom and/or Dad to do things for him that were appropriate at an earlier life stage but are inappropriate and unhealthy for a young adult. It is often helpful to write down these expectations so they are clear to all parties and can be reviewed or amended as needed.

I also encourage you to see this as a time to *relate* with your son rather than *do* for him. Take advantage of his being there to hear how he has changed (hopefully, grown!) intellectually, emotionally, and spiritually. You can listen, learn about his dreams and his frustrations, and be a source of encouragement and love. My prayer is that, in time, he will launch successfully to live an independent life, knowing he always has a home in your heart and in God's.

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



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

SHEDDING SOME LIGHT

Random Thoughts for the Last Days of Summer

A mousetrap placed on top of your alarm clock will prevent you from rolling over and going back to sleep after you hit the snooze button.

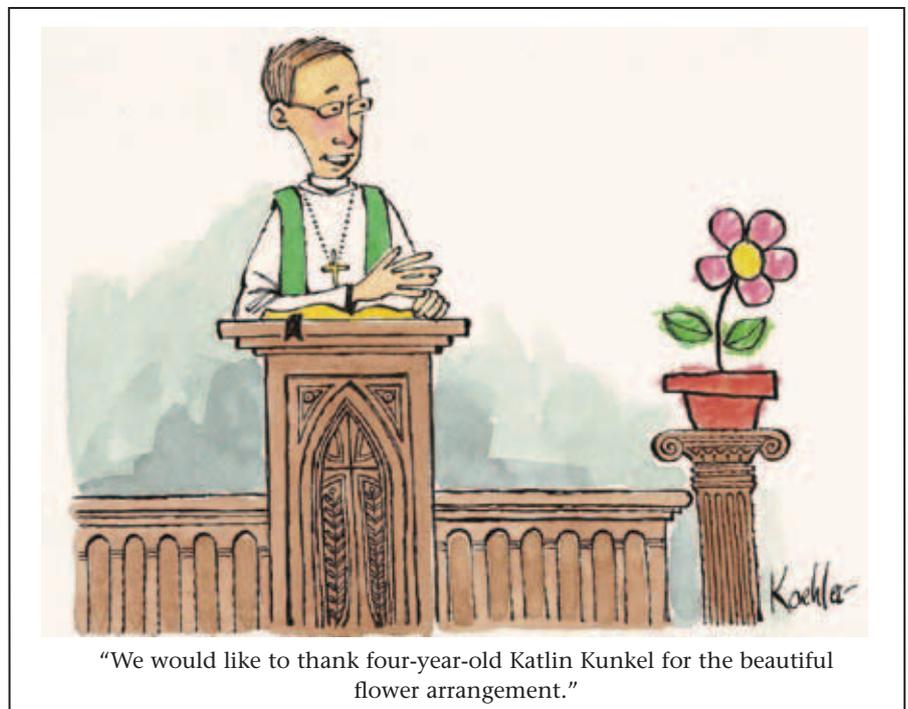
Kathryn Gritts
St. Louis, Mo.

You know your commute to work has become too much when you sit at your desk and attempt to buckle in.

Karen Higgins
St. Louis, Mo.

The worst thing about summer is that people of all shapes and sizes feel obliged to wear shorts.

George Kottwitz
Trinity Lutheran Church
Edwardsville, Ill.



"We would like to thank four-year-old Katlin Kunkel for the beautiful flower arrangement."



With All the Company of Heaven

Read Luke 1:26–33.

What does the angel Gabriel do?

The English word *angel* is derived from the Greek word *angelos*, which means “messenger,” especially a heavenly messenger. Throughout the Bible these creatures bring messages from God to men. Some other passages you may read are Gen. 16:7–12; 22:11–18; Matt. 28:2–6.

The angels do more than speak, however. At times they do the work of God in the world. Read 2 Chron. 32:17–22, which describes what happens when Hezekiah called upon God to save Jerusalem from Sennacherib, the king of Assyria.

What does the angel do to the enemy army?

Why does the angel do this?

Read Rev. 8:1–11.

What are some of the things angels are shown to do in this passage? How do they fulfill God’s will?

At other times, God sends angels to protect His people from calamity.

Read Dan. 6:16–23.

How did an angel save Daniel?
Why did the angel save Daniel from the lions’ den?

Read Acts 5:18–23.

How did the angel’s intervention save the apostles?

What were they able to do since the angel helped them?

The holy angels are remarkable creatures. While Scripture is replete with references to them, there is much we do not know and cannot know in this life. Yet we know that they, like us, are created by God to do His will. Even though they live an existence we cannot fathom, like us, they fear and love God above all things, trusting in Him. And we know that our loving God has given angels to serve His will, protect His people, and announce His Good News throughout history.

We may not see His angels among us, but we can be sure that His holy angels continue to serve God for the benefit of the Church and the proclamation of the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Rev. Christopher Hall (pastor@redeemer-enid.com) is pastor of Redeemer Lutheran Church, Enid, Okla., and third vice-president of the Oklahoma District.

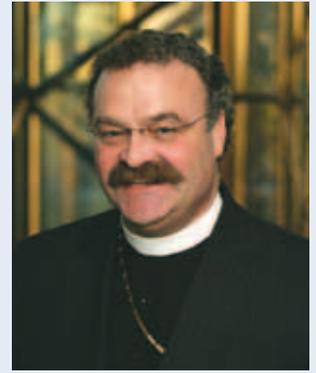


September 29 is a unique day in our Lutheran worship and practice. The *Lutheran Service Book* includes a list of commemorations and festivals honoring God for His work through various people in Scripture and in the history of the Church. But one is different than all the others: St. Michael and All Angels. All other festivals are for humans, but Michael is one of the angels, one of the innumerable numbers of invisible creatures in God’s creation.

The Scriptures are full of references to the angels of God, which are mentioned over 280 times in the text of the ESV Bible. What’s more, when you include the references to cherubim and seraphim, there are more than 350 references to angels.

Read Luke 1:11–20.

What does this angel do? How does he identify himself in v. 19?



Beginning with Repentance

The greatest eras in the history of the Church have all begun with repentance. Those times when the Gospel of free forgiveness by faith in Jesus Christ has shone brightest in missionary witness and expansion—in a burning desire to care for the weak and needy with Christ's own mercy, and in zealous and creative endeavors in church life and organization—have all begun with the preaching of repentance.

It's hardly a coincidence that John the Baptizer's first recorded words were, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!"

(Matt. 3:2). It's no accident that the first words out of Jesus' mouth when He began His public ministry were likewise, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" (Matt. 4:17).

And note that the text says, "from that time [forward] Jesus began to preach" repentance.

Jesus, the greatest preacher ever, was throughout His ministry a preacher of repentance. After Jesus' death and resurrection—the

grand payment and absolution for

all the sins of the world, past, present and future—Peter repented and was restored following his own miserable defection and denial. And then Peter and the rest of the apostles burst upon the world with a glorious preaching of repentance. At Pentecost, Peter preached the thunder of the Law: "This Jesus whom you crucified, God has made both Lord and Christ.' Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Brothers, what shall we do?'" Peter responded with the sweet comfort of the Gospel: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins" (Acts 2:36–38).

The Reformation began the same way. The very first words of Luther's Ninety-five Theses declare: "When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ says 'Repent,' he wills that the entire life of the Christian be one of repentance."

The Reformation began with a divine call to repentance—with a confession of sin and a rejection of the

delusion that human activity can in any way, whole or in part, bring about salvation or divine favor.

Why have we lacked missionary zeal? Why have we been so divided? Why have we failed to love each other? Why have we struggled financially? Why have we failed to convince both those within and outside our fellowship? Why have we been unable to listen to our brothers and sisters? Why has our preaching so often lacked urgency and biblical depth? Are we preachers therapists, or are we prophets of God with a clear message of Law and Gospel? Are we still the Church that preaches Jesus' own message of repentance? As I write these things, I am thinking above all of myself, of my own sins.

There is nothing for any of us in the Missouri Synod to be smug about. "For what do you have that you have not been given?" Luther reminded the Germans of his day that the precious Gospel can be and has, in fact, been lost by whole nations.

Buy while the market is at your door; gather in the harvest while there is sunshine and fair weather; make use of God's grace and word while it is there!

For you should know that God's word and grace is like a passing shower of rain which does not return where it has once been . . . when it's gone it's gone. . . . And you Germans need not think that you will have it forever, for ingratitude and contempt will not make it stay. Therefore, seize it and hold it fast (Luther's Works 45:352).

The good news is that the Lord delights in having mercy upon sinners, just like us. In fact, "Christ dwells only in sinners" (Luther). That means that Christ dwells only in a Church made up of sinners—people and pastors just like us. If we won't be sinners (Repent!), we shall have no Savior.

Jesus has given us an astounding gift. We have the treasure of the Gospel so marvelously and biblically laid before us by Luther's Small Catechism. May the Lord grant us repentance, all of us, that the Gospel not pass from us and that we poor sinners—yes, the Missouri Synod—might be His own tool to preach repentance, forgiveness, and faith in His name—even now, even today.

Matthew Harrison

"Let's go!" Mark 1:38

e-mail: president@lcms.org

Web page: www.lcms.org/president

'If we won't be sinners (Repent!), we shall have no Savior.'