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Jesus loved children. Not only did He enjoy their company (Mark 10:14), He invited His followers to assume their attitude:

He called a little child and had him stand among them. And He said: I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. (Matthew 18:2-4)

In Sacred Scripture not only children but youths of heroic faith are praised for their character and actions: a youthful David faces Goliath; a youthful Jeremiah calls the people back to God; a beautiful and youthful Esther is God’s instrument to save His people.

The church’s children and youth are a great blessing. This issue of For the Life of the World explores how important and central their faith and life are to the church’s mission.

A pattern of events suggests that the youth of the church want serious and substantial spirituality, i.e., teaching drawn from Sacred Scripture, the historic creeds, and the confessions of the church. Signs increase that youth outside the church are drawn by real and serious engagement of God rather than by “religious” merchandizing and entertainment. Their souls hunger for more.

Last September, for example, I witnessed a remarkable event. In Helsinki, Finland, the state church’s cathedral normally draws 50 to 80 worshippers despite its capacity to seat thousands. In sharp contrast the Pyhän Sydämen Kappelissa congregation—known for its strong Scriptural and confessional stand—was filled to its capacity of 400 plus. Ninety percent of the congregation was under 50 with most under 30 and many students from the University of Helsinki.

The service with Holy Communion was structured after the historic liturgy and punctuated with flute, violin, choir, and organ music. While it was nearly two hours in length, it seemed like 45 minutes—even to one seated in the rear of the balcony with a translator! The morning was so striking that I inquired of the pastor: “What type of outreach program do you use?”

The pastor’s response stressed personal contact joined to serious catechesis in the Scriptures and Christian doctrine. The pastor said: “Most of these university students come from the privileged sector of Finnish culture. They have experienced novelty, changing fashions, and changing family structures...some have experimented with drugs and ‘different lifestyles.’ They are weary of trendiness and novelty. They hunger for what is true and permanent—beautiful, noble, and enduring.”

These youth respond, under God’s grace, to God’s gifts of Sacred Scripture and the Sacraments: these gifts are true and permanent—beautiful, noble, and enduring. The Christian church is the one and only place where such treasures are freely available. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

If the church shapes her message to satisfy the novel and trendy, she forfeits her character and her ability to reach out in mission and invite all to share in the blessings of Christ’s saving work. Whether it be the state churches of Europe or North American religiosity, acculturation and accommodation impoverish and threaten Christ’s people.

Confessing Christ and heeding His voice in the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures is not repristination or dead traditionalism or the mere display of a conservative temperament. No, Christ, and all that He calls us to, is true and permanent—beautiful, noble, and enduring. His gift of baptismal identity makes every day fresh and meaningful. His Word is the bread of life. The banquet of His very body and blood is the heavenly food that satisfies the soul.

Our youth, indeed all of us, need daily nurture in these holy gifts. Our worship, our catechesis, and our lives should point to the Holy Trinity who has revealed Himself in Christ.

Concordia Theological Seminary is committed to the formation of pastors who will personally and compassionately feed the church’s entire family with the truthful, the beautiful, and the permanent—Christ’s Word and Sacraments.

As a confirmation hymn puts it so beautifully:

O Holy Trinity, To whom I all things owe,
Your image graciously Within my heart bestow.
Choose me, though weak and lowly, To be Your temple holy
Where praise shall rise unending For grace so condescending.
Oh, heav’nly bliss, Your own to be, O Holy Trinity!
My Maker, Now Be Nigh (LW 255, st. 4)

May God bring forth courageous generations of Davids, Jeremiah’s and Esthers to renew the church and rekindle its missionary zeal to share those gifts that are truthful, beautiful, and forever.

Sincerely yours, in Christ’s service,
2 From the President

4 The Cute, the Cool, and the Catechized
By Dr. Gene E. Veith, Professor of Humanities, Concordia University, Mequon, Wis.
Even within regular-sized, one-worship-service congregations, there is generational segregation. Lutheran casualties of the worship wars might be surprised to hear that liturgical worship is now being hailed as the style of both the present and the future.

6 Are Today’s Ears Hearing the Timeless Message?: Law and Gospel for Every Generation
By the Rev. Dr. Carl C. Fickenscher II, Assistant Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions, Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind.
God’s message is for all times, for all people. The Church’s task is to proclaim that message to the world. Is the Word actually being received by all generations?

8 Holding Dear Herman
By the Rev. D. Richard Stuckwisch, Jr., Pastor of Emmaus Lutheran Church, South Bend, Ind.
This sermon was prepared for a funeral of an infant who passed away the night following his birth.

11 Yours, Mine or Ours: Teenagers’ Perceptions of Church Music
By Dr. Barbara J. Resch, Coordinator of Music Education, Indiana University—Purdue University Fort Wayne, and Director of Children’s Choir, St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, Ind.
Planners of youth gatherings and youth services typically assume that teenagers will be most open to the hearing of God’s Word when it is carried by the styles of rock and popular music. There are several concerns with this approach to choosing music for worship, not the least of which is that it may be based upon a false assumption about teens’ relationship to the music they consider “theirs.”

14 In the Field
By Pam Knepper
Featuring the Rev. Martin Stahl, Regional Chaplain for Navy Region Southwest, San Diego, Calif.
he Valley Cathedral, a Phoenix mega-church affiliated with the Assemblies of God, offers three services: The “traditional service”—that is to say, a traditional Assemblies of God pentecostal service with old-time gospel music, hand-clapping, and speaking in tongues—is for the older members. The “contemporary service”—with electric guitars, drums, and praise songs—is for the no-longer young baby boomers. Then, presumably for those neither old nor middle aged, for the young people and Generation-Xers, there is a service “rooted in high-church rites and liturgies.”

According to the pastor, Dan Scott, author of The Emerging American Church, the kind of worship that will wither away is the non-liturgical lecture-style services that characterizes much of Reformed Protestantism. “What is disappearing,” he says, “is the middle ground between the liturgical and the contemporary.”

Lutheran casualties of the worship wars might be surprised to hear that liturgical worship is now being hailed as the style of both the present and the future. Writing in a major evangelical journal, Daniel Harrell cites what he describes as “post-contemporary worship.” “Surprisingly,” he writes, “from the standpoint of younger generations, this new ‘seeker-sensitive’ version of Christian worship left many longing for some of those things that had been identified as obstacles . . . Whatever the reason, many younger leaders are turning from seeker-sensitive forms toward recapturing ambiguity and antiquity.” He goes on to describe how Generation-Xers are attracted to ancient rituals, icons, and Gregorian chants, though often as an eclectic sampling with little theological coherence.

Will it be possible for these churches to maintain a Lutheran style with an evangelical substance? Probably not. A new sacramentalism is arising in various Reformed church bodies, along with accusations of “crypto-Lutheranism.”

Certainly, even the evangelicals—including the mega-churches—are troubled by the worship wars. Rev. Scott, he of the three generational services, is concerned about this three-way generation gap. “What we are seeing is a struggle between three very different generations, each of which rejects the others’ approach to worship,” he said. “This is distressing, to say the least. At some point, you have to find some source of unity.”

Even within regular-sized, one-worship-service congregations, there is generational segregation. Very young children sing cute baby songs; they play games and color in Sunday school and often have their own sermons, an object lesson in the front of the sanctuary, with the pastor in his robes squatting down to be on their level.

With children who have reached middle school, though, the fun and games stop. Confirmation class force-feeds them memory work and serious theology.

“Youth group,” though, is something else again. Teenagers lead each other around blindfolded in “trust walks” and fall backwards into each others’ arms to develop self-esteem and to build faith in each other—never mind that self-esteem and faith in human beings does not quite accord with what the Bible teaches about sin and faith in Christ. And never mind that such relationship-building exercises that teach you to trust your friends fly right in the face of the other major message of youth ministry: Don’t give in to peer pressure! It seems you had better not trust your friends after all.

Then there are Singles Groups, then Couples Groups, and, once children come along, Young Marrieds, a group which often stays together until, to their horror, another group gets organized that is younger than what they have become. All along, there are the older members of the congregation who go to Voters’ meetings, serve in church offices, put on the church dinners, and serve as the dependable backbone of the congregation. Often, though, each group has its own agenda, with little interaction with the others.

I do not really intend to put down the age stratification in the church. Clearly, there are different developmental stages in children. Adults, as they go through the different stages of their lives, profit from the mutual support of fellow Christians at the same stage.
Problems come when the different stages and the different groups within the church are unrelated to each other, when they become separate and incompatible, when the church is not unified. Ideally, these stages should be developmental, allowing a member to grow up from Baptism on into the full, shared life of a spiritual community, in which a wide diversity of ages and sensibilities come together in the Body of Christ.

How is this done? By catechesis. As the note in the Catechism reminds us, the questions and answers “drawn up with great earnestness of purpose” by Dr. Luther “are no child’s play” but are “for both young and old.” “As for myself,” said Luther, “let me say that I, too, am a doctor and a preacher—yes, and as learned and experienced as any,” and yet “I must still read and study the Catechism daily.” Indeed, “I cannot master it as I wish, but must remain a child and pupil of the Cathechism.”

This involves a process by which children and teenagers are formed into fully-functioning worshippers, initiated into the whole life of the congregation, in which all—regardless of their age or interest groups—come together in the Presence of Christ. Young children, confirmands, teenagers, Generation-Xers, middle-aged Baby Boomers, and retirees should all be growing ever more deeply in Word and Sacrament, worship and the Christian life, as their capacities and life experiences make the Catechism relevant in new and multi-faceted ways.

Our habit of age stratification derives largely, no doubt, from the habit imposed by the schools, which sort diverse children according to the one criterion of what age they are. The Catechism reflects a different educational tradition, the developmental approach of the classical liberal arts, in which grammar (learning content) leads to dialectic (understanding the content through questions and answers) which leads to rhetoric (expressing and applying one’s understanding).

It is much easier for very young children to memorize Bible verses and the Catechism (the grammar of Christian education) than it is for middle school children, the age when catechetical instruction often begins. Young adolescents—already in a mood to question authority and to “talk back”—are developmentally ready for dialectic, the give and take, the questioning of “what does this mean?” that is reflected in the very question and answer format of the Catechism. Teens are indeed at the stage of trying to express themselves and to reach out to their peers, the rhetoric stage that in part justifies some of the conventional youth group exercises. This is the stage in which they can best learn to apply their faith in both the realistic temptations they are facing in their lives and in a full participation in the worship and sacramental life of the congregation.

Then adults, as they take on themselves the various vocations—as parents, as servant/employees, as masters/bosses—described in the Table of Duties, and as their life struggles give them more experience in cross-bearing, can find themselves delving deeper and deeper into the truths of God’s Word.

In the meantime, everyone is worshipping together in a liturgy that is truly trans-generational and, extending back through time, multi-generational. Everyone worships in a style that is not a matter of their particular favorite kind of music—whether “big band,” soft rock, or grunge metal—but in a style that connotes “church,” following a form not because it comes back in vogue, but because it bears God’s gifts.

A major problem with the current generational segregation is that, in the crassest pragmatic terms, it does not really work. Much of the child-oriented material aims at cuteness, but cuteness is for adults. Children themselves do not relate to each other on the basis of cuteness and are often embarrassed by the baby-songs they are asked to sing. Teach them to sing hymns, teach them to chant psalms and sing the liturgy. In this way, they will feel the profound satisfaction of actually participating with the grown-ups, a sense of acceptance and belonging that children crave.

As for teenagers and young adults, the attempts to cater to them by trying to be fashionable only comes across as manipulative and—since adults can never be up to date, and it is embarrassing for them to try—lame. “The church always goes wrong when it tries to appear cool,” Generation-Xer Tom Beaudoin has commented. “It never goes wrong when it tries to attend to people’s deepest thirst.”

Beaudoin, the author of Virtual Faith: The Irreverent Spiritual Quest of Generation X, does advocate setting aside some “generational space” within a congregation so that people of a particular age can have fellowship with their peers. But “worship needs to be something shared by everyone,” he insists. “When you set up Gen-X young adult ministries, they can’t be allowed to become a church within a church.”

Nor is he in favor “of taking Smashing Pumpkins and Sarah McLachlan and making that church music,” he says. “What works for us in our secular lives doesn’t necessarily have to work for us at church. To be honest, I find most Gen-Xers suspicious when the church comes too closely to resemble what they’re doing in their secular lives.”

“There seems to be a both/and sensibility about Gen-Xers toward church services,” he says, echoing a distinctly Lutheran concept. “We tend to want both our secular lives, our CDs, our Internet relationships, attention to fashion, our own culture, our movies, and something else, something different, maybe even more traditional liturgy, maybe more traditional forms of worship.”

After all, what both children and young adults yearn for is a sense of belonging, something that cannot be achieved when they are segregated in their own insulated worlds within the church. Nor can older adults feel a sense of belonging when their church casts out what is meaningful to them in a futile attempt to please the young. The fact is every generation belongs in church, because every generation belongs to Christ.

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Gene Edward Veith is Professor of Humanities at Concordia University, Mequon, Wisconsin
What are your ears accostomed to hearing? As a test, try this:
1. Was Mantovani his first name or last name?
2. Is Paul dead?
3. How much did a fan pay for a piece of French toast partially eaten by a member of ‘N Sync?
4. Britney Spears: did she or didn’t she?

**Scoring:**
If you know enough to understand ONE or TWO of the above questions, you’re...PRETTY NORMAL. If you know enough to answer correctly THREE of the questions, you...PROBABLY HAVE A CHANCE TO WIN A MILLION FROM REGIS. If you know enough to care about all FOUR of the questions, you’re...UNUSUAL.

Let’s face it. Few of us would be in the least interested in tuning in to all four of these artists—that’s right, they’re all musicians—and, if we did, we wouldn’t “get it.” Not all four, anyway.

Fair enough. Nobody hurt. To each his own.

There is, however, a message everybody is supposed to get, everybody needs to get. God’s message is for all times, for all people. The church’s task, of course, is to proclaim that message to the world. But if our pews and pulpits are a mix of the Mantovani generation, erstwhile Beatles fans, and youthful up-and-comings, is the Word actually being received by all? Are today’s ears hearing the timeless message?

**What Is the Timeless Message?**
If the idea that today’s ears are different is somewhat disquieting, there is certainly also a calming side to it. Past generations of preachers and hearers have dealt with this, too, and somehow, through it all, the Church has survived. We know why, of course. Conservative Christians, especially confessional Lutherans, would all agree that God has delivered to us a timeless message. It’s not overly simplistic to say that if what’s preached is God’s message, it will be heard! Moreover, as we’ll see, God’s message does successfully reach all generations because it strikes one note that is familiar to every ear. Our greatest challenge, then, is to be sure that we are indeed proclaiming God’s message.

What is the timeless message? The Bible? Certainly. Christ Jesus? Absolutely. Salvation? Yes. But what is it that the Bible says? What about Jesus Christ? What is the message of salvation?

Lutheran homiletician Herman Stuempfle writes that “whatever other elements are necessary in a Christian sermon, there is a certain theological structure which is indispensable.” This, he says, is “the classic Law/Gospel distinction which has been a constant theme in Lutheran theological and homiletical thought since the Reformation.”

God’s timeless message is Law and Gospel properly divided. C. F. W. Walther asserts, “Any passage of Scripture, yea, any historical fact recorded in Scripture, can be classified as belonging either to the Law or to the Gospel.” The message of the Bible, Christ, salvation is the Law and the Gospel.

It is Holy Scripture itself that directs us to divide Law and Gospel. St. Paul (a different Paul; this is the one who did die and is now feasting at the heavenly banquet) stresses to Timothy, “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of Truth” (II Timothy 2:15). Elsewhere he identifies the distinction: “Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather through the law we become conscious of sin” (Romans 3:20). “I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16).
Luther elaborates, “We should understand ‘Law’ to mean nothing else than God’s word and command, in which He directs us what to do and what not to do, and demands from us our obedience or ‘work.’ . . . On the other hand, the Gospel or the faith is a doctrine or word of God that does not require our works. It does not command us to do anything. On the contrary, it bids us merely to accept the offered grace and forgiveness of sins and eternal life and let it be given to us.”

In other words, the Law lays down what is demanded of man; the Gospel tells him that Christ has fulfilled those demands for him. The Law is everything in Scripture about which human beings are to be at work. The Gospel is always God graciously at work in Christ Jesus. Human beings are active agents only in the Law. God alone is active in the Gospel.

**Applying the Timeless Message**

Luther understood the Law as God’s means of preparing man for the message of salvation. This is the Law’s chief purpose. When man hears the demands of the Law, the Holy Spirit convicts him of his failures to obey. The intended result is to drive him to his knees in desperation.

At that point, the Gospel may then fulfill its chief purpose: To lift man up with the assurance of forgiveness in Christ. Luther again explains, “The other word of God is neither law nor commandment, and demands nothing of us. But when that has been done by the first word, namely, the Law, and has worked deep despair and wretchedness in our hearts, then God comes and offers us His blessed and life-giving word and promises; He pledges and obligates Himself to grant grace and help in order to deliver us from misery, not only to pardon all our sins, but even to blot them out, and in addition to create in us love and delight in keeping His Law. Behold, this divine promise of grace and forgiveness of sin is rightly called the Gospel.” Thus the Law makes man aware of his need for a Savior by showing him his sin, as in a mirror; the Gospel announces that he has that Savior in Christ Jesus.

**But Still “Timeless” Today?**

Law and Gospel properly divided is the message that everyone in every generation needs to hear. “Distinguishing between the Law and the Gospel,” Luther reminds, “is the highest art in Christendom, one that every person who values the name Christian ought to recognize, know, and posses.”

This truly is timeless, not only because God the giver is unchanging, but also because human ears do in at least one sense remain the same in every era. Once more Luther: “If human nature is not aided by God’s grace, it is impossible to keep the Law, for the reason that man since the fall of Adam in Paradise is depraved and full of sinful desires, so that he cannot from his heart’s desire find pleasure in the Law, which we all experience in ourselves. For no one lives who does not prefer that there were no law, and everyone feels and knows in himself that it is difficult to lead a pious life and do good, and, on the other hand, that it is easy to lead a wicked life and do evil. But this difficulty or unwillingness to do the good is the reason we do not keep the Law of God. . . . Thus the Law of God convicts us, even by our own experience, that by nature we are evil, disobedient, lovers of sin, and hostile to God’s laws.”

Everyone is sinful. Therefore, to every generation, the Law rings true. However a contemporary world may try to deny such unpleasant truths, deep down inside every soul, the conscience must bow in agreement: “Yes, it’s true. I’ve sinned, and for my sin, I’m accountable to the Creator.”

But once the conscience has been so pricked, the Gospel may also immediately become welcome. For every age, Christ is the answer to sin, and to that answer, by the power of the Holy Spirit, the terrified soul will cling. That, too, will never change “until,” the Formula of Concord says, “the flesh is put off entirely and man is completely renewed in the resurrection. There he will no longer require either the preaching of the law or its threats and punishments, just as he will no longer require the Gospel.”

Contemporary preacher will tinker with the packaging, and there is work to be done. Disciples of Britney Spears may hear differently than the Paul McCartney or Annuazio Mantovani fan. But it’s not the packaging that causes the Word to be heard. It’s the message itself, the timeless message of Law and Gospel properly divided. When that is being proclaimed, the message will be heard by, (dare we say?) will be in sync with, each new generation.

**Notes:**

1. Herman G. Stuempfie, Jr. “Law and Gospel in the packaging, and there is work to be done. Disciples of Britney Spears may hear differently than the Paul McCartney or Annuazio Mantovani fan. But it’s not the packaging that causes the Word to be heard. It’s the message itself, the timeless message of Law and Gospel properly divided. When that is being proclaimed, the message will be heard by, (dare we say?) will be in sync with, each new generation.

**By the Rev. Dr. Carl C. Fickenscher II**
The following is a sermon that was prepared for a funeral of an infant who passed away the night following his birth.

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Grace, mercy, and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen. The sermon text is the Visitation of the Blessed Virgin Mary unto her cousin, Saint Elizabeth, as recorded by St. Luke in the Gospel appointed for this past Sunday, the Festival of Saint Mary, the Mother of our Lord. In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. [Amen]

Rick and Sheryl, as your Pastor, and as your friend, I find myself unable to express to you the full extent of my sympathy and the grief that I share with you. Indeed, over these past few days, I have found myself at a loss for words of any sort at all (unusual for me). At times I have wondered who is comforting whom, as your confession of faith in response to this tragic loss has encouraged me and strengthened my own faith as well. Now, today, I would so much like to answer all your questions. But I cannot. Typical of my nature, I would so much like to fix it all for you and make everything right. But I cannot. It is only the Word of the Lord that I am able to speak to you and give to you. But that is enough . . . The Lord was too eager to hold your dear Herman—more quickly and more closely than we could accomplish. I was already looking forward to baptizing him, even as you were planning to entrust him to the Lord through Holy Baptism, and Barb was so anxious to be his godmother. But the Lord has taken him into His arms and blessed him even more directly. It is the Lord’s prerogative to do so, because Herman, as you know, belongs to Him. You have given him birth, but He has given him life—here on earth, and now in heaven.

Oh, how I bemoan our limited human perspective, which cannot see the true reality at work, and so we cannot help but grieve. But whatever it is you have wanted for your son, your prayers have been more than answered. He lacks nothing in Christ, his Savior. Everything belongs to him, and he lives more fully now than you or me.

I am sorry for you, Rick, that you will not have the joy and thrill of taking Herman to Six Flags or Cedar Point (or maybe that isn’t your thing). But if you were to go, perhaps with Tobias and Egon—as Zach and I went earlier this summer—you would find the better the ride, the longer the line. What any of us wouldn’t give to go to the head of the line without waiting . . . Well, that is what young Herman has done; he has surpassed us all, and he is having the ride of his life (which has no end).

In doing so, his short life on earth has come full circle to a beautiful completion. For (by my reckoning at least) he was conceived at the beginning of Advent—at the beginning of this current Church Year—as we heard the preaching of repentance from Saint John the Baptist, and as we waited with the Blessed Virgin Mary for her days to be accomplished. And now, Herman’s birth (here in time on earth) and his “nativity” in heaven have coincided with the Festival of Saint Mary, the Mother of God, as we have heard again her beautiful Song of Praise (the Magnificat) upon her Visitation unto Saint Elizabeth, the Mother of Saint John.

Among other things, Saint Mary here reminds you that our children are the Lord’s. In her case, in particular, her Child was and is the Lord! But yours, no less than hers, belong to Him. So also Herman Matthew, who was “God’s gift” to you—whom you intended from the start, by faith, to return unto Him (as Hannah did).

Thus have you done. Thus have your prayers been answered. Thus have your intentions been fulfilled.

But not at all in the way or in the time that you envisioned or anticipated. And the bonds of love—which God has also given to you—now make it so hard to let go. Which is why, as your family and friends and fellow members of the Body of Christ, we today not only mourn with you; but we rejoice on your behalf and in your stead, while you cannot, that Herman is the Lord’s.

Now, among the many questions in your heart and mind, I know that you are searching for a “why?” To which I chiefly must respond that the good and gracious will of God is done, even without our prayer, on earth as it is in heaven, whether or not we can know or understand His loving purpose for us. He did not kill your son; nor did He desire Herman’s death (nor your grief). He has come because of sin; and so the Lord has taken even this last great enemy, and He forces it to serve His mercy.

Thus does He bring life out of death, by His own Cross and Crucifixion. And thus does He bring the blessing out of the curse. As you have also confessed: “All things work together for good for those who love Him, who are called according to His purpose . . .”
Dear Herman

By the Rev. D. Richard Stuckwisch

So, I shall tell you what I have thought, as your Pastor, as I have considered the “why” and the “wherefore” of it all. As I have also wondered, what could it mean, that parents who love children so much, who value human life so very highly, should lose their son to death.

There has been a lot of propaganda in this country (there still is) in support of the lie that children in the womb are not yet “real” or “truly persons.” That lie has deceived countless women into having abortions—confusing their conscience and hindering their chance for repentance. The same lie has also made it difficult, if not impossible, for those who have miscarried to mourn the loss of their unborn children.

But the difference of one day (of 20 hours) has betrayed the lie; and Herman’s death has given those other mothers and fathers this opportunity to grieve—with you, for your son, but also for their own dear children.

Because he has shown us—in our sight—what was already true long before he was born: that he is fearfully and wonderfully made, crafted by the hand of God in His divine Image (the Image of Christ) for life everlasting.

And along with that, lest wretched unbelief should cause you any doubts... because I know, Rick and Sheryl, you have worried that others might not realize or understand, that someone so new, so tiny and fragile as Herman, was and is a real person... But lest there be any doubts, here stands our Gospel from Saint Luke:

Certainly, the Son of God, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ—who was, and is, and is to come—He has always been real and truly a person (indeed, from all eternity!). And among that great cloud of witnesses, who surround us even now, the Blessed Virgin Mary is our evidence and witness, that God has taken for Himself each and every stage of human life—beginning with conception, growing in the womb, and suffering birth.

Your Lord has thereby sanctified the unborn life, and newborn life, as truly precious in His sight... and no less redeemed by the sacrifice of His own flesh and blood.

What is more, while He was yet concealed in the womb of Blessed Mary—within her first trimester, perhaps not even “showing”—His unborn cousin, John, while yet in the womb of Saint Elizabeth, leaps for joy with faith and recognition of his Savior and his God (solely by the hearing of Saint Mary’s voice!).

While proud adults (in the imagination of their hearts) have tried to claim that little children “get nothing out of church,” that liturgy and sermons are meaningless and pointless for these little ones, Jesus Christ our Lord and Saint John the Baptist say otherwise! And you and Herman have showed us just how very important and significant it is that young children be in church (with their parents). For in the midst of all your grief, you also now have the blessed assurance that Herman has known the presence of his Savior and his God through the voice of His servant here in His Church. It was no stranger who took Herman into His arms.

You have deeply regretted that Herman was not given the opportunity for Holy Baptism. And no one prizes the treasure of that Holy Sacrament more highly than I do. But Herman has taught us an understanding of things that we might otherwise be able to ignore. For too many parents have their children baptized, but fail and neglect—beforehand and afterwards—to bring their little children into the presence of Christ our God, into the sound of His voice, within His Holy Church. Yet, the same Word of God, which washes us with water in Holy Baptism, is also spoken and sung week after week in the Divine Service...

And through that Word, Christ has called Herman to Himself; He has taken him into His arms and blessed him.

Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of Christ. And for the past nine months, beginning with the Holy Season of Advent (1998), Herman has been hearing that Word... Sheryl, you have told me how he recognized and happily responded to the sound of your voice (and Rick’s) and to the noisy squeak of your rocker. How much more, then, did he know the voice of Christ and His divine Word?!

For that Word, which conveys the Holy Spirit, and which conceived the Son of God in the womb of a Virgin Mother, is able to do and accomplish far more abundantly than we could ever ask or think or imagine. It has given Herman life, because it is the Word of the Gospel, which is the Power of God unto Salvation...

Thus did Herman hear that God Himself was once a tiny Fetus, just like him! That He, too, was given arms and legs, and hands and feet, and eyes and ears (but probably not the Tribble nose). His arms would welcome little children. His legs would take Him to the Cross, to which His hands and feet were nailed (for Herman and for you). His eyes would look with mercy on His people, and His ears would hear their prayers...

As Herman’s ears have heard, that true God, begotten of His Father from all eternity, also became true Man, born of the Virgin Mary; that He is our Lord, who has redeemed you—an otherwise lost and condemned creature—from sin, death, and the power of the devil... not with silver or gold, but with His holy and precious Blood, His
innocent suffering and death; that He has done all this for Herman—no less than for you and for me—that we might be His own, and live under Him in His Kingdom, and serve Him in everlasting righteousness, innocence, and blessedness . . . even as He has risen from the dead and lives and reigns eternally.

Whatever else you might think or feel or experience (especially right now), it is this (and only this) that is most certainly true!

Now is the time, more than ever, to measure your life by faith alone—and not by sight. Your sinful heart will tell you that God has surely turned His face away from you, or that He is punishing you for some reason. For how and why else would your son be taken from you? But if and when those doubts and fears arise, know that your Lord has set before you here today the example of His Blessed Virgin Mary—His most highly-favored Lady—whose Son was born for this very reason: to die. And from the first she was told how this sword would pierce her soul at the foot of the Cross.

Your vocation as parents is lived under that same Cross, which redefines everything by a very different standard. It is why we are able to sing with Saint Mary—in the face of death and grief—that the Lord has shown strength with His arm (with a tiny, frail, infant arm . . . with a tired, bleeding, crucified arm). He has put down the mighty from their thrones—by ascending the throne of His Cross; and He has exalted the lowly in His Resurrection from the dead.

This we cannot see or feel; but we can only believe, and only by the Word and Spirit of God. We do not have His perspective, whose thoughts are not our thoughts, whose ways are not our ways. Nor do we have the perspective of eternity, from which a day is like a thousand years (no more nor less than seventy or eighty).

These perspectives we do not have—and perhaps we never will. We are not God, but His servants and His handmaids; it is for us according to His Word. But in that Word we have been given the blessed perspective of Christ and His Cross—the incarnate Son of God, who makes sense of it all. We live by His Word, by His faith. And He has remembered His mercy (toward Herman, and toward us).

Had I been given the privilege of baptizing Herman, I would have asked him, first of all, to confess his faith in the Holy Triune God—his own faith, in his own God. And this he would have done, employing the lips and voices of his parents and godparents, his Pastor, and his fellow believers in Christ.

How I wish that I could give you Herman’s faith right now—and Herman’s voice, and Herman’s perspective.

Among the many things we’ve talked about these past few days, you mentioned David and his son to me, before I even had the chance to give you that example. How David mourned and fasted while the child was still living—and sick and on his deathbed—in hopes that God would relent and spare the boy’s life.

What I have discovered in this story since we spoke, what I had never noticed before, is that David’s son died on the seventh day . . . And now, perhaps, you already know what I’m going to say:

He died before he could be circumcised, according to the Word of God, on the eighth day of his life. He died without the covenant and grace of circumcision.

Yet, David’s response is one of the most beautiful confessions of our faith. For when his son was dead, he rose from mourning, he washed his face, and he ate; because, he said, “While the child was alive, I fasted and wept; for who could tell whether the Lord would be gracious to me, that the child might live? But now he is dead; why should I fast? Can I bring him back again? I shall go to him, but he shall not return to me.”

And so it is that you shall go to Herman, who is with the Lord forever. We could not baptize Herman here, but Christ has now bathed him in the waters of life, and dressed him in the white robes of His own perfect righteousness in heaven. And where it would have been seven or eight years (at least) before Herman could receive the Holy Supper here, the Lord has granted him “early Communion” at the Banquet Feast of the Lamb in His Kingdom. Where it is now also Herman’s voice—no longer the mutters and gurgles you know, but the voice that Christ has given him—that sings with Saint Mary (and with you):

“My soul now magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God, my Savior. For He who is mighty has done great things for me, and Holy is His Name!”

To whom be all glory and honor and praise, both now and forever, In the Name * of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
My college-bound daughter received an enticing ad for hard rock and alternative music that urged her to “take your own music off to college with you—buy one CD and get eleven free!” Although in this case the recording company was off the mark on what this particular young woman’s “own music” was, it was well aware that a symptom of the passage through adolescence is the identification with a peer group and its chosen musical styles—and those styles are typically rock and pop music. Research as well as experience with teenagers remind us that this preference for popular music spans the range of social, intellectual, and demographic characteristics of adolescents, and is recognized as a distinguishing characteristic of adolescence.

Keying into this musical preference, the planners of church youth gatherings and youth services typically assume that teenagers will be most open to hearing and singing God’s Word when it is carried by these favorite musical styles of rock and popular music. Choosing music that is stylistically derivative, indistinguishable from secular popular music except for its religious lyrics, these worship planners predict that junior high and high school students will be lured to such a church service if the kind of music they love to listen to in the car is carried into the sanctuary. Once there, they will be caught up in the proclamation because the words are being brought to their hearts by a kind of music that sounds familiar, like “their own music.”

There are several concerns with this approach to choosing music for worship, not the least of which is that it may be based upon a false assumption about teens’ relationship to the music they consider “theirs.” My Music is a collection of interviews with people from age four to 83, including teenagers, asking them to talk about the music that is valued by them. In virtually every case, the music that meant the most to people had some extra-musical connection, a social, emotional, or spiritual link that had created a personal affiliation with that music and placed it within a particular personal context: music my fiancé and I danced to, music my mother sang to me, music my friends and I listen to together. This additional layer of connective tissue seems to place music irrevocably within the contexts in which it “belongs.”

My research on teenagers and their attitudes about the kind of music that they think belongs in church turned up some interesting insights into what forges this musical connection for high school students. In a survey of nearly 500 teenagers from four regions of the country, both statistical data and informal conversations reflected the significance of having first-hand experience with music within a particular context. What teenagers generally perceived as appropriate church music was the very music they were hearing in church—the church they considered their own, not their friends’ church or churches portrayed in the movies.

The research study involved the playing of 40 recorded excerpts of church music, representing the historical and stylistic range of music that is being heard in American churches today. The students were asked to indicate, anonymously and in writing, not how much they liked the music, but how appropriate they thought
it would be for a church service. I said something like “Imagine yourself sitting in church; if you heard this music, would it seem right, or out of place?” Since more than 32 religious groups were represented, including the mainline denominations, world religions, cults, and many non-denominational groups, the image of “church service” varied greatly among the respondents, and each group seemed to have its own sense of what was fitting for that time and place.

Statistical analysis of the rating scales summarized these responses. Emerging as the most powerful predictor of the judgment of appropriateness was familiarity and experience with the musical sound within the context of worship. The music heard in the church service became the music deemed appropriate for the church service. Students who heard or sang hymnic choral music in church considered that to be the model for church music. On the other hand, a small group of California teenagers commented that of the whole survey tape they had considered only two excerpts appropriate for church, because their church used only praise songs that everybody sang, and to “just listen” to anything else was foreign to their worship experience.

In addition, there was a general consensus that the sound considered most appropriate church music by this large and diverse group of students was a choral sound: vocal, not instrumental; corporate, not soloistic; with a text that was presented in a manner that was straightforward and understandable. The selection ranked most highly for worship appropriateness was an Anglican chant, a verse of Psalm 98 sung by an unaccompanied male choir in four part homophony. On the other hand, solos that sounded virtuosic and polyphonic choral with elaborate accompaniments were considered inappropriate. Most instrumental music, jazz, and Christian rock music were considered inappropriate for church by a great majority of the students.

While the students associated church music with the sounds they had heard or performed in church, the study found that any musical style that was closely identified (based on their experience or their perception) with another social setting or with a particular age group was not considered appropriate church music. This included their own age group: the examples of Christian rock music I played for them were overwhelmingly considered inappropriate for church. The playing of much of the contemporary Christian music evoked rolling eyes and comments written in the margins of the survey forms: “This sounds like my parents’ music” and “This reminds me of Lawrence Welk.” A soft and slow “Agnus Dei” from a jazz Mass produced nervous laughs and further notes on the survey form: “I think these words are fine but this music is too sexy for church. Sounds like a nightclub act.” The brass choir introduction to a “Gloria” by a well-known contemporary composer for the church drew the reaction “Not for church! Sounds like a movie sound track!!!!” This sense of contextual appropriateness (“Sounds like . . .”) was borne out in an additional research study I conducted, in which every piece of potential church music played for the students was considered appropriate for some context (concerts, leisure listening, background music for brunch, dancing) but far more refined distinctions were made concerning which pieces were appropriate for church services.

Apparently, then, these teenaged church-goers did not bring to the church service their own musical preferences as the “right” music for that occasion. Rather, their judgment of what was appropriate for worship was their response to the music that the church has already put in place, whatever that music may be. This conclusion surely reflects a philosophy that has been understood by the Church for centuries: Lex orandi, lex credendi. This dictum (literally, the law of prayer, the law of belief) has been understood to mean that what people believe influences the way they worship, and, conversely, the way they worship also influences what they believe. The implications of the survey are that existing church music practice also forms belief about appropriate church music practice, at least among young and impressionable worshippers.

This is not to say that the young people surveyed were rejecting Smashing Pumpkins in favor of traditional hymns in the other parts of their lives. In fact, discussions with the teenagers indicated that they had a strong allegiance and a clear sense of ownership about the place of rock and pop music in their social lives. Our conversations supported the written research that this familiarity becomes part of the personal identity of many teenagers. They knew what was currently popular and what they would listen to, and they considered it theirs. Furthermore, they resented and ridiculed adults who attempted to take over this style, or who mistakenly promoted a dated musical style as something that might be appealing to them. Many students appeared to make a distinction between their music—the music they liked to listen to in their free time—and the music they encountered and accepted as part of other times and places in their lives, such as the church service.

An interesting exchange took place in a high school I visited in Nashville, Tennessee. The site of the city’s English as a Second Language program, this school’s ethnic and religious population was remarkably diverse. The spokesperson for a group of girls explained to me and the rest of the class that their church served up a variety of worship services: “I go to one service where there’s music I like, and my parents go to another service where they hear, you know, their music.” A young man called out from the back of the room “I like reggae; you gonna have a
remarkable respect for the diversity of the saints who gather together in corporate worship, and a willingness to suspend personal preference for the sake of the larger group. When I explained to one class that they were to listen to the survey tape and make a judgment of appropriateness, a boy asked “Do you mean appropriate for me or for the whole congregation?” Who knows what his responses would have been if he had made these judgments as a congregation of one, but it was enlightening that he understood that his personal perceptions might differ from those of the whole group to which he belonged. Several students spoke specifically about Christian rock music being offensive to some members of their churches; one said

“This would give my grandma cardiac arrest, so probably not!” Another girl wrote “For each piece I tried to picture the little old ladies in my church, and if I thought it would upset them, I said it was not appropriate. People shouldn’t get upset about that kind of thing in church.”

For many teens, the church service may be the only time they ever participate with both children and elderly people in a setting of equality. Typically, a 16-year-old boy and his 75-year-old grandmother don’t eat at the same restaurants, go to the same movies, or listen to the same radio station. But when they come to the Divine Service they confess their sins in unison and stand together singing their response of gratitude for the gifts, using words that are neither his nor hers, but the expression of a common and shared faith. The music carrying those words is neither “his music” nor hers, but an expression that is able to transcend both age and personality. The words, music, or both may be centuries old or may have been written for what Grandma still calls “the new hymnal.” When we come into the timeless presence of God’s presence in the Divine Service, the dates of the hymns we sing and the ages of the singers are just another aspect of the temporal realm we leave behind.

The establishment of a hymnal practice that spans ages can help to build this common expression. Rather than developing children’s hymns for children’s services, often expressions that children grow out of as quickly as last year’s tennis shoes, teaching liturgical responses and hymn verses to young children helps them to grow into the extended family of God as it gathers to worship. Similarly, establishing a separate Youth Service with its own hymnic style and worship practice forces an age-based separation at the very time when adults are most fearful that their teenagers will become alienated from the church. The turbulent years of adolescence may be the most crucial years of all for retaining the comfort and stability of our ritual behaviors, including a consistent liturgical and hymn-singing practice.

The 500 teenagers who participated in my research study have stated what many of us already know: that the Church’s song both reflects and forms what that Church believes, that importing a musical expression into the Church from a conflicting culture is dishonest and ineffectual, and that the music of the Church needs to carry its text clearly and understandably to all of its members. When it does not reflect the popular taste of any particular age group, and when it nurtures its own particular language, the Church’s expression becomes both diverse and inclusive, because it is unbounded by the considerations of age. It becomes “our music” early in life, draws on the richness of past centuries, becomes ever fuller with the discovery and endurance of new creative expressions, and then remains ours for a lifetime.

An earlier version of this article was published in the July 1998 issue of CrossAccent: Journal of the Association of Lutheran Church Musicians and is reprinted here with the permission of the Association.

Since he was a sophomore in high school, the Rev. Martin Stahl has known that he wanted to devote his life ministering to God’s people.

Growing up in Arlington Heights, Illinois, Rev. Stahl attended Faith Lutheran Church and St. Peter’s Lutheran School.

“In the first grade I knew I either wanted to be a teacher or a pastor,” remembered Rev. Stahl. “But it wasn’t until my sophomore year in high school that I made the decision to become a pastor. My own pastor, the Rev. Edgar Behrens, was very encouraging and ultimately helped me realize that I should be a minister.”

Graduating from Arlington High School in 1967, that fall Rev. Stahl began studies at Concordia Junior College in Ann Arbor, Michigan, where he earned a degree in pre-theology. In 1971, he graduated from Concordia Senior College in Fort Wayne, Indiana, with a bachelor’s degree in Theology and Sociology. After graduation, he attended Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri, for one year. He then spent the next year studying in Oberursel, Germany. Upon returning to the United States, he continued his seminary studies at Concordia Theological Seminary in Springfield, Illinois.

After completing his second year of seminary studies, he was placed as a vicar at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Sioux City, Iowa. It was here that Rev. Stahl met his future wife, Becky. In 1975, at the end of his vicarage year, the two were married. Rev. Stahl and his new bride returned to the Springfield campus for his final year. Graduating in 1976, Rev. Stahl’s first call was to serve St. Paul Lutheran Church in Stanwood, Iowa.

“While I was at St. Paul’s, I became deeply involved in evangelism,” he remembered. “So two years later when Trinity Lutheran Church in Grand Island, Nebraska, extended a call to me to start an evangelism program for them, I jumped at the chance.”

It was here, while serving at Trinity, that the direction of his ministry was changed forever.

“One Sunday the endorsing agent for LCMS chaplains attended services at my church,” explained Rev. Stahl. “After the service he approached me and explained that after hearing my sermon he was convinced that I should become a chaplain in the Armed Services. At that moment I knew that God was calling me to serve in this capacity.”

A year later in 1981, while serving a new congregation in Gretna, Nebraska, Rev. Stahl became an endorsed reserve chaplain in the United States Navy. The next year, he accepted the call to serve one year as an endorsing agent in Washington D.C. This was followed by three years of active duty with the United States Marines in Oahu, Hawaii.

“A portion of my time in Hawaii was somewhat difficult because a year of it was spent with a destroyer squadron,” said Rev. Stahl. “I didn’t see my family for seven months and, unfortunately, the deployment started one week after my last child was born. That was not fun.”

But while being away from his family was difficult, the bond that Rev. Stahl formed with the soldiers was amazing.

“As a chaplain you have access to people’s lives that you don’t experience as a parish pastor. You live with these people 24 hours a day, and you get to
hear not only the good but the bad in their lives," explained Rev. Stahl. "They not only come to you for spiritual guidance but as an ear to tell their troubles to. Once you establish a relationship with them, a kind of trust forms that I had never experienced before as a parish pastor."

In 1986, Rev. Stahl and his family moved to Chicago. For two years he recruited new chaplains and served as head chaplain for 16 states. Then in 1988, he received three separate calls from the LCMS. After turning down the first two, he accepted the call to serve as head of field education and teach classes in Practical Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana.

“I went back on reserve status as a chaplain and taught at the seminary,” said Rev. Stahl. “For the time I was there, it was a good change for me.”

But the change didn’t last. A year and a half later in December 1989, Rev. Stahl decided to go back on active duty to serve on the aircraft carrier, the U.S.S. Kittyhawk, based in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Lasting two years, this call included a deployment that took him around South America.

In December 1991, Rev. Stahl went back to Washington D.C. to work in the Chief of Chaplains Office, where he was in charge of reserves and the chaplain candidate program for the entire United States Navy.

Three years later, Rev. Stahl and his family moved to Newport, Rhode Island, where he headed up basic course officer training for all new chaplains at the Navy Chaplain School.

“This was both a grueling and happy time,” explained Rev. Stahl. “Grueling because I had to teach chaplains of some 124 different denominations how to minister and play together. Happy because it was wonderful to see the real excitement chaplains finally experience once they realize what their ministry is going to be like.”

In 1998, after four years in Rhode Island, Rev. Stahl accepted his current call to serve as regional chaplain for Navy Region Southwest in San Diego, California.

“This position has been a lot of hard work, but very satisfying,” explained Rev. Stahl. “I have been able to take 11 chapels and 65 personnel and make them into a well-running team. This is the first time anything like this has ever happened. Luckily this approach is now going Navy-wide.”

As a chaplain for nearly 20 years, one issue that Rev. Stahl frequently address-es with new and old chaplains is the tightrope that exists for all that serve in this capacity.

“As a chaplain you are constantly walking a tightrope between the two institutions you are serving—the church and the military,” explained Rev. Stahl. “Chaplains must believe that their first calling is to God and their church. Otherwise, they become more officer than pastor, and this is dangerous.”

Rev. Stahl says the danger lies in the fact that many chaplains believe they will get more respect if they have rank. Thus rank becomes more important than serving God and His people.

“Soldiers can sense this loyalty and with it the respect is therefore gone,” explained Rev. Stahl. “Chaplains must not neglect the people they have been chosen to serve—God’s people. Otherwise, what’s the point of being a chaplain?”

Another issue that chaplains must deal with is the fact that often-times they are separated from their families for long periods of time.

“The sacrifices that spouses of chaplains make are tremendous. While their spouse is gone, they alone are responsible for taking care of the family and for many that can be tough,” said Rev. Stahl. “But the positive is that while a chaplain is home there are no church meetings to attend or late night phone calls, like a parish pastor experiences. When you are home, you are home. So you make up for the time you are gone during those periods.”

As far as the future is concerned, Rev. Stahl is not sure what God has in store for him.

“Someone once said that a Peter is a minister who is happy to stay put serving one church. A Paul, on the other hand, is someone who is on the move all the time,” explained Rev. Stahl. “I can honestly say that I am a Paul and only God knows where my next move will be.”

The Rev. Martin Stahl is married to Becky, who is currently pursuing her Lutheran elementary teaching degree. She also works at a Lutheran preschool. They are the parents of four daughters:

Katie, an elementary school teacher at Faith Lutheran School in Tucson, Arizona; Carolyn, a senior at Concordia College, River Forest, Illinois; Kristin, a freshman at Palamar College in San Diego, California; and Kellyn, a freshman at Temecula High School, Temecula, California.
CHRIST’S GIFTS FOR HEALING THE SOUL:
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THE GOOD SHEPHERD INSTITUTE
Pastoral Theology and Sacred Music for the Church
Co-Directors: Arthur A. Just Jr. and Richard C. Resch

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

SUNDAY, November 5
4:00 PM All BACH Organ Recital
Recitalist: Martin Jean
5:30 PM DINNER on your own, or Soup, Salad, and Sandwich Buffet – Katherine Luther Hall
7:00 PM ALL SAINTS’ CHORAL VESPERS
Kramer Chapel
Choirs: SCHOLA CANTORUM and KANTOREI
Preacher: President Dean O. Wenthe
Kantor and Choir Director: Richard C. Resch
8:30 PM WELCOME RECEPTION in Luther Hall

MONDAY, November 6
7:30 AM MATINS – Kramer Chapel
7:00-8:15 BREAKFAST – Katherine Luther Hall
8:15-8:45 REGISTRATION – Sihler Auditorium
8:45 AM PLENARY ADDRESS – Sihler Auditorium
The Gift of the Church’s Song: Sacred Music as Healing and Comfort
Presenter: Richard C. Resch
10:00 AM MORNING PRAYER – Kramer Chapel
Preacher: Kurt E. Marquart
Organist: Janet Muth
11:00 AM SEMINARS
Healing the Soul through Hymnody
Kramer Chapel Loft
Presenter: Stephen P. Starke
Healing in the Canticles of the Old and New Testaments
Sihler Auditorium
Presenter: Ronald R. Feuerhahn
12:00 LUNCH – Katherine Luther Hall
1:15 PM PLENARY ADDRESS – Sihler Auditorium
Healing in the Music of Johann Sebastian Bach
Presenter: Robin A. Leaver
2:30 PM SEMINARS
Eyes to See: Teaching the Sacramental Scriptures
Sihler Auditorium
Presenter: Harald G. Tomesch
The Rites of Pastoral Care: Healing through the Liturgy
Kramer Chapel Loft
Presenter: John T. Pless
4:00 PM VESPERS – Kramer Chapel
5:30 PM WINE AND CHEESE
Mezzanine of Katherine Luther Hall
6:30 PM CONFERENCE BANQUET – Katherine Luther Hall
Banquet Speaker: William C. Weinrich
With lute music as Luther would have played it
**TUESDAY, November 7**

7:30 AM  MATINS – Kramer Chapel
7:00-8:15  BREAKFAST – Katherine Luther Hall
8:45 AM  PLENARY ADDRESS – Sihler Auditorium
   *The Medicine of Immortality: Healing for a New Creation*
   Presenter: Arthur A. Just Jr.
10:00 AM  SUNG MATINS – Kramer Chapel
   Preacher: James G. Bollhagen
   Choir: The Seminary Kantorei
   Organist: Janet Muth
11:00 AM  SEMINARS
   *Eyes to See: Teaching the Sacramental Scriptures*
   Sihler Auditorium
   Presenter: Harald G. Tomesch
   *The Rites of Pastoral Care: Healing through the Liturgy*
   Kramer Chapel Loft
   Presenter: John T. Pless
12:00  LUNCH – Katherine Luther Hall, or on your own
1:15 PM  PLENARY ADDRESS – Sihler Auditorium
   *The Art of Spiritual Evaluation: A Framework for Understanding the Health of the Soul and Its Cure*
   Presenter: Harold L. Senkbeil
2:30 PM  SEMINARS
   *Healing the Soul through Hymnody*
   Kramer Chapel Loft
   Presenter: Stephen P. Starke
   *Healing in the Canticles of the Old and New Testaments*
   Sihler Auditorium
   Presenter: Ronald R. Feuerhahn
3:30 PM  Q AND A WITH THE PRESENTERS
   Sihler Auditorium
4:00 PM  + Itinerarium +

**ABOUT THE PRESENTERS…**

RONALD R. FEUERHAHN is Associate Professor of Historical Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. He is a member of the LCMS Commission on Worship and chairman of the Liturgy Committee for the Lutheran Hymnal Project. Dr. Feuerhahn is a member of Societas Liturgica and of the LCMS-ELCA Discussion Panel.

MARTIN JEAN is Associate Professor of Organ at Yale University where he teaches in the Yale Institute of Sacred Music. Dr. Jean is playing all of Bach’s organ works in recital at Yale University during this 250th anniversary year of Bach’s death.

ARTHUR A. JUST JR. is Dean of the Chapel, Co-Director of The Good Shepherd Institute, and Professor of Exegetical Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. Dr. Just is also a member of the LCMS Lectionary Committee of the Lutheran Hymnal Project, and is the author of *The Ongoing Feast* and the *CPH Commentary on Luke*.

ROBIN A. LEAVER is Professor of Sacred Music at the Westminster Choir College of Rider University and visiting Professor of Liturgy for the Liturgical Studies Program of the Graduate School of Drew University. Dr. Leaver is internationally recognized as a hymnologist, musicologist, and Bach scholar.

JANET MUTH is Kantor at St. Paul’s Lutheran Church in Ann Arbor, Michigan. She is a member of the LCMS Commission on Worship and is a member of the Hymnal Committee for the Lutheran Hymnal Project.

JOHN T. PLESS is Assistant Professor of Pastoral Ministry and Missions at Concordia Theological Seminary. He is a member of the Agenda Committee of the Lutheran Hymnal Project and the Board of Congregational Services of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Professor Pless is book review editor for *Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology*. Prior to coming to Fort Wayne he served as campus pastor at University Lutheran Chapel, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis.

RICHARD C. RESCH is Kantor of Concordia Theological Seminary and of St. Paul’s Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, Co-Director of The Good Shepherd Institute, and is the Sacred Music Professor for the Seminary. Kantor Resch is also Chairman of the Commission on Worship and is a member of the Hymnal Committee for the Lutheran Hymnal Project.

HAROLD L. SENKBEIL is pastor of Elm Grove Ev. Lutheran Church, Elm Grove, Wisconsin. He has served as visiting instructor at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, and at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. Pastor Senkbeil is a member of the LCMS Commission on Worship and Church Relations and is the author of *Sanctification: Christ in Action* [NPH 1989] and *Dying to Live: The Power of Forgiveness* [CPH 1994].

STEPHEN P. STARKE is pastor of St. John Lutheran Church-Amelith in Bay City, Michigan. From 1985 to 2000 he was pastor of Grace Ev. Lutheran Church of Middletown, Connecticut, and during that time he held positions on various boards and committees in the New England District. Pastor Starke served on the Hymn Selection Committee for Hymnal Supplement 98 and is currently chairing the Hymnody Committee for the 2007 Lutheran Hymnal Project.

HARALD G. TOMESCH is Associate Professor of Greek and New Testament at Concordia University, Mequon, Wisconsin. He has worked extensively with the New Testament book of Hebrews, the Gospel of John, and the birth of the divine liturgy in Judaism.

WILLIAM C. WEINRICH is Academic Dean and Professor of Historical Theology, Patristic Studies, New Testament, and Systematic Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. He is also Third Vice President of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Dr. Weinrich is the Book Review Editor for *Concordia Theological Quarterly* and serves as chaplain in the Indiana Air National Guard.

DEAN O. WENTHE is President and Professor of Exegetical Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne. He serves as General Editor for the “Concordia Commentary Series” from Concordia Publishing House and was Associate Editor of the “Concordia Self-Study Bible.”
C oncordia Theological Seminary (CTS), Fort Wayne, is pleased to announce its spring 2000 calls to the pastoral ministry and vicarage assignments: 39 men received their divine calls on April 12 and 74 men received their vicarage assignments on April 11.

CALLS

ERIC M. AHLEMEYER
Messiah Lutheran Church
Aspen, CO

SAMUEL M. G. BOODLE
Lutheran Church of Nassau Nassau, Bahamas

FRANK G. CIAMPA
The Ev. Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd
Brooklyn, NY

A. ANDREW DAS
Trinity Lutheran Church (Assisting Pastor)
Lombard, IL

FREDERICK E. DAVISON
Zion Lutheran Church
Kokomo, IN

DAVID M. DePAOLI
Grace Lutheran Church
Needles, CA

PAUL M. DOEHRMANN (AR)
New Hope Lutheran Church
Ossian, IN

DONALD W. EHRKE
Christ & Good Shepherd Lutheran Churches
Breckenridge & Leadville, CO

SEAN M. ESTERLINE
Grace English Lutheran Church
Chicago, IL

ROBIN D. FISH JR.
Our Savior Lutheran Church
Platte City, MO

MARC L. FREIBERG
Trinity Lutheran Church (Assistant Pastor)
Hobart, IN

BRUCE K. HEIN
District Missionary to the Deaf
Rocky Mountain District

STEPHEN M. KING
Our Savior Lutheran Church (Associate Pastor)
Burlington, WI

GRIFFITH F. PRITCHARD (AR)
Trinity Lutheran Church (Associate Pastor)
Peoria, IL

JOHN S. RUTOWICZ
St. Peter Lutheran Church
Ocheyedan, IA

CALLS

MICHAEL J. KOLESAR
St. John’s Lutheran Church
Secor, IL

JEROME P. LECKBAND
Trinity Lutheran Church
Foster, NE

R. ERIC MALMSTROM
Our Redeemer & Trinity Lutheran Churches
Ojai & Santa Paula, CA

GREGORY T. MANNING
Bethlehem Lutheran Church (Associate Pastor)
Fort Wayne, IN

DAVID R. MUELLER
Trinity Lutheran Church
Goodland, IN

MARK W. MUMME
Zion Lutheran Church
Hardwick, MN

MICHAEL C. NEMEC
Evangelistic Missionary
Panama

MICHAEL A. PENIKIS
Hope Lutheran Church (Associate Pastor)
Shawnee, KS

STEVEN N. POCKAT
Trinity & Grace Lutheran Churches
Bear Creek, WI

ARThUR L. PORTER
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church (Associate Pastor)
New Orleans, LA

SAMUEL R. PRANSCHEK (AR)
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Taylor, MI

RAYMOND J. SALEMINK
Mount Calvary & Immanuel Lutheran Churches
Eagle Grove & Rowan, IA

GEORGE W. SHAFFER
Our Savior Lutheran Church
Sulphur Springs, TX

KENNETH M. SPENCE
Pella Lutheran Church (Associate Pastor)
Waupun, WI

WILLIAM W. STRATMAN (AR)
St. John’s Lutheran Church
Rushmore, MN

PAUL D. SUNDBOM
St. Peter’s Lutheran Church (Assistant Pastor)
Conover, NC

RALPH G. TAUSZ
Lutheran Church of the Apostles
Melrose Park, IL

DANIEL E. THIES
Eternal Trinity Lutheran Church
Milton, FL

DAVID J. THIES (AR)
Faith Lutheran Church (Associate Pastor)
Huntsville, TX

KELLY D. TODD (AR)
St. Johannes Lutheran Church
Kingsley, MI

LOUIS R. VICTIAN (AR)
Mount Greenwood Lutheran Church
Chicago, IL

LEE C. WENSKAY
St. Paul Lutheran Church
Pigeon, MI

VICARAGES

JOSEPH M. ADAMS II (AR)
St. Mark Lutheran Church
Shelbyville, IN

MICHAEL D. AHLEMEYER
St. Peter’s Lutheran Church
Waterford, WI

JEFFREY A. ATHON (DEL)
Trinity Lutheran Church
Norman, OK

MARK O. ANARIKO
Matongo Lutheran Theological College & Kenyoro Parish
Nyamira District, Kenya, Africa

MICHAEL R. BAGNALL
Bethlehem Lutheran Church
Rapid City, SD

JAMES A. BARBEY
Hope Lutheran Church
Bradenton, FL

JEFFERY R. BAUER
Trinity Lutheran Church
Vinton, IA

DOUGLAS D. BAUMAN
Zion Lutheran Church
Corunna, IN

RONALD J. BENSON (AR)
Trinity Lutheran Church
Grand Island, NE

MARK E. BERLIN
Lutheran Homes, Inc.
Fort Wayne, IN

TED A. BOURRET (DEL)
St. Paul & Salem Lutheran Churches
Potter & Gurley, NE
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Church/Location</th>
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<td>DAVID M. JUHL</td>
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<td>JUSTIN D. KANE</td>
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<td>PAUL D. KIENKER (DEL)</td>
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<td>Wheaton, IL</td>
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<td>Brookings, SD</td>
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<td>Little Rock, AR</td>
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<td>HUGH A. PILLSBURY (DEL)</td>
<td>Resurrection Lutheran Church</td>
<td>Waterville, ME</td>
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<td>KENNETH C. RANKIN III</td>
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<td>STEPHEN M. ROSEBROCK</td>
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<td>GERARD T. SPARACO (AR)</td>
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<td>MORRIS W. STEPHENS, JR.</td>
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<td>Los Angeles (Westchester), CA</td>
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<td>RICHARD P. VOGELER (DEL)</td>
<td>St. Andrew Lutheran Church</td>
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<td>RICHARD VON STEINMAN (DEL)</td>
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<td>Lincoln Park, MI</td>
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<td>MANABU WAKABAYASHI</td>
<td>St. Matthew Lutheran Church</td>
<td>Walled Lake, MI</td>
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<td>OLIVER G. WASHINGTON, JR.</td>
<td>St. Paul Lutheran Church</td>
<td>Rushville &amp; Hay Springs, NE</td>
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<td>RICHARD W. WEAVER</td>
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<td>Jacksonville, FL</td>
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<td>JOEL E. WOOD (AR)</td>
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<tr>
<td>DEL (Delayed Vicar)</td>
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<td>AR (Alternate Route)</td>
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</table>
The Lord showers His blessings upon Christ’s Child Learning Center (CCLC). The center’s purpose is to serve the families of future pastors. The staff at the learning center feels privileged to embrace their children during this time of transition as the whole family prepares for ministry.

Christ’s Child Learning Center is a registered day care and preschool that serves the students and staff of Concordia Theological Seminary in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Providing loving care for children ages six weeks through six years during the school year, CCLC offers a preschool curriculum and age-appropriate programs for infants and toddlers. School-age children up to 12 years old enjoy age-appropriate activities during a summer program called Kids on Campus.

This has been a year of growth for Christ’s Child Learning Center. Due to an increasing demand for quality childcare, the staff has initiated building renovations to meet the needs of 32 registered children. With many inquiries for fall registration, we anticipate this high enrollment to continue. Predicting continued growth, future plans include the hope to expand the current facility or to build a new structure.

The Christ’s Child Learning Center enjoys support from the entire seminary community. Concordia Theological Seminary works closely with the childcare to provide high quality services. The campus dining service prepares a nutritional lunch each day, the Food Co-op provides food for breakfast and a daily snack, and the Clothing Co-op also supplies other items to meet the center’s needs. The library has increased its collection of children’s books and invites the preschool children for story time each week.

The Fort Wayne community also makes many contributions to the day care. Christ’s Child Learning Center has received grants from the Lutheran Foundation of Fort Wayne to help subsidize day care tuition. This has been a tremendous blessing for the seminary families! Local LCMS churches also send financial support, along with supply donations, and local businesses occasionally offer services or supplies at discounts or as donations.

Christ’s Child Learning Center depends upon the day care families to operate smoothly. These families offer their personal time and gifts to Christ’s Child Learning Center and give willingly from their hearts to make the childcare and preschool special. Due to its location on campus, parents have an opportunity to interact with their children during the day.

Please support the important work of assisting men in preparing for the ministry by praying for the Christ’s Child Learning Center and its programs, by donating items that the center can use in its work, and by offering financial support to help continue the high-quality care that is provided. For more information about Christ’s Child Learning Center, please feel free to contact the center’s director, Mrs. Renita Nahrwold, at (219) 452-2240.
Get Your News from the Seminary Fast!

CTSNEWS, a service of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Ind., provides information relating to Concordia Theological Seminary and her programs. Receive news releases via e-mail from Concordia Theological Seminary as soon as they are posted.

Send an e-mail to MAILSERV@CRF.CUIS.EDU and leave the subject line blank. In the body of the message, type the command SUBSCRIBE CTSNEWS. To remove yourself, follow the same steps but type UNSUBSCRIBE CTSNEWS.

Seminary Sunday Materials Available
Concordia Theological Seminary has many materials available to assist congregations in sponsoring a “Seminary Sunday.” Some things that congregations can receive free of charge include inserts that can be used in Sunday bulletins, newsletters, and other publications; “Student Adoption” brochures; “How Can They Hear” brochures; a video entitled, “Today’s Seminary, Tomorrow’s Pastors”; retreat information and admission packets.

All of these items can be ordered multiple ways. You can call the Public Relations Department at (800) 481-2155, or you can e-mail your request to admission@mail.ctsfw.edu. You can also request materials by writing to Concordia Theological Seminary, 6600 N. Clinton St., Fort Wayne, IN 46825.

We encourage each congregation to prayerfully consider having a seminary Sunday to heighten members’ awareness of the seminary and her programs.

Board of Regents Extends President’s Appointment
At its recent meeting, the Board of Regents of Concordia Theological Seminary (CTS) voted to continue the tenure of the Rev. Dr. Dean O. Wenthe as president of CTS to the year 2006.

“We are very happy to have Dr. Wenthe as president of CTS,” said the Rev. David Anderson, Chairman of the CTS Board of Regents. “We are thankful for the job he’s done, and are excited to extend his appointment as president until 2006.”

President Wenthe has moved the seminary in positive directions, and under his tutelage, CTS has realized great strides as an educational institution of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

When asked about the decision, Dr. Wenthe said, “It is a privilege to serve the seminary as President. The Board of Regents has distinguished itself in strategic planning and governance. Faculty and students are dedicated to the church and its confession. In a day when Lutheran identity is under pressure to acculturate in various ways, the clarity and charity with which the seminary community confesses Christ is a gift from God. To assist in strengthening and supporting that confession is a great honor. To God alone be all glory and thanks.”

President Wenthe Visits the Baltics
The Rev. Dr. William Weinrich, the Rev. Professor Timothy Quill, and the President of CTS, the Rev. Dr. Dean O. Wenthe recently visited the Baltics to meet with the bishop and archbishops of the three Baltic States. The purpose of the meeting was to follow up on conversations that were held with them previously at CTS concerning theological training and the seminary’s assistance to them as they emerge from the communist era and endeavor to hold up the Lutheran confession with clarity and scriptural integrity.

Dr. Weinrich, as Third Vice President of the LCMS, represented the Rev. Dr. Alvin Barry’s office during the conversations.

Archbishop Jaan Kiivit of Estonia, Archbishop Janis Vanags of Latvia, and Bishop Jonas Kalvans of Lithuania have all expressed confidence in their experience with the LCMS and its theological vision.

While many issues remain to be discussed between the bishops and President Alvin Barry’s office, new opportunities for theological education and formation are arising daily. The seminary has pledged to assist these bishops in such an exciting and challenging time in any way the bishops regard as appropriate.

Said Dr. Wenthe of the opportunities, “We at CTS will not only help teach, but will also benefit from the witness, courage, and convictions of these fellow Lutherans.” He continued by saying, “All of our contacts with these men are very moving, as their profound commitment to Christ has been forged by decades of incredible persecution and hardship.”

While in Lithuania, it was also Dr. Wenthe’s pleasure to confer the Doctor of Divinity degree upon the Rev. Charles Evanson, who is assisting with instruction at the University of Klaipeda as an Ordained Staff member of CTS deployed to Lithuania.
Thank You, Mr. Jacobs!

We don’t really know a great deal about Mr. Charles Jacobs, who passed away last year and bequeathed property to the seminary valued at just over $430,000. He wasn’t a member of our Board of Regents or President’s Advisory Council. He wasn’t an alumnus of the institution. In fact, he was not even on our mailing list!

What little we do know about Charles Jacobs we learned from his attorney and obituary information. His obituary notice tells us that he was born on September 12, 1920, and was confirmed at Emmanuel Lutheran Church, Fort Wayne, April 14, 1935. We know that he was a graduate of Central High School, Fort Wayne, and that he served his country with distinction as a member of the Army’s 94th General Hospital during World War II, stationed in the European Theater from October 10, 1942, to February 27, 1946.

Mr. Jacobs lived in a modest home in an older neighborhood in Ft. Wayne, where he worked as a self-employed machinist, retiring in 1989. We can say with certainty that he was a dedicated Christian man with a deep and abiding love for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. He must have been one of those special people who are truly selfless in their giving, seeking no special accolades or recognition.

In providing for the future of the seminary and her mission, Mr. Jacobs has provided a visible testimony of his faith and dedication to Christ’s Church on earth. His gift will not be forgotten. Thank you, Mr. Jacobs!

If you are like Mr. Jacobs and have provided for the seminary in your will or estate plan, please take a moment to let us know today. We would appreciate the opportunity to get to know you and to thank you for your intent. Together we can all work to further Christ’s Kingdom and fulfill the Great Commission. Our toll-free telephone number is 877-287-4338.

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Themes
Designed to create a community of discourse to form a new kind of evangelicalism, each issue is arranged around a particular theological theme or problem. Topics are looked at from an overview perspective, followed by articles looking at the historical, polemical, and exegetical angles. Our intent is to promote a classic Christian theology that is thoughtfully engaging for the layperson as well as the theologically trained.

On My Mind
Featuring well-known Bible expositor and author Dr. James Boice, this back-page column is a personal perspective on the church from a seasoned urban pastor.

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Since “faith comes by hearing” (Romans 10), we feature a Christ-centered sermon in every issue. Selected messages come from pastors from a variety of confessional traditions across the country.

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Michael Horton, Editor in Chief

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## CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Events

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<td>July 16-29, 2000</td>
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<td><strong>Prayerfully Consider</strong></td>
<td>September 28-30, 2000</td>
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<td><strong>Good Shepherd Institute</strong></td>
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<td><strong>2001 Symposia Series</strong></td>
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<td>September 10, 2000</td>
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<td><strong>Organ Recital</strong></td>
<td>November 5, 2000</td>
<td>Martin Jean</td>
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<td>November 5, 2000</td>
<td>Kramer Chapel</td>
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<td><strong>Advent Candlelight</strong></td>
<td>December 10, 2000</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Choral Vespers</strong></td>
<td>November 5, 2000</td>
<td>Kramer Chapel</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Epiphany Lessons and Carols</strong></td>
<td>January 14, 2001</td>
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### Retreats

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<td><strong>Hymn Writers Retreat</strong></td>
<td>October 20-22, 2000</td>
<td>(219) 452-2204</td>
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<td><strong>Lutherhostel</strong></td>
<td>October 29-November 3, 2000</td>
<td>(219) 452-2204</td>
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<td><strong>Elders Retreat</strong></td>
<td>November 3-5, 2000</td>
<td>(219) 452-2204</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sabbatical Week</strong></td>
<td>November 5-10, 2000</td>
<td>(219) 452-2204</td>
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"We wanted our kids to follow their dreams, instead of worrying about money. Our Lutheran Brotherhood representative made that possible."

Lutheran Brotherhood was founded on the idea of service to Lutherans. We call it stewardship. It means we’re dedicated to making a difference in the lives of Lutherans, by managing financial resources as well as reaching out to people in need.

You can see stewardship in the efforts of Lutheran Brotherhood district representative Kurt Gland, who helped the Hansons with their estate conservation needs. He found a way for them to support their charitable causes, without taking away from their children’s inheritance.

You’ll find examples of Lutheran Brotherhood building stronger Lutheran communities, congregations, institutions and families all across the country. Today, we’re on the Hansons’ front porch.

Serving through Stewardship

LUTHERAN BROTHERHOOD

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