

## What kind of church would my church be if everyone were like me?

### FROM THE PASTOR

Over the years I have heard all sorts of little sayings which seek to capture some aspect of religious thought. The one that keeps coming back to me is one I heard long ago. "What kind of church would my church be, if everyone were just like me?" It's an intriguing thought. It's also very humbling if we really think it through.

Ask your self a few questions like these. Would there be an ample supply of Sunday School teachers if everyone were just like me. Would there be plenty of people to serve on committees, to make calls on visitors or shut-ins? Would the church lawn be cut regularly, the church cleaned weekly, and the nursery be amply staffed? Would the church budget be met and the bills paid? Would there be strong support for missions if everyone supported the church just like me? What would the music be like if everyone was just like me? What would Bible class discussions be like if everyone was just like me?

By now you can see how intriguing this question is. If we were able to clone ourselves over and over again, what impact would it have on a congregation if each member was exactly like us? Would our church be a friendly church which welcomes others into its midst or would we keep to ourselves? Would we embrace all who came through the door with the same love and enthusiasm? Would we treat the affluent in the same way as those who were poor? Would we welcome only those whose children were well behaved, who were nicely dressed and caused no disturbance? Would we show love and forgiveness to all when they did something to offend us? Would we be there to support the pastor in his ministry or only be there to criticize?

"What kind of church would my church be, if everyone were just like me?" I try to ask myself this question regularly. It helps me keep things in perspective. If everyone were just like me, there would be some areas where we would shine. But I also know there

would be many areas where the church would be wanting.

Thank God that each member of the church is not exactly the same. We all have our strengths and weaknesses. Thank God that there are people who make up for those areas in which we fall short.

Hope Lutheran Church has approved a new organizational structure and in the coming months we will be looking to fill new positions in which people can serve the Lord with their gifts and talents. Just as God has made our human bodies with many different unique parts that work together to make the body function, so also God has brought us together in the body of Christ and given each one of us unique gifts and talents that we can use to the glory of God and for the spread of the gospel among us. I would encourage you to consider prayerfully what gifts God has given you – gifts that are unique to you – gifts that you can put to use in service to your Savior. As God brings together each one of our gifts, God creates a church that is far better than one in which everyone is "just like me." Instead, it is a church with many different gifts working together for the Lord.

Let us each thank God that everyone is "not just like ourselves." Thank God for the many different and unique gifts he has given to each of us. Let's ask God to forgive us for our sins and shortcomings and ask for help to do better in the future. Let's us thank him for Jesus who lived, died, and rose again to forgive our shortcomings and sins. Let us strive to be more and more like Jesus for what a church it would be if every member were just like him.

*Pastor Kehren*

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and some others in the membership this Fall; probably in October as we move forward in our reorganization program.

Please welcome all of our new leaders and encourage them in their tasks ahead and keep them in all your prayers. Again, thank you one and all for all your help - encouragement & prayers while I was President as I'm sure you will do the same for our new President - Steve F.

As we go forward in God's work here at Hope - God urges us to be faithful with his Word, to use it regularly, to preach it accurately and clearly, and to spread it zealously, always remembering that the success or lack of success is in God's hands, not ours. Always be faithful in whatever you do wherever you are and whoever you are.

Until next time - May Almighty God's - Creator and Sustainer of all life and all things great and small - Grace and Peace be with you always.

**COMMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Bill B

Brothers & Sisters in Christ - Fellow Christians

At the Voters Meeting on the 8th of July, the voters approved the newly revised Constitution for Hope Lutheran as well as a new slate of officers for the rest of 2008 & 2009. As you will note a lot of the previous officers are stepping down and taking a rest and breather for a while or taking on another position within the church. We still have two Ministry Leader positions to fill and I'm very confident that we can have those positions filled by the next Church Council meeting sometime in middle or late August, at which time the leadership will be working on filling the various coordinator positions under the various Ministry positions under the new reorganization. A large majority of these positions are now being filled, but under another name.

Again, a very special "THANK YOU" to all of those who have served and are now taking a breather or a sabbatical break and to all who have volunteered to serve our Lord at his church here at Hope Lutheran in the upcoming months. The upcoming months will be a very challenging, exciting and rewarding time for all of here at Hope. Pastor Stroh, Director of Parish Assistance, will be coming out to talk to all Leaders

**IT HAPPENED IN AUGUST...**

28 August 1988 - The ceremonial ground breaking for the new sanctuary was held. The shovel was wielded by President Ted H., Building Committee Chairman Ron S., Committeeman Greg J. and Committeeman Steve G. Actual construction would begin in March of 1989, and the structure would be completed in September 1989.

11 August 1996 - Mr. Craig Kiecker was installed as the first Principal/Teacher of Hope Lutheran School. He was the entire faculty and staff for the first two years.

27 August 1996 - Pastor Behringer conducted a brief dedication service for the Hope Lutheran School at the Fellowship hall. An open house was held for the attendees.

28 August 1996 -It was the first day of school, with one Principal/Teacher and four students.

23 August 1998 - Mrs. Linda Kiecker was installed as the second Teacher at Hope Lutheran School. The

school year began with sixteen students and a staff of two.

15 August 1999 - Miss Kristine Krug was installed as Teacher at Hope Lutheran School. The school year began with twenty two students and a staff of two.

27 August 2000 - The new school building was dedicated exactly four years after the initial school dedication. The building is the fourth phase of construction at the Hope facility.

3 August 2003 - Mrs. Carol Heyn and Mrs. Jane Sullivan were installed as Teachers at the Hope Lutheran School. They were both members of Hope and were called to share a single position - each teaching part time. The staff then consisted of three full time positions (with four incumbents).

### GENTLE THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

The easiest way to find something lost around the house is to buy a replacement.

### HOPE SCHOOL NEWS

#### Welcome to Hope Lutheran School's 13<sup>th</sup> Year!

Our theme for the upcoming school year will be "Hope in the Lord" based on Isaiah 40:31,



*They will soar  
on wings like eagles*

Those who  
**HOPE**  
in the  
**LORD**  
will renew their  
**STRENGTH**  
Isaiah 40:31



*They will run  
and not grow weary*

If you would like a calendar for the 2008-2009 school year please see Mr. Leifer.

#### Registration Night/School Cleaning Day

The new school year is upon us. For all school parents, Registration Night will be held on August 11, at 7:00 pm. For all congregation members, School cleaning day will be held on August 17 at 12:00 noon. Please mark this date on your calendar and help spruce up our school for the new year. There is plenty to do, and "many hands make work light."

### Volunteer Your Time for Your School

We need your help! If you have time available during the school week, please come work with some of Jesus little lambs. Currently, we need kindergarten helpers, who would be doing small group and individual projects outside of the classroom. Soon we will also be looking for Royal Readers to come and read books to our young ones a few Wednesday afternoons a month. If you are interested, please see Miss Krug to find out what is available. Thanks!

### Wish List

**Laminating Machine**

**SMART Board interactive whiteboard**

**More Computers in Classrooms**

**Digital Projector**

### YOUNG AT HEART

The Young at Heart group will meet in the Fellowship Hall at 11:30am on Tuesday, August 19<sup>th</sup>. We will have a general potluck, so please bring a dish to share. A few of the members at St. Andrew will be joining us and we will have a Surprise Guest Speaker who will share with us what his life was like walking with Jesus.

World Missions

April 15, 2008

Dear Friends at Young at Heart:

"God demonstrates his own love for us in this; while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). We have seen this promise fulfilled in our World Mission program. Over the past 12 years the number of souls in World Mission churches has grown from approximately 33,000 to over 77,000 souls.

On behalf of the Board for World Missions, I would like to extend my thanks to you for your gift, a gift that enables us to continue sharing the wonderful message of God's love with the people of other nations. Your gift of \$545.00 was recorded on April 8, 2008, and has been directed to India-India Orphanage.

We appreciate the commitment of the missionaries and their families who are willing to share God's saving truth on our behalf. We are grateful to God for your committed gift of love in supporting their work.

We assure you that we also are committed to using your offering in the wisest possible manner.

Because He lives,  
Rev. Dan Koelpin, Administrator  
WELS Board for World Missions

### HOPE FOOD CLOSET

All food donations are given to Betty N's Hope Food Closet. Please help by purchasing the designated items for the month.

Leave your purchases on the counter on the East side of the kitchen. Thank you for your outreach to the community.

**August:** Rice, Macaroni & Cheese

### THANK YOU, THANK YOU

A belated thank you to Lisa B. and her team of volunteers for the cake social and delicious light luncheon following the Confirmation Service in May and for another cake social for the New Member Sunday in June.



I want to thank everyone that helped the kids raise money for Tree of life camp; it was a HUGE success for only 1 month!!!! I think we were able to give each child going to camp about \$100 towards the cost!!! I know the families really appreciated it and you can see in pictures that the kids enjoyed. See the attached link for the start of camp pictures save the link if you want to check back later.

Watch for new fund raisers coming up so we don't have to try to do it all in 1 month! How about "A WAFFLE FEST" sound yummy??? Thank you again very much for all your help.

In Christian Love,  
Linda G.

### ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Have you been sitting on the right side of the church this summer with the sun beating down upon you? We seem to all try to avoid the pews with the sunshine or find ourselves sitting on the left.

Join us after late service on Sunday, August 24th for a sandwich luncheon and an Ice Cream Social in the Fellowship Hall. This event is a fund raiser for the purchase of mini blinds for the sanctuary. Matching funds will be provided by Thrivent Financial for Lutherans.

Sloppy Joes and chips will be served, followed by ICE CREAM with all the toppings. Please bring your appetite, sweet tooth and oh yes, your free will offering and join in the fun.

### TOGETHER



#### News from the WELS

July 2008  
Website: [www.wels.net](http://www.wels.net)

**July 7, 2008**

#### LWMS: FOCUSED ON OUR MISSION

**From the office of President Mark Schroeder**

Last week I had the privilege of attending a portion of the annual convention of the Lutheran Women's Missionary Society (LWMS) in Tucson, Ariz. For three days, approximately 1,200 women (and more than a few men, too!) gathered to hear directly from WELS missionaries, missionary wives, and mission members from around the world. The reports were touching, inspiring, and entertaining, but the purpose was not merely to entertain or tug at the emotions. The purpose of these presentations was to enable the women of the LWMS to meet and connect with those whose lives have been touched by the work of LWMS mission projects and to become more familiar with the gospel ministries supported by the LWMS.

For decades the LWMS has provided a special opportunity for the women of WELS to be directly involved in the support of mission efforts. Support for missions has been their single focus and purpose, and it remains so today. The organization's commitment to spreading the gospel of Christ is

evident in all they do, from the many mission displays in the convention hall lobby, to the close cooperation with the synod's Boards for Home and World Missions, to the keen interest shown by convention delegates to news and reports from mission fields.

The LWMS has held to its purpose and has consistently focused on the importance of missions. In doing that, the organization has not only provided valuable support for our mission work in terms of dollars, prayers, and communication with mission families, it has also served to remind all of us that mission work remains a central task and theme for our entire synod. I thank the leaders and members of the LWMS, not only for the work that they do to support missions but also for helping us all to keep our focus on the task of sharing the gospel with the world.

If you've ever attended an LWMS convention or a synod convention, you've witnessed the LWMS tradition of presenting the flags of every nation in which our synod conducts mission work. At last summer's synod convention, when WELS entered into formal fellowship with the Lutheran Church of Portugal, Pastor Artur Villares promised that he would send the Portuguese flag in time for the next convention. He kept that promise and asked me to deliver his country's flag to the women of the LWMS. Last week I had the privilege of presenting that flag, and it has now joined the growing group of flags representing the places where WELS is working to carry the gospel to all nations.

To view a video shown at the convention profiling the women of the LWMS, go to <http://streams.wels.net/video/convention>

Serving in Christ,  
Mark Schroeder

### Also in this Issue...

#### **WELS Relief distributes aid for flooding**

WELS Committee on Relief—or "WELS Relief"—has completed its assessment of flooding damage to church buildings and members' homes throughout the upper Midwest, and has released \$105,000 in disaster aid.

#### **"Year of Jubilee" launched at district conventions**

"Year of Jubilee," the new synod wide offering designed to reduce WELS' debt of \$22.4 million, was

launched with special presentations at each of the 12 district conventions last month.

#### **Fourth mission counselor position filled**

Rev. Peter Kruschel, administrator for WELS Board for Ministerial Education, accepted the call from WELS Board for Home Missions to be the mission counselor in the Pacific Northwest and southwestern regions.

#### **Latino students gather at WLS**

For the first time, a national theological training seminar was held at Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary (WLS), Mequon, for Latinos studying to be congregational assistants in their churches.

**July 21, 2008**

#### **THANK GOD FOR HIS BLESSINGS!**

**From the office of President Mark Schroeder**

" 'Test me in this,' says the LORD Almighty, 'and see if I will not throw open the floodgates of heaven and pour out so much blessing that you will not have room enough for it' " (Malachi 3:10).

With those words, God encouraged the people of Israel to place their trust in his promises, and he assured them that he would bless them in ways that they could hardly expect or even imagine. At last summer's synod convention, we were encouraged to have that same kind of trust in God's faithfulness. In the 11 months since that time, he has poured out financial blessings on our synod that few of us would have expected.

The preliminary results for our synod's fiscal year, which ended on June 30, show that the synod ended the year with a budgetary surplus of approximately \$2.8 million. Year-end accounting is still being finalized, but our financial staff is confident that these numbers are very close to what the final results will be. The surplus is the result of a number of factors, including a substantial increase in congregational and individual offerings combined with significant under-spending by the areas of ministry. The Synodical Council will determine how these funds will be utilized.

In May, the Synodical Council already approved an increase of \$500,000 in the 2008-09 budget for Home Missions to be used for new mission starts. The majority of this \$500,000 was actually a part of the 2007-08 budget that was not spent in 2007-08.

The budget originally adopted by the synod convention for the coming year (2008-09) showed a shortfall of \$2.6 million. This shortfall was created when the convention restored \$600,000 to World Missions and \$2 million for the continued operation of Michigan Lutheran Seminary in Saginaw. Again, due to a number of factors, the \$2.6 million shortfall has been reduced to approximately \$900,000. Part of the surplus from 2007-08 could be used to cover that \$900,000 shortfall, with the remaining surplus placed, for the time being, into a buffer fund for shortfalls that may occur in the future. Again, the Synodical Council will determine how to handle these unexpected blessings and will present final recommendations to the next synod convention.

Two important things need to be noted. First, we can and should be filled with a sense of overwhelming thanks to God. Even in a time of financial uncertainty in our nation, he has moved his people to bring generous thank offerings to support the worldwide proclamation of the gospel. This support is not the result of a convention resolution; it's the result of the gospel of Jesus Christ working in the hearts of God's thankful people.

Second, some have expressed a concern that news of this surplus will lead congregations and members to conclude that the financial crisis has passed and that support will diminish, even as forecasts warn of future shortfalls. I'm convinced that just the opposite will happen. We believe that the promises of a gracious God are what moved people to respond with their offerings in the last year. Those promises have not changed, and we should have no doubt that the gospel will continue to lead us to focus our efforts on the mission opportunities that God will give to us.

Personally, I would like to thank our synodical leaders (the Conference of Presidents and the Synodical Council) for their planning work and the encouragement they offer to the members of the synod. I would like to thank congregational leaders, both called and lay workers, for helping to keep our congregations focused on our shared work as a synod. I would like to thank the members of our congregations for their generous offerings. Together, we join our hearts in thanking God for the gift of his Son, and for all of the other gifts that he continues to shower on us as individuals and as a synod. To him alone be the glory!

Serving in Christ,  
Mark Schroeder

## Also in this Issue...

### **WELS humanitarian aid trip to Africa**

The three members of WELS Humanitarian Aid Committee—which exists to help spread the gospel by providing points of contact with people through humanitarian aid—are traveling to Africa.

### **Record registration for worship conference**

This year's National Conference on Music, Worship, and the Arts, to be held July 28-31 in St. Peter, Minn., already has a record number of registered attendees and presenters—almost 1,000 people.

### **Work begins at new mission in Reno**

Rev. Steve Hillmer, the new outreach pastor at Shepherd of the Mountains, Reno, Nev., was installed July 13. As outreach pastor, Hillmer is working to start a new mission congregation in Spanish Springs.

### **New president for WLC**

Daniel W. Johnson has accepted the call to be the next president of Wisconsin Lutheran College (WLC) in Milwaukee, Wis. Johnson was the administrator of Arizona Lutheran Academy (ALA) in Phoenix, Ariz.

### **Spotlight on Streams: leadership conference**

About 450 people—including public and Lutheran school teachers, principals, pastors, and school board representatives—attended the 2008 WELS National School Leadership Conference in June.

For more on these stories, visit the WELS website at [WELS.net](http://WELS.net)

## YOSEMITE MUSINGS

By Stephen L.

I am going on a hike with Mr. Bolla and my friends  
We made s'mores and ate hot dogs  
On Saturday we packed up camp  
It took forever to get home where my mom  
Was waiting for me

## YOSEMITE ALPHABET

By Stephen L.

A is for amazing Yosemite  
B is for bears are bad animals  
C is for cliffs in Yosemite  
D is for dangerous bears  
E is for excellent waterfalls  
F is for food that bears eat  
G is for giant bears  
H is for hills  
I is for irresistible land  
J is for jump for the ball  
K is for killing bears  
L is for little bears  
M is for men hiking half dome  
N is for nasty bears  
O is for being outside  
P is for people being loud  
Q is for quiet people  
R is for rocks  
S is for sandwiches  
T is for terrain on the trail  
U is for underground caves  
V is for Vernal Falls  
W is for waterfalls  
X is for extreme hiking  
Y is for Yosemite  
Z is for ZZZs when you are sleeping

## YOSEMITE MUSINGS

By Stephen L.

I am Vernal Falls  
I feel people walking on the side of me  
I hear the water trickling  
I see people walking on me  
I am big, cool, and fun to climb

## A REAL BARGAIN

The government recently calculated the cost of raising a child from birth to 18 and came up with \$160,140 for a middle-income family, not including college tuition.

Some may break out their calculators and dream about all the things we could have bought or all the places we could have traveled.

But \$160,140 isn't so bad if you break it down. It translates into \$8,896.66 a year, \$741.38 a month or \$171.08 a week. Just \$24.44 a day. Just over a dollar an hour.

"What do I get for my \$160,140?"

Naming rights. First, middle and last.

Glimpses of God every day.

Giggles under the covers every night.

More love than your heart can hold.

Butterfly kisses and Velcro hugs.

Endless wonder over rocks, ants, clouds, and warm cookies.

A hand to hold, usually covered with jam.

A partner for blowing bubbles, flying kites, building sand castles and skipping down the sidewalk in the pouring rain.

Someone to laugh yourself silly with no matter what the boss said or how your stocks performed that day.

You never have to grow up. You get to finger-paint, carve pumpkins, play hide-and-seek, catch lightning bugs, and never stop believing in Santa Claus.

You have an excuse to keep reading the adventures of Piglet and Pooh, watching Saturday morning cartoons, going to Disney movies, and wishing on stars.

You get to frame rainbows, hearts and flowers under refrigerator magnets and collect spray-painted noodle wreaths for Christmas, handprints set in clay for Mother's Day and cards with backward letters for Father's Day.

For \$160,140, there's no greater bang for your buck. You get to be a hero just for retrieving a Frisbee off the garage roof, taking the training wheels off the bike, removing a sliver, filling the wading pool, coaxing a wad of gum out of bangs and coaching a baseball team that never wins but always gets treated to ice cream regardless.

You get a front-row seat to history to witness the first step, first word, first bra, first date, first time behind the wheel.

You get to be immortal. You get another branch added to your family tree, and if you're lucky, a long list of limbs in your obituary called grandchildren.

You get an education in psychology, nursing, criminal justice, communications, and human sexuality no college can match.

In the eyes of a child, you rank right up there with God.

You have the power to heal a boo-boo, scare away monsters under the bed, patch a broken heart, police a slumber party, and love them without limits, so one day they will, like you, love without counting the cost.