

# W *The Lutheran* WITNESS

MAY 2003

VOL. 122 NO. 5



## *The Secret Pain*

*Also:*  
*Another New Hymnal?*  
*Women in Combat*



# The Lutheran WITNESS

A MAGAZINE FOR THE LAYPEOPLE OF THE LUTHERAN CHURCH — MISSOURI SYNOD

MAY 2003

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Tom Opentander/CPH

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## What kind of pastor?

*What kind of pastor do I want?  
I want the pastor that I have.*

*Margaret Mohler  
Phoenix, Ariz.*

DR. L. DEAN HEMPELMANN ("WHAT KIND OF Pastor Do You Want?," March '03) is to be commended for publicly asking the question and soliciting responses.

From my 50-plus years of experience as a parish pastor, I feel strongly that a pastor, in order to be really an effective shepherd, needs to encourage and practice the servant-hood role. Too much we are tempted to be authoritarian—the source of all the answers—with the tendency to pontificate.

We have a Savior who came to us in the servant role. He sent His disciples out into the world only after He had demonstrated the role of the humble servant as He washed their feet. We are called to serve those who are part of our parish and those who aren't. The hymn (*Lutheran Worship* 262) says it well:

Come as a servant—so he came—  
And we receive you in his stead.

*Rev. Norm Spomer  
Eagan, Minn.*

WHAT KIND OF PASTOR DO I WANT? I WANT the pastor that I have.

I want a pastor who is human, one who confesses his sin with me every Sunday morning. We must realize that our pastor will have weaknesses, forgive him and do all we can to help him.

I want a pastor who preaches the loving kindness of a God who sent His Son to redeem the world, a Savior who has made me right with God without any merit or worthiness on my part—a man who makes doubly sure that no one leaves his church without *knowing* that his sins are forgiven.

I want "a man who is the husband of one wife, and manages his children and household well" (1 Tim. 3:12).

I want a pastor who believes that the *Holy Spirit*, not the pastor's charisma, "has called me by the Gospel, enlightened me with his gifts, sanctified and kept me in the true faith." A man who with St. Paul says his message is Christ crucified.

I want my pastor to pull the little girls' ponytails and scoop up the baby he just baptized and hold it while he greets the people as they leave the church. I want a pastor who loves his people.

Let's praise God for the special person He made, and not complain because he is not like the pastor of some megachurch. He is the pastor God wants us to have at this time. We must pray for him and do everything we can to uphold the unity of the church so the outside world can say, "Look how they love one another." This "new commandment" from Jesus to love one another does include our pastor.

*Margaret Mohler  
Phoenix, Ariz.*

## From camp to church work

THANKS SO MUCH FOR THE ARTICLES IN the March *Lutheran Witness* that included the strong connection between outdoors ministry and recruiting church workers. In "Where Church Workers Come From," Vicar Jim Mueller's encouragement to those interested in church work includes getting "some hands-on experience at a

Lutheran summer camp. ..." In "Four for Four," Brad Hopfensperger mentions that working as a Lutheran-camp counselor for four summers was "probably the biggest influence" on his decision to become a pastor.

The influence of outdoors ministry on future church-work professionals is true not only in my own life. In a study I found while doing research for my master's degree, it was fourth among 18 tested factors (Jeter Basden, Baylor University, 2001).

*Kevin Bueltmann  
Assistant Director  
Camp CILCA  
Cantrall, Ill.*

*For those who would like more information on church-work careers, the Synod's Board for Higher Education has produced a number of free brochures about church careers and about the institutions that make up the Synod's higher-education system. To download information about schools and programs from the Web, go to <http://higher-ed.lcms.org>. Or, call the Higher Education office in St. Louis toll-free at (800) 248-1930, Ext. 1254.—Ed.*

## War

I AM A VETERAN OF WORLD WAR II AND must say that the first four letters in the March *Lutheran Witness* were a blow. These letters apparently would suggest that all LCMS citizens should be "conscientious objectors" in the present circumstances.

The Sunday before I left for the Army, a classmate from Concordia College in Seward, Neb., then a teacher at a Missouri Synod school, told me he felt relieved he didn't have to go. He said he just wouldn't be able to go to war. My father, a Lutheran teacher, taught the passage from Romans 13, to be subject

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to the higher powers, since there is no power not ordained by God.

Should I repent for being part of the task force that liberated Buchenwald? That gave me nightmares for two years.

*W. Frederick Reese  
Fairbury, Neb.*

I AM A VETERAN OF WWII AND SERVED IN the European Theater from 1942 to 1945. I was returned to the States in March 1945 for further training in preparation for the invasion of the Japanese homeland. I take issue with the statement by Dr. Albert Jabs in the March "Letters" that "the dropping of the atomic bomb on Hiroshima was wrong. (Yes, it shortened the war, but at what moral cost?)"

Had the bomb not been dropped, thousands of allied forces and Japanese civilian and military personnel would have been killed. The cost of lives lost in taking Japanese-held islands such as Okinawa was but a precursor of the costs that would have been incurred in taking the Japanese homeland.

I am confident that many of those whose lives were spared by dropping the atomic bomb have made valuable contributions in all walks of life. How does one equate the value of casualties spared versus the "moral cost" raised by Dr. Jabs? I have been able to lead a productive Christian life because the decision to drop the atomic bomb shielded me from the horrors of trying to invade Japan.

*Karl Alberti  
Toledo, Ohio*

***We welcome letters that comment on articles in The Lutheran Witness. Letters may be edited for length and clarity. Send letters to "Letters," c/o The Lutheran Witness, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295; or send them via e-mail to Lutheran.Witness@LCMS.org.***

*There's hope  
in Christ  
for those  
who grieve  
the loss of a  
child through  
abortion.*



by Linda D. Bartlett

**M**other's Day, Father's Day, Grandparent's Day and Life Sunday are not happy events for those wounded by abortion. These days, intended to celebrate life, can instead be a reminder of lost lives and denied relationships.

For 30 years, abortion has been the subject of heated debate. But for millions of American women, and for the men, grandparents, siblings and friends in the lives of those women, abortion is not a debate – it is a loss. It is the loss of a son, a daughter, a grandchild. That's because motherhood and fatherhood—and even grandparenthood—begin at conception.

Many of us know someone who has lost a child through miscarriage. We grieve with them, offer the peace of Christ and entrust the precious little one to God. But abortion is a secret pain. It is a loss that is carried deep inside and alone.

The great loss of life should pierce the heart of every one of us. The numbers are staggering. More than 3,000

women have abortions every day. These women are in our families, congregations and circles of friends. They are Christians who worship with us and go to Bible study with us. I know some of these women. At least 21 of my relatives, friends or acquaintances have had abortions—16 of these women are Lutherans. Two are the wives of Lutheran pastors. At least three have had more than one abortion.

Abortion has created a new mission field for the church. There is a need to enter this mission field—but, first, we must understand that we will almost certainly encounter denial, anger, self-hatred, distrust, grief, remorse and the natural, but perhaps deeply buried, desire for reconciliation with the Giver of Life.

For those in denial, our message must gently convict. For those already convicted, our message must be of hope and our behavior sincere. Just as we have been reconciled to God through Jesus Christ, we have been given a ministry of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:18).

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Eight months ago, I became a grandmother for the first time. Holding my grandson is surprisingly different than holding my own two sons. Each gaze upon the child of my child is a generational moment. The room of my heart excitedly receives this little one. The room of my life rearranges itself.

Often, when I am holding my grandson, I think of the thousands of other women of my generation whose arms will never hold a grandchild. Their arms will never hold the child of their child. That's because pregnant women believed the lie: "Make this one sacrifice and choose a better time to be a mother." Although the room of their hearts may have whispered a word of welcome, the room of their lives did not.

Because these women either did not hear or did not trust God's promise, the world captured their every thought and desire. Tossed in a tumultuous sea, these women reached toward "salvation" in the guise of a "quick and painless" abortion.

But the degrading act goes against all that is maternal and natural. Sent away from the abortion clinic, women are abandoned to burdens of guilt, grief and anger that threaten to pull them into cold and lonely darkness, away from the Giver of Life.

### How to respond

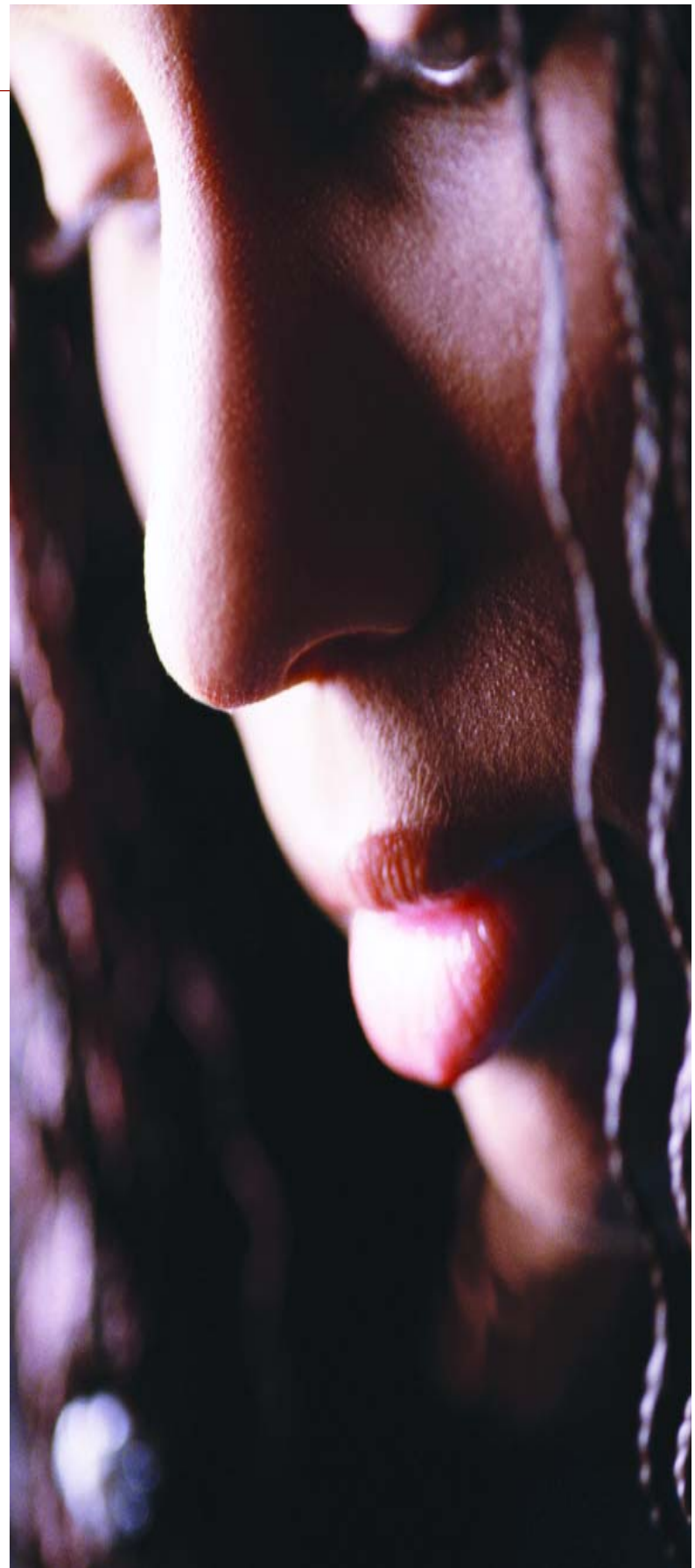
So how do you and I respond?

Some say, "How could a woman do such a thing!" This statement is not intended to be cruel, but it is heard as a judgment.

Others, hoping to be less judgmental, say, "I would never have an abortion myself, but I believe every

*Some say, "How could a woman do such a thing!" This statement is not intended to be cruel, but it is heard as a judgment.*

woman should have the right to choose." This statement sounds compassionate, but to the woman who has had an abortion, it sounds like a comparison: "Abortion is wrong and because I am a good person I wouldn't do such a terrible thing, but women who are incapable of doing the right thing should have a choice."



*Over one American million women choose abortion each year. Immediately afterward they may feel a sense of relief, but in the months and years following that choice, many of them will silently struggle with symptoms related to post abortion syndrome.*

# SUGGESTIONS FOR THOSE WHO CARE

1. As you speak of God's love for each human life—from the moment of conception—take care that your choice of words and manner welcomes those who have been wounded by an abortion choice and long for forgiveness and hope.

2. Include post-abortion healing brochures in your church tract rack or place them in mothers' rooms or restrooms. E-mail: [nfo@lutheransforlife.org](mailto:nfo@lutheransforlife.org) or call Lutherans For Life Healing Hearts at 1-888-364-LIFE for samples.

3. Invite a small group of church members to study post-abortion syndrome and consider opportunities for outreach. Order the book *From Heartache to Healing* (Concordia Publishing House) from Lutherans For Life.

4. Parents can help make abortion unthinkable by raising sons to chivalry and daughters to purity. God's Word equips parents to guard youthful innocence and honor the created differences between male and female. Lutherans For Life offers a variety of resources for instructing in purity.

## healing hearts

Celebrations of life, such as Mother's Day, can be reminders of great loss. At such times, you can call The Healing Hearts ministry, the post-abortion ministry of Lutherans For Life, at their toll-free hotline: (888) 21story. In Illinois, call (708) 990-0909. The Healing Hearts ministry offers hope and healing through Jesus Christ.

The Lutherans For Life toll-free number is 888-364-LIFE. Visit their website at [www.lutheransforlife.org](http://www.lutheransforlife.org)

Both statements are condemning. Neither offer hope before or after an abortion.

There is a third response. Trying to imitate Jesus. Jesus understands why people like you and me sin; He came to live among us, to feel our frustration, fears and sorrow. He placed Himself



in a very different circumstance here on earth than that of heaven. Jesus loved us so much that He willingly took on our disgrace, our burden, our sin. Only by living under the Cross are we able to see those hurt by sin (including ourselves) in a new way.

Days on which we celebrate life are meant to be happy days, but for many they are not. In the heart of nearly every post-abortive woman is an empty place that is forever expectant and waiting. Although she may have believed the lie that there was no room, a cry of sorrow echoes in the room that was always there, waiting.

We cannot go back in time to erase 30 years of legalized abortion nor the effect on women, men, children and society. Mothers who once believed there was no room in their life for a baby now mourn the child whose heart beat so close under their own. Fathers who once believed that there was no room in their life for a baby are now angry at themselves for failing to protect their son or daughter. Could-have-

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been grandparents who once believed there was no room in their lives for a baby now dream of grandchildren that would have filled the rooms of their homes with laughter.

Sometimes, when I'm holding my grandson, my thoughts turn to Mary. She approached me after I was finished speaking to a group of Lutheran women, asking for my address. In the letters that followed, she confessed two abortions. "There has been so much pain in my heart," Mary wrote. "I could understand how God could forgive a murderer, but not someone who has killed her own child."

This pain and the belief that she had committed the sin "too big to be forgiven" held Mary captive. But, "the reason I want to tell you my story," Mary continued, "is to thank you! If, years earlier, I had

heard the words of compassion and forgiveness that I heard from you, I would not have had a second abortion. I would have been reconciled to God and turned my life around a lot earlier instead of wallowing in the muck of sin and accusation."

### A word of hope

"Mary"s are everywhere ... and they are waiting. They are silently waiting for a word of hope. Their broken hearts long to be healed. God has given us His Word to speak in love. To be sure, the Word of Truth presses hard on the source of pain. "When I kept silent," wrote the psalmist, "my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I

acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,' and You forgave the guilt of my sin" (Ps. 32:3-5).

There is hope for women and men who have been pierced by abortion's blade. It is Jesus! In Jesus, all who confess their sin are cleansed and forgiven (1 Tim. 1:15). In Jesus, the captive is set free (Gal. 5:1)! Jesus fills the empty and expectant rooms of hearts—and heals the secret pain.



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*Linda Bartlett is a volunteer with Healing Hearts and serves as president of National Lutherans For Life.*



## Missouri Synod chaplains serve troops in war with Iraq

As this *Lutheran Witness* went to press in late March, at least 16 LCMS active-duty military chaplains were serving on ships or with troops in the



Navy Chaplain Craig Muehler of Camp Lejeune, N.C., leads the dedication service for a Marine chapel in February in Kuwait. Muehler, one of 16 active-duty LCMS military chaplains serving in the war zone, is assigned to the U.S. Marines 2nd Force Service Support Group.

war with Iraq and another 12 Reserve and National Guard chaplains had been ordered to active duty stateside for a year.

Seven of the Navy chaplains were serving with U.S. Marine units from Camp Pendleton, Calif., and Camp Lejeune, N.C.

After assembling in Kuwait, the chaplains were expected to accompany U.S. troops as they moved through Iraq. No other details were avail-

able at press time, according to Chaplain Rodger R. Venzke, director of the Synod's Ministry to the Armed Forces.

"I am extremely grateful for the consistent support members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod have provided our Ministry to the Armed Forces for so many decades, through so many wars," Venzke said.

That support has allowed his office to provide informational and devotional materials by

mail to Lutherans serving in the armed forces worldwide.

About 85 LCMS pastors are active-duty military chaplains and another 120 are in the Reserves or National Guard, Venzke said.

For information about the Synod's Ministry to the Armed Forces, or to submit a name to its "Ministry-by-Mail" list, visit the Web site [www.lcmsworldmission.org/armedforces/](http://www.lcmsworldmission.org/armedforces/) or call (800) 433-3954, Ext. 1337.

## Grassroots fund drive gains momentum

Lutherans were still donating to a grassroots e-mail fund drive for LCMS World Mission when this *Lutheran Witness* went to press in late March.

At that time, the total received in the effort was \$53,400 — some \$24,000 more than a month earlier.

The campaign started when Paul Koehler of Omaha, Neb., sent an e-

mail message to his friends and family, urging them to give "at least \$1 for each member of your household," and then forward the e-mail to others.

More than one family responding to the e-mail has included their pets among household members, and others have included as many as 32 people in their extended families.

Contributions may be sent to LCMS World Mission Support, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, MO 63122-7295. Make checks payable to "LCMS World Mission" and earmark them "grassroots effort."

Gifts also may be made via the Web site <http://catalog.lcms.org/> — go to "Where LCMS World Mission needs it most."

## Lutherans help with medical aid for Iraqi children

U.S. Lutherans helped provide a shipment of medical aid for children in Iraq that arrived at two hospitals in Baghdad the week before hostilities broke out in March.

The \$90,000 shipment of antibiotics, emergency medicines and supplies came from seven faith-based agencies—including Lutheran World Relief

(LWR) — that are co-sponsoring an appeal for Iraq called "All Our Children." The goal is to raise \$1 million for medicines and medical supplies for sick and malnourished children in Iraqi hospitals and clinics.

Last fall, LWR sent \$457,000 worth of material aid to Iraq that was made possible by contributions from congregations of the

Missouri Synod and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA).

LWR also is using funds from LCMS World Relief and the ELCA World Hunger Appeal for war-related aid that involves churches in the Middle East and is providing aid for food and facilities at a refugee camp on the

Jordan-Iraq border.

For more information, visit the LWR Web site at [www.lwr.org](http://www.lwr.org).

Contributions earmarked "Iraq" and made payable to "LCMS World Relief" may be sent to LCMS World Relief at P.O. Box 66861, St. Louis, MO 63166-9810. LCMS World Relief will forward the funds to LWR.

## LCMS boards may face cuts as discretionary funds fall

The Lutheran—Church Missouri Synod's six program boards "may face substantial cuts" after the LCMS Board of Directors sets the national Synod's 2003–04 budget at its May 15–17 meeting in St. Louis, said Brad Hewitt, chief administrative officer for the Board.

The six program boards are those for missions, higher education, district and congregational services, communications, human care and

Black ministry.

"The [next] budget year is shaping up to be as difficult as the 2002–2003 fiscal year for the Synod," Hewitt said at the Feb. 27–March 2 Board meeting in Fort Wayne.

The Synod's fiscal year is July 1 through June 30.

Hewitt told the Board that projections indicate that the six program boards will have about \$9.7 million of discre-

tionary income among them next year—\$3.8 million less than the \$13.5 million in discretionary funds in their combined budgets for the current fiscal year.

Hewitt defined discretionary income as "revenue that is not committed to other spending."

Hewitt said that the 35 LCMS districts are pledging \$21 million to the Synod in 2003–04 from offering income that congregations forward to

them—\$675,000 less than last year, and that congregational giving to districts also is declining.

"Everyone is feeling the effects of the slumping economy," Hewitt said.

The Board also made salary adjustments for Synod employees next year that range from no change in salaries for officers and top executives to an 8 percent increase for missionaries.

## Matching grants benefit Synod colleges, seminaries

The Thrivent Financial for Lutherans Foundation announced in March that it is giving a \$1.1 million challenge grant to support the Missouri Synod's Concordia University System's (CUS) "For the Sake of the Church" campaign and the 10 CUS colleges and universities.

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, also announced that an anonymous gift of \$1 million it received for its students' tuition aid will match dollar-for-dollar other gifts made by

June 30. Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, received a similar matching grant last year.

The Thrivent grant is contingent on CUS and the schools raising \$2.5 million in funding.

For the Sake of the Church has a goal of doubling the enrollment of LCMS students at the CUS schools and raising \$400 million in endowments for those students by 2010. The campaign has so far raised about \$100 million.

The two seminaries have similar programs of full-tuition guarantee for students preparing for the pastoral ministry. Neither is involved in For the Sake of the Church.

For information on establishing a For the Sake of the Church

endowment, contact Rev. Edward Bertram at (314) 996-1650; [edward.bertram@lcms.org](mailto:edward.bertram@lcms.org).

To donate toward the matching grant at St. Louis or for more information, contact the Development Office at

(800) 822-5287; [develop@csf.edu](mailto:develop@csf.edu).

At Concordia, Fort Wayne, contact the Office for Institutional Advancement at (877) 287-4338, Ext. 2212; [schmidtrg@mail.ctsfw.edu](mailto:schmidtrg@mail.ctsfw.edu) or [ruttdd@mail.ctsfw.edu](mailto:ruttdd@mail.ctsfw.edu).

## Missions' Allan Buckman retires

Dr. Allan R. Buckman, who has served the Synod's mission board since his 1965 graduation from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, retired from full-time service March 1.

Buckman, 63, served from 1989 as director for world areas with LCMS World Mission. After his retirement, he continues to serve part time.

After graduating from

the seminary, Buckman was a Synod missionary in Nigeria for 12 years, supervising the translation of the New Testament into the Yala language.

He left Africa in 1977 to be the mission board's secretary for Africa, Europe and the Middle East, a position he left 12 years later to serve as director for world areas.

"It's been a great learning and growing experience, personally, throughout the entire 37-plus years," Buckman said.



*Buckman*

### For more news...

For more news — and more timely news — visit <http://reporter.lcms.org> on the Web. That's the Web site for *Reporter*, the official newspaper of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

# WOMEN IN COMBAT:

## DOES GOD'S WORD GIVE GUIDANCE?

by David W. Wollenburg

**A**s I write this article, we are at the very brink of war. By the time it is published, the war may be over. This is not the best time to be talking about the subject at hand. But in response to an assignment, I offer the following with the prayer that it will serve the “ministry of reconciliation” to which we have been called.

We live in a world infected irreparably by sin; a world condemned to chaos and uncertainty; a world in rebellion that leads to decay. Ours is a world racing toward the end of time as we “hear of wars and rumors of wars,” and we see “nation ... rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom,” and we witness “famines and earthquakes in various places” (Matt. 24:6–7).

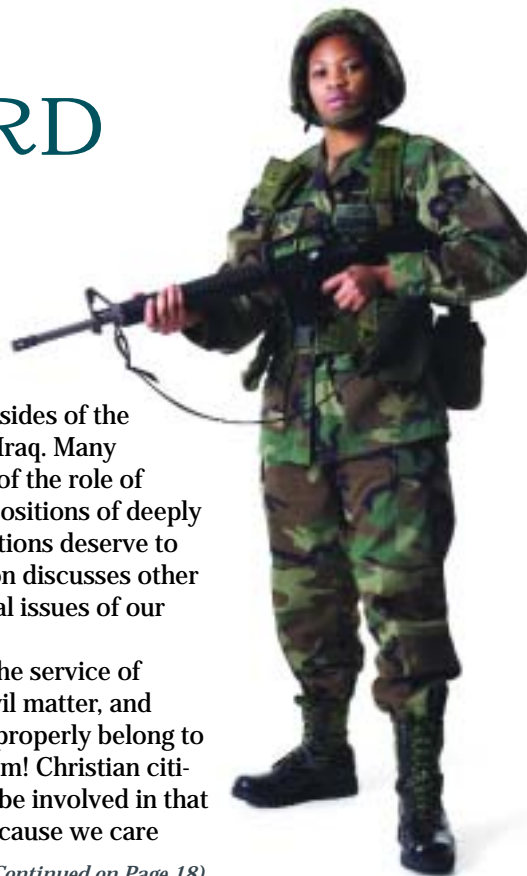
Into such a world God sent His Son to redeem those who live in this present chaos. Jesus fulfilled the Law in our place. He died for all in order to satisfy the Father’s justice. He rose again to assure us of this fact. He sent us His Spirit so that we might know that we are not alone as we await the end of time. He says, “See to it that you are not alarmed. Such things must happen” (Matt. 24:6).

It is in these times that we are considering the question of the church addressing the issue of women in combat.

Unquestionably, this is an emotional topic. There are men and women of good faith on both sides, even as there are peo-

ple of good faith on both sides of the question of the war with Iraq. Many approach the discussion of the role of women in combat from positions of deeply held faith, and these positions deserve to be heard just as our nation discusses other societal and constitutional issues of our day.

And that’s the point: The service of women in combat is a civil matter, and discussions pro and con properly belong to the civil and political realm! Christian citizens of the State need to be involved in that discussion as citizens, because we care about the answers. *(Continued on Page 18)*



### ‘What does the Bible teach about wo

“Where does The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod stand on women serving in combat?”

In response to such questions directed to his office, Missouri Synod President Gerald Kieschnick has asked the Synod’s Commission on Theology and Church Relations to study the issue on the basis of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessional writings.

In response, the commission invited individuals who have had experience serving as parish pastors, military chaplains and as professors at the Synod’s seminaries to make presentations on the topic.

The members of the commission feel that the insights shared in these presentations merit wider exposure. They believe that the contemporary discussion of the topic of women serving in the

# TWO VIEWS

## IS GOD INDIFFERENT?

by Leroy Vogel

**R**emember Norman Rockwell's painting, "The Tearful Farewell," that depicts a young man in military attire striding forth to action and adventure amid the tears of mom, dad and sweetheart?

Today, the tearful farewell may likely portray a young woman in military attire departing for combat while dad and the kids stare out the window with bewildered looks.

How did this change come about?

### A brief history

World War II military planners ascertained that some non-combat positions could be filled by women and "free a man to fight." Thus, the Women's Army Corps (WAC) was organized. In 1948, Congress passed the Women's Armed Services Act, which authorized permanent status for women in the military. This law stipulated: 1) The number of women in the military may not exceed two percent; and 2) a Combat Exclusion Law stating, "Women may be assigned to all units except those with a high probability of engaging in combat. ..."

In 1973, President Richard Nixon decreed an end to the draft. Men did not volunteer in sufficient numbers to meet Defense Department quotas. Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird waived the two percent stipulation of WASA. The number of women in the military burgeoned. The Service Academies and ROTC units were integrated.



*A female United States Army private uses a fixed bayonet during basic training at Fort Leonard Wood, Mo.*

In 1993, President Bill Clinton's Secretary of Defense ordered: "The services shall permit women to compete for assignment in aircraft engaged in combat missions ... develop a legislative proposal to repeal the existing Combat Exclusion Law and permit the assignment of women to ships that are engaged in combat missions." In 1994 the Army integrated combat occupations previously reserved for men.

The fiat was complete, a great social experiment was underway, as well as a great national debate.

Many analysts and commentators, military and civilian, saw this experiment as disastrous to national defense. The concern of many was that, in the military, traditional gender roles are there for a reason and gender neutrality/political correctness not only puts national security at risk, but endangers the lives of the very military personnel who provide that security.

### Is Scripture silent?

Laying aside the pragmatic concerns, the question facing the Christian community can be stated as follows: Is God indifferent to the question of

*(Continued on Page 19)*

## Women serving in the military?

military and in combat will be enriched by the perspectives presented in the articles by Rev. Leroy Vogel and Dr. David Wollenburg.

The Commission on Theology, as it has gone about its study of this topic during this time when our country is at war, is mindful of the debt of gratitude that American citizens owe to all of those dedicated women and men who have responded to their country's call to serve in the military, and who are willing to risk their lives in the service of their country.

*Dr. Samuel H. Nafzger  
Executive Director*

*Commission on Theology and Church Relations*

(Continued from Page 16) But this is not an issue either of church polity or theology, and we as the church need to respect that fact. The church's job is to encourage, build up and serve the "ministry of reconciliation" that St. Paul describes in 2 Cor. 5:18ff. Our call is to follow St. Paul's example. He says it this way: "We put no stumbling block in anyone's path, so that our ministry will not be discredited" (2 Cor. 6:3).

We cannot, of course, ignore clear moral issues. Indeed, we must address them when and where it is appropriate and Scriptural. The "ministry of reconciliation" to which we have been called speaks the word of Law and Gospel for the purpose of saving souls and witnessing to God's work in Christ Jesus. Our responsi-

"It will not do to formulate articles of faith on the basis of the holy Fathers' works or words. Otherwise, their food, clothes, houses, etc., would also have to be articles of faith—as has been done with relics. This means that the Word of God—and no one else, not even an angel—should establish articles of faith."

It is important to understand this point as we address the question of women in combat, as well as other subjects of political debate. "Only the Word of God should establish articles of faith." And, the fact is, no matter how hard we try to discover clear guidance in the Scriptures regarding the subject of women in combat; it just is not there. We need to admit that.

It helps as we remember that God Himself recognizes the difference between the church and civil government and assigns different responsibilities to each. Jesus made this point when He responded to the question of paying taxes in Matthew 22, "Give to Caesar what is Caesar's," He said, "and to God what is God's."

St. Paul wrote, "The authorities that exist have been established by God ... He is God's servant to do you good" (Rom. 13:1, 4).

The Augsburg Confession, Article XXVIII, says it this way:

"Since this power of the church bestows eternal things and is exercised only through the ministry of the Word, it interferes with civil government as little as the art of singing interferes with it. ... The powers of church and civil government must not be mixed."

We, as the Church have been entrusted with the ministry of the Word. We are to be about the job of reconciliation. We are called to share God's peace with one another, even in time of war.

Going to war is not an easy matter.

Individuals must be encouraged and comforted. Provision must be made for those who are left at home, for the lonely, the scared and the anxious. That's where we need to turn our attention.

We need to talk about how we can help, support and instruct both women and men who are called to combat. We need to talk about how to help and support their families, friends and the communities from which they have been drawn.

And while we do, let's also recognize and give thanks for the fact that ours is not an immoral or unfeeling government. The United States military respects individual rights even as it encourages human excellence and advancement. It cares about the families of those who are sent to war. It cares about the unborn (pregnant women are not deployed to war so that innocent lives might

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*The capture and rescue of Private First Class Jessica Lynch highlighted the issue of women serving in the military. Here, U.S. Army Maj. Gen. Vincent Brooks is looking at a picture of Lynch during her rescue.*

bility is to proclaim, "That God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them" (2 Cor. 5:19). That alone is enough for us to do.

Having called us to faith in times of worldly chaos, Jesus adds another promise: "Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away" (Matt. 24:35). And so, Christ says what the Spirit says through the apostle John, that is, we are to take the Word at face value, neither adding to nor subtracting from its message (Rev. 22:18–19).

Our own Lutheran Confessions hold such a view of the Scriptures. Indeed, in the Smalcald Articles, first printed in 1538, Martin Luther, referring to Gal. 1:8, wrote:

(Continued from Page 17) women in combat?

The major issue that clouds theological engagement on the matter is the apparent lack of any definitive “proof text” of Scripture that addresses women as military combatants. A purview of Law, prophets, Gospels and epistles simply does not indicate this to be an issue about which God has spoken authoritatively.

But not too fast! Does silence automatically imply indifference?

Where to begin? At the beginning, of course. Gen. 1:26ff indicates that both sexes are created in the image of God, and Gal. 3:28 attests that there is no sexual priority or preference with respect to salvation in Christ. However, both Old and New Testaments identify a difference of rights, responsibilities and roles pertaining to the sexes.

Ignoring the Biblical account of creation, radical feminism identifies sexual differentiation and roles as social constructs, and, if society has created the distinctions, society can abolish them.

Lutherans believe, teach and confess that sexual differentiation and roles are part and parcel of God’s “Order of Being.” That is, if God is the Creator and Designer of the sexes as well as of their differentiation and roles, to overturn that order represents the abandonment of Biblical religion.

## Ordered equality

Is not part of woman’s “glory” to be found in her God-given role as life-giver and nurturer—not as life destroyer? Is man’s role not to protect and nourish her in that glorious role? Does not the abandonment of the arrangement established in Eden fly in the face of God’s design for His creation?

These are questions worth pondering because an alien voice again has entered Eden: “Yea, hath God said there is a complementary differentiation between the roles of man and woman?”

Scripture is clear. God made two different sexes, equal but with assigned roles. Sexual equality is not the issue; ordered equality is. Scripture and the tradition of the Church assign to man the role of defender, protector, warrior. To woman is given the role of life-giver, nurturer, sustainer.

While it may be argued that there is no specific Scriptural passage that forbids a woman to serve as warrior, the apparent accommodation of some within the Church to the spirit of the age that turns warrior into a unisex role would appear, at a minimum, to be a departure from the divine wisdom of the Creator regarding the differentiation of the sexes.

While some may view it as a shaky premise upon which to hang the will of God, there is a curious Hebrew interpretation of Deut. 22:5 that is rendered in the New International Version: “A woman must not wear men’s clothing ... for the Lord your God detests anyone who does this.”



A United States Marine Corps female recruit enjoys a short break during boot camp. The Marines train an average of 3,700 male and 600 female recruits a day at Parris Island.

A prohibition against cross-dressing? Or is there more? The construct of import is the compound noun *keli-geber*, translated above as “men’s clothing.” In Hebrew, *keli* denotes “equipment,” specifically a soldier’s equipment. Further, the Hebrew noun *geber* denotes “mighty man” or “hunter” or “warrior.” Thus, a legitimate translation of the phrase uses language of a decidedly military flavor: “No woman shall put on the gear of a warrior.”

The church fathers understood it so, as did John Calvin and Martin Luther. Luther knew Hebrew and comments on the verse as follows: “A woman shall not bear the weapons of a man ... it is improper. ... Through this law [God] reproaches any nation in which this custom is observed.” Why? Because God created male and female with specific and complementary characteristics. It is in their relationship with one another that the two constitute the full expression of humanity.

To paraphrase Luther in another context, woman was created to be a vessel for life, not to kill and destroy.

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(Continued from Page 18) not be a risk). It cares about those who are orphaned, and those whose spouse or child never returns. It even cares about the sexual behavior of its members and seeks to encourage moral and ethical behavior.



*Jael was an experienced tent-rigger. This drawing by Carlo Maratta depicts Jael as she lifts the hammer.*

As the church we can do it better: That's our call. Our chaplains do it day after day; so do our pastors. Our call in these days is to pray for them, and encourage them even as we pray for and encourage the men and women who stand in the face of combat.

At the same time, we will pray for and encourage those individual Christian men and women who are engaged in the political process. They are addressing the social and civil questions of our age in the proper places—in the halls of Congress, in the courts and statehouses of our nation, and in all the places where public policy is decided.

That is their job, not the church's. The Savior has given the church other things to do.



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## What about Deborah?

Proponents of women in combat who point to the Deborah account in Judges 4 for support would do well to examine the Biblical text rather than a "Bible story" commentary. As Israel's enemies prevailed, God employed Deborah to communicate His command to a man, Barak, directing him to recruit an army and promising victory. Barak was recalcitrant and insisted that Deborah accompany him. God vowed to shame Barak by giving honor for victory to a woman. Deborah capitulates and accompanies Barak to Mount Tabor, but no further. Consistent with Deuteronomy, she donned no battle gear nor engaged in the conflict. Barak (unaccompanied by Deborah) led 10,000 men into the valley to a resounding victory. The rebuke for Barak's recalcitrance was rendered when a heroic woman, Jael, was given the opportunity to slay the fleeing enemy commander, Sisera. She did this in her own tent, with household equipment, not as a warrior on a battlefield.

The story of Deborah presents a condemnation of male cowardice in the face of God's command; it does not provide a glorification or endorsement of woman as warrior.

## The sound of silence

This all-too-brief article is only an introduction to the Biblical implications of the question, "Is God indifferent to women in combat?" Yet to be mined are the riches of the New Testament with its beautiful depiction of the harmonious, God-pleasing relationship relevant to the complementary roles of men and women. It should be enough, however, to encourage a deeper exploration of the question.

At the very least, before a woman embarks upon a role as military combatant, she should consider this: If God is indifferent to the woman-warrior concept and a woman chooses to serve in a *noncombatant* role, God is not offended. If, however, God is not indifferent to the woman warrior concept, and a woman seeks service as a *combatant*, does she not become a victim of her own will and disobedient to that of God?

The stakes appear to merit the expenditure of our church's finest and most diligent theological efforts.



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## MOTHERS OF FAITH

by Grant Bode

“Mommie!”

My son, Gideon, knows well the word, “Mommie.” In fact, it was, as I remember, the first word he said. It has always been said that little boys are closer to their mothers than their fathers.

As we observe Mother’s Day on May 11 this year, let’s take time to notice some of the mothers who played significant roles in Scripture. How did these mothers play a significant role:

### Eve

Why is Eve, the first mother, called the mother of all living (Eve means “living”)? Not only is Eve the mother of the human race, but through her offspring, Jesus Christ was born, and only through Him is God’s plan for eternal life restored. (See Gen. 3:15).

Explain how 1 John 3:8 reaffirms God’s promise in Genesis.

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### Jochebed

Exodus 6:20 tells us that Amran and Jochebed were the parents of Moses and his older brother, Aaron. What did Jochebed do to protect her infant son, Moses, when Pharaoh gave the order to throw the male children into the river? (Read Ex. 2:1–3).

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According to Heb. 11:23, what enabled Jochebed to disobey the Pharaoh and hide her son?

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### Hannah

Read 1 Samuel 1 and 2. Hannah could not have children; she wept, prayed and made a vow to the Lord (1:10–20). The Lord heard her

prayer and gave her a son, Samuel. Hannah responded with a prayer of thanksgiving. How did she keep her vow (2:11)?

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### Mary

Certainly, we know about Mary, the mother of God. God brought His only son into the world through the Virgin Mary, born as the Christ Child. Although we do not worship the Virgin Mary, we certainly honor her as the one who was “highly favored” (Luke 1:28).

What did Mary do after Jesus was born and the shepherds worshiped the Christ child? (Read Luke 2:19)

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And what about the time Jesus was in the temple as a boy teaching the teachers—what did Mary do and what is the lesson for us? (Read the story in Luke 2:41–51)

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### Eunice and Lois

Eunice was Timothy’s mother, and Lois was his grandmother. These two women played a significant role in the life of Timothy, who helped St. Paul preach the Good News on his missionary travels.

What does the apostle Paul write about them in his second letter to Timothy (2 Tim. 1:1–7)?

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Indeed, as we study these women of faith throughout Scripture we see



how God uses each of us in particular ways to further the Gospel message of Jesus Christ our Lord. And, so often, He uses mothers. Mothers who nurture, love, care for, discipline and teach their children of the love of Jesus.

No wonder the first word of a baby is usually “Mommie.” After all, in a manner, it reflects the love of our Lord for us His children when He says: *“How often I have longed to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings”* (Luke 13:34b).



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## WHO WILL LEAD US?

The March issue of *The Lutheran Witness* carried several items about the Synod's need to take very seriously the recruitment and retention of professional church workers—pastors, teachers, directors of Christian education, deaconesses, parish nurses, directors of music, directors of Christian outreach, etc.

The growing shortage of church workers has become a major concern for all of us. It directly affects our future, as reflected by the question, "Who will lead us?"

As I think about the future of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, I see clearly the need not only for new workers (recruitment), but also for better care of our current workers (retention). For the latter group, we need to find and implement more and better ways of keeping these dedicated servants of the Lord meaningfully fulfilled in their work of mission and ministry; seeing that they are properly encouraged, adequately compensated and respectfully cared for; and helping them to experience holistic health and significant joy in the midst of the burdens and challenges that accompany professional church work.

*Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matt. 9:38). Doing so will surely help produce a godly answer to the question, "Who will lead us?"*

Under the leadership of Dr. L. Dean Hempelmann, director of pastoral education for the Synod's Board for Higher Education, and Dr. Bruce Hartung, director of the Synod's Commission on Ministerial Growth and Support, a new initiative—it's called "What A Way!"—

aims to make the active recruitment and retention of church workers an integrated part of the LCMS culture and lifestyle in the local congregation.

The recruitment and retention of church workers is so important that even in these difficult financial times, when the synodical budget is being reduced in the wake of our national economic downturn, the Synod's Board of Directors has allocated \$250,000 in this fiscal year to the What A Way! initiative.

The immediate plans of the What A Way! team are to:

- establish What A Way! cabinets in each of our 35 districts to provide guidance, counsel and encouragement to congregations and their members in recruitment and retention efforts;
- offer a first wave of printed resources for congregational use in recruitment and retention initiatives; and
- design and implement a state-of-the-art interactive Web site to help our people explore recruitment and retention possibilities.

One story in the March *Witness* profiled Epiphany Lutheran Church in Houston (Pastor Mike Welmer), which takes very seriously its responsibility and ministry of encouraging its young people to consider professional church-work careers. What a blessing for a congregation of 1,000 baptized souls to have five members studying to become professional church workers! Epiphany, along with a significant number of other congregations in our Synod, offers an excellent model of recruitment in the congregational context.

You can be of assistance in this critical endeavor for the future of our Synod:



- Continue to pray for the What A Way! initiative and for the mighty working of God's Holy Spirit in these recruitment and retention efforts.
- Consider whether God's Holy Spirit may be calling you to a career as a professional church worker.
- Encourage your son or daughter or grandson or granddaughter or friend or neighbor to consider a career in professional church work.
- Willingly and generously support "For the Sake of the Church," an endeavor to raise \$400 million to assist in preparation of professional church workers and to double the number of LCMS students studying at the 10 colleges and universities of our Concordia University System.
- Willingly and generously support our Synod's two seminaries with your gifts and with your prayers.

*"Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field" (Matt. 9:38). Doing so will surely help produce a godly answer to the question, "Who will lead us?"*

### **Jerry Kieschnick**

**Lives Transformed through Christ, in Time ... for Eternity!**

John 3:16-17

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