

THE LUTHERAN WITNESS

LW<sup>®</sup>

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INTERPRETING THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

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FROM A LUTHERAN CHRISTIAN PERSPECTIVE

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AUGUST 2012



# STANDING READY

**Wounded Souls Made Whole**

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**Just Cause**

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**Can Christians Be Soldiers?**

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## Pastors, Love Your People!

**I**t was a bright, crisp morning at the Graham and Gwen Koch sheep operation in Australia, just on the South Australia/Victoria border. This wonderful, humble Lutheran couple managed several thousand sheep on several thousand acres. Graham piled us into his “ute,” short for “utility vehicle” (we call it a “flatbed pick-up” in Iowa). As we neared the flock, a thousand skittish animals began bawling and fleeing, a sea of nervous wool. But then the scene changed in an instant. Graham began calmly, even quietly, repeating, “Hey Bob. Hey Bob.” Suddenly the flock turned toward us at once, and within a minute or two, we were in a sea of calm but bleating sheep. They were so tightly packed around the truck that I might have walked across them. The sheep knew his voice (John 10:3). It was a magic moment of profound joy and New Testament insight. I’ll never, ever forget it. “But we Your people, the sheep of Your pasture, will give thanks to You forever; from generation to generation we will recount Your praise” (Ps. 79:13).

*Pastor* means “shepherd.” A Lutheran pastor is an *undershepherd*, carrying out a task and office that belongs to Jesus, “the great shepherd of the sheep.” Jesus is the great pastoral example, the pastor *par excellence*. Yes, Jesus often speaks hard words when the Law is needed to bring repentance (Mark 8:33), but He does so in a context where “the good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” (John 10:11). Love marks the life of Jesus and His undershepherds (John 3:16; 1 Tim. 4:12). A pastor forgives (John 20:23; 2 Cor. 2:10). A pastor does out the Lord’s words and gifts (2 Tim. 4:2; 1 Cor. 11:23). A pastor teaches with patience and kindness (1 Tim. 3:3; 1 Tim. 4:12ff.).



Aboard the U.S.S. John C. Stennis, an aircraft carrier, during a DOXOLOGY retreat for chaplains.

A pastor serves (John 12:13ff.). A pastor prays for his people (2 Tim. 1:3). A pastor goes (Matt. 28:19). A pastor cares (Acts 6:1ff.). A pastor sacrifices (2 Cor. 11:24ff.). A pastor is visible among his people (Mark 1:38). A pastor knows his people (John 10:14). A pastor sympathizes with his people and cares for and about his co-workers and parishioners (Rom. 16:1–16). A pastor cares for those for whom his people care (Luke 8:41). A pastor suffers patiently, sometimes even at the hands of his sheep (2 Tim. 1:8ff.). A pastor is visible in his community (1 Tim. 3:7). A pastor spares no effort to bring back the wayward and find the lost (2 Tim. 4:5). A pastor seeks sheep “outside the fold” (John 10:16). A pastor leads with capable zeal (Rom. 12:8). A pastor is aware of his own weaknesses and asks for forgiveness and patience (2 Cor. 12:7ff.).

All this is a tall order; in fact, it is impossible. How could we pastors, “maggot sacks” of sin and weakness that we are (Luther), ever be up to this imitation of Christ and His apostles? Of ourselves, we cannot. But Christ, who gives the Office of the Holy Ministry, provides the grace sufficient for the task at hand.

In short, a pastor loves his people.

**Pastor Matthew Harrison**





## / to the reader /



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



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A young man named Jason with a short haircut and arms covered with tattoos sat next to me on a recent flight from St. Louis to San Antonio. Headed to Fort Sam Houston, I was en route to meet up with three other LCMS communicators. Together, we would spend three days learning from and spending time with the LCMS chaplains who care for troops and veterans of the United States military.

Enlisted in the Air Force, Jason talked easily about his first deployment to Kyrgyzstan, his parents in Minnesota, working on his MBA thanks to the GI Bill and what it will be like to redeploy in two months to Afghanistan.

"Does redeploying scare you, knowing what you know now?" I asked him. "It's my job," he replied calmly. "I don't get to freak out. At least, not outwardly. Not now."

It seemed like a natural segue. "So, what's your opinion of chaplains?" I asked. "Do you talk to them about what you're going through?"

"I've talked to a lot of chaplains," he said quietly. "I'd talk to my chaplain for hours on my first deployment. Now I go to chapel on base every week." I stayed quiet.

"The great thing," he continued, "is that they're here for us. They're not here for the military. It shows."

In this issue of *The Lutheran Witness*, we tell the stories of soldiers like Jason and the chaplains who care for them. Throughout the following pages, these military personnel help us understand how the LCMS is poised to care for these heroes who are in our midst, in our congregations and in our communities. To watch these warriors tell their stories, go to [www.lcms.org/thosewhoservevideo](http://www.lcms.org/thosewhoservevideo).

"Just know we pray for you," I told Jason as we parted ways at the baggage claim. "That's what the Church does; she prays."

His smile was genuine. "I appreciate that," he said, picking up his camouflage bag. On the back of his right arm, I spotted another tattoo: a sword with a Bible passage wound around it.

"Hey!" I piped up, pointing at it. "Why Isaiah 41:10?"

He turned back around. "Because it says, 'So do not fear, for I am with you,' he said. 'Do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you.'"

He stopped, thought for a second, and then said, "Oh yeah, and 'I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.'" He smiled again, gave a little wave and was gone.

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## / on the web /

- > Visit *Reporter Online* at [reporter.lcms.org](http://reporter.lcms.org) to read about:
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  - helpful ideas and other information from a conference for homeschooling Lutherans, July 20–21 in Wichita, Kan.
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  - the revised lead show in the morning called **His Time**—"a time for everything under heaven" (Ecc. 3:1)—dealing with the Church Year.



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# 10 Minutes with . . . General John Vessey

by JENI MILLER

**G**eneral John W. Vessey Jr., is one of the greatest—and LCMS—military heroes of this generation. He served the United States in active military duty for more than 46 years, most notably as Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff under President Ronald Reagan.

Vessey was the recipient of numerous awards, including the Purple Heart, and in 1992, President Bush awarded him the nation's highest civilian honor: the Presidential Medal of Freedom. He is also the only person to have ever achieved every rank the Army offers.

The following is an edited *Lutheran Witness* (LW) interview with General Vessey (GV).

**LW:** In your extensive military career, what stands out?

**GV:** For me, the greatest honor was the opportunity to serve for 46 years with some of the finest men and women that our country produces. It was exciting and rewarding, but when it comes down to it, most of my accomplishments and honors were due to the work of others. I am just a fellow simple human being that God allowed to be in extraordinary situations and places on this earth.

**LW:** Considering your wide-ranging service, what was the biggest challenge in your career?

**GV:** I had marvelous Lutheran, U.S. Army chaplains that constantly reminded me that God is in charge. Without the chaplains, my service would have been much more difficult. I often compared the chaplains to Zacchaeus in the tree. Zacchaeus was a short guy, but he climbed that tree to get up to see His Lord. The chaplains allowed me to see God when otherwise I wouldn't have seen Him.

**LW:** How did your Lutheran faith play a role in your military work?

**GV:** I've been a lifelong Lutheran, and for that I am thankful. Martin Luther once wrote a pamphlet called *Whether Soldiers Too Can Be Saved*. I really took that to heart. Article 16 of the Augsburg Confession—which among other things says that Christians may serve in just wars—well, one can certainly take comfort in that too. Christ goes with us wherever we are. The Lutheran Confessions are blessings to us, make us stronger and help us understand the Word of God even more.

**LW:** Did you ever have to compromise or follow orders that burdened your conscience?

**GV:** I never allowed my Christian beliefs to be a secret. I sometimes went out of my way to be sure they weren't a secret! When traveling to places that were enemies to the U.S., I knew that they would bug our living facilities, so I'd do my daily devotions and prayers under the bug so they could hear loud and clear where my beliefs lie.

**LW:** Do you have any words of wisdom for LCMS Lutherans?

**GV:** Our Lord has given us a few orders: Follow Me. And love your neighbor as yourself. And take the Word to the far reaches of the earth. It's not, "If you want to do this, then go ahead." There are no alternatives. And that's an order! ❄️



Photos courtesy John Vessey



# letters

## *Believe It Your Way*

The June/July issue's focus on "Believe It Your Way," the notion of one being "spiritual, but not religious," was of particular interest to me as a 25-year veteran marriage and family life educator in college classrooms. Such cafeteria-style belief systems are indeed common—especially among today's young adults. Their attitude is being summed up as "So what?" This tells me that while supporting our international mission ventures is highly important, we must recognize the enormous mission field in our own communities—perhaps in our own families!

*Janette C. Borst  
Emporia, Kan.*

I just finished reading the June/July issue and was just blown away by every article. I have personally had these very same conversations about do-it-yourself religion and have come to the same conclusions as these authors. I have to say that writing such as this makes me very proud to be a Lutheran.

*Deborah Sabatino  
Bourbon, Mo.*

While I agree with many of the points made in the latest *Lutheran Witness* about "self-made cafeteria spirituality," I think William Cwirla's line, "There is nothing more dangerous than an isolated individual with a Bible" goes way too far. I thought one of the three tenets of the Reformation was "Scripture Alone." The Bible is our ultimate authority. Not man, not the church, not pastors.

*Lindsey Pfanstiel  
Red Bud, Ill.*

**Author note:** *While the Reformation certainly taught the authority of Scripture alone, it never taught the "believer alone." The danger of the isolated individual with a Bible is adequately demonstrated by countless sects and cults that began with one person and his or her personal interpretation of the Bible. The Ethiopian eunuch had Spirit-sent Philip to help him understand what he was reading from the Bible (Acts 8). Faith in Christ brings us into communion with Christ and our fellow believers in the "communion of saints," and so the believer is never alone, whether in life or death. We confess not only "I believe" but also "We believe" as in the original wording of the Nicene Creed.*

—The Rev. William M. Cwirla



**A** retired U.S. Air Force Colonel and Command Pilot, LCMS member Colonel Bud Day served during World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. He spent five years and seven months as a prisoner of war in North Vietnam. During that time—in which he escaped imprisonment, lived on frogs and berries to survive and was recaptured and tortured—Day remained steadfast in faith in God and in service to his country.

Day is the most decorated U.S. military service member since General Douglas MacArthur, receiving more than 70 decorations, and is also a recipient of the Medal of Honor and the Air Force Cross. Following his retirement, he resumed work as a lawyer and currently attends Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, Shalimar, Fla.

The following is an edited *Lutheran Witness* (LW) interview with Colonel Day (CD).

**LW:** It would be impossible to recount here what you went through during your military career. How were you able to remain so courageous?

**CD:** I have been very frightened many times. I don't make any excuses or apologies for that. However, I experienced physically a calm that God gave me in the midst of trouble. Being a soldier is not easy, but I was able to remain courageous because I knew that I was involved in defeating a lot of evil for the good of my neighbor.

**LW:** When in Vietnam, your plane was shot down, and you suffered torture and imprisonment. Did you ever question God's grace?

## 10 Minutes with . . . Colonel Bud Day

by JENI MILLER

**CD:** I never questioned my faith. It never faltered. No matter what our enemies tried to tell me or what I heard on the radio, God never allowed me to believe them or question my faith.

**LW:** How does your Lutheran faith impact your work and life, both past and present?

**CD:** I believe that your faith . . . dictates how you conduct yourself and how you live, the stand you take on certain issues. I've always held on to the outlook that God runs the universe and has a plan for all of us. Everything that happened to me—and that continues to happen to me—is a part of God's perfect will.

**LW:** How do you see your service in the Armed Forces as a vocation given by God?

**CD:** Freedom is not free. We even acknowledge that in the hymns that we sing in church, like "Onward Christian Soldiers," as we recognize that there is always a war raging and that all people should be treated fair and equally. Sometimes people are given the vocation to fight to protect that, which is why I see no conflict in being a Christian and being in combat at all.

**LW:** How can we in the LCMS best serve and help our brothers and sisters who risk their lives for our protection?

**CD:** We not only need to believe in Christ, but we also need to be diligent in acting out our beliefs. The best way to help those in the military is by prayer and keeping the faith. ❄️



Photos courtesy Bud Day



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# Marching Orders

by Greg Wismar

**F**rom vict'ry unto vict'ry His army He shall lead." These familiar words from the first stanza of "Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus" (*LSB* 660) are typical of the many expressions in the prayers, liturgies and hymnody of the Church that contain military images and references. The pages of the hymnal are filled with swords, banners, soldiers and armies. Both earthly armies and heavenly forces are sung of and spoken about in many ways.

In the "Prayer" section of *Lutheran Service Book*, a prayer for the "Armed forces of our nation" asks God to "strengthen and protect those who serve in the armed forces of our country" (*LSB*, p. 314). Another petition, titled "In times of war," entreats the Lord that we "may be preserved from all danger and glorify You for the restoration of tranquility in our land" (*LSB*, p. 313). These petitions may be prayed both individually in private devotions as well as when God's people are gathered together for worship.

The themes of war and peace have been part of Lutheran worship since the time of Martin Luther himself. His hymn "Grant Peace, We Pray, in Mercy, Lord"

(*LSB* 777, 778), adapted from a sixth-century Latin text, was often sung immediately following the sermon in German churches in the Reformation era, sometimes appended to the classic Luther hymn, "Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word" (*LSB* 655). A different kind of martial image appears in the Matins service where, in the *Te Deum*, we sing of the "noble army of martyrs" who praise God eternally in heaven (*LSB*, p. 223).

Many of the hymns that reflect the battles of the Christian life have come from times of struggle and conflict; others have been crafted in more peaceful times. One of the best-loved of all the hymns that versifies the topic of Christian warfare is "Onward, Christian Soldiers" (*LSB* 662). This

text was written far from any sort of battlefield. It was authored in 1864 by an English clergyman, Sabine Baring-Gould, to serve as the "marching song" for a procession of children at a springtime church festival in Yorkshire. Since the procession was headed by a cross and a banner, Rev. Baring-Gould incorporated a number of military images into his poetry. In the original second stanza of the hymn, one not usually included in hymnal versions of the song, he expresses a sense of unshakable faith and confidence as he writes: "At the sign of triumph Satan's host doth flee; On then Christian soldiers, On to victory."

About two decades after Baring-Gould penned his hymn for children, another Anglican clergyman, George Kitchin, wrote the words that put all of us into the marching line, in the hymn "Lift High the Cross" (*LSB* 837:1). Whether we are members of our nation's military forces or not, we all have our "marching orders" as followers of Jesus Christ to join the "happy throng" that sings joyfully the "triumph song" of eternal victory (*LSB* 662:4). 🌿

## August

- 18 1520** Martin Luther published his *Open Letter to the Christian Nobility*, laying the groundwork for the Reformation.
- 21 1577** The Lutherans signed the Formula of Concord at Gotha, which confessed the Scripture as the only rule of faith and dealt with various doctrinal controversies.
- 31 1518** Martin Luther published his explanation of the 95 Theses.

Dates courtesy Concordia Historical Institute



Since 2001,  
America has  
engaged in a long  
war against  
terror. Christ alone  
provides comfort  
to this new  
generation of  
veterans who has  
left home, served  
and returned.

# WOUNDED SOULS MADE WHOLE

by DANIEL GARD

The Spirit of God moved across the formless, dark void that was to become the earth. By His Word, He called the universe into existence, formed the earth and began time. But in time, the crown of His creation rebelled. Sin entered the world, and with sin came death. Soon Cain would murder his brother, Abel, as the dark cloud of sin moved over human history. From that day to this day, brother has warred against brother as a desperate creation rebels against its Creator.

Throughout her history, the United States has defended freedom at home and around the world. Young people have donned the uniform and, as citizens of the kingdom of the left (the state), have left their towns, cities and countryside to protect the ones that they love. Most returned home. Some did not. But to all who have served in war and peace, we say, "Thank you."

Since 2001, America has engaged in a long war against terror. A new generation of veterans has left home, served and returned. These are remarkable people who use words rarely heard in our contemporary culture: *Honor. Duty. Integrity. Commitment. Loyalty. Country.* They understand that the real



definitions of words like these are not to be found on the paper pages of a dictionary. Rather, they are found in the lives of their shipmates and comrades and in the lives of the families that love them, pray for them and await their return.

And almost all do return home and transition back to normal, productive civilian lives. For some, however, that transition is more difficult. Some bear visible or hidden wounds of war in their bodies. Still others bear the wounds of war in that deepest part of the mind that cannot leave behind the traumatic scenes of war but consciously or subconsciously relive those scenes. Medical personnel stand ready to assist all who bear these wounds of war as the instruments of God in bringing about healing.

But there are other wounded warriors that no surgeon or psychologist can help because they bear wounds, not of the body or mind, but of the soul. Those wounds are inflicted by seeing things and doing things that violate the conscience of a human being. They manifest themselves in a variety of ways—inability to forgive, loss of purpose and meaning, loss of hope for the future, loss of trust in God and a multitude of other profound spiritual distresses. Such wounds cannot be “fixed” by surgery, medication or psychotherapy.

There is one cure alone: the eternal Gospel of our God—He who was in Christ Jesus reconciling the world to Himself. It is in the water of Baptism and the eternal promises of the Christ, who died and rose for the sin of the world. It is in the sweetest words a human being can hear, “Your sins are forgiven.”

It is in the Supper where the Lord of heaven comes to us sinners in His body and blood. It is in Christ, who “was wounded for our transgressions; He was crushed for

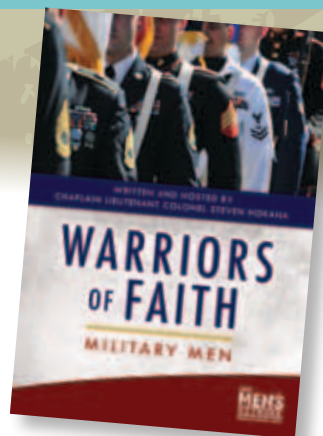
our iniquities; upon Him was the chastisement that brought us peace, and with His stripes we are healed” (Is. 53:5).

It is in the Church that the wounded warrior finds Jesus and the healing of the soul. In the parish—whether small or large, country, urban or suburban—there is a pulpit and altar, and there alone true and eternal life is given and sustained. For the warrior now deployed, it is that home church so far away that ties him or her to a reality greater than the one before his or her eyes. For the veteran now home again, it is that church that speaks to the deepest issues of forgiveness, peace and hope. For the

It is in the Church that the wounded warrior finds Jesus and the healing of the soul.

family who waits for the return of their warrior, it is the Church—the communion of saints—that sustains with Word and Sacrament.

The world continues to rebel against its Creator. There are and will be wars and rumors of wars. But our Lord Jesus continues to come into the midst of that fallen world and embraces every human soul with His love and forgiveness and peace. Those who are in Him are never alone. Our Lord promised His people as they prepared to take the Promised Land, “Be strong and courageous. Do not fear or be in dread of them, for it is the Lord your God who goes with you. He will not leave you or forsake you” (Deut. 31:6). And His promise is still true. ❁



# A healing transition

The forthcoming **Men's NetWork** video Bible study, *Warriors of Faith—Military Men*, focuses on military warriors, addressing the unique and profound experiences they share. Written and hosted by Steven Hokana, an Army chaplain with 27 years of experience, this multi-part, military-themed Bible study takes aim at the issues of anger, grief, guilt, forgiveness and love as each plays out for veterans and the family and friends waiting for them at home.

The experiences binding veterans together are deep. While military service is positive for many, others suffer with long-term struggles. Psychological shock, physical injuries and emotional trauma are the “stuff” of active-duty military service in battle zones. *Warriors of Faith—Military Men* and its accompanying discussion guide will prove a valuable outreach resource for congregations to invite veterans from the community to men's groups and Operation Barnabas chapters (see pg. 25), as they assist returning service personnel getting in sync with their lives on the home front. Go to [www.lhmmen.com](http://www.lhmmen.com) to learn more.

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*A Lutheran communications team  
spent time with LCMS chaplains and  
the troops for whom they care  
at Fort Sam Houston,  
San Antonio, Texas.  
These are their stories.*

# STANDING READY

by ADRIANE DORR





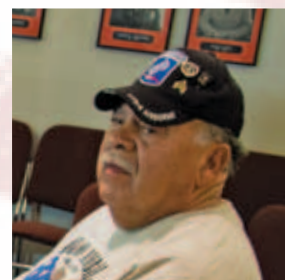
Santiago (Jimmy) Aguirre and Jesse Salcedo sit quietly in a room at the U.S. Army Medical Department Museum at Fort Sam Houston, San Antonio, Texas. Both are Vietnam War veterans and recipients of the Purple Heart, a decoration for those wounded or killed in combat. Retired Chaplain Conrad (Connie) Walker, a member of Concordia Lutheran Church, San Antonio, is seated between them.

Salcedo, a machine gunner in Vietnam, and Aguirre, a medic in the same war, meet weekly with Walker to work through lingering pain, hear God's words of comfort, and remember. Together, their military service has created a shared history and a marked dignity, a "fraternal love," Walker says, one that—even to outside observers—is tangible.

Chaplains like Walker have an enduring history in The Lutheran Church—

Missouri Synod (LCMS). As pastors who wear the uniform of the United States military, these men have brought God's Word and Sacraments to Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Marines since the Civil War, through World War II and even now in the Middle East and Asia.

These men are an important part of any mission, the two veterans say. "The chaplain has a calming effect," Salcedo remembers. "Most of the pain, most of the fear, it's all in our head. But then the



'Better people than me died that day, men that were braver than me.'

— Jesse Salcedo



➤ The original Purple Heart award was instituted by George Washington in 1782 to reward troops for "unusual gallantry" and "extraordinary fidelity." To learn more, go to [purpleheart.org](http://purpleheart.org).





**‘Person by person, you do what a pastor has to do: shepherd his flock.’**

— Chaplain Conrad Walker

chaplain comes, and he provides comfort and peace.”

“[Chaplains] provided the strength that we needed during the time of battle,” Aguirre adds. “You need comfort, and the chaplain is there to provide it.”

Chaplain Walker says he was simply being a pastor. “Person by person, you do what a pastor has to do: shepherd his flock,” he explains.

The conversation continues as the three discuss two of society’s most uncomfortable topics: politics and religion. With the removal of combat troops from Iraq in 2011 and those stationed in Afghanistan scheduled to pull out by 2014, these three refuse to let the influx of military personnel back home go unnoticed.

They are standing up on behalf of a minority. Although 2.5 million troops have fought in Iraq and Afghanistan, troops comprise less than 1 percent of the United States population.

The men are also quick to note that the suffering experienced in combat doesn’t end when a soldier returns home. In fact, the Department of Veterans Affairs notes that nearly 20 percent of soldiers now struggle with

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), a result of the strain of war. This often-silent suffering also contributes to the number of veterans who have committed suicide after returning home. Shockingly, the Pentagon reports that suicide now ranks as the number 2 cause of death for soldiers, second only to combat. But embedded deep within this culture of strength and sorrow, the LCMS’ chaplains, congregations and members stand ready to care for these men and women, both down range and back home.

“Better people than me died that day, men that were braver than me,” says Salcedo, his voice breaking as he shares that he has been nominated for the Congressional Medal of Honor. “If I do get that medal, it would be for them, not for me.” He stops, unable to go on.

Chaplain Walker puts his hand on Salcedo’s shoulder. “God bless, Jesse,” he says, ever the chaplain. “God bless.”

## **Ugly, messy business**

Home to several military installations—Fort Sam Houston, Lackland Air Force Base and Randolph Air Force Base—San Antonio is “Military City

USA,” says LCMS Chaplain Steven Hokana. Stationed at “Fort Sam” and dressed in his Army combat uniform bearing a large black cross, the mark of a chaplain, Hokana explains what it’s like to serve the Church as a pastor to the Armed Forces. In his 20-plus years of pastoral care, lived out from Iraq to Afghanistan to Alaska, he’s learned that “War is messy, ugly business.”

Hokana is the training manager at the U.S. Army Medical Department Center and School’s (AMEDD) Department of Pastoral Ministry Training, where the mission is to “produce the world’s best spiritual trauma care specialists to support the nation.” Here, Hokana helps prepare chaplains for medical ministry in combat and emergency situations. Chaplains learn how to deal with trauma and maintain spiritual resiliency, an understanding that will help in “reconciling soldiers to God and to their country,” Hokana says.

Perhaps the most difficult situation chaplains will face is telling a family that their soldier has died in service to the United States. “When they open that door and they see two people in the absolute best dress uniform you’ll ever see in your life, they look,” Hokana says, “and then they look again. And when they make that second look, they know that their life is forever changed.”

Chaplain Mark Nuckols serves as pastor of St. Paul Lutheran Church, Austin, Texas. Previously deployed to Iraq as a chaplain in the Army Reserve, he recalls his own struggles while caring for soldiers: “Reading theology is what helped me get through many, many difficult things. Herman Sasse and Luther were two of my best companions [while deployed] because of the difficulties they went through, because they stayed faithful in a very difficult environment.” That’s just one of the blessings of Lutheran theology, he says, the way that it “can look at something very, very violent like war and not try to sugarcoat it . . . but deal with it head-on. That’s the theology of the cross.”



‘If we [chaplains] feel bummed out or isolated or put pressure on to stretch or violate the tenets of our belief, we know that our church stands behind us 100 percent.’

— Chaplain Steven Hokana



‘Pastor that person. Encourage them primarily to get back into the church again regularly.’

— Chaplain Mark Nuckols





**'It's not only my Bible. It's a reminder of everything I've been through.'**

— Private Heather Green

The suffering Hokana and Nuckols experienced begs the question: While chaplains are busy caring for the soldiers, who is caring for the chaplains? Thankfully, LCMS Operation Barnabas stands ready to help chaplains and the soldiers for whom they care, lending support to veterans and educating congregations in how to serve the military personnel and their families in their midst. (See pg. 25 for more.)

DOXOLOGY, an LCMS Recognized Service Organization, also “strengthens pastors for the task of faithfully shepherding the souls entrusted to their care,” offering retreats specifically for chaplains. “Our goal [is] to assist them to remain mentally and spiritually healthy as they respond to trauma and to provide them with emotional resilience strategies,” said Dr. Beverly Yahnke, co-director of the program.

The support of the LCMS as a synod brings comfort too. “Our church loves us,” notes Hokana. “If we [chaplains] feel bummed out or isolated or put pressure on to stretch or violate the tenets of our belief, we know that our church stands behind us 100 percent.”

Still, he makes one more request of the LCMS: “Continue to be in prayer,” he asks simply. “We are still a nation at war.”

## Re-assimilation

For one section of the military in particular, that war caused life to change completely after Sept. 11, 2001. Unfortunately, this same group—National Guardsmen and Reservists—doesn’t receive the attention that active duty soldiers do.

They are now “basically active duty,” Nuckols says. “There are numerous Guardsmen and Reserves who have gone to two and three and even four tours of duty in Iraq or Afghanistan.”

Deploying and then returning to jobs, family members and a congregation made up of civilians is difficult. “Re-assimilation can be overwhelming,” he points out. “It’s an interesting compartmentalization of feelings and issues that you have with yourself and with your family.”

Congregations can bridge that gap, he says, by showing Christ’s mercy to these troops, an incarnational love that “is embodied in the theology that we’ve been given.” In fact, Nuckols says, the LCMS is primed to care for these warriors. “Talk to them,” he encourages. “Everybody has a story. They want to be listened to.” And to the clergy: “Pastor that person,” he urges. “Encourage them primarily to get back into the church again regularly.”

Photos by Michael Schuermann

## Blank pages

Northwest of San Antonio, the almost 30,000-acre Camp Bullis serves as training ground for the military. Sixteen young future medics sit on bleachers under muted shade, sweating in the heat of the Texas sun, uniforms covered in dirt and dye, weapons still in hand. They've just finished "trauma lanes," an exercise in which soldiers simulate a combat situation. Under fire, they must treat and remove their wounded and fallen comrades. Completing trauma lanes is the final step in qualifying to be a combat medic; most of them will be deployed within the next six months.

One young soldier, Private Heather Green, leafs through her Bible. When she ran out of paper for taking notes during Basic Training, Green started writing on the only paper she had left: the blank pages in the back of her Bible. Wiping sweat from her forehead, she opens the Bible to those pages and starts reading. "The different types of IEDs (Improvised Explosive Devices)," she says with a slight Southern drawl. "The five C's [of IED awareness], the five things that you need to make one."

"It's not only my Bible," she explains, tucking it back in her pocket. "It's a reminder of everything I've been through."



## The Leapin' Deacon

Chaplain Connie Walker is a Master Paratrooper. Trained as a Paratrooper, he made hundreds of jumps out of airplanes, once in combat in Vietnam. Nicknamed "The Leapin' Deacon," Walker recalls winsomely that those jumps, made from an aircraft moving at 150 knots an hour, 1,000 feet above the earth, "increase your prayer life."

"The next to the last command before you jump, by the Jumpmaster, is, 'Stand in the door!'" Walker says. "It ran through my mind—the Gospel of St. John, where the Lord Jesus says, 'I am the Door,' and it was comforting."

Other experiences in the chaplaincy were more chaotic. As a chaplain in combat, Walker learned to go "where the

**'You don't carry a weapon. You have the Word of God and the blessed Sacraments.'**

— Chaplain Conrad Walker

➤ To learn more about Chaplain Walker, read his autobiography, *The Leapin' Deacon*.





'Joy for me was when I was out there getting the job done with my soldiers.'

— Captain Larkin O'Hern

need is," he recalls. "And when [soldiers] yell, 'Medic! Medic!' the chaplain has to crawl with them, and you try very hard to pull them back out of the direct line of fire. They are terrifying moments."

No matter the circumstances, Walker says, a chaplain does what he is given to do: bring Christ's forgiveness and peace to hurting, fearful souls. "Under exceedingly hostile conditions, you go to [the soldiers] except you aren't armed," he says simply. "You don't carry a weapon. You have the Word of God and the blessed Sacraments."

Now in San Antonio, Walker's work with soldiers has continued after his retirement. He currently serves as National Chaplain Emeritus for the Military Order of the Purple Heart. In both situations—active duty and retirement—Walker says a chaplain's comfort and focus never change: "to stew in the juices of God's Word, the Confessions, and the hymnal."

### Don't Be Afraid

In the lobby of San Antonio's Brooke Army Medical Center (BAMC), a lullaby of chimes plays over the intercom. "Did you hear that?" Hokana says, his face lighting up. "That means a baby was just born!"

The tinkling chimes offer a bit of hope at this leading medical treatment center. Here, troops are treated for burns, the loss of limbs and countless other wounds inflicted in combat. But SAMMC welcome civilians as well. The birth of a baby is a reminder of what all of the troops say they want: a little bit of normality.

Captain Larkin O'Hern is determined to regain it. A 2008 West Point graduate and a member of the 101st Airborne Division, O'Hern lost both legs and an arm to an IED blast while deployed to Afghanistan in 2011.

"Joy for me was when I was out there getting the job done with my soldiers. Now," he explains, "there is a sense of accomplishment that when it was my turn, I said, 'Send me,' and not, 'Please send somebody else.'"

Walking in to the Center for the Intrepid, a state-of-the-art rehabilitation facility located on the BAMC campus, O'Hern has some encouragement for Christians: Don't be afraid to talk to "somebody that's either in the military or somebody that's been wounded. Engage with them the same way that you would anybody else that you met or that visited your church."

As a Wounded Warrior, he notes, being injured is an "important part of your identity but not more important than you being a Christian." In other words, soldiers "just wanted to be treated like anybody else who walked in to church."

The cherry on top? "It always helps to know that people are praying for you."

### Pro Deo et Patria

"War is messy, ugly business," Hokana said. Yet the LCMS and her chaplains stand ready to combat the chaos of war with the promises of Christ, offering His forgiveness and grace to those whose lives have been forever altered by service to their country.

"Others *think* you've changed; you *know* you have," wrote LCMS Chaplain Alvin Katt from Pearl Harbor in 1941. Leaving the U.S. Army Medical Department Center and School at Fort Sam Houston, a sign above the door explains why: "*Pro Deo et Patria*," it reads.

**"For God and country."** ❁



# LEFT BEHIND

by KATIE SCHUERMANN

Chaplains and troops are not the only ones who are brave. Diane Richard, member of Tallmadge Lutheran Church in Silver Lake, Ohio, received a phone call last February that her son, an Apache helicopter pilot and captain in the Army, had been injured in an accident. His helicopter had somersaulted into the mountains of Afghanistan, crushing practically every part of his body. Diane and her husband rushed to their son's side at Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas. "He went from being this capable Army officer to being dependent on me for everything," Diane explained. "We have had to go through watching his first steps again just like when he was a child."

Diane Richard



Diane spent the next four months serving as her son's non-medical attendant at Fort Sam Houston. Family, friends, church members and even strangers flooded her family with support, writing letters and emails, mailing cards and prayer shawls and bringing food to family members at home in Ohio. "It has really opened our eyes to the love of Christ that's in the community," she said.

Diane's church also made sure she was never without the Word. "All during Lent, our church recorded the sermon and sent the bulletin. . . . I could pop it in and listen and just feel like I was a part of the congregation."

Mary Hokana, wife of U.S. Army Chaplain Steven Hokana, has faced her own challenges at home over the years. Just three weeks after giving birth to her daughter, Mary watched her husband deploy for Operation Desert Storm. Left behind with two children under the age of two, Mary wondered when and if she would ever see her husband again. However long his tour of duty lasted, she knew she would be waking up the next morning in a single-parent home.

"You need a break," Mary admitted. Her family lived too far away at the time to help with the kids. "I had a great neighbor. We would call each other on the phone and say, 'Sounds like you need to meet in the middle.' So, we'd meet in the middle and have coffee."

It is not just servicemen and women who need support. Their families need us, as members of the LCMS, to care for them too, whether it is our ears to listen, our hands to serve, our shoulders to cry on or our lips to remind them that they are valued and important. Consider reaching out to the military spouse left alone to care for her children. Offer her childcare that she might enjoy an evening out, invite her family to be a part of your own family activities and receive her children into your church with zeal.

Sponsor her children at summer camp, youth conferences and national youth gatherings, and be the surrogate grandparents they have always wanted. Prepare meals for military families taking care of a wounded warrior, write them notes of encouragement and pay their electric bill. Whatever you do, remember these families in prayer, for they give up so much more than just their homes, jobs and social life. They give up their loved ones. ☼

# LICENSE TO CARRY

by KATIE SCHUERMANN

Chaplains in the United States military do not carry a weapon. Ordered by the Geneva Conventions to be noncombatants, chaplains run toward the boom of battle armed with only Word and Sacrament. But they do not run into the fray alone.

"I carry as many weapons as I can get my hands on," Sergeant Nick Waters, a Chaplain Assistant in the Army, explains with a smile. "My job is to keep us safe and get us home."

Chaplain Assistants are the bodyguards of the ministry. Trained in combat skills, they protect the chaplains who bring pastoral care to war-weary troops both on and off the battlefield.

One chaplain and one assistant are assigned to each battalion, and they work together as a "unit ministry team" to serve their fellow troops. "They're not meant to be a little assistant pastor. They're not just a minion to do your bidding," Chaplain Mark Nuckols, who has been deployed twice, explains.



Sergeant Waters

Photo by Michael Schuermann

Chaplain Assistants are more than just guardians, however. They also assist the chaplain with administrative duties and occasionally mediate between the chaplain and his soldiers.

"Sometimes, it is easier for a soldier to talk to me rather than to an officer," says Waters. "They talk to other soldiers," Nuckols agrees. "They make connections and relationships."

While not required to provide pastoral care themselves, Chaplain Assistants do look out for hurting soldiers and direct them to the chaplains for spiritual care. Together, these agents of hope serve the wounded and the suffering in times of war and peace. 🌸



# JUST CAUSE

by MARK J. SCHREIBER

The power of the military worldview to transform and change a young man or woman is similar to that which is at the center of religious experience and the power of the holy, namely, *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* (a fearful, awe-inspiring mystery). Combat is a test of manhood, a titanic struggle of life and death on the battlefield. The alluring, seductive power of the military mindset and corresponding worldview compels the participant to enter a dangerous world and experience of life with which relatively few people have direct contact.

William Bennett, seeking moral clarity in the war against terrorism, writes that to teach children that non-violence is the highest human virtue steals from their minds one of the oldest and noblest virtues of the human race, namely, that there are still some things worth fighting and dying for. In the book *Why We Fight*, Bennett quotes John Stuart Mill in support:

War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things. The decayed and degraded state of a moral and patriotic feeling which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse. A man who has nothing for which he is willing to fight—nothing he cares about more than his own safety—is a miserable creature who has no chance of being free, unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself.

The true warrior fights for others to establish a greater peace. Kingdoms, nations and governments rise and fall by the power of the sword but never yet in the blood-soaked history of this world has the “lion lain down with the lamb” in perpetual peace.

Our Savior said that there will be wars and rumors of wars until the end, which assumes there will be armies, fighting, death and destruction until the Final Judgment. He also promised that in the midst of all these wars, the Gospel will simultaneously prevail for the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. The chaplain penetrates this

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Help our Lutheran servicemen and women stay spiritually strong while they serve by enrolling them in the Ministry-by-Mail program. The LCMS is the only denomination to support its members serving in the Armed Forces in such a direct way, so add a member or update an address today by calling 800-433-3954, ext. 1337.

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witness  
lcms.org



# STRENGTHENING



**How does faith in Christ keep soldiers and their families connected during deployment?**

# Bonds

by MICHAEL and JANET FRESE

## michael

When I received sudden orders to deploy to

Afghanistan, I was flooded with emotions. The ache and pain of my first deployment had dulled with time, but in an instant, it came throbbing back. How would I break the news to my wife that I would be leaving for 12 months just two years after a 15-month deployment? What dangers and physical hardships would I face in the harsh desert terrain? In the midst of these initial fears, I also felt a sense of duty and adventure in bringing the Gospel to infantry soldiers on the front lines of war. This is why I volunteered to serve.

Being called away from family and into the danger of war feels like you are surrendering a certain tangible part of your role at home. Bedtime prayers and birthday celebrations continue on despite your absence. Cars still need oil changes and leaky roofs must be fixed—by someone else. By God's grace, it is only a temporary separation, but there is still much trial and suffering. It is a cross to bear. Yet, God in His mercy uses this cross to produce fruit in spite of the pain, bringing lasting, spiritual good out of earthly suffering. This, too, shall pass, but the Word of the Lord endures forever.

Life in Christ is a stronghold in the midst of mortar rounds and IEDs. Time spent in prayer and reading the Scriptures takes on profound, personal significance. Phone conversations with family are short and precious, sometimes losing connection in the middle of a funny anecdote or heartfelt discussion.

When separated by war from loved ones, you realize how intimately you all are connected to your heavenly Father through prayer. A set prayer and devotional routine with your family is a welcome respite from the turmoil of combat or the loneliness of night. You may choose to study the Small Catechism together or pray the Psalms, one each day, helping to erase the distance of miles and multiple time zones.

You may not be physically present in your home, but as the head of the household, you are leading your family to their heavenly Father. As you read, pray and share, you are strengthening the bonds that God has given you in His family—the Church. As Christians, you are not only connected by family blood, but by Christ's blood. Faith in Christ strengthens family ties and makes homecomings sweet, bringing lasting strength during and after deployment.

# janet

Being separated during

deployment is an enormous sacrifice. You become a situational single parent, bravely juggling a myriad of new roles while praying fervently for your spouse's safe return. Emotions run the gamut from feeling capable and strong to crumbling with loneliness and exhaustion, all while you try to carry on with something resembling a routine.

Putting deployment in the framework of vocation gives perspective to some of its challenges. Vocation is found in your present circumstances, in the here and now—not where you wish you could be. Parenting alone is difficult and certainly not ideal, but for the moment, this is what God has given you to do. Serving the United States in the midst of war is both exhilarating and frightening, but this is the work that God has given your spouse to do at this time.

Children would rather have their fathers and mothers next to them for meals, prayers, and conversation, but for the moment, communication must change to fit the circumstances. Take advantage of instantaneous email, chatting via webcam and a mostly reliable mail service, luxuries that were not available even a generation ago. Keep your spouse present in your daily conversation, whether remembering his favorite food, a joke only he would tell or a host of other nondescript memories. Continue on in your vocation—spouse, friend, parent and child of God—knowing that you are doing the work which God has given to you at this time, which is pleasing to Him.

In the meantime, while you wait for your loved one to return, remember that God does not leave you to fend for yourself. He has



given you a community of believers, and He gives you a unique vocation through which to serve others. Relax your expectations of yourself. It's perfectly fine to have pancakes for dinner, leave dirty dishes in the sink and go outside to chase fireflies instead. Be willing to accept help when it's offered. Allow your friends to mow the lawn, take your children for the afternoon or drop off a meal. You'll both benefit from their generosity.

It's painful to be separated. Childhood milestones are missed, dinner table seating is rearranged, the bed is half-cold—but we can find comfort in knowing that God does not leave us in despair. His promise of life and forgiveness in His body and blood give comfort and hope in the midst of turmoil.

Life in Christ is a stronghold in the midst of mortar rounds and IEDs.







# CAN CHRISTIANS BE SOLDIERS?

by ADAM FRANCISCO

*For 500 years,  
Lutherans have  
answered "Yes."*

**I**t is hard to imagine a vocation more at odds with popular conceptions of Christian living than military service. The Christian life is supposed to be about peace and love for the neighbor, but the life of a Marine, Soldier, Sailor or Airman revolves around war. How then can a Christian support or volunteer for military service?

For the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther (and for us as Lutherans), the answer is found in Scripture. Rom. 13:1–4 and 1 Peter 2:13–15 are the primary sources. Both sanction secular government and its right to wield the sword. Luther referred to this as a “divine thing entirely” and concluded, “The very fact that the sword has

Photo by Michael Schuermann

## The soldier fights not to defend himself but the life and property of his fellow citizens, that is, his neighbors.

been instituted by God to punish the evil, protect the good, and preserve peace is powerful and sufficient proof that war and killing along with all the things that accompany wartime and martial law have been instituted by God.”

Luther wrote these words in 1526. During the previous two years, Germany had witnessed a tremendous amount of bloodshed during the Peasants War. The emperor of Germany, Charles V, had recently called for the forceful suppression of Lutheranism. And the Muslim Turks had ravaged regions east of Germany just a few months prior, effectively bringing Islamic civilization to the eastern gates of European Christendom.

At the time, there were a number of Protestant Christians (generally called Anabaptists) who believed Christians had no business being involved in any sort of civil service and certainly not of the military variety. The lives of true Christians, they said, were to be spent engaging in acts of charity and Christian love toward their neighbor. Secular government and military service was for secular people.

More than a few Christian soldiers were troubled by this claim, so they turned to Luther for advice, requesting that he address the issue in writing. He had already made his basic position on secular affairs known in a work entitled *Temporal Authority* (1523). But ever the pastoral theologian, he decided to draft a text addressing the specific issue of whether true Christians could in good conscience serve in military vocations. He titled it *Whether Soldiers, Too, Can Be Saved*.

At the outset, Luther made one thing clear: A Christian is not a Christian by virtue of the vocation(s) he serves; a Christian is a Christian by virtue of his faith in Christ. A person's identity as a Christian was accomplished apart

from his vocation. It was accomplished in and through the person and work of Jesus, “granted and given us by the grace of God alone.”

With that matter clarified, Luther turned to the question of whether military vocations—even if they required acts of extreme violence—could be regarded as a profession fitting for a Christian. His answer was a resolute yes. He

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military mindset with conviction and truth, carrying on the tradition of illuminating the just causes that are still worth fighting for. He is not a cheerleader for war, but he awakens the conscience and secures the moral high ground of righteousness and just cause.

The military is not an easy Gospel environment, but there are still numerous opportunities for the astute chaplain to share the Gospel. Love of the Law in the military creates immeasurable *esprit de corps* coupled with good order and a mutual love of discipline, strictness and even the harshness and deprivation of military life.

But this Law-oriented mindset does not bar the Gospel from doing its work. Service members respond to the Gospel rightly proclaimed as God's universal grace for all mankind, especially when the poignant question is asked, "How can I continue to live in sin with an ungrateful heart now that my salvation has been secured by the love of God in Christ Jesus?" The Gospel offers answers to these kinds of questions and brings comfort to the most difficult of

situations, offering peace to military members in the face of battle. Because of it, they know that their hearts, minds and consciences are secure in the cross of Christ.

There are no quick answers for the Gospel to do its work in the military worldview and environment; there are only opportunities for the chaplain to see those opportunities and exercise the courage to penetrate the military culture. War is not a tidy event. Innocents die unintentionally, and the guilt of unintended loss of life can be a hellish, haunting nightmare for all who engage in war. Chaplains must listen for the pain and understand its root, waiting for the cross of Jesus Christ to complete its mission.

There is a great personal gap of experience between the one who fights the war and the one who counsels him or her. The skilled chaplain doesn't cavalierly announce the Gospel of cheap grace and instant forgiveness, make the sign of the cross and walk away as if he has done his job. Instead, he seeks to understand the soul-numbing violence exercised in war, the certain

post-traumatic stress after combat and the depth of the conflicted feelings and guilt involved in war. The chaplain walks with the service member, step by gracious step, to the cross of Christ where God meets every Soldier, Sailor, Airman and Marine in all their warrior pride, guilt, imperfection, anger and despair. Here our gracious God in Christ speaks His firm word of unconditional love, "You are forgiven!" This is the chaplain's eternal just cause and the heart of his ministry. ❀

# OPERATION BARNABAS

LCMS Operation Barnabas is a network of care to our nation's military members and their families. Through this program, the LCMS:



- ★ provides care and support to mobilized pastors (Reserve chaplains), their families and their congregations,
- ★ provides training and support to Lutheran congregations who want to care for military and military families in their congregations and communities, and
- ★ serves as a resource to other organizations that provide care to military families.

Go to [www.lcms.org/?pid=732](http://www.lcms.org/?pid=732) to watch videos, download resources and learn how to get involved in Operation Barnabas.

➤ **Chaplain Mark J. Schreiber** ([mark.schreiber@lcms.org](mailto:mark.schreiber@lcms.org)) is director of the LCMS Ministry to the Armed Forces.

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acknowledged that the work of a soldier at war "seems an un-Christian work completely contrary to Christian love."

When one looked at the matter closely, however, he believed even killing in combat was "a work of love." A soldier fighting in a just war is not fighting for personal or national gain but rather in defense of others. The soldier fights not to defend himself but the life and property of his fellow citizens, that is, his neighbors.

Luther also explained that military professions are absolutely essential for the preservation of peace and order. The world was in his day, and still is in ours, full of what he called "warmongers," those who would use war as an extension of politics to acquire lands and wealth and those who simply reveled in bloodshed. The only way to stop such injustices is through force of arms. For the sake of peace, he wrote, militaries are required. Those who serve within them not only serve in legitimate professions, but "right and godly" vocations.

A Christian who serves in the military, therefore, did not and does not need to be troubled by the clamoring of Christian pacifists. Not only does a soldier's vocation, presuming its duties are properly and legally executed, legitimately serve the neighbor, but it is also what Jesus identified as the greatest act of love (John 15:13), for every member of the military has committed to offer his life in defense of his fellow citizens. Every Christian Marine, Soldier, Sailor and Airman can serve with full confidence that, as Luther put it in his great hymn, "Our victory has been won; the Kingdom ours remaineth." ❀

➤ **Dr. Adam S. Francisco** ([adam.francisco@cu.edu](mailto:adam.francisco@cu.edu)) is a United States Navy veteran and associate professor at Concordia University Irvine.



Photo by Michael Schuermann



*Note: The "official notices" are published for a single purpose only: giving notice of a result, namely, changes in the Synod's membership rosters by the addition or deletion of the names of individuals and congregations. It is not always appropriate that reasons for the changes be identified in the published notices. Since a change can occur for any of a variety of reasons, no assumptions may be made merely from the fact that a change has occurred. —Ed.*

## Colloquies

MONTY D. GLEITZ, Elizabethtown, Ky.; MARK MOOG, Evansville, Ind.; BERIHUN MOKONNEN REDE, San Diego, Calif.; UNG WON CHO, Los Angeles, Calif.; SUNG IL CHO, Lawrenceville, Ga.; BYUNG GON KIM, Duluth, Ga.; JEONG HO SHIN, Irvine, Calif.; WENBIN (FREEMAN) LI, Fremont, Calif.; GEOM NAM LEE, Flushing, N.Y.; MICHAEL WAGNITZ, Windsor, ON, Canada; have completed the Pastoral Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are, therefore, eligible for a call.—Rev. Dr. Herbert C. Mueller Jr., Chairman, Colloquy Committee, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, Mo. 63122-7295.

KIMBERLY L. PALINKAS, Mentor, Ohio; ROBIN N. SINCOX, Augusta, Mo.; JACQUELINE A. GLOSS, Gilbert, Ariz.; DIANE M. ROSS, Yorba Linda, Calif.; SANDRA J. NAEGELI, Racine, Wis.; ASHLEY B. GASAU, Racine, Wis.; CYNTHIA M. BRIGGS, Bay City, Mich.; ELIZABETH J. RISKE, Phoenix, Ariz.; NELDA E. KOEBERL, Frohna, Mo.; DEBORAH M. LICHTENEGGER, Frohna, Mo.; SUSAN M. ELLINGSEN, Wakesha, Wis.; KATHRYN C. MANAHAN, St. Louis, Mo.; RHONDA J. DILZER, Queen Creek, Ariz.; MEGAN M. VOGEL, Toledo, Ohio; DANIELLE S. ROTHERT, Seymour, Ind.; have submitted their applications for the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod through CUEnet. Correspondence regarding their applications should be directed within four weeks after publication of this notice to Rev. Dr. Herbert C. Mueller Jr., Chairman, Colloquy Committee, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, Mo. 63122-7295.

BRETT ELLIS, Katy, Texas, has submitted his application for the Director of Christian Education Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod through Concordia University Texas, Austin, Texas. JONATHAN G. BIRNER, Naples, Fla., has submitted his application for the Director of Parish Music Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod through Concordia University Chicago, River Forest, Ill. Correspondence regarding their applications should be directed within four weeks after publication of this notice to Rev. Dr. Herbert C. Mueller Jr., Chairman, Colloquy Committee, 1333 S. Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, Mo. 63122-7295.

KRISTI LARSEN, Waconia, Minn., has completed the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and is, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Dr. Kevin Hall, Director, DCE Program and Colloquy, Concordia University, St. Paul, 275 Syndicate N., St. Paul, Minn. 55104.

DAWN MARIANO, Peoria, Ariz., and CAROLYN SHIERY, Orange, Calif., have completed the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Dr. Becky Peters, Director, Colloquy Program, Concordia University, Irvine, 1530 Concordia West, Irvine, Calif. 92612-3203.

JOSEPH GASTLER, Trinity Lutheran Church, Woodway, Texas; REBECA GIBSON, Westlake

Preparatory Lutheran Academy, Richmond, Texas; MARINEA MCGHEE, Baton Rouge Lutheran School, Baton Rouge, La.; and ADAM WILLIAMS, Trinity Lutheran School, Houston, Texas, have completed the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and are therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Dr. Paul Buchheimer, Placement Director, Assistant Colloquy Program Director, Concordia University Texas, 11400 Concordia University Drive, Austin, Texas 78726.

MEGAN MARTIN, Emmaus, Fort Wayne, Ind., has completed the Teacher Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and is, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Mark A. Waldron, Director of Teacher Colloquy, Concordia University Chicago, 7400 Augusta St., River Forest, Ill. 60305-1499.

AMANDA BRADLEY, Pensacola, Fla., has completed the Director of Christian Education Colloquy Program of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and is, therefore, eligible to receive a call.—Dr. Kevin Hall, Director, DCE Program and Colloquy, Concordia University, St. Paul, 275 Syndicate N., St. Paul, Minn. 55104.

## Tenure

The Board of Regents of Concordia University, River Forest, Ill., herewith gives notice of intent to grant tenure to JODIE DEWEY, BRENDA GRAHAM, JENNA MAHAY and CAROL REISECK. Any comments concerning this intent should be addressed to the following within six weeks after publication of this notice.—Dr. John Johnson, Executive Officer, Board of Regents, Concordia University, 7400 Augusta Street, River Forest, Ill. 60305-1499; fax: 708-209-3534.

## Requests for Reinstatement

HEATHER CHILDRESS, Shattuc, Ill.; MELINDA JAYNE HANKE, Ballwin, Mo.; JANET B. HEIEN, Peoria, Ill.; MEREDITH MATTERN, Spring, Texas; DAWN M. MUELLER, Wheaton, Ill.; LA RAYNE NEWTON, Saginaw, Mich.; JAMES GRANT RUSH, Il, Flint, Mich.; JAMES A. SCHEUER, Milwaukee, Wisc.; and GAIL ANN WILSHEK, Watertown, Wisc., have applied for reinstatement to the Ministers of Religion—Commissioned roster of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. Correspondence regarding these applications should be directed to the undersigned for receipt no later than **Sept. 5, 2012**.—Dr. Raymond L. Hartwig, Secretary, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1333 South Kirkwood Road, St. Louis, Mo. 63122-7295.

## Nominations

**The Board of Regents of Concordia College—New York, Bronxville, N.Y.,** has solicited nominations for **president** of the institution. The full list of presidential candidates accepting nomination will be published in the August *Reporter*. The list of candidates, together with additional details on deadlines and procedures, may also be found on the college's website at [www.concordia-ny.edu](http://www.concordia-ny.edu). Click on "Presidential Search."

## Positions

The Lutheran Witness *welcomes notices for positions available at affiliated entities and Recognized Service Organizations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The deadline for receipt of such notices is the 20th of the month two months prior to the publication month (e.g., August 20 for the October issue). Send notices to [jennifer.duffy@lcms.org](mailto:jennifer.duffy@lcms.org). —Ed.*

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

- **Concordia University, Ann Arbor, Mich.,** faculty positions: **chemistry**; and **Wind Ensemble/Pep Band Conductor**; and administrative positions: **coordinator, Library Services**; and **coordinator, Student Activities and Retention.**
- **Concordia University Nebraska, Seward, Neb.,** **assistant professor of accounting.**
- **Concordia University, Portland, Ore.: Nursing-Skills Lab coordinator and clinical instructor.**
- **Concordia University, St. Paul, Minn.:** faculty position of **physical therapy program director.**
- **Concordia University Texas, Austin, Texas:** multiple faculty positions in **nursing**; and seeks an **admissions counselor** at the San Antonio and the DFW locations.
- **Concordia University Wisconsin, Mequon, Wis.:** faculty position in **World History.**

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

## Anniversaries

The Lutheran Witness *welcomes notices 50 words or less from LCMS congregations about their upcoming "milestone" anniversaries. The deadline for receipt of such notices is the 20th of the month two months prior to the publication month (e.g., August 20 for the October issue). Send notices to [jennifer.duffy@lcms.org](mailto:jennifer.duffy@lcms.org). —Ed.*

**St. Paul's**, Evansville, Ind., is celebrating its 125th anniversary throughout the year 2012 with the theme "Declare His Glory, Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow!" Confirmation reunion on Aug. 19. Celebration dinner on Sept. 9 with speaker Dr. Wallace Schulz. For more information, contact [vsfuchs@insight.com](mailto:vsfuchs@insight.com).

**St. Luke's**, Reno, Nev., will celebrate its 100th anniversary Sept. 23, 2012, with a special worship service at 11:00 a.m. The Rev. Ryan Alvey, son of the congregation, will serve as preacher. A catered banquet and program will follow the service. Contact the church office at 775-825-0588 or [secofrev@stlukesreno.com](mailto:secofrev@stlukesreno.com) or visit [www.stlukesreno.com](http://www.stlukesreno.com).

**Good Shepherd**, Rochester, Ill., will celebrate its 50th anniversary Sunday, Sept. 16, with a worship service at 10:00 a.m. followed by lunch and a program. The guest preacher will be the Rev. Dr. Dean Wenthe from Concordia Theological Seminary. Former pastors and members are invited to attend.

**Peace**, Tifton, Ga., will celebrate its 50th anniversary Aug. 18–19. A Celebration Service will begin at 4:30 on Saturday, Aug. 18 to be followed by a catered dinner and special program. The speaker for this service will be the Rev. Richard Pieplow of Valdosta, Ga. On Sunday, Aug. 19, the worship service will begin at 10:00 a.m. with a brunch to follow. Friends and former members wishing information may call the church office at 229-382-7344 or can e-mail the church at [peacecl@friendlycity.net](mailto:peacecl@friendlycity.net).

**St. John's**, Union, Ill., will celebrate its 125th anniversary on Sunday, Sept. 9 at the 10 a.m. worship service. The Rev. Dr. David R. Schmitt from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, Mo., will be guest preacher. Following the service, friends and members are welcome to join us at Donley's

Banquet Hall for a delicious luncheon and celebration. A lovely meal is planned for all! For more information or to make luncheon reservations, please call 815-923-2733 or email [stjohn125th@sbcglobal.net](mailto:stjohn125th@sbcglobal.net).

**St. Paul's**, Kewanee, Ill., observes her 150th anniversary at Oktoberfest, an event beginning with Vespers at 5:00 p.m., Sunday, Oct. 7, with a former pastor, the Rev. Kenneth Wegener, preaching. A banquet follows. The following day, Dr. Lawrence Rast, president of the Fort Wayne seminary, will preach the morning Communion service at 9:00 a.m. and hold a seminar afterwards. Call 309-852-2460 or email [stpauls@kewanee.com](mailto:stpauls@kewanee.com).

**Hosanna**, Buffalo, Minn., will celebrate its 30th anniversary Aug. 6-12. Special evening celebration Aug. 8 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. with music, pie and ice cream social. Celebration church service Aug. 12 at 9:00 a.m., followed by food and fellowship. For more information, visit [www.hosannalcms.org](http://www.hosannalcms.org).

**St. Paul**, Blue Earth, Minn., will celebrate its 125th anniversary with a 9:30 a.m. worship service Oct. 14. A catered dinner will be held at Hamilton Hall after the service. The Rev. Dr. Paul L. Maier will be guest preacher at the 2:00 p.m. anniversary worship service. For more information, contact the church office at 507-526-7318 or email [stpauloffice@bevcomm.net](mailto:stpauloffice@bevcomm.net).

**Trinity**, Berrien Springs, Mich., will celebrate its 100th anniversary, "A Century of God's Grace," at a special worship service Sunday, Sept. 30, 2012, at 10:30 a.m. The Rev. David P. E. Maier, Michigan District president, will be guest speaker. A catered dinner will follow the service. Call 269-473-1811 for information.

**Messiah**, Forest Lake, Minn., will celebrate its 40th anniversary, Saturday, Oct. 6 at 4:00 p.m. with former pastors, banquet and historical presentations, culminating in a mission emphasis service Sunday, Oct. 7, at 9 a.m., with guest preacher District President David Stechholz and reception following. Visit [www.messiahlutheranforestlake.org](http://www.messiahlutheranforestlake.org), call 651-464-6842 or email [pastor@messiahlutheranforestlake.org](mailto:pastor@messiahlutheranforestlake.org).

**Our Savior**, Fenton, Mo., will be finalizing the yearlong celebration of its 50th anniversary at a dinner on Sept. 9. The theme for this year is "Building on the Firm Foundation." The guest speaker for the dinner will be the Rev. Dr. Ray Mirly, Missouri District president. For more information on the dinner, contact the church office after Aug. 1.

**Morning Star**, Lakeside, Calif., joyously commemorates 40 years of preaching, teaching, out-reaching and up-reaching with a year-long celebration, which began in September 2011. We have committed ourselves to completing a special mission event for the community each month.

You will find more information about our congregation, location, and many resources for faith-building studies at [www.morningstarlcs.org](http://www.morningstarlcs.org).

**Mt. Calvary**, Ft. Lupton, Colo., will celebrate its 75th anniversary with a 9:00 a.m. service Aug. 19. Guest speaker will be the Rev. Charles Blanco. A time of sharing memories will be held after the service. An anniversary meal will be served at noon. Contact the church office at 303-857-6827 or email [office@mtcalvaryluth.org](mailto:office@mtcalvaryluth.org).

**Peace with Christ**, Ft. Collins, Colo., will celebrate its 40th anniversary Sept. 15-16. A catered dinner and program are scheduled for Saturday evening at the Midtown Arts Center. Reservations are required. Former pastor Chip Winter will preach at both Sunday services. A fellowship hour with refreshments is scheduled between services. A noon meal and program will follow the 10:45 service. Additional information is available at [www.pwchrist-fc.org](http://www.pwchrist-fc.org). You also may email the church office at [pwchrist@pwchrist-fc.org](mailto:pwchrist@pwchrist-fc.org).

**St. John's**, Cordova, Neb., celebrates 125 years of God's faithfulness Saturday, Sept. 22, with a potluck dinner at 6:00 p.m. and services Sunday, Sept. 23, at 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. with a dinner at 11:30 a.m. Son of the congregation, the Rev. Peter Jurchen, will be guest minister at each service.

**Mount Calvary**, San Antonio, Texas, will celebrate its 90th anniversary on Sunday, Sept. 30, in both the 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. services. An anniversary dinner and program will follow the 11:00 service. All former members are cordially invited. Please inform us of your attendance by calling 210-824-8748 or emailing us at [mtcalvary@mountcalvarysa.org](mailto:mtcalvary@mountcalvarysa.org).

**St. Paul**, Parkersburg, W. Va., will celebrate its 125th anniversary throughout 2012 with the theme "To God Be the Glory" and will culminate with a special service and dinner on Sept. 30. Several former pastors and members will be in attendance. For more information, see [www.stpaulwv.org](http://www.stpaulwv.org) or email [office@stpaulwv.org](mailto:office@stpaulwv.org).

**Lutheran Church of the Master**, Phoenix, Ariz., will observe its 50th anniversary on Oct. 28 at 9:00 a.m. This celebration will coincide with the Festival of the Reformation. A banquet will follow the morning service. For more information, please contact Jerry Lowery at 602-997-7439 or [beth1924@yahoo.com](mailto:beth1924@yahoo.com).

**Holy Cross**, Madison, Ohio, will celebrate its 45th anniversary on Aug. 5. Pastor Howard Davis will lead the anniversary worship service with the Rev. Terry Cripe, Ohio District president, as guest speaker. A breakfast buffet reception will follow the celebration service. In addition, we will also celebrate Pastor Davis' 50th year in God's service.

## In Memoriam

*Obituary information is provided by district offices to the Synod's Office of Rosters and Statistics. Any questions about content should be referred, therefore, to the appropriate district office. — Ed.*

### ORDAINED

**BALZER, DOUGLAS K.**, Nov. 18, 1946, to April 26, 2012.

**BORCHERDING, CHARLES D.**, Nov. 22, 1938, to May 12, 2012.

**ETZEL, LENHART EMIL**, Dec. 4, 1925, to May 29, 2012.

**JESKE, DAVID G.**, March 15, 1938, to May 9, 2012.

**MIDDENDORF, MARVIN L.**, Dec. 29, 1927, to April 27, 2012.

**MUELLER, ARMAND J.**, April 6, 1932, to June 1, 2012.

**PINNT, WALTER M.**, Nov. 3, 1925, to May 26, 2012.

**REIMER, ROBERT K.**, Nov. 24, 1943, to May 24, 2012.

**SPATZEK, CARLTON C.**, Oct. 29, 1928, to July 10, 2011.

### COMMISSIONED

**BLOMENBERG, GILBERT PAUL**, Jan. 20, 1918, to May 13, 2012.

**GRESENS, RONALD JAMES**, Dec. 18, 1935, to April 27, 2012.

**HOLSCHEN, JUDITH ANN (JUNIS)**, Nov. 25, 1941, to May 26, 2012.

**OETTING, HARRIET M. (PUEGGEL)**, June 8, 1933, to May 14, 2012.

**PRAHLOW, AUGUST JOHN**, March 6, 1935, to April 10, 2012.





by MATTHEW LORFELD

The vocation of a Soldier, Marine, Seaman, Airman or Coastie carries a unique set of joys, struggles and burdens. This is especially true for troops with families. Deployments take spouses and parents from a service member's family. Combat brings the duty and honor of serving one's nation and brothers-in-arms, but it also often brings pangs of conscience over decisions that involve taking another's life. There are also the casualties of war and troops who return with traumatic injuries seen and unseen.

In Luke 7:1–10 (and Matt. 8:5–13), Jesus encounters a centurion whose servant had become ill and near death. This encounter comes right after Jesus finishes preaching the Sermon on the Mount. Read Luke 6:20–49. Summarize Jesus' teaching. What is Gospel, and what is Law?

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Read Luke 7:1–5. When a centurion heard about Jesus, he sent some of the Jewish elders from Capernaum on his behalf. It is clear by his action and the words of the elders ("He loves our nation") that this centurion is not a Jew. Why would he send the Jewish elders on his behalf?

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The Jewish elders say something quite surprising: The centurion is worthy! Ironically, it is because he was a Gentile that the centurion would not go to Jesus

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himself. What is the basis by which the Jewish elders declare this centurion to be worthy (v. 5)?

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Read Luke 7:6–10. Jesus begins to travel with them. As Jesus approaches, the centurion sends another delegation of his friends. What does the centurion have to say about his own worthiness?

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On our own, we are not worthy. In fact, we confess in the Divine Service that we are not worthy of God's forgiveness. Look at Confession and Absolution in your hymnal. How do we confess that we are not worthy? (See *LSB*, p. 151 and 184.)

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We also learn in the Small Catechism about our unworthiness. Look at the explanations of the Creed and the Lord's Prayer (*LSB*, pp. 323–25). Where does it speak about our unworthiness? Does God respond to our own worthiness?

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Note that it is not until the very end of Luke's account of this miracle that Jesus finally speaks. When He does, Jesus points to the centurion's faith. Read Rom. 10:13–17 and Eph. 2:8–9. Faith is a gift given through the proclamation of the Gospel. Faith clings to and receives what Jesus has to give. Whether you are serving your nation in the armed forces, are a spouse of a serviceman or are a civilian in any of the numerous vocations our Lord gives, we unworthy servants all have the same need: Jesus, His forgiveness, and His righteousness. What the centurion's encounter with Jesus shows us is that Jesus is for you. In Him alone there is healing, absolution and eternal life. ✽

# JESUS IS FOR SOLDIERS TOO

