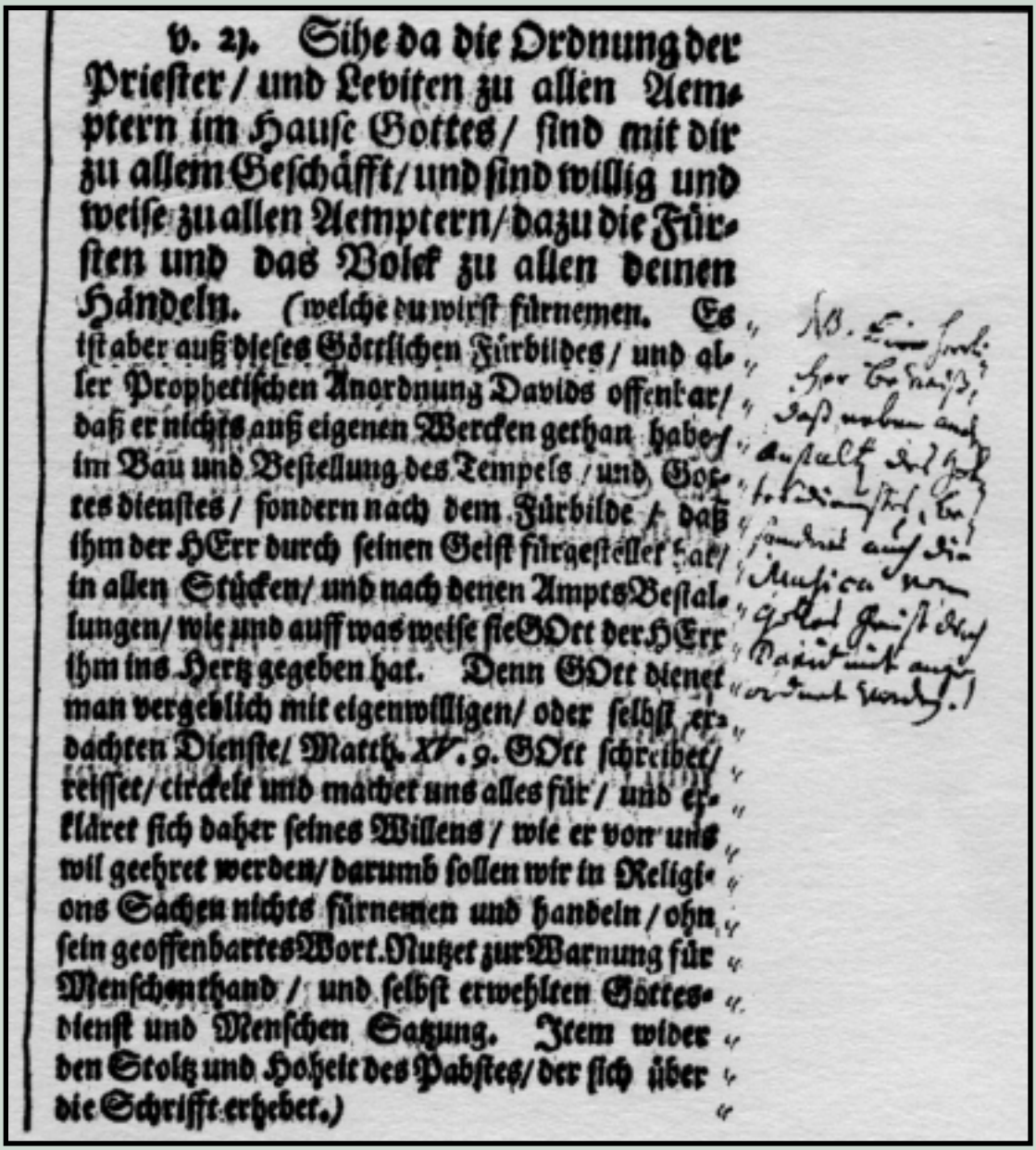
# LOGIA

A JOURNAL OF LUTHERAN THEOLOGY



v. 21. Sihe da die Ordnung der Priester / und Leviten zu allen Aemptern im Hause Gottes / sind mit dir zu allem Geschäfft / und sind willig und weise zu allen Aemptern / dazu die Fürsten und das Volck zu allen deinen Händeln. (welche du wirst fürnemen. Es ist aber auß dieses Göttlichen Fürbildes / und aller Prophetischen Anordnung Davids offenbar / daß er nichts auß eigenen Wercken gethan habe / im Bau und Bestellung des Tempels / und Gottes dienstes / sondern nach dem Fürbilde / daß ihm der HErr durch seinen Geist fürgestellet hat / in allen Stücken / und nach denen Ampts Bestallungen / wie und auff was weise sie GOtt der HErr ihm ins Hertz gegeben hat. Denn GOtt dienet man vergeblich mit eigenwilligen / oder selbst erdachten Dienste / Matth. XV. 9. GOtt schreibet / reisset / circkelt und machet uns alles für / und erkläret sich daher seines Willens / wie er von uns wil geehret werden / darumb sollen wir in Religions Sachen nichts fürnemen und handeln / ohn sein geoffenbartes Wort. Nutzet zur Warnung für Menschenhand / und selbst erwehlten Gottesdienst und Menschen Satzung. Item wider den Stoltz und Hoheit des Pabstes / der sich über die Schrifft erhebet.)

# THE DIVINE SERVICE

EASTERTIDE/APRIL 1993 VOLUME II, NUMBER 2

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# Correspondence

Perhaps Michael Albrecht is not accustomed to working with persons of integrity, but it is important for him to realize that some of us exist.

I am responding to his assertion that: "when Marva Dawn calls ordination 'a theological construct which has no specific basis in the New Testament,' she does not mean to imply that therefore it is not worth contending for the ordination of women." I have never had the hidden agenda he claims is "clear."

When I finished my M.Div. in 1978 I could have chosen to be ordained because I was working for an ALC congregation at the time. I did not so choose, for reasons of the statement into which Albrecht reads his own contrary implications.

It causes me great grief that persons in the LCMS [Rev. Albrecht is not an LCMS person. *Ed.*] are so afraid of the abuses of historical-critical methods that they never move beyond them to gain skills with newer tools—such as canonical criticism, literary criticism, and aspects of linguistics like semantic domains—that are favorable to those of us who interpret the Bible in conservative ways.

Marva J. Dawn
Vancouver, Washington

Yes, please—more of the "lost" articles of Sasse! Some time ago, I was "caught" between Eastern Orthodoxy and the Lutheran Church. The question was: is Orthodoxy orthodox and is Lutheranism merely Lutheran? For if the Lutheran Church is not within the apostolic, catholic church, then I had "no use" for it.

Having grown up in various evangelical sects, I thirsted for catholicity of doctrine and practice. Sasse was one of the Lutheran authors who seemed devoted to apostolicity and catholicity. How excited and relieved I was to read the *We Confess Series* [CPH, 1984-1986] etc. The Lutheran Church is "daily" losing prospective converts who do not see us as being and loving the catholic church.

Dale Nelson
Mayville, North Dakota

I have reference to Logia, Vol. I, No. 1, page 2, left–hand column, line 8, first word—"Armenian." This is really an ethnic or national term. I believe you should have used the word "Arminian" which refers to Jacobus Arminius (1560-1609), the Protestant theologian who revised the Calvinist view of the Reformation.

Louis Bier
Westwood, Massachusetts

Dr. Roger D. Pittelko's article, "The Office of the Holy Ministry in the Life of the Church: A View from the Parish," should be required reading for the entire clergy roster and all seminary students. His courageous stance in portraying how far we have drifted from the classical Lutheran tradition and have, subsequently, listened to various siren voices leading us into the waters of general Protestantism should be carefully noted. Would to God that we return to Wittenberg.

Also, under Logia Forum the commentary on Oreos should encourage the clergy to be attired as clergy. Why the disguise? To be "one of the boys"? We know servicemen, the police, and firemen by their uniforms. Should we not take pride in wearing the clergy "uniform" depicting us as pastors of word and sacrament?

Rev. Kurt V. Grotheer
Mt. Prospect, Illinois

Both the first and the second issues of LOGIA contained articles that took issue with church and ministry writings of two Wisconsin Synod theologians from the first part of this century: "Are There Legal Regulations In the New Testament?" by August Pieper and "The Origin and Development of the New Testament Ministry" by John Schaller.

Erling Teigen's essay in the first issue of LOGIA voiced some concerns over the Pieper-Schaller approach to the ministry. David Scaer's article in the second issue was much shriller as he juxtaposed Pieper, Schaller, and the Wisconsin Synod with such pejorative epitaphs as "legalism," "Hoefling," and "Schleiermacher."

Something that caught my eye while reading Teigen was that his reference for the Schaller article in the *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* was inaccurate. One will look in vain for it in the Winter, 1989, issue as Teigen cites it.

One such inaccuracy might be excused as a misprint. When, however, Scaer repeated the same inaccurate reference in his essay, I could not but wonder: did Scaer ever bother to read Schaller for himself? Or were second-hand prejudices enough of a basis for him to mount his attacks (on fellow Lutherans who were considered confessional brothers with the Missouri Synod in the Synodical Conference)?

Such sloppy scholarship also makes me wonder: if one cannot be trusted in such minor matters, how can one be trusted in major matters? For those interested in reading Schaller for themselves, his essay is found in the *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*, Volume 78, Number 1 (January, 1981), pp. 30–51.

Rev. Curtis A. Jahn
Jackson, Wisconsin

## LOGIA CORRESPONDENCE

*We encourage our readers to respond to the material they find in LOGIA—whether it is in the articles, book reviews, or letters of other readers. Some of your suggestions have already been taken to heart as we consider the readability of everything from the typeface and line spacing (leading) to the content and length of articles. While we cannot print everything that comes across our desks, we hope soon to begin a point/counterpoint section entitled COLLOQUIUM FRATRUM, for our readers and writers to consider the various facets and consequences of what has been printed herein.*

*If you wish to respond to something in an issue of LOGIA, please do so soon after you get an issue. As a quarterly periodical, we are often meeting deadlines for the subsequent issue about the time you receive your current issue. Getting your responses in early will help keep them timely. Send your concise correspondence to: LOGIA Correspondence, 707 N. Eighth Street, Vincennes, IN, 47591-3111.*

# *Whose Liturgy Is It?*

NORMAN NAGEL

LITURGY. Λειτουργία. Ἡ θεία καὶ ἱερὰ λειτουργία. "THE divine and holy liturgy." That's how those who have been doing it the longest talk about it, as found, for instance, in the Byzantine liturgy of St. John Chrysostom. And even today, if you pass by an Orthodox church and look at the notice board, it will tell you when the "Divine Liturgy" is next going on.

We face the question tonight as to *why* the liturgy goes on, *who's* doing it, and *whose* liturgy it is? Clearly in the Greek tradition, which is the oldest, it's *God's* show. So λειτουργία went into Latin most easily as *munus,* which had its equivalent in *officium*, which went into German as *Amt.* Thus, in Germany, the Roman Catholic notice board will tell you when *Das Hochamt* is next going to be celebrated (that's the Mass; almost next to a doctrine of the ministry, isn't it?).

Into French and English went the other Latin word which ran with *officium—servitium, servitium Dei.* Thus, in French and English today there is much reference to "service" (e.g., *Service Book and Hymnal*). What dropped off, however, was the *Dei* part that ran with the *servitium* when it was still running in the way of ἡ θεία και ἱερὰ λειτουργία—"the divine and holy liturgy."

At first, you couldn't have a *servitium* without a *Deus,* and so it was *servitium Dei.* Later, however, the genitive was dropped, and so it developed into the world in which Luther grew up, which spoke mostly of *servitium* or *munus* or *officium,* but all apart from the genitive *Dei.* Thus, one of the great liturgical achievements of the Reformation was that the genitive came back! Whose service is it? *God's* service! *Gottesdienst!* From the Reformation on, and within that heritage and tradition, it has been called *Gottesdienst.* But if not that, then what?

## GOTTESDIENST

*Dienst,* of course, goes into English as "service." And when in the Lutheran tradition the genitive *Gottes* got dropped off, space was made for the supposition that perhaps it really wasn't God's *Dienst* but ours. And so in the English-speaking world, *Dienst* came to be translated in that line of thinking as "worship." Thus, to say "worship service" is utter tautology; it is to say the same thing by the Latin line as well as the Anglo-Saxon line—somewhat like saying you have a "belly stomach-ache." And anyway, as Reginald Fuller once pointed out in the Lutheran-Episcopal dialogue, "worship" is a term that is not really at home in the Lutheran tradition (or perhaps shouldn't be). We once had a "Commission on Liturgy and Hymnody." Now we have a "Commission on *Worship.*" Of course, the word "liturgy" also took a long time to come into our usage, way into the seventeenth century. But *Gottesdienst* has always been there.

What is *Gottesdienst*? Is it a subjective or objective genitive? Is God the subject doing it or is he the object of what is being done? Is he at the receiving end of the verbs or are we?

Λειτουργία (as you read your Kittel [4:215 ff.]) is the service that a benefactor renders by putting up the money for the next sports event or a ship for the city's navy. Kalb calls that kind of a *Dienst* a *Volksdienst.* You can't get much mileage out of that kind of a *Dienst*, but there are, of course, people who do.

Never trust anybody who runs it all by etymology. There you will hear that in λειτουργία, there's ἔργον stuff and there's λαός stuff, so λειτουργία must mean "work of the people." Utter nonsense, but it certainly fits for those who would be pushing their understanding of the liturgy as a "work of the people." It runs well with the "people of God" notion of the liturgy that has come out of the Roman Catholic endeavor to get the Mass out of the hands of the priest and into the action of the people along with him. That's where the movement from mouth communion to hand communion comes in. By putting their hands out, everybody can be getting into the action since it's supposed to be the "work of the people."

You won't get it simply by etymology. You need to ask: what is it that is called by that name? What is the *content* of the term in its usage, and within that usage, what is it exactly that is going on? And what was going on there even before there was a term for it? As Elert pointed out, baptism was going on long before there was a doctrine about it. It's rather like that with the liturgy.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

NORMAN NAGEL is Graduate Professor of Systematic Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri. This article is a transcription of a lecture he presented to Opus Dei (a liturgical study group on campus) on January 16, 1989. It has been transcribed and adapted for publication by the editors of LOGIA.

In the Old Testament, there was no doubt about whose liturgy it was; *God* gave it to them. As they lived in that liturgy, they were then his people. When it came to the temple, all of the sacrifices and the services there were given them to do by God, and when there wasn't any temple left during the captivity and after A.D. 70, the big hole left vacant was filled in with liturgy, where confessing the *Shema* was recognized as being a sacrifice. We pick that up in the New Testament with the synagogue service. You recall how in Jerusalem the first Christians continued to go along and do all of the temple liturgy things. This is the kind of continuity which runs in the way of the gospel, not in the way of the law which says, "Don't got to do that no more."

You may recall that when the apostle Paul came to a place, he started off at the synagogue. In Luke 4 our Lord did the same thing. He didn't say: "What would be a nice text to push what I want to push today?" He preached on the appointed pericope, "as was his custom" [Lk 4:16]. Guilding [A. Guilding, *The Fourth Gospel and Jewish Worship,* Oxford, 1960] has attempted to show how the whole of the Gospel of John runs according to a lectionary which finds its rhythm in the festivals of the year. Jesus himself lived and preached within all that.

In the synagogue you had the *Shema:* "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord." With that, they confessed, rejoiced, and acknowledged, "It's all the Lord's show. His name first." All of that came by way of the words which had gone into their ear holes. After the *Shema* came prayers pulled out of the name of God. Then a reading from the Torah, a reading from the prophets, and then a sermon and a blessing. That was the pattern of Luke 4 and the apostle in the synagogue. Our Lord's sermon, "Today is this fulfilled," became the proclamation of the apostle, and along with that proclamation, the reading of the apostolic words when you didn't have an apostle there preaching anymore.

With Jesus and the message that he fulfilled—the whole of the Scriptures—comes all that he brings with him and bestows. He promises that where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he is in the midst of them [Mt 18:20]. This fulfills the saying in the *Mishna:* "Wherever two or three men are reading the Torah, there is the *Shekinah* among them." Jesus uses that saying in reference to his own name. It's out from his name, then, that the name of the triune God was first put upon us at our baptism, for with Jesus come the mandates and gifts of holy baptism, holy communion, holy absolution, and holy ministry (2 Cor 8:23). When you call them "holy," you're saying, "They are the *Lord's. His* show. *He* runs them."

All of that flows into our confession of *Gottesdienst.* It is the Lord who is there for us where his name is, and with his words he delivers what his gifts say. We are there only as those who are being given to. Ours is simply the way of faith, and faith has nothing to say except what it is given to say: "Amen."

In 1 Corinthians, and also in Justin Martyr's first *Apology,* you are struck with what a big deal the "Amen" is. You remember the apostle says, "That's something no one can say 'Amen' to" [1 Cor. 14:16]. He's talking about what's going on in the liturgy. In Justin Martyr also you see the people say "Amen"—"So be it! That's it! Gift received!" When you're saying back to God what he has said to you—ὁμολογεῖν—you can't be getting it wrong, nor is it something that can be wobbled or changed.

We are working toward the question of *adiaphora.* Everything that has been said so far cannot be tossed or cannot be put under the heading *adiaphora.* It is simply there. Given. That's how the Lord does it. It's an enormous lot of liturgy, and it's liturgy understood in the way of faith and in the way of the means of grace.

## LITURGY AS THE LORD'S WORDS

When we talked about the word *liturgy* and said, "Now what is it that is called by that name?" it was all of those things. In the Large Catechism's explanation of the First Commandment [LC I, 16, 27] *Gottesdienst* is everything that is with us at the receiving end of God's gifts, enlivened by those gifts to the praise and thanks to God—that dimension of liturgy which is the "bounce back to God" of his gifts. God says: "I am the Lord your God." We say: "You are the Lord our God." He says: "You are my people." We say: "We are your people." And so also comes the "Amen." God says: "Your sins are forgiven." Faith says: "Amen." God says: "Peace be with you." Faith says: "Amen."

Beginning early in the third century, there was a fair bit of liturgy that was written down. All we have from before then are basically agendas. They didn't have service books. They knew it all by heart! In Justin Martyr's *Apology* (you may recall that it was addressed to the emperor who was thinking that it might be a good thing to get rid of the Christians), Justin Martyr is wanting to show that Christians aren't really such dangerous people, and that perhaps they might even be *good* for the empire. And so you get summary statements [*Apology* I:61-67] which describe what goes on with the newly baptized, and then

***In the Old Testament, there was no doubt about whose liturgy it was; God gave it to them.***

what goes on every Sunday. This is about A.D. 150. Here's the first time that we ever find it said that Sunday is the day on which creation began and the day on which our Lord arose. Prior to that we hadn't heard that. That's some 120 years after Jesus. What went on in between? Well, all of the things we had spoken of above with the *Shema.*

In Justin's account of Christian worship, you have the things we have seen going on in the synagogue as well as all the things that came in with Jesus—Κύριος Ἰησοῦς and all of that [Phil 2:11; Rom 10:9]. God was giving his gifts, and faith was joyfully receiving and acclaiming them. In 1 Corinthians 14, it got to be a bit too much, and so the apostle said, "Let everything be done decently and in order" [1 Cor 14:40]. Some peo-

ple like to use that as the *sedes doctrinae* for liturgy. Actually, it was just that there was so much going on that it was more of a "Let's do it not all talking at the same time." Corinth was a rather spectacular case. You recall how the apostle calls them back to the liturgy, as he quotes it with the words of our Lord [1 Cor 11:23-26]. From the liturgy, then, he draws out the things that they need to be hearing about.

Cullmann is the man who finds a bit of liturgy behind every bush in the New Testament [O. Cullmann, *Early Christian Worship,* SCM, 1953]. Test that out. And there's the glorious Κύριος Ἰησοῦς essay of Sasse [H. Sasse, *We Confess Jesus Christ,* Concordia, 1984, pp. 9-35]. He thought that was the best thing he'd ever written. He couldn't say anything more to the heart of it all.

***You don't fling yourself about in such a way as to draw attention to yourself. Anything that draws attention to you is running counter to* Gottesdienst.**

With the Lord's Supper, the words are there. With Holy Baptism, the words are there. With the readings, the words are there. Simply given to us! You look at the early liturgies and they are 98% (or 97.3%!) Holy Scripture. Clearly, the Lord is having his say, and with his words he's giving out his gifts. So there's what happens, and then there are the words that are used (and these are maximally the Lord's own words from Holy Scripture), and then there are what you might call the "rubrics." Something like them are mentioned in Hebrews 9:1, where you have the "rules" or "regulations" of the "liturgy" or "service" [δικαιώματα λατρείας]. So if you look at the early liturgies (or the Byzantine liturgy which I quoted above), you find that the words of the liturgy that are spoken are 98% Scripture, and then in between you get "rubrics."

## RUBRICS

In contemporary usage, the freight of the term *liturgy* has tended to shrink from what is described as *Gottesdienst* in the Large Catechism, to merely a text in a book, or even simply the rubrics for doing it. Now, of course, the one who is the instrumentality of the Lord's saying his words certainly needs some help in doing that maximally as the instrumentality of the Lord, and so there are rubrics. But anything that deflects away from the Lord toward his instrument runs counter to what the liturgy's there for, that is, *Gottesdienst.*

That's why it's a good thing to cover him up with vestments so that you can forget whether it's Chuck, John, Bill, or Fred. And he shouldn't be wearing argyle socks and fancy shoes. And keep your feet on the floor . . . both of them. You don't lounge about or draw attention to yourself in any way. That reminds me of when I visited in a resident hostel for young ladies in New York. The rule of the house was that in the rooms where they could receive their gentlemen callers, both feet had always to be on the ground, which was a nice way of saying, "No hanky-panky."

Similarly in the chancel. You don't fling yourself about in such a way as to draw attention to yourself. Anything that draws attention to you is running counter to *Gottesdienst.* You are a kind of "necessary instrumentality." The Lord, astonishingly, has you there to speak his words, but *how* you are there is to be a confession of that fact. And so, if somebody comes into chapel and looks at you, he is to be drawn by you into the direction you are pointed. And so you don't gawk all around to see how many people are coming in or not. You are there to aid people toward what you are *all* there for. This is the *coram Deo* point, and you are there as nothing but a servant. Anything that trumpets the fact that it's Uncle Fritz up there runs contrary to being a servant.

Now, of course, for fancy shoes and keeping feet on the floor, we don't have a word of God. We do have rubrics, and you're going to be turning at the altar one way or another, and so you learn how to do it in a way that is most serviceable to the gospel. And since it is the Lord's way of giving, we are taught in the way of faith which is contradicted by an "I don't got to." The liturgy was there before you were. That's the marvelous thing! Sometime you must go to an Orthodox church. Nothing could be more irrelevant, and they're doing it just like they've been doing it for 1500 years!

## SAME OLD LITURGY

We are now in the year of celebrating a thousand years of the Christian Church in Russia. They would be much more apt to talk about it as a thousand years of the liturgy. As the liturgy's going on, the Lord is having himself his people as he gives out his gifts and is praised. I think, perhaps later in our question-and-answer session, we might bump into some of the ways nowadays that people would take over the liturgy, as if it belonged to them to do with as they please. There are those who say, "Well, as long as you've followed the parts more or less, you can put in something that you've made up yourself." One brother here told me that he was expected to be involved in what was called a "Christmas Creed." And he asked the pastor where it came from, and the pastor said, "Oh, I wrote it. Isn't it nice?" Where it says "Creed" you have Creed—Creed as given to us, not as we whipped together in a cutesy way last night or three months ago.

Similarly you don't play games with the name of God. You say it like he gave it to us to say, like it was put on you at your baptism. And when you quote Scripture in the liturgy, you quote Scripture as the Lord gave it to us. You don't think that you might be able to improve on it. It's only as you are sure of the name of God that there's any liturgy at all. And who are you to be calling on the name of the Lord except that he's put his name on you at your baptism? That, you recall, is in Peter's sermon [Acts 2] and also in Romans 10: "All who call on the name of the Lord will be saved." That's liturgy!

The history of the liturgy is like a great tree. Some of the branches have been blown away or pruned off. A little bit more has grown here or there. But what we know of the liturgy, from as long as we know of the liturgy, is what's gone on in the litur-

gy. With that we confess a whole lot of things. We confess the *perpetuo mansura* of Augustana VII. It's the *Lord's* church, which he sees through to the end, and we know ourselves to be in the company of those who through the centuries called upon the name of the Lord. With them we are gathered in his name, are given the forgiveness of sins. With his word he delivers what his words say—baptism, Holy Communion. And so the liturgy is one of the greatest treasures! It is where we live as his people, for we are his people only as we are gathered in his name.

Thus, the liturgy can be a great gift, haven, and joy to people who live in a society and a world where they can't be quite sure what things are going to be like five years from now, or whether tomorrow everything will be changed. In a world where everything has gotten to be so transitory and "throw it away tomorrow," is there anything that they can count on as lasting, that they can be sure will still be there tomorrow, next Sunday, next year, and when they die? The liturgy delivers the answer, "Yes!" Same old liturgy every Sunday. You can count on it like it's been there for a thousand years and more. When people bump into that in a world where there isn't anything else they can be sure of like that, *there* is something real! And so we decline the demands of a consumer society which has to have a new model every year or every week if you're going to sell. For then you're talking marketing, and you're not talking the church of Christ and the holy liturgy.

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

*Dr. Nagel, you've been talking about "the" liturgy as if it's all the same. But haven't we received many liturgies or many styles of liturgy down through the history of the church? If so, how do we decide which form of liturgy to follow? Or are you speaking just of broad outlines? Even our own hymnal has quite a variety of liturgies.*

The front runner in all that I've been saying is *Hauptgottesdienst,* and that's the Sunday morning service. That's the way Justin Martyr tells us and Hippolytus and Pliny's letter and all that's given in the New Testament about it. In Anglican usage, "the services" are all of the others beside Holy Communion. There's Holy Communion, and then there are "the services."

Now when you say "What a lot," do you mean six or five hundred? To run Sunday morning in a novel way—like it's never been done before—is a most unfaithful thing. Whether we have two or three settings of the same liturgy, that's not at the heart of the matter. For instance, in *Lutheran Worship,* one of the things that we sought to achieve there with the different settings was that there would be more than one way of doing things, but that these would become *familiar* ways of doing them. Some people, when they show up for church on Sunday morning, don't have much of a clue as to what to expect. "What's he going to try out on us today?" That's the extreme, of course. When you point to the number of settings, it's a recognition of the bounty of gifts, and one never can say, "Well, that's the lot of it." The next time there is a new hymnbook, by then you should be having such opportunity for the enrichment of the liturgical life of the church, but that comes through the centuries a bit here and a bit there.

*A partner question perhaps to "Whose liturgy is it?" would be "Who is the liturgy for?" Some of the works that I've run into recently talk a lot about how liturgy needs to be made serviceable for the purposes of evangelism. If people walk in who have never been to a Christian service before, they ought to know what's going on. And so we've got to make it as simple and straightforward as possible.*

The Orthodox liturgy is so utterly theocentric. People drift in and drift out. In that tradition they all know what's going on, but you or I drifting in wouldn't have much of a clue. Now, what goes on in the liturgy is what goes on in the church. They are interchangeable. Evangelism is reaching out to the unchurched, and you do that in the best way that you can, but you can't do that with Holy Communion. "Shove off Holy Communion for a few Sundays. We're going to do evangelism here because we think that the liturgy is for people." Pretty risky to be shoving the Lord's Supper aside.

Here again, the Lord's service is not a sales pitch. We are gathered merely as the Lord has gathered us. Perhaps the question is better put this way: if the stranger comes wandering in and exclaims, "There's nothing like this anyplace else in the world!" then the message has begun to get through. The more comfortable we make it for them in the ways of the world which they bring with them, the more we impede their evangelization.

***The liturgy was there before you were. That's the marvelous thing!***

In the church which I served in London, there was *Hauptgottesdienst* in the morning. But if you weren't quite sure whether you were a full-blast Christian, or didn't much know whether you wanted to be or not, you might slip in to the evening service. The evening service was there in such a way as to be a bit more of a "Nicodemus kind of thing," so that you have services which bear that in mind. However, does that mean setting aside the previous set of considerations? And can you ever do evangelism by the thousands? They all end up in the water [Acts 2:41]!

You see, it has been said that Lutheran Hour preaching soft-peddles baptism because we would lose all our Baptist hearers if we gave them a full-blast straight doctrine of Holy Baptism. (I do not say that it is so. I say that I have *heard* it said. Check the evidence.) But the whole Nicodemus thing of "the wind bloweth where it listeth," and you can't call the shots on the Holy Spirit, and anybody that's got a sure-fire evangelizing technique is talking about something that is not in the way of the Holy Spirit as we confess. He does his work where and when it pleases him. That's a recognition that we don't call the shots.

We don't sit down first off and say, "What's the best way

to do it?" The Lord gives us the means of grace and says, "Here's what you get on with." It's only if you think that they won't work that you have to resort to other measures.

One of the things you often hear Luther say is, "We don't have a Word of God about that, but we have been given the gospel, and that's to be the way of it." And yet you may hear the insistence that proper church music is Palestrina, so we'll have nothing but Palestrina here; or proper church music is guitars, and so we'll have nothing but guitars here. One of the greatest temptations for those who love the liturgy is to slip into legalisms. And even though you see how astonishingly conservative Luther was with regard to the liturgy—pretty much the same old thing—he wouldn't say, "That's it! We've got it for good!" There is always what's alive and growing in the liturgy.

*One of the greatest temptations for those who love the liturgy is to slip into legalisms.*

Now are we to ask, "What do people want?" or "What will best serve the gospel?" There are some kinds of words and music which impede or deflect from the gospel. There are some kinds of music which would work people's emotions toward a programmed end—that draw people into paying attention to themselves rather than Christ-ward and toward his gifts. This is what the apostle is speaking about in 1 Corinthians. Each of those problems arose because people were being deflected from Christ.

It is not as though we have a great heritage and we live on that. Rather, we live in that heritage in the way of those who know that the Lord never quits giving his gifts, and those gifts don't come in contradiction to what he's given already. They come in the way of their enlargement and vitalization.

This "always more" aspect of the liturgy is particularly noticeable in Holy Baptism. There are so many good things to be extolling there! Shouldn't we be putting in the sign of the cross, or the renunciation, or the baptismal garment, or the baptismal candle? . . . so that it grows to such a point that there's so much extolling of all these wonderful gifts of baptism that underneath it all, the real thing may become blurred. And so from time to time some pruning is necessary, but it's always in the way of the gospel. You can't not be extolling the gifts, but then you know, "The meat'll be burning if we don't get home by 12:15!" *Lutheran Worship* puts a few nice things back in again, and next time around people will say, "That takes frightfully much too long. We'll snip that out." So whether you have a candle or not, we don't have a word of God for it, but how we come to have a candle or not have a candle is no matter of indifference. We may only arrive at it in the way of the gospel and in the service of the gospel.

*Concerning ceremony in the service—the sign of the cross, kneeling, censing, and the like—how does one keep these things from calling attention to one's self rather than to the gospel?*

When the servants of the liturgy come out into the chancel, they kneel at the prayer desk. With that they are drawing people into what they're to be there for. If they came out and prostrated themselves in front of the altar, that would say something good and true and honoring God, but the rest of us would have forgotten what we were there for and would say "Well, why on earth is he doing that?" or "That's a bit much, isn't it?"

Growth comes by inches. You need to recognize that we are within "the mutual conversation of the brethren" [SA III, IV]. We live within this tradition, and with its treasures we are then equipped for helping one another to recognize what is growing and what is in the way of the gospel. So, when we go into chapel and there are some who recall their baptisms with the sign of the cross as the Small Catechism bids us to, and some don't, and some sit and pray and some kneel and pray—that's something to be rejoicing about!

That's the extraordinary thing about the way the apostle deals with those who are so hip off into tongues. He doesn't stand at the door and frisk the tongues out of them. He sort of lets them go on having tongues in the liturgy. He doesn't knock tongues. He just feeds them more Jesus. The more Jesus goes in, the more the tongues get pushed to the fringe. And he indicates that priority by putting tongues at the bottom of the list [1 Cor 12:10]. He doesn't slice them off, but there is a direction there.

And so, when you come to a congregation whose liturgical life—that is, the way in which they have been given the gifts of our Lord and the means of grace—has been pretty impoverished, you don't come out and say, "Hey, we got to do something about this liturgy!" You first of all preach a few years of Jesus into them, and then they come to know what they're there for and that he always has more to be giving them.

The legalism which I spoke of is our greatest danger. It is indicated when people "come on strong" with doing this or that as a great, big liturgical advance. But the gospel works by way of drawing people into the liturgy so that they say, "Wow, isn't this great! More than I ever suspected!" Real growth comes only by inches.

And so when we go into chapel, and there's a great hubbub of chatter, I have sometimes felt like arising and saying, "Shut up, you lot! Don't you know what we're here for?" We may serve our brethren better if we are at our prayers, and by them, invite and draw and pull others into the quietness *coram Deo*. That is the appropriate way of being before the Lord and his having his say. LOGIA

# *Toward a Confessional Lutheran Understanding of Liturgy*

JOHN T. PLESS

WHAT DOES THE BOOK OF CONCORD CONFESS CONCERNing the liturgy?[1] As the term *liturgy* is variously used these days, we had best start with the Confessions' own definition of the term. Melanchthon goes on for several paragraphs in Apology XXIV to supply the definition of liturgy: "But let us talk about the term *liturgy*. It does not really mean a sacrifice but a public service. . . . Thus the term *liturgy* squares well with the ministry" (Ap XXIV, 80-81).

Contrary to both the medieval Roman opinion that the liturgy or the Mass is church's sacrifice and the modern Liturgical Movement's slogan "Liturgy is the work of the people,"[2] the Confessions understand liturgy as God's work, *Gottesdienst*, Divine Service.

As the office of the holy ministry goes, so goes the liturgy and vice versa. The difficulty that the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod is currently having over the office of the holy ministry is perhaps a result of our failure to see the liturgy from the perspective of the means of grace, and therefore, from the very heart and center of the Lutheran Confessions: God's justification of the sinner for Christ's sake by grace through faith (AC and Ap IV). If the liturgy is our thing to do with as we please, then we are free to shape it as we please according to whatever cultural or personal whims may be popular at the moment. If the holy ministry is simply a set of functions, the church is free to shape and distribute them according to the desire of the majority or perceived pragmatic needs. Hence women's ordination and "lay ministry."

However, the Lutheran Confessions operate with an evangelical rather than an anthropocentric definition of the office of the holy ministry and of the liturgy which has as its stewards and dispensers (Ap XXIV, 80; 2 Cor 5:20) those ordained into this office. To be sure, certain forms and practices embedded within the liturgy may indeed be adiaphora.[3] God's word and sacraments are not. The very nature of God's gifts in word and sacrament shapes and defines the form of their delivery in the Divine Service. The public worship of the congregation will always either confess or deny Christ and his word. What Werner Elert said of Luther applies to the Confessions as well:

> No matter how strongly he (Luther) emphasizes Christian freedom in connection with the form of this rite (the Sacrament of the Altar), no matter how much he deviates from the form handed down at the end of the Middle Ages, no matter how earnestly he warns against the belief that external customs could commend us to God, still there are certain ceremonial elements that he, too, regarded as indispensable.[4]

The Confessions make a clear distinction between the worship that flows from the gospel and forms of worship which obscure or deny the work of Jesus Christ. Article IV of the Apology describes evangelical worship as faith:

> Faith is that worship which receives God's offered blessings; the righteousness of the law is that worship which offers God our own merits. It is by faith that God wants to be worshiped, namely, that we receive from him what he promises and offers (Ap IV, 49; also see Ap IV, 57, 59-60, 154, 228, 309-310).

The faith of which the Apology speaks is bestowed through external means, word and sacraments. Article V of the Augustana demonstrates how closely the liturgy is linked to the office of the holy ministry:

> For through the word and the sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Spirit is given, and the Holy Spirit produces faith, where and when it pleases God, in those who hear the gospel (AC V, 2).

Word and sacrament are by their very nature liturgy; they do not exist in the abstract but only in the fact of their institution by Christ and their administration by his called and ordained servants within his church. Here we may note the insistence of Article VII of the Augsburg Confession, not simply on "word and sacrament" somehow being present in the church, but rather "that the gospel be preached in conformity with a pure understanding of it and that the sacraments be administered in accordance with the divine word" (AC VII,2). We may not become liturgical Nestorians acting as if the "sub-

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stance" of word and sacrament does not shape the "style" of their delivery. The Augsburg Confession "defines the church liturgically" (John Kleinig), that is to say the church is located in the liturgy where the word is purely preached and the sacraments rightly administered.

Apart from the faith-creating gospel which is bestowed in word and sacrament, man will indeed worship, but his worship will be idolatry. So Luther writes in the Large Catechism:

> As I have often said, the trust and faith of the heart alone make both God and an idol. If your faith and trust are right, then your God is the true God. On the other hand, if your trust is false and wrong, then you have not the true God (LC I, 2-3).

***Word and sacrament are by their very nature liturgy; they do not exist in the abstract but only in the fact of their institution by Christ and their administration by his called and ordained servants within his church.***

Unbelief is not merely atheism in the conventional sense of the word, but false belief, belief in a lie about God. Such unbelief is energetic as it exchanges the truth of God for a lie and worships accordingly. So Luther writes:

> Behold, here you have the true honor and the true worship which please God and which he commands under penalty of eternal wrath, namely, that the heart should know no other consolation or confidence than that in him, nor let itself be torn from him, but for him should risk and disregard everything else on earth. On the other hand, you can easily judge how the world practices nothing but false worship and idolatry. There has never been a people so wicked that it did not establish and maintain some sort of worship. Everyone has set up a god of his own, to which he looked for blessings, help, and comfort (LC I, 16-17).

Man is by nature a worshiper. The problem is that the worship which we engage in by nature is idolatry. This idolatry is fueled by the *opinio legis*, the opinion of the law that we can do something to save ourselves from God's wrath and judgment. It is for this reason that Luther identifies idolatry as the foundation upon which the Roman Mass stands (see LC I, 22) as it confuses God's *beneficium* with man's *sacrificium*.

Luther's treatment of this theme under the First Commandment's requirement that "We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things" (SC I, 2) informs his exposition of the Second and Third Commandments as well. In his explanation of the Second Commandment, the misuse of God's name is set in opposition to faith's use of the Lord's name in prayer, praise and thanksgiving. The Second Commandment is related to the Third Commandment as God's name is to his word. The link between the Second and Third Commandments is the explanation of the First Petition of the Our Father where we are taught that God's name is hallowed "when the Word of God is taught clearly and purely and we as children of God, lead holy lives in accordance with it" (SC III, 5).

Seen in this light, the Third Commandment has its focus not on a specific day (which is fulfilled in Christ according to Colossians 2:16-17; also LC I, 82) but on the pure preaching of the gospel and faithful hearing of the same. Vilmos Vatja explains:

> In no sense is this worship a preparatory stage which faith could ultimately leave behind. Rather faith might be defined as the passive cult *(cultus passivus)* because in this life it will always depend on the worship by which God imparts Himself—a gift granted to the believing congregation.
>
> This is confirmed in Luther's Explanation of the Third Commandment. To him Sabbath rest means more than a pause from work. It should be an opportunity for God to do his work on man. God wants to distract man from his daily toil and so open him to God's gifts. To observe the Sabbath is not a good work which man could offer to God. On the contrary it means pausing from all our works and letting God do his work in us and for us. . . .
>
> Thus Luther's picture of the Sabbath is marked by the passivity of man and the activity of God. And it applies not only to certain holy days on the calendar, but to the Christian life in its entirety, testifying to man's existence as a creature of God who waits by faith for the life to come. Through God's activity in Christ, man is drawn into the death and resurrection of the Redeemer and is so recreated a new man in Christ. The Third Commandment lays on us no obligation for specific works of any kind (not even spiritual or cultic works) but rather directs us to the work of God. And we do not come into contact with the latter except in the Service, where Christ meets us in the means of grace.[5]

As it is Christ who gathers his congregation by his name and around his word and sacraments, the Lutheran Confessions are engaged in a polemic against all "self-chosen"[6] forms of worship which obscure the glory of Christ and rob sinners of the sure comfort of the forgiveness of sins. Article XV of the Apology states:

> Scripture calls traditions 'doctrines of demons' (1 Tim 4:1) when someone teaches that religious rites are helpful in gaining grace and the forgiveness of sins.

> This obscures the gospel, the blessing of Christ, and the righteousness of faith. The gospel teaches that by faith, for Christ's sake, we freely receive the forgiveness of sins and are reconciled to God. Our opponents, on the other hand, set up these traditions as another mediator through which they seek to gain the forgiveness of sins and appease the wrath of God (Ap. XV, 5).

It is clear that this polemic is not against traditions *per se*, but against a use of traditions to obtain the forgiveness of sins. Article XV continues:

> Although the holy Fathers themselves had rites and traditions, they did not regard them as useful or necessary for justification. They did not obscure the glory or work of Christ but taught that we are justified by faith for Christ's sake, not for the sake of these human rites. They observed these human rites because they were profitable for good order, because they gave the people a set time to assemble, because they gave the people a good example of how all things could be done decently and in order in the churches, and finally because they helped instruct the common folk. For different seasons and various rites serve as reminders for the common folk. For these reasons the Fathers kept the ceremonies, and for the same reasons we also believe in keeping traditions (Ap XV, 20).

The Apology notes that traditions "interpreted in an evangelical way" are useful for catechesis and preaching:

> We gladly keep the old traditions set up in the church because they are useful and promote tranquility, and we interpret them in an evangelical way, excluding the opinion which holds that they justify. Our enemies falsely accuse us of abolishing good ordinances and church discipline. We can truthfully claim that in our churches the public liturgy is more decent than in theirs, and if you look at it correctly we are more faithful to the canons than our opponents are. Among our opponents, unwilling celebrants and hirelings perform Mass, and they often do so only for the money. When they chant the Psalms, it is not to learn to pray but for the sake of the rite, as if this work were an act of worship or at least worth some reward. Every Lord's Day many in our circles use the Lord's Supper, but only after they have been instructed, examined, and absolved. The children chant the Psalms in order to learn; the people sing, too, in order to learn or to worship. Among our opponents there is no catechization of the children at all even though the canons give prescriptions about it. In our circles the pastors and ministers of the churches are required to instruct and examine the youth publicly, a custom that produces very good results. Among our opponents, there are many regions where no sermons are preached during the whole year, except in Lent. But the chief worship of God is the preaching of the gospel (Ap XV, 38-42).

The Lutheran Confessions, therefore, gladly embrace the catholic liturgical heritage, cleansing it of the virus of works righteousness. The Confessions thereby maintain the mass "with greater devotion and more earnestness than among our opponents" (Ap XXIV, 1; see also Ap XXIV). For the Lutheran Confessions, "spiritual worship," that is, "the worship of faith," is not set in opposition to the external proclamation of the word and the administration of the sacraments. Indeed, the Confessions' attack on the enthusiasm of the spiritualists is particularly sharp:

> In these matters which concern the external, spoken word, we must hold firmly to the conviction that God gives no one his Holy Spirit or grace except through the external word which comes before. Thus we shall be protected from the enthusiasts—that is, from the spiritualists who boast that they possess the Spirit without and before the Word, and therefore judge, interpret, and twist the Scriptures according to their pleasure (SA III, VIII, 3).

As God graciously comes to us only by means of the external word, it is this word that gives content and form to the Divine Service. The word gives content and form to the Divine Service not in a biblicistic sense but in the way of the *viva vox evangelii.* As the clear proclamation and confession of the saving gospel is not a matter of indifference, the content and form of the liturgy is hardly a matter of indifference. Under "the impact of the gospel" (Elert), the Lutheran Confessions restore the liturgy as Christ's service to his people to be received in faith. The liturgy is the "external word" in action bestowing God's gifts and unlocking the lips of his people to extol his name in faithful confession and praise.

***The Lutheran Confessions, therefore, gladly embrace the catholic liturgical heritage, cleansing it of the virus of works righteousness.***

Calls for renewal in worship are common these days. Yet most of the proposals for renewal stem from the pressure of the law rather than the way of the gospel.[7] The Lutheran Confessions' call for a renewed *cultus* is concerned not with innovative or clever changes in texts and ceremonies, but with a liturgy that revolves around the Lord's forgiveness proclaimed and bestowed in the preached word, baptism, absolution, and the Supper. Such a liturgy is geared toward renewal in repentance, faith, and holy living.

Genuine liturgical renewal will be a renewal in the catechesis of the Small Catechism. The Small Catechism has a dual

function as it serves as both a confessional document and a liturgical text. Of all the catechisms of Christendom, Luther's Catechism is the only one that may be prayed (Wilhelm Löhe). The Small Catechism weds doctrine with doxology as the believer is tutored in the truth of God's Word to the praise of his grace. The strength of this union can certainly be seen in Luther's "catechism hymns" ("Here is the Tenfold Sure Command," "We All Believe in One True God," "Our Father, Who From Heaven Above," "To Jordan Came the Christ, Our Lord," "From Depths of Woe, I Cry to You" and "O Lord, We Praise You") as the reformer casts the content of the catechism's doctrine into hymnic form.[8]

As a handbook for the royal priesthood of believers, the Small Catechism tutors God's holy priests in the reception of his gifts in word and sacrament. These gifts are received in repentance and faith and as they have their way in the Christian's life they come to fruition in the places where God has called him to live within the world. The catechism, like the Lutheran liturgy, takes sacrifice out of the chancel and relocates it in the world. Faith gives birth to works of love for the sake of the neighbor (Rom 12:1-2). Earlier in this century, Dom Gregory Dix proposed a "four-fold shape"[9] of the liturgy. The Small Catechism suggests a "three-fold shape" of repentance, faith, and holy living that, unlike Dix, distinguishes law from gospel, works from grace, and love from faith. LOGIA

## NOTES

1. For helpful anthologies of citations concerning worship in The Book of Concord, see David Magruder, "The Lutheran Symbols and a Theology of Worship" (Fort Wayne: Concordia Seminary Printshop, 1990) and Arthur Carl Piepkorn, "What the Symbolic Books of the Lutheran Church Have to Say About Worship and the Sacraments" (St. Louis: Concordia Seminary Printshop, 1952). Helpful treatments of the Confessions' view of the Divine Service, worship, and liturgical practices are found in Werner Elert, *The Structure of Lutheranism* trans. by Walter Hansen (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1962); *Confession* translated by H. George Anderson (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986) pp. 204-219. Luther's theology of the Divine Service and its impact on Lutheran liturgical practice is aptly treated by Heinrich Bornkamm, *Luther in Mid-Career: 1521-1530* trans. by E. Theodore Bachmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983) pp. 459-480; Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther: Shaping and Defining the Reformation 1521-1532,* trans. by James L. Schaaf (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1990) pp. 119-135; and especially Bryan Spinks, *Luther's Liturgical Criteria and His Reform of the Canon of the Mass* (Nottingham: Grove Books, 1982).

2. See Charles Evanson, "Evangelicalism and the Liturgical Movement and Their Effects on Lutheran Worship" (Fort Wayne: Concordia Seminary Printshop, 1989) for an analysis of the theological presuppositions behind the dictum "liturgy is the work of the people."

3. For a treatment of Article X of the Formula and its relationship to the current confessional-liturgical crisis in Lutheranism, see John T. Pless, "The Relationship of Adiaphora and Liturgy in the Lutheran Confessions" in *And Every Tongue Confess: Essays in Honor of Norman Nagel on the Occasion of His Sixty-fifth Birthday* edited by Gerald S. Krispin and Jon D. Vieker (Dearborn, Michigan: Nagel Festschrift Committee, 1990) pp. 195-210. For historical background of Article X see Robert Kolb, *Confessing the Faith: Reformers Define the Church 1530-1580* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1991) pp. 63-81.

4. Werner Elert, *The Structure of Lutheranism* trans. by Walter Hanson (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House,1962) p. 325.

5. Vilmos Vatja, *Luther on Worship* trans. by U.S. Leupold (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1958) p. 130.

6. George Wollenburg has identified the "ordination" of women to the pastoral office as one such form of "self-chosen worship." See George Wollenburg, *The Office of the Holy Ministry and the Ordination of Women* (Minneapolis: University Lutheran Chapel, 1990) p. 25. A related example of such idolatry would be liturgical and sacramental use of feminine names for the Godhead. See Alvin F. Kimel Jr., "The Grammar of Baptism" in *First Things* (December 1991) pp. 33-37 for an excellent critique. In light of what the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions teach us regarding the relationship of God's name to worship, catechumens will need to be warned that "baptisms" performed in the name of "creator, redeemer, and sanctifier" or other substitutions for the canonically mandated name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are pagan rituals that profane the name of God.

7. John Fenton spots this as the key problem with the recently published report of the LCMS Commission on Worship report entitled "Worship Toward 2000." See John Fenton, "Worship Toward 2000: A Review" in *The Bride of Christ* (St. Michael's and All Angels, 1991) pp. 33-34.

8. For an excellent treatment of the relationship between theology and hymnody see Robin Leaver, "Renewal in Hymnody" in *Lutheran Quarterly* (Winter 1992) pp. 359-383.

9. Dom Gregory Dix, *The Shape of the Liturgy* (New York: Seabury Press, 1945) pp. 36 ff.

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President, Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, Mequon, WI

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# *Johannes Bugenhagen and the Lutheran Mass*

DENNIS MARZOLF

FRIENDS OF THE WITTENBERG REFORMATION SPEAK FREQUENTLY of Luther and Melanchthon. Both men were great teachers and witnesses to the truths of Christianity. Yet there is a third individual who made an indelible mark on the history of Lutheran Christianity. This third member of the Wittenberg triumvirate was a skilled speaker, an educational reformer, a humanist, a musician, a lecturer, a pastor and bishop, and the most widely traveled of all the Wittenberg reformers. This forgotten reformer was the first Lutheran missionary to take the message and practice of Lutheranism from Wittenberg to Braunschweig, Hamburg, Lübeck, Pomerania, Denmark, Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, Hildesheim, and their related cities and duchies, including Iceland, Greenland, Norway, Bremen, and Danzig. This "third man" was also the first theologian to take the principles and practice of the Lutheran divine service to the regional churches of the northern reformation.

An examination of the component parts of the *Bugenhagenesque* mass form will follow a short survey of his life and work, in the hope that this brief essay might spark a renewed American interest in the life and work of Bugenhagen. This brief discourse is offered to the reader in the firm conviction that yet another examination of the worship practice of sixteenth century Lutheranism may cause us to reflect again and anew on the scriptural strength, moral virtue, and evangelical brilliance of the orthodox and catholic liturgical forms which are the birthright of the Evangelical Lutheran Christians.

## I. CARDINAL POMERANUS

Johannes Bugenhagen came to Wittenberg in the guise of a humanistic scholar seeking to consult the primary sources in his quest for truth. In this quest he abandoned a successful and comfortable career as the educational director for the important schools in Treptow on the Rega. He was a graduate of the University of Greifswald, and he was a respected educational administrator. He was in demand as a lecturer. He was a pointed and articulate preacher. He was one of the first north European historians of the "new" scientific order. Bugenhagen had been skeptical of the teachings that issued forth from the youthful university at Wittenberg; despite, or because of his skepticism he left home and hearth for the sake of discourse and discovery. "Go to the source for knowledge!" To that end he had studied humanists in his search for truth. After reading Luther's *Babylonian Captivity* he wrote to Luther. We do not know the content of that first letter, but we can reckon that it dealt with the conditions of churchly life, especially the lack of morality so prevalent on the part of the clergy and the educated laity. Luther replied in a note sketched in the cover of *Freedom of the Christian*:

> You have requested me to give you a brief directive for Christian living. The Christian needs no moral law! The spirit of faith will guide him to all that God commands and brotherly love requires. Read this in that spirit. Not everyone believes the gospel. Faith in your heart will grasp it. . . .[1]

At the blossom of his career Bugenhagen left his success and influence to become a student once again. The thirty-five-year-old educator arrived in Wittenberg in March of 1521. The Wittenberg reformation would never be the same. In Bugenhagen, his dear *Pommer,* Luther found a human confessor, confidant, and comforter dearer than Staupitz, and the Lutheran liturgy would bear the impression of the sensibilities and faith-life of the preacher from Pomerania for generations.

Bugenhagen became an adjunct professor at Wittenberg, lecturing on the Psalter for the Pomeranian students at the university. In time the *Hörsaal* was filled to overflowing. At Luther's direction these lectures were published in 1524. In the meantime, Bugenhagen had taken a wife (October 13, 1522) and had become the pastor of St. Mary's Church, the city parish *(Stadtkirche).*

On St. Michael's day, 1523, the city pastor died. The All Saints' Chapter attempted to secure a successor. As they were occupied in their deliberation the city council and city parish, under the leadership of that "trouble-making professor," elected Bugenhagen to the vacant office. Thus one of Lutheranism's first married priests was called to an office that carried with it a stipend sufficient to his needs. Bugenhagen remained in this

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office until his death in 1558, despite initial fears that his Pomeranian accent and dialect would render his sermons unintelligible.

His first task as city pastor was to rebuild what the unrest of Karlstadt's radical reformation had destroyed. There was no longer any divine service on weekdays, no school for the boys, and consequently no choir for divine service on the Lord's day. The new pastor reinstated all of this—school, daily worship, and care for the individual souls of the city. This experience, and his experience as administrator of one of the most important schools of Pomerania would serve him well as he traveled to the powerful centers of the northern renaissance with his detailed *Ordnungen* for social, governmental and liturgical reform.

Bugenhagen dedicated his life to the publication of works pertinent to the preaching and the practice of the Christian life: the church orders for the government, education, and worship of Braunschweig, Hamburg, Lübeck, Wittenberg, Pomerania, Denmark, Hildesheim, Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel, and the Saxon Lutherans living under the Leipzig Interim; the Harmony of the Passion, Death, Resurrection and Ascension of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; exegetical works on the Psalter, Deuteronomy, Samuel, Kings, the Epistles of Paul, Job, Jeremiah, and Jonah. In addition he authored hundreds of sermons each year following his investiture in Wittenberg, and he composed a treasury of Lutheran systematic writings directed to the needs of various parishes, duchies, and universities within Lutheranism and Anglicanism.

Bugenhagen had a clear perception of his role in the Lutheran Reformation. In 1535 he traveled with Luther to meet the papal legate and his lighthearted appraisal of the situation reveals his understanding of his role as pastor and representative for the Lutheran cause: "Now the German Pope and Cardinal Pomeranus begin their journey!"[2]

Luther came to him as friend and confessor. When political and personal fears and doubts came to the professor, Luther would go to Bugenhagen, or if he was too weak he would request the city pastor to call on him with the consolation of evangelical confession and absolution, the proclamation of the gospel and the administration of the sacrament of Christ's body and blood.

Bugenhagen held a high view of his call and vocation. He would not desert his vocation for reason of personal safety. When the plague threatened Wittenberg he sent his wife and family away, but he remained to comfort and assist the citizens and Luther. After Luther's death the Schmalkaldic War drove the university from Wittenberg, yet Bugenhagen remained as pastor and confessor to those who waited for the city to be crushed as a symbolic manifestation of imperial power and right. When the city was not destroyed he worked with the new elector to insure a peaceful reinstitution of education and Lutheran government. At this time he and Melanchthon attempted to exercise a degree of humanistic moderation and cooperation. Doubtless he believed that the Lutheran cause would be furthered by this cautious obedience to the new civic authorities.

Other students of Luther felt differently, however, and the city pastor endured all manner of derision and accusation at the mouths and pens of former colleagues, students and parishioners. Thus it was that the Gnesio-Lutheran cause turned away from Wittenberg and its pastor. When Bugenhagen died, he was succeeded by Paulus Eber, another member of the cooperative, mediatorial branch of humanistic Lutheranism. Nonetheless Bugenhagen's memory was held dear in the hearts of those northern Lutherans who had been faithfully served by his visitation and labor, especially in the realm of the Danish king. Bugenhagen's liturgical influence remains to the present day in all those Lutheran congregations who trace their lineage to the empire of Christian III.

Johannes Bugenhagen was a faithful servant of the gospel. His faithfulness was put to many tests of endurance as he was called to the regions bordering the North Sea and the Baltic to insure the peaceful political introduction of the teachings and practices of Lutheran Christianity.

The following inventory of calls and releases from parish duties indicates the extent of Bugenhagen's evangelistic missionary work. Although Luther rejoiced in "Pommer's" efforts he also lamented his absence. In 1530 during Bugenhagen's tenure in Lübeck, Luther wrote, "As if being Luther were not enough, now I must also be Pommer! . . ."[3] It is noteworthy that Luther willingly assumed the extra parish and civic duties incumbent on the office of city pastor so that Bugenhagen could travel and assure the success of the Lutheran way of faith and life in the northern regions.

*Luther came to him as friend and confessor. When political and personal fears and doubts came to the professor, Luther would go to Bugenhagen. . . .*

May 1528: Bugenhagen, his wife Walpurga and daughter Sara travel to Braunschweig.
September 1528: Bugenhagen and consortium travel to Hamburg, where a new order is announced and adopted.
June 1529: Bugenhagen returns to Wittenberg.
October 1530: Bugenhagen arrives in Lübeck for the preparation of a new order for the city and region.
April 1532: Bugenhagen returns to Wittenberg.
1533: The church order for Wittenberg.
May-November 1534: Bugenhagen called to prepare Pomeranian church order.
August 1535: Return to Wittenberg.
June 1537: Bugenhagen, Walpurga, children and a nephew travel to Copenhagen.
August 1537: Bugenhagen officiates at the Lutheran coronation mass for Christian III and his wife Dorothea.

September 1537: Bugenhagen ordains seven Lutheran bishops for the Danish realm.
July 1539: Return to Wittenberg.
Spring 1541: Bugenhagen travels to Schleswig-Holstein. He returns to Wittenberg by Pentecost.
August 1542: Bugenhagen travels to Braunschweig-Wolfenbüttel; en route he is called to Holdesheim to prepare and enforce a new church order. He returns to Wittenberg in mid-winter.
1549: The *Interim* order prepared by Georg von Anhalt is revised and signed by Bugenhagen. The order is approved by the Emperor, but it is never published.

***This enchiridion of Bugenhagen's thought regarding the Lutheran mass is also a straightforward means of comparison for contemporary Lutheran practice. . . .***

## II. THE BUGENHAGEN MASS

The following outline of the Lutheran divine service contains elements drawn from the Mass Orders and Visitation Articles prepared by Bugenhagen. While it is a non-historical combination and compilation based on documents spanning a significant realm of geography and experience (1528–1549) it is a means by which Bugenhagen's thought may be easily examined by those who are acquainted with the Roman rite and Luther's proposed rites (*Formula Missae* and *Deutsche Messe).* This enchiridion of Bugenhagen's thought regarding the Lutheran mass is also a straightforward means of comparison for contemporary Lutheran practice, especially in those parishes that continue to observe the Lutheran manifestation of the chief liturgy of the western church. It is not insignificant that virtually every portion of this artificial combination is a portion of the Wittenberg Mass described by Wolfgang Musculus in 1536.[4]

### The Order of the Mass, as it may be celebrated in those places possessing good choral scholars.

All private, secret and godless masses shall be discontinued and rendered illegal by the governing forces. Therefore the mass shall be celebrated only in the congregational gathering, for the mass is nothing other than the exercise of our Lord's testament, instituted for the comfort of troubled and weary consciences, in order to proclaim the death of our Lord.

The mass shall be held on Sunday and festival days, provided that there are people who wish to receive the sacrament. The priest shall wear the accustomed vestments before an altar that has also been vested with the usual paraments, the chalice, and the like.

The Benedictus and Antiphon shall be sung in the vernacular, without organ accompaniment, so that the words sung by the choral scholars *(Schola)* may be understood.

A vernacular Psalm or an artful setting of the Latin Introit shall be sung.[5] On the festivals a Latin hymn may be sung: from Christmas to Purification, *Puer natus;* from Easter to Ascension, *Salus populi ego sum;* from Ascension to Pentecost, *Viri galilei;* on Pentecost, *Spiritus Dominus;* on St. John's Day, *Ne Timeas Sacharia;* on St. Michael's, *Benedicte Domino.* At other times, and especially when the prescribed Latin hymn is not scriptural, a hymn from one of Dr. Luther's songbooks may be sung.

In the meantime the priest and deacon shall kneel before the altar for their private prayers, including the *Confiteor* according to the text of the tract for the liturgy for Ash Wednesday, Psalm 103:10 and 79:8–9:

> O Lord repay us not according to the sins we have committed, nor according to our iniquities. O Lord, remember not our iniquities of the past; let your mercy come quickly to us, for we are brought very low. Help us, O God, our Savior, and for the glory of your name, O Lord, deliver us, and pardon our sins for your name's sake.

Additional Psalms may be said (51, 130) or another according to the practice and desire of the priest.

The ministers shall conclude their prayers of preparation with the words of the Our Father, paying careful attention to the petitions for the preaching of the gospel, the welfare of the government, and the needs of all men. The priest shall then proceed with the order as it was of old, free of the disease of Rome and all papal mythology.

The *kyrie eleison* shall be sung, in three-fold, four-fold, or nine-fold form, according to the festival or the season, either the *Dominicale, Angelicum, Martiribus, Confessoribus,* or *Virginibus.* The *Dominicale* shall be sung in Advent and Lent, the *Paschal Kyrie,* between Easter and Pentecost, and the *Summum* on the high festivals. The *schola* may sing a different setting on the festivals, especially an *artful* setting, at the direction of the cantor. It is important, however, that the music of the choir or the organ not be so long that the sermon must be shortened. Two artful motet settings in the regular service, or three on the festivals, are enough. It is important that all the people may also have the opportunity to sing the praise of God, especially during the communion where Christ has instructed all to "do this in memory of me."

Then the priest may intone the *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, and on occasion the boys may sing an artful setting of the Latin *Gloria;* or he may intone the *Gloria* according to the Latin melody, and the boys may sing the old chant form of the *Et in Terra,* after which the entire congregation shall sing *Allein Gott in der Höh sei Ehr.* Then the choir and the organist *in alternatim,* or in an artful setting, may proclaim the Latin text *Laudamus te, Benedicimus te* until the canticle is ended.

If no choir is present the laity shall sing *Allein Gott.* If the service should be too long the *Gloria* may be omitted. It is omitted during Lent.

The priest shall turn to the altar and sing the appropriate collect in the vernacular. He may turn to the people to sing the salutation, but this is not necessary. On occasion he may sing other collects appropriate to the commemorations, special circumstances or needs. The congregation shall sing *Amen* to each collect.

The priest shall turn to the congregation and sing the Epistle for the day in the vernacular, according to the old Latin melody, as it is more beautiful.[6] If he cannot sing he may read the lesson, provided he is careful and articulate.

The gradual or a German hymn appropriate to the day shall be sung. It is also fitting that the *Alleluia,* which is the eternal song of the church, shall be sung. It would be good for the *schola* to sing the *Alleluia* (without the *coda* or *jubilus),* the purified verse or sequence and a German hymn *in alternatim.*[7]

On the festivals, at the least, the old sequences shall be sung *in alternatim* with vernacular hymns. From Christmas to Presentation, *Alleluia, Dies Sanctificatus* with the sequence *Grates nunc omnes* shall be sung *in alternatim* with the hymn *Gelobet seist du, Jesus Christ.* In Eastertide, *Alleluia, Pascha nostrum* with the sequence *Victimae paschali* shall be sung *in alternatim* with the hymn *Christ lag in Todesbanden.* At Pentecost, *Alleluia, Veni Sancte Spiritus* shall be sung *in alternatim* with *Nun bitten wir* or *Komm, Gott Schöpfer, Heiliger Geist.* On the Marian festivals, *Nun freut euch* shall be sung. The sequence *Psalite rego nostro* shall be sung on the Nativity of John the Baptist. The sequence for the festival of Mary Magdalene, *Laus tibi Christe, qui es creator et redemptor . . .* may be sung two or three times on Sundays throughout the year. The sequence for Trinity Sunday, *Benedicta semper sancta Trinitas* may be sung as frequently as anyone wishes. At other times a hymn shall be chosen that matches the character of the Gospel lesson, e.g. when the Gospel speaks of faith and grace, *Es ist das Heil, Durch Adams Fall* or another. If the Gospel speaks of those who despise the gospel, *Es spricht der unweisen Mund, Ach, Gott vom Himmel,* or another; if the Gospel speaks of good works, *Herr, wohl werd wohnen* or another, and so on, as may be best determined by the cantor.

The priest shall turn to the people and sing the Gospel, in the vernacular and according to the prescribed melody.

Then the priest shall turn to the altar and intone the *Credo,* and the *schola* shall sing a setting of the Creed. Then the people shall sing *Wir glauben All' . . . .* The Latin *Credo* may be omitted if the time requires it, or it may be sung *in alternatim* between the Latin prose and German metrical form, article by article and verse by verse.

During the Creed hymn the priest shall ascend the pulpit, where he shall exhort the congregation to pray the Our Father. After the prayer everyone shall join in singing *Komm heiliger Geist, Herr Gott.* On the festivals the following hymns shall be sung: Christmas, *Ein kindelein so löbelich,* on Easter, *Christ ist erstanden,* on Pentecost, *Nun bitten wir.* He shall then preach the sermon based on the Gospel for the day. The sermon shall contain reference to the Trinity, the person and work of our Savior Jesus Christ, and other articles of the faith, including the fear of God, true repentance, the forgiveness of sins, the true fruits of repentance, love, hope, the cross, comfort, patience, good works, and whatever else the Gospel lesson brings with it. The sermon should also attend to those things in the lesson that are of ill report, namely the false worship of God, and futile trust in one's own works or self-righteousness.

The sermon should conclude with the confession of sins, prayers of thanks, and intercession, according to the regular form. The priest shall exhort the congregation to earnest prayer for those things that are of special concern, and he should remind them of the need for their alms. (However, he should take care not to lengthen the time with unnecessary words and uncertain reports pertinent to the events of the time.)

The entire congregation may join the priest in praying the Our Father, the Apostles' Creed and the Ten Commandments. At the end of the prayers the hymn *Da pacem Domine* shall be sung in Latin and German, *Verleih uns Frieden.* Another vernacular hymn may be substituted for the hymnic prayer for peace. On Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost the hymn *Fröhlich sollen wir Alleluia Singen* may be sung.

At this time the alms for the poor shall be gathered (for that is why this portion of the service has been called the Offertory from days of old, and everyone shall add a prayer to the gift that is being offered).

During the Offertory hymn the communicants shall gather in the choir, the men and young men on the right, and the women and maidens on the left, according to their age and station.

***It is important, however, that the music of the choir or the organ not be so long that the sermon must be shortened.***

The priest, with the assistance of the sacristan, shall prepare sufficient bread and wine at the altar according to the number of communicants. The sacristan shall take great care to have bread and wine sufficient to the exact number of communicants, so that the Words of Institution will not need to be repeated during the distribution.[8]

When the hymn is ended and the communicants are in the choir, the Preface and *Sanctus* shall be sung in Latin. The *Sanctus* may be sung according to the German setting. On the festivals the preface proper to the day may be sung. On ordinary Sundays the preface proper to Trinity may be sung, which along with the Nicene Creed has been written to confound the Arians.

When the *Sanctus* has been sung he shall turn to the people and read the Exhortation to the communicants according to the following form:

> Dearly beloved in Christ! Because you have gathered here in the name of the Lord to receive the new testament of his body and blood, I exhort you in Christ, that you receive this testament in true faith, and that above all, you give heed to the word of Christ, who has given his body and blood for the forgiveness of our sins; that we lift our hearts to him, by faith, in thanksgiving for the result of his unbounded and undeserved love, namely our proven justification, which he accomplished by his perfect and only sufficient sacrifice on the cross, and by his precious blood, so that we are saved from the wrath of God, the power of sin, death and the devil.
>
> Therefore he gives us his body and blood as a sign and unbreakable testimony of his unspeakable love. In his name, according to his command, and at his own word we receive this testament. Let us kneel before him in true faith.[9]

On occasion the Preface and *Sanctus* may be omitted, and in their place the Litany and collect may be sung. The exhortation shall always be read, however, as it contains all that is necessary for a true preparation for the sacrament.

The priest shall turn to the altar and sing the Our Father, in German, to which the people shall sing Amen.

Here shall follow the Words of Institution. They must always be sung in the vernacular. When the communicants gather in the choir, and there is to be a distribution of the sacrament, no distribution shall take place unless the entire congregation has heard the Words of Institution.

If a second priest shall assist in the administration of the sacrament, he shall stand at the north end of the altar and distribute the blood of Christ after the celebrant has administered the body of Christ to the communicants. The celebrant shall be vested in the usual vestments appropriate to the mass, the assistant in the usual vesture. The sacrament shall always be administered in both kinds.

The cantor shall determine the music to be sung during the communion, and he shall lead the choir and the congregation in motets and hymns appropriate to the distribution, chief of which shall be:

*Agnus Dei* (Latin)
*Jesus Christus, Unser Heiland*
*Jesaia, dem Propheten*
*Gott, sei gelobet*
Psalm 111, *Confiteor tibi* or its German form, *Ich dank dem Herrn vom ganzen Herzen*
The Latin hymn *Pange lingua*
The other form of the German *Agnus Dei, O Lamm Gottes, unschuldig,* may be sung (N. Decius, 1522).

Hymns appropriate to the festival may be sung during the distribution, and hymns that speak of baptism are always appropriate.

The singing of the hymns shall be silenced immediately upon the end of the communion, or if the priest must sing the Words of Institution in the case that the sacristan has not prepared the exact amount of bread and wine for the communicants.

If there are few communicants (less than sixteen) the distribution shall follow immediately upon the words of consecration appropriate to the particular elements. In this way Christ's own institution may be followed. If there are many communicants (more than 16) the words of consecration shall be sung in their entirety. Christ's own words of institution are a sufficient formula for the distribution. All other forms should be disregarded. When all have communed, the priest shall commune himself with all reverence and faith. He shall consume what little remains of the sacrament, whether it is in the cup, or on the corporal or the paten. He shall take care to insure that nothing that has been used in the distribution shall be mixed with that which has not been consecrated with the word of the Lord.

***The sacristan shall take great care to have bread and wine sufficient to the exact number of communicants, so that the Words of Institution will not need to be repeated during the distribution.***

Following the communion the entire congregation shall sing the German *Agnus Dei (Christe, du Lamm Gottes,* Braunschweig, 1528) as a hymn of adoration to Christ in heaven.[10]

Then the priest shall sing the Collect of Thanks, in German, to which the people shall sing Amen.

He shall then sing the Benediction to the people, according to the text of Numbers 6.

Following the Benediction a brief German hymn may be sung by the choir according to the discretion of the cantor, but it must not be too long. During this hymn the priest shall remove the mass vestments, and he shall kneel with the assistant to make his concluding prayers.

If there are no communicants there shall be no consecration after the sermon, so that no misuse of the sacrament shall arise. The priest shall stand at a lectern in his surplice and shall conclude the service after the sermon with a German hymn, the collect, another hymn and the benediction.[11]

Bugenhagen's mass orders bear the marks of Lutheran reformations of the historic rite. In all cases the Canon of the Mass has been omitted, as have certain other non-scriptural propers. He differs with Luther and other Lutheran orders in his abolition of the Elevation, the *Pax Domini* and in his prescription of the *Agnus Dei* as a post-communion canticle. Yet his orders are rich in their use of the propers. The lectionary, collects, introits, graduals, alleluias and festival sequences, and the seasonal and festival prefaces are retained, and he encour-

ages the use and creation of new vernacular liturgical music and texts for the proper and the ordinary according to the examples of Luther and Decius.

Bugenhagen exhibits a desire for the retention and cultivation of theoretically sound music typical of those associated with the evangelical Lutheran cause. The Lutheran divine service, according to Bugenhagen, would always incorporate music of 1) the "antique" tradition (the choral or Gregorian tradition), 2) music of the "cultivated" tradition (the contrapuntal tradition of composers Josquin Des Prez, Johann Walter and others), and 3) music in the "vernacular" tradition. The "vernacular" tradition was familiar to all European Christians by the middle of the fifteenth century, and Luther built his vernacular congregational hymns on a tradition that was encouraged by the advent of the Renaissance into the sixteenth century.

The vernacular musical tradition of the chorale was conceived within Lutheranism by the combination of three musical and poetic catalysts:

1. The troped chant settings in which ancient liturgical melodies were given modern words: (*Kyrie, Gott Vater in Ewigkeit* and *Jesaia dem Propheten);*
2. The popular "carol" or *leisen* of the previous century and a half, in which non-Gregorian melodies had been composed for sacred texts (*Nun bitten wir, Gott sei gelobet, Resonet in laudibus/Joseph, lieber Joseph mein);*
3. The courtly musical and poetic tradition of the *troubadour* and *minnesinger*, in which contemporary and competitive musicianship produced the "opera house-concert hall" music of the sixteenth century; in no sense was this music the equivalent of our current pub/dance hall/Broadway music; yet it was contemporary and popular in the same sense as Copland, Britten, Penderecki and others. (Luther: *Christ, unser Herr* and *Ein feste Burg;* Decius: *Allein Gott in der Höh* and *O Lamm Gottes;* Losius and other composers would build on this tradition, and this tradition was directly responsible for the construction of the liturgical music of Walter, Scandellus, Praetorius, Schuetz, Buxtehude, Pachelbel, J.S. Bach, and myriad of our Lutheran cantors and composers, even to the present.)

Bugenhagen's attitude toward the vestments and liturgical space was equally conservative. In fact, he exhibits a conservatism greater than Luther in his prescription that the altar should remain in the traditional position. In all his orders, and especially in the Wittenberg order, his prescription for the retention of the altar at the eastern wall of the chancel/choir is clear. He regarded the introduction of the free-standing altar as an unnecessary innovation, despite Luther's instructions in the *Deutsche Messe.*[12]

In another striking difference with Luther he favored the traditional Latin melodies for the chanting of the Epistle and Gospel. Luther sensed an "unnatural and jarring result" from the pairing of the Latin melody and the vernacular text, yet Bugenhagen favored the ornate Latin melodies for the chant, and this favoritism is all the more astonishing in view of the fact that he clearly omitted the *coda* and *jubilus* that had been a part of the Alleluia for many centuries.

While it is tempting to believe that the first generation of Lutheran Christianity was overshadowed and overpowered by Luther's every wish and whim, even this superficial examination of Bugenhagen's influence on the Lutheran liturgical program would lead us to believe otherwise. This examination makes us realize that Luther's leadership and preeminence were tempered by the fact that he was strong enough to include and respect other legitimate leaders within the ecclesiastical camp of Wittenberg.

As we pause to learn from the example of sixteenth century Lutheranism, we cannot help but be impressed by the fact that Luther encouraged and supported others in the work of reformation, even when their views were not in total agreement with his own. We latter-day Lutherans would do well to journey to the lecture hall in Wittenberg and listen to the words of Bugenhagen. Perhaps God will raise up a company of interpreters to present the words and works of this forgotten reformer for a hungry American audience. LOGIA

## NOTES

1. Johannes Bergsma, *Die Reform der Messliturgie durch Johannes Bugenhagen* (Kevelaer: Verlag Butzon & Bercker, 1966) p. 9, note 65.

2. Bergsma, p. 16.

3. Bergsma, p. 20; see also WAB V, Nr. 1757.

4. Adolf Boes, "*Die Reformatorischen Gottesdienste in der Wittenberger Pfarrkirche von 1523 an,*" *Jahrbuch für Hymnologie und Liturgik,* 1958–1959, p. 4 ff.

5. An "artful" setting refers to a musical setting that was often described by the term "figuralis." The chant and the Lutheran chorales were sung in unison. Much of the modern choral music was composed in a multivoiced, polyphonic contrapuntal style that was common to the European church. The chief composer of this international style was Josquin Des Prez, and Johann Walter's compositions reflect the Lutheran use of this style.

6. Bugenhagen disagrees with Luther and Walter on this point.

7. The *alternatim* practice was adopted by the Lutheran reformers from the liturgical practice of the old church. According to this practice verses of the canticles and hymns were performed by alternating musical forces, both vocal and instrumental, e.g. *Gloria in excelsis Deo:*

Artful organ intonation.
Priest: *Gloria in excelsis Deo* (chant).
Choir: . . . *et in terra pax* . . . (chant).
Choir: *Laudamus te* . . . (polyphonic setting).
Organ alone: *Glorificamus te* . . .
Choir . . . Organ . . . etc.

The Lutheran development of the *alternatim* practice led to some of the great musical creations of the church, namely the chorale prelude and the church cantata.

8. All of Bugenhagen's orders exhibit a grave concern that an abuse of the sacrament might occur through any unnecessary repetition of the consecration, especially a second "quiet" consecration that could have allowed for any re-introduction of the practices associated with the private mass. To that end the sacristan was instructed to be meticulous in his preparation of the elements. Under no circumstance was the priest ever to consecrate the elements in the course of the distribution unless the entire congregation could hear.

9. Bergsma, p. 150.

10. This rubric is unique to Bugenhagen, and in it he seems to be at odds with Luther who felt that the *Agnus Dei* fit well with the elevation. It is noteworthy that Bugenhagen abolished the elevation in Wittenberg (1542) and he did not hesitate to condemn the practice. See Bergsma, pp. 198 f. and 223 f.

11. Bergsma, p. 202 ff. It is likely that the chief service without communicants did not occur in Wittenberg, and Bugenhagen's orders exhibit a clear evolution of thought relevant to this practice. It is surprising that there was a need for such a service in the other great Lutheran cities, especially Hamburg and Lübeck, but the need for this conclusion to the service could point to the strength and persistence of Roman eucharistic piety and practice.

12. Bergsma, p. 94.

# A CALL FOR MANUSCRIPTS

The editors of LOGIA hereby request manuscripts, book reviews, and forum material for the following issues and themes:

| ISSUE | THEME | DEADLINE |
|---|---|---|
| Reformation 1993 | Scripture and Authority in the Church | July 1, 1993 |
| Epiphany 1994 | Piety and Pastoral Care | October 1, 1993 |
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Send all submissions to the appropriate editors and addresses as listed on the inside front cover. Please include IBM, Macintosh or Apple diskette with manuscript whenever possible.

# *Church Music at the Close of the Twentieth Century The Entanglement of Sacred and Secular*

RICHARD C. RESCH

As the twentieth century comes to a close, the church, especially in her music, is living with a confusion of the sacred and the secular. She finds herself immersed in a blending of these two worlds which is having an effect on her whole life, and especially her worship life. The blending is not unique to this time, but there are aspects that are new, that are raising important questions and that are changing the practice of the church.

We begin our look at this entanglement by establishing the reason for concern. The church and the world have never been friends. That in itself is not reason for concern; in fact, that is as our Lord says it should be. "Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God." (Jas 4:4). The reason for concern at the close of the twentieth century is that something quite unnatural is happening: the world and much of the church are becoming *good* friends. And it is often through matters musical that this unhealthy *bonding* is initiated and nurtured.

George Stoeckhardt, one of the great theologians of the Lutheran Church, addressed a pastoral conference in 1902 on the subject: "Two Truths which the Church Dare Not Forget in Its Conflict with the World." He based his address on 1 John 2:12-17. Truth number one: the church and the world are irreconcilable adversaries. Truth number two: the church has sufficient might to overcome the world. Stoeckhardt said about truth number one:

> The conflict and enmity between the world and the church is something natural. The world is well aware of this and for that reason does not leave Christians alone. Should the world turn a friendly face towards Christians, fawn upon them and entice them, it is only because of its enmity toward Christianity, with the devilish design of turning the children of God away from Him. The world is and remains kindly disposed toward Christians only on condition that Christians forsake and deny their nature and assume the mind and nature of the world. What happens when the church becomes one with the world? The church ceases to be the church for it is impossible to unite the church and the world. Church and world exclude one another. Wherever the boundary line between world and church remains unsettled, here disintegrates also the difference between truth and error.[1]

Martin Luther has strong words of caution about this world:

> Look not at what the majority of the world is doing; look at what is right and at what the majority should be doing. In the first place the world does not know its trouble, a fact which makes it very blind; in the second place, it does not know where to go in search for help. You can never do or preach what the world considers right.[2]

From the earliest days of the church there has been a dangerous mixing of the two worlds, the sacred and the secular. The following comments are so applicable to today that it is hard to believe they describe the church at the time of Gregory of Nazianzus (ca. 379):

> What belonged to the theater was brought into the church, and what belonged to the church into the theater. The better Christian feelings were held up in comedies to the sneer of the multitude. Everything was so changed into light jesting, that earnestness was stripped of its worth by wit, and that which is holy became a subject for banter and scoffing in the refined conversation of worldly people. Yet worse was it that the unbridled delight of these men in dissipating enjoyments threatened to turn the church into a theater, and the preacher into a play actor. If he would please the multitude, he must adapt himself to their taste, and entertain them amusingly in the church. They demanded also in the preaching something that

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should please the ear; and they clapped with the same pleasure the comedian in the holy place and him on the stage. And alas there were found at that period too many preachers who preferred the applause of men to their souls' health. [3]

C.S. Lewis speaks of another church father, Athanasius, who was so well known for his life-long battle against the world that his epitaph read *Athanasius contra mundum,* "Athanasius against the world":

> The civilized world was slipping back from Christianity into one of the *sensible* synthetic religions which are so strongly recommended today and which, then as now, included among their devotees many highly cultivated clergymen. It is to his glory that he did not move with the times; it is his reward that he now remains when those times, as all times do, have moved away.[4]

***It should come as no surprise that the church and the world are at war. They have different masters, different agendas, different bottom lines and different futures.***

It should come as no surprise that the church and the world are at war. They have different masters, different agendas, different bottom lines and different futures. When St. Michael threw the dragon and his angels out of heaven they came to earth with a vengeance, spewing wrath like there is no tomorrow because their time is running out (Rev 12:7-12). The agenda of the devil is not just to rule the world but to destroy the Bride of the One who defeated him. As the devious one, the devil is a master at infiltration. He would like everyone to believe that there are three happy camps: the church, the world and the innocent mixture of the two.

War is one thing when the two sides are clearly defined; it is quite a different matter and far more dangerous when the enemy looks like one of your own. We have to admit that there are three camps today, although "happy" would not be the appropriate adjective. It is the third camp, the camp of entanglement, that should be of concern to the church. It is indeed sad that the good gift of music,

- that powerfully carries the Word,
- that teaches the faithful,
- that wonderfully helps the soul to soar above this world giving it a foretaste of the next,
- that according to Luther "drives away the devil,"[5]
- but that according to Calvin "deserves great caution because it can too easily become a tool of the devil," [6]
- that good gift of music is suffering dangerous levels of infiltration in these end times.

Before I speak about how the entanglement is manifest in the church, I need to say a few words about language. God has given language to his children so that they can learn of him and then speak to and about him. Music is part of that language. The divine gift of music in the service of the church is itself able to evoke, uplift and communicate both non-verbally and as a carrier and interpreter of words. It is in the Word of God where the children of God learn about the appropriate use of *all* language, for the Word itself serves as a model. There they learn how God wishes to be addressed and confessed. "At the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil 2: 10,11). The children learn what is most important in their life in words that carry the seriousness of *what* is being taught. They learn of matters unchanging and eternal. They learn of sacred mysteries in a language befitting sacred mysteries. "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth" (Jn 1:14). The children learn profound truths made simple, but never simplistic and never colloquial.

The sacred, holy Word of God is a language worthy of revealing God. For the purpose of this paper we will call this *faith language.* This is a language shaped by belief that points to Christ.

The world also has a language that describes and teaches what it is about, and likewise music is a part of that language. World language is an anthropocentric language. Secular man learns about his language by looking at himself and the world around him. It is a consensus language that evolves from man's self-study. However the study does not usually look to or learn from the past, nor does it look with caution to the future, but is almost exclusively the consensus voice of the present. Secular man's self-study reveals what is important *now,* relevant *now,* effective *now.* Therefore, world language is an ever-changing expression determined by the masses in a given time. Music as language, teacher, and influence is thriving at the close of the twentieth century in the world language of entertainment.

How, specifically, is the entanglement of sacred and secular manifest in the church? Take one part faith language, add one part world language, blend well and pour into the church. The result is not tasty, but I will serve it in three parts.

### I.
### The mixture confuses language to and about God with language to and about man.

Christocentric and anthropocentric have to battle it out as equals. The usual result is a theology of glory expression showing that world language has won the battle. A theology of glory expression appears to be about God but is really about a way of life, methods and a view of the church that makes man feel good about what he has been able to do for himself and for God. The glory then is man's, because what God has accomplished is secondary at best, and often is not even mentioned. Such language sounds "religious" and it may contain pious-sounding fragments of faith language. In reality it is world lan-

guage, whose expression and content, be it textual or musical, comes from man and his experience.

There is going to be trouble when there is confusion about who is God. Add to that a confusion of what is the church and you will see why almost all denominations are in their present state of questioning and turmoil. Most laymen do not see any of this confusion and that in itself is a problem. It is no secret that catechesis, which would lead to lay discernment, is not a priority in today's church. It is not possible to have two masters, and yet a theology of glory gives the appearance to the undiscerning that one can have the best of both worlds by dwelling in this third world of entanglement.

Examples of that confused language are plentiful in Contemporary Christian Music, in the popular, experiential supplemental hymnals found in many Lutheran pews, in the gimmicky Vacation Bible School music, in school musicals that use religious themes, and in solo and choral music available from a host of publishers. If one heard this language from afar, minus text, one would never guess that it means to be faith language for it blatantly has its source in the musical expression of the world. However, the concern is not just a matter of music but has to do with the total expression. As early as 1985, Amy Grant said in a *USA Today* interview, "We prefer to be a little bit sneaky with the lyrics . . . when you start getting churchy, they start running"[*USA Today* 11-8-85]. After Miss Grant spoke of her fast-paced drumbeats, her "deafening screams" and her sensually oriented apparel, the reporter ended the interview by asking the reader the question, "This is gospel music?" In a 1986 magazine interview Miss Grant said, "There are songs that can go both ways. I call these God-girlfriend songs—meaning you are either singing it to God or to your boyfriend or girlfriend" [*Charisma*, 7-7-86, p. 21].

***God has given language to his children so that they can learn of him and then speak to and about him. Music is part of that language.***

Confused language is knocking at the door of the whole church. It may not claim to be church music, but its influence will not leave us alone. For many denominations this does not present a problem; they have only to open the door and what comes in represents nothing different from what they already are. But for Lutherans opening that door means having to leave behind their very heart and soul. Theology of glory and theology of the cross expressions are opposites. One is centered in the law and the other in the gospel. What is so disturbing is that today's uncatechized Lutherans often see the cross as law and glory expressions as gospel.

Many will concede what I have just said, but continue to argue for this language because they say it brings the lost to the real language, to the real God. They say that they are concerned first with the mission of the church. However, the mission of the church was never meant to change the center of the church, which is the gospel of Christ. The Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Articles VII and VIII on the church declares:

> The church is not merely an association of outward things and rites, like other polities, but it is mainly an association of faith and of the Holy Spirit in men's hearts, which indeed has outward marks so that it may be recognized, namely through the pure teaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments in agreement with the gospel of Christ.[7]

How honest is it to bring the lost first to a different god? How do they react when somewhere down the road they discover this deception? Is "bait and switch" yet another program for the sake of the outwardly "successful" church? Is the Bride of Christ the saints gathered around the means of grace, or the saints gathered around the latest marketing tool from the world?

As Lutherans, we either believe that the means of grace have the power or we do not; it is really that simple. Through the faithful administration of those means, God produces numbers and interestingly enough, his results are invisible. A major puzzle of our time is not that much of organized religion has left the difficult path of theology for the superhighway of pragmatism and sociology, but that so much of Lutheranism has willingly joined the parade. There is no doubt about it; the church at the close of the 20th century is confused and Lutherans have not been spared. Lord help us when we confuse God and man, divine means and worldly methods. The language of entanglement has not been innocent in this confusion.

## II.
## The mixture makes the present all-powerful, the past irrelevant and the future poor.

For most of church history there has not been an enormous gulf between sacred and secular music. For instance, Bach does not have a different compositional style for the church and the court.[8] This fact is used by some to defend what is now happening in the church. But there are significant differences between then and today. The church was the dominant force then and the church influenced the culture. The church's musical matters remained stable because change happened in the church slowly and with extreme caution. So except for heretical texts from time to time, the world was not exerting its influence on the church through its own music. In fact, it was important to the church that the opposite was true.[9]

But the devil uses different tools in different times. All has been turned upside down and now the culture is the dominant force that influences all that it touches. The last thirty years cannot be compared to any other time in history, for never before have multibillion-dollar industries created, sustained and sold what the world is about. This is power and influence that overpowers every other voice today. It is power and influence that shapes values, has its own agenda and is masterful at desensitizing the masses.

Kenneth A. Myers, in *All God's Children and Blue Suede Shoes,* writes:

> I believe that the challenge of living with popular culture may well be as serious for modern Christians as persecution and plagues were for the saints of earlier centuries. Being thrown to the lions or living in the shadow of gruesome death are fairly straightforward if unattractive threats. Enemies that come loudly and visibly are usually much easier to fight than those that are undetectable. Physical affliction (even to the point of death) for the sake of Christ is a heavy cross, but at least it can be readily recognized at the time as a trial of faith. But the erosion of character, the spoiling of innocent pleasures, and the cheapening of life itself that often accompany modern popular culture can occur so subtly that we believe nothing has happened.[10]

***What is amazing and deeply disturbing is that much of the church is looking to the power and influence of this popular culture for advice and counsel for its life.***

What is amazing and deeply disturbing is that much of the church is looking to the power and influence of this popular culture for advice and counsel for its life. This is exemplified by a piece that recently came to my mailbox offering formulas for success through music. Lyle Schaller compiled two pages of real-life observations in an article called "The Changing Music Scene." In each observation, success was found by leaving something behind, such as the hymnal, the liturgy, organs, formality, and moving on to what people want. The thrust of the article was threefold: 1) success is measured by numbers, 2) pastors interested in success will be flexible, and 3) music is a tool for appeasement and manipulation. The only statement made in this article that I could agree with was, "MTV may be the most influential single force in shaping the music preferences of people born after 1965."[11]

It is not difficult for Mr. Schaller or anyone else to observe and cite the influences of our day. What is difficult is theological discernment of what it means. Discernment helps to protect the flock. Discernment guides the church in what may possibly be used from the world without changing what the church is! The Schaller article, sent to church workers throughout the LCMS from their district offices, was devoid of discernment. Martin Luther says, "Faithful shepherds must both feed the lambs and guard against wolves so that they will flee from strange voices and separate the precious from the vile"[12] (Jn 10:12-16,27; Jer 15:19). Dr. John Kleinig, one of today's leading Lutheran theologians studying worship practice based on the Old and New Testament, says that it is a basic task of the pastor and theologian to distinguish the holy from the common, the clean from the unclean.[13]

The church and her leaders do not need sociologists and non-theological church leaders interpreting MTV as an indicator of how the church should move for the sake of those born since 1965. Theology is not the starting point for these people, so while they may come to reasonable-sounding conclusions, they also come to dangerous conclusions for the true church. One such prophet, Russell Chandler, in *Racing Toward 2001: The Forces Shaping America's Religious Future,* concludes that, "Churches have to keep changing. If their church leaders can't discern what is happening around them, then they might as well call it quits."[14] Mr. Chandler is talking about sociological discernment; I am talking about theological discernment.

Ninety years ago, Dr. Stoeckhardt expressed a truth that has not changed: "Wherever the boundary line between world and church remains unsettled, there disintegrates also the difference between truth and error." The camp of entanglement is disintegrating the boundary line. What is desperately needed is theological discernment and courage on the part of pastors and other church workers to say what this means and then to gently educate the flock. As Kenneth Myers says, "The church is to be a living example of alternatives to the methods and messages of the world."[15] The last thing pastors and church musicians need are more survey results.

F. Pratt Green states simply and beautifully the theology of church music in his hymn:

> So has the Church, in liturgy and song,
> In faith and love, through centuries of wrong
> Borne witness to the truth in ev'ry tongue. Alleluia!
> [LW 449:3]

This hymn describes an inheritance. Our liturgy and hymns through centuries of wrong have united us in the true faith. Unfortunately, an inheritance means that it comes from the past, so that does not sit well today. Nevertheless it is true, that in every century since the early church, elements of liturgy and hymnody have been added to the sung confession of the church. At the close of the 20th century we have an inheritance that carries truth that is a divine gift to the Bride of Christ. A gift that gathers richness and depth as time goes on. In the 17th century alone God gave the church Heermann, Gerhardt, Rist, Crüger, Praetorius, Schütz, Schein, and Scheidt. God did not start there, nor did he stop there.

This faith language from the past is now questioned, called irrelevant, not effective or politically correct, out-of-touch, elitist, parochial, and is then discarded in one voters' meeting for something meaningful for today. The past does not have much to offer to people consumed with the present.

In contrast it is interesting how the future is talked about constantly, even longed for, but not in real terms. Thomas Day, author of the perceptive and amusing book *Why Catholics Can't Sing,* said in response to the outcry against his book:

> Somebody could write [another] book of case studies—true stories—about all of the destruction done in

> the name of this yearning for the future. I have heard so many depressing tales about the music in parishes and seminaries being destroyed—left in ruins—by a clique that was determined to build immediately the future kingdom on earth: tomorrow's parish, the elect gathered into small prayer cells. The announced goals for this new church of the future are always beautiful, even glorious, but as far as music is concerned, the practical application of those ideals always produces the same results: featured-star solo performers and an almost exclusive diet of music by the latest trendy groups and the latest trendy "contemporary" composers. The music of this "future kingdom parish" is very narrow indeed, an audible symbol of a rigid intolerance.[16]

Those living in the present do not like to see the result of living in the present, but the future honestly reveals the result. There it is revealed what happens when the church stops teaching through a stable, consistent worship practice. There it is revealed how little people know when catechesis is abandoned for the latest programs from the mailbox. There it is revealed how confused the church has become about matters of doctrine like: law/gospel distinction, church and ministry, and a theology of worship. The future shows results. The immediate future is welcome only because it measures effectiveness and success of the latest programs in use. But the present is not comfortable with matters unchanging, catholic and eternal.

***The church and her leaders do not need sociologists and non-theological church leaders interpreting MTV as an indicator of how the church should move for the sake of those born since 1965.***

### III.
### The mixture destroys reverence.

Thomas Day gives a painfully accurate assessment:

> Part of the "sacred atmosphere" and the "mystery" once so strongly associated with liturgy used to come from the congregation knowing that clergy in the front were "cut down to size" and even made to look somewhat pitiful by the ritualistic burdens placed upon them; the laity sensed that, although bishops and priests were members of a special class, the ceremony and the confining language had the odd effect of harnessing the clergy in a public endeavor and making them public servants—servants who gave up their identity, their personality, and their personal preferences during a liturgy, in order to become "we" and serve the public good. With personalities minimized, the laity could join the clergy in this objective, collective action, which took everyone to matters beyond the commonplace: perhaps to the mysterious, the transcendent, and the sacred. [17]

A Lutheran theology of worship, *Gottesdienst*, is about matters beyond the commonplace. Here the faithful gather around the real presence offered in the means of grace. Given and received here are sacred mysteries during a time that is set apart from the rest of the week. Reverence and a sense of awe are in order. Architecture, art, language, music and attitudes will draw the worshiper to the real presence. Personalities, egos, private agendas, performances, and casual attitudes have no place here. For what is happening is not centered around a campfire or an individual skilled in manipulating a crowd; but God himself is the actor and the event is far from commonplace.

The blending of faith language and world language has dealt a serious blow to reverence for the holy. Unfortunately, examples are plentiful: Christmas programs that refer to the wise men as "wise guys" and the stars in the sky as the "pointer sisters;" Vacation Bible School materials called, "He's A Radical God"[18] that are textually and musically offensive to those of us outside of the MTV influence; parochial school musicals in which rows of children kick up their legs like a Radio City chorus line while singing "I love that rule book that golden tool book; it keeps me downright, upright sanctified" [*Short Stops*, Word: Waco, Texas, 1990]. Or there are songs from "Kid's Praise" musicals like "The Wa-Wa Song":

> I'm gonna walk, wa wa, sing la la
> Shout, oh, and clap my hands until
> Jesus Christ comes again, whoa yeah!
> I know I have a friend who lives inside of me
> And every time I call on Him I walk in victory
> On days when trials come, and my heart goes clippety ying
> I'm glad for Jesus Christ and that He taught me how to sing.
> And now I'm full of joy, I'm living in His promised land
> I'm gonna shout out loud, I'm really gonna clap my hands!
>
> [From *Psalty's Super Songbook*, Maranatha: Nashville, 1990]

Some will say that these examples never claimed to be worship music, or music of the church. That is true, but I ask: Is the subject itself any different? Does the respect and reverence for profound and holy matters change because children are singing it, or because it's not in the nave of a church? Whether it claims church music status or not is irrelevant, because we all know that it is gradually working its way into the Divine Service. It has a growing fan club. The blending of faith language and world language has caused a desensitizing of all ages, especially in matters of reverence. The influence is not a quiet voice whispering to only a few; it is a consumer-oriented voice shouting at the church and her leaders, many of whom are listening.

## CONCLUSION:

*Grant wisdom, O Lord, we pray.*

What happens when God is confused with man (Part I), and the present thinking is allowed to direct that confusion (Part II)? We have a church and a world blended into something that becomes more difficult by the day to discern, because they look and sound alike (Part III). There appears to be little difference, and people start to ask, "Is the only difference in the way we live?" To which the true church cries out, "Lord, have mercy."

***Justification, not sanctification, is the central doctrine of Lutheranism, but this will not be made clear in the world of entanglement. Justification is the center in faith language pointing to Christ and what he has done for man.***

There is a difference between the world and the church that is about much more than sanctification. Justification, not sanctification, is the central doctrine of Lutheranism, but this will not be made clear in the world of entanglement. Justification is the center in faith language pointing to Christ and what he has done for man. Faith language is about a mysterious, glorious incarnation. It is about an atonement on a cross, which is not gloom and doom, but beautiful, refreshing gospel. It is about how God has chosen to speak to his children, not through little, internal voices, but through powerful, although mysterious means like water, words, bread and wine. Faith language models and accurately represents God's holy word, and therefore, it is the perfect carrier of Lutheran doctrine and *ethos*, or behavior.

While I have not spoken in any depth about the truly amazing Lutheran inheritance of church music, that, together with a Lutheran theology of worship is what I have been defending. I have tried to show that the problems facing church music are symptomatic of larger problems facing the whole church.

Revelation speaks of how much the devil has to lose in the last days and how frantic his work will be within the Bride (Rev 14-17). If he can bring the thinking, the methods, the ways of the world into the very center of the church's life, her worship, he will do it. If he can convince the church that music is an innocent and guaranteed way that the world can help to make the church successful, he will do it. Scripture concludes the section about devil/church entanglement with these words: "In this situation wisdom is needed" (Rev 12:13-13:18, NET). To which we can only add our Amen! Lord help us.

Wisdom is indeed needed! I do not claim to know the fine cut-off line between faith and world language. I do not claim to have the answers to the difficult questions facing church music today. But there is no need, and it is not wise for the church to be anywhere near the line, for she has her own realm of language shaped by faith that offers all she will ever need. The world, which seeks to influence everything else in the earthly pilgrimage—should leave the worship and the confession of the faithful alone!

There will be those hungry to learn more about the "fine line" so that they can live near the line in an attempt "to be all things to all people" (1 Cor 9:22). But there are few places more dangerous for the Christian to live. The "fine line" is the very line that confuses law and gospel, theology of glory and cross, means of grace and means of the world, "in the world" and "of the world," the holy and the common, God and boyfriend, and on and on. If our Lord has separated our sins from us as far as the east from the west, do we ask "Where is the line that separates east and west?" If our Lord says, "Be ye separate!"(2 Cor 6:17-18), do we doubt that his words are said for our good?[19]

The Bride needs to follow John's words in Revelation advising wisdom and ask these questions:

- How wise is it to either dabble or dwell in a third world of entanglement and confusion?
- How wise is it to water down catechesis and at the same time initiate worship practice foreign to Lutheran doctrine and practice?
- How wise is it to put aside Lutheran hymnals that unite and teach a Lutheran *ethos,* for weekly, fresh, throw-away orders and rally songs?
- How wise is it to turn the powerful gift of music over to manipulation and entertainment?
- How wise is it to follow the latest survey which may lead the church down a different road every month?
- How wise is it to give up liturgical practice altogether for *Menschendienst?*
- How wise is it to treat the holy like the common?

All of this is teaching something to the visitor and to the faithful. Wisdom is indeed needed!

Wilhelm Löhe, pastor in the tiny Bavarian village of Neuendettelsau, wrote knowingly and eloquently about entanglement back in the mid-nineteenth century:

> A holy group separates itself from the children of the world and unites with the indestructible church of God. This separation and this union will never end until the Lord comes again. Because of this separation and this union God bears with the world, and nothing more important takes place under the sun than this separation and union. When this separation and union ends, there will be no more world—its hour will have come, its end will be here.[20]

Do not despair! As Stoeckhardt told those pastors back in 1902, the Bride has all the power she needs to overcome the world. Thanks be to God! LOGIA

*Soli Deo Gloria*

## NOTES

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19. I am indebted here to the Rev. Joel A. Brondos.

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# *Ecclesia Orans*

## *Letters Addressed to Lutheran Pastors*

HERMANN SASSE

DEAR BRETHREN IN THE MINISTRY:

BEFORE WE CONTINUE THAT DISCUSSION OF THE MEANS OF grace which we began with the doctrine of Holy Baptism, allow us to speak about another question, which today concerns Christendom of all confessions, the question concerning *the prayer of the church.*

### I.

This question expresses itself in the great liturgical movements, which, as is the nature of such movements, run through the Christianity of all peoples and of all confessions. The liturgical movement of the Roman church, which from beginnings about 1910 suddenly broke out after the First World War into a mountain torrent, until it was guided into quiet channels and ecclesiastical control by the encyclical *Mediator Dei* of 1947; the corresponding striving for a real renewal of liturgical life in the Lutheran churches of Germany and of the world, whose tragedy lies in this that they joined the great confessional movement of our time either not at all, or too late; and finally the fact that the world of Reformed churches—liturgically sterile except for Anglicanism—has likewise been gripped by such movements; all of this points to the fact that here we are dealing with a basic phenomenon of life in the very depths of present-day Christianity.

One must, so to say, shake his head in amazement, when one sees such things as the following: namely, that at the very same time that Roman Catholic churches were replacing the high altar by the ancient church's old Christian *mensa*, behind which the priest celebrated mass, facing the people—a practice since forbidden by the curia—at that very same time in the Reformed churches of Scotland the Scoto-Catholic Movement was restoring the high altar, which their own reformation had once abolished. And when even that most unliturgical German church, the church of Wuerttemberg, in which every Amen by the congregation used to have to be defended against the suspicion of papism and in which consecration at the celebration of the Sacrament of the Altar is to my knowledge still forbidden, when even that church has experienced her own liturgical movement with a restoration of the Gregorian chorale, then there must be something like a revolution taking place in Christendom.

And though many of the happenings in the liturgical movement are questionable, and though the movement is often dilettante and untheological; still behind the movement there lies hidden Christendom's own deep longing to come forth from the misery into which she has fallen through the modern secularization of her life. In fact, she finds herself unable to withdraw herself from the necessity of larger and smaller conferences. Even as the ancient church had to use the methods of work and the communication facilities which antiquity provided—the "holy" ecumenical synod was after all originally a very profane institution—likewise the church of today must make use of the technical achievements of our time. The great August Vilmar has called them the earthly basis for our perceiving the one, holy church.

But she must not forget where her peculiar tasks lie. Now it is true, under circumstances the church too can confer with the state through its Secretary for Foreign Affairs *(Aussenminister)*. But she must be clear on this; that with her resolutions, announcements, and proposals she makes no impression on the world. That all disappears in the wastepaper baskets of governments this side and that side of the iron curtain. Only a few church politicians are making an impression on the world today, but not because they are churchmen, but because they are politicians. This is something the Lutheran churches of the world still have to learn, although they might have learned it from Father Luther, who wasn't nearly so naively unacquainted with the world *(weltfremd)* as many often say. The Lutheran churches are still even now sunning themselves in the delusion that they have something to expect from the world other than the dear holy cross, which all those must carry who proclaim God's law and the gospel of Jesus Christ to mankind. But this delusion will soon disappear.

Our American brethren in the faith will also learn this through painful experiences. Instead of setting up a church bureau in Washington, it would have been better if they had

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equipped some place somewhere in the solitude of their immense land where prayers would be made day and night for their government and for the peace of the world. For the church of Christ is not a church that is always busy holding conferences, nor is she a church that does business with politicians and with the press, but she is *ecclesia orans*, and that is, so to say, her main calling. Either she is *ecclesia orans*, as indeed she revealed herself already in the catacombs,or she is nothing.

And now let no one say that prayer is self-evident, that, after all, we have services once or twice a Sunday. No, that prayer of the church which we meet in the New Testament everywhere where the life of an *ecclesia* is spoken of is unfortunately not something self-evident. Or who would maintain that prayer is made in our Lutheran churches today with a fervor which even approaches that with which the church of the New Testament prayed "without ceasing?" (Acts 12:5). Where today is Luther's mighty praying with its visible answers? Where is the prayer of those pious people, of which Luther spoke in his explanation of the Lord's Prayer in the Large Catechism, the prayer which in those days held the devil back from destroying Germany in its own blood? Yea, despite all the criticism which the Reformation has directed at the mumblings of Catholic prayer and which the modern liturgical movement within the Catholic church undertook independently from an entirely different viewpoint, must we not finally put the question as to where, in which church, prayer is being made with more fervor and perhaps also with better training—for prayer too must be learned—whether in the Catholic church or in the churches of the Reformation?

Think only of the rosary, which is rightly a rock of offense to us, even as it has also been sharply criticized by Catholics themselves. Is not perhaps the fundamental mystery of divine revelation, the miracle of the incarnation of the eternal Son of God, still much better preserved in it than in the prayer-poor or prayer-less Protestantism of our day? Is not a Catholic church, where the worshipers go in and out all day long, to be preferred to a Protestant house of God whose doors are closed tightly throughout the week, only because Calvin and the old Reformed people feared that the cult of the saints and worship of the *Sanctissimum*—which, however, was no longer present—might secretly still be continued? Where else then should poor Christians still pray? That praying in one's chamber which is lauded so much—in a questionnaire of Berlin's working-class children twenty years ago Guenther Dehn found that in many cases the passage Matthew 6:6 was one of the few fragments which still stuck after confirmation instruction—that praying in one's chamber has always existed only in connection with prayer in the church. And remember: how many people today have a chamber for themselves?

Is not the great crisis of modern Christianity, of which we spoke in our first letter, perhaps connected with a prayer-crisis? The ancient church entered a world in which prayer was taken for granted among Jews and Gentiles. If the ninefold *Kyrie eleison* of the Roman mass was really taken over from the cult of the *Sol Invictus*, as a Catholic scholar, the late Odo Casel, supposed, then that is an example of the fact that the ancient pagan world was in her way a world of prayer. The church of the present day lives in a world which no longer prays and which can no longer pray. One has only to recall Kant's famous dictum that the more a person progresses in good *(im Guten)*, the more he begins to stop praying. Has the lack of prayer in the modern world influenced the church more deeply than we are inclined to believe—even as the incapability of modern man to understand sin has influenced Christendom so deeply?

So much the more promising it is then, when everywhere in Christendom people are concerned about real prayer. For in this concern there lies no attempt to get out of the duty of practicing Christian love over against the world, but rather a striving to find the way back to the one thing needful, without which the Martha-service of social work and of "political theology" must become a worldly business. In this concern lies rather the desire of the church to be again the church of Christ and not to be only another agency for the general improvement of modern mankind. And that concern addresses itself not to the professional liturgical scholars, who are able to do nothing else but prepare ever new liturgical movements, but crying: "Lord, teach us to pray!" it directs itself to the greatest man of prayer *(Beter)* of all, to the praying Son of God.

***For the church of Christ is not a church that is always busy holding conferences, nor is she a church that does business with politicians and with the press, but she is* ecclesia orans . . .**

## II.

When the New Testament speaks of *ecclesia*, it thinks, first of all, of the holy people of God of the end time, the true Israel, that is assembled for divine worship. That doesn't mean that only those who are assembled belong to the church. Those people also belong to the church who are absent for valid reasons (remember: at that time there was no legal Sunday as yet), to whom the "Eucharist," the consecrated bread, was then sent home.

There are many types of gatherings mentioned in the New Testament: first, the Service of the Word *(Wortgottesdienst)* taken over from the synagogue, in which the word of God was read and then proclaimed in the sermon; second, the Service of Prayer, which followed immediately after the Service of the Word; third, the Eucharist, that is, the celebration of the Lord's Supper; and fourth the Agape, the Feast of Love, which had earlier been combined with the Communion Service and then later, when the other three forms of the service had coalesced, continued as a special celebration. In all of these services prayer was made, especially in the Eucharist, the Great Thanksgiving, as the Communion Service is called after its main prayer, the most solemn prayer of the entire Christian divine worship. We

must at some later time speak of this prayer, which was closely connected with the *Sanctus* and with the Words of Institution, when we consider the Lord's Supper.

Before the Eucharist there was once a portion of the divine service of which only some fragments have been preserved for us in the great liturgies of the east and of the west; it was the church's Service of Intercession *(Fürbittegottesdienst)*. While anyone, even pagans, could take part in the Service of the Word as also in its prototype in the synagogue—it was, we should remember, the great mission opportunity of the ancient church—before the Service of Prayer all those who were not baptized, even Christian catechumens, had to leave the room. "The doors, the doors!" this call was heard at its beginning. No heathen, no Jew, no catechumen would be present when the *ecclesia*, the holy people of God, brought their concerns before the countenance of God.

***Has the lack of prayer in the modern world influenced the church more deeply than we are inclined to believe . . . ?***

Unfortunately only remnants of this Service of Prayer have been preserved, in the east, e.g., in the great Act of Prayer of the liturgy of the Coptic Jacobites which introduced the Mass of the Faithful, and in the west in the Good Friday bidding prayers of the Roman Agenda (according to Pope Celestine I at Augustine's time these prayers originally introduced every celebration of the Eucharist).

What is peculiar to this prayer-part of the service is the continual participation of the congregation. First, every time, for each intercession, the content of the particular prayer is fully announced together with the invitation: "Let us pray." Then follows the call for all to kneel, and then the silent prayer (a *Kyrie eleison* might take its place, however). Then the congregation rises, and there follows the actual prayer of the priest. Thus all of Christianity's concerns are brought in prayer to God. Prayer was made for the church, for the pope (remember that in Alexandria as well as in Carthage the Primas also had the title of pope), for the bishops, for priests and deacons, and for all other orders of the church, among which also the laity was considered an order in the church. Prayer was made for the emperor and magistrates, for the army, for the health of men and (in Egypt) of animals, for good weather and for harvest, for the catechumens, for the heretics and schismatics, for the unbelieving Jews *(pro perfidis Judaeis)*, that God might convert them. In short, there is hardly a concern which is not included therein, and always in such a manner that the congregation not only hears the prayer that is spoken at the altar, but also prays it at the same time. Here there are no passive listeners, but only active, praying participants, only the *ecclesia orans*, which is alone with its Head as the Body of Christ and in this sense prays "in the name of Jesus."

## III.

Two things are noteworthy about this praying of the early church. First, the activity of the congregation is noteworthy. All churches of the modern world, including the Catholic church, suffer from the fact that prayer, also when made in church, has to a greater or lesser degree become private prayer. The restoration of the *ecclesia orans,* of the congregation that prays together, was the goal of the Catholic liturgical movement of our days, a goal that has not been reached. This movement protested against this that the congregation that was gathered for divine worship, if carefully scrutinized, was a group of individual Christians, each of whom conducted his private devotion.

Their attempt to change this and to return to the *ecclesia orans* of the beginning had of necessity to suffer shipwreck on this fact that in spite of all liturgical training the individual Christian could not understand the prayers which were spoken at the altar in a foreign language, and therefore could not really pray along with the minister. Hence the demand for a mass in the mother tongue or, to speak more precisely, the elevation of German, English and other modern European languages to the rank of liturgical languages. This demand, however, has now been pushed back far beyond the foreseeable future, even though its fulfillment is legally possible; for the *Codex Iuris Canonici* does not prescribe mass in the Latin language, but only in the language of each individual rite (c. 819).

Behind all of this there lies hidden, of course, a deeper phenomenon. The restoration of the "congregation" and of the rights of the congregation is impossible in the Roman church, since Catholic canon law has destroyed and abolished the concept of the congregation (the "Rights of Persons" in the CIC, to be sure, recognizes besides the clergy and the religious also the laity, but only in their societies and brotherhoods). Here lies the deepest difference between the understanding of the term "layman" in present-day Catholicism and in the early church. In the church of the New Testament and in the entire ancient church world the "laity," the "people," the "crowd" *(plethos)*, still constituted a necessary order in the church, into which one was taken in most cases only after a long catechumenate; the laity constituted an order which possessed very definite rights, which no one else could exercise.

Only traces of this understanding of a congregation have remained in Catholicism, in the mass book, e.g., the *"nos servi tui, sed et plebs tua sancta"* in the Anamnesis of the Canon of the Mass; or then the intercessions for the whole estate of Christ's church with their enumeration of the various ministerial offices; furthermore in the Good Friday bidding prayers; and otherwise undoubtedly in the role played by the people gathered before St. Peter's at the election of a pope, *viz:* the right of exultant ovation, a role which has grown out of its ancient right of participation in the election.

It is part of the tragedy of those churches which grew out of the Reformation that they have been able to realize the participation of the congregation in the divine service theoretically, but not practically. If the Reformation had achieved what it should have achieved, it would not have dared to restrict this participation to only a few responses and to the hymn of the

congregation. We must confess that the evangelical congregation today at least is not a "praying church" in that sense in which the early church was.

Perhaps much of the oft-lamented breakdown of the church in its tasks over against the modern world can be explained by this that she has long since ceased to be a praying church in the sense of the early church, a church which behind locked doors brought all concerns of mankind, also those of non-Christian mankind, before the throne of God. Is not our praying in all churches, in the Catholic churches as well as in those which call themselves Evangelical, only a weak echo of the early church's mighty praying? Are not also our churchgoers to a great extent simply only listeners, even though they hear the prayer in their mother tongue? Has not modern individualism also disrupted the Evangelical "congregation" to such an extent that it has become only a fiction? Doesn't the "evangelical" congregation as it exists on paper (supposedly on the paper of the church constitution, in reality, however, on the paper of the bureau of tax collections) differ from the Roman congregation, which doesn't even pretend to exist thus on paper, essentially in this point: that she is only less alive?

## IV.

The second thing that is noteworthy about this praying of the early church is its connection with faith in Christ. And this is the thing that distinguishes it from the prayer of the synagogue, with which it otherwise has so many similarities. It is prayer in the name of Jesus and therefore prayer that can be answered. "The Lord be with you": this introductory salutation of the bishop expresses the wish to the congregation that the Lord Christ may now pray with it and make its prayer his own. The Head of this body prays together with the body. The response "and with thy spirit" expresses the wish of the congregation to the minister who leads the prayer that the Lord may pray together with him, make his prayer his own, so that the prayer rises up before God's throne "through Jesus Christ our Lord." Despite the fact that the Salutation with its *parallelismus membrorum* may well go back to Jewish sources, in the church that has all received a new meaning because of its strict Christological relationship.

The prayer of Jesus Christ, the prayer which he prayed while here on earth, and the prayer, which he as the High Priest of his church continually offers to the Father, has given to prayer in general a new and deeper meaning. Christian prayer is, if it is really Christian, something different also from the striking prayer of the synagogue with its biblical background. It is the prayer of the church as the Body of Christ or the prayer of the individual Christian as a member of this body.

No matter whether it be the Lord's Prayer, which Jesus gave to his disciples and which he himself did not pray—for it is the prayer of sinners—or the great high-priestly prayer of John 17 which none of us can repeat, because it is the prayer of the sinless Son of God, spoken even as he was on the way to his sufferings and death as the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world: no matter which prayer it be, ever since Jesus himself prayed and taught us how to pray, a new kind of praying exists on earth, which is unknown in any other religion. The New Testament calls it prayer in the name of Jesus, i.e., *"ex persona Christi,"* the prayer in which he himself takes part. "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching any thing that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven. For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." These words from Matthew 18:19f. correspond exactly to the promises which are attached to prayer in the name of Jesus in his farewell words in John 14:13; 14:26; 16:23ff. Would you expect the prayer which the Lord Christ prays together with us to be unavailing? Shall not the Father hear and harken to the Son?

And that is part of the deep New Testament mystery of prayer, that prayer is made not only on earth, but also in heaven, as the Revelation of St. John testifies; yea, that prayer reaches into the Trinity, when the Son prays to the Father and when Paul in Romans 8:26f. teaches that there is such a thing as an assistance, a praying of the Holy Spirit with us: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. But he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." The Son and the Holy Spirit are our paracletes, our advocates, in heaven, as John expresses it (Jn 14 ff.; 1 Jn 2:1).

Thus it is to be explained that according to the New Testament church-prayer as an activity of the Spirit is closely connected with the other forms of spiritual speaking, along with confession (Mt 10:20), with speaking with tongues and with prophecy (1 Cor 14). Therefore true prayer exists only in the church of Christ, which as Israel according to the Spirit has the promises that in the last days God shall pour out his Spirit upon all flesh, so that then not only individual specially honored (*begnadigte:* charismatically called) persons, but God's entire holy people in the church should be "a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people" (1 Pt 2:9) and thus be in possession of all the rights and authority which the individual Old Testament offices possessed.

***The restoration of the* ecclesia orans*, of the congregation that prays together, was the goal of the Catholic liturgical movement of our days, a goal that has not been reached.***

And as every Christian has received the Spirit by the laying on of hands at or after baptism, thus he is given to the ministers in a special manner by the laying on of the hands in ordination (1 Tim 4:14). Thus in early Christian divine worship the minister—be he apostle or prophet, teacher or bishop, or whatever you might call the Spirit-filled incumbent of the *ministerium ecclesiasticum*—prays together with the congregation

and the congregation prays with him, be it in free prayer, which seems to have been a peculiar function of the prophets in the old church (we hear Didache 10:7 at the end of the Eucharistic Prayer: "But permit the prophets to give thanks as much as they wish"), or be it in the first fixed prayers, which go back into the New Testament age and in which we recognize an echo of the mighty Spirit-prompted *(pneumatisch)* prayer of the first church. "Thou, Holy Spirit, teachest the soul to pray aright," thus the Lutheran Pentecost hymn has it. In this sentence is comprehended all the mystery of the church's praying. That this prayer be answered would be the fulfillment of all the liturgical movements of our time. For they can have no other fulfillment but this.

## V.

Even as the church is at the same time both subject and object of faith—the paradox of that article of faith concerning the one catholic and apostolic church consists in this that the church and she alone believes in the church—in like manner the church is at the same time both subject and object of prayer. The church prays for the church—otherwise who would pray for her?

It is worthwhile to consider the ancient prayers of the church for the church. In the prayer at the breaking of the bread in the Didache (9:4) we hear: "As this bread that we break was scattered upon the mountains and gathered together became one, so let Thy church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into Thy kingdom." Added to this petition for the unity of the church at her perfect consummation there is in the prayer that follows it a petition for the purification and unification of the church: "Remember, O Lord, Thy Church, to deliver her from all evil and to perfect her in Thy love; and gather her together from the four winds sanctified for Thy kingdom, which Thou didst prepare for her" (Didache 10:5). These glorious prayers were then taken over by the later church and expanded, especially in connection with the Lord's Supper, e.g., even Luther, following the example of Chrysostom, gladly used in his sermons on the Lord's Supper the symbolism of the many kernels of grain which make up one loaf, and of the many individual grapes which become wine, in order to illustrate the nature of the Lord's Supper as the *sacramentum unitatis*.

But besides these pictures of the Didache we find also other instances of the church's own prayer for the church. In the same liturgy of the Coptic Jacobites which we just mentioned we hear: "Pray for the peace of the one, holy, catholic and orthodox church of God." [Brightman, *Liturgies Eastern and Western I*, p. 160], and almost all oriental liturgies offer parallels to this. Above all, what was prayed for ever and again, also in the Roman liturgy, was the unity and the peace of the church; even as the orthodox church also prayed for protection from her enemies. And if heretics are mentioned, as in the Roman Good Friday prayers, then it is the conversion of the heretics and schismatics that is the burden of the prayers. But prayer for the church always belongs to the nature of these church-prayers of intercession, and besides the peace and unity of the church, the duration of the holy church is often the prayer-content, as, e.g., in the so-called Prayer of Chrysostom, which, by the way, has also been taken over into evangelical liturgies.

What does this prayer of the church for herself mean? Is it a *sacro egoismo*, a more or less obvious clericalism that is expressed in this prayer? By no means; rather it is the deep conviction that the church is not what she should be. It is the conviction that she lives by the boundless mercy of her Lord and that without this forgiving mercy she is lost. So it is certainly not a clericalism or a false ecclesiastical cocksureness, but what really prompts this prayer is a great feeling of uncertainty, of continual danger threatening the church, from without to be sure, but also from within.

If the church before the Reformation was in any point evangelical, then it was evangelical here. And one can certainly put the question, whether the pre-Reformation church was not at least in this point more reformatory than the so-called churches of the Reformation. At any rate, intercessory prayer by the church for the church belongs to the essence of true evangelical divine worship; and we are speaking not of intercessory prayer which has become empty form only, but of prayer which is spoken with all the fervor of the *ecclesia orans* in view of the admonitions and threats to the congregations in Revelation 2 and 3. For there it certainly is taken for granted that whole churches can die, even though they are outwardly at least still churches of Christ and to all outward appearances at least show signs of important life.

*We must confess that the evangelical congregation today at least is not a "praying church" in that sense in which the early church was.*

## VI.

But if this is true, then such church-prayer of the church must be first of all prayer of repentance. The great danger of the church of all ages lies in this that she preaches repentance to the world and at the same time herself becomes a castaway, because she forgets that all true repentance must begin at the house of God, with the repentance of the church. Here also there is no difference between the Catholic churches who from principle do not repent and the Evangelical churches who do not repent in practice. We are so accustomed to seeing church politics hold the leadership in the church that we erroneously expect that a change in church politics must bring forth a new way in the whole business.

But if we have such expectations, then we should learn from church history that up to now every new day in the church of Christ has begun with a movement of repentance. Christianity itself once entered world history as a mighty

movement of repentance. It was as a movement of repentance that in antiquity it conquered the ancient world and then in modern time (the so-called "Great Contrition") the people of our day. And when at Constantine's time the masses began to stream into the church for more or less outward reasons, then the cloisters became the centers of repentance. Every new epoch in the Middle Ages began with a movement of repentance, and the Reformation with Luther's first thesis and the saving message of the justification of the sinner through faith alone is the greatest example in the history of the church for this truth.

At that time people didn't yet believe that you can renew the world by world conferences. We believe that by conferences and organizations, by pronouncements and radio speeches we can spare ourselves the bitter way of sorrows of contrition and repentance—until God's mighty hand one day will also crush those means and teach us that the church lives by the means of grace, by nothing else, and that her life is expressed solely and alone in this that she becomes a praying church again, as she was in the days of the apostles, when it was said of her: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Acts 2:42). "And fear came upon every soul" is said of this praying congregation.

Fear has not come upon one single soul because of Amsterdam, Bethel and Leipzig, because of the Ecumenical Council of Churches, the *EKiD* and the *VELK,* and not because of the college of cardinals either. For only the praying church which moves heaven and earth with her prayer, even when outwardly she has to go down in defeat in the process, could and might effect truly world-shattering changes in this century. The praying church, which we do not want to confound with the church of liturgical scholars, is a power which shakes the social and political world of our century, because in her and in her alone he is present unto whom all power in heaven and earth is given. The life of the Lutheran church in this century depends on this, whether she again will become a praying church in this sense, a praying church in the sense of Luther and of the Lutheran Reformation.

## VII.

Unlike other confessions, the Lutheran Church has, we know, received a definite liturgical heritage. She is not saddled with the heritage of the ancient sacrifice-idea, a heritage which makes every renewal in the Catholic churches of the east and west always a renewal of the sacrifice-idea, and therewith a renewal of paganism. And yet, on the other hand, the Lutheran Church has never made a complete break with the early Christian, New Testament liturgy, a break which couldn't be avoided by the Reformed churches, because they had abandoned belief in the Real Presence—a fact that we must expand in a later letter—without which there can be no true liturgy. Our church's liturgy therefore could be that which it was in the sixteenth century according to a Catholic liturgical scholar, namely: "the first serious attempt undertaken with unique linguistic and musical means to create a German folk-liturgy and thus to bridge that strangeness which has remained between the German people and the liturgy ever since their becoming Christian" [F. Messerschmid, *Liturgie und Gemeinde*, 1939, p. 66].

If one is to have an idea of the triumphal course of the Reformation in Germany, then "one must," the same author tells us [Messerschmid, p. 49], have received from the sources an intimation of the unheard-of vitality of these divine services; of the powerful religious feeling with which they were celebrated by those congregations which had before this been only dumb witnesses and spectators and listeners in the church . . . one must have received an intimation of the power with which these chorales were taken up by old and young and by all classes! Even Jesuit eyewitnesses have averred that these chorales brought more believers to this new teaching than all preaching and other efforts to win them!

***. . . church-prayer of the church must be first of all prayer of repentance.***

Why are things not so today? Why has our divine service lost the power over men's spirits? This is one of the most earnest questions which our church has to consider.

One answer that must be given to this question is the fact that we pastors no longer know and understand the liturgical treasures of our church and therefore are not in a position to introduce our congregations to them. And one of the urgent duties of the Lutheran pastorate today is to win back that which has been lost. Why don't we preach more often on the liturgy? Why do we believe that we must enliven our liturgical life by borrowing from the Eastern church, or from the Roman Catholic church? Why don't we know any more what the evangelical divine service of the old Lutheran Church was like? Why do we leave it to Catholic theology to rediscover Luther's importance as one of the greatest liturgical geniuses? Why do we know practically nothing about the greatest liturgical scholars of our church in the nineteenth century, about Loehe and Kliefoth? How can we explain the mass-printing of theologically and liturgically worthless works on modern liturgical art, from Arper-Zillessen to Burghart's unfortunate new Prussian Agenda? God help us, that we teach again the great prayer of the church, that our church may become a genuine *ecclesia orans.*

With best wishes for this Easter season, the time of the church's jubilation, I greet you in the fellowship of the faith.

Your,

Hermann Sasse. LOGIA

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4/93

# *Church & Ministry*

## *Part II: Systematic Formulation*

JOBST SCHÖNE

### THE NATURE AND ESSENCE OF THE HOLY MINISTRY

The Lutheran Confessions speak of the ministry as a certain activity, precisely determined by the gospel proclamation and administration of the sacraments, committed to men called for this service. Since the gospel and the sacraments as the means of grace do not exist in isolation for their own sake, but are intended to reach men for their salvation, they are essentially linked with their execution. This execution is effected through the ministry of the church as an instrument of God's own saving activity. Therefore the ministry is a divine institution, a gift from God, along with the gospel and the sacraments themselves, but subordinate to them for the purpose of their performance. It is this function which determines the nature and essence of the church's ministry. This is perfectly expressed in Article V of the Augsburg Confession: "To obtain such faith God instituted the office of the ministry, that is, he has provided the gospel and the sacraments. Through these [i.e., not the ministry, but the means of grace], as through means, he gives the Holy Spirit, who works faith, when and where he pleases, in those who hear the gospel."

It is the same office of the ministry which article XIV of the Augsburg Confession has in mind when it declares "that nobody should publicly teach or preach or administer the sacraments in the church without a regular call (*nisi rite vocatus*)." Apology XIII, 7–12 has to be taken as an authentic comment on AC V and XIV when affirming the nature of the ministry as a "ministry of the word," having "God's command and glorious promises" and God's approval: he "is present in it." So the holders of the office of the ministry "are called to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments to the people"—nothing else, and by no means "to make sacrifices that merit forgiveness of sins for the people, as in the Old Testament." Thereby a clear distinction is made between the ministry and the Old Testament priesthood, which is neither its source nor its continuation. The ministry's origin and mandate are different from such a priesthood.

The mandate for the ministry comes from Christ who gave the gospel and the sacraments to mediate his salvation. Therefore the ministry of the church has to make known the will of God in law and gospel. This proclamation comes from the church and calls people into the church. Consequently the ministry serves in building up the church, in expanding her and preserving her until the day of consummation. Since the church lives and depends solely on the gospel, the ministry as the servant of the gospel belongs to the *esse* of the church, to her very existence and being. The duty and service (*munus*) of the ministry consists of preaching the word, administering the sacraments, absolving from sin and leading the church, which altogether is a pastoral service (*munus pascendi*) of caring for and shepherding Christ's flock (Jn 21:15ff.; Acts 20:28), performed by the authority of the word alone, not by human power (*sine vi humana, sed verbo*; AC XXVIII, 22). It is finally Christ himself who proclaims, absolves, cares and leads his church—through ministers as his instruments.

To speak of the ministry means to speak of concrete persons holding its office and acting in relation to concrete human beings needing Christ's salvation. Even if we determine the ministry by its function, we cannot ignore the fact that this function has to be exercised by persons and is always bound to them. There does not exist such a thing as "the ministry as such," a mere abstract function, but it always calls for an office and its holder. He is the one who has to carry this function into effect. In accordance with the New Testament, the Lutheran Confessions do not separate the function of the ministry from the holder of its office; instead, they are concerned with persons called into this office—they speak of pastors and bishops and their duties, entrusted to them by Christ, who calls, appoints and commissions his servants. He himself determines whom he elects and considers as qualified for the ministry. This is of great significance for the church's obligation not to ordain women for the ministry. A mere functional view of the ministry, disregarding its bearers, would probably vindicate a different ruling. But the New Testament combines the function with the person carrying it into effect, placing this entire complex under Christ's command and direction.

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

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### THE MINISTRY AS DIVINE INSTITUTION

"God instituted the office of the ministry" (AC v). This statement excludes human authorship of this pastoral service. Instead, the Augustana regards the office of the ministry as substantially identical with the ministry given to the church by Christ himself. Again, it is not a mere function, but realized and personified by those who have been called to serve the church. The pastoral office of today is linked with the apostolate instituted by Christ and originates from it—the unique elements cannot be transferred, but its permanent functions, proclaiming the gospel and administering the sacraments, must be carried out throughout the ages. In this respect Christ remains active through his servants; he is doing what they do, as long as they act according to his command. It is not their own or any human authority which they can bring to bear, but he himself is serving his church and speaking to the world, though hidden under his servants' word and activity. This corresponds to the mystery of Christ and the faith: God's condescension, by which he adjusts himself to our existence; visibly, but in weakness; hidden under its counterpart, but present in reality. In, with and under a human appearance Christ himself is working. So we find in the visible church the hidden reality of the Body of Christ, in her visible ministry the hidden reality of Christ serving his people. The church has always to affirm, confess and preserve the apostolicity of her ministry, performing it in accordance with the divine institution of a service bringing God's salvation to this world. Following the example of Christ (1 Cor 11:1), the apostolic ministry has to serve and nothing but serve "to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the Body of Christ may be built up" (Eph 4:12), not claiming the position of lord over someone's faith (2 Cor 1:24). The authority of the ministry must stand the test in serving according to the example of Christ who appoints men to the ministry.

> ***Christ remains active through his servants; he is doing what they do, as long as they act according to his command.***

### CHRISTOLOGICAL FOUNDATION

Christ always remains the Lord of the ministry. The ministry has to carry out his command; it does not proclaim any self-appointed message, but the one Christ has entrusted to his church and revealed in the Scriptures. It does not perform any self-chosen works for the welfare and benefit of mankind, but it is to do what Christ wants it to do.

More than that, Christ himself is doing what his servants do. Almost all New Testament designations and titles of the different offices carrying out the ministry, are applied as well to Christ himself: he is "deacon" (Rom 15:8; Lk 22:27); he is the "apostle" (Heb 3:1); he is "teacher" (Mt 23:8; Jn 13:13); he is "bishop" and "shepherd" (1 Pet 2:25; 5:4)—so every ministry in the church is derived from Christ. And Christ's own mission is continued through his servants: as he has been sent by the Father, so he sends them into the world (Jn 17:18; 20:21). We can speak of the real presence of Christ's own ministry in the ministry of the church. The latter participates in the authority of the former. His power to forgive sins is handed over to the apostles and the church at large, to be exercised through the ministry.

However, there are essentials of Christ's own ministry which can be conferred neither on an apostle nor on any other servant in the ministry. These essentials are the unique events of salvation, performed once and for all time. This would include Christ's salvific suffering, death and resurrection. In this respect nothing can and will ever be repeated, but is simply the foundation of our salvation to which we can only give witness. Yet his presence in our midst, starting with his incarnation, did not come to an end with his ascension. To be present in his church until the day of his second coming, he gave his gospel and the sacraments, creating salvation today when they are proclaimed and administered. We depend on the means he himself has chosen for his continued presence; no one can represent and realize his presence aside from them in a self-determined manner. The means of grace guarantee his presence, and as his servants do administer them, they serve for Christ's own presence today. That is why the Confessions speak about the "power" (*potestas*) of the ministry, along with a strong emphasis on its character as a service.

### MINISTRY AND CHURCH

The Lutheran doctrine of the ministry does not allow for any separation between this ministry and the church. It is always related to her; the ministry is instituted to serve the church and it is God's gift to the church at large. The ministry can never exist without the church, simply for itself, serving its own purposes. Whenever the ministry is tempted to do so, it abandons its very nature, it denies its mandate and degenerates into a peculiar order different from the common estate of Christians—completely contrary to its destination.

On the other hand, the church is ordinarily bound to the ministry and cannot dispense with it. She has rather to care for its establishment by Christ's command. How is this accomplished? In this connection we have to realize that the church herself does not come into existence by human decision. She is a divine institution herself, not composed by any number of Christian individuals resolving to join for common exercise of their faith. Instead, the church is created by the word, not existing as a product of human efforts. According to the New Testament she is the Body of Christ, accepting and carrying her members. So we cannot make or build the church like an association or a human society; we can only know that we do belong to her by virtue of our baptism and faith, which is given to us through the church. Just as a family is brought into being by God's creative activity, not by individuals who decide to form it, to become brothers and sisters and appoint parents, so the church is more than a mere product of her members' activity, but depends on her Head and Lord, whom she has not chosen, but who has chosen, accepted and gathered his people.

All these members are equal in their need of salvation, equal in sinfulness and have in common their privilege of participating in the same grace. They are all called to be priests. However, this does not include equality in offices, duties and mandate. In this respect the New Testament makes a clear distinction: "Are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all teachers?" (1 Cor 12:29). Far from any arrogance, St. Paul preserves us from any leveling and equalizing of distinct offices of the ministry. We all belong to the priesthood of believers, but we do not equally participate in the ministry.

The ministry is given to the church at large in order to confer it on specific holders in accordance with Christ's institution. He retains the ministry and delegates it by ordination to those whom he elects, calls and blesses to serve him and his church. In so doing, Christ makes use of the church as an instrument for carrying out his will and command.

In this way the priesthood of all believers does not enter into competition with the special ministry, nor does it create the ministry merely for the sake of decency and good order. Instead, the common estate of Christians, by virtue of their priesthood, takes over responsibility for the existence of the church's ministry: congregations have to ask for new workers in the Lord's harvest field (Mt 9:38), to encourage qualified men, support schools and other institutions for their training, to assist their future and present pastors by their prayers and offerings, to call them into their place of work, and finally to take part in their ordination to the ministry by fervent supplication for the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In doing so, they live up to their priesthood, which is, according to the New Testament, not primarily a matter of rights, authority and privilege over against the special ministry, but much more of duty, service and offering (1 Pet 2:5).

The priesthood's task of *judging doctrine* should not be understood as the supreme right of supervision and control, since it originated from a situation of emergency and self-defense. In the time of the Reformation and ever since, Lutheran congregations have had to distinguish between false and true doctrine, to deny obedience to a clergy departing from the gospel. "Since these important matters also concern ordinary people and laymen who for their eternal salvation must as Christians know the difference between true and false doctrine, we declare our unanimous adherence to Dr. Luther's Small and Large Catechisms . . . since they formulate Christian doctrine on the basis of God's Word for ordinary laymen . . ." (FC SD RN 8). This obligation to judge doctrine has to be balanced with the "office of the bishop" (and the pastor in his parish alike) "to preach the gospel, forgive sins, judge doctrine and condemn doctrine that is contrary to the gospel," as set forth in Augustana XXVIII, 21. This does not allow for the laity as the last resort of doctrinal judgment, since such decisions require a high degree of knowledge, normally left to properly trained clergy.

The priesthood of all believers has the mandate of mission work, i.e., to give witness to the faith from person to person in every given situation. In this respect the laity is called to cooperate with the clergy; both have to fulfill the same task. Altogether the priesthood is not so much a matter of status or possession, but a matter of conduct, of Christian life, constantly to be realized and put into effect. Tensions between this priesthood and the special ministry will inevitably arise if the ministry is no longer understood as a service to God's people, on the one hand, or if the priesthood of all believers is considered as an embodiment of rights, on the other hand. Actually, both are interrelated and depend on each other: the ministry has the task of preparing God's people for carrying out their priesthood (Eph 4:12) and of making effective the manifold gifts of the Spirit in the church and for her welfare.

Unlike ordinary Christian individuals, the holder of an office of the ministry is mandated to act *publicly*: "It is taught among us that nobody should publicly teach or preach or administer the sacraments in the church without a regular call" (AC XIV). The term "publicly" did not get a detailed interpretation in the Confessions; however, it certainly refers to dealing with the means of grace in the presence of the congregation or larger parts of it, i.e., not in private circles. Furthermore, this term indicates that such an activity is related a) to the worship service, and b) to the public in general, which again is to be understood as the church at large on the one hand and the outside world to which the gospel has to be brought on the other. Finally this "public" proclamation is determined not only by a spatial dimension, namely its field of activity, but also by its contents, namely that this proclamation gives expression to the church's doctrine, not to private opinions. It is an entire church body which speaks "publicly" and which is responsible for such proclamation. As such, the church speaks in the place and stead of Christ and can rely on his promise to be present and to make his voice heard through his ministers.

***. . . the church is ordinarily bound to the ministry and cannot dispense with it.***

This mandate to proclaim and act "publicly" characterizes the "public" ministry over against the Christian's individual witness to his Lord. The two are not to be mixed or confused. The Lutheran Church therefore has always stated that no one can claim this special and distinct ministry, divinely instituted, by his own right, nor appoint himself to it, nor hold it by virtue of a pretended inward "call" of the Spirit. It has to be conferred publicly.

## ORDINATION

The rite of ordination, by which the office of the ministry is publicly conferred, has its roots in the New Testament. St. Paul's letters to Titus and Timothy (the Pastoral Epistles) provide evidence for the rite of ordination, although we are not provided with all the details of the ancient rite (1 Tim 4:14; 2 Tim 1:6; Ti 1:5). It is a passing on of the apostolic mandate, formerly received from Christ himself. In fact, God's own action of ordaining, manifest in the mission of his Son, is continued

by Christ (Jn 17:18; 20:21; Lk 10:16). Basic elements of today's rite of ordination are clearly contained in Christ's appointing the apostles: it is a call (*vocatio*), a blessing (*benedictio*) and a mission (*missio*). None of these elements should be considered as more valuable than any of the others. Nor should they be considered in isolation from the others. They belong together as a complex and take effect together in the rite of ordination.

The call (*vocatio*) is a call from God, confirmed and established in the rite of ordination through men appointed for this and acting as the instruments of Christ. Christ himself places the one whom he has elected into the ministry by means of his church operating through the congregation and the clergy performing this rite. A valid call, however, can only be extended under a twofold condition: the ordinand must belong to the priesthood of all believers, that is, he must be baptized and therefore be a member of the church; secondly, he must be qualified for the ministry by adequate training and natural ability.

***From now on the ordained minister is authorized to preach, teach and administer the sacraments in Christ's name.***

The blessing (*benedictio*) which the ordinand receives is given through the proclamation of the word of God, through prayer for the Holy Spirit and, normally, through the laying on of hands. This blessing comes to pass by the promise of God that goes along with the prayer of the church, so we have to trust that he will do what we ask for, according to his promise to make the external word by his Spirit into an effective word, which performs what it says. This blessing is a reality, accepted by faith, and transfers to the ordinand the gift of the Spirit, authorizing him to act in the ministry.

The mission (*missio*) puts the ordinand under the mandate of the ministry and the obligation to perform it. He is now bound to serve Christ and his church for life in the special position of a minister of the word. Ordination is given once and forever; it does not confer special rights or raise the ordinand to some special order or status which is higher or more holy than other Christians, but it *does* bind the servant permanently to the church, until his death (notwithstanding that practical circumstances may bring about resignation or removal from the office of the ministry, such as sickness, age or incapacity for various reasons). It is not in accordance with the New Testament and God's irrevocable call, blessing and mission, to take a servant of the word only during the very special space of time in which he is exercising his mandate. On the other hand, the permanence of the *vocatio, benedictio* and *missio* urges both, the church and the ordinand, to consider carefully his capacity and ability to live up to his ordination.

Each of the three elements which comprise the rite of ordination is based on the expanded process of "making" a minister. They give final expression to this process and summarize the process. While we can speak of ordination as confirming the election with the laying on of hands (Tractate, 70), we should keep in mind that the term "confirmation" formerly had a much broader meaning than it does in contemporary language. When referring to the ancient practice of ordination, the Tractate is well aware of this fact.

The Augsburg Confession, on the other hand, requires a "regular" execution of the "call" (used synonymously for ordination). The Latin term *rite vocatus* leaves room for different forms or rituals by which ordination can be performed, including the "canonical" one. Generally, the Augustana refers to the worship service as the proper place to perform this rite and requires a ritual which emphasizes the divine institution of the ministry.

The very essence of this rite is found in prayer, traditionally accompanied by the laying on of hands. The significance of this *impositio manuum* has been debated in Lutheran theology; is it an adiaphoron or a necessary element? Though different answers have been given, the Lutheran churches have kept this apostolic custom (Acts 6:6), for it underscores the meaning of the prayer. Certainly, there is no equality between prayer and laying on of hands; the latter is added to the former, not the other way around. But it indicates the certainty that these prayers are fulfilled; it emphasizes their conferring character; and it marks the ordinand as a called, blessed and commissioned servant of his Lord—the Holy Spirit has taken possession of him. From now on the ordained minister is authorized to preach, teach and administer the sacraments in Christ's name.

Ordination differs from installation insofar as it places someone into the ministry in general and authorizes him for serving the entire church—it has "universal" meaning according to the universal mandate of Christ. Installation, on the other hand, places an ordained minister into a specific field or position and authorizes him to act there legitimately. Ordination and installation can be combined in the same rite if a minister is installed for the first time along with his ordination—but ordination will never be repeated if he is called to serve some other congregation or in any other position in the church.

The "universal" character of the ministry, reflected in ordination for serving the entire church, is not limited by the confessional commitment which is normally included in the rite of ordination. Since the Confessions to which the ordinand binds himself claim to be the true exposition of the *doctrina evangelii*, they themselves are "catholic," i.e., of universal validity, not restricted to a certain denomination. Thus a confessional commitment emphasizes the universal character of ordination. The ordinand enters into the confessional commitment which the Lutheran church has always treated as more important, even more important than the laying on of hands.

## THE MANDATE

The mandate of the ministry, conferred by ordination, can best be described by breaking it down into its constituent parts. The ordained minister's authorization consists of eight com-

missions (*potestates*):

1) It is primarily directed to preaching the gospel publicly.

2) This is closely connected with the administration and distribution of the sacraments, for the gospel "offers counsel and help against sin in more than one way, for God is surpassingly rich in his grace" (SA III, 4). The Smalcald Articles therefore list under the heading of "The gospel" not only the "spoken word, by which the forgiveness of sin (the peculiar function of the gospel) is preached to the whole world," but also Baptism, the Sacrament of the Altar, the power of the keys and finally the "mutual conversation and consolation of brethren" (SA III, 4). The sacraments are administered in public worship services, in which the pastor has the responsible position of leadership: he has to decide whom he admits to the sacraments and whom he must refuse.

3) This again is related to the "power of the keys": ordinarily the ministry is entrusted with the forgiving or retaining of sins according to John 20:21–23, i.e., to hear confession and give, if possible, absolution.

4) Next to these central functions, the ministry is also responsible for passing public judgment on doctrine in order to keep the gospel proclamation pure and to condemn as false those teachings which are contrary to the apostolic gospel given in the Scriptures. This then serves the unity of the church. In AC XXVIII, 21 this mandate is explicitly ("according to divine right") attributed to the "office of bishop," who necessarily is an ordained minister.

5) This authorization also covers excommunication: "to exclude from the Christian community the ungodly whose wicked conduct is manifest." In the Tractate this statement is reaffirmed: "By the confession of all, even our adversaries, it is evident that this power belongs by divine right to all who preside over churches, whether they are called pastors, presbyters, or bishops" (Tractate, 61). "All this has to be done not by human power but by God's Word alone" (AC XXVIII, 21). Since doctrinal judgment and excommunication affects the whole church, Lutherans have always accepted the rule that the ministry and the laity should cooperate for this purpose in conventions and councils deciding jointly, while the final responsibility rests with the holy ministry.

6) Presiding over churches is also one of the functions of the ministry. This must be done in a spirit of love and care for God's people, according to the example of Christ, whom the minister must represent, and with the intention "to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace" (Eph 4:3), on the level of the local congregation as well as the church at large.

7) We also have to mention the ministry's responsibility for ordination in order to guarantee the continuation of gospel preaching.

8) Since it belongs to the nature of the gospel itself that it should be brought to all the world in order "to make disciples of all nations" (Mt 28:19), the mandate of Christ urges those who are entrusted with the gospel to do mission work and to stimulate and encourage all Christians to engage in this great commission. The ministry is to take a leading role in this respect.

Though the church can never dispense with the ministry as the divinely instituted instrument of gospel proclamation and administration of the sacraments, emergency cases may occur in which no ordained minister can act. In such cases a great responsibility falls to the laity; they have to carry on with spreading the gospel message and take over responsibilities which normally belong to the ministry—to the extent necessary, and as long as no ordained minister is available. In this connection public preaching and teaching and emergency baptism by unordained laymen have always been recognized as legitimate in the Lutheran church. Different opinions have been raised as to the legitimacy and validity of such an absolution, though Luther himself advocated it. Nevertheless he rejected the administration of the Lord's Supper by laymen and restricted it explicitly to the public office of the ministry in order not to risk any doubts about the validity of this sacrament nor any sectarianism which might come up and split the church. Lutheran churches today should carefully note this position, observe this rule and follow the reformer's advice.

### THE ONE MINISTRY AND THE VARIOUS OFFICES

Since all different commissions (*potestates*), bound together in the mandate of Christ, are intended to accomplish and support the same, namely "reconciling the world to God in Christ" (2 Cor 5:19), the Lutheran Church has consequently spoken of the one ministry as divinely instituted. Any distinction in this one ministry, any establishment of various offices, any hierarchy, is not divinely instituted but of human right and left to the freedom of the church.

*Any distinction in this one ministry, any establishment of various offices, any hierarchy, is not divinely instituted but of human right and left to the freedom of the church.*

We must realize that not every ordained minister can carry out all the responsibilities of the ministry mentioned previously. He cannot do all these things at once and in the same place in the same position. To put Christ's mandate into effect, it needs division and special allocation as to different offices. This is *de jure humano* and subject to practical and actual circumstances as they come up and may change from time to time in the course of history, influenced by culture and society. It still remains the same ministry, although it is manifested in various forms, through different offices, through different ecclesiastical structures, subject to alteration and adjustment. Special responsibility is turned over to regularly appointed ministers according to the needs of the church (Acts 6:3), for proper order and peace in the church as God wants it (1 Cor 14:40), and for the unity of the body of Christ (Eph 4:4–6). So church presidents, bishops, counselors and other ministers in church leadership positions hold an office which is substantially a pastoral office, participating in the one gospel office which Christ

has instituted. They have to carry it out in a pastoral, gospel-oriented manner, and in a spirit of care and love. Likewise theological teachers, training future pastors, hold a pastoral office, serving the gospel proclamation in a special way. The same is true in general for all similar offices. Everyone holding it remains basically a pastor, put under Christ's mandate for the ministry, not into a secular position.

## THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN

Each member of the church has the "power" to proclaim the gospel, since he or she can give witness to what he or she believes. He or she, in cases of emergency, also has the right to administer the sacrament of baptism, and as largely accepted among Lutherans, to forgive sins in the name of Christ. But this is not automatically true for public gospel proclamation and administration of the sacraments and for the office of presiding over churches or congregations in the position of pastoral leadership. Why not? Because wherever the congregation is assembled and gathered for the public worship service, the mandate of Christ, conferred by a legitimate call and holy ordination, must determine what the church is doing, and must become manifest by a valid authorization of a certain person to exercise it.

The Lutheran Confessions do not deal with the question of the ordination of women because at that time the matter was not under discussion. The Confessions never regard women as Christians of lower degree. Women fully participate in membership in the body of Christ. They belong equally to the priesthood of all believers, without any reservation or restriction.

The public ministry, however, is rooted in the apostolate and depends upon divine authorization. This authorization is conferred through call and ordination, provided that the ordinand is adequately qualified. To prove such qualification we have to consider natural physical and mental strength, his ability to bear the burden of the ministry. In this respect women may be well qualified. However, there are other important considerations. Women have been given a specific position according to creation which places them into a specific relationship to men. The New Testament does not cancel this created order; rather the Holy Spirit affirms this order explicitly through apostolic instruction. There are clear passages of Scripture which support this position: Eph 5:21–33; 1 Cor 14:33–38; 1 Tim 2:11–15. In 1 Cor 14:33ff. the whole matter is dealt with in the context of orderly worship in the publicly assembled congregation; St. Paul declares his instruction to be a "command of the Lord," which certainly binds the church. Though women played an important role in supporting and spreading Christ's message, for instance being the first ones to communicate the good tidings of his resurrection, they were not chosen to serve as Christ's apostles. Since the call of the apostles was the beginning of the public ministry in the church, we must make allowance for the fact that women were not included among the apostles. Later on the church did not follow the example of the ancient Greek and Roman religions which knew of female priests, nor did she give room to sectarian enthusiasm as in Gnostic and Montanistic sects which ordained women to their ministry.

It is in obedience to clear statements of Scripture and with the intention of remaining in union with the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church, that Lutheran churches today should, by all means, stay away from the ordination of women. The Holy Spirit would contradict himself if he would authorize women to preach and teach publicly and perform all the obligations of the pastoral ministry.

## CONCLUSION

The Lutheran understanding of the ministry rightly claims to be in accordance with New Testament doctrine and in harmony with Christ's institution. In Apology XIV on "Ecclesiastical Order" Melanchthon makes this statement: "We know that our confession is true, godly and catholic" (XIV, 3). And from the fact "that God approves this ministry and is present in it," he concludes, "It is good to extol the ministry of the word with every possible kind of praise in opposition to the fanatics who dream that the Holy Spirit does not come through the word but because of their own preparations" (Ap XIII, 12 f.). LOGIA

# Reviews

*"It is not many books that make men learned . . . but it is a good book frequently read."*
Martin Luther

## *Review Essay*

### *Martin Chemnitz—A Rigorous Theology*

***The Lord's Supper in the Theology of Martin Chemnitz.*** By Bjarne W. Teigen. Brewster, Mass: Trinity Lutheran Press, 1986 (Lutheran Synod Book Co., 734 Marsh, Mankato, MN 56001) 226 pages. $16.95.

The Chemnitz jubilee was celebrated in 1986 in commemoration of the 400th anniversary of the death of the Lutheran Church's "Second Martin." The same year Bjarne Wollan Teigen's book on *The Lord's Supper in the Theology of Martin Chemnitz* appeared. Teigen, retired president of Bethany Lutheran College in Mankato, Minnesota, has submitted an investigation, based on a careful and extensive study of the sources, about Melanchthon's disciple Chemnitz, who nevertheless followed Luther faithfully in the doctrine of the Holy Supper. The book is of special interest not only for the history of theology but also for systematics.

Chemnitz is regarded as the chief author of the Formula of Concord. Because the Formula, together with the remaining parts of the Book of Concord, sets forth the correct interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, it claims for itself, as a confession of the church, a derived dogmatic normativity. Teigen shows convincingly that Chemnitz's sacramentology and his christology directly formed and influenced the statements made in Articles VII and VIII of the Formula. Therefore an intensified study of Chemnitz's works can greatly contribute to doctrinal clarification of questions being considered in modern Lutheran theology of the Lord's Supper. Reading Teigen's investigation will make it increasingly clear that the study of Chemnitz's theology is not a matter of merely academic abstractions; rather it entails dogmatic decisions with eminently practical implications for church work and the actual administration of the Sacrament of the Altar.

Martin Chemnitz's theology of the Lord's Supper can be summarized in the following points:

1) The words of Christ, with which he instituted the sacrament, are the basis for the church's doctrine of Holy Communion. The words of the Lord's testament may not be changed—analogous to a last will in the secular realm. They are to be comprehended in faith according to their actual, literal meaning (p. 18 ff.; FC SD VII, 43–60).

2) The very essence of the Sacrament of the Altar must be defined solely by the words of institution and not in analogy to other meals of a secular or religious nature (p. 19). The testamentary words of Christ are not to be understood as a mere historical report about a past event; rather they are a divine mandate to which the church is bound as a matter of principle (p. 76 ff.).

3) The *sacramental action* instituted by Christ (the same as the use) is precisely defined. It consists of the *consecration* of the elements of bread and wine by means of the *verba testamenti;* then of the *distribution* of the consecrated elements; and finally of the *oral reception* of the consecrated elements (p. 11 ff.; SD VII, 75–76, 83–87).

4) "The unconditional command and promise of the consecration is the *only* basis for the certainty that we today have the same supper which the Lord instituted and gave as a gift to his church" (p. 89, emphasis by Teigen). The *verba testamenti* are "the powerful, creative words of Christ which achieve the presence of the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament" (p. 76). When those called by Christ to the office of the ministry recite the *verba testamenti*, they are not acting on their own authority but in the stead of Christ. Christ himself is acting through his messengers; he alone is the effective consecrator (pp. 80 ff., 92 ff.; SD VII, 76–78).

5) By means of the consecratory words of Christ and not through the Christians' eucharistic prayers there takes place "*a great, miraculous, and truly divine change*, since before it was simply and only ordinary bread and common wine. What now, after the blessing, is truly and substantially present, offered, and received is truly and substantially the body and blood of Christ" (p. 53; emphasis by Teigen). Through the conversion bread and wine do not lose their substance, but they enter into a sacramental union with the body and blood of Christ (SD VII, 38 f.). The Lutheran principle *finitum capax infiniti* stands in contradiction on the one hand to the Roman dogma of transubstantiation, which leads to the annihilation of the earthly elements; and on the other hand to the Reformed Enthusiasts, who deny the substantial presence of the body and blood of Christ in the elements (p. 56).

6) The Reformed negation of the real presence is closely tied to a Nestorian separation of the natures of Christ; the body and blood of Christ "cannot" be present in the sacrament,

because the human nature of Christ is confined to heaven. In view of this position Chemnitz supports his theology of the Lord's Supper with additional christological arguments; these are not, however, the foundation for the doctrine of Holy Communion; rather they are merely arguments for the christological "possibility" of the real presence (p. 30 ff.). Chemnitz puts a great deal of emphasis on the indissoluble hypostatic union of Christ's divine and human nature and, following from that, the *genus maiestaticum*, the communication of the attributes of the divine to the human nature of Christ. Chemnitz distinguishes—as do Luther and the Formula of Concord—the mode of the sacramental presence of Christ from the circumscriptive and the repletive manner of Christ's presence (p. 38 ff.).

Generally a difference has been thought to be evident between Chemnitz's and Luther's christology; Chemnitz's ubivolipresence has been considered a relative ubiquity (the risen Lord's human nature is omnipresent only when Christ actually wills it to be). But Teigen shows, particularly in examining the views of E. Schlink, that Luther and Chemnitz in fact took the same doctrinal position regarding the repletive presence of Christ, that is, the absolute omnipresence (p.42 ff.).

Chemnitz's teaching of the ubivolipresence is directed against the defamation of the real presence by the Enthusiasts, who identified the repletive presence of Christ in all creatures with the sacramental mode of the presence of Christ and thus came to absurd, even blasphemous conclusions. And Chemnitz confesses—again in agreement with Luther, who distinguished the presence of God as such and his presence for me (cf. p. 44)—that while Christ is present in all places, it is not his will for us to seek and find him there; thus it is "safest and simplest to drop all such questions from our discussion and to limit ourselves to the boundaries of divine revelation so that we may seek Christ and lay hold on Him in the places where He has clearly promised that He Himself wishes to be" (p. 45).

7) The sacramental presence of the body and blood of Christ effected by the consecration is a full reality even before the distribution and the oral reception. "The meaning is not that the blessed bread which is divided, which is offered, and which the apostles received from the hand of Christ was not the body of Christ but becomes the body of Christ when the eating of it is begun" (p. 82). In this connection it is not without significance to note the change made in the distribution of the sacrament which Chemnitz made obligatory for all the congregations in Brunswick at Easter 1568 by virtue of his office as municipal superintendent. Johannes Beste reports: "During communion silk cloths and bowls were held up before each communicant so that the spilled blood of Christ might not bring curse and distress upon the city" [Johannes Beste: *Geschichte der Braunschweigischen Landeskirche von der Reformation bis auf unsere Tage,* Wolfenbüttel 1889, p. 100]. Until then, holding up of cloths and bowls was customary only in St. Martin's Lutheran Church in Brunswick [Philipp Julius Rehtmeyer: *Historiae ecclesiasticae inclytae urbis Brunsuigae,* Pars III, Braunschweig 1710, p. 313 f.]. Within the divinely instituted action (II, 3) the faithful veneration of the sacramentally present Christ is permissible; ". . . no one . . . denies that Christ, God and Man, truly and substantially present in his divine and human nature in the action of the Lord's Supper, should be worshiped in spirit and in truth, except someone who, with the Sacramentarians, either denies or harbors doubt concerning the presence of Christ in the Supper" (p. 103). Teigen shows convincingly that this last quotation, directed against the Enthusiasts' denial of the veneration of the sacrament, in concentrated form became part of SD VII, 126. There it stands again in the larger context of anti-Enthusiastic theses, so it would be illegitimate to interpret it in an anti-Roman sense contrary to its intention.

8) Part of the complete *actio sacramentalis* is the distribution and the reception of the sacrament worthy of veneration; "it conflicts with the Words of Institution when the bread which has been blessed is not distributed, not received, not eaten" (p. 175). Thus every kind of sacramental administration is to be rejected where the remains of the consecrated elements are not consumed with the communion service; also the practice of the Roman church to reserve the sacrament and, connected with that, to venerate it outside of the divinely instituted action, is in direct contravention of Christ's clear command.

9) The oral or sacramental partaking in faith of the body and blood of Christ involves man in his totality of soul and body. "The theme that the Lord's Supper is also the 'medicine of immortality' constantly runs through Chemnitz's exposition of the benefits of the sacrament" (p. 157).

When we have looked at Chemnitz's rigorous theology of the Lord's Supper—based solely on the biblical foundation of the *verba testamenti*—and its normative reception in the Formula of Concord, we find it all the more surprising that standard, confessional Lutheran doctrinal works (Baier-Walther, Schmid, Pieper, Hoenecke) hardly ever refer to Chemnitz in detail. Rather they cite almost exclusively the Lutheran theologians of the 17th century and interpret the statements of the church's confessions from that viewpoint.

The theologians of the 17th century in their work and thinking had committed themselves to the (pseudo-) Aristotelian four-causes system. While this is not necessarily an illegitimate method, it can lead to a change in or an abridgement of biblical contents. While for Chemnitz the sacramental union was effected solely by means of Christ's creative word of consecration, the Aristotelian mode of thought leads to a debilitation of the *verba testamenti*, because here the real presence is considered at least in part a consequence of the oral reception, which is a constituent of the formal cause of the Lord's Supper. ". . . for Hunnius, the body and blood of Christ are not present until they are eaten and drunk, since this is the purpose which is intended" (p. 91). Similarly Quenstedt opines: "This sacramental union itself does not take place except in the distribution" (p. 184).

The denial of the unconditional efficaciousness of the words of consecration does away with the veneration of the sacrament within the sacramental action. The Melanchthonian theology of the Lord's Supper propounded in the later stages of Lutheran orthodoxy looked upon the veneration of the sacrament as mere artolatry. Consumption of the remaining elements is no longer looked upon as a theological necessity based

on the command of Christ. The Melanchthonian view of consecration prevalent in later orthodoxy, that it is "general proclamation of the Gospel" (p. 83), or a prayer setting apart the elements or the request for a worthy reception (p. 173), is, strictly speaking, a special form of synergism, since the miracle of the real presence is dependent upon the act of eating and drinking. Quite accurately Teigen concludes that thereby "*a monstrum incertitudinis* with respect to the real presence and the benefits of the sacrament" (p. 101; emphasis by Teigen) arises.

The receptionism prevalent in present-day confessional Lutheran sacramentology, accompanied by a changed concept of "*actio*" in the sense of the "dynamic functionalism" (p. 187), results, according to Teigen, in a change of Christ's efficacious words of institution; this receptionism is not just a tolerable opinion but rather constitutes—in agreement with Chemnitz—"a most serious error" (p. 190). This is of even greater seriousness as the church confesses in SD VII, 32—with a clear reference to the communion services of the Sacramentarians—that a publicly accepted change or misinterpretation of the *verba testamenti* leads to the loss of the sacrament.

In light of the sacramental theology that is now widely spread throughout confessional Lutheran churches, Teigen fears that "only through a 'happy inconsistency' . . . they have had the sacrament of the true body and blood of Christ. But it should be remembered, as Pieper has so often stated, that a happy inconsistency does not extenuate nor legitimize error" (p. 190).

One cannot lay Teigen's work aside without feeling disconcerted. We should be most grateful to the author for the openness and fearlessness with which he points to certain dogmatic deficits within the Lutheran Church. And indeed it is most necessary that through objective though intensive efforts the church may be led back to dogmatic clarity and a sacramental use in accordance with such clarity. This is a matter of obedience to the last will of the Lord as well as our appropriation of salvation independent of any human conditions.

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***The Climax of the Covenant: Christ and the Law in Pauline Theology.*** By N.T. Wright, Minneapolis: Augsburg-Fortress Press, 1992. 316 pages.

The title of Wright's book reflects his "growing conviction that covenant theology is one of the main clues . . . for understanding Paul, and that . . . what he says about Jesus and about the law reflects his belief that the covenant purposes of Israel's God had reached their climactic moment in the events of Jesus' death and resurrection" (p. xi).

This book is a compilation of Wright's "detailed exegesis of certain Pauline passages" which present Paul's view of the relationship of Jesus Christ and Jewish law (p. xi). Some of these essays were previously published and others were given as seminar papers. In this new arrangement, some have received extensive revision while others have not.

This book is divided into two parts, with an introduction and a conclusion. In the introduction Wright raises the question, "What is Pauline Theology?" Part I contains "Studies in Paul's Christology." Part II studies "Paul and the Law." Wright labels his conclusion as "The Climax of the Covenant."

In the introductory chapter, chapter one, Wright states that "Pauline theology" consists in redefining Jewish "monotheism and election, God and Israel . . . by means of christology and pneumatology" (p. 1). Each chapter that follows is intended to answer specific questions that have arisen in the study of "Pauline theology." Wright's answers assume that Paul's theology should be seen with Judaism and not Gnosticism as its background.

In chapter two of the first section, Wright draws exegetical ties between Adam and Christ, Adam and Israel, and Israel and Christ. Adam failed to do what God wanted him to do. Where Adam failed, Israel was given the task. And where both failed, Christ did things perfectly. For Paul, Christ's work of obedience had to undo the disobedience of the first Adam and the curse on Israel, because even with the Law, Israel could not undo the effects of Adam's sin. Christ's death and resurrection have now undone Adam's sin, and have done what God intended to work through Israel. God's privileges given to Israel are now given to Christ and to those who are in Christ (p. 36). These blessings in Christ are for all humanity. Wright does some intricate exegetical studies of the Christ-Adam passages in I Corinthians 15:20–57 and Romans 5:12-21 to reach his conclusions. Wright also relates all of this to God's covenant promises to Abraham (pp. 24–25, 36).

In chapter three, Wright continues to emphasize the "Adam-christology" by an exegetical study of Χριστῷ in Philemon 6. In this chapter Wright argues that Paul's use of Χριστός is inclusive—"basically shorthand for 'the people of the Messiah,'" the new humanity (pp. 48–49). Again Wright folds this into "covenant theology" (p. 48).

Wright continues to build on these ideas in chapter four, which is an exegetical study of Philippians 2:5–11. Wright dismisses the value of any "hypothetical predecessors" of Paul or of the hypothetical predecessor of this particular section of Paul's Epistle to the Philippians (p. 57).

Though Wright correctly relates Paul's theology to the crucifixion of Jesus, he incorrectly rejects the idea of a dying Messiah based on Isaiah 53. Here again Wright states as fact that Israel's task was to "undo the sin of Adam" (p. 61—seen before p. 21ff.). This is a popular idea found in other works tied to "covenant theology" (like *Crossways*!) but one that raises a very serious question—how could Israel, made up of sinful human beings, undo the sin of Adam? Israel could not! For them to do so would be a theology of works. While it is true that salvation comes from the Jews (Jn 4:22), the Jews themselves could not bring that salvation about. Only the promised Messiah could do that. Having salvation come from the Jews in Christ is far different than saying that Israel can "undo the sin of Adam."

Wright does some very detailed exegetical work to determine the exact meaning of the Greek term "ἁρπαγμός." Wright renders this term as "Christ did not consider his equal-

ity with God as something to take advantage of," or "as something to be exploited for his own gain" (pp. 79–80). Wright ties this together with the doctrine of justification, his "Adam-christology," and the incarnation of a preexistent Christ who is God himself. Wright paraphrases Lohmeyer who said of Christ, that "only of a divine being can it be said that he was obedient unto death," because for all other human beings since Adam, "death comes as a mere necessity" (p. 92).

Wright's exegetical study of Colossians 1:15–20 in chapter five is a gold mine. Wright affirms the Pauline authorship of Colossians (p. 1, fn. #3; p. 99, fn. #3; p. 119). In deference to exegetes who are constantly trying to figure out predecessor documents to the biblical materials, Wright states that the task of any exegete "is to deal with the text that we possess," and not with hypothetical originals (p. 100, 102). Thus Wright defends the study of this poem as a unit. He notes that Paul incorporates echoes of Genesis 1:1 and Proverbs 8:22 to emphasize that Jesus is the Wisdom of God at work in creation. Paul works within the framework of Jewish "creational and covenantal monotheism" but redefines these categories as "christological monotheism" (p. 114). Thus Paul differentiates Christianity from Judaism, paganism, polytheism and dualism. The covenant theme is heavily present in this chapter

One significant statement from Wright in this chapter involves the doctrine of the Trinity. "It is now, I believe, necessary to assert that, although the writers of the New Testament did not themselves formulate the doctrine of the Trinity, they bequeathed to their successors a manner of speaking and writing about God which made it, or something very like it, almost inevitable" (p. 117).

Wright's exegetical study of I Corinthians 8 in chapter six sets forth Paul's redefinition of the Jewish *Shema* so that Christ is its center. This chapter is worth its salt because Wright shows how Christianity is opposed to the pagan world. Christian monotheism is very helpful in combating the modern pagan ideas of "mother earth," "new age paganism," etc. Wright's suggestion that Paul set forth a Christian ethic for living in a pagan world is very relevant for today. This chapter closes the first section of the book.

Chapter seven begins Part Two of the book. Wright does an extensive exegetical study of Galatians 3:10–14 in chapter seven and Galatians 3:15–20 in chapter eight. Wright states that this entire chapter of Galatians must be understood as flowing forth from Genesis 15 and Deuteronomy 27–30. For all the good things Wright has in these chapters, he unfortunately overlooks the real significance of Genesis 15—which is a prediction of the death of God in Christ the Messiah. This results from his rejection of the idea that Jewish theology had a tradition predicting the death of the Messiah (p. 60), and from his adherence to covenant theology.

Wright is correct when he says that the story of God's dealing with Abraham is "fundamental" to Paul's theology (p. 140). Paul emphasizes the fact that in Christ, God's blessing to Abraham and the world cannot be prevented from coming to pass by the Torah. Christ's death has broken through the problem of the Torah so that the promised blessing will reach its intended destination (pp. 143–144).

Wright's treatment of the entrance of Gentiles into the people of God (pp. 154 ff.) overlooks the fact that Gentiles had been incorporated into God's Old Testament people from the beginning. The best example of this comes from Deuteronomy 29 to which Wright does not make any reference when dealing with Deuteronomy 27–30 (pp. 145 ff.). There God includes, along with the Jews, the "alien who is within your camps" as those who "may enter into the covenant with the Lord your God, and into His oath . . . in order that He may establish you today as His people and that He may be your God, just as He spoke to you and as He swore to your fathers, to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (Deut. 29:11-13 NASB).

Wright's exegesis of the "Seed" passage in Galatians 3:16 attempts to redefine "Seed" as a plural singular—the people in Christ—rather than as a specific reference to Christ. This ties in with Wright's view that many christological passages in Paul should be interpreted ecclesiologically (chapter eight and pp. 263 ff.). Interestingly enough J.P. Koehler also interpreted the Galatians "Seed" passage in this way [J.P. Koehler, *The Epistle of Paul to the Galatians,* trans. E.E. Sauer (Milwaukee: Northwestern, 1957) pp. 86ff.] Luther interpreted this passage as a reference to Christ [AE 26, pp. 298ff.].

Chapter nine, an exegetical study of II Corinthians 3:18, emphasizes the fact that what "the law could not do, God has done in Christ and by the Spirit" (p. 192). In footnote 13 of this chapter, Wright admits that "justification is not normally associated directly with covenant theology . . ." (p. 178). In that Wright is correct. Even non-Lutherans have testified to the truth that testamental theology is the framework for the doctrine of justification. [Brian Spinks, *Luther's Liturgical Criteria and His Reform of the Canon of the Mass* (Bramcote, Notts: Grove Books—Grove Liturgical Study No. 30, 1982), pp. 27–34; Basil Hall, "*Hoc est Corpus Meum:* The Centrality of the Real Presence for Luther," in George Yule, ed., *Luther: Theologian for Catholics and Protestants* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1985) pp. 112–144].

Wright's study of Romans 1–11 brings the second section of the book to a close and moves into his conclusion. Wright engages the reader in a careful "narrative analysis" of Romans 8:1–11 in chapter ten. In this chapter Wright ties justification to the covenant by defining justification as "covenant membership" (p. 203). Justification here is seen not so much as Christ's justifying of sinners, but as incorporating the justified into God's "covenant people." This seems tied to the emphasis on ecclesiology (the Church) over christology (Christ) seen above.

In explaining how Christ is the "climax of the covenant" Wright emphatically rejects "two covenant theology." This faulty theology says that God will save "physical Israel" (the Jews) without faith in Christ under the "old covenant," just as he will save the Gentiles under the "new covenant." In other words, the "new covenant" does not replace the "old covenant," rather they exist alongside one another—they parallel one another—and both remain in force. Wright notes that here "mainline critical exegesis and mainline fundamentalism" have been "at one" (p. 233).

Wright calls the "two covenant" theology "*anti-semitic*" and emphasizes the fact that Paul himself thought such a posi-

tion "*anti-semitic*" (p. 253—emphasis in the text!). The "two covenant" position says that Christianity is exclusively for "non-Jews." This, says Wright, is "the German Christian theology of the 1930's . . ." (p. 253). Wright also rejects all other faulty forms of this "two covenant" theology which lead to deistic, universalistic, neo-pagan, and fideist ("my religious experience is all that matters") ideas. Wright also rejects "two covenant" theology because it says that "all roads lead to the one god." This is, of course, utterly false and utterly destructive of the strong mission emphasis Paul has in Romans (pp. 254 ff.). Finally, Wright writes against those who believe that there are "silent Christians" who can be saved without faith in Christ as their Savior (p. 254).

Wright's christological monotheism states that one can only be saved by grace through faith in Christ. Wright strongly argues for an inclusive church which incorporates all those for whom Christ died—Jew and Gentile alike! And he just as strongly encourages Christian witnessing and mission activity toward the Jews because the promises God made to Abraham and to the fathers have their real and true fulfillment in Jesus Christ the Messiah. The Jews and the Gentiles, being children of Adam, lack the righteousness of God. They cannot find that righteousness through the Torah and its works. It comes only through the justifying work of God in Christ. Wright upholds the truth that Christ is called God in Romans 9:5 (p. 237).

Interestingly enough, though Wright is a strong covenant theologian, he is more rectilinear than typological in his approach to prophecy (pp. 264-265).

This reviewer rejoiced at numerous things in Wright's book. Some of his "new approaches" to certain texts were very stimulating.

As a Lutheran reviewer of a book published by a Lutheran publishing house, with the review to be published in a Lutheran periodical, I was greatly concerned that Wright should say that we are now living in "a post-Lutheran world" (p. 121). In one sense, Wright's book is supporting evidence for such an assertion.

This reviewer finds that theological life in "a post-Lutheran world" includes the removal of "testamental theology" from the theological battlefield as well as from Lutheranism itself.

Life in a "a post-Lutheran world" causes Wright to say that Paul is a covenant theologian. The linguistic scholar Adolf Deissmann wondered why so many scholars had unhesitatingly translated the Greek word διαθήκη with the word "covenant." Deissmann stated that "no one in the Mediterranean world in the first century A.D. would have thought of finding in the word διαθήκη the idea of 'covenant.' St. Paul would not, and in fact did not. To St. Paul the word meant what it meant in his Greek Old Testament, 'a unilateral enactment,' in particular 'a will or testament'" [G.A. Deissmann, *Light From the Ancient East*, trans. L.R.M. Strachan (New York: Doran, 1927) pp. 337–338]. This Pauline testamental theology was unfortunately absent from Wright's book.

Testamental theology provides a much better framework for many of the points that Wright makes in his book. It presents a clear and sharp distinction between law and gospel. It is intimately tied to the doctrine of justification by grace through faith apart from the deeds of the law. It points forward to the death of God in Christ which was predicted when God passed through the sundered parts of the animals when he made בְּרִית with Abraham in Genesis 15. The High Priest, the sacrificial animals in Old Testament worship—especially the scapegoat—and the Suffering Servant in Isaiah 53 all pointed to the Messiah who would die to redeem his people from their sins. This is the theology which lies behind John the Baptist's statement about Jesus: "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29).

Testamental theology avoids the problematical necessity of having Israel take the role of the Messiah. It avoids having to say that the death of the Messiah is something new. Rather, with testamental theology, the sacrificial death of the Messiah is simply a fulfillment of the basic promises made by God to Adam, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and the entire Jewish nation—as well as to the world.

Sadly, this testamental theology has been replaced with covenant theology in most of Lutheranism and in almost all of Christendom.

For Luther this biblical testamental theology was the core of Christ's justifying work for all sinners, Jew and Gentile alike [*AE* 35, pp. 75–111; AE 36, pp. 35ff. & 269–305; *AE* 37, pp. 307–341]. Though that testamental theology still has its Lutheran adherents today, it is dying a swift death. It is partly because of the demise of testamental theology in Lutheranism that Wright is correct as he notes that we live in a "post-Lutheran world." World Lutheranism will be revived if Lutherans again seize the blessing that is theirs in the testamental theology of Holy Scripture.

That Lutherans might rediscover their testamental theological heritage I include this list of study helps which uphold a testamental understanding of διαθήκη: Ernst Lohmeyer, *Diatheke: Ein Beitrag zur Erklaerung des neutestamentlichen Begriffs* (Leipzig: J.C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1913); Hermann Cremer, *Biblico-Theological Lexicon of New Testament Greek,* trans. W. Urwick (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark—4th English Edition with Supplement, 1895/1962) pp. 549-553 and 887-891; J. Barton Payne, *The Theology of the Older Testament* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1962), pp. 71–96, 246–257, 463–504; *The New Testament: God's Word to the Nations* (GWN) (Cleveland, Ohio: Biblion Publishing, 1988) pp. 531–540.

Wright's book is not easy light reading. Though confessional Lutherans will not agree with everything found in this book because it is written from the perspective of covenant theology, this reviewer found much that was profitable in it.

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*Luther's English Connection: The Reformation Thought of Robert Barnes and William Tyndale.* By James McGoldrick. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1979. Paper. viii + 231 pages.

With this study Professor McGoldrick attempts to steer a path between the traditional premise which once placed Barnes and Tyndale as responsible for spreading Luther's reformation theology to England and the opposite view that Barnes and Tyndale were not reformers interested in theological change, but rather pupils of Erasmus' humanistic moral reform of the church. As McGoldrick states, "The present writer's study of the sources has led him to the conclusion that the traditional view is completely valid with regard to Barnes, and, with some qualifications, generally correct for Tyndale as well. In the case of the latter, it is evident that he disagreed sharply with Luther on the meaning and importance of the eucharistic presence, and his method of defending infant baptism was quite different from Luther's. Because of the great importance that Luther attached to the Eucharist, and in view of Tyndale's divergence from that view, it is probably not appropriate to identify Tyndale simply as an 'English Lutheran,' as we may confidently do with Barnes."

*Paul T. McCain*

*Vogel's Cross Reference and Index to the Contents of Luther's Works: A Cross Reference between the American Edition and the St. Louis Edition of Luther's Works.* By Heinrich J. Vogel. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1983. Cloth. 281 pages.

Vogel provides an indispensable tool for Luther research. The value of this work is quickly realized when one attempts to locate a reference in the Weimar edition based on a quotation of Luther from the St. Louis edition which has been translated and references to the American Edition. Of course, this work does not in any way replace Kurt Aland's *Hilfsbuch zum Lutherstudium,* but given the fact that Aland's work covers every edition available, is in German, costs over $100 and is difficult to come by, Vogel provides a work which may unlock many an unused St. Louis edition sitting on the shelf gathering dust. Vogel explains his purpose: "Most references to Luther's works are made to either the Weimar edition, the St. Louis edition, or the Erlangen edition. Since the completion of the American edition, which is only a selection of Luther's works, the question often arises whether a given reference to the Weimar, St. Louis, or Erlangen editions was included in the American edition, and if so, where. The purpose of this cross reference is to facilitate finding such references in the American edition."

*Paul T. McCain*

*Martin Luther: Reformer in the Making* by Erwin R. Scharf. Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1987. Paper vii + 104 pages.

Erwin Scharf provides a lay audience with a series of popular lectures on the work of Martin Luther. His comments suffice to explain the purpose of this modest little volume. "Those who read these pages will realize that they were not meant to provide an exhaustive biography of Luther or history of the Reformation. It is the author's wish, however, that the reader will find this account worthwhile and helpful to his understanding of the way in which God guided the young Luther along a difficult and challenging pathway to the threshhold of the Reformation."

*Paul T. McCain*

*For All the Saints: Changing Perceptions of Martyrdom and Sainthood in the Lutheran Reformation* by Robert Kolb. Macon, Ga.: Mercer University Press, 1987. Cloth. xii + 186 pages. $29.95.

Kolb summarizes the results of nearly ten years of research into the subject of the development of Lutheran views toward martyrdom and sainthood in this volume. His interest in the subject was initiated by a question regarding a martyr book produced by Ludwig Rabus who produced the first Protestant martyrology. With his typical penchant for thorough historical research and use of the sources, Kolb provides a fascinating analysis of the Lutheran view of saints. He concludes that because the Lutheran reformation had "turned all believers into saints" (p. 156) there was a need to reshape the understanding of the saints. Also, Lutherans quickly developed a high regard for Luther and virtually made Luther the saint *par excellence.* Because of their doctrine of the word, the Lutherans developed a keen interest in the history of the preaching of that word, rather than a superstitious interest in the legends and myths surrounding the medieval veneration of the saints.

With this work Kolb demonstrates how the restoration of the gospel as the chief activity of the church replaced the veneration of the saints. This work provides an excellent resource for discovering the Lutheran use of the saints. The chapter on Luther in later Lutheran lore is particularly interesting and revealing. The only criticism here, again, must be the price of the volume. It is prohibitive. But of course this has nothing to do with the quality of this study, which is excellent and informative and sheds light on a heretofore unexplored aspect of the Reformation and its impact on the religious culture of the Lutheran Church.

*Paul T. McCain*

# Logia Forum

## Short Studies and Commentary

## Pastoral Style and God's Gifts

*The Winter 1993 issue of* certus sermo *cited a portion of Martin Luther's* Commentary on the Gospel of John *(*AE *22:528 ff.), where he wrote the following about a pastor's style. We felt it worthwhile to include the extended reference of that citation.*

My dear friend, regard it as a real treasure that God speaks into your physical ear. The only thing that detracts from this gift is our deficient knowledge of it. To be sure, I do hear the sermon; however, I am wont to ask: Who is speaking? The pastor? By no means! You do not hear the pastor. Of course, the voice is his, but the words he employs are really spoken by my God. Therefore I must hold the word of God in high esteem that I may become an apt pupil of the word.

If we looked upon it as the word of God, we would be glad to go to church, to listen to the sermon, and to pay attention to the precious word. . . . But since we do not honor the word of God or show any interest in our own salvation, we do not hear the word. In fact, we do not enjoy listening to any preacher unless he is gifted with a good and clear voice.

If you look more at the pastor than at God; if you do not see God's person but merely gape to see whether the pastor is learned and skilled, whether he has good diction and articulates distinctly, then you have already become half a Jacob [Gn 27:16–29]. For a poor speaker may speak the word of God just as well as he who is endowed with eloquence. . . .

The same food may be prepared in silver as in dishes of tin. Venison, properly seasoned and prepared, tastes just as good in a wooden dish as in one of silver. We must also make this application to baptism and absolution. This ought to be a comfort to us. People, however, do not recognize the person of God but only stare at the person of man. This is like a tired and hungry man who would refuse to eat unless the food is served on a silver platter.

Such is the attitude that motivates the choice of many preachers today. Many, on the other hand, are forced to quit their office, driven out and expelled. That is done by those who do not know this gift, who assume that it is a mere man speaking to them, although, as a matter of fact, it is even more than an angel, namely, your dear God, who creates body and soul.

This does not imply that we should despise and reject the gifts which God has distributed according to his own measure, more to the one and fewer to the other; for gifts are manifold. However, there is but one God who works through this multiplicity of gifts (1 Cor 12:6). One dare not despise the treasure because of the person.

## Allegorical Worship

Balls dropping down. Balloons lifting off. Clowns miming. Dancers dancing. Lights flashing. People clapping. It is not altogether unusual to experience such things at Lutheran congregations, LWML conventions, and youth gatherings in our nation. "Adiaphora," claim those who organize such events. "Something must be done to hold the attention of those who are gathered to receive the means of grace"—something more exciting than the historic liturgy.

If people want to drop balls and release balloons, we have no argument with that. Let people do it to their hearts' content. If they find some spiritual significance in all of it, if they are brought closer to God by it, if it gives meaning to their lives, who are we to criticize? But we do have questions, such as, "When is a thing what it is?"

The appeal of adding such elements to the divine service seems to be symbolic, sensational and subjective. Those who plan such events are no doubt trying to help others gain insight into the meaning and significance of the divine service. By audiovisual metaphor and simile they attempt to convey what God's grace, mercy and peace are like. What we are then confronted with, however, is allegorical worship rather than the Divine Service.

Nothing actually is what it is supposed to be. Everything is allegorized: symbolized, sensationalized and subjectivized. Instead of an absolution that really is an absolution, we have some *illustration* of what absolution must be like. Invocations and benedictions find themselves encumbered with earthly imageries which are intended to manifest spiritual realities. If one didn't know better, it would seem that we are exchanging the love of Christ for a platonic relationship with the Lord God Almighty.

Here is where Evangelical style is no longer Lutheran sub-

stance. It comes dangerously close to a Eucharist that has "significance" instead of a Lord's Supper which does what it says. It isn't too far from a baptism that is "like" water which washes us clean instead of a Holy Baptism that now saves us. It is flirting with scriptural words which ought to have some "meaning" for our lives instead of the word of God which breathes life and Spirit into us.

Somewhere in the midst of all those parables, bubbles, lights, smoke, costumes, and streamers, there may still be a remnant of something that is what it is. If we happen to visit a congregation which engages such analogies, perhaps we can lean toward a regular attender, asking him or her to point out the realities in the program so that we can be ready for them. They will assuredly be friendly and caring enough to do so . . . if they can.

JAB

# What's in a Name? Eucharist or Lord's Supper?

*The following was originally published in* Word & World, *Winter, 1989, pp. 52, 54. Used with permission. Subscription inquiries can be directed to Word & World, 2481 Como Ave., St. Paul, MN 55108.*

In the confusion of the contemporary church it is essential to maintain a sense for the objectivity of the gifts of divine grace. It is of utmost importance to remember just who is giving and who is given in the sacraments. We are to eat and drink in remembrance of the Lord. Thus what we do should be called the Lord's Supper. That is the earliest biblical name (1 Cor 11:20) as well as the most apt and comprehensive designation for the sacrament. Other designations, particularly "the Eucharist," are theologically misleading and deceptive.

We are indeed to give thanks (εὐχαριστεῖν) for God's gifts to us. But to turn the sacrament into our thanksgiving is to comport ourselves more in the fashion of the Pharisee than the publican. At least two things go wrong. First, there is a disastrous change of subject in the sacramental action. Second, since prayer can by analogy be understood as sacrifice, the way is left open to interpret the whole as our sacrifice to God rather than the Lord's gift to us. This is hopelessly to mix up and confuse what the Reformation tried so carefully to distinguish. It is to set in place once again exactly what was rejected. When the Augsburg confessors spoke about sacraments which are to be administered "according to the gospel" (AC VII), this is the sort of issue they had in mind.

We need to look at these two effects, the change in subject and the question of sacrifice, a bit more closely. When the Lord's Supper becomes the Eucharist, we become the acting subjects in the sacrament rather than the Lord. The way is then open to the bowdlerization and sentimentality evident in many quarters today in which the Supper becomes the occasion for our communion with one another rather than with the Lord. So the Eucharist is done in small groups, in "caring community" programs, out on the trail, and goodness knows where. People are to participate, apparently, more on the basis of feelings and needs in relation to others than because of faith in the Lord. The Supper has become a means to promote our togetherness but not a partaking of the body and blood of the Lord.

There is little new under the sun. Already at the time of the Reformation Luther knew of this kind of development. When the word promising the presence of the Lord was taken away, the Supper degenerated into just an occasion for human togetherness. It became, as Luther remarked, like a parish fair (*AE* 37:141). To that, Luther insisted:

> . . . It is the Lord's Supper, in name and in reality, not the supper of Christians. For the Lord not only instituted it, but also prepares and gives it himself, and is himself cook, butler, food, and drink. . . . Christ does not say, in commanding and instituting it, "Do this as your summons to mutual recognition and love," but "Do this in remembrance of me" (*AE* 37:142).

An age which has already reduced God pretty much to a meaningless cipher, a sentimentality characterized as "love in general," cannot afford to lose sight of the fact that this sacrament is the Lord's Supper, not ours. He gives it. He is the gift. We are indeed to give thanks for this unspeakable gift. But the thanksgiving must be quite distinct; it must not displace the gift itself. When the Lord's Supper becomes the Eucharist everything is run together and confused and the sheer gift of the gospel is obscured, if not lost.

But the second problem is even more serious: the Supper is interpreted as a sacrifice. What occurred on the night in which our Lord was betrayed is simply run together uncritically with what happened on the day he was crucified and then the whole is interpreted by the very ambiguous and amorphous metaphor of sacrifice. The number of theological and systematic problems stirred up by such a metaphor is legion. Once again, the Lord's *Supper* as sheer gift—as our Lord's last will and testament—gets lost, swallowed up by all the talk of our eucharistic sacrifice. The whole burden of the Reformation in this regard was to distinguish carefully between the sacrament—the gift—and whatever "sacrifice" of prayer and praise might surround it.

All the recent attempts to rescue the idea of sacrifice, moving away from "repetition" to liturgical "representation" (the key concept in all modern discussion, including that of *Baptism, Eucharist, and Ministry*), have been only cosmetic. Calling the Supper the Eucharist simply paves the way for the return to an understanding of the whole in terms of the sacrificial scheme the Reformation rejected. This is the hidden root of all our troubles about ministry. Where sacrificial conceptuality takes over we have to reinstitute a priesthood to do the sacrifice.

What one finds in the church today is either the sacrament of our togetherness (the parish fair) or a return to sacrificial views which obscure and distort the gospel. What the church needs is not "the Eucharist," but the Lord's Supper!

Gerhard O. Forde
Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary
St. Paul, Minnesota

## Easter Buffoonery and Effective Ministry

"Particularly unchristian is every kind of such buffoonery in the church when men are gathered to hear and learn the Word of God. But the practice is common where many come together. Even where at first things of a serious nature are discussed, men soon pass to frivolous, wanton, foolish talk, resulting in a waste of time and the neglect of better things. For instance, on the festival of Easter, foolish and ridiculous stories have been introduced into the sermon to arouse the drowsy . . ."

—Martin Luther
Sermon for the Third Sunday in Lent
Lenker's *Sermons of Martin Luther*, 7:155

"To achieve creditable results, my friends, a minister must needs preach the Word of God in its truth and purity without any adulteration whatsoever. This is the first and foremost requisite for success. Some preachers of our time hush certain teachings that are offensive to worldly people. They do this with the good intention of not shocking their hearers. But this is a great mistake. You cannot make a person a true Christian by oratory, though it be ever so sublime and fervent, but only by the Word of God. The Word of God alone produces repentance, faith, and godliness, and preserves men therein unto the end."

—C.F.W. Walther
*Law and Gospel* (Dau), p. 111

"If you want to be a maker of God, come here and listen. He wants to teach you the art so that you do not err and make an idol but make the true God as he really is. . . . Learn to remember him, that is, as has been said, by preaching, praising, honoring, listening, and giving thanks for the grace revealed in Christ. If you do that, behold, you are confessing with heart and mouth, with ears and eyes, with body and soul that you have given nothing to God, nor are able to, but that you have and receive each and every thing from him, particularly eternal life and infinite righteousness in Christ. When this takes place, you have made him the true God for yourself, and by means of such a confession you have upheld his divine glory. For this is a true God who gives and does not receive, who helps and does not let himself be helped, who teaches and rules and does not let himself be taught or ruled. In short, he does and gives everything, and he has need of no one; he does all things freely out of pure grace without merit, for the unworthy and undeserving, yes, for the damned and lost. This kind of remembrance, confession, and glory he desires to have.

It is true that such worship takes place devoid of all splendor and does not appeal to the eye according to the flesh; but it fills the heart, which otherwise neither heaven nor earth could fill. If the heart is filled, then also eyes and ears, mouth and nose, body and soul, and all members must be filled. For the way the heart behaves, so all the members behave and act, and each and every thing you do is nothing but an expression of praise and thanks to God. That is then a different ornament and embellishment from the golden chasubles, yes, from imperial, royal, papal crowns; the ornaments and glitter of all churches and all the world are as refuse compared with this glorious remembrance of Christ."

—Martin Luther
"Admonition Concerning the Sacrament" (1530)
*AE* 38:107 ff.

## Pietism for Evangelism and Missions?

*The January 1993 issue of* evangel*, a publication of the American Association of Lutheran Churches (AALC), reported on the first national evangelism conference of The Great Commission Network held November 29-December 1 at Glory Lutheran Church in Plymouth, Minnesota. The following excerpts note an appeal by several leading Lutheran theologians to promote Pietism as a model for evangelism today.*

Dr. Carl Braaten, from the Lutheran School of Theology in Chicago, surprised and delighted many at the conference with his message during the opening worship Sunday evening. Dr. Braaten, who has sometimes been criticized for tendencies toward universalism (the belief that in the end all people will be saved whether or not they believe on Christ), delivered a vigorous offensive *against* universalism. . . .

Braaten went on to affirm Pietism as the source of Lutheran involvement in missions. "From the period of Lutheran orthodoxy in the 17th century we have inherited a centripetal concern for the pure doctrine of the gospel," he said. "From Lutheran Pietism we have inherited a centrifugal passion to traverse the whole world." Braaten criticized mainline bureaucrats and seminaries which have no zeal for missions. "What is missing today," he said, "is person-to-person and heart-to-heart sharing of the gospel."

Dr. Walter Sundberg, from Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary, reviewed the history of Lutheran failures in evangelism and lifted up Philipp Jakob Spener as a model for today. Spener (1635–1705), the founder of Lutheran pietism, also lived at a time when he could say: "This church is dying." His book *Pia Desideria* describes his [Spener's] attempt to revive the church through daily use of God's Word and fellowship groups committed to Christian discipleship.

The closing address was given by Rev. Homer Larsen, senior pastor at Nazareth Lutheran Church in Cedar Falls, Iowa. Larsen affirmed Dr. Sundberg's assertion that Lutherans "don't need to ask permission" or apologize for calling sinners to "conversion" and to "decision for Christ." He noted that all of the speakers had agreed in rejecting a false security about baptism. We must "get on with it," Pastor Larsen said, and call back those who have "drifted away from their baptismal covenant. Go home and preach for a decision!" he said.

## Surrender to Secularism

*The following is an excerpt from Alexander Schmemann's* For the Life of the World, *published by St. Vladimir Press, 1973, p. 109.*

It sounds like a paradox, but the basic religion that is being preached and accepted as the only means of overcoming secularism is in reality a *surrender* to secularism. This surrender can take place (and actually does) in all Christian confessions, although it is differently "colored" in a nondenominational suburban "community church" than in a traditional, hierarchical, confessional and liturgical parish. For the surrender consists not in giving up creeds, traditions, symbols, and customs (of all this the secular man, tired of his functional office, is sometimes extremely fond), but in accepting the very function of religion in terms of promoting the secular value of help, be it help in character building, peace of mind, or assurance of eternal salvation.

It is this key that religion is preached to, and accepted by, millions and millions of average believers today. And it is really amazing how little difference exists in the religious self-consciousness of members of confessions whose dogmas seem to stand in radical opposition to one another. For even if a man changes religions, it is usually because he finds this one he accepts as offering him more help, not more truth.

While religious leaders are discussing ecumenicity at the top, there exists already at the grass roots a real ecumenicity in this "basic religion." It is here in this "key" that we find the source of apparent success of religions in some parts of the world, such as America, where the religious "boom" is due primarily to the secularization of religion. It is also the source of the decline of religion in those parts of the world where man has not time enough yet for constant analysis of his anxieties and where secularism still holds out the great promise of bread and freedom.

## Doing Without Liturgy

*This is an excerpt from the reprint* Liturgy and Spiritual Awakening *by Bo Giertz, translated by Clifford A. Nelson, available through Concordia Theological Seminary Press, Fort Wayne, Ind., p. 4.*

There can be no normal church life without liturgy. Sacraments need form. The order of worship must have some definite pattern. It is possible to live for a short time on improvisations and on forms that are constantly changing and being made over. One may use only free prayers and yet create a new ritual for every worship situation. But the possibilities are soon exhausted. One will have to repeat, and with that the making of rituals is in full swing.

In circles where people seek to live without any forms, new forms are nevertheless constantly taking shape. Favorite songs are used again and again with monotonous regularity. Certain prayer expressions are constantly repeated, traditions take form and traditional yearly ceremonies are observed. But it would not be wrong to say that the new forms that grow up in this way are usually less attractive and more profane than the ancient liturgy. They contain less of God's Word. They pray and speak without scriptural direction. They are not so much concerned about expressing the whole content of Scripture, but are satisfied with one thing or another that seems to be especially attractive or popular. The new liturgy that grows in this manner is poorer, less biblical, and less nourishing to the soul than the discarded ancient order.

## Worthy Reception

*Luther was all too familiar with folks who absented themselves for a long period of time from the Lord's Supper. In his "Admonition Concerning the Sacrament" (1530), he specifically wishes "to provide clergymen and preachers with the reasons to be used in admonishing their people and attracting them to the sacrament . . . to move them to go to the sacrament willingly and without human compulsion and to receive the same with joy." What follows is a portion of that work found in* AE *38:127-129 along with the admonition to pick up your own copy from Concordia Publishing House!*

In order that everyone may learn what a tricky knave the devil is, I want to give an example out of my own experience to all who are willing to let themselves be warned. It has happened to me several times that I resolved to go to the sacrament on this or that day. When the day arrived, my devotion disappeared or some hindrance came up, or I regarded myself unfit, saying: "Very well, I will go in a week." But the next week again found me as unfit and encumbered as on the former occasion: "Very well, I will go next week." Those weeks became so numerous that I almost got away from it entirely and hardly ever went to the sacrament. But when God granted me grace to become aware of the devil's knavery, I said: "Do you want to make a wager, Satan, that I don't know what you are up to? A plague upon your cleverness!" So I broke out of the vicious circle and participated in the sacrament, even without making confession several times (which I do not ordinarily do) to spite the devil, particularly because I was not conscious of any gross sins.

And so I discovered this about myself: if a person has no longing or reverence for the sacrament and yet earnestly makes the effort to participate in it, then such thoughts and the action itself bring forth sufficient reverence and longing and do a good job of driving away the lazy and morose thoughts which hinder a person and make him unfit. For it is a gracious, efficacious sacrament; if one thinks about it only a little with earnestness and prepares oneself for it, then it kindles, arouses, and further attracts the heart to itself. Try it, and if you do not find it to be thus, you can accuse me of lying. I am willing to wager that you, too, will find that the devil has artfully fooled you and has cleverly kept you from the sacrament so that he

might in time make you lose faith entirely and make you forget about your dear Savior and all your need.

If you had no other reason or need to participate in the sacrament, my dear fellow, would this not be a sufficient sin or need that you find yourself cold and indifferent toward the sacrament? What is this other than finding yourself cold and indifferent toward believing, thanking, and thinking about your dear Savior and all his benefits which he has shown you by his bitter suffering with which he redeemed you from sins, death, and the devil and made you righteous, alive, and blessed? How will you kindle your interest in the face of such coldness and disinclination? How will you awaken your faith? How will you be aroused to give thanks? Will you wait until the sacrament itself comes to you, or the devil gives you permission, or his mother urges you to do so? Nothing will ever come of this. Here you must encourage yourself and hold fast to the sacrament; it is a fire which can kindle hearts. Here you must consider your need and poverty and listen to and believe in the benefits of your Savior. Thus your heart will change and you will get other ideas.

For this reason God acted rightly and properly when he has permitted us to remain in a state in which we must fight and wrestle with sins, death, the devil, the world, the flesh, and all sorts of temptations, so that we are obliged and compelled to seek and desire his grace, help, word, and sacrament. Otherwise, if this were not the case, no human would be at all likely to inquire either after his word or after his sacrament, or seek either grace or help. But now that such hounds, yes, devils, are after us and pursue us, we must indeed become more alert and, as a hunted deer longs for fresh water, we too should cry out for God, as Psalm 42 [:1] says. In this way our faith will become well exercised, experienced, and strong, and we shall abide and become established in Christ.

But if you say that you do not feel sin, death, the world, the devil, etc., and are not engaged in a fight or a struggle with them, and therefore no need compels you to partake of the sacrament, I answer: "I hope that you are not serious in believing that you alone among all the saints and people on earth should be without such a feeling." If I knew that you were really serious about it, I would truly arrange it so that on all streets on which you walk all the bells would have to be rung and ahead of you they would cry out: "Here comes a new saint, exalted above all saints, who neither feels nor has sin." But I want to tell you without jesting: "If you do not feel any sin, you are assuredly completely dead in sins, yes, dead, and sin is reigning over you with might." I do not even have to mention, of course, external sins such as a desire for unchastity, adultery, anger, hatred, envy, revenge, pride, covetousness, lasciviousness, etc.; the fact that you have neither the need nor the desire to partake of the sacrament is in itself already a most serious and great sin. From this we perceive that you also have no faith, that you have no regard for God's word, have forgotten about Christ's suffering, and are full of unthankfulness and all kinds of spiritual abominations.

My counsel therefore is this: If you find that you are so utterly insensitive that you do not feel sin, death, etc., take hold of your mouth, nose, ears, hands and feel whether they are flesh or stone. If they are flesh, very well, then at least believe the Scripture, if you cannot trust your feelings. For Scripture says: "The desires of the flesh are against the Spirit" [Galatians 5:17], also Romans 7 [:18]: "Nothing good dwells within me, that is, in my flesh.," and so forth. In accordance with these sayings, speak thus: "Truly, I am aware of my bodily flesh. Surely there is nothing good in it. For that reason, so long as I have flesh, it is of course necessary for me to go to the sacrament to strengthen my faith and spirit against the flesh which is opposed to my spirit." Scripture is not lying to you, but your feeling and your lack of feelings are deceiving you: for, although sin is forgiven and also conquered by Christ so that it cannot condemn us or accuse the conscience, it nevertheless has remained to the extent that it can tempt us and thus can exercise us in our faith.

## Luther's Hausandacht

*In our last issue we were able to provide two devotions translated by Rev. Joel Baseley from Luther's* Tägliche Hausandachten von alle Tage des Kirchenjahres *compiled by George Link and published in 1877. We are delighted to publish several more in this issue, reminding our readers of Pastor Baseley's caveat: "This is a working document—a first translation. If some sentences are longer and harder to follow, it is because they are close to German idiom. You can help me by returning your comments with some ???'s where you find the translation tedious or confusing."*

### SUNDAY OF TRINITY XXI

**"Your priests are clothed in righteousness and Your saints rejoice." Psalm 132:9**

God promises that He will so govern the priests—that they are pure and holy through the Word and should have a good conscience. If we could hold this against their little deficiencies in mortal things, we would suffer this priesthood with greater patience.

I became a monk and have lived in confusion. I have been bound with cords of a troubled conscience through which the press of human conditions piles one sin upon another. I was bound against nature to an impure chastity outside of marriage. If someone had said to me how I could purchase the costly freedom with Christ and the great glory and prize which we now have through the Word and the Spirit of God, I would have fallen on my face, would have gladly given my life, if only to plead for the redemption of my conscience.

Yet now, because we are in truth clothed with salvation by way of the majestic and public promises of forgiveness of sins and of eternal life, we forget such spiritual goods and kingdom, and lament that we are no kings in this mortal life and hold our eternal and divine honor as no big thing. But that is the height of unthankfulness, that we become so annoyed by external poverty, and that we don't rather have joy and happiness because of such great spiritual goods. For who would not rather beg from house to house, yet possessing spiritual goods,

than be Bishop of Mainz, or Pope, which, since they are enemies of the Word, who are under the unfortunate blessedness of the goods of the world? For they do not have the forgiveness of sins, so they are deficient in the hope of eternal life, knowledge of Christ, and everything else which we have through the Word unto overflowing.

If we are also despised, martyred, sorrowed, plagued, horrified and poor before the world, we should be comforted by those gifts we receive from the heavenly kingdom, that we are more than conquerors through faith in the Word over sin, death and Satan; that we are thoroughly and completely clothed with salvation.

How many people have fallen into doubt in this wholesome and blissful time? If they had had the knowledge of grace and the consolation of the Word, don't you think that they would rather lose all the goods of the world because of it? For if one feels the wrath of God and doubt, therefore all the goods would melt in importance and become too feeble. What good, then, are art, cities, kingdoms and principalities?

That's why Paul calls the complete [earthly] heritage faith, that all things be dropped for the sake of the knowledge. So even if we have to live on beggar's bread, this fact will not break you, because we eat bread with angels, the gospel, Christ and the sacraments? But no one tastes this in the papacy who wants to follow the papacy and seek a cardinal's miter [made] with the devil's forge. I strove after other goods, which those wise fellows, which are either Epicurean or Academics, actually despise. But I hold it higher then all the pearls of the world and all its gold.

If I, for my first thirty years, had truly understood only a single psalm, I would have thought that I would have been as God. Everything was so full of atrocious errors, horror and countless idolatries. But now that the Lord has revealed divine wisdom and knowledge just like a flood, we do not seek unthankful people or worldly goods, and we are so gentle, that we do not mind that something is lacking to us, which the world has. But Is 28:20 states that the bed is narrow, therefore both [divine and worldly things] could not have room.

We do not reject worldly goods for they are God's gifts. But to whom they are given, he it is who has them with thanksgiving. Without complaint he fills the needs of his neighbor. But to those who do not approach wealth, He would have them suffer patiently, as Paul says that he could suffer anything, both being fed and hungry, having enough and suffering need, and so forth. This is because we have another kingdom in heaven, and an expectation of blessedness. The One who has begun to give us through the Word and Sacrament gives purely and unfalsifiably the Word and the priesthood in order that we would not concern ourselves greatly with other things.

Therefore, this is a wonderful understanding, that the church and the Word must remain until the end of the world. That will not happen by human advice or wisdom, but rather that God would clothe His priest with salvation. If now just as Ahab and the other godless kings of the time, the world is full of idolatry, also there were yet true prophets, through which the Word could be obtained. (Altb. VII, 652-653.)

Anoint them prophets. Make their ears attent
To Thy divinest speech, their hearts awake
To human need, their lips make eloquent
To gird the right and ev'ry evil break.

## MONDAY OF TRINITY XXI

**"So as you forgive people their sins, so will your heavenly Father also forgive your sins." Matthew 6:14**

That is a wonderful supplement which is also very precious and would make everyone marvel how He adds such a supplement upon this single petition, "Forgive us our trespasses," as he might also have done with other such petitions and say: "Give us this day our daily bread as we give it to our children." Or, "Lead us not into temptation, as we also tempt no one." " Loose us from evil, as we save and loose our neighbor." Yet there is no petition that has such an addition as this. And it appears that the forgiveness of sins should be earned by our forgiveness. Where, then, does our teaching stand, that forgiveness comes alone through Christ and is experienced alone by faith?

The first answer is that He had wanted to especially establish this prayer and bind the forgiveness of sins to our own forgiveness, that He therewith attach the Christians to it and by that love one another and let this be their chief article and foremost, next to faith and receiving forgiveness; that they would continuously forgive their neighbor. That, as we have from Him in faith, we also will be so disposed to our neighbor through love; that we don't annoy each other and make each other sorrowful. But rather than think that we are always forgiven, if such sorrow is done to us (as must also in life be encountered), we shall know that it is not forgiven us. For where wrath and ill will lay in the way, then it ruins the whole prayer so that one can neither desire or pray the previous petition.

See, this makes a fast and strong bond, by which we are held together, that we not become disunited from each other and cause splitting, factions and sects, where we would come, pray and secure something before God differently. But rather we agree with each other through love and remain united in all things. When that happens, then it is a mature Christian community, as they both rightly believe and love. What thereafter is yet defective, that should be consumed in the prayer and everything be forgiven and bestowed.

But how does He [the Lord] place the forgiveness of our sins even upon our works and say: "If you forgive your neighbor, then shall you be forgiven, and on the other hand . . . ?" Does this not say that the forgiveness does not stand on our faith? Answer: The forgiveness of sins, as I have already often said, happens in two ways: first through the gospel and Word of God, which is experienced inwardly in the heart before God through faith. To others, outwardly through works from which Peter speaks in 2 Peter 1, where he teaches about good works: "Dear brothers, be diligent, make your calling and election sure." There he desires that we should make sure that we have faith and the forgiveness of sins, that is, that we be informed of the works, that one knows a tree by its fruits, and they make

apparent that it is a good tree and not a rotten tree. For where there is a right faith, there surely follow good works. So a person is both inwardly and outwardly pious and right, both before God and people. For that is the consequence and the fruit by which I make sure to myself and others that I have right faith, which I previously could not know or see.

So here is also the outward forgiveness, so I, indeed, reveal a true sign, that I have forgiveness of sin from God. Again, when one does not show this to his neighbor, then I have a sure sign that I do not have the forgiveness of sins from God, but rather am stuck in unbelief. Behold, that is the twofold forgiveness. On the one hand it is inside the heart and depends only upon God's Word and outwardly it breaks out and overflows and makes us sure that we have it inwardly. So we distinguish between faith and life, as an inward and outward righteousness in this way. The inward is previously there as the trunk and the root out of which good works, as fruit, must grow. The outward is but a sign of the same and as St. Peter says, *certificatio,* an affirmation, that such is definitely there. For he who does not have the inner righteousness, does none of the outward works. Again, where there are no outward signs and evidence, then I cannot be sure of that one. But rather such a one deceives himself and others. But when I see and feel that I gladly forgive my neighbor, then I can say with confidence that I do not do that according to my nature, but rather I experience something different through God's grace than I did before. (Altb. V, 871-872.)

Make them apostles, heralds of Thy cross;
Forth may they go to tell all realms Thy grace.
Inspired of Thee, may they count all but loss
And stand at last with joy before Thy face.

## TUESDAY OF TRINITY XXI

**"Dear brothers, when a person is overcome by some sin, you, who are spiritual, return him to the right with a gentle spirit." Galatians 6:1**

Among those who love Christ and rightly learn His Word and believe, we offer the observation that we not only keep peace and unity, but also desire with hearty pleasure to suffer and bear all human weaknesses and sins, and would gladly with a humble spirit instruct.

This is not only what St. Paul teaches here, but also is what he makes known by his deeds. For he had endured the Galatians in their weakness, in which they had so horridly fallen, and also other communities, which the false apostles had turned, who thought they could turn [from Christ] and make their hearts and zeal better. So he had also taken up the task to restore those involved in incest in 2 Corinthians 2. He had reconciled the servant Onesimus, whom he had converted to the faith in Rome while he was imprisoned, and restored him to his master.

Even so, here and in other places, he teaches through his own example how one should help another who has so fallen. So these are examples where he would counsel, that is, he would make known their errors, sins and failings of heart in order to improve them. But when he was opposed, he encountered the most speedy attacks by the false prophets who were so hardened and would defend their doctrine as if it were not erroneous, but rather rightly fashioned. "Would to God," he says, "that they also would be eliminated, who are destroying you," or "Whoever makes you fall into error, let him bear his judgment, no matter who he is," or "Even if we, or an angel from heaven. . . . Let him be accursed."

And there is no doubt about this, that there would be many who are false apostles against St. Paul who have defended themselves and said that they also had the Spirit and were Christ's servants, who taught the gospel just as St. Paul. If we do not agree with him in all articles of doctrine, Paul should not for that reason speak against us with such a frightening judgment, since by his being so stubborn, he shows nothing else than that he only makes the congregation wander and divides their fine unity. But he doesn't let any such fine practical words stand to contest his own. Rather he acts in freedom from them. He damns and curses the false apostles without great show, calls them detractors of the congregation and perverters of the gospel of Christ. He lifts his doctrine very high in opposition and desires that all should yield and give way to peace so that there can be unity of love, apostolicity, angels of heaven or whatever is eternal.

So if you desire to be a true caretaker of souls [Seelsorger], you must quickly learn this doctrine of Paul and be concerned with those who are so fallen. Dear brothers, he says, when one is overcome in a sin, embitter and afflict him no further. Do not dismiss or condemn him but help him to restoration; advise him (as is contained in the Greek word), and bring alive to restoration through your humble spirit what the devil has ruined in him by his cunning and the weakness of the flesh. For the kingdom, into which you have been called, is not a kingdom in which one's conscience is frightened and tortured, but rather it should correct and comfort him. Because of this, where you see some brother who is frightened for the sake of his sins committed, run to him, extend your hand to him, that he again can be established after his fall. Comfort him with fleet, loving words and receive him again with a mother's heart.

But those hardened in their thought and impenitence who persevere and proceed forth without fruit in all the security in sin, those you scold and punish hard. Then again, those who are overcome in some sin, whose fall is suffered and because of it sorrow comes, then you who are spiritual should aid and advise and do all with a humble spirit. Not with great sharpness and severity, as some father confessors take care to do, which were sent to refresh by the life-giving spoken comfort and to make alive, but afflict weak hearts with their feet. But they give nothing other than only vinegar and gall to drink as the Jews did to Christ on the cross. (Altb. VI, 871.)

Anoint them priests. Strong intercessors, they,
For pardon and for charity and peace.
Ah, if with them the world might, now astray,
Find in our Lord from all its woes release!

# To the Diaspora: Another Perspective

*It is not easy for your* Logia Forum *editor to appreciate all that lies behind each paragraph of articles submitted by contributing editors (N.B.: contributing editors noted on our masthead have their articles attributed to them by initials while others are listed by name and location). In the Epiphany 1993 issue, editor GFW offered six examples of candidates for the holy ministry of the Word abusing their divine call into the ministry. Certain aspects of that essay triggered various responses which were either a bit too personal or too argumentative to reproduce in the Letters or Forum section. Then came the following article which offers another perspective.*

*We do not by any means intend to allow this* Forum *to be transformed into a* Coliseum. *We hope the following perspective will contribute to a constructive and evangelical dialogue. Having personally spoken to both of these contributing editors in the meantime, your* Logia *Forum editor is happy to report that no seething invectives lie behind either of these articles—and there is every indication that everything will work together for good. . . .*

I would like to offer six examples of district presidents or placement officers and/or committees abusing their *jure humana* function in the placement process of candidates for the ministry.

Candidate A—was extended a call by the Lord of the church through his church. The calling congregation specified his name on the call document and sent it to the district president for processing through the LCMS Board for Higher Education. The president declined to forward the divine call. The call was not filled. The congregation is still vacant.

Candidate B—a husband and father of three children, was extended a call from a congregation which was unable to give him a living salary. He was forced to decline the call for that reason. He was told by a member of the seminary placement committee that he would not receive another call "for a long time," many months. He called his father-in-law for help. His father-in-law in turn called the president of the synod who in turn called a district president who in turn contacted a congregation which had already expressed its desire for that specific candidate as its pastor. A call was extended with alacrity and the candidate accepted it.

Candidate C—a husband and father of four children was placed in a congregation unable to support even a *single* pastor. Obliged to return the call, he waited ten months before hearing from the seminary placement committee and receiving another call.

Candidate D—served a vacancy congregation as a student for some time. The people learned to love him and wanted him as their pastor. They extended a call for a candidate, expressing their desire to be sent Candidate D. The call was duly processed. No candidate was assigned the call, and today, almost a year later, the congregation is still without a pastor. Candidate D was also expressly requested by three other congregations, but was not placed in any of them.

Candidate E—attended graduate school for a year and returned home the following spring. He wrote and called the seminary director of placement, asking for an interview which would lead to placement. Although he traveled hundreds of miles for the interview, the placement director declined to see him. Ten months later, he has still not been contacted by the seminary placement office.

Candidate F—had a very good and successful vicarage and became acquainted with a nearby congregation which, being denied a vicar for a couple of years, needed an assistant pastor. Candidate F was called. Along with 31 other students he received no call at the April placement. The congregation again issued a call specifically to him and submitted the call to the district president for processing. The district president did not do so. However, the district office forwarded the call to the chairman of the Board of Assignments of the Council of Presidents.

At the July placement the candidate expected to receive a call from that congregation, but was given a call to another congregation. Meanwhile, a third call was issued by the congregation which had specifically first asked for Candidate F to be assigned to them. The candidate contacted the district president and asked for advice. The president told the candidate he would authorize ordination and installation if the candidate was led to accept the call. After seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit through much prayerful consideration, reading of Scripture and counsel from professors and friends, the candidate accepted the call first which had now been issued three times.

Subsequently, the district president refused to authorize ordination or installation of the candidate, and the Board of Assignments concurred. The candidate has now served the congregation as assistant pastor for eight months, but remains unordained.

A common factor in all of these cases is that seminary placement officers and/or district presidents whose office it is to facilitate the call of candidates into the holy ministry have at times done just the opposite. They have thus caused hurt to conscientious and faithful candidates who desire the office of a bishop (1 Tim 3:1). They have in effect denied to congregations the right to "call, elect, and ordain ministers" (Tr 67; *AE* 39:305–314). The cases represent an abuse of the call.

We can only conclude that the divine call into the ministry of the word is abused not only by self-seeking, self-serving candidates whom God forgives for Christ's sake and the church should forgive, but by careless, cynical, and even mean-spirited placement officers and district presidents whom God forgives for Christ's sake and the church should forgive as well.

Can anything positive be done by the church in the *jure humano* placement process of candidates in cases like these? Can the number of self-seeking and self-serving candidates be decreased? Can the harm done candidates and congregations by arbitrary and uncaring placement officers and district presidents be averted?

On the basis of a very fruitful conversation with Prof. Daniel J. Simundons, Dean of Academic Affairs at Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary, and one of his staff, I would offer the following suggestions:

1) Allow the candidate to pick the area of the country and the type of ministry (country, town, suburbia, inner city, black, Hispanic, deaf work, dual parish, assistant pastor, etc.) and then *respect* his desires as much as possible. For instance, a candidate in the ELCA who does not desire to be an assistant pastor is not placed into that kind of ministry. In the LCMS the practice has been quite the contrary as of late. In the ELCA a candidate is regularly placed in the district (or region: he has three choices) he desires or a district adjacent to it. This is often not the case in the LCMS.

2) If a candidate declines a placement, do not penalize him for being self-serving. Do not force him to wait a long period of time before extending another call, and do not demand that he return to the seminary placement committee for "re-certification." Such treatment has had devastating results on candidates financially; it has wasted their valuable time and sometimes it has kept them out of the ministry permanently. Certification in the ELCA holds for a three-year period and is only then reviewed on a yearly basis, a kind and reasonable policy.

On the basis of the Scriptures, the doctrine of the Lutheran Confessions and out of loving consideration to both the calling congregation and the candidate, I would offer the following suggestions:

1) Encourage congregations to call a specific candidate if the people know and trust such a person.

2) If there has been some infraction of *jure humano* bylaws, which are adiaphora, relating to the call process, do not thwart the candidate's desire to be a pastor or violate the right of a Christian congregation to call a pastor merely to comply with a bylaw or a custom. And if synodical bylaws or customs among district presidents or seminary placement committees inhibit the candidate from being *rite vocatus*, change the bylaw or custom.

3) Elect or appoint to seminary certification and placement committees professors who have occupied the office of pastor faithfully for a goodly time.

4) Allow congregations to contact and interview candidates if they desire to do so, but with the help of clergy, i.e., local pastors (circuit counsellors) who know the congregation and/or professors whom the congregations and candidates choose. The purpose of this suggestion is to return in some degree to the practice of the Lutheran Church for two centuries whereby the calling congregation had opportunity to examine any candidate who was nominated to be their pastor, a practice virtually abandoned in our country where congregations have abdicated or been deprived of their responsibility to examine candidates for themselves.

5) Stop district presidents from controlling call lists and keeping candidates off call lists of congregations.

6) Both district presidents and seminary placement committees should not place a candidate in a call which does not offer the candidate enough salary to live on (Lk 10:7; 1 Cor 9:14).

7) District presidents and placement officers should not criticize *bona fide* and rightly certified candidates.

It is my opinion that these suggestions, which do not presume to be perfect, are more consistent with the theology of the New Testament and the doctrine and practice of the divine call taught in our Lutheran Confessions than the present practice (at times applied rigidly) of the LCMS pertaining to the placement of candidates in the holy ministry. The present bylaws and policies as they are carried out are not intrinsically bad, and their original intentions were the very best, but they are the product of an older culture, encrusted with outmoded ethnic mores which often serve to inhibit, not help, the evangelical call process.

The desires of candidates and the needs and rights of calling congregations can easily be passed over by a stiff and unfeeling application of the present policies. In Norway for generations, candidates have freely applied for a call to specific congregations, and this was not uncommon in Luther's day.

Yes, God calls the pastor to the local congregation. And the Lord of the church calls through his church. But in whatever holy activity our Lord carries out in his church, the church is always encumbered with the flesh and is never without sin (Rom 7; LC II, 54; AC XX, 40; SD I, 14). The entire church sings with Luther:

> The best and holiest deeds must fail
> To break sin's dread oppression.

Or as one translator expressed his word:

> My purest thoughts and deeds but prove
> Sin in my heart is living.

Today as always, we must warn candidates against greed and self-seeking (1 Tim 3:2–3). District presidents and officials and all of us need to be warned against the same sins; and when involved in the placement process we need to be warned also against being overbearing, pompous, unjust and uncaring (Titus 1:6-8). We would do well to remember what district presidents seeking to place Seminex graduates used to say in the seventies: candidates seeking calls to the office of the ministry are God's gifts to the church (Eph 4:11; AC V). At the same time, we would do well to recall what our Confessions say about the power of bishops (AC XXVIII; Ap XXVIII; SA II, X; Tr 1-92).

RDP

## April Fools

A leading church-consultant firm recently unveiled plans for a pastoral pay scale which it is calling the "Great Commission." According to this plan, pastors will be paid a base salary supplemented by a *commission* based on the number of new people brought into church membership. The firm's president reported, "If a preacher cannot produce results, then neither should he get paid." This model plan hopes to bring great savings to congregations who feel they cannot otherwise afford a pastor with the present giving rates of most members, motivating pastors to get out of their offices and into the highways and byways, compelling people to come in Lk 14:23).

Preliminary resolutions are now being drafted for presentation at the 1995 LCMS synodical convention regarding a new non-geographical district in the LCMS. The RIM District will be comprised primarily of charismatic Lutheran congregations across the U.S. and Canada. A spokesperson expressed some disappointment that the entire synod had not yet caught the full measure of the Spirit to be on fire for the Lord, but stated that "a non-geographical district will have to do for now."

What has been called a "Southern District Theology" (SDT) has until now been an oral tradition expressed with a wink and a handshake. In a hotly debated move, a private publishing company has accepted a manuscript designed to introduce pastors and laypeople to the theology one might expect to find in the Southern District. This effort is frowned upon by those who feel that the SDT was never meant to be published. Adherents maintain that it is in every way faithful to the position of the Missouri Synod—even if it differs in some practical applications from certain other Midwestern districts, such as closed communion and the pope as Antichrist. They contest, however, that the spirit of the SDT will be significantly altered or seriously threatened if it comes to be delimited in print. In any case, the four-page dogmatics textbook, complete with introduction, maps, charts, and index will go on sale for $19.95 on February 30, 1994. The first 500 purchasers of this dogmatics will get a lapel pin and bumper sticker which say: "I've got a Southern District Theology."

Those who hope to purchase a 1994 *Lutheran Annual* can expect a sharp rise in cost by the last half of this calendar year. The new annual will be about the size of a New York Greater Metropolitan Telephone Directory. This action is the direct result of synod's legal petition to the IRS which stated that female teachers performed "substantially all" the sacerdotal activities of the church. This in turn led female teachers either to declare themselves as self-employed for income tax purposes or to force them to withdraw their names from the roster of synod: Commissioned Ministers—Teachers. A follow-up investigation by the IRS turned up evidence in Concordia—Seward's *Issues in Christian Education* publication, confirmed by an International Center staff person, which admitted that "*everyone* is a minister." This has led to the subsequent IRS ruling that *all* members of LCMS congregations must now be added to the synodical roster, declaring themselves to be self-employed or to exclude themselves from LCMS churches—or else the church body will lose its tax-exempt status. The new 1,297-page section will be entitled: Non-Commissioned Ministers.

The twelve-member Commission of Women Pastors (CWP) has stamped its imprimatur on *Different Voices/Shared Vision* articles which demonstrate that the passages heretofore prohibiting women from being ordained (1 Tim 2; 1 Cor 14) are not normative/instructive but are problematic/corrective. These passages must be understood in the socio-cultural context in which they were written, a context in which there was a specific problem which Paul was addressing. The council's spokesperson, Pr. Christine Paulina, went on to note that socio-cultural circumstances in North America are rapidly deteriorating to the point that she predicts that the CWP will soon have to dictate that "Men ought to remain silent in the church" and "It is not permitted that a man have authority over a woman." The commission is currently composing an "Epistle to the Saints in Saint Louis" as a non-normative problematic/corrective-but-mandatory position to this effect.

JAB

## Walter Sundberg's Vision

The formation of the ELCA has brought forth several groups, each with its own vision of what the merged church body ought to be. There are those who feel that the ELCA should maintain a strong Lutheran identity. This group is divided into two parties—according to George Lindbeck: "denominational Lutherans" and "evangelical catholics." In the course of the debate over the ELCA's identity, another group has emerged—those who believe that the future of the Lutheran Church lies within Protestantism. Walter Sundberg, a professor of church history at Luther Northwestern Theological Seminary in St. Paul, Minnesota, is a spokesman for that position.

Sundberg is particularly critical of the evangelical catholics. He believes they are "closet" Roman Catholics who are contemptuous of all aspects of Protestantism and whose goal is to lead Lutheranism back into the Roman fold. He reacted to Richard Neuhaus' becoming Roman Catholic with the flip comment that Neuhaus was "acting on the thesis"—which meant that Neuhaus was finally becoming what he had been all along. Neuhaus' departure, according to Sundberg, deprived the evangelical catholic movement of one of its most important leaders and will ultimately lead to its demise.

A thoughtful analysis of Sundberg's basic theology will help us understand why he is so critical of the evangelical catholics. A recent article in the *Lutheran Quarterly*, "Ecumenism and the Conflict Over Modernity" (Winter, 1990) is instructive. This essay will analyze and critique that article.

Sundberg makes a distinction between what he calls "practical ecumenism" and "theoretical ecumenism." Practical ecumenism occurs within the context of the religiously pluralistic society of America. In America, the various religious groups live in peaceful harmony with one another; there exists a spirit of tolerance. People experience each other's religious

beliefs through attendance at such rituals as baptisms, weddings, and funerals.

This pluralism has been a characteristic of America from its beginnings. Both Protestants and Catholics are comfortable with it. Sundberg is sensitive to criticisms that such a pluralism has resulted in a minimalistic faith, fierce secularism, and what Robert Bellah calls "ontological individualism," but he views it as the most practical way of dealing with religious differences.

Theoretical ecumenism, in contrast, wants to remove the differences between Protestants and Catholics by reinterpreting doctrinal controversies. At the heart of this effort is the attempt to reconcile differing views on the nature of the church. If consensus is reached on that question, church unity can be achieved. Sundberg cites several examples of theoretical ecumenism including Protestant efforts in the early part of the twentieth century, Vatican II, and recent documents of the World Council of Churches, especially *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (1982). The ecumenists, Sundberg says, reinterpret words relating to the sacraments and the organization of the church and believe that they have created actual unity. Although he admits that such an approach has ecumenical advantages, Sundberg thinks that it overlooks and ignores the deep confessional differences that have arisen in the history of the church. He continues by analyzing these differences.

Sundberg's main contention is that Catholics and Protestants have fundamentally different views regarding the individual's relation to Christ and the church. Citing Friedrich Schleiermacher, he states that Catholicism makes the individual's relationship to Christ dependent on the church. Protestantism, by contrast, "makes the individual's relation to the church dependent on his relation to Christ." Protestantism and Catholicism are "distinctive forms" and "modes of thought" in Christian faith. Catholics are bound to obedience to the ecclesiastical hierarchy; Protestants, on the other hand, have a direct relationship to Christ. Sundberg's assertion is that the main issue is authority, especially the power any institution can exercise over the individual. At this point, Sundberg launches into a discussion of the relationship between the Reformation and the French Revolution.

According to Sundberg, the Reformation of the sixteenth century and the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century are inseparably linked. Both are to be seen as revolutions which advocated the freedom of the individual. The Reformation freed people from ecclesiastical authority. The French Revolution, an event that took place during the Enlightenment period, glorified individuality. Thus, that event and the Reformation are connected and should receive similar interpretations. Sundberg cites a long list of theologians and historians, especially from the nineteenth century, to back his claim, and he makes the point that both Protestants and Catholics interpreted the Reformation as a revolution. Thus, "Protestantism *does* engender the modern temperament." Catholicism is a religion that is authoritarian and legalistic; Protestantism has rejected that.

Sundberg wants the church to face squarely the challenge of modernity. Modernity is characterized by the breakdown of traditional authority, the autonomy of the individual and no uniform societal order. Protestantism, which provides the individual with a direct connection to the gospel and is critical of any institutional mediation, is able to meet that challenge. Catholicism, in contrast, places the individual in subservience to the institutional church and thus reduces people to being nothing more than a docile flock. Individual freedom is destroyed.

It is in the context of modernity that Sundberg criticizes the evangelical catholics. He accuses them of retreating from modernity into some romantic vision of the past, to a time when there was order and solidarity in both church and society. To escape the "fragmentation of modern life" they look to the Roman Catholic Church, with its hierarchy, liturgical forms, and sacramental traditions, to provide wholeness and unity. Ecumenically, this means a "return to Rome." Several prominent Lutheran theologians are cited as advocates of the evangelical catholic strategy—Carl Braaten, George Lindbeck, William Lazareth, and Robert Jenson.

Sundberg is confident that the evangelical catholics will not prevail; they are just one more "high church movement" which will eventually disappear or, at best, remain as nothing more than a faction within the Lutheran Church. As far as he is concerned, the differences between Protestantism and Catholicism are irreconcilable. Thus, no organic unity of the churches is possible.

Sundberg's article is important because it is a concise statement of how he views the Reformation and because it demonstrates the basis of his attacks on the evangelical catholics. He has marshalled a whole series of names and events in order to construct his particular view of Lutheranism and its place in the twentieth century world. It is an impressive argument, but, when one wanders through the maze of sources he employs, several problems emerge.

Sundberg presents the "heroic" and the "cultural-historical" views of the Reformation, both of which were prevalent during the Enlightenment, and makes these views normative for the interpretation of that event. The "heroic" view stressed Luther the individual, especially the young Luther. The "cultural-historical" view saw the Reformation as a turning point in European culture. It emphasized man's progress and his freedom from the bonds of intellectual obscurantism. The Reformation was the beginning of a refinement of Christianity, which culminated in the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century. The Reformation enabled man to be conscious of his God-given nature which freed him to regain the world.

Is this a proper understanding of the Reformation? Although Luther's importance to the Reformation cannot be questioned, his downplaying of his own role in that event, referring to himself as a "stinking carcass," lends little credence to the "heroic" view. Luther saw the Reformation as a work of God, not the action of an individual hero or rebel. The cultural-historical view would better apply to the views of Erasmus than Luther.

Erasmus advocated the simple gospel of love and defended man's freedom of the will. Luther, on the other hand, spoke of sin, grace, and justification, rejecting the value of all human goodness and works. To describe the Reformation as a revolu-

tion against authority, stressing individual autonomy and glorifying human reason, is to describe a movement in a way that the Lutheran reformers would not have recognized. The kind of individualism that was prevalent during the Enlightenment would have horrified them. To make reason—which Luther called a "whore"—into a queen and the ultimate determiner of truth would be the ultimate blasphemy to the various authors of the Lutheran Confessions.

The Scriptures and the Confessions, found in the *Book of Concord*, are the normative authorities for the Lutheran Church; yet one searches in vain for any mention of these in Sundberg's historical construction. He presents us with no objective authorities whatever; everything is subjective, the individual in direct contact with God. Even the Scriptures are subject to individualistic interpretation. The individual, then, is able to determine what is true for himself/herself. Taken to its logical conclusion, religion is nothing more than individual opinions.

The Lutheran Reformation was not revolutionary and individualistic. It was basically conservative. At Augsburg the confessors made the following affirmation: "Nothing has here been said or related for the purpose of injuring anybody. Only those things have been recounted which it seemed necessary to say in order that it may be understood that nothing has been received among us in doctrine or in ceremonies that is contrary to Scripture or to the church catholic. For it is manifest that we have guarded diligently against the introduction into our churches of any new and ungodly doctrines" (Tappert, 95:4–5).

This is not the statement of a group of revolutionaries. It is a confession of oneness with the Holy Catholic and Apostolic Church. This affirmation reveals that it was not Lutheranism's intention to go its own way. It was an expression of a desire to attain unity. If we are to properly understand the Lutheran Reformation, it is far better to allow the reformers to speak for themselves than to listen to the views of Goethe or rely on Schleiermacher (who was not himself a Lutheran).

If we agree to let the reformers interpret the Reformation, we can look to the Confessions for our understanding of the nature of the church. The Lutheran Reformation viewed the church as "the assembly of all believers among whom the gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the gospel" (Tappert 32:1). The church is a community centered around the objective means of grace. There is no hint of individualism. The individual Christian's life is always seen in the context of the believing community that is called into existence and whose faith is sustained through the word that is preached and the sacraments of Baptism, Absolution, and the Lord's Supper. Membership is not an option.

In the Large Catechism, Luther makes it clear that outside the church there is no forgiveness or holiness and the Church is "the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God" (Tappert 418:55; 416:42). He also rules out the possibility of any direct relationship with God outside the objective means of grace—witness the famous statement from the Smalcald Articles: "Whatever is attributed to the Spirit apart from such word and sacrament is of the devil" (Tappert, 313:10).

Luther and the other Lutheran reformers had disagreements with the hierarchy of the Roman Church, but they did not conceive of the church without formal structures. In fact, even the church of the Renaissance popes was regarded as the true church of Christ because the marks of the church, the word and the sacraments, were nominally present. Lutherans did not believe, as did the followers of Zwingli and Calvin, that the medieval church with its liturgical forms and sacramental structures was idolatrous. they even stated that they would be willing to accept the pope if the pope would be subject to the gospel. In summation, the Lutheran reformers claimed that they were the catholic church in the strictest sense of the word.

These statements from the Lutheran Confessions which are binding for Lutherans bear no resemblance to the so-called "Protestant" view which places the individual in direct relationship to God, a view that places the church on the periphery. If we take Sundberg's description seriously, he seems to describe a church which is nothing more than a voluntary association. This is characteristic of American protestantism. The emphasis is on what humans do; there is little talk about what God does, either to bring the community of believers into existence or to sustain that community.

I believe that Walter Sundberg is so offended by Catholicism that his feelings have distorted his view of Lutheranism itself and have caused him to seek any rationale he can find in order to purge the Lutheran Church of any vestiges of Catholicism. The so-called "evangelical catholics" are his whipping boy, and their increasing strength has caused him to intensify his attacks on them. But, in order to refute them, Sundberg must turn to the Enlightenment, not the Lutheran reformers themselves, to find support for his views. He is like the Fundamentalist who begins with a preconceived notion and then looks for Scripture passages (often out of context) to prove his point.

Walter Sundberg envisions a Lutheran Church that will take its place among the various denominations that constitute American Protestantism. This is not an option for any confessional Lutheran. We cannot identify ourselves with groups that make the creeds optional, hold the liturgy in contempt, and reject such teachings as baptismal regeneration, the authority of the church to forgive and retain sins, and the real presence of the body and blood of Christ in the sacrament—teachings that are at the very heart of the gospel. These are matters of life and death, and the manner in which Lutheranism attends to them will determine its future as a confessing movement within the church catholic.

In America, the Lutheran Church has been confronted with this choice before. In the mid-nineteenth century, the "American Lutherans" led by Samuel Schmucker and Benjamin Kurtz advocated that Lutheranism surrender its particularities (the liturgy, baptismal regeneration, holy absolution, and the real presence) so that it might be more at one with American Protestants. The confessional Lutherans (among them F.D.C. Wyneken, W.J. Mann and C.P. Krauth) rejected

that proposal. They were the evangelical catholics of their day. This was not an escape from the complexities of modern life nor a romantic retreat into the past. They were concerned for Lutheran confessional integrity.

We must let the Scriptures and the Confessions be our guides in these most difficult and confusing times. Walter Sundberg's vision that we embrace theological pluralism and emphasize individuality is essentially un-Lutheran and constitutes an assault on basic confessional Lutheranism. The evangelical catholics (whom Sundberg would have us believe are nothing more than high-church, crypto-Romans) are sounding a call for theological and confessional integrity in the midst of the confusion that pervades the ELCA where virtually everything and anything is allowed to be believed and taught. Actually, Walter Sundberg, despite what might be a protest on his part, should feel very much at home in the ELCA because that church body is, in many respects, a product of the modernity he lauds and commends.

The aforementioned issues have profound implications for ecumenical relations. Lutheranism cheerfully obligates itself to be a confessing movement within the church catholic, but it is also committed to healing the breach that occurred in the sixteenth century. That was the intention of the confessors at Augsburg. It is the ongoing task of the Church of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession. Walter Sundberg criticizes what he calls "theoretical ecumenism" because it ignores doctrinal differences; yet, he has gone on record as favoring a proposal for pulpit and altar fellowship with the Reformed and Presbyterians. This proposal is the result of dialogues which ignored virtually all the historic controversies between the two sides [Cf. Walter Sundberg, "The Leuenberg Agreement in the North American Context" in W.G. Rusch and D.F. Martensen, eds. *The Leuenberg Agreement and Lutheran-Reformed Relationships.* Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1989, 81–96].

Where should Lutherans stand in the ecumenical movement? About thirty years ago, Hermann Sasse, whose confessional loyalty cannot be doubted, wrote a thought-provoking essay, "The Inspiration of Holy Scripture" (in J.W. Montgomery, ed. *Crisis in Lutheran Theology.* Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, Inc., 1967. 2:13–17). In that essay he asked these questions: "One wonders which tragedy is greater: to add another source of revelation to the inspired Scriptures as in Roman Catholicism; or to lose the Scriptures as the inspired Word of God as in modern Protestantism? Which is worse: to add a mediatrix of all graces to the only true Mediator between God and man; or to lose Christ as the Mediator entirely?" If Walter Sundberg is consistent in his praise of modernity, we know what his answer to these questions would be. Sasse, as a confessional Lutheran, committed to the church catholic, would answer them quite differently.

DAG

## Creedal Catholicity

Dr. William Weinrich, writing in the Spring 1992 issue of *Concordia Theological Quarterly,* has raised an issue which deserves more serious discussion than it has so far received. Under the title "The New WELS Creed," Weinrich offers a constructive critique of the new translation of the Nicene Creed which has been approved for inclusion in *Christian Worship: A Lutheran Hymnal,* which is scheduled to appear in August of this year. Weinrich is concerned about the sentence in the Second Article which reads as follows in the new translation: "For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary, and became fully human."

Pastor Victor Prange, chairman of the WELS Commission on Worship, had written an editorial which appeared in the September 1, 1991 issue of *The Northwestern Lutheran,* explaining how the issue of inclusive language was being addressed by the Joint Hymnal Committee. After observing that the use of the English word "man" in the generic sense "is rapidly becoming a thing of the past," Prange went on to say:

> The more the word "men" is used in this gender specific sense, the less will its generic sense be recognized. As a result of this language change the Joint Hymnal Committee has chosen to use the translation "fully human" in the Nicene Creed when speaking of Jesus rather than using the word "man." This is not to deny that Jesus was male. But the creed is not making the point that Jesus was male. The creed means to say that just as Jesus is "fully divine" so also he is "fully human."

Prange's editorial was evidently picked up by the *Metro Lutheran,* a Minneapolis-area monthly. That is how it came to Weinrich's attention. Weinrich allows that "this change is no doubt a well-intentioned attempt to update the creedal language," but then he contends that "in the change envisaged by WELS the faith witnessed by the Scriptures and given ecumenical confessional expression in the Nicene Creed is being eroded no less than in those instances where the names of the Trinity are emasculated."

Weinrich's point is that generic divinity never exists apart from the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Similarly, generic humanity never exists apart from a concrete male or female, and that, of course, includes Jesus. Abstract divinity and abstract humanity may exist as dogmatic categories or theoretical constructs, but when the Nicene Creed confesses the incarnation of the Son of God, we are describing an historical event.

Consequently, according to Weinrich, the creedal revision put forth by the WELS "breaks the organic connection between the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures and the ecumenical creed as an orthodox summary of the Scriptures." Half a page later he adds: "Indeed, the generic language of the new WELS creed guts the whole range of biblical talk about the person and work of Christ (New Adam, Son of God, Son of Man, Bridegroom, etc.) which are possible only of a male

member of the human unity of male and female."

The bottom line, therefore, according to Weinrich, is: "Whatever else the new WELS creed may be, it falls seriously short of reasserting the faith of Nicaea and the trinitarian and christological doctrines which the fathers there believed to be necessary to confess and to preach the gospel purely."

Weinrich's critique has recently been answered. Professor James Tiefel of Wisconsin Lutheran Seminary, a member of the Joint Hymnal Committee, responded with an article entitled, "In Defense of the Nicene Creed," which appeared in the Winter 1993 issue of *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly*. Tiefel begins his apologia by observing:

> In great part the troublesome issue revolves around the fact that the English language has traditionally used the word *man* to speak both of human beings in general and male human beings specifically. Most languages have different words for these two ideas. The Greeks used ἄνθρωπος, when speaking about the human race and ἀνήρ when speaking about males; Latin notes the difference with *homo* and *vir;* the Germans with *Mensch* and *Mann.* Bible translations in Latin and German found it easy to differentiate between the human and male; English found it difficult.

After pointing out that the *New Evangelical Translation* (which is being produced by a team that includes many conservative Missourians) has determined to change the word "men" to "people" at Luke 2:14 and 1 Timothy 2:4, Tiefel concedes that *Christian Worship* "wishes to avoid male-oriented language for human beings" whenever both males and females are involved. He insists, "Our hymnal does so without apology, and it follows a precedent set already by St. Paul.

Tiefel points to 1 Corinthians 6:18 where St. Paul quotes 2 Samuel 7:14. "In order to state clearly what God intends for all his people, Paul was content to write, 'I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons,' but rather, 'I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons *and daughters.*'

Tiefel goes on to reject the idea that *Christian Worship* wishes to avoid references to Christ as male. He asserts: "At no point in the translation of the Nicene Creed are any words that refer to the masculinity of Jesus eliminated or changed. The masculine pronouns, *he/him* are used throughout. Jesus is called the Son of God."

This leads to a treatment of the Greek word ἐνανθρωπήσαντα. "Literally, the word means 'he was humanized.'" Tiefel quotes John 1:14 and Hebrews 2:14 and Philippians 2:6–7 in support of the full humanity of Christ. He acknowledges the point that Jesus' masculinity is an essential part of his humanity.

> We have no argument with Weinrich's theology here. When he insists, however, that the phrase, "fully human" undermines this theology, we disagree. . . . There are translations of the Nicene Creed which do deny the masculinity of Christ, and *Christian Worship* disavows all such blasphemy. As much as our committees reject, however, any translation which says less than what the Creed says, so they reject any effort to say more than what the Creed says.

The question is: to what extent can we expect the Nicene Creed to address the issue of egalitarianism? While it seems highly unlikely that the contemporary radical feminist movement would be the least bit attractive to Athanasius, is it not something of an anachronism to ask the Nicene Creed to address the issue?

It seems clear to me that this is not only a lexical issue. There is more at stake here than the precise meaning of a word or phrase. Because it is an ecumenical creed that is being translated, this issue has implications that reach beyond the boundaries of any one synod—and even beyond any one denomination.

Professor Theodore Hartwig of Doctor Martin Luther College in New Ulm, Minnesota, was also a member of the Joint Hymnal Committee. In the Summer 1989 issue of *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* he provided the background and rationale for the new translation in an article entitled, "The Creeds in Contemporary English." In that article he expresses appreciation for past Lutheran practice which "has avoided the sectarianism of going it alone, being different, striving for the unique." I like to think I hear some passion as he goes on to say:

> . . . though, for confessional reasons, we live in a state of outwardly divided communions, the Christian church nevertheless remains a single catholic community of believers confessing one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. In this light, would anyone want to gainsay that the sameness of outward form which for many years we experienced and cherished with the common texts of the Lord's Prayer and Creeds has been a heartwarming and compelling witness to the true unity of the Church? Granted that for the present this unity remains hidden from the eyes of flesh, its hiddenness detracts in no way from its reality for the eyes of faith. In the absence of freedom-robbing compulsion that makes a law of conformance in externals, we can bear witness to our respect for true ecumenicity by refraining from going it alone with our own translations of worship forms commonly used in English-speaking Christendom. We can be consistent with past Lutheran practice, and in Christian liberty freely make use of texts in contemporary English that have gained acceptance in the mainstream of English-speaking churches and that hold promise of becoming the "common" texts of the next generation.

The point is that "the new WELS creed," as Weinrich calls it, is not an idiosyncratic creation of one small synod. The Joint Hymnal Committee carefully studied the work of the International Consultation on English Texts (ICET) and its successor, the English Language Liturgical Consultation (ELLC). The

only point at which the Joint Hymnal Committee chose to depart from the ELLC translation of the Nicene Creed was in the Third Article where they opted for "one holy *Christian* and apostolic Church" rather than "one holy *catholic* and apostolic Church."

It is true that since the decision was made to incorporate the translation "fully human" into *Christian Worship,* the ELLC has issued a revised version which says "truly human." And since the issue of liturgical texts continues to be in flux, other changes could come along in the future. But that does not change the intent of the Joint Hymnal Committee, which was to abide as far as possible within the Christian mainstream.

Dr. Martin Luther insisted, "We certainly neither preach nor desire to preach anything that differs from . . . the doctrine and the faith which for fifteen hundred years since the birth of Christ, nay, longer, for five thousand years, from the beginning of the world, was preached by the fathers and the prophets and is clearly revealed in Holy Scripture." Thus it is truly meet, right, and salutary that we who proudly bear the name "Lutheran" should conscientiously cultivate creedal catholicity.

MJA