LOGIA

A JOURNAL OF LUTHERAN THEOLOGY

OFFICE & OFFICES

HOLY TRINITY 1997 VOLUME VI, NUMBER 3

εἴ τις λαλεῖ,
ὡς λόγια Θεοῦ

LOGIA is a journal of Lutheran theology. As such it publishes articles on exegetical, historical, systematic, and liturgical theology that promote the orthodox theology of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. We cling to God's divinely instituted marks of the church: the gospel, preached purely in all its articles, and the sacraments, administered according to Christ's institution. This name expresses what this journal wants to be. In Greek, ΛΟΓΙΑ functions either as an adjective meaning "eloquent," "learned," or "cultured," or as a plural noun meaning "divine revelations," "words," or "messages." The word is found in 1 Peter 4:11, Acts 7:38, and Romans 3:2. Its compound forms include ὁμολογία (confession), ἀπολογία (defense), and ἀναλογία (right relationship). Each of these concepts and all of them together express the purpose and method of this journal. Logia considers itself a *free conference in print* and is committed to providing an independent theological forum normed by the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions. At the heart of our journal we want our readers to find a love for the sacred Scriptures as the very Word of God, not merely as rule and norm, but especially as Spirit, truth, and life which reveals Him who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life—Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore, we confess the church, without apology and without rancor, only with a sincere and fervent love for the precious Bride of Christ, the holy Christian church, "the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God," as Martin Luther says in the Large Catechism (LC II, 42). We are animated by the conviction that the Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession represents the true expression of the church which we confess as one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.

LOGIA (ISSN #1064–0398) is published quarterly by the Luther Academy, 9228 Lavant Drive, Crestwood, MO 63126. Non-profit postage paid (permit #4)) at Cresbard, SD and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Logia, PO Box 94, Cresbard, SD 57435.

Editorial Department: 314 Pearl St., Mankato, MN 56001. Unsolicited material is welcomed but cannot be returned unless accompanied by sufficient return postage.

Book Review Department: 1101 University Avenue SE, Minneapolis, MN 55414. All books received will be listed.

Logia Forum and Correspondence Department: 2313 S. Hanna, Fort Wayne, IN 47591–3111. Letters selected for publication are subject to editorial modification, must be typed or computer printed, and must contain the writer's name and complete address.

Subscription & Advertising Department: PO Box 94, Cresbard, SD 57435. Advertising rates and specifications are available upon request.

SUBSCRIPTION INFORMATION: U.S.: $22 for one year (four issues), $40 for two years (eight issues). **Canada and Mexico:** one year surface, $25; one year air, $32. **Overseas:** one year, air: $42; surface: $29. All funds in U.S. currency only.

The Cover Art features a woodcut illustration from the *Deudsch Catechismus* (Wittenberg: George Rhaw, 1530.)

Each of the Commandments, the Articles, and the Petitions, as well as Baptism, the Lord's Supper, and Confession in this edition of the German Catechism are illustrated with woodcuts. The woodcut on this issue's cover is the illustration used for the First Petition of the Lord's Prayer.

From the Walther A. Maier Rare Book Collection of Concordia Seminary Library, St. Louis.

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FREQUENTLY USED ABBREVIATIONS

AC [CA]	Augsburg Confession
AE	*Luther's Works,* American Edition
Ap	Apology of the Augsburg Confession
BAGD	Walter Bauer, William F. Arndt, F. Wilbur Gingrich, Frederick W. Danker, *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*
BSLK	*Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche*
Ep	Epitome of the Formula of Concord
FC	Formula of Concord
LC	Large Catechism
LW	*Lutheran Worship*
SA	Smalcald Articles
SBH	*Service Book and Hymnal*
SC	Small Catechism
SD	Solid Declaration of the Formula of Concord
SL	St. Louis Edition of Luther's Works
Tappert	*The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church.* Trans. and ed. Theodore G. Tappert
TDNT	*Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*
TLH	*The Lutheran Hymnal*
Tr	Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope
Triglotta	*Concordia Triglotta*
WA	*Luthers Werke,* Weimarer Ausgabe [Weimar Edition]

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Correspondence

Dear Editor:

Several months ago my brother sent me a copy of Leigh Jordahl's article on J. Preus. In my opinion, it presents a somewhat misleading, or at least a very oversimplified, account of the chair membership problem at Bethany during Alfred Fremder's tenure. I am particularly concerned about the lack of documentation (or any other evidence) in an article by an author who, I assume, intended to write history.

I offer a different interpretation of what took place in those days. If anyone should care to see the documents cited, I will be happy to provide copies.

Jordahl writes: "after the ELS fellowship break with Missouri, it was [C. M.] Gullerud, supported by Bethany's very able choir director, Alfred Fremder, who, interpreting unionism in its most rigoristic manner, maintained that Missouri students at Bethany should not sing in the choir" (48).

The problem at Bethany was not one of an unevangelical or unscriptural position on unionism held by Fremder. The question of choir membership arose after the Norwegian Lutheran Synod (now ELS) suspended fellowship with the Missouri Synod in June 1955. The admission policy of the school was inconsistent with the resolution terminating fellowship. Fremder and other faculty members brought this to the attention of the Board of Regents of Bethany Lutheran College.

Fremder insisted on a practice consistent with the synod resolution. Following a September 20, 1955, meeting of the Board of Regents, at which Fremder and at least two other faculty members were present, Fremder wrote:

> I ask to be relieved of the duties of choir director for the 1955–56 school year. This I do . . . in full harmony with the Norwegian Synod resolutions passed last June (Alfred Fremder to The Board of Regents, September 21, 1955).

Fremder was unable to accept a resolution of the Board, adopted in the September 20 meeting, because it "recognizes choir work as requiring orthodoxy in faith and practice" (ibid.), while permitting students outside the fellowship to participate.

I was one of the faculty members present at the September 20 Board meeting and wrote:

> Orthodoxy of the Missouri Synod students and other students from church bodies with whom we are not in fellowship dare not be assumed on the basis of a student's application and subsequent registration because the invitation of Bethany to Missouri Synod students clearly leaves room for the impression that we will tolerate student membership in heterodox churches. A Letter of August 13, 1955, stated: "Any question with regard to church and communion attendance should be left to your home parents and home pastor to decide" (Vernon Gerlach to Board of Regents, September 21, 1955).

In their letters of September 21, both Fremder and the undersigned pleaded for a studied reconsideration of the Board policy prior to the beginning of the 1956–1957 school year.

Three days later, Fremder wrote:

> We teach . . . that it is unionism to go into a heterodox church and there join in the singing of hymns and prayers. Heterodox is applied to those churches who tolerate error. Now, in line with that, should there be any of our students who are offended by our teachings and practice or who are indifferent to them, we wish and are actually obligated by our Lord to caution them in these matters. They, too, then should not be expected by us to become partaker of what they consider to be sins in us (Alfred Fremder to President [B. W.] Teigen, September 24, 1955).

Jordahl's article lacks any documentation to support the contention that Fremder interpreted unionism in its most rigorous manner. Fremder's position was the scriptural one, the historical position of the Synodical Conference. Three members of the Board of Regents wrote:

> We thank you also for the very friendly spirit shown in our discussions and for your expressed willingness to consult with us further.
>
> Would it be possible for you, with a good conscience, to con-

> tinue as choir director under the same admissions policy as in the past, but to do so as a protesting member of the faculty. . . . We would like to have you continue as our choir director, and we also want to honor your conviction in this matter (Julian G. Anderson [President of the Board of Regents], Chr. Olsen, Stuart A. Dorr to Prof. Alfred Fremder, September 25, 1955).

Unlike a "canon lawyer," Fremder agreed to continue as choir director after

> assurances by the two representatives of the Board to change or tighten the policies. These oral promises of the Board's representatives made in the presence of Prof. Gerlach and Dean [Norman A. Madson] assured me and put my mind at ease (Alfred Fremder to The Board of Regents, June 5, 1956).

During the 1955–1956 school year, the Board brought the issue to its climax when it ruled that all Bethany students were to be considered orthodox in faith and practice until proved otherwise, and all Bethany students were eligible for the choir provided they were musically qualified.

That was the end of the road for Fremder. In his letter of resignation, he reviewed his position:

> (2) I am not leaving Bethany College because of the presence of Missouri Synod students. (3) I do not equate choir singing with the pastoral office. I equate choir singing with prayer fellowship (when sacred texts are used). (4) I am not against doing mission work at Bethany, provided it consists of teaching them to observe all things, as Christ asks. The soliciting and fellowshipping of members of heterodox churches, inviting them as part of admission policy to continue in their errors and soft-pedaling controversial matters is not doing mission work. It is filling the coffers at the expense of men's souls. While we officially condemn our students' worship at heterodox churches, we invite them to worship with us. That is not Scriptural. (5) There is an important obligation toward Norwegian Synod students which must not be overlooked. When these students note the variance between Norwegian Synod doctrine on fellowship and Bethany practice, confusion will inevitably follow. Along with confusion comes offense, and, ultimately, hardness of heart. That is doing a disservice to our Norwegian Synod pastors and congregations. Actually, love for the souls of all our students demands a practice consistent with Scriptural doctrine.
>
> . . . I have always felt that Bethany has no purpose in existing, save for being faithful to the one thing needful (Ibid.).

Alfred Fremder was no canon lawyer. He was an early opponent of the Church Growth Movement, a staunch defender of scriptural church growth.

Cordially,
Vernon S. Gerlach
1225 East La Jolla Drive
Tempe, AZ 85282

LOGIA CORRESPONDENCE AND COLLOQUIUM FRATRUM

We encourage our readers to respond to the material they find in Logia *— whether it be in the articles, book reviews, or letters of other readers. While we cannot print everything that is sent, we hope that our Colloquium Fratrum section will allow for longer response/counter-response exchanges, whereas our Correspondence section is a place for shorter "Letters to the Editors."*

If you wish to respond to something in an issue of Logia *, please do so soon after you receive an issue. Since* Logia *is 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 Correspondence contributions to* Logia *Correspondence, 314 Pearl St., Mankato, MN 56001, or your Colloquium Fratrum contributions to* Logia *Editorial Department, 314 Pearl St., Mankato, MN 56001.*

Office and Offices

Some Basic Lutheran Philology

Mark Nispel

The theme "Office and Offices" brings to mind at once the rather uncomfortable realization that in discussing this topic contemporary North American Lutheranism is more often lost than found. Theological perfection is not yet close at hand.[1] This implies no malice toward theologians, of whom I consider myself one, albeit an amateur. Even less is it meant as an affront to confessional Lutherans, of whom I am unreservedly one. Rather, it comes as the conclusion of an extended period of observation of the various divisions, parties, and sects—even within synodical boundaries—all intending to defend the truth.

It is not difficult to find several examples of such divisions in the ranks of confessional Lutherans. One of the longest-standing divisions claims to distinguish between the "Missouri position" and the "Wisconsin position." Attempts to characterize these have had the Missouri position defining the office in terms of leading a local congregation and "offices" as pieces of this office given to others, whereas the Wisconsin position is said to define the "office" (that is, the "public ministry") in terms of a rather undefined group of "ministry functions," and the "offices" as the concrete realities created when functions are given to individuals to administer. The differences perceived here have contributed in this century to the rise of various smaller Lutheran bodies that lay claim either to the Wisconsin Synod tradition or to the tradition of Old Missouri. In addition, more recent investigations have attempted to show that in fact Walther and early Missouri do not fit with what is often called "Old Missouri" at all. Further, in contemporary Missouri it is possible to identify various strands of thought. The prevalent one is identified by attempts to speak of the office and offices in terms of the "pastoral office" and its "functions." This terminology implies some sort of existence of a pastoral office as distinct and identifiably discrete from its assigned functions. But what this means is generally unclear. Finally, with the increasing plague of evangelicalism in our midst, any coherent doctrine of the preaching office has been endangered by anti-clerical madness and lay fever. These have not as yet been isolated and appear to be spreading. So in answer to this some circles have turned to inoculation with the Roman virus.

If not everyone agrees with the above characterizations, and surely not everyone will, most will at least grant that such divisions have existed for a long time and that by now matters have become so confused that at times opponents cannot even find each other in the fog but end up boxing the air. At other times actual opponents mistakenly find themselves on the same side. The terminology of "office" has become so compressed from bearing various theological theories that even those who want to communicate about these matters find it difficult to do so without replaying everything that has gone before. Questions such as "What is 'office'?" "What is 'public ministry'?" "What are other offices in the church?" which continue to be troublesome, can prove to be very difficult to discuss without introducing a bias into the conversation. With the situation such as it is, I would like to suggest a return to basics. It seems appropriate to spend a moment, maybe two (for the less mature among us we can call it "quiet time"), in consideration of the basic concept of office involved in this matter. This approach is not a back-to-the-Bible approach as such, but assumes that we have inherited a confessional language that expresses biblical truth and needs to be carefully considered and understood well, especially in light of our own ecclesiastical separation from the Latin and German Confessions. I have in mind first a brief investigation into the basic philology of "office" and "function" as used by Luther and the Confessions largely outside of the context of the locus here in contention. Second, I hope this basic equivalent to "August two-a-days" will improve our blocking and tackling and will bear fruit on the playing field, thereby helping to inform our specific doctrinal difficulties.[2]

THE BASIC PHILOLOGY OF "OFFICE"

The first matter at hand is a consideration of the origin of the terminology of office. This word is used in the translations of our confessional documents to represent two very important words, the Latin *officium* and the German *Amt*. Both of these appear in the private writings of Luther as well. *Officium* in classical Latin was a rather broad word that could represent any kind of "service, attention, and so on, which a man renders to others whether from kindness or duty." Thus it referred to something someone does. It could mean among other things: (1) a duty, (2) something that is "expected of or belongs to a person or thing," (3) a "trust, charge, business, administration, πρᾶξις," such as naval service or public service.[3] In the middle ages, however, the word was used instead to represent persons (as employees of government), a territory of jurisdiction, or an ecclesiastical post such as presbyter or bishop.[4] It is therefore important to note that in time the word appears to have changed its focus from something a person did to

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the person himself in relation to that something, or even the place or post where it was done.

The German word *Amt,* on the other hand, derives from the Gallic word *ambactus* through a family of Celtic words that in some way related to their feudal state. The *ambacti* were the vassals who belonged to the ruling lord. [5] Apparently the Germans derived the abstract *Amt* from this word, which originally referred to the concrete person. The word *Amt* referred then to "an occupation to which the (subjugated) servant is bound by his lord." [6] This later broadened from feudal service (*Hofdienst*) to service rendered (*Dienstleistung*) in general. The word later came to include any standing obligation that might be given to someone, even to a free man, although the character of submissive service continued to be implied. The person with the power remained the superior of the one performing the *Amt.* Later still the word came to indicate the public service rendered in relation to the state and soon ceased to imply compulsion. It indicated an obligation assigned but also accepted by the servant (*Diener*). So finally *Amt* came to signify chiefly "(1) the obligations and functions assigned to someone and belonging to the position accepted by him," or, "(2) a public sphere of work assigned to someone in relation to the obligations and functions bound with it."[7] The first represents specific duties or work someone does while the second refers to phrases like "spiritual office", "government office," "to accept an office," "to administer an office," "to be in office," and the like.[8]

The idea of "office" finds use not only in texts discussing the public ministry of the church but even more frequently in texts speaking of Christian vocation.

The second matter is to consider the usage of this terminology in its broadest context in Luther and the Confessions. It should be with these understandings of *Amt* and *officium* that we read our theological heritage and not with ideas drawn from the English word "office."[9] The idea of "office" finds use not only in texts discussing the public ministry of the church but even more frequently in texts speaking of Christian vocation. But an examination of texts of this type reveals that any theological use of office cannot be separated from the accompanying concept of *Beruf* or call. In fact, it is from the idea of call that the theological use of office must be understood. This appears to make sense because it corresponds with the basic meaning of *Amt* as an assigned obligation or duty.

An examination of Luther's Genesis commentary is particularly enlightening in this regard, since Luther returns to the theme of call and office repeatedly. In his comments on Genesis 22:3, where Abraham is setting out to sacrifice Isaac, Luther notes that Abraham does not argue, asking, "Why does God give this command?" He turns away from temptation, saying, "I am sure that something better will happen than I am now seeing—not through my strength or that of my people but through the power of the command of God. Therefore I shall obey the Lord, who is giving me the command and is calling me [*Dominum iubentem et vocantem*]" (AE 4: 102–114 [WA 43: 212 ff]). Shortly thereafter Luther relates this line of thought to Genesis 22:19, where God has stopped Abraham from killing his son and has promised him that in his Seed all nations will be blessed. Then Abraham leaves the altar with Isaac and returns to his servants who waited for them. Luther finds it

> truly amazing that the very saintly patriarch returns from so sacred a place. If such a grand revelation about sacrificing a son were to come to us, and if that glorious promise—"In your Seed shall all nations be blessed"—were added—likewise the conversation and the presence, not of one angel but of the entire heavenly host— human devotion [*humana devotio*] would surely give the advice that this place would not only be held in reverence but should also be inhabited. Why, then, does Abraham not do this? . . . The example of Abraham, who had most valid reasons for instituting something at this place, is something notable. He was called [*vocatus est*] from Beersheeba to Mt. Moriah by divine authority; he offered a very great and admirable sacrifice because he was ready to immolate his own son; and he heard the Word of God from heaven in fear and faith. Nevertheless, he undertakes nothing; nor does he call the people together to extol or honor the place . . . . To his religious practice Abraham adds nothing over and above his calling [*ultra vocationem*] . . . . He thought: "I have done what I was obliged to do; I have sacrificed my son just as I was commanded to do. But God is not commanding [*Non autem mandat Deus*] me to set up a form of worship at this place. Hence I shall venture to do nothing." Thus he refrains from every rash and bold action; he abides in the fear of the Lord and waits for His call, ready to obey and to follow wherever God calls him [*expectat eius vocationem paratus obedire et sequi, quocunque eum vocaret Deus*] (AE 4: 178–180 [WA 43: 264–265]).

These comments (and many similar ones regarding Abraham's call out of his fatherland, Noah's obedience in building the ark, and so on) all show that in Luther's thought and terminology a divine command given to the patriarchs was considered a call from God. A *mandatum Dei* is a *vocatio* (call, *Beruf*). Abraham received a command; Abraham obeyed. And Luther states that the opposite of being called is to "venture" to do something without divine command. In actuality this sort of language is ubiquitous in Luther and is in no way limited to his disccusion of the patriarchs. For example, in the *Hauspostille,* when Luther comments on Jesus' being led into the wilderness, he states that "the Lord Jesus is led by the Spirit in the wilderness, that is, the Holy Ghost called him into the wilderness." The Evangelist reports this so that man ought to guard against his own devotion, since Christ himself did not head into the wilderness out of his own devotion (*aus eigner Andacht*) without the word of God. No one, says Luther, should attempt to serve God unless he is certain that

God has bid him do it "either through His Word, or through men who have authority over us in God's place."

> For whoever undertakes something without such a call, like the monks and nuns who have run into the monasteries, he in no way serves God by doing this but rather does this contrary to obedience to God. Therefore this example of Christ is to be considered well: that he did not run into the desert on his own volition but rather the Holy Spirit bid him to do it. And we should do the same and undertake nothing from our own devotion [*aus eigener Andacht*] but rather in everything we do we should be able to say and boast: This was done in obedience and (on account of) the command of God.[10]

Here Jesus' call corresponds to the Holy Spirit's bidding him to a particular action. This example is to show us that our service to God should come from our own call from God (*Befehl Gottes*) and not something we ourselves dream up (*aus eigener Andacht*).[11] The monks and nuns, Luther's favorite targets when addressing this topic, do precisely this when they choose their own works they consider holy that are not divinely commanded. From this definition of call one can see that calls are personal things.[12] A call is the divine command that pertains to the individual. But if one asks:,"What if I do not have a call or command like Abraham? What if the Holy Spirit does not lead me into the wilderness? How do I receive a call?" Luther answers this question by identifying the source of God's commands as the word of God or those "men who have authority over us in God's place."[13]

Thus a "call of God" is, according to Luther, a divine command given to an individual. And such a command comes either directly from God, as in the case of Abraham, or mediately through the word of God and through people in authority. These ideas allow Luther to expand the meaning of the terminology further by referring not only to the very specific commands considered thus far, but also to the universal commands in God's Word applicable to every individual. For in the common orders (*den gemeinen Ständen*) of society and with the works of love, no new specific command is required, for it already exists in the Ten Commandments. "There our Lord God bids everyone to hear God's word, love God, call upon God, obey father and mother, not to murder, and not to commit adultery but rather be married. All of this is God's creation and command."[14] Out of these universal commands of Scripture flow the common orders of society in which each person can be sure of his place and what God has commanded him to do.[15] This is his vocation; this is his calling.[16] So Luther concludes that

> Everyone should do what is commanded him and not do whatever is not commanded to him. And if everyone pays attention to his call he will have his hands full doing what is commanded so that he may not trouble himself with that which is not commanded him. And if there are no other commands, still the Ten Commandments concern all men so that if he obeys these wherever they should be obeyed he will have enough to do. [17]

It is this understanding of a call of God that illuminates Luther's terminology of office (*Amt*). For Luther continuously relates the two together through the idea that one's office is the thing God bids one to do. For example, Christ, being sent by the Father, can be said to have an office. In one place Luther says that "his office is that he should teach."[18] In another place Luther says that after Christ ascended to heaven "his office is that he should make souls free and loose from the law, sin, and death."[19] Thus "office" can become a synonym with *Werk* (work) or even *Tun* (a thing done). As a thing commanded, "office" can also be used in the plural to indicate various things commanded. So the Augsburg Confession says that, without Christ, human nature is too weak "to carry out commanded offices [*befohlene Ämter auszurichten*]."[20] In other places *Amt* is explicitly used as a synonym of "commanded work" (*befohlenes Werk oder Tun*). So for Luther and the Confessions it is in the command of God that one receives his offices or works to perform. Thus, says Luther, when the monks claim that to live in the "common orders and offices" is nothing compared to their holy life, they are making a judgment without the word of God. But whoever has the word of God can be sure that in the Fourth Commandment God has commanded even such seeming small works as when a child goes to school and studies, a young girl spins and sews, or a servant girl cooks, washes, sweeps, carries the children, wipes their mouth, and bathes them. "Through his word God makes them holy works and he needs no chrism in addition."[21] Luther's concern is that we not dream up our own works with which to serve God. A holy work is not just any work but rather only that work which has been commanded and is performed in faith.

Thus a "call of God" is, according to Luther, a divine command given to an individual.

It should not be surprising then that "office" or "offices" can on the one hand refer to individual tasks commanded by God. This is particularly true of the Latin *officium,* which could mean specific tasks or duties performed. We can refer to this as office in the narrow sense. On the other hand, the meaning of "office" reflects the second definition of *Amt* and the third of *officium* given earlier, such that it indicates the sphere of work or operation of the person given such duty and obligations. This is especially true when Luther and the Confessions refer to the common orders of society and the general commands that govern them. This can be referred to as the office in the wide sense.

Often these senses of "office" are found mixed together, something requiring careful reading. For example, the Apology states that Paul does not praise the works and labor (*die Werke und Arbeit*) of marriage in and of themselves, but rather wants wives first to have faith and receive forgiveness.

> Following this he gives consideration to the work of their office and call as wives [*des Werkes ihres weiblichen Amtes und Berufs*], just as in all Christians good works should follow out of faith so that each does something according to his calling [*Beruf*] so that he is of use to his neighbor. And just as these good works please God, so also such works please God which a believing wife does according to her call. And such a wife will be saved who performs her office as wife according to her call in the order of marriage [*ihrem Beruf nach im ehelichen Stand ihr weiblich Amt tut*].[22]

In the first part of this text the words "office" and "call" are synonyms indicating a vocation or calling, namely, the "wifely office" to which a woman may be called. This represents the use of office in the wide sense. But interestingly in the same text the Latin reads at the end: Ita mulieris officia placent Deo propter fidem, et salvatur mulier fidelis, quae in talibus officiis vocationis sua pie servit. And so the Latin indicates she serves "in such offices of her calling," referring to the individual duties or functions a wife does within her office of being a wife. Thus in theory, if not in actual practice, one could speak of offices within one's office. But one could never rightly speak of an office without or even separate from its functions, because it is precisely these duties that give substance to "office" in the wider sense.

OFFICE AND OFFICES IN THE CHURCH

It is this terminology of call and office that Luther and the Confessions use within their theology of the public ministry of the church. In this short space, however, I will only be able to focus upon the use of the terminology of office. On the one hand, "office" can occasionally refer to individual functions that are performed within the sphere of work that one has been given. For example, Luther denies that the Roman bishops act like true bishops because they "will neither preach nor teach, nor baptize, nor administer the Lord's Supper, nor perform any work or office [*Werk oder Amt*] of the Church."[23] Here *Amt* is a synonym of *Werk* and refers to individual duties that properly are the bishop's to perform, such as teaching, baptizing, and communing.[24] Similarly, in another place Luther writes that this is "the simple meaning of the [third] commandment: since holidays are observed anyhow, such observance should be devoted to hearing God's Word, so that the special office of the day should be the ministry of the Word [*eigentlich Amt sei das Predigtamt*] for the young and the mass of poor people" (LC I, 86). Here "office" is specifically the single function of preaching or teaching the word as opposed to any other duties, such as administering the Lord's Supper, that might be performed. And this particular office is designated by the important compound word *Predigtamt,* which here refers to the individual function of preaching.

On the other hand, Luther and the Confessions often use "office" in the wide sense when teaching about office in the church. Here the word "office" refers to the sphere of activity (*Wirkungskreis*) in which the officeholder performs the duties given him to perform. In this category fall the terms of concrete offices such as *Bischofsamt* (office of the bishop), *Pfarramt* (parish office), or *Schullehreramt* (schoolteacher's office).[25] For example, in the Apology we read that "the bishop's office is according to divine right: to preach the gospel, forgive sins, judge doctrine and reject that doctrine which is contrary to the gospel, and to exclude those from the congregation whose godlessness is obvious, not with human power but only through God's word."[26] In this way of speaking the bishop's office includes many different specific duties. And when they do not perform these duties, "the bishops do not perform their office according to the gospel," as the German text of the Apology says. But again the Latin, which finds it easier to speak about individual functions, says literally that they do not "perform the offices of bishops [*episcoporum officia*] according to the gospel."[27]

One could never rightly speak of an office without or even separate from its functions, because it is precisely these duties that give substance to "office" in the wider sense.

This use of the wide sense of "office" to speak of churchly posts can be expanded even further so as to add yet another tier or layer to the terminology of office. Thus arise words like *Kirchenamt* that include all actual concrete offices held by individuals in the church. This ties into Luther's idea of the general orders (*Stände*) of the world and is in fact equivalent to one of the orders, namely, the public life of the church in all its facets.[28] So Luther says:

> The estate [*Stand*] I am thinking of is rather one which has the office of preaching and the service of the word and sacraments and which imparts the Spirit and salvation, blessings that can not be attained by any amount of pomp and pageantry. It includes the work of pastors, teachers, preachers, lectors, priests (whom men call chaplains), sacristans [*Küster*], schoolmasters, and whatever other work belongs to these offices and persons. This estate the Scriptures highly exalt and praise" (AE 46: 220–221).

So we have observed how the singular "office" can be used to designate everything from a singular function (*Verrichtung*) to the estate containing all the concrete offices in the church (*Stand*). This is all fine and good. But many of the questions causing difficulties in our midst concern how to relate the realities designated by these various uses of office. In fact the theme "Office and Offices" implies that this is in fact the main problem needing to be addressed. So we must now turn directly into the wind.

RELATION OF OFFICE AND OFFICES

It turns out that it is the grand evangelical principle of Luther and the Confessions that ties together all the various realities within the church designated as office. This evangelical principle bases the existence of the church and everything in it upon the foundation of the gospel of Jesus Christ and its proclamation. The word of God is the holy of holies, and "whatever hour God's word is

taught, preached, heard, read, or meditated upon, there the person, day, and work are sanctified thereby, not because of the external work, but because of the word" (LC I, 91). All authority of the church, its sacraments, its offices, and everything else that belongs to the church finds its purpose and authority in the gospel. Even the law of God is proclaimed only in order to prepare for the coming of the gospel. And it is only in light of this principle that Luther and the Confessions can be understood when they speak of the offices of the church and their relation to one another.

Luther speaks directly to the question of how the various duties in the church relate to one another. It is the above principle that drives him to say that many functions exist in the church, namely, to preach, to baptize, to administer the eucharist, to bind and loose sins, and many others, "but the first and foremost of all on which everything else depends is the teaching of the Word of God. For we teach with the Word, we consecrate with the Word, we bind and absolve sins by the Word, we baptize with the Word, we sacrifice with the Word, we judge all things by the Word."[29] Here Luther does not use the term "office" as he did above, but clearly he is speaking of functions in the church or offices in the narrow sense. This opinion of Luther is repeated in an oft-misused passage from the Apology, where we read that

> among the adversaries, in many regions, during the entire year no sermons are delivered, except in Lent. Here they ought to cry out and justly make grievous complaint; for this means at one blow to overthrow completely all worship. For of all acts of worship [*Gottesdienst*] that is the greatest, most holy, most necessary, and highest, which God has required as the highest in the First and Second Commandment, namely, to preach the word of God. For the office of preaching [*Predigtamt*] is the highest office [*höchste Amt*] in the church. Now, if this worship is omitted, how can there be knowledge of God, the doctrine of Christ, or the Gospel?[30]

These texts apply the evangelical principle directly to the office or function of preaching and teaching the Word of God (and, yes, preaching and teaching are treated as equivalent and essentially the same office) and give it first place in the church. But Luther directly applies this to the concrete offices within the church. And he concludes that

> if the office of teaching the Word [*Amt des Worts*] is entrusted to anyone, then everything accomplished by the Word in the church is entrusted, that is, the office of baptizing, consecrating, binding, loosing, praying, and judging doctrine. Inasmuch as the office of preaching the gospel is the greatest of all and certainly built upon it, it becomes the foundation for all other functions [*Ämtern*], which are built upon it such as the offices of teachers, prophets, governing, speaking with tongues, the gifts of healing and helping, as Paul directs in 1 Cor. 12:28 (SL 10: 1592).

Thus for Luther whoever "has the office of preaching [*Predigtamt*] given to him has the highest office in Christendom given to him."[31] Clearly, for Luther, the ranking of the function of preaching as the highest of all duties in the church at the same time makes the preacher's office the highest concrete office in the church. Further, the office of preaching comes as a unit: one has it whole or not. All other concrete offices have authority and function based upon the office of preaching. Thus for Luther and the Confessions *Predigtamt*, while describing the chief function, was also the most evangelical and descriptive of titles for the highest concrete public office. This evangelical principle allows *Predigtamt* to transcend the layers or senses of "office" and becomes the element that ties them together in the vertical dimension. Thus all the concrete offices in the wide sense, whether pastors or presbyters or bishops, gain their theological standing not from the ranking and hierarchy within the church (which is by human rite) but from this chief evangelical function given them. They all have the same call; they are all equal by divine right (Tr, 61–67). Whether bishop, pastor, preacher, or assistant pastor, all of them are "sent alike to the the *Predigtamt*."[32] For they all receive the "command to teach the gospel [*mandatum docendi evangelii*]" (Tr, 60–61).

The office of preaching comes as a unit: one has it whole or not.

This sort of unity found in the preaching office allows for a wide range of speaking that often mixes the wide and narrow senses of office. At times this chief office, which is restricted to no single concrete manifestation, is designated by its component functions. So the Augsburg Confession says "office is according to divine right: to preach the gospel, forgive sins, judge doctrine and reject that doctrine which is contrary to the gospel, and to exclude those from the congregation whose godlessness is obvious, not with human power but only through God's word (AC XXVIII, 21)." And yet it remains in unity as the "office of bishop." Likewise the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope says that "the gospel assigns to those who preside over churches the command to teach the gospel, to remit sins, to administer the sacraments," etc. (Tr, 60). Yet it remains a unity assigned to particular concrete manifestations. It is even possible for Luther to use *Predigtamt* to designate the highest level of office, that is, the *Stand* of the church with all its concrete offices.[33]

Thus it should be noted that this evangelical definition has no absolute or legalistic reference to a local congregation, only to preaching to those who hear. On the other hand, Luther never considered the *Schullehrer* or similar people, who deal in part with the word and teach children, but are not approved and called to preach and teach in the church at large, to have been given the office of preaching in the proper sense. But this brings us to the divine institution and call that pertains to the ministry, and this is going too broadly afield. But it should be pointed out again that, as demonstrated earlier, office should always be considered in relation to the corresponding call of God. Here lack of space hinders us, however, from approaching theological perfection.

The forgoing has attempted to lay a basic foundation for understanding the (at times) confusing terminology of office and offices in our Lutheran theological heritage. It certainly has not answered all the ongoing questions or even approached many of them. But the basis, I believe, is sound and should provide a firm foothold for evaluating at least parts of existing theological models of the public ministry. We can only hope that as the world continues all around us to deceive and destroy much of what claims the Christian name, we might perhaps experience enough of the Spirit of truth and humility that someday clarity and agreement will come upon us and we will be able once again to experience true Lutheran union, the dream of our forefathers. LOGIA

NOTES

1. See Kurt Marquart, *The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance* (Ft. Wayne, IN: International Foundation for Lutheran Confessional Research, 1990), 70–72. Of course, the good Professor Marquart has poignantly relieved us of this burden with his insightful comments on these pages.There is in fact a distinction between orthodoxy and perfect theology.

2. With regard to things like blocking and tackling: We Cornhuskers of Nebraska relate best to such football analogies, and especially to the idea of basics (I-back right, I-back left, fullback up the middle . . .).

3. F. P. Leverett, *A New and Copious Lexicon of the Latin Language* (Boston: Wilkins, Carter and Co., 1845), 598. Interestingly, πρᾶξις ([1] "a doing, a mode of acting, a deal," [2] "a thing to be done, business") appears in Rom. 12:4, which the KJV translates as "office," where we would undoubtedly no longer use it. "For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office . . . ."

4. *Lexicon Latinitatis Medii Aevi* (Corpus Christianorum Continuatio Mediaualis, 1975), 634. Interestingly, it was also used to designate the *office liturgique* as in *officium divinum, officium ecclesiasticum.*

5. "eorum . . . ut quisque est genere copiisque amplissimus, ita plurimos ambactos clientesque habet." *Bellum Gall.* 6.15. Quoted in Alfred Götze, *Trübners Deutsches Wörterbuch* (Berlin: Walter de Gruter and Co., 1939), 73.

6. Götze, 73.

7. Daniel Sanders, *Wörterbuch der Deutschen Sprache mit Belegen von Luther bis auf die Gegenwart* (Leipzig: Otto Wigand, 1876), 29–30.

8. Ein Amt bekleiden, bedienen, verwalten, übernehmen; einen in ein Amt einsetzen, ihm ein Amt übertragen, geben; einen vom Amt absetzen usw.

9. Webster says the primary meaning of "office" in English is "a special duty, charge, or position conferred by an exercise of governmental authority and for a public purpose: a position of authority to exercise a public function and to receive whatever emoluments may belong to it; b: a position of responsibility or some degree of executive authority." These definitions are what most often come to mind. But this is not the general meaning of *Amt* and *officicum,* as we have observed. Webster informs us that there is a meaning of the word "office" which is "something that one ought to do or must do: an assigned or assumed duty, task, or role." This is much closer to the root meaning of our terms of interest.

Interestingly, Walther was aware of a disagreement even among German Lutherans of the word *Amt.* In 1861, Walther reproduced an article from the *Erlanger Zeitschrift* entitled "Bemerkungen über das Amt." This article is said to be *wertvolles* (valuable) by Walther in his introduction to the article. In it the author basically studies the word *Amt* and its usage. He concludes: "I hope that these comments on language will convince the kind reader or strengthen him in his conviction that great caution is necessary in coming to conclusions concerning the doctrine of the Lutheran church on the ministry as found in the Confessions when looking at individual texts of our Lutheran symbols in which the words *Amt* (office), *Predigtamt* (preaching office), and *Schlüßelamt* (office of the keys), etc. are found. And, I will add (I hope it will convince him) that the presumption must be that where the word "office" occurs in such texts that this is being used in the simple sense of a "commissioned work" (*aufgetragenen Thuns*) without any other additional meanings, because this alone is the essential idea of office in the use of the German language, as we have proven above." Emphasis by Walther. *Lehre und Wehre* 7 (1861): 295–296.

10. SL 13: 246–247. "Nun steht hier, der HErr JEsus sei vom Geist in die Wüste geführt, das ist, der Heilige Geist habe ihn in die Wüste gerufen. Solches hat der Evangelist insonderheit wollen melden, daß man sich hüte vor eigener Andacht; sintemal Christus selbst nicht aus eigener Andacht noch Vornehmen in die Wüste gegangen und da mit dem Teufel gerungen hat; wie viele thun, und mancherlei vornehmen, ohne GOttes Wort, aus eigener Andacht. Aber es soll keineswegs sein. Niemand soll nichts anfangen noch irgend hinlaufen, GOtt zu dienen, er wisse denn gewiß, daß GOtt ihm solches geheißen habe, entweder durch sein Wort, oder durch Menschen, die an GOttes Statt über uns Macht haben. Denn wer ohne solchen Beruf etwas vornimmt, wie Mönche und Nonnen in dem Klöster gelaufen sind, der thut nicht allein GOtt keinen Dienst, sondern thut wider den Gehorsam GOttes. Darum ist uns die Exampel Christi wohl zu bedenken, daß er nicht von sich selbst ist in die Wüste gelaufen, sondern der Heilige Geist hat ihns geheißen; auf daß wir dergleichen auch thun, und nichts aus eigener Andacht vornehmen; sondern in allem, das wir thun, rühmen und sagen können: Es geschehe im Gehorsam und Befehl GOttes."

11. Thus, again in Genesis, Luther returns to comment on Abraham's obedience:

> True obedience is not to do what you yourself choose or what you impose upon yourself, but what the Lord has commanded you through His Word [*quod Dominus per verbum suum te iusserit*]. This definition is drawn from this very passage of Moses when he states about Abraham (Gen. 12:4): "So Abraham went, as the Lord had told him." Here you have obedience defined after the manner of the dielecticians, as something that requires the Word of God. Therefore when God is not speaking but is keeping silence, there can be no obedience. Moreover, it is not enough that God speaks; but it is necessary that He speaks to you. Thus the Word of God came to Abraham that he should sacrifice his son. It was, therefore, true and praiseworthy obedience that Abraham wanted to carry out this command; but it was directed to him. But the fact that the descendants of Abraham wanted to imitate this same action was not obedience, even though the work was the same. For they had not been commanded to do this, as Abraham had been commanded [*erat iussus*]. Similarly, the young man in the Gospel is told to sell everything and to follow Christ (Mark 10:21), and it would have been a most admirable work of obedience if he had obeyed. The monks boast that they are doing the same thing, and they regard this as a true praise of obedience; but it is not obedience, because Christ did not give them this command [*non ipsis hoc mandatum dedit Christus*]. Careful note should be taken of this description: "Abraham went, as the Lord had told him." The Lord, it says, has spoken and He has told Abraham that he should go out. Therefore this going out was a most sacred work, an obedience that was most pleasing to God (AE 2: 271 [WA 42: 455]).

12. See Ap XXVII, 50.

13. This would of course tie into the entire idea of the masks of God (*larvae Dei*). For, as Luther would say, God loves to work from behind masks in order to test our faith, that is, to find out if we will believe him and obey him even when he speaks from the mouth of another person, and that all may be orderly and proper.

14. SL 13: 247. "Mit den gemeinen Ständen und Werken der Liebe bedarf es keines neuen Befehls; denn solches ist bereits in den Zehen Geboten befohlen. Da heißt unser HErr GOtt einen jeden, daß er GOttes Wort hören, GOtt lieben, GOtt anrufen soll, Vater und Mutter gehorsam sein, niemand tödten, nicht Unzucht treiben, sondern ehelich wer-

den soll. Solches alles ist GOttes Geschöpf und Befehl; derhalben darf man da nicht fragen nach dem Heiligen Geist, daß er dich oder mich sonderlich berufe, und heiße ehelich werden, Vather und Mutter sein usw. Solcher Befehl ist zufor da."

15. *Hauspostille,* SL 13: 2216. "Das ist eine nöthige Lehre, da sehr viel an gelegen ist, daß wir unsern Beruf in GOttes Wort fassen, und ein jeder deß gewiß soll sein, daß alles, was er thut und läßt, in GOttes Namen und aus GOttes Befehl gethan und gelassen sei." In translation: "This is a necessary doctrine on which much depends, that we take hold of our call in God's word. Everyone should be certain that everything that he does or leaves undone he does or leaves undone in God's name and at God's command."

16. So Luther on Genesis 17:9: "Magna igitur sapientia est, cum homo facit, quod Deus praecipit, et hon habita ratione aliorum, quid faciant, ipse vocationi serio servit, sed profeto pauci hoc faciunt" (WA 42: 639 [SL 1: 1071]). In translation: "Therefore it is indeed great wisdom when a man does what God has commanded him and does not pay attention to others nor asks what they are doing but rather pays attention only to himself and his call" (AE 3: 128).

17. *Auslegungen über den Evangelisten Johannes,* SL 8: 874. All of these ideas are reproduced by Melanchthon in Ap XXVII, 50, which comments on the young man Christ bid to sell all his possessions. The Apology understands this as a call: "Vollkommenheit steht in diesem Stück, da Christus spricht: 'Folge mir nach!' Und darin steht eines jeden Christen Vollkommenheit, daß er Christo folge, ein jeder nach seinem Beruf (*in vocatione*); und sind doch die Berufe (*vocationes*) ungleich . . . . Darum, obschon jener Jünglin berufen ist, daß er verkaufen sollte, betrifft sein Beruf nicht andere, wie Davids Beruf, daß er König werden sollte, nicht alle betrifft, Abrahams Beruf, daß er seinen Sohn opfern sollte, betrifft nicht andere. Also sind die Berufe ungleich; aber der Gehorsam soll gleich sein, und darin steht Vollkommenheit, so ich in meinem Beruf gehorsam bin, nicht so ich mich eines fremden Berufs annehme, da ich nicht Befehl oder Gottes Gebot davon habe."

18. *Auslegungen über die Psalmen,* SL 5: 123–124. "In order to say much with few words: here the entire law is set aside and the office of Christ is described most correctly that he will not use the sword or establish a new worldly kingdom but that he will be a teacher who will instruct men concerning an unheard of yet eternal decree of God. . . . Our King, concerning whom the Holy Spirit here prophesies, was ordained and made King by God the eternal Father that he might teach. All at the same time he is Priest, Teacher, and Theologian, that he might teach and instruct his people concerning God and rull only their consciences. . . . Christ leaves behind these things of the kings of the world and says to his people: 'With you it is not so.' For his kingdom is in words and his office is that he should teach."

19. *Auslegungen über die Psalmen,* SL 5: 1347. "So ist nun Christus gen Himmel gefahren, sitzt zur rechten Hand GOttes, und sein Amt ist, daß er die Seelen frei und los mache vom Gesetz, Sünde und Tod."

20. "For outside of faith and outside of Christ human nature and ability is far too weak to do good works, to call upon God, to have patience in sufferings, to love one's neighbor, to act upon commanded offices, to be obedient, or to avoid evil lusts" (AC XX, 37).

21. *Hauspostille,* SL XIII: 2218–219. "Darum ists nichts mit den Mönchen und mit ihrem Dreck, daß sie vorgeben und sagen: In gemeinen Ständen und Aemtern leben und seinem Beruf folgen, das ist nichts aber in ein Kloster gehen und ein Mönch werden, das ist etwas. Sie gedenken also: O das sind gemeine Werke, welche auch die Heiden thun; darum ists nichts sonderliches vor GOtt. So urtheilen sie von den Aemtern und Werken, ohne und außer GOttes Wort. Wer aber GOttes Wort hat, der spricht also: Wahr ists, so man es dem Werk nach rechnen will, ists ein sehr gering Ding, daß ein Knäblein in die Schule geht und Studirt, ein Mägdlein spinnt und näht, eine Dienstmagd im Hause kocht, spült, kehrt, Kinder umträgt, wischt, badet. Denn solches thun die Heiden und Unchristen auch. Aber sie thun es ohne GOttes Wort, das ist, sie thun es nicht im Glauben, glauben nicht, daß GOtt ein Dienst und Gehorsam mit solchen Werken geschehe, und wissen seinen befehl nicht. Ein Sohn aber, Tochter und Magd, so Christen sind, wissen aus dem vierten Gebgot, daß GOtt solche Werke gebietet und haben will.

"Gott macht durch sein Wort heilige Werke draus, und bedarf keine Chresams dazu. Denn das Wort ist der rechte Chresam, daß GOtt sagt durch den heiligen Paulum: 'Ihr Kinder, seid gehrosam euern Eltern in dem HErrn'; item: 'Ihr Knechte, seid gehorsam euern leiblichen Herren mit Furcht und Zittern, in Einfältigkeit eures Herzens.' Eph. 6:1–5. Ohne solche Worte sind es schlecte gemeine Werke, so auch die Heiden thun. Aber durch solch Wort und Glauben werden die schlechten Werke (welche die Heiden ebensowohl thun) heilig und GOtt angenehm. Die zwei Stücke, GOttes Wort und Glaube, machen die Werke angenehm."

22. Ap XXIII, 32. "Denn die Werke und Arbeit im Ehestande für sich selbst ohne den Glauben werden hier allein nicht gelobt. So will er nun vor allen Dingen, daß sie Gottes Word haben und gläubig seien, durch welchen Glauben (wie er denn allenthalben sagt) sie empfangen Vergebung der Sünden und Gott versöhnt werden. Danach gedenkt er des Werkes ihres weiblichen Amtes und Berufs, gleichwie in allen Christen aus dem Glauben sollen gute Werke folgen, daß ein jeder nach seinem Beruf etwas tue, damit er seinem Nächsten nütz werde; und wie dieselben guten Werke Gott gefallen, also gefallen auch Gott solche Werke, die ein gläubig Weib tut ihrem Beruf nach; und ein solch Weib wird selig, die also ihrem Beruf nach im ehelichen Stand ihr weiblich Amt tut."

23. "Nun sie (die Roman Bischöfe) aber nicht recht Bischöfe sind oder auch nicht sein wollen, sondern weltliche Heren und Fürsten, die weder predigen noch lehren noch taufen noch kommunizieren, noch einiges Werk oder Amt der Kirche treiben wollen, dazu diejenigen, die solch Amt berufen treiben, verfolgen und verdammen, so muß dennoch um ihretwillen die Kirche nicht ohne Diener bleiben" (SA III, x, 1–3).

24. Sanders, 29, lists another meaning of *Amt* as "individual ecclesiastical office-functions (einzelne kirchliche Amtsverrichtungen)." Thus we also see *Amt* is used as a synonym of *opus* and *munus* in Latin.

25. It is particularly the German with its flexible ability to form compound nouns that leads most often to terms like this.

26. AC XXVIII, 20. "Derhalben ist das bischöfliche Amt nach göttlichen Rechten: das Evangelium predigen, Sünden vergeben, Lehre urteilen und die Lehre, so dem Evangelio entgegen, verwerfen und die Gottlosen, deren gottlos Wesen offenbar ist, aus christlichen Gemeinde ausschließen, ohne menschliche Gewalt, sondern allein durch Gottes Wort."

27. Ap XXVIII, 12: "non faciunt episcoporum officia iuxta euangelium."

28. "This life is profitably divided into three orders: (1) life in the home, (2) life in the state, (3) life in the church. To whatever order you belong—whether you are a husband, an officer of the state, or a teacher of the church—look about you, and see whether you have done full justice to your calling and there is no need of asking to be pardoned for negligence, dissatisfaction, or impatience" (AE 3: 217).

29. "Das erste aber und das allerhöchste, daran alle anderen haften und hangen, ist lehren das Wort Gottes. Denn mit dem Wort lehren wir, segnen, binden und entbinden, taufen, opfern, richten und urtheilen alles" (SL 10: 1572 [AE 40: 21]).

30. Ap XV, 44. This text is from the German translation of the Apology. That the *Triglotta* translates this as "the ministry is the highest office in the Church" is misleading and demonstrates a bias in presenting this text.

31. AE 39: 313–314 (SL 10: 1548–1549).

32. Tr. 9, German text. The applicability of this text to this context is witnessed by Tr. 10 (the German Text): "We have a certain doctrine that the preaching office (*Predigtamt)* originates from the general call of the apostles."

33. Again a much misunderstood text: "All who are engaged in the clerical office or ministry of the Word are in a holy, proper, good, and God-pleasing order and estate, such as those who preach, administer sacraments, supervise the common chest, sextons and messengers or servants who serve such persons. These are engaged in works which are altogether holy in God's sight" (AE 37: 364).

The Ministry and the Schoolmaster

The Relation and Distinction between the Offices of Pastor and Teacher in the Missouri Synod

Daniel S. Johnson

Two conflicting views of the preaching office are taught today within the Lutheran church: the christocentric view and the anthropocentric view. It is this latter view that is also referred to as the sociological or transferal view of the ministry. The christocentric view teaches a *Predigtamt* (preaching office) that receives its authority "from above," from Christ himself, through his institution and mandate (Jn 20:22–23; Mt 28:18–20; Mt 16:19; 1 Cor 4:1), in behalf of the congregation; hence it is christocentric. This is the teaching of our Lutheran Confessions. The anthropocentric view describes a ministry receiving its authority "from below" under the direction and in the name of the congregation, transferred from the congregation to the *Predigtamt*. This view is expressed by Schleiermacher's doctrine of transfer (*Übertragungslehre*).[1]

The christocentric view places the pastor in the office, fulfilling the functions[2] or marks (*notae*) of that office according to Christ's mandate and institution. The pastor is there not for himself, but Christ has placed him there for the benefit of his people, the royal priesthood. The anthropocentric or sociological view sees the ministry in an abstract way, detaching it from its divine institution and removing the distinction between royal priests and ministers.[3] This view predominates when the pastor is understood to exercise his office "in the name of" the congregation. This carries with it a transferral view of power. Edmund Schlink writes:

> The Confessions do not permit us to place the universal priesthood as a divine institution over against the public ministry as a human institution. The idea of a transfer of the rights of the universal priesthood to the person of the pastor is foreign to the Confessions. The church does not transfer its office of preaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments to individuals in its membership, but it fills this office entrusted to it by God, it calls into this office instituted by God. In this office the pastor therefore acts in the name and at the direction of God and in the stead of Jesus Christ. He acts with authority not on the basis of an arrangement made by believers but on the basis of the divine institution.[4]

The priesthood and the ministry must be distinguished, but neither can they be separated. The church, as taught in AC vii, is both ministry and priesthood. Hermann Sasse speaks of this:

> It is therefore in fact impossible in the New Testament to separate ministry and congregation. What is said to the congregation is also said to the office of the ministry, and vice versa. The office does not stand above the congregation but always in it. . . . Office and congregation belong inseparably together . . . .
>
> Of all Lutheran churches there can hardly be another in which the office of the ministry is so highly honored as in the Missouri Synod, where the congregation is so much the center of churchly thinking and activity. Office and congregation are piped together. The life of the one is also the life of the other. If the office falters, so does the congregation. If the congregation falters, so does the office.[5]

Today there is a danger that this distinction (and yet inseparable unity) may be blurred. In light of the present concern we ask, What is the consequence when the office of the ministry and the royal priesthood are not properly distinguished? More specifically, in light of the current crisis, what is the proper relationship between the office of the ministry and the office of the schoolmaster, and the consequence when they are not properly distinguished? This is the focus of this article.

To consider the "orders of man" as normative and speak of *an* office of ministry devoid of its article assumes a plurality of offices rather than the one divinely mandated office. When this happens then the office, *the* ministry, loses its location and becomes *a* ministry, an abstract entity. This is evident when 1 Peter 2:1–10 is used as a means of promoting the sociological view of "everyone a minister."[6] Saying that everyone, such as the schoolmaster, the secretary, the organist, the choirmaster, the usher, or the youth director, is a minister,[7] sets up levels of ministry.[8] This ministerial hierarchy parallels a comparison of spiritual gifts. This, then, is "in the way of the law"[9] and not of the gospel. Hence the means of grace (holy absolution, for example), are met with uncertainty.

The confessions, in their use of 1 Peter 2:9, do not teach the doctrine of the priesthood in such a way (Tr, 69). They do not, however, exclude the priestly service of the royal priesthood, as is recognized in the Catechism's Table of Duties, in Ap x, 24, 25, and 26, and in various other citations within the Confessions. The Smalcald Articles state that the gospel is given

> [f]irst, through the spoken word, by which forgiveness of sin . . . is preached to the whole world; second, through Baptism; third, through the holy Sacrament of the Altar;

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> fourth, through the power of keys; and finally, through the mutual conversation and consolation of brethren (SA III, IV; Tappert, 310).

John Pless speaks well when he says:

> Debates regarding "Church and Ministry" in the nineteenth century have perhaps clouded the fact that the primary distinction in 1 Peter 2:1–10 is not an anti-clerical distinction between those who are called and ordained into the Office of the Holy Ministry and the rest of the baptized but between faith and unfaith. The church is a priesthood and within that priesthood, there is an office established by God Himself to provide oversight for the spiritual house which God has built. *All believers are priests but not all priests are ministers.* 1 Peter 2:1–10 is descriptive of the identity and activity of the Royal Priesthood.[10]

Our Lutheran Confessions see only one ministry, and that ministry is given by way of the Gospel. The Gospel sees no comparison between recipients, but sees only that which is delivered, namely, the gift. This gift is presented in Article IV of the Augsburg Confession and received in Article V.[11] This is where the Ministry (*das Predigtamt*) is provided as an instrument of the means of grace.

> To obtain such faith,[12] God instituted the preaching office [*Predigtamt*], that is, provided the Gospel and the sacraments. Through these, as through means, he gives the Holy Spirit, who works faith, when and where he pleases, in those who hear the Gospel (AC V; *Triglotta*, 45).

The Lutheran Confessions teach that the ministry is a definite office. It is established. It is settled. It is located. There is a man placed into it with a definite task.

> According to divine right, therefore, it is the office of the bishop to preach the Gospel, forgive sins, judge doctrine and condemn doctrine that is contrary to the Gospel, and exclude from the Christian community the ungodly whose wicked conduct is manifest. All this is to be done not by human power but by God's Word alone. On this account people of the parish [*Pfarrleut*][13] and churches are bound to be obedient to the bishops according to the saying of Christ in Luke 10:16, "He who hears you hears me" (AC XXVIII, 21–22).

Irenaeus once said, "If you want to find a Bishop, you look to find where the Eucharist is given out." The ministry is the office of preaching, teaching, and giving out the sacraments. This is what our confessions call the *Predigtamt.* Where there is no means of grace, there is no ministry. Likewise, if there is no ministry, no preaching office, there is no means of grace. The ministry is located in the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the sacraments.[14] The consequence of not properly distinguishing between priesthood and ministry is the elevation of one at the expense of the other.[15] What is at stake here is the gospel.[16]

The historical perspective teaches us that much of what happens today is a result of what happened yesterday. Even in 1997, 157 years after Stephan, the Missouri Synod finds itself guarding itself against Stephanism. Because of this, it has enamored itself with Walther and a strong congregationalism.[17] Even today the prevalent thought is, "What happened to us then must *never* happen again." This also must be considered in light of Grabau and Löhe,[18] who each taught an ecclesiology Walther rejected. James L. Schaaf writes:

Our Lutheran Confessions see only one ministry, and that ministry is given by way of the Gospel.

> A doctrinal dispute over the nature of the ministry had found Löhe and Walther espousing different views, Walther holding that the office of the ministry received its authority from a transference of power by the congregation and Löhe believing that the ministerial office was especially established by Christ within the congregation and for the congregation.[19]

Walther taught that the ministry grew out of the priesthood of believers with the congregation possessing the authority of the *Amt.* For sake of good order the congregation simply transfers it to one of its members. Therefore, the congregation is the bearer of the Keys and transfers (*übertragen*) such authority to the pastor. The pastor exercises his office "in the name of the congregation." This is taught in Thesis VII of his *Church and Ministry:*

> The holy ministry [*Predigtamt*] is the power, conferred [*übertragene*] by God through the congregation, as possessor of the priesthood and of all churchly power, to exercise the rights of the spiritual priesthood in public office [*in öffentlichem Amte*] in the name of the congregation.[20]

Against this transferal view (*übertragen*), Löhe writes:

> But private confession is only a half-measure if the power to bind is not also given to the man who has the power to loose. Refusal of absolution and denial of the Lord's Supper must be in the hands of the individual pastor . . . in each individual case the refusal itself must be left to the pastor, although he must remain accountable to the church for his action.[21]

Löhe held that the office of the ministry is a divine institution in its own right and does not derive its right and authority from the local congregation. Therefore, according to Löhe, the congregation does not transfer its powers to the pastor, but the pastor who fills the office is the instrument of Christ.[22]

Schaaf again observes:

> In the dispute between the two parties, the fundamental theological question dealt with the origin of the Amt. Both Grabau and Walther were agreed that the ministry was a divine institution and not a human invention, but they differed sharply in regard to the manner in which the authority of the ministerial office was given to the individual bearer of the Amt. . . . In complete opposition to Walther, Grabau and Löhe taught that the Amt does not come from the congregation, but the congregation from the Amt.[23]

S. P. Hebart points out that Löhe taught that only the pastor can bestow actual forgiveness, that the absolving words of a layman contain "only the force of a consolation."[24] Schaaf also reminds us that in the midst of this controversy

> [b]oth the ministry and the congregation have an interdependent relationship to one another which rests on the subjection of both parties to the same Lord of the Church. The priesthood of all believers and the office of the ministry do not compete with one another. The priesthood of all believers is the presupposition for the ministry, for only those who through baptism belong to it are equipped for and may aspire to the office of the ministry.[25]

So who is correct and who is in error? Sasse reminds us that the answer is both and neither. Either position can easily be defended in the Confessions and Holy Scriptures. The common danger of both positions, however, is for one, the congregation or the ministry, to be overemphasized at the expense of the other. When Walther overemphasizes the authority of the congregation, he risks ignoring the unique gift Christ has given in the office of the ministry.[26] When Löhe overemphasizes the ministry, he risks removing from the priesthood such gifts as "emergency baptism" and "emergency absolution."[27]

It must be kept in mind that congregation and ministry are interdependent. Sasse writes:

> Already for this reason the alternative "ministry or congregation?" in the nineteenth century was falsely put. Löhe himself saw this, by the way, as Hebart has shown in his illuminating book about him. What was lacking was the strength to draw the consequences of this recognition, and instead there was misapprehension in diagnosing what lay behind the other's position. The position taken by Missouri had nothing to do with the American propensity to do things democratically, as Mundinger has shown in his penetrating study *Government in the Missouri Synod*. After all, Walther and those like-minded with him were all antidemocrats. And Hebart has shown that no conservative political notions distorted the concept of the church for Löhe, who was never so dominated by nationalistic motives as were Bezzel and the later representatives of Neuendettelsau. On both sides there was an overemphasis on one aspect of Biblical truths which in the New Testament belong together. This happened because each party took one side of the New Testament passages as the important one, under which the other had to be subordinated.[28]
>
> The office of the holy ministry is not lord over the congregation (2 Cor 1:24); the congregation is not lord over the office of the holy ministry (Gal 1). Both are under Him who alone is Lord; in Him they are one.[29]

The purpose of this essay is not to determine whether Walther or Löhe are indeed guilty of overemphasizing their positions.[30] Such argument will be left to the reader.[31] For our study, we will consider how Walther's theological matrix of congregational supremacy may have, in part, allowed for a blurring of the distinction of the office of the ministry and the office of schoolmaster within the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

The common danger of both positions is for one, the congregation or the ministry, to be overemphasized at the expense of the other.

John C. Wohlrabe states in his *Ministry in Missouri until 1962* that, for the most part, in the years between 1887 and 1932 the Missouri Synod's position on the doctrine of the ministry remained fairly constant.[32] Between 1932 and 1940, however:

> Confusion within the Missouri Synod over the place of the teacher in the doctrine of the ministry intensified dramatically. . . . There were a few who continued to maintain that the parochial school teacher had no divine call.[33]

Beginning with the Selective Services Act in the 1940s, the Missouri Synod saw a movement that required men of ages twenty-one to thirty-five to register for the Armed Services. For those in the clergy or seminarians studying for the ministry, an exemption for service in the military was granted. In order for the parochial teacher and students studying at Missouri Synod teachers colleges to receive the same exemption, Synodical President John Behnken issued a letter designating teachers "a regular minister of religion."[34]

Wohlrabe continues, "After Lutheran teachers had officially gained the status of ministers of religion during World War II, the push to solidify and further develop that status began."[35] In 1948 the Board of Education understood Behnken's statement as a doctrinal position and set a precedent when it reported:

> The office of the teacher, like that of pastor, is a branch of the general ministry, or of the one office, which Christ instituted when he gave to His Church the Office of the Keys and the Great Commission.
>
> The office of teacher does not issue from the pastorate but from the general ministry. Therefore it is not an auxiliary

> office in the sense of it being subordinate to the pastorate, but is an office which exists in its own right.[36]

This statement was a departure from the historical Missouri position and the Lutheran Confessions.

Later, August C. Stellhorn, Secretary of Schools for the Missouri Synod, followed up on this statement of the Board of Education. He delivered an essay to the 1949 Educational Conference at Concordia Teachers College, Seward, Nebraska, in which he stated that the *Predigtamt* is not limited to the pastorate but also includes parochial teachers.[37] Arnold C. Mueller reiterated this in his *The Ministry of the Lutheran Teacher* when he stated that "*Predigtamt* is here general for the office or ministry of all who teach the word."[38] Mueller concluded that the office of parochial teacher is an office parallel to the parish pastor.[39]

Not only did such an understanding confuse the uniqueness of the office, the* Predigtamt*, but 1 Timothy 5:17 was used in a way that implied that the schoolmaster was the object of Paul's discourse.

Following Stellhorn, a special committee reported to the 1953 Synodical Convention that the teacher is not a layman, but that he belongs to the clergy.[40] The report asserted:

> The regularly called parochial school teacher, who has been duly elected and called for full-time service in the church to perform specific functions of the public ministry, is a "minister of Christian education" and therefore is properly classified under the official categories used by our Government—"ministers of the Gospel" and "ministers of religion." These designations are also properly applied to those who are officially appointed to similar positions. . . . Accordingly, the regularly called parochial school teacher belongs to the clergy of the Church.[41]

The committee went on to report about the parochial teacher that "[h]e belongs to that class of elders who labor in Word and doctrine and who are to be accounted worthy of "double honor" (1 Tim 5:17)."[42]

Not only did such an understanding confuse the uniqueness of the office, the *Predigtamt*, but 1 Timothy 5:17 was used in a way that implied that the schoolmaster was the object of Paul's discourse. In fact the context and concern of Paul's letter is the *Predigtamt,* the pastoral office. Confusion is also generated when Ephesians 4:11–12 is used as if "pastors and teachers" were two distinct offices. The Greek grammar indicates one office, referring to the *Predigtamt.* To this issue the Missouri Synod's Commission on Theology and Church Relations writes:

> In Ephesians 4:11–12 St. Paul refers to the various offices that God gave to the church for the building up of the saints for the work of service. Two important observations should be made within the context of this report. In giving the "shepherds and teachers" to the church, God was appointing them, just as He appointed kings for Israel (1 Kings 1:48; 1 Sam. 12:13; cf. also Eph. 1:22). Moreover, by attaching the definite article "the" to "shepherds and teachers" the apostle indicates that teaching belongs to the essence of the duty of shepherding. Although there are varying interpretations of this passage from Ephesians 4, it is evident that teacher (*didaskalos*) does not refer to the modern office of the parish school teacher. The emphasis here is on how the saints are prepared for service by apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastor/teachers. The pastor does this by teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments. Hence the Lutheran Confessions call his office "*the ministry of teaching the Gospel and administering the sacraments*" (AC v).[43]

Though the churchly office of schoolmaster is not denied in this passage of scripture, neither does it demonstrate that the office of schoolmaster is the *Predigtamt.*

A further confusion of the distinction between ministry and priesthood within the Missouri Synod was a result of definitions used to satisfy the Internal Revenue Service for tax purposes. In March 1950 the IRS ruled that a Lutheran teacher named Eldor Eggen was required to declare his housing allowance on his income tax. He was considered an employee and not under the classification of clergy and therefore could not claim a deduction for his housing allowance. In order to bring tax relief to the teachers in the synod, the LCMS set forth a sociological view as its "official position."[44] This view was a departure from its traditional understanding and the Lutheran Confessions. Shortly after this ruling the LCMS published a "Supplemental Brief" as an appeal. In part, the "Brief" stated that the pastor and teacher "*share the public ministry*." It argued that the "functions" of pastor and teacher

> Overlap considerably . . . particularly in rural areas where there is no teacher, the pastor will teach the Lutheran school, and in congregations which are temporarily without the service of a pastor, or where the pastor is ill, the teacher may assume the pastoral functions.[45]

A number of years later, in the 1981 synodical convention, a floor committee presented a resolution to address the "subject of classification of ministers for purposes of federal law."[46] This was in response to an IRS ruling that

> In addition to being an ordained or commissioned minister within the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod . . . an individual must be "in ministry" in order to be entitled to the treatment afforded to a "*minister of the Gospel*" under tax law.[47]

This resolution was referred to the Board of Directors and later adopted at the 1983 convention. Resolution 5-09A reads as follows:

WHEREAS, There is need for clarification of the factors that qualify pastors and teachers as "ministers of the church" or similar titles for the purpose of United States income taxes, social security (FICA and self-employment taxes), unemployment taxes, and selective service; and

WHEREAS, The regulations of one governmental authority, the IRS, require that an individual be authorized to carry out "substantially all of the functions" of the office of the public pastoral ministry to qualify for such status; and

WHEREAS, the traditional theology of the Synod allows "substantially all of the functions" of the office of the public pastoral ministry to be performed by male teachers under some circumstances, but this is not true of our women teachers; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that only those duly ordained pastors and duly commissioned male teachers who are listed on the Synod's official membership rosters shall be regarded by the Synod as qualifying as "ministers of the church" or similar titles for purposes of United States income taxes, social security (FICA and self-employment taxes), unemployment taxes and selective service.[48]

Not only does this resolution espouse a sociological view of the ministry, but, in order to comply with IRS rulings for those "in ministry," the convention adopted the classification of "Minister of religion—ordained" and "Minister of religion—commissioned"[49] to replace the earlier classification of "Ministers of the Gospel" and "Teachers."[50] In the 1986 convention, this classification achieved an "official" status with a bylaw change.[51] Unfortunately, such definitions for secular reasons have also been used to define our theological position. It is incumbent upon the Missouri Synod to demonstrate great care when adopting resolutions in convention, lest they be misconstrued to mean something other than what our Confessions teach. As Wohlrabe warns: "Even the seemingly smallest, most innocuous resolution of a convention can have immense implications on the doctrine and practice of our synod."[52]

With the historical setting reviewed, this question comes to mind: How was this drift from Missouri's original position on the doctrine of church and ministry permitted? In order to glean an answer, let us return to Walther's *Church and Ministry.* In Ministry Thesis II, he stated, "The preaching office [*Predigtamt*] or pastoral office [*Pfarramt*] is no human ordinance, but an office instituted by God Himself." As a proof for this thesis he called upon AC V: "This statement [AC V] of course does not speak of the ministry of the Word [*Predigtamt*] *in concreto* or of the pastoral office [*Pfarramt*] but only of the ministry of the Word *in abstracto.*"[53]

Here Walther defined the *Predigtamt* in AC V as the ministry in the abstract (*in abstracto*) or wide sense. Hence it includes all ministry done both publicly and privately—the general ministry of the church.[54] In Ministry Thesis I,[55] however, Walther had called upon AC XIV to define the *Predigtamt* in the concrete (*in concreto*) or narrow sense. This is what he referred to as the public ministry (*in öffentlichem Amte*), as seen in Ministry Thesis VII.

Ludwig Hartmann, whom Walther quoted, referred to the ministry in two ways:

> First, in an abstract way [*in abstracto*] when the state or the office itself is being considered, Art. V of the Augsburg Confession treats it; second, in a concrete way [*in concreto*] when the persons are considered who minister in this holy office, as Art. XIV of the Augsburg Confession treats it.[56]

For Hartmann, however, the ministry (*Predigtamt*) in AC V was a ministry *in abstracto*, referring to the *task* done by the *Predigtamt*—not the general ministry of the church (wide sense) as Walther understood it. For Hartmann *in concreto* referred to *who* does it (AC XIV), namely, the parish pastor. Walther did not use the terms in the same way Hartmann did.[57] In order to harmonize Walther's theses, it must be shown that *Predigtamt* is used elsewhere in the Confessions *in abstracto*, in the wide sense, as he has defined it. This proves difficult when the Confessions use *Predigtamt* interchangeably with *Pfarrer,* the parish pastor.

How was this drift from Missouri's original position on the doctrine of church and ministry permitted?

It would be most difficult to prove that Stellhorn and Mueller made a conscious attempt to change the doctrine of the ministry within the Missouri Synod. What they did attempt was a change in the synod's thinking on the topic of the parochial teacher. With this, it is easy to see how Walther's understanding, as taught in *Church and Ministry,* has permitted such a view.[58] When *Predigtamt* is viewed in the "wide sense," as in Ministry Thesis II, it then invites statements such as Ministry Theses III–IX. In these theses a kind of *Predigtamt* is taught that comes out of the congregation, with its authority "transferred (*übertragen*) by God through the congregation" (Thesis VII). Agreeing with Thesis VII in principle, Stellhorn and Mueller took their stand against Thesis VIII by insisting that the teacher holds the *Predigtamt,* not subordinate to but parallel to that of the pastor.[59]

Perhaps the division between Walther and Löhe was due to one seeing what was lacking in the other; hence the question of "congregation or ministry?" In this article the question is, Should the *Predigtamt* be understood in the wide or narrow sense? Stellhorn and Mueller, and those who have followed them, have opted for the wide sense or sociological view of the ministry. What, then, is the consequence when a distinction is drawn between wide and narrow senses of the *Predigtamt*?

The gospel cannot be fractionalized. Yet a sociological view of the ministry tends to do just that. When one receives holy baptism, all of God's promises are bestowed. Nothing is held back. The same is true of the holy supper and holy absolution. What is holy is of the Lord. It is his. He cannot be fractionalized. Neither can his gifts. To seek a "floating gospel" that is not specified in any one office is to invite uncertainty as to where the gospel is given, received, and located. Where there is uncertainty, there is doubt. Where there is doubt, faith cannot exist (Jas 1:6).

Our Lutheran Confessions speak of certainty. In the Confessions, the gospel is delivered by way of justification, located in Christ's institution, promise, and mandate, namely, the *Predigtamt,* the pastoral office (Jn 20:22–23; Mt 18:19–21; 1 Cor 4:1; AC v). These gifts are received and extolled by the church, the royal priesthood. Who is the bearer of the keys: the *Predigtamt* or the priesthood, the ministry or the congregation? The answer is both, the ministry in its sphere and the priesthood in its. One cannot be raised at the expense of the other. But this does happen when the ministry is defined in terms other than those taught in the Confessions and given in Holy Scripture.

Luther taught that the priestly duty for parents (Eph 6:4; 2 Tim 1:5) is to provide for Christian nurture of their children.

What is the consequence when the office of the ministry and the royal priesthood are not properly distinguished? When Walther's Ministry Thesis VII (*übertragen,* the *Predigtamt* in the "wide sense") is pushed to its logical conclusion, which Mueller and Stellhorn have done, then everyone is seen as a minister. Everyone holds a part of the *Predigtamt.* The distinction of priest and minister is then blurred. What is unique to each is hidden. The distinction is reduced to that of a least common denominator. Anarchy in the church is the natural result. The consequence of this is uncertainty with respect to the efficacy and *proprium* of the office. Ultimately the gospel itself is at stake.

In response to these trends, Douglas Fusselman has clarified the distinction between priest and minister:

> The distinction between laypeople and pastors, then, is simply a matter of instrumentality; a layperson functions according to his/her own person; a pastor functions in the office, that is, as the instrument of Christ's presence. The layperson might correctly perform churchly acts, but in such actions he/she alone is the actor. When the pastor performs these same acts in the office, Christ himself is the actor. This distinction can influence the efficacy of the divinely instituted actions.[60]

By definition an office has both a function and a person placed into it. This is what gives it its concrete nature. It is located and definite. It is the pastor who has been placed into the office "to preach the Gospel, to forgive and retain sins, and to administer and distribute the sacraments" (AC XXVIII, 7). The pastor has been given by Christ's mandate (Jn 20:22–23) to stand up and say to the penitent in behalf of the congregation, "Do you believe that my forgiveness is God's forgiveness?"[61] And then, upon the affirmative answer, to say into his ears, "Let it be done for you as you believe. And I, by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ, forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Go in Peace."[62]

Fusselman continues:

> The lay/pastor distinction is nowhere better understood than in absolution. The pastor, by virtue of the office, is able to deliver "indicative-operative absolution" in the first person singular: "I forgive you all your sins" . . . Christ is here personally addressing the penitent through the instrument of the pastor—the penitent truly encounters Christ. If a member of the laity should speak in this manner, the offered forgiveness would be considered as coming from the absolving individual rather than from the only-begotten Son of the Father. The laity can deliver *divine* pardon only in the third person singular: "God forgives you all your sins." While it cannot be demonstrated that one form of absolution is always or necessarily preferable to the other, it can be demonstrated that the two absolutions are not identical. The office is the difference. The lay/pastor distinction is discernible also in the application of the Word.[63]

Is this the task Christ has given for the schoolmaster? What service has God provided for the schoolmaster? What is the proper relationship between pastor and schoolmaster? The Large Catechism provides some help here when it states:

> In connection with this command there is more to be said about the various kinds of obedience due to our superiors . . . Where a father is unable by himself to bring up his child, he calls upon a schoolmaster to teach him (LC, IV, 141).

The parent is the one instructed to catechize his children in Deuteronomy 6:

> These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home, and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates (Dt 6:6–9, NIV).

Luther taught that the priestly duty for parents (Eph 6:4; 2 Tim 1:5) is to provide for Christian nurture of their children. He said that father and mother are to be bishop and bishopress over their household, "that you in your homes are to help us carry on the ministry [*Predigtamt*] as we do in the church" (AE 51: 137). The schoolmaster brings support to this endeavor. He finds his office of vocation, his priestly duty, under the authority of the parent to teach and "nurture" the children of the congregation in Christian piety, science, and the arts, such as reading, writing, and arithmetic within the setting of the day school. Furthermore, he is summoned to assist the parent and pastor in catechesis, as is the duty of the entire priesthood.[64]

When the vocation of schoolmaster is seen properly as an arm of the parent, it must not be considered as insignificant or unimportant. It is an important vocation within the church—it

is a summons by God to serve.[65] To ask, Who has what ministry?[66] is to ask the wrong question. The question placed before the Christian is, What has Christ done for me that I might serve him?

Christ has given to his church, that is, to both priesthood and ministry (AC v), the following gifts: gospel, forgiveness, and eternal life. These gifts are what priesthood and ministry have in common. Having seen what they have in common also allows one to see what is unique. With this understood, everything is seen as gift.[67] To receive something as gift is to see it as unique. To receive something as gift is to receive it as it has been given. When a gift is received it is not compared to other gifts. It stands alone. When a gift is received from one's father, one does not properly accept that gift by comparing it to the gift given one's brother. To compare gifts is to fractionalize the gift.

When one improperly receives a heavenly gift, there is a confusion of law and gospel. This is the risk when one operates with a sociological view of the ministry. When a gift is received, one properly rejoices in the gift as it has been given. To confess the Lord's gift is to confess that gift as unique. That is how the gift is honored. So, when one speaks of the gift of holy baptism, it is properly honored when what is confessed is that which is unique only to holy baptism. When the gift of the Lord's Supper is considered, one confesses only that which is unique to that gift; likewise with holy absolution.

When Christian vocations are understood to be unique gifts, then one is freed to say only what can be said of a pastor, a schoolmaster, a parent, and a Christian. And, when each is seen as a unique gift, one can also properly articulate that which is similar. For what they truly have in common is of the Lord—forgiveness of sin and eternal life. Luther writes:

> For we must believe and be sure of this, that baptism does not belong to us but to Christ, that the gospel does not belong to us but to Christ, that the office of preaching [*Predigtamt*] does not belong to us but to Christ, that the sacrament [of the Lord's Supper] does not belong to us but to Christ, that the keys, or forgiveness and retention of sins, do not belong to us but to Christ. In summary, the offices and the sacraments do not belong to us but to Christ, for he has ordained all this and left it behind as a legacy in the church to be exercised and used to the end of the world; and he does not lie or deceive us. Therefore we cannot make anything else out of it but must act according to his command and hold to it. However, if we alter it or improve on it, then it is invalid and Christ is no longer present, nor is his ordinance (AE 38: 200).

History has revealed a synod where problems of church and ministry, possibly debated all too hastily or dogmatically a century ago, have returned to haunt us today. As we near the end of this century, Walther's position has come to be interpreted more and more in an anthropocentric way and according to the views of Schleiermacher. The confusion concerning the distinction between *Predigtamt* and Schoolmaster in Missouri is but one of many stemming up from the debate. In an attempt to avoid the possible excesses in Löhe and Grabau, have we allowed the pendulum to swing too far? The warnings of Grabau and Löhe against allowing Jeffersonian democracy to color our ecclesiology must be heard today as much as in any time in the Missouri Synod's 156-year history.

All are priests, yet not all are ministers.[68] There is a priesthood and there is a ministry. They are not the same; still they are both given by God. This is the way of the Confessions. Therefore, we do well when we receive it as it is given us "and gladly hear and learn it" (SC I, 6). Let us return to our Confessions and the Holy Scriptures and confess the doctrine of the ministry in the way of the gospel. LOGIA

NOTES

1. This is not to be confused with the early Luther, who spoke of a "doctrine of the general priesthood of believers [which] emerged in protest to the outward, clerical priesthood of the papal system" (Lowell C. Green, "Change in Luther's Doctrine of the Ministry," *Lutheran Quarterly* 18 [May 1966]: 174). Green observes that in the years 1520–1525, Luther tended to subordinate the ministry to the priesthood. However, the peasants' revolt, the emergence of the enthusiasts, fanatics, and the general breakdown of the church prompted Luther to rethink or at least change his emphasis on the doctrine of the ministry. Green continues, "For if we study Luther's writings on the ministry and the priesthood of believers from 1520–1525, isolated from his thought in other periods, we can find a strong case for the transferal view. Liermann points out that in the early years of the Reformation Luther apparently established the power of the congregation at the expense of the office of the ministry. The congregation appeared to have won, and the ministerial office seemed doomed to extinction in the Reformed church. But a reversal set in during the second half of the 1520s, and the office of the ministry was preserved to the developing Lutheran church" (174). "We may speak of three ways in which the change in emphasis manifested itself in Luther's teaching after 1526. (1) Luther begins to realize that the spiritual priesthood and the ministerial office are two completely different things. . . . (2) After 1527 the idea of *geistliches* Regiment, spiritual rule by the ministers, connects the minister with the Fourth Commandment, indicating divine origin of the office, and the duty of obedience on the part of the laity. This provides a reciprocity. (3) The third change in emphasis vitally affects the content: *Kirche,* church, replaces *Gemeinde,* congregation. The means of grace are not necessarily committed restrictively to a local congregation, but to the Church in its universal character that transcends congregations" (178). In this article (175–177), Green gives an analysis of the chief source material of what some have called a transferal theory (*Übertragungslehre*) in Luther.

2. What I have called a sociological or transferal view of the office of the ministry is often referred to as the functional view. The reason I have avoided this term is the confusion it creates. This is confounded by the confessional teaching of the *Predigtamt* as an office with many distinct "functions," mainly, preaching, teaching, forgiving and retaining sins, administering the sacraments, and judging doctrine (AC XXVIII, 21–22). Holsten Fagerberg points this out in his study *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1972), 230–238.

3. The blurring of the separation of the office of the ministry and the royal priesthood can be traced back in part to Friedrich Schleiermacher. "If there is religion at all, it must be social, for that is the nature of man, and it is quite peculiarly the nature of religion" (Friedrich Schleiermacher, *On Religion: Speeches to Its Cultured Despisers* [New York: Harper and Row, 1958], 148). This understanding of church naturally taints the

confessional understanding of the ministry. Schleiermacher continues, "By universal freedom of choice, recognition and criticism, the hard and pronounced distinction between priest and laity will be softened, till the best of the laity come to stand where the priests are" (175). Here Schleiermacher asserts that ministry is merely a matter of functions that all the laity perform.

4. Edmund Schlink, *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions*, trans. Paul Koehneke and H. Bouman (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1961), 245.

5. Hermann Sasse, *We Confess the Church*, trans. Norman Nagel (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1986), 78–79.

6. An example of Schleiermacher's understanding of church is seen on church bulletins that read: "Pastor: John Doe. Ministers: Every member of the congregation." While on the surface this may seem innocuous, it really betrays a misunderstanding of the separation of the office of the ministry and the royal priesthood. This is also seen in numerous hymns sung in the churches of our day. One such hymn, published by Concordia Publishing House, contains the following line: "I am the Church! You are the church! We are the church together." What Schleiermacher failed to realize, and this hymn fails to express, is that Christ cannot be separated from his church. He is the groom—the church is his bride. The church cannot exist apart from Christ.

7. Though the modern oxymoron "lay minister" is not specifically mentioned, it also applies to our argument here. For more on this see Douglas Fusselman, "Only Playing Church? The Lay Minister and the Lord's Supper," *Logia* 3 (Epiphany 1994): 43–49.

8. In reference to the phrase "everyone a minister," Kurt Marquart writes: "In that case the distinction between the priesthood and ministry vanishes, and the difference between the ministry of 'everyone' and that of 'some' becomes, by implication, one of degree, not of kind" (Kurt E. Marquart, *The Church and Her Fellowship, Ministry, and Governance*, Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics 9, ed. Robert D. Preus [Fort Wayne, IN: International Foundation for Confessional Lutheran Research, 1990], 104).

9. [Ed. To the uninitiated, "in the way of the Law" and "in the way of the Gospel" are "Nagelisms," i.e., phrases coined by Norman Nagel of Concordia Serminary, Saint Louis, to indicate whether a mode of religious speech or action functions in a manner conformable to the law or the gospel. "In the way of" does not mean "in front of."]

10. John T. Pless, "Catechesis for Life in the Royal Priesthood," Essay delivered to the Pastoral Conference of the Iowa East District of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, Easter III, 1994, 9. Emphasis mine.

11. AC IV deals with the doctrine of justification. Article V delivers the gift by means of Word and Sacrament through the *Predigtamt*, the Ministry.

"The Apostolic Commission was, after all, addressed *directly* not to believers generally but to the Eleven (Mt 28: 16 ff.)" (Kurt Marquart, *Church Growth as Mission Paradigm: A Lutheran Assessment*, A Luther Academy Monograph [Houston: Our Savior Lutheran Church, 1974], 43).

12. Article V refers to the "faith" given by way of Article IV.

13. Tappert here mistranslates *Pfarrleut* as "parish pastors." It is properly translated as "people of the parish." This is reflected in the translation above. The *Triglotta* translates correctly.

14. The means of grace are given out through the ministry, *Predigtamt,* as taught in AC V. These gifts are found in the church where "the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel," as taught in AC VII.

15. "Ernst Kinder, like Ferdinand Walther, has warned against applying the priesthood of believers to political struggles in the church. Kinder points out that, when the priesthood of believers has been understood *politically,* it has lost its *priestliness.* [Ernst Kinder, *Der evangelische Glaube und die Kirche*, 1958: 163]. He writes that it was not the intention of the reformers to allow such a distortion, but rather the modern attempts to play the priesthood against the ministry, with an appeal to democratic ideas derived from natural law, have led to the secularization and emptying of the content of this beautiful concept. The very fact that every Christian is already a priest before God (1 Pet. 2:8–9) obliterates the need for a public priesthood. And a view of the ministry which builds its authority upon the royal priesthood tends to make the pastoral office subsidiary and not completely necessary" (Lowell C. Green, *Adventures in Law and Gospel: Lectures in Lutheran Dogmatics* [Ft Wayne, IN: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, 1993], 194).

16. Norman Nagel writes that where the ministry is misunderstood, "What is at stake is the preaching of the Gospel. No preaching of the Gospel, no church. No preaching of the Gospel without a preacher" (Norman E. Nagel, "The Office of the Holy Ministry in the Confessions," *Concordia Journal* 14 [July 1988]: 284).

17. "Missouri Synod polity came out of a compromise with a 'rabid' lay party which, in the judgment of Mundinger, 'stood for an extreme congregationalism with heavy emphasis on the individual. Like the Anabaptists, they took certain isolated quotations from Luther's writings of the early 1520s, tore them out of their life situations, and tried to construct a new church polity' (Carl S. Mundinger, *Government in the Missouri Synod* [Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947], 107). After years of opposing this, Walther compromised with them. 'In this extreme exigency Walther made a virtue of necessity and adopted a realistic course. He accepted principles of church government which his lay opponents had gathered from the writings of Luther [these were all from the early Luther as was noted above]. To these he added from Luther certain provisions which safeguarded the dignity of the ministerial office: his transfer theory, the doctrine of the divinity of the call, the absolute authority of the Word of God, and the permanence of tenure' (Mundinger, 213). This polity emphasizes what neither Luther (later in life) nor our Confessions emphasize, the priesthood of all believers. The Confessions only refer to the priesthood of all believers once, and there it is used as a synonym for church (Tr, 69). In fact the Apology specifically states that it is the Reformers' greatest wish to maintain the old church polity: In 'Of Ecclesiastical Order' we read, 'Concerning this subject we have frequently testified in this assembly that it is our greatest wish to maintain church-polity and the grades in the Church [old church-regulations and the government of bishops], even though they have been made by human authority [provided the bishops allow our doctrine and receive our priests]' (Ap XIV, 24, 25)" (Paul R. Harris, "Angels Unaware," *Logia* 3 [Epiphany 1994]: 39).

18. "The distinction between visible and invisible church was especially important to him [Löhe]. The visible Church was composed of those who were called; the invisible, of those who were chosen. The invisible and the visible Church are one, although not identical; the invisible Church exists without the other; both exist at the same time. Hebart sees Löhe's entire activity as an attempt to make the invisible church as visible as possible. The question of the relation of the visible Church to the invisible Church is, according to him, the key to understanding Löhe's stand on Kirche and Amt" (James L. Schaaf, *Wilhelm Löhe's Relation to the American Church: A Study in the History of Lutheran Mission* [Heidelberg: J. L. Schaaf, 1962], 146).

19. James L. Schaaf, Introduction to Wilhelm Löhe, *Three Books on the Church*, trans. James L. Schaaf (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 24.

20. C. F. W. Walther, *Church and Ministry,* trans. J. T. Mueller (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1987), 268.

21. Wilhelm Löhe, *Three Books on the Church*, trans. James L. Schaaf (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1969), 175.

22. This is why Pieper writes that Löhe's view of a so-called "ministerial order or caste . . . makes the officiant a 'means of grace' alongside Word and Sacrament" (Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics* 3 [Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1953], 447). This appears to be the crux of Walther's rejection of Löhe's view of church and ministry.

23. Schaaf, *Wilhelm Löhe's Relation to the American Church*, 131.

24. See Marquart, *The Church*, 110–111, n. 22. Here he quotes S. Hebart, *Wilhelm Löhes Lehre von der Kirche, ihrem Amt und Regiment: Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Theologie im 19. Jahrhundert* (Neuendettelsau: Freimund-Verlag, 1939). Also see Schaaf, *Wilhelm Löhe's Relation to the American Church:* "The weakest point in Löhe's concept of Amt is his limitation of the office of the keys to the ordained clergy; a layman can give comfort to a penitent sinner, but never absolution" (148).

25. Schaaf, *Wilhelm Löhe's Relation to the American Church*, 132.

26. "It is well known that there are two strands in Luther's thoughts on church and ministry: the priesthood of all believers and the divine institution of the pastoral office. He emphasized the former against the Romanists and the latter against the Enthusiasts. The extraordinary situation in

Perry County led to only one of those strands being followed, the priesthood of all believers" (Harris, 35). Also see Harris, 35, n. 2.

27. "Both Grabau and Walther believed, of course, that they were correctly representing the Lutheran doctrine as defined in the symbolic books of the church. Although a clear definition of the nature of the church and the ministry was not found in the Book of Concord, both men cited sections from it and from Luther that, according to their opinion, supported their respective views. Walther found his chief support in Melanchthon's *Tractatus de Potestate Papae* and Luther's *De instituendis ministris Ecclesiae,* while Grabau always returned to Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession, *De ordine ecclesiastico,* or rather, as he himself expressed it, to the interpretation given that article by the Lutheran *Kirchenordnungen*" (Schaaf, *Wilhelm Löhe's Relation to the American Church*, 130–131).

28. Sasse, 79.

29. Sasse, 83.

30. "The Means of Salvation are present in the church in such a way that God himself is always Giver and Gift. Since Christ is not absent (Reformed view) but ever present (Lutheran view), it is beside the point to argue whether the Means of Salvation have been given to the church, to the pastors, or to the congregations. God is present and himself acts in each Means of Grace as subject, while the church remains the direct object of divine working. When the Means of Salvation are regarded as the "possession" of one of these groups, the danger occurs that either tyranny, synergism, or an anthropocentric view of the church will result" (Green, *Adventures,* 199–200).

31. For a detailed description of the controversy between Walther and Löhe, see James Schaaf, *Wilhelm Löhe's Relation to the Church,* 121–161.

32. For a more detailed analysis of the changes with regard to the doctrine of the ministry within the Missouri Synod until 1932, see John C. Wohlrabe, Jr. *Ministry in Missouri until 1962* (n.p.: 1992). This monograph is a condensed version of Wohlrabe's 1987 Th.D. dissertation at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis.

33. Wohlrabe, 39–40.

34. An open letter to all Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod teachers from President John W. Behnken, October 11, 1940, Board for Parish Education Files, III.1-T.0549, Box 54, Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis.

35. Wohlrabe, 41. Previous to this passage, Wohlrabe had written, "Increased confusion came by way of the introduction of a new understanding [of the ministry]. Arnold C. Mueller, the Editor of Religious Literature (1933–1966), and August C. Stellhorn, Secretary of Schools for the Missouri Synod (1921–1960), advocated the Wisconsin Synod's position on the doctrine of the ministry within the Missouri Synod. This position has become known as the functional view of the doctrine of the ministry. Motivated by a desire to increase the status of the parochial school teacher within the Missouri Synod, Mueller and Stellhorn set forth this functional view as representative of the Missouri Synod's position before the United States government and published it throughout the Synod as the only proper and correct understanding" (Wohlrabe, 40). Note that Wohlrabe uses the term "functional view" as a synonym for the sociological view of the ministry. See Wohlrabe, 39–47, for a detailed history of the events described above.

36. See "The Status of the Lutheran Male Teacher," November 1948, Board of Parish Education Files, III.1- T,0549, Box 52, File 5, 8, Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis.

37. See August C. Stellhorn, "The Lutheran Teacher's Position in the Ministry of the Congregation," Board of Parish Education of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, July 7–8, 1949.

38. A. C. Mueller, *The Ministry of the Lutheran Teacher* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), 80.

39. To assume that the office of schoolmaster or teacher in our schools is an office parallel to the parish pastor has no historical or confessional support. There is evidence of a longstanding partnership within the parish, but this has historically been that of the pastor filling the *Predigtamt* as taught in Article V of the Augustana through the divine call of Article XIV: "It is taught among us that nobody should publicly teach or preach or administer the sacraments in the church without a regular call." As our Confessions teach, there is therefore no call from God through the church, except the call to preach the word and administer the holy sacraments.

Robert Preus writes in his monograph on the doctrine of the call within the Confessions: "The call is to the one and only office, the ministry, nothing more and nothing less. There is no call to an office which is not the preaching of the Gospel and administration of the Sacraments, no call to social work, political action, works of mercy, or anything else—Such functions are the office of the *vocatio caritatis* which belongs to all the Christians, to the universal priesthood of believers . . . . There are two conclusions of primary importance to be drawn from what has just been said, and the fact that the call must correspond to the ministry itself. First, there simply is no call from God through the church but the call to the preaching of the Word (and administration of the Sacraments), no call to monkery, exorcists, ostiaries; social work, political office, military service; no call in our day to fund raising, accounting, public relations, Sunday school or *parochial school teaching,* or even so-called directorships of Christian education, evangelism or church administration. There is only the one call to the one public *ministerium evangelii docendi* . . . . Second, if one is placed in the ministry and does not carry out the office of the ministry of the Word, he has no call and no ministry. This is the point made by Luther in his many writings against the papacy and by Melanchthon in the Treatise and Apology" (Robert D. Preus, *The Doctrine of the Call in the Confessions and Lutheran Orthodoxy*, Luther Academy Monograph No. 1 [n.p.: Luther Academy, 1991], 20, 21–22). Emphasis mine.

40. *Proceedings of the 1953 LCMS Synodical Convention* (St. Louis: 1953), 317.

41. *Proceedings* (1953), 323.

42. *Proceedings* (1953), 323.

43. *The Ministry: Offices, Procedures, and Nomenclature*, A Report of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, September 1981 (St. Louis: 1981), 14.

44. "In the Eggen Case, the functional view of the ministry was presented as the official position of the Missouri Synod before the United States Government. In actuality, this position was very different from the traditional understanding within the Missouri Synod, particularly that position which was adopted at the 1851 synodical convention . . . . Also, this new understanding was now set forth as the 'official position' of the Synod without having been approved by a synodical convention, nor had it been fully discussed throughout the church body" (Wohlrabe, 45). Here Wohlrabe uses "functional" in the sense that I use the term "sociological."

45. Fred L. Kuhlmann, *Supplemental Brief on the Appeal of the Ruling in the Eggen Case*, Board for Parish Education Files, III.1-T.0549, Box 52, Files 5, p. 20, Concordia Historical Institute, St. Louis.

46. *Proceedings of the 1983 LCMS Synodical Convention* (St. Louis: 1983), Res. 5-09A.

47. *Tax Bulletin*, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, March 1987, par. 1.115.

48. *Proceedings* (1983), Res. 5-09A.

49. In light of the view that ordination is seen only as an adiaphoron, the distinction given here appears rather meaningless. See *Handbook of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod: 1995 Edition* (St. Louis: 1996) and *The 1997 Lutheran Annual of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod* (St. Louis: 1996).

50. See *Proceedings* (1983), Res. 5-09A.

51. See *Proceedings of the 1986 LCMS Synodical Convention* (St. Louis: 1986), 163–165, Res. 5-02A.

52. Wohlrabe, v.

53. Walther, 178.

54. What Walther means by the ministry [*Predigtamt*] *in abstracto* is the task of the pastor [*Pfarramt*] as well as that of the father in his home, and every Christian. This is what Stellhorn has understood as the "general ministry."

55. "The holy ministry [*Predigtamt*] or pastoral office [*Pfarramt*] is an office distinct from the priesthood of all believers." Walther, 161, Thesis I.

56. Walther, 178. Quotation by Walther from Ludwig Hartmann, *Pastorale Evangelicum* (Nuremberg, 1697), 4: 25.

57. This observation was first brought to my attention by Pastor

William M. Cwirla of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Hacienda Heights, California.

58. Though the current state of affairs in the Missouri Synod concerning the office of the ministry may be due to pushing Walther's ecclesiology to its logical conclusions, it appears that Walther himself would not have allowed it. This is evident from his many writings and the distinction he maintained in practice between the pastor and teacher during his lifetime. He wrote concerning AC XXVIII, 8–9 in *Church and Ministry*: "Here the office of the keys, which the congregation possesses and by which it administers the means of grace, is identified with the power of the bishops, and to it the obtaining of the eternal gifts is bound. But this is not because the eternal gifts of Christ's kingdom could in no wise be obtained without the administration of the means of grace by official [*öffentlichen*] ministers [*Amtspersonen*], but God desires ordinarily to impart these gifts to men only in this way" (Walther, 192, under Ministry Thesis III).

However, as Wohlrabe has pointed out: "With respect to the doctrine of the ministry as it relates to the office of teacher in the church, one cannot say that there was a uniform position during the formative years of the Missouri Synod, nor in the years that followed. The first two directors of the Addison Teachers Seminary (which was eventually moved to River Forest, Illinois), J. C. W. Lindemann and E. A. W. Krauss, maintained that the office of a teacher is twofold in nature, part churchly and part civic. This was also held by others within the Synod. However, the generally accepted and officially adopted position was that the office of teacher in the church, with all its functions and responsibilities (teaching the children both the Word of God and secular subjects), was a divine office. It was a part or branch of the public office of the ministry, which was held in its entirety by the pastor of a congregation. The teacher was a colleague of the pastor because they shared in the same office. The pastor was given supervisory responsibility over the teacher. Although the teacher was not given the right to vote in synodical conventions, he was not considered a layman. He was an advisory member of the Synod and a member of the clergy. Yet, he was not a holder of the full public office of the ministry" (Wohlrabe, 12–13).

59. "The preaching office [*Predigtamt*] is the highest office, from which all other church offices flow." Walther, 22, Ministry Thesis VIII.

60. Fusselman, 45.

61. See "A Short Form of Confession," in the LCMS 1986 edition of Luther's Small Catechism in *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1991), 26 and 219. The 1943 synodical catechism and Tappert omit this statement of the pastor. We wonder why. With this statement of our catechism, properly understood, there can be no sociological or transferal view of the office of the ministry.

62. *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation*, 26 and 219. Lowell Green observes: "To be sure, the section on Confession and Absolution in the Small Catechism was not in the 1529 edition but was added by Luther in 1531; there he said that we confess ourselves guilty of all sins before God, but in the Confessional only those we know and feel in our hearts (LCMS Catechism, 19). The section on the Office of the Keys was not by Luther but by Andreas Osiander of Nürnberg, first appearing in his famous *Kinderpredigten* (sermons for children)" (Green, *Adventures*, 204). Also see Johann Michael Reu, *Dr. Martin Luther's Small Catechism: A History of Its Origin, Its Distribution, and Its Use* (Chicago: Wartburg Publishing House, 1929), 32–33.

The Lutheran Confessions include many other passages about the Office of the Keys and Confession, e.g., "It is taught among us that private confession should be retained and not be allowed to fall into disuse" (AC XI); "For we also keep confession, especially because of absolution, which is the Word of God that the power of the keys proclaims to individuals by divine authority. It would therefore be wicked to remove private absolution from the church. And those who despise private absolution understand neither the forgiveness of sins nor the power of the keys . . . the ministry of absolution is in the area of blessing or grace, not of judgment or law" (Ap XII, 99–101, 103); "The ministers of the church therefore have the command to forgive sins" (Ap XII, 105); The Lutherans retained holy absolution, stating that people were ordinarily not admitted to the holy supper except they had first been heard and absolved privately (AC XXV, 1).

Elsewhere in the Lutheran Confessions, Holy Absolution is accorded an important place in the church and even called a sacrament (AC, XI; Ap, XI, XII; SC, V, "On Confession," *BSLK*, 517–519; LC, "Brief Exhortation," *BSLK*, 725–733; SA III, III, *BSLK*, 436–449, 453–457). Lowell Green notes that "It was only later that Holy Absolution was displaced in the Lutheran church under the influence of Calvinism, Pietism, and Rationalism" (Green, *Adventures*, 204). Fred Precht writes: "Various factors contributed to the gradual decline of private confession and absolution in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. It was difficult to revive a custom that had generally fallen into desuetude, especially when so many members of the synod came from non-Lutheran or dubiously Lutheran backgrounds. Moreover, pietistic strains within the Synod, combined with Puritanism in the American environment, gradually tended to increase the pressure toward abrogating private confession in favor of group, or corporate, confession. Neither should a certain anti-Roman Catholic sentiment be dismissed. Also a factor that may have abetted the trend is Walther's persistent equating private absolution with the mere pronouncement of objective reconciliation" (Fred L. Precht, *Lutheran Worship: History and Practice* [St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1993], 351).

63. Fusselman, 45.

64. This view was also held by Reinhold Pieper, the President of Concordia Seminary, Springfield, Illinois, who was also the older brother of Francis and August Pieper. "Reinhold was to have asserted that there is one office of the ministry in the church, that of the pastor or preacher. In this office all the gifts, powers, and functions of the Gospel are embodied, and it alone is of divine ordinance. The office of teacher stems entirely from parents, on whom God has enjoined the training of their children. It was further held that it was not wrong for the teacher to look upon their calling as divine, but their calling belonged in the same category as that of a Christian cobbler or tailor" (Wohlrabe, 19).

65. This service is encouraged in "The Table of Duties" of the Small Catechism. One's vocation and call to serve is properly honored when "The Table of Duties" is seen as a gift and opportunity for service given by a gracious and merciful God.

66. In the New Testament διακονία is often translated as "ministry." More properly in many passages, this word should be translated as "service." Perhaps we could reduce the confusion over the ministry by using "service" instead of "ministry" for those offices of vocation outside of the *Predigtamt*. Likewise, since the call of the teacher is, in the proper sense, in the same category as a butcher, baker, or candlestick maker, it would be more appropriate to designate the work of a teacher as a vocation.

67. Likewise, when a service is seen as a gift, then what can be said of a pastor, schoolmaster, or parent can also be said of the "butcher, baker, or candlestick maker." Each Christian is a gift to the church. Each is called to serve (1 Cor 12, 1 Pt 3: 9–10). It is the Preaching Office, the *Predigtamt*, the ministry, however, that is the gift by which the means of grace is delivered to God's people. It has a specified call. All other vocations are given to serve within the congregation and the orders of creation. The Confessions teach this in the Catechism's Table of Duties.

68. In his letter to the Bohemians in 1523, Luther stated, "A Priest is not identical with Presbyter or Minister—for one is born to be a priest, one becomes a minister" (AE 40: 18).

The Diaconate: A Misunderstood Office

Michelle Gallmeier

The role of women in the church is highly debated in our day. The confusion in our society over the roles of both women and men has spilled over into the church, and is an issue that cannot be overlooked. Repeatedly and consistently the issue of women is addressed from the same single perspective: can women be ordained as pastors? While this is definitely a question that should be addressed, and has been addressed by the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod extensively, it is not the only question. Only one side of a multi-faceted crystal has been looked at; thereby it has been forgotten that there are other questions to be asked. The question of ordaining women into the pastoral office has indeed been answered. It is therefore necessary to move on. For decades the question has been asked in the wrong manner: what are women *allowed* to do? This implies that care has been taken not to let them do too much, and carries a message of fear, distrust, or a lack of confidence in the abilities of women.

The correct manner in which to address the question is this: in what capacities outside the pastoral office *should* women serve? Do women have a special calling in the church, and how are their unique attributes needed? One answer to these important questions is the office of deaconess. A further question that needs to be addressed is why the office of deaconess, which has been in existence since New Testament times, does not seem to be understood or promoted to the extent that it could be in our church. This study will seek to explore some reasons for this, and portray a correct understanding of this much-needed office.

THE CASE FOR THE OFFICE OF DEACONESS

Although there is undisputable evidence that an active female diaconate was in existence in the early church, the question of whether or not this office was instituted in the New Testament has been often debated. The Greek words διακονία and διάκονος are translated many different ways: servant, minister, assistant, worker, helper, and deacon, among others. These two words also have many definitions. Bauer, Arndt, and Gingrich's *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* lists five definitions for the word διακονία:[1]

(1) Service of a spiritual nature: Acts 6:4; Heb 1:14; Eph 4:12; 2 Cor 11:8; 1 Cor 16:15; 2 Tim 4:11; Rev 2:19.
(2) Service of meals: Lk 10:40.
(3) Service of an office such as prophets and apostles: 1 Tim 1:12; Acts 1:17, 20:24, 21:19; Rom 11:13; 1 Cor 12:5; 2 Cor 3:7–9, 4:1, 5:18, 6:3; Col 4:17; 2 Tim 4:5.
(4) Service of aid, support, and distribution of alms: Acts 6:1, 11:29, 12:25; Rom 15:31; 2 Cor 8:4, 9:1, 12.
(5) Service of the office of deacon: Rom Rom 12:7.

For the word διάκονος two definitions are listed:

(1) a. Servant of someone, including waiters at table: Mt 20:26, 23:11; Mk 10:43; Jn 2:5,9; of kings, Mt 22:13; of apostles and the Gospel, Col 1:23; Eph 3:7; Col 1:25; 2 Cor 3:6, 6:4; 1 Th 3:2; Ti 1:9; 2 Cor 11:23; Col 1:7; 1 Tim 4:6; 2 Cor 11:15; Jn 12:26.
b. Helper, God's helper in the Gospel: 1 Th 3:2; 1 Tim 4:6; Eph 6:21; Col 4:7; Rom 15:8; Gal 2:17.
c. Deacon as an official of the church: Phil 1:1; 1 Tim 3:8, 12; Ti 1:9.
(2) a. Helper, agent of the government authorities: Rom 13:4.
b. Deaconess: Rom Rom 16:1.

It is confusing, at times, to determine which meaning of the word was intended, and this confusion is increased by these words being used interchangeably, regardless of gender. Διακονία, the feminine noun, is used to refer to men as well as women, as in Acts 6:4, Romans 12:7, 15:31, and 2 Corinthians 9:12. Διάκονος, the masculine noun, is used to refer to women as well as men in Matthew 23:11, John 12:26, and to Phoebe in Romans 16:1. Perhaps both words refer not to gender, but to office. It is noteworthy that every use of διάκονος in the New Testament epistles is translated as either *minister* or *deacon* in the King James Version. The only exception is Romans 16:1, regarding Phoebe, where it is translated as *servant.* The word διακονία, on the other hand, sometimes refers to an office in the epistles, but not always. This may answer the question of why Paul used the word διάκονος rather than διακονία to refer to Phoebe. Perhaps he wanted to clearly designate her office.[2] The question of whether or not Phoebe had the office of deaconess, according to Romans 16:1, has been addressed by many scholars. The following quotes are a few of several examples. In his commentary on the book of Romans, George Stoekhardt writes:

> Phoebe was a deaconess, a patroness, a benefactress of the poor, sick, strangers in the congregation at Cenchrea, the eastern seaport town of Corinth. So may the brethren in Rome especially also render her assistance, in whatsoever affair she has need of them, and thereby reward her faithful service, which she performed to many Christians of her congregation and to the apostle himself.[3]

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When speaking of Pheobe in Romans 16:1 Paul E. Kretzmann states, "Just as the congregation at Jerusalem had elected deacons to minister to the poor and needy, so other congregations in apostolic times had deaconesses, principally for the work among women."[4] Martin Franzmann in his *Commentary on Romans* writes: "Phoebe, the bearer of the Letter to the Romans, deaconess of Cenchrea, had afforded help and protection to many Christians passing through the busy port, Paul among them."[5]

Διάκονος, a form of διάκονον, used in Romans 16:1, is the word used in 1 Timothy 3:8. Paul is referring to the office of deacon in verses 8–10 and 12. The office of deaconess may be referred to in verse 11 for the following reasons. The word γυναῖκας is often translated as *wives,* but Paul did not give special instructions to wives of overseers in the preceding verses. He only addressed the overseers. Another translation for γυναῖκας is *women,* and this could refer to deaconesses. Why would Paul use the word γυναῖκας instead of διακονία? Γυναῖκας specifies women and διακονία does not. Since he had been previously speaking of male deacons, he had to use a word that clearly showed that he was speaking of deaconesses.

The role of deaconesses in these early church writings was that of ministry to women and children.

In his *Popular Commentary of the Bible* P. E. Kretzmann says the following about 1 Timothy 3:11:

> The apostle has a special charge to the women deacons or deaconesses. This verse does not concern the wives of deacons, but is directed to the deaconesses; for the women were employed in this capacity from the earliest times. (Compare Rom 16:1). These women were to exhibit the proper gravity and dignity in their deportment, which would at all times cause men to respect them and their office . . . . Fortunately, the time does not seem to be far distant when we shall have deaconesses in most of our congregations. If such consecrated women, actuated by the love of Christ, devote their lives to the service of their fellow-men, their value to the Church will be beyond calculation.[6]

Διακονοῖς, another form of διάκονος, is the word used in Philippians 1:1: "To all the saints in Christ Jesus at Philippi, together with the overseers and deacons" (NIV). An argument could be made that deaconesses were included in that greeting, since it is the same word used to refer to Phoebe in Romans 16. Some verses use other words for servant in addition to διάκονος or διακονία. The word σύνδουλος, or fellow servant, is used with διάκονον in Colossians 1:7, 4:7, and Philippians 1:1. Another word for service, λειτουργία, is also used with the word διακονία in 2 Corinthians 9:12: "For the administration (διακονία) of this service (λειτουργία) not only supplieth the want of the saints, but is abundant also by many thanksgivings unto God" (KJV). Here διακονία refers to office, not gender. It is easy to understand the difficulty in determining how to translate these words.

THE HISTORY OF THE OFFICE OF DEACONESS

The ecclesiastic office of deaconess was established by the third century A.D.[7] Around A.D. 112, Pliny the Younger makes references to Christian maidservants called deaconesses in a letter to the Emporer Trajan. In the third century, the *Didascalia of the Apostles* and the *Apostolic Constitutions* clearly show the existence of orders of deaconesses. The role of deaconesses in these early church writings was that of ministry to women and children. Deaconesses visited and assisted the sick and needy, assisted in the baptism of women, taught women after baptism, and were appointed for prayer. They were unmarried or widowed, and their qualifications were based on those given in 1 Timothy 3. Clearly they were an established, respected, and recognized group with specific ministries to perform. The fourth century was the "golden age" of deaconesses. Deaconesses were more common in the Eastern church, were ordained as deaconesses, and were responsible to the bishops.[8] After the fourth century, the office of deaconess declined steadily through the twelfth century, when it disappeared. Only passing references to deaconesses are found during this time.

Deaconesses appeared again in Kaiserswerth, Germany, in 1836, revived by Theodore Fliedner.

> Fliedner's Deaconess Institute [founded 1836] at Kaiserswerth is the pride of the evangelical church. It has now 190 branches, with 625 sisters, in the four continents . . . . [Wilhelm] Löhe founded the deaconess institute of Neuendettelsau, on strict Lutheran principles, with hospital, girl's school, and asylum for imbecile children.[9]

During the second half of the nineteenth century deaconesses came to America when William Passavant asked Fliedner to send deaconesses from Germany. Lutherans from other countries also began training centers and mother houses around the country in the late 1800s. Two LCMS pastors, F. W. Herzberger and Philip Wambsganss, were also involved in establishing American deaconesses. In 1919 the Lutheran Deaconess Association of the Synodical Conference was formed in Fort Wayne. Deaconesses served primarily in institutions as nurses until 1941, when they began to serve in parishes as well. In 1943 the Lutheran Deaconess Association moved to Valparaiso, Indiana, and students have studied at Valparaiso University since that time. In 1979 the LCMS established its deaconess program at Concordia College, River Forest, Illinois.

THE SERVICE OF WOMEN IN THE NEW TESTAMENT

Since there is an office for women to serve our Lord's church, how does our church employ their unique qualities? In this context it is helpful to examine appropriate service of deaconesses by examining appropriate service of any woman in the church. The women of the New Testament are a good example.

It has sometimes been said that the women of the New Testament gave only material support to Christ, his disciples, and the church. This is not an accurate scriptural view of how these women served. In many places the New Testament seems to be

somewhat vague about specific tasks performed by the women who served. Not much is said about Phoebe in Romans 16, except that she "has been a great help to many people" (NIV). Mark 15:40–41 mentions the women who were also disciples of Jesus, saying that they had cared for Jesus' needs. Luke 8:1–3 speaks of women who followed Jesus, giving him monetary support. Acts 9 tells the story of Dorcas, whom Peter raised from the dead. She "was always doing good and helping the poor" (NIV). Thus it remains uncertain as to what exactly the duties of these women were. Perhaps that is not important, however. The focus of the New Testament seems to be on the Christian faith and character of these and other women, not on specific tasks. The scriptural premise seems to be that if Christian faith and character are present, the proper actions will follow, and glory will be given to God. One might think of Mary, the mother of Jesus, Mary and Martha, the woman who anointed Jesus at Bethany, the women at the cross and at the tomb. Can one imagine these and other women who served, neglecting to offer words of encouragement, comfort, and love to Jesus, his disciples, and others when given the opportunity? It is only natural to assume that the women of the New Testament ministered to the spiritual and emotional needs, as well as the physical needs, of the people they served.

THE GIFT OF PROPHECY

This leads to the consideration of the gift of prophecy. To minister to spiritual and emotional needs of people involves the use of the gift of prophecy. In the apostle Peter's Pentecost sermon of Acts 2, he quotes the prophet Joel: "In the last days, God says, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy . . . . Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days, and they will prophesy" (NIV). The New Testament Christians believed they were in the last days, as does the church today. This gift of prophecy is a gift the Spirit gives to men and women alike—a gift to the priesthood of all believers.

Yet the gift of prophecy is not discussed much today, and is usually thought of in the sense of foretelling the future, or as the Lord speaking directly to a prophet with a message for his people. Prophecy, however, is given another sense quite often in the New Testament. Lenski says that prophecy in the Acts 2 passage is used in the sense of *voicing the saving and blessed will of God to men everywhere.* [10] He also quotes Luther, who said,

> What are all other gifts together compared to this gift, that the Spirit of God himself, the eternal God, comes down into our hearts, yea, into our bodies and dwells in us, rules, guides, leads us! Thus now, as concerning this passage of the prophet, prophesying, visions, dreams are all one thing, namely the knowledge of God through Christ, which the Holy Spirit kindles and makes to burn through the Word of the gospel.[11]

Lenski makes a distinction between a prophet such as Agabus and the charisma of prophecy when he writes regarding Acts 11:27. He says, "This gift any Christian might acquire, and Paul urges all to seek it (1 Cor 14:1)."[12] "It consisted in thoroughly understanding the Word and in adequately presenting it."[13]

In Acts 21:9 are four women who had the gift of prophecy. These were daughters of Philip, who was one of the Seven. Lenski says, "Philip's daughters . . . had the gift of prophecy, the ability to set forth God's will from his Word, the gift for which Paul told all the Corinthians to strive (1 Cor 14:1)." Other passages that speak of prophecy in this sense are Romans 12:6, 1 Corinthians 12:10, and especially 1 Corinthians 14:1–3, where Paul defines this gift in verse 3: "But everyone who prophesies speaks to people for their strengthening, encouragement, and comfort" (NRSV).

The primary focus of the deaconess office lies in spiritual care.

The gift of prophecy in this sense is a gift women, as well as men, are given by the Holy Spirit. It is not hard to think of Christian women we know who encourage and comfort others with words of Scripture and hope in the Lord in times of need, sickness, or distress. It is reasonable to assume that the New Testament church intended the members of the diaconate to give spiritual nurture as well as to minister to the physical needs of people, which could be done in many different ways. Why would the spiritual qualifications for this office be so stringent, according to 1 Timothy 3, if the holders of the office were only to function as social workers? One of the greatest gifts God created in women is the natural tendency to nurture others. When this gift is combined with the gift of prophecy, the result is a wonderful blessing of God.

BIBLICAL OFFICES: ARE THEY FUNCTIONAL OR RELATIONAL?

The question is often asked, What is it deaconesses do? It is impossible to list all of the tasks a deaconess might perform, and a litany of as many of them as she can think of does not usually seem to satisfy the inquirer. Perhaps this is so because one has been conditioned to think in terms of function rather than relationship to Christ first and then to others. Yet similar to the pastoral office, the primary focus of the deaconess office lies in spiritual care. Unlike a pastor, a deaconess does not preach or administer the sacraments. Her primary responsibility, however, is to assist the pastor in ministering to the spiritual needs of the people she serves, and her specific tasks, such as directing the choir, leading the youth group, or visiting an invalid, are means to do this. In a limited sense, both pastors and deaconesses are generalists. Today church workers are thought of differently than in generations past. The church has been influenced by current culture to such an extent that the church has begun to be thought of in terms of a business. When that is done, the new concerns are productivity, money, success, power, statistics, and functions of staff, rather than focusing on God's Word and the spiritual needs of his people. The tasks a person performs become more important than his or her Christian faith and character. The functionalist business model turns a church into a cold, depersonalized place that diminishes the value of its servants' personal faith and character.

Ironically, this business mentality is exactly what our society does *not* like about today's culture. We are now a people who are distant from one another. We are numbers in computer data

banks, and people are lonely, looking for love, acceptance, and a place to belong. Many churches have identified this need, which is one of the underlying causes for the rapid growth of the charismatic movement and the Church Growth Movement. Yet shallow emotionalism replaces clear preaching of law and gospel. This gives people a quick emotional fix, but not a lasting solution to loneliness, a solution found only in Jesus Christ.

If our churches have become cold and depersonalized, it is not because our worship forms are outdated or that our beliefs do not meet the needs of today's people. The people are to blame, not the form of worship. If the church becomes a business, where do love, spiritual nurture, and Christian charity fit? Spirituality becomes stagnant when there is greater concern with the number of people in the building than with preaching and teaching what they need to hear, rather than what they want to hear. Deaconess students' primary area of study is in theology because the most important thing a church worker can learn in college is God's Word and how to properly distinguish and *apply* law and gospel to a person's current situation in life. The techniques of psychology can be helpful, but only when they are subservient to, and not in conflict with, Scripture. God calls us to be faithful to his Word first and foremost.

A BIBLICAL MODEL FOR WORKING TOGETHER

Church workers need to work together and relate to one another and the people they serve from the biblical model, which is relational, rather than from the functional model of our business world. In searching Scripture one finds that much more is said about the Christian character of church workers than about what tasks they are to perform. 1 Timothy 3 spells out in detail the requirements for pastors, deacons, and deaconesses. The criteria concern Christian character, not communication skills or marketing practices. Titus 1:5–9 speaks of requirements for pastors, and these also focus on Christian character. In chapter 2 Paul tells Titus what pastors are to teach the people they serve: Christian character. This does not mean that it is unnecessary to develop skills, however. This is important, but always secondary. Deaconess students choose supportive course work in areas such as music, youth ministry, psychology, social work, biblical languages, and multi-cultural ministry.

Scripture provides numerous examples of how the servants of the New Testament church related to one another. These people had a very strong bond with one another and with the people they served. They loved one another deeply, and spoke of this love often, encouraging the congregations to develop a Christ-centered love for one another. In Romans 16 Paul speaks of Phoebe as a sister, and asks the Roman congregation to look after her and give her whatever assistance she needs. In the same chapter Paul refers to others as "my beloved," such as the woman Persis. Paul refers to the Philippians in chapter 4 as "my brethren dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown." Peter calls Silvanus a "faithful brother," and Marcus "my son" in 1 Peter 5. These are just a few of numerous examples of the strong love and cooperation of these servants of God's people. The most important thing these people did was teach God's Word and be examples of Christ's love. This is a very different environment from what is seen in today's business world. Where is competition, a struggle for power, control, prestige, and money in this picture? These things cannot exist side by side with love.

It is tremendously important to examine seriously our working relationships with one another. We are in partnership with one another, not in competition for control, since we are all slaves of Christ Jesus, according to Philippians 1:1. Deaconesses want to serve, not control; we do not want to be pastors. Deaconesses want to assist pastors and be a complement to them by using the unique gifts of women to nurture, comfort, and work for peace and harmony, proclaiming Christ's precious gospel to those who need to hear it. There is no reason to fear or mistrust those whom God has called to serve when we have a proper understanding and attitude toward that service.

Our church needs the gifts of women, just as it needs the gifts of men. The office of deaconess is a biblical way to use these God-given gifts to edify the church. In God's plan to send his Son, he graciously willed to need a woman. God chose to need a woman . . . to sustain his human life as an unborn child . . . to give him a human birth . . . to be nurtured and trained by her during his years of childhood. In God's plan for the world, he "needs" women in much the same way in every generation. He needs women today, especially, who will reflect him as the God who responds to human needs with self-sacrifice and compassion. He needs women who will witness to his "regard" for those held in low regard by society. He needs women who see a dignity and not a denigration in serving others—in being a "helper." No man can do that in quite the same way as can a woman! The church, therefore, is richer, healthier and more vibrant when it is possible for women to serve in their "helping" role in numerous aspects of its ministry. When men and women give to one another—and can give to the church—the gifts God has given to each, the entire body is enriched.[14]

May God guide, bless, and strengthen us as we serve together in proclaiming the precious gospel of Christ. LOGIA

NOTES

1. BAGD, 4th ed., 182–883.
2. The Greek does not use a word translated as *deaconess* with a feminine suffix. The word used for Phoebe is the masculine διάκονος. Deaconess, however, is the traditional term used for women deacons. This issue is outside the scope of this paper.
3. George Stoekhardt, *The Epistle to the Romans,* 2 vols., trans. Erwin Koehlinger (Fort Wayne: Concordia Theological Seminary Press), 2: 204–205.
4. Paul E. Kretzmann, *Popular Commentary of the Bible,* 2 vols. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921), 2: 83.
5. Martin Franzmann, *Romans,* Concordia Commentary (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1968), 274.
6. Kretzmann, 381.
7. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds., *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* 10 vols. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1925), 7: 410.
8. *The Ante-Nicene Fathers,* 431.
9. Professor Kurtz, *Kurtz's Church History*, 3 vols, trans. John Macpherson (New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1885), 3: 212–213.
10. R. C. H. Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles* (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1934), 74.
11. Lenski, 74–75. Lenski does not document this quote from Luther.
12. Lenski, 459.
13. Lenski, 866.
14. *God's Woman for All Generations: A Report of the President's Commission on Women.* The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1987.

Externum Verbum

Testing Augustana V on the Doctrine of the Holy Ministry

Norman Nagel

Always we strive to be faithfully attentive to the words, words to which we are pledged at our ordination—the words of Article v of the Augsburg Confession. They still go on saying what they say, despite the attempts to make them say something more amenable to our control, and so lead to the muddling and even loss of the gospel, which comes only as a gift.[1]

For what the text says, we go first to Augsburg to hear what was there confessed as it was said and done by those who confessed it. How can we test whether that is in fact what we are hearing? Various changes in the nineteenth century worked changes in the way the Augsburg Confession was expounded, but only in our century have alien pressures been strong enough to work actual departures.[2]

Is AC v a wax nose, or is it not a wax nose? The surest answer must come from AC v itself. It says what it confesses, and then the opposite of that is rejected. Any interpretation which falls short of expressing this opposition/contradiction is therefore a misinterpretation. To escape suspicion of special pleading, we shall therefore begin not with AC v but with the preceding articles. This will test whether the Augsburg Confession does in fact do things in the way of statement and then rejection of the statement's opposite.[3]

THE WAY OF CONFESSION AND REJECTION

A good way of testing whether you have understood the positive statement is to check the negative. If they don't match, then you've got it wrong, and vice versa. Thus Article i of the Augsburg Confession confesses the Holy Trinity. The opposite of that is the teaching of the ditheists and the Unitarians. These are rejected. Article ii confesses the totality of sin, the opposite of which is the Pelagian assertion "that we can be justified before God by our own strength or reason." This is rejected.

What is rejected and what is confessed match up. So we have it right. But there is more than just being sure that you have said it right. There is another match-up, the soteriological one—or better, that of the Savior. At stake is salvation. It all hangs on Christ. Negatively put, damnation is the lot of those "who are not born again through baptism and the Holy Spirit." This is matched by the recognition that denial of sin "disparages the sufferings and merit of Christ"—Dr. Luther's definition of heresy.[4] There is an antiphonal relation between "baptism and the Holy Spirit" and "the sufferings and merit of Christ." They are both on the positive side of what is confessed. Salvation's achievement and salvation's bestowal: Calvary achieved it, it is bestowed by water and the Spirit.

Article iii confesses—in the way of Chalcedon and the Apostles' Creed—the one who achieved it was "a sacrifice not only for original sin but also for all other sins and to propitiate God's wrath." Article iii has no antithesis.

In Article iv the negative statement comes first. "We cannot obtain forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God by our own merits, works, or satisfactions." The opposite of that is "by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith." "Christ suffered for us and that for his sake our sin is forgiven and righteousness and eternal life are given to us." Gifts received, that is faith.

In order that the gifts be given, that the gifts be received—that is faith—the Lord arranged for their delivery as gifts. Not a bit of good unless delivered. Hence we have Article v, without which Article iv would remain undelivered. Gifts delivered, yes, that's faith. For such faith to happen God instituted the office of the ministry (*Predigtamt*), the ministry of teaching the gospel and giving out the sacraments. Where these are going on, there is the Holy Spirit doing his work, delivering the gifts which create faith "in those who hear the gospel"—nowhere else, although the first antithesis is "not by our own merits but by the merit of Christ." It is all referenced to him, and it comes as gifts bestowed by the Holy Spirit in the means of grace.

TESTING AC V

Now comes the test, such as we have observed in previous articles. Have we understood the positive as the contrary of the negative given in the article?

> Condemned are the Anabaptists and others who teach that the Holy Spirit comes to us through our own preparations, thoughts, and works without the external word of the gospel.

The contrast is between what is referenced to ourselves and what is from outside of ourselves. Matching salvation's achievement as none of our doing but only Christ's, is salvation's delivery, which is also none of our doing but from outside ourselves as gift of the Holy Spirit through the "external word of the gospel." That the words are external, coming to us from outside, is inherent in the fact that they are gospel: "the external word of the gospel."

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Denial of the external word is then denial of the gospel, which comes only as gift, that is, by faith, that is, by the bestowing done by the Holy Spirit through the means of grace "in those who hear the gospel." Romans 10:17: "Faith comes by what is heard." What is heard comes from outside by the *externum verbum.* No *externum verbum,* nothing heard. So that there be *externum verbum* heard, "God instituted the office of the ministry," "the ministry of teaching the gospel and of giving out the sacraments."

The traditional term for the office of the holy ministry was *ministerium eccleslasticum.* This is the Latin heading of AC v;[5] AC xiv has *ordo eccieslasticus,* which refers to the same thing but with a bit more connection with ordination, and so fitting well with why AC xiv was put in. The German of AC v speaks of *Predigtamt.* This rings with the Reformation gospel recognition of the nothing-but-gift of the *externum verbum, die Predigt* ("The Sermon"). Thus the gospel is heard from outside, and this is not left in any doubtful unlocatedness; rather, it is located where the Lord has put it, in the *Amt,* the office, which is where we are not left in doubt that the Lord is the one who does it. Hence "the holy ministry."[6] The Lord baptizes, he absolves, he ordains, he gives into our mouth his body and his blood.

AC v says what it confesses, and then the opposite of that is rejected. Any interpretation which falls short of expressing this opposition/contradiction is therefore a misinterpretation.

As with the preceding articles, you have to tear AC v away from the Lord to get it wrong. What is wrong is indicated as the negative of what is positively confessed. When the positive and negative statements match up, then we know we have heard it right. Any doctrine of the office of the holy ministry which is not running in the way of the *externum verbum* is not the doctrine of the office of the holy ministry that is confessed in Article v of the Augsburg Confession.

This happens, for example, when the so-called priesthood of all believers is put into the *Predigtamt.* The believers are indeed there in Article v. They are "those who hear the gospel." They can't be hearing it unless it is coming to them from outside, unless the *externum verbum* is being preached to them. But the mouth and the ears are not in the same head. There is the mouth that has been put there in the *Predigtamt,* and there are the ears of "those who hear the gospel." They have the *externum verbum* that comes to them from outside themselves, that is, it comes in the way of a gift, that is, gospel. There is no one here giving himself or herself gifts. What you give yourself is not a gift, it is not in the way of the *externum verbum,* it is not in the way of the gospel. Lose the *externum verbum* and you lose the gospel.

Article vi tells of the life of the gifts received, the life of faith. The gifts and antithesis are the same as in Article iv. The antithesis here is "not through works but through faith alone without merit." This we heard of in Article v: "our own preparations, thoughts, and works," which is the antithesis of "the external word of the gospel." "Those who hear the gospel" of Article v appear in Article vii as "those among whom the gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are given out according to the gospel." The gospel is preached (*gepredigt*) only as there is someone preaching it (*Predigtamt*). Chemnitz sums up what is confessed in the Augsburg Confession when he confesses the church as being where "there are those who preach and those who hear."[7] To say other than this would be to deny the *externum verbum* of the gospel. The Small Catechism's Table of Duties makes it quite clear: kingdom of the right hand: preachers and hearers; kingdom of the left hand: vocations.

Externum verbum is the way of the *Predigtamt* and of the means of grace. They both go in the same way. To say otherwise is to say something other than is confessed in the Augsburg Confession. The office of the ministry is there for nothing else but the means of grace. It is never there for its own sake, as is clear from Article v. There our attention is not left on the office of the ministry, as if it were an item by itself; rather, it is centered on the means of grace. To be sure, these are not going on unless there are the mouth and hands that the Lord has put there for them to be said and done. Gerhard, following Luther and Chemnitz, speaks of the instruments which the Lord uses for giving out his gifts: the means of grace, as the number one instruments (*instrumenta prima*), and the instrument the Lord puts there to serve out the means of grace, the office of the ministry, as the *instrumentum secundum.*[8]

"What God has joined together let not man put asunder" (Mt 19:6). To speak of instruments is to speak in the way of *externum verbum,* that is, in the way of gifts given from outside ourselves (*extra nos*). *Extra nos* is then both the way in which our salvation was achieved and the way in which it is delivered: "as through means," *tamquam instrumenta.* Both *instrumentum* and *externum* confess and guard the gospel and the dominical certainty that it is the Lord who is saying, doing, giving out his gifts. Where gifts happen, there are two involved: the one who gives the gift and those to whom the gift is given. The Lord does not leave us unlocatedly in doubt about his giving to us of his gifts.

AND YET MORE . . .

When we hear the articles answering back and forth to each other (antiphonal exegesis!), we are surely hearing what they say. When that gets jarred, it is a signal that we are getting it wrong, or even that we may be wanting to make it say what it does not say.

Article v was thought to say enough regarding the office of the ministry. But then Eck was saying that the Evangelicals were setting aside the office of the ministry by making it something which included every Christian. He had heard some talk which sounded like that, such as never had been heard in the church before. It was to deny this slander that Article xiv was inserted and was so understood by the Confutation.[9] The *ordo,* the office, the *Predigtamt,* does not have every Christian in it, but, as always, only those were in it who were put there—as was plain for all to see—*rite vocatus.* To be put into the *ordo is* to be ordained, and that is clearly so *rite vocatus. No* unordained man was *rite vocatus.* To suppose that might be the case would be to agree with Eck and to

contradict why AC XIV was inserted in the first place. AC XIV is understood correctly when it is understood as it was understood by those who wrote it, and as they acted according to what they confessed, and as is evidenced by the antithesis.

Article XXVIII is then the third article in the Augsburg Confession dealing with the *Predigtamt.* Here the antithesis is the way things go in the kingdom of the left hand. The German title is *Von der Bischofen Gewalt;* Latin: *De potestate ecclesiastica. Gewalt* and *potestas* came from ἐξουσία in Matthew 8:18, which has nothing to do with the sword by which things are run in the kingdom of the left hand. The only power of the office of the holy ministry is "the power mandated by God to preach the gospel, to remit and retain sins, and to administer the sacraments." The clergy have no power but by the apostolic mandate (Jn 20:21–23 and Mk 16:15). The mandate and the power cohere in the office. In contrast with *iure humano* and civil power, this is a "mandate of the gospel"—*iure divino,* or better, *iuxta Evangelium.*

When we hear the articles answering back and forth to each other (antiphonal exegesis!), we are surely hearing what they say. When that gets jarred, it is a signal that we are getting it wrong, or even that we may be wanting to make it say what it does not say.

Here we have then "mandate of the gospel," "office of the gospel," "ministry of the gospel," all running in the way of "the external word of the gospel," and all together set over against how things go in the kingdom of the left hand. All draw away from an anthropocentric reference, as was also done already in AC VIII, and as AC V did not allow us to put any confidence in a human being, but only in the office. There the *instrumentum secundum* is located with the *instrumenta prima* for the Lord's use, and thus all is surely his doing and none of ours. Succinctly Article VIII says: "Grounded in the ordinance and mandate of Christ, the word and the sacraments do what they do even if they are given out by evil priests."

"The mandate of the gospel," "the office of the gospel," "the ministry of the gospel," and "the external word of the gospel" are the way of confessing the doctrine of the office of the holy ministry, which is then also a bulwark against clericalism. Clergy are worth only what they have been put into the office for: not their own words, but Christ's. Thus Article XXVIII in the Apology confesses "a bishop according to the gospel":

> A bishop has the power of the order [*potestas ordinis*], namely, the ministry of word and sacraments. He also has the power of jurisdiction [*potestas jurisdictionis*], namely, the authority to excommunicate those who are guilty of public offenses or to absolve them if they are converted and ask for absolution. A bishop does not have the power of a tyrant . . . . He has a sure mandate and a sure word of God, which he ought to teach and according to which he ought to exercise his jurisdiction (AC XXVIII, 13–14).

Christ gave

> a specific mandate, a testimonium given to the apostles so that we may believe them not according to their own words but those of another. For Christ wants to assure us, as was necessary, that his words thus delivered through men do what his words do [*das leibliche Wort Gottes Kraft*] and that we should not look for another word from heaven. "He who hears you hears me" cannot be applied to traditions. For Christ requires them to teach in such a way that he might be heard, because he says, "hears me." Therefore he wants his voice, his word to be heard, not human traditions (Ap XXVIII, 18–19).

Then there is mention of the asses who put their confidence elsewhere. These we have already met in AC V denying the external word of the gospel. The *externum verbum* is what a minister is put there to speak. When he speaks the *externnum verbum,* it is the Lord himself speaking, for what they say are his words.

> I believe that when the called ministers of Christ deal with us by his divine command, in particular when they exclude openly unrepentant sinners from the Christian congregation and absolve those who repent of their sins and want to do better, this is just as valid and certain, even in heaven, as if Christ our dear Lord dealt with us himself (SC V).

"He who hears you hears me." Luke 10:16 is quoted in the Confessions five times. It clinches "the *externum verbum* of the gospel."

> According to divine right, therefore, it is the office of the bishop to preach the gospel, forgive sins, judge doctrine and condemn doctrine that is contrary to the gospel, and exclude from the Christian communion [*Gemein, a communione*] the ungodly whose wicked conduct is manifest. All this is to be done not by human power but by God's word alone. On this account the people of the parish [*Pfaffleut*] and churches are bound [*schuldig*] to hearken to the bishops according to the saying of Christ in Luke 10:16: "Who hears you hears me (AC XXVIII, 21–22).
>
> The ministers act in the place of Christ and do not represent their own persons, according to Luke 10:16: "He who hears you hears me." (Ap VII, 47).

The Apology XII, 40–42 quotes Luke 10:16 in confessing holy absolution and holy communion. And then twice more:

> Christ requires that they teach in such a way that he himself be heard [German adds: *durch ihren Mund Christum selbst höre*], because he says: "He hears me." Thus he wishes his own voice, his own word, to be heard (Ap XXVIII, 19),

> They represent the person of Christ on account of the churchly call, and do not represent their own persons, as Christ testifies, Luke 10:16: "He who hears you hears me" (German adds: *Also ist auch Judas zu predigen gesendet*). When they give out the sacraments, they do it as Christ's substitute and in his place (*vice et loco Christi*) (Ap VII, 28).

Weightier still is the mandate and institution of the Lord. This is the clinching appeal of the Confessions regarding holy baptism, holy communion, holy absolution, and holy ministry. The first thing the Augsburg Confession confesses of the holy ministry is that it is instituted by God. For the dominical mandate and institution of the holy ministry, the Confessions quote Matthew 28:16–20, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:44–49, and John 20:21–23.

SPEAKING FOR THE LORD

"Who is sufficient for these things?" asks the apostle (2 Cor 2:16). Only one who speaks as the Lord speaks. When the Lord speaks through his called and ordained mouthpiece, his words are to one the savor of death unto death, and to the other the savor of life unto life. When this causes you to tremble, the only answer which holds to the question, "Why you are doing this?" is: "The Lord put me here to say this, to do this." All other ground is sinking sand. That the Lord put you there is attested by the fact that you were put there according to the mandate and institution of the Lord. By baptizing and teaching you have been sent to make disciples, to preach repentance and the forgiveness of sins in his name, to forgive the sins of penitent sinners and not to forgive the sins of the impenitent, to give out the body and blood of the Lord, to care for the flock which he has put you there to watch over. In holy absolution you speak "in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ":

When this causes you to tremble, the only answer which holds to the question, "Why you are doing this?" is: "The Lord put me here to say this, to do this." All other ground is sinking sand.

> Upon this your confession, I, by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you, and in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost (*TLH*, p. 16).

If you cannot say this, you cannot say this. Those to whom you give the gift of forgiveness—it is a gift because it comes to them from outside by the *externum verbum*—those to whom the gift is given say "Amen," "That is so," "Gift received." "The words 'for you' require all hearts to believe." "For you" is *externum verbum.* The unordained say "us" with the subjunctive. No one dares to speak as the Lord speaking unless the Lord has clearly (*rite vocatus*) put him there to do that.

In holy absolution, as the Small Catechism puts it, the pastor asks: "Do you believe that my forgiveness is God's forgiveness?" "Yes, dear confessor," says the one making confession. "He who hears you hears me." Here is the deepest kind of comfort and doctrine for you when you tremble at your speaking as the Lord himself.

Here is the deepest dimension of the fact that you have a divine call. What you say and do the Lord is saying and doing. The Large Catechism confesses: "To be baptized in God's name is to be baptized not by men but by God himself. Although it is performed by the man's hand it is nevertheless truly God's own doing" (*opus Dei, Gottes eigen Werk;* LC IV, 10). The opposite of this is "as something we do" (*als ein Ding das wir tun;* LC V, 7).

All its worth comes from who is doing it. What he uses is a few words with some water, spoken by the mouth and poured by the hands he has put there for his speaking and pouring. The antithesis to this is attaching "greater importance to our own achievement and merits" (LC IV, 11).

> No matter how precious and dazzling they might appear, they would not be as noble and good as if God were to pick up a straw. Why? Because the person performing the act is nobler and better. Here we must evaluate not the person according to the works, but the works according to the person, from whom they must derive their worth (LC IV, 12).

Can you identify with the piece of straw? Then you are into the freedom of the gospel and its *externum verbum.* As one seminarian, alive with the gospel, put it: "See the Lord about it. I only work here." When you falter, the *externum verbum* still holds. The *externum verbum* you carry carries you. Faith's confidence is not in anything in ourselves but only outside ourselves in the *externum verbum.* Faith has nothing but what it is given; what it is given is given by the *externum verbum.* "Faith must have something to believe—something to which it may cling, upon which it may stand and be surely grounded" (LC IV, 29).

> Yes, it must be external so that it can be perceived and grasped by the senses and thus brought into the heart, just as the entire Gospel is an external, oral proclamation [*ein äußerliche mündliche Predigt ist*]. In short, whatever God effects in us he does through such external ordinances [*äußerliche Ordnung*] (LC IV, 30).

As the Smalcald Articles put it:

> In these matters which concern the external spoken word, we must hold firmly to the conviction that God gives no one his Spirit or grace except through or with 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 or before the word and who therefore judge, interpret and twist the Scripture or spoken word [*mündlich Wort*] according to their pleasure

(SA III, VIII, 3. Cf. the Anabaptists of AC V who deny the *externum verbum*).

Äuszerlich Wort, leiblich Wort, mündlich Wort. Where is this *Mund,* the mouth which speaks the *externum verbum?* The Lord has located a sure place for finding it: he has mandated and instituted the office of the holy ministry.

Tertullian observed those who wanted to push in some new thing as first asserting that it is all a conflict of opinions. When this was sufficiently asserted so that everyone agreed it was all a matter of opinion or interpretation, and so could not be insisted on, what finally emerged as the only right way was the new thing being promoted.

A denial of the *externum verbum* is a denial of the doctrine of the office of the holy ministry, and if the *externum verbum* goes, there goes also "the deepest kind of comfort and doctrine" (*gravissima consolatio et doctrina*). The antithesis of this is represented in Apology XXVIII, 19 by the asses who ground their confidence elsewhere. There are asses enough around, and in your own heart, to rob you of the strength and joy of the *externum verbum*'s deepest kind of comfort and doctrine. Your confessional subscription, to which you were pledged at your ordination, says you are not going to let them, or rather that the Lord won't let them as he holds you with his *externnum verbum.*

ALL A MATTER OF INTERPRETATION?

Those who assert that the doctrine of the office of the holy ministry has always been in contention are simply throwing dust in the air. The first serious contention broke out in the nineteenth century. Theological weakenings may be diagnosed which had been preparing for changes. Those culminated in the enormous influence of Schleiermacher, against whom stood both Walther and Löhe, both committed to confess what the Confessions confess.[10] Of the mid-nineteenth-century debate, Schlink has observed: "Since these distortions rest ultimately on a misunderstanding of God's revelation in the external word, it would be ill-advised to seek the cause of this confusion in the Confessions themselves."[11] Or better still, to identify the confusion by contrast with what the Confessions themselves confess and reject as the opposite of what they confess.

When all that has been said and done, AC V simply goes on saying what it has always been saying, and will surely continue to do so. Theologians may debate what is primary in the doctrine, but so long as what is done runs with what is confessed, no irreparable harm may be done. Harm begins when departures from what is confessed are being worked towards. Tertullian observed those who wanted to push in some new thing as first asserting that it is all a conflict of opinions. When this was sufficiently asserted so that everyone agreed it was all a matter of opinion or interpretation, and so could not be insisted on, what finally emerged as the only right way was the new thing being promoted.[12]

In the case of AC V, doubt is cast on its title. Its title is an impediment to the new thing being pushed. So it is pointed out that the title was not part of the original text. What is not pointed out is that the title was there within three years and could not have survived if it was a misrepresentation; besides that, the title is lifted out of the article itself. For those who wrote it, *ministerium* and *Predigtamt* spoke of the office of the holy ministry, divinely instituted for the service of the means of grace.

CONCLUSION

What the doctrine of the office of the holy ministry was defended against we have observed in testing by what is the opposite of what is confessed. In AC V that is "the Anabaptists and others who teach that the Holy Spirit comes to us through our own preparations, thoughts, and works without the external word of the gospel." We have focused on the external word and observed that because it is of the gospel, it is external. The opposite of external is the opposite of the gospel. Opposite of the gospel is the AC V's statement of "our own preparations, thoughts and works." This was matched by "our own merits, works and satisfactions" in the negative statement of AC IV, which was the opposite of "the forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God" that is ours for Christ's sake through faith. For the delivery of this the Augsburg Confession goes on to confess the institution of the office of the ministry (*Predigtamt*). The Lord's institution is the surest location of the delivery of the gospel, which is extolled as all and only Christ's saving work in Article III, as the forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God in Article IV with its title "Justification," and ours by faith which is created by the Holy Spirit in those who hear the gospel, for the preaching of which "God instituted the ministry of teaching the gospel and giving out the sacraments." It all hangs together on Christ.

We may test our doctrine of the office of the holy ministry by "all Christ's doing and bestowing," by the "forgiveness of sin and righteousness before God," that is, by the doctrine of justification, by what God has instituted, by his instruments for giving out his gifts. By all of these and their opposites we may then test what has here been said of "the external word of the gospel" in AC V.

> We wanted to set forth our position so clearly that our very adversaries would have to confess that in all these questions we abide by the true, simple, natural, and proper meaning of the Augsburg Confession. And we desire by God's grace to remain steadfastly in our commitment to this Confession until we die. As far as our ministry is concerned, we do not propose to look on idly or stand by silently while something contrary to the Augsburg Confession is imported into our churches and schools in which the almighty God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has appointed us teachers and shepherds (SD XII, 6)
>
> . . . "with intrepid hearts" (SD XII, 40). LOGIA

NOTES

1. See David P. Scaer, "Augustana v and the Doctrine of the Ministry," *Lutheran Quarterly* 6 (1992): 403–423. *Concordia Journal* 14 (July 1988): 283–299. *Logia* 2 (January 1993): 4–40. Todd Nichol and Marc Kolden, eds., *Called and Ordained* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1990). Review by Heinecken in *Lutheran Quarterly* 5 (1991): 513–531; by Root in *Lutheran Quarterly* 6 (1992): 220–223.

For how basic *externum verbum* is, see K-H zur Mühlen, *Nos Extra Nos* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1972): 227–265. For precision of terms see W. Stein, *Das kirchliche Amt bei Luther* (Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1974). He knows the Latin—a much more unwaxnosable language. See Hermann Sasse, *We Confess the Sacraments* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1985): 139.

2. Krister Stendahl, *The Bible and the Role of Women* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1966), 7; 2–3.

3. Quotations from the Book of Concord are from the Tappert edition. Where this translation has not been followed, the decisive text is *Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche* (Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht: Göttingen, 1986), and serving as corroborative witness, the *ConcordiaTriglotta* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921).

4. WA 50: 267, 18. See Peter Newman Brooks, ed., *Seven-headed Luther* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1983), 26.

5. *Ministerium* is what is here confessed. It is the noun, and *ecclesiasticum* is the adjective which qualifies and locates it. Hence "the ministry in the church" or "the churchly ministry." "The ministry of the church" not only turns the adjective into a noun, but also inserts a genitive, and so confronts us with the problem of what sort of a genitive. Does the church run the ministry, or does the ministry run the church? Both questions are alien to the text, and any translation needs to make clear that AC v confesses what the Lord has instituted and does.

Alternative to "churchly ministry" would be "ministerial church." The latter would do better for those who read AC v as the church, which *Predigtamt* clearly shows not to be the case. *Predigtamt* has two things together: the sermon and the office, the *Amt* which preaches, the office which gives out the sermon, pulpit office. Cf. "pulpit and altar fellowship," a gift located—a means of grace and a faith way of confessing it. Cf. AC xxviii, and "in those who hear the gospel."

6. Tappert, 12. WA 40: 62, 30; AE 26: 20.

7. Martin Chemnitz, *Loci Theologici* 17: 4. Translated by J. A. O. Preus (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989), 2: 698. C. F. W. Walther, *Church and Ministry,* trans. J. T. Mueller (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1987), 220.

8. Johann Gerhard, *Loci Theologici,* ed. Edward Preuss (Berlin: Schlawitz, 1868). Locus 23; 20: 14, 18, 38, 81, 262. 23: 250 faces objections to *externum verbum.* WA 6: 530, 28: *nec conferentis personam aliam quem instrumentum vicarium Dei accipe.* AE 36: 62. Martin Chemnitz, *Ministry, Word, and Sacrament,* trans. Luther Poellet (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1981), 29.

9. *BSLK,* 69, n. 1. W. Gussmann, *Quellen und Forschungen zur Geschichte des Augsburgischen Glaubensbekenntnisses* (Cassel: Pillardy, 1930), 2: 134. Johann Eck, *Enchiridion locorum communium adversus Lutherum et alios hostes ecclesiae* (*1525–1543*) (Münster: Aschendorff, 1979), 113–116. *Die Contutatio der Confessio AC vom 3, August 1530,* H. Immenkötter, ed. (Münster: Aschendorff, 1979), 86–87. Cf. C. F. W. Walther, *Walther on the Church,* trans. John Drickamer (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1981), 79. Here we bump into Tertullian's ways to recognize those who have departed the way. They do not care to whom what is holy is given. Differences in theology are of no concern. Catechumens are baptized before instruction. Women serve as ministers. They impose priestly functions on laymen. They make alterations in their rules of faith [they apparently had several] according to their judgment. *De Praescriptione* 14:9. *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina,* 1: 198–99. *Library of Christian Classics,* 5: 41. And all this without benefit of the Augsburg Confession.

10. For Schleiermacher see Scaer, 417. For Walther and Löhe see Hermann Sasse, "Ministry and Congregation," in *We Confess the Church* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1986), 69–79. See Harleß for North America, *Kirche und Amt nach lutherischer Lehre* (Stuttgart: Liesching, 1853).

11. Edmund Schlink, *Theology of the Lutheran Confessions,* trans. Paul F. Koehneke and Herbert J. A. Bouman (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1961), 249, n. 20.

12. *De Praescriptione* 14:9. *Corpus Christianorum, Series Latina,* 1: 198–99. *Library of Christian Classics,* 5:41.

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
Holy Trinity 1998	Lutheran Missions [note change]	February 15, 1998
Reformation 1998	Bondage of the Will	April 1, 1998
Epiphany 1999	Ethics and Theology	August 1, 1998
Eastertide 1999	Confessional Subscription & Doctrinal Statements	October 1, 1998

Send all submissions to the appropriate editors and addresses as listed on the inside back cover. Please include IBM or Macintosh diskette with manuscript whenever possible. (Specify word processing program and version used.) Please write for style sheet.

On the Public Reading of the Scriptures

Leslie Lanier

During the introductory remarks prefacing a piece in the Forum section of *Logia* 5, no. 2 (Eastertide 1996), entitled "On the Public Reading of the Scriptures," an invitation was issued for a "more profound" response to Pastor Daniel Fienen's article "Lay Readers in Public Worship" (*Concordia Journal*, October 1995). How profound this response is will be left to the judgment of the reader. A response seemed not only appropriate, however, but necessary; a response therefore follows, one that will be kept as brief as possible.

In his article Pastor Fienen comes to the conclusion that not only may laymen read the Scripture lessons in public worship, but that laywomen may also do so. In response to this conclusion, two questions need to be considered:

(1) Is it proper for laymen to read the Scripture lessons in public worship, or is this activity to be reserved for those holding the pastoral office?
(2) If it is appropriate for laymen to read the Scripture lessons in public worship, is it also appropriate for laywomen to do so?

In order to answer these questions three passages of Holy Scripture need be considered: 1 Timothy 4:13, 1 Corinthians 14:26–37, and 1 Timothy 2:11–14. Some relevant statements from the early church also need to be looked at.

Taking first things first, we need to answer the following questions: Is the reading of the Scripture lessons in public worship to be reserved for those holding the pastoral office? Is it acceptable for laymen to read the lessons at all? Some say yes; some say no. Those holding the view that the readings should be left for the pastor often appeal to 1 Timothy 4:13 for support. While there may be good reasons for the pastor to read the lessons, does this passage from Paul's letter to Timothy reserve the public reading of the Scripture lessons for the pastor?

Paul tells Timothy in 1 Timothy 4:13 to "attend to" or "provide for" (προσεχε) the reading of the Scriptures. While Timothy may indeed have personally read the Scriptures in worship, he could have just as surely attended to or provided for the readings by having a qualified assistant read them. In fact, the church historically has had just such worship assistants for the pastors. As early as the middle of the second century we find these assistants referred to in Justin Martyr's *First Apology*. Justin writes:

> And on the day called Sunday, all who live in the cities or in the country gather together to one place, and the memoirs of the apostles or the writings of the prophets are read, as long as time permits; then, when the reader has ceased, the president verbally instructs, and exhorts to the imitation of these good things.[1]

Here two distinct people were involved in proclaiming God's Word, a reader, who actually read the Scriptures, and the president (pastor), who then instructed and exhorted the congregation concerning the Word. Tertullian, writing at the beginning of the third century, also mentions the position of reader in his *On Prescription against Heretics*. There, in a section commenting on the lack of discipline and order evident among the heretics, Tertullian writes:

> Nowhere is promotion easier than in the camp of rebels, where the mere fact of being there is a foremost service. And so it comes to pass that today one man is their bishop, tomorrow another; today he is a deacon who tomorrow is a reader; today he is a presbyter who tomorrow is a layman. For even on laymen do they impose the functions of priesthood.[2]

The natural reading of this passage would lead us to believe that the position of reader was, by the year 200, an established office in the church, along with bishop, presbyter, and deacon. This was certainly the case by the early fourth century. Canons from the councils of Antioch (341 A.D.) and Laodicea (343 A.D.) show that at least by that time reader had become a minor ecclesiastical office.[3]

The point here, of course, is that the evidence from the early fathers and councils shows that the reading of the Scriptures was not reserved for the pastor alone. The early church did not interpret 1 Timothy 4:13 that narrowly. Others could and did read the lessons. These others, however, were not laymen randomly selected from the congregation in an attempt to promote lay involvement. They were men set aside for the particular service of reading the Scripture lessons—for being mouthpieces through which God's Word could instruct his people as they gathered for worship.

The application of this evidence to the present time leads to the conclusion that the church certainly has the freedom to have readers as did the early church. In light of the currently used short readings one can question the necessity of having readers (long

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gone are Scripture readings lasting "as long as time permits," as Justin writes—one to one and a half hours by some accounts); but necessity aside, there is nothing to prohibit readers from reading the lessons in church. If readers are used, however, it goes without saying that they should be good readers. They should be people set aside, "commissioned," for the particular service of reading, and they should be proficient at their task. They should read the Word clearly, drawing attention not to themselves, but to the Word of God they are speaking.

It is now necessary to consider the second question: if it is acceptable for laymen to read the Scripture lessons in the worship services of the church, is it acceptable for laywomen to do so? Here the discussion leaves the realm of the roles of clergy and laity[4] and enters the realm of gender—of appropriate roles for men and women. To answer this question it is vital to turn again to the Word of God as found in the writings of the apostle Paul, to 1 Corinthians I4:26–37 and 1 Timothy 2:11–14.

If it is acceptable for laymen to read the Scripture lessons in the worship services of the church, is it acceptable for laywomen to do so?

In summing up his directions to the Corinthian congregation regarding proper use of spiritual gifts and proper worship practices, Paul writes the following (1 Cor. 14:26–37):

> What is the outcome then, brethren? When you assemble, each one has a psalm, has a teaching, has a revelation, has a tongue, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification. If anyone speaks in a tongue, it should be by two or at most three, and each in turn, and let one interpret; but if there is no interpreter, let him keep silent in the church; and let him speak to himself and to God. And let two or three prophets speak, and let the others pass judgment. But if a revelation is made to another who is seated, let the first keep silent. For you can all prophesy one by one, so that all may learn and all may be exhorted; and the spirits of the prophets are subject to prophets; for God is not a God of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints. Let the women keep silent in the churches, for they are not permitted to speak, but let them subject themselves, just as the Law also says, and if they desire to learn anything, let them ask their own husbands at home; for it is improper for a woman to speak in church. Was it from you that the Word of God first went forth? Or has it come to you only? If anyone thinks he is a prophet or spiritual, let him recognize that the things which I write to you are the Lord's commandment (NASB).

What can be said about this passage regarding the question at hand? One observation that can be made, relating back to the first question considered above, is that this passage was not written only to or for pastors or only for the proper carrying out of the functions of the pastoral office. For Paul says that when the Corinthian brethren assemble, each one brings a psalm, a teaching, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation. Obviously others than the pastor were involved in bringing these before the congregation. Also, these activities were not only functions of the pastoral office (1 Cor 12:7–8). A second observation that can be made, directly related to the question of women's involvement in the gathered assembly, is that, at least in some sense, the women were to remain silent (σιγάω). For Paul writes in verse 34, "Let the women keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but let them subject themselves, just as the Law also says." The question is: in what manner must the women remain silent?[5]

Pastor Fienen makes the point in his article that Paul refers only to a qualified silence on the part of the women, not to total silence on their part. In this he is undoubtedly correct. The same word for silence used here (σιγάω) is also used to describe the silence of Peter, James, and John following their witnessing Jesus' transfiguration (Luke 9:36). This verse tells us not that the disciples from that point on remained totally silent, but that they remained silent concerning the Transfiguration, at least until the Lord had risen from the dead (Mt. 17:9). Their silence was indeed a qualified silence. The same can be said regarding the silence Paul commands of women in the church. There is no evidence, Scriptural or historical, to suggest that Christian women were meant to remain totally silent in the assembly. There is no reason to believe, for example, that the women were forbidden to join in the corporate liturgy, the singing of hymns, or in corporate prayer such as the Lord's Prayer. So, in what sense were the women commanded to remain silent?

First of all, Paul states in verse 35 that women were to remain silent during any theological give-and-take that occurred in the worshiping assembly. Evidently members of the congregation were free to ask questions as points were made by individuals to the group. The women, however, if they did have questions, were to refrain from asking them in church. They were to wait and ask their husbands (their men) at home.

Second, the women were to remain silent regarding the bringing of the items mentioned by Paul in verse 26 before the congregation. They were not to bring a psalm (not "hymn" as the NIV translates), a teaching, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation before the gathered assembly. In short, the women were not to prophesy, speak in a tongue, or interpret a tongue before the congregation. They might do so privately (1 Cor 11:3, although there only praying and prophesying are specifically mentioned) while showing proper respect for their place in the order of God, Christ, man, woman. They were not to do so in public worship, however. To divorce verse 34, which commands women's silence, from the verses in Paul's summary section that precede it (26–33) does injustice to the entire passage. To do so renders the command for silence meaningless,

with no referent. Paul's command of silence on the part of the women is simply an application of proper gender roles to the activities in the public assembly that he has just described—the bringing forth of a psalm, a teaching, a revelation, a tongue, or an interpretation, as well, of course, as asking related questions in the assembly. Of these activities, the first two in particular relate most directly to the issue of women reading the Scripture lessons in public worship. Paul writes that when the congregation assembles, each one may bring a psalm or a teaching (v. 26) in order that the congregation may learn and be exhorted (v. 31).

As noted above, Paul uses the word *psalm* (ψαλμός), not *hymn* (ὕμνος). (The NIV translation at this point is therefore incorrect.) If one traces ψαλμός through the New Testament, one will find it used seven times; here in 1 Corinthians 14:26, and also in Luke 20:42 and 24:44, in Acts 1:20 and 13:39, as well as in Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16. In four of those seven instances, in Luke and Acts, the form of ψαλμός used directly refers to a Psalm, a portion of the Holy Scriptures. In Ephesians 5:19 and Colossians 3:16 Paul refers to "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs," thereby drawing some distinction between a psalm and what would be considered a hymn today.

Since here in 1 Corinthians 14:26 Paul specifically chose, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to use the word ψαλμός, it is not unreasonable to assume that he was referring to bringing a Psalm before the assembly. While this Psalm may not have been part of the lessons prearranged to be read before the congregation, it would have been a portion of the Holy Scriptures brought before the congregation for the members' instruction, exhortation, and edification. Regarding the bringing of such a Psalm before the congregation, the women were to be silent.

They were also not to bring a teaching before the gathered assembly. While teaching (διδαχή) here certainly involves more than just the reading of the Scriptures, the one reading the Scripture lessons is certainly bringing a form of teaching before the assembly. In fact, we could say that the one reading the Scripture lessons is bringing the purest form of teaching before the assembly. For what is the Word of God, as the exegetical department of Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, has so correctly noted, but the teaching par excellence in the church of God?[6]

The basic point that Paul is making in repeating the Lord's command that women keep silent in the church is that in God's order of things, it is simply not the women's place to instruct the congregation and so to exercise a leadership role in the worshiping assembly. Instead, women are to subject themselves, as even the Law (Gn 3:16) says. This is reiterated by the apostle in 1 Timothy 2: 11–14, where he writes:

> Let a woman quietly receive instruction with entire submissiveness. But I do not allow a woman to teach or exercise authority over a man, but to remain quiet. For it was Adam who was first created, and then Eve. And it was not Adam who was deceived, but the woman being quite deceived, fell into transgression." (NASB)

How can a woman quietly "receive instruction" or "be taught" (μανθάνω) when she is actively, indeed, vocally involved in bringing the instruction to the people? One who "quietly receives instruction with entire submissiveness" reminds us of Job in chapter 40 of the book bearing his name. There (40:3–5) Job lays his hand to his mouth and says that he will speak no more. He then quietly listens as the Lord instructs him. One is therefore not reminded of Jesus standing in the synagogue at Nazareth, reading from the prophet Isaiah, with all present there giving him their undivided attention (Lk 4:16–17).

It is not coincidental, by the way, that in Luke 4 Jesus, a man, stood up to read the lesson. This was the accepted practice in the synagogues as well as later in the Christian church. And why was this so? It was so because women reading the lessons goes against the basic principles determining proper gender roles laid out by God Himself. The issue here is therefore not some isolated rule of ceremonial law for either Old Testament times or New. Rather, before us is a command of the Lord that reflects the complimentary but basically different roles he intends for men and women—the one being the father, the other being the mother; the one in love being the head, the other in love being submissive to the head; the one publicly instructing God's people, the other quietly receiving instruction.

The one reading the Scripture lessons is certainly bringing a form of teaching before the assembly.

One challenge that is faced in Christ's church in our time is a wholesale attack against any differences in role between men and women. To sanction the practice of women reading the Scripture lessons, to have them serve as mouthpieces for God's Word as it instructs his people, is simply one more step down the road of giving in to the challenge. While there may be no "express words" found in Scripture specifically forbidding women from reading the lessons in worship, there are also no "express words" specifically forbidding abortion. And yet the principles of God's Word stand. There has never been any doubt in the mind of the orthodox church in either case. Women reading the lessons in the gathered assembly goes against the apostolic word, and abortion against God's specific commandment "You shall not murder." It is just as simple as that. We have the Lord's command, "You shall not murder." We also have the Lord's command, "Let the women keep silent in the churches; for they are not permitted to speak, but let them subject themselves, just as the Law also says." It should be understood that this command from our Lord is given in love, for our good (as are all of his commands). It should also be understood that he expects us to keep his commands (Jn 14:15; 1 Jn 5:3) and that he will bless our personal lives, our homes, and our church if we do. LOGIA

NOTES

1. Alexander Roberts and James Donaldson, eds., *Ante-Nicene Fathers,* 14 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1956), 1: 186 (LXVII).

2. *Ante-Nicene Fathers,* 3: 263 (XLI).

3. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace, eds., *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers,* 14 vols. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1976), 14: 113, 143–144.

4. We in the LCMS have no minor ecclesiastical office or minor order of clergy with the title of "reader." According to our polity one is either a pastor (clergy) or a layperson. In the early church, deacon, sub-deacon, reader, and later acolyte and doorkeeper, although not holding the pastoral office, were considered minor orders of the clergy. (There is an informative excursus on the minor orders in volume 14 of the *Nicene & Post-Nicene Fathers* series, 144–145.)

5. There is a tendency within the LCMS these days to limit this Pauline command for women's silence (indeed, his limitations placed on women's service in the church in general) narrowly to the functions of the pastoral office.

In the recent CTCR majority report "The Service of Women in Congregational and Synodical Offices" (*Reporter,* December 1994), we find this statement in section B:

> the Scriptures themselves qualify or limit the eligibility of women for service in the church. The Scriptures do so in those passages which require that only men are permitted to serve in the office of pastor and carry out the functions which God has assigned to it (1 Corinthians 14; 1 Timothy 2).

(The conclusion of the majority in that report, of course, was that since auxiliary offices such as that of congregational president do not involve carrying out the functions of the pastoral office, women may hold these offices.)

Yet in the CTCR report "The Ministry, Offices, Procedures, and Nomenclature," we find this statement:

> Putting it simply, there is only one pastoral office, but the office which we formally refer to as the office of the public ministry has multiple functions, some of which are best handled by another, e. g., the parochial school teacher who is performing that function of the pastoral office (19).

On the one hand, we have the statement that women may not serve in an office that is involved in carrying out the functions of the pastoral office, women, however, being permitted to serve wherever this is not the case (for example, as congregational president). On the other hand, the CTCR states that parochial school teachers carry out a function of the pastoral office. And yet we have women teaching in our Lutheran schools. Is it that women may serve as congregational president, exercising authority over both men and women in the congregation, but should not serve as school teachers for our children? It would appear that confusion reigns on this whole issue. Where is the foundational biblical concept of gender roles based upon God's order of/in creation (1 Cor 11:3, 7–10; 1 Tim 2:11–13; Eph 5:22–24)? This concept appears to be getting more and more lost amid our speculations regarding divinely and humanly mandated offices and their functions. The forest is being lost for the trees.

6. *Women Speaking in the Church,* The Opinion of the Exegetical Department of Concordia Theological Seminary, October 4, 1982.

Does a Congregation Ordinarily Have the Right

Temporarily to Commit an Essential Part of the Holy Preaching Office to a Layman?

E. W. Kähler

Translated by Mark Nispel *

Thesis 1: The public preaching office is an office of the word.

Note 1: Since the following theses are concerned with the preaching office, it is the *materia circa quam* of this lecture. It is therefore of utmost importance for us to define this term succinctly and in accordance with Scripture. We say the public preaching office in order to show that we do not mean the *office in abstracto* but rather *in concreto*. We mean by this that what will be considered is not the office itself separate from the people who bear it, but rather the ministry in view of the people who are in this office.[1] The question in our thesis is: What type of office do the public preachers in the church hold? And this is the shortest and simplest answer: the office of the word.

Note 2: Luther translated the Greek words διακονία, λειτουργία, οἰκονομία, etc. with the word *Amt*. See John Gerhard in his *loc. de minister.* §8. From this it is clear that this word "office" in recent times has been used (or rather misused) in anything but the biblical sense.

Note 3: So the public office in the church is a ministry [*Dienst*] that is performed through the word. Here belongs first Acts 6:4: "We however will keep to prayer and the office of the word" (διακονία τοῦ λόγου). Without a doubt this verse sums up that which the apostles and all preachers should consider as the essence of their ministry, namely, to wield the word, that is, the word of God. It is obvious that the τοῦ λόγου is the genetive of object. The apostles wanted to say: Our special ministry, our noblest office, is to be that which has the word of God as its object (*objectum reale*). We will exercise our office through the word. The beginning, middle, and end of our ministry is the word. Next is 2 Timothy 4:5: "Do the work of an evangelical preacher" (εὐαγγελιστοῦ). Timothy's work and that of every evangelical preacher should be that which is signified by its name: he should be an evangelist, a herald of the joyous message. The gospel, the word of God, is therefore the real object of the ministry (*objectum reale ministerii*). That is, it is the object on which the ministry and work must concentrate. Therefore Paul also says in Titus 1:9: "Keep to the word which is certain and can teach." Also 2 Timothy 4:2 says: "Preach the word, hold . . . etc." Matthew 28:20 contains the general mandate [*Generalmandat*] of the Lord to his church and to her public ministers: "and teach them to keep everything that I have commanded you." The doctrine, however, is contained in the word. Therefore Christ graciously committed the office of the word to his disciples (Lk 24:47). Of the remaining apostolic instructions the most important here is 2 Corinthians 3:6 ff., where the holy apostle calls the ministry of the preacher an office of the New Testament (διακονία καινῆς διαθήκης) or of the spirit (πνεύματος, v. 6.) or the office, which preaches righteousness (τῆς δικαιοσύνης, v. 9.) He calls it this because this ministry imparts the new fellowship with God [*Gottesgemeinschaft*], the life-creating Spirit of God, the righteousness established in Christ through the word, the λόγος τῆς καταλλαγῆς (5:19). This word indeed belongs to all Christians, but its proclamation is the special calling of those to whom it is officially committed, v. 20. According to this the significance of the activity of the office rests in the divine origin and content of the word proclaimed by those bearing the office. Therefore the thesis says that the public preaching office is called an office of the word. See also the Smalcald Articles, the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope §67 ff., Luther in the *Epistle Postil* D. 11. Epiph. Erl. v. 8, 28, and also his *Confession Concerning the Supper of Christ,* Walch xx, 1378.

Thesis 2: Whenever someone is given the office of the word, all offices in the church that are carried out through the word are also thereby granted to him.

Note 1: Since we saw in Thesis 1 that a preacher occupies the office of the word, the question is: What does that mean? What is a preacher to whom the office is committed authorized to do? The answer first of all in general is, everything that is performed through the word.

Note 2: Second Corinthians 5:19 says: "For God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself and did not reckon their sins against them and established among us the word of reconciliation." Christ reconciled us, who had thrown away heaven and salvation through sin, to God. He did this by dying for our sins and by being raised for our justification. He thereby opened the gates of the kingdom of heaven to us once again. And in order that we might be able to enter into heaven reopened, he established among us the word concerning the reconciliation. According to Thesis 1, Note 2 the public proclamation of this word is the special call of the bearers of the office. The Lord in Matthew 16:19 calls this office "the keys of the kingdom of heaven." The giving of the keys is the symbol of a certain entrusted, conferred power because he who has the keys has admittance to everything. When Christ gave

This article was presented originally as a lecture to the Columbus Pastoral Conference of the Ohio Synod at their gathering in Lancaster, Ohio, on March 3–4, 1874. It was first published in *Lehre und Wehre,* the official theological journal of the Missouri Synod (vol. 20, nos. 9, 11, 12). C. F. W. Walther was editor and was responsible for the content of the journal.

the keys to Peter and his successors in office to administer them publicly in the name of the church, he thereby taught that he wanted to establish them as the administrators and stewards of his house. They were established to open the treasures to the worthy and grant them possession and use of such treasures and to shut out the unworthy and turn them away from the kingdom of God. We steadfastly maintain that the office of the word and the keys of the kingdom of heaven are identical. Therefore we find that with the keys of the kingdom of heaven every ministry function [*Dienstverrichtung*], power, and authority is bestowed so that with these everything may be performed that is necessary for the kingdom of Christ or for the ruling of the church. In other words: he who is to administer the word publicly has thereby received the right to perform whatever is accomplished through the word. Our thesis must therefore be correct.

Note 3: Our dear father Luther writes: "To whomever the office of the word is committed also is given all other offices which are performed in the church through the word" (*Concerning the Ministry,* AE 40: 3–44). Melanchthon wrote: "It is obvious that in the Scripture the power of the church and the keys mean one and the same thing" (*Corpus Reformatorum,* XII, 494). Matth. Flacius wrote: "Now the keys comprise and include all lawful authority and might of church government, to do something or leave it undone. This cannot be denied nor should be."[2] Only the pope and the pope's bishops have their *casus reservatis* in which others cannot validly function. Chemnitz writes concerning this: "This circumstance has to do with reserved cases, namely, in the ancient church the judgment of severe crimes which called for the punishment of excommunication was committed to the bishops. In this way, in accordance with their advice, the proper amount of public repentance would be laid upon the guilty for his improvement and for the upbuilding of the church. . . . At a later time the *casus reservati* was changed from this so that the word of God could not absolve a repentant sinner through just any preacher even if he was rightly called. Only the bishop or the Roman pope could do this. This arrangement was made not for the sake of order or discipline but rather because the full power to forgive sins supposedly resided in the pope. According to his whim this power was then conferred on the ministers of lesser grades. They acted as if God's word could only forgive sins when, insofar as, and only in the circumstance that the power which is in the heart of the pope is added to it. The might and power of the word of God supposedly differs according to the different grades of those who administer it so that when administered through the one it can only forgive small sins but when administered through the pope it can forgive all sins, even the greatest ones. . . . This was invented in order to strengthen the power of the antichrist."[3]

Thesis 3: The rights given with the office of the word (in the narrower sense) are the authority to preach the gospel, to administer the sacraments, and the authority of spiritual jurisdiction.

Note 1: The forgoing theses proved that with the office of the word is bestowed everything that is performed through the word. So now the question becomes: "What is performed through the word? What are the rights of one called to the preaching office? When we use the phrase "in the narrow sense" in the current thesis we want to indicate that there are essential and derived rights of the preaching office. The derived rights belong to the ministry of the word in the wider sense, concerning which we will speak in Thesis 7. Our present thesis is taken from Walther, *Church and Ministry*, Part 2, Thesis V.

Note 2: All essential parts of the office of the word can be subsumed into the above-mentioned powers (Mt 29:19–20; Jn 20:21–23; Jn 21:15–16; 1 Cor 4:1; see Walther).

The giving of the keys is the symbol of a certain entrusted, conferred power.

Note 3: Our Confessions often witness that the rights to the above-mentioned powers are the essential parts of the preaching office. And so it says in the Augsburg Confession, article XXVIII: "Our churches teach also that the authority of the keys or bishops according to the gospel is an authority and command of God to preach the gospel, to forgive and retain sins, and to administer and handle the sacraments. . . . This same authority of the keys or the bishops is used only with the teaching and preaching of God's word and the administration of the sacraments according to their call, either to many people or few. . . . Therefore the bishop's office according to spiritual rights is to preach the gospel, forgive sins, judge doctrine, to reject doctrine that is contrary to the gospel, and to exclude the godless from the Christian congregation if their godlessness is obvious. All this is without bodily force, through God's word alone" (*Triglotta,* 84; see also Apology XXVIII; Smalcald Articles, etc.).

Pol. Leiser further writes in the *Harmony of the Gospels*: "It is the office of him who receives the keys of the city from the king, if he is to be faithful to his king, to receive the true citizens inside the walls in order to lay before them, not his commands, but the king's. He makes sure that the citizens have food and clothing. He expels those who will not live according to the laws of the city. . . . The authority of the keys of the kingdom of heaven is similar to this. For it is the office of the ministers of the church first to receive [new citizens] into the church through baptism as the sacrament of reception. . . . Second, it is their office to explain to those previously received the doctrine of Christ, not the dreams of men, not the doctrines of the philosophers, not the decisions of councils. . . . Third, they must be concerned that the believers are fed and given drink with life-giving care of the new man through use of the table of the Lord. . . . Fourth, if some disrupt the peace of the church and either through false teaching or through a godless life become an offense to others and will not accept any admonishment, they must be excluded from the fellowship of the saints and put out of the church. If they return through repentance and have put away the offense, they are permitted again into the fellowship."

Finally, Martin Chemnitz writes: "This office has power given from God (2 Cor 10), but it is a power such that it is circumscribed by certain duties and boundaries. These are namely to preach God's word, to instruct the erring, to admonish sinners, to

warn the lazy, to comfort the distressed, to lift up the weak, to confront the opponents, to test and condemn false doctrine, to punish sinful morals, to administer the Sacraments instituted by God, to forgive and retain sins, to be an example to the flock, to pray privately for the flock as well as speak the public prayers in the church, to take over the care for the poor, to publicly excommunicate the stubborn and later accept them back and reconcile them with the congregation, to install ministers of the church according to the direction of Paul. . . . For that is what belongs to those two greatest parts, namely, the authority to preach the gospel and administer the sacraments and the authority of spiritual jurisdiction."

The dogmaticians called this twofold authority of the preachers the *potestas ordinis* and the *potestas jurisdictionis* (see Gerhard, *loc. de min. eccles.* §192).

Thesis 4: Ordinarily the congregation, which has the right of calling, is not only bound to the preaching office until the Last Day, but also may not mutilate it; that is, she must establish all its essential parts together.

Note 1: As we have seen, the holy preaching office is an office of the word that authorizes the bearer for all offices which are performed through the word, namely, public preaching, public administration of the holy sacraments, and the use of spiritual judgment. Since we are speaking here of the preaching office insofar as its relationship to the congregation is concerned, it is necessary for our goal to answer the question: What is the relationship between the congregation, for which and through which the preaching office subsists, and the office not only in general but also in regard to its individual essential parts? The thesis gives the answer.

Note 2: The congregation, that is, the invisible assembly of believers, whose visible representatives naturally are the voting members, have received the keys and the spiritual priesthood *principaliter et immediate* (Treatise §24) [chiefly and immediately] from the Lord (Mt 18:15–20; 1 Pt 2:5–10). But the keys are publicly administered by the preaching office (Thesis 2, Note 2). It follows then that the congregation is the only entity through whose election, call, and sending the preaching office can be committed to certain qualified persons (Acts 1:15–26; 6:1–6). Therefore Quenstedt writes: "By the word 'keys' is understood the power of the church, of which the right to call and commission ministers is a part."

Note 3: This Thesis says that the congregation is ordinarily bound until the end of time to the preaching office. That is proved not only by the divine institution of the preaching office in general (Acts 20:28; 1 Cor 12:28–29; Eph 4:11), but also from the command of Christ that the office of the apostles should endure until the Last Day (Mt 28:19–20): "Go and teach all people . . . and teach them to obey everything that I have commanded you." Thus the congregation must establish the preaching office in its midst and be bound to it until the Last Day.

Note 4: This last statement is speaking of things under normal circumstances [*ordentlicher Weise*]. But in these last troubled times it can happen that the public preaching office can easily be taken from the congregations, and there are emergencies in which the order of the holy office neither can nor should be kept. In such true emergencies every Christian can preach the word, absolve, baptize, yes, also administer the Lord's Supper; and indeed, when this is done such things are as valid and effective as when they are performed by an ordained pastor. Everyone, however, who deviates from the order should know why he does it. The reason for such is nothing else than that which God's word itself gives, that love is the fulfillment of the law. Whoever does not know his reason and acts haphazardly sins against his conscience and misuses his Christian freedom. It should also be noted that in emergencies one may deviate only as long and as far from God's order as long and as far as the emergency lasts. Deviating from the order without need in the name of love would be based on nothing but self-will and despising of divine order and of the majesty who instituted such order. To such a person should be applied Luther's words: "Yes, many may also come forth and say: Why do we need pastor and preacher anymore? We ourselves can read at home. They go in certainty and do not read it at home either. Or, wherever they do read it at home yet it is not so fruitful or powerful as the word is through public preaching and the mouth of the preacher whom God has called and established to speak it to you" (*House Postil* D. VIII. Trin. Walch VIII, 1816). What is said here concerning the public preaching of the gospel pertains obviously also to the preaching of the gospel to individual sinners, that is, to private absolution. Although it should not be denied that absolution is the gospel, which all Christians as spiritual priests are called to proclaim, yet we must still firmly hold that wherever absolution has a certain public character laymen should absolve only in an emergency. Otherwise they ruin God's order. Thus Luther says: "Other Christians, although they do not have the ministry, still have the command in emergencies to comfort you when you are despairing of your sins" (*House Postil* D. XIX p. Trin.). And in another place he says: "We all have the authority to hear confession, but no one should presume to do this publicly except him who is chosen to do it by the congregation. Privately, however, I may use it, for example, when my neighbor comes to me and says: Dear friend, my conscience is burdened. Absolve me so that I may be free. This I may do; but, I say, this must happen in private" (*Church Postil* D. Quasimodogen.).

In emergencies one may deviate only as long and as far from God's order as long and as far as the emergency lasts.

Note 5: The congregation is also directed to the use of the ministry of the word, which God has instituted and sustains in the church, because through this office eternal blessings are given to men (2 Cor 10:4ff., 13:3f.). The preaching office is an office of the word and those heavenly blessings are supplied through the word. Further, preaching, administering the sacraments, and using spiritual judgment are essential parts of the office of the word. And God receives men, rescues them from sin, death, and the power

of the devil, and gives them eternal life through the individual parts of the office as well as through the entire office. Therefore it follows that the congregation must not mutilate the office; that is, it must establish all the essential parts of the office together. Suppose that a congregation had only one preacher and indeed committed to him the office of proclaiming the gospel through public preaching, but under no circumstances allowed him to baptize, to administer the sacrament, to absolve or retain. In this way they would mutilate the office, which they neither are able to do nor are permitted to do, as we will see later. Without preaching no faith is possible, Romans 10:14. Without baptism an adult is in constant danger of shipwreck in every temptation. And baptism is the only means of grace for children (Mk 10:15f.; see Jn 5:4; 1 Pt 3:21; Gal 3:27; Eph 5:23; etc.). The goal of the holy supper is above all to seal the forgiveness of sins (Mt 26:28), to strengthen an ever-tottering faith, to further brotherly love and the unity of confession (1 Cor 10:17). These means of grace do not make up the keys only when taken together. Rather, each one truly and certainly opens up heaven to the repentant sinner as well as any other. Can one of these means of grace be lacking without bringing men's souls into the greatest of danger? Certainly not. It is also obvious that, since a congregation must establish the office of the word, therefore it must establish all the essential parts of it together.

The congregation must not mutilate the office; that is, it must establish all the essential parts of the office together.

Note 6: A short witness of John Gerhard may find a place here. He writes: "The necessity [of the preaching office] depends on the divine order. For it has pleased God to save through foolish preaching those who believe it (1 Cor 1:21). The result of this pleasure is the dependence of that highest and most costly work, namely, the conversion and salvation of men, upon the preaching of the gospel and therefore also upon the office of the church, and the inseparable connection of them both (Rom 10:14; Eph 4:11–12; 1 Tim 4:10). Therefore in Obadiah they are called saviors."[4]

***Thesis 5: The congregation can establish grades (τάξις τάγματα) of the one office of the word; that is, they can arrange matters so that this person cares for one part of the office of the word and that person cares for another part. This is done, however, only* de iure humano.**

Note 1: If we hold fast to the principle derived from the last thesis that all essential parts of the office must be established by the congregation, we are led to the question: Is the congregation duty bound to have all parts of the office administered together by one person? The answer according to the above thesis is no.

Note 2: From the apostolic instruction in 1 Corinthians 14:40 that everything should occur in the church in an honorable and orderly fashion (κατὰ τάξιν), the order was created in the old Lutheran church especially in large parishes that certain persons should be appointed exclusively for certain functions of the holy office. And so there were afternoon preachers, assistant preachers, deacons, archdeacons, subdeacons, so-called catechists, etc. etc., who in part only preached, or only baptized, buried, comforted, held confession, administered the holy supper, etc. These are pure orders that were also known by other names in the ancient church. And even now in the larger churches it is often necessary and salutary to establish such grades in the functions [*Verrichtungen*] of the preaching office. This also occurs in many of our churches in America when alongside the head or senior preacher there are one or more assistant preachers who have divided themselves into caring for different functions of the office. Now, such order did not first become necessary during the historical development of the church. Rather, this was sanctioned already in the apostolic age by the apostles themselves and introduced into the church. The apostle in Ephesians 4 mentions, along with prophets and teachers, pastors. They were set over a certain flock of the church (1 Pt 5:1–2), and did not only teach but also administered the holy sacraments and carried out care of souls. There were also teachers who simply explained the doctrine to the people and who later became the catechists (Rom 2:20; Heb 5:12). The apostles included all grades under the name of the episcopate or the prestbyterate, which is the same thing. And when the congregation commits the care of different parts of the preaching office to different people, they really confer in reality to each one the office of the keys because each one opens up heaven through the part of the ministry of the word that he administers. The congregation then also confers the office of the word, the preaching office itself.

Note 3: It is of the highest importance firmly to hold that there is no command of God concerning which and how many grades or orders there should be in the holy office. If an order of these grades of the ministry were *de iure divino,* as the antichristian papacy teaches,[5] we would naturally be bound to such grades as were introduced in the early church by the apostles. From the letters of Paul, however, which were written to different congregations, we can see that in the time of the apostles not all churches had the same number and type of grades and orders. They were free. It only remained that when they were established consideration was given to order, benefit, and upbuilding. If, however, it was free in the apostles' time, then it must also be so now. The arrangement even now that the care for one part of the preaching office is conferred to this person and another part to another person is a human if also a good, salutary, and often-needed order.

Note 4: Our church confesses in the Smalcald Articles: "Here Jerome teaches that such a distinction between bishops and pastors comes only from human arrangement, as one sees in the work" (*Triglotta,* 523). If the distinction between church government [*Kirchenregiment*] and the office of pastor is a human arrangement, how much more then the distinction between preachers who are in one and the same congregation, even if on account of their functions they have titles of one being higher and another lower!

We allow ourselves here to refer to the enlightening handling of this subject in Martin Chemnitz's *Examen Concil. Trident.* After Chemnitz has named the grades of the office in the apostolic and ancient church and established that they were entirely free and were established only for the sake of order, he continues: "In

entirely the same manner, with the same goal and with the same freedom, most of those grades used in the ancient church are also retained among us." And later he says further: "Third, that which we reject in the papist doctrine of grades is that they claim that according to Christ's institution and command and according to the tradition of the apostles it is necessary to have just so many grades in the individual churches. For above we proved the opposite from the apostolic history. And the fathers in whose time there was such a distribution of grades of the ministry of the church confess explicitly that these rest neither on divine command nor apostolic tradition." The doctrine of Scripture, the history of the church, and the nature of the matter are even so many protests against the unfortunate false doctrine adopted even by so-called Lutherans of a supposed distinction in the grades of the office according to divine right.

Thesis 6: If the congregation commits an essential part of the preaching office [to someone], they commit it in its entirety virtualiter, with the provision to care only for the designated part. (The one called to a part of the ministry, however, does not have the right to take over the part of another without a further call.)

Note 1: If the following are true: (1) He who has the ministry of preaching, administering the sacraments, and using spiritual judgment occupies offices that are accomplished through the word and has the office of the word or the preaching office to administer (Theses 1–3); (2) the congregation is not only bound to the ministry of the word in general, but also to its individual parts and therefore may not mutilate the ministry (Thesis 4); (3) finally, the functions of the preaching office may be divided up (among ministers) but only according to human right (Thesis 5); then it is obvious that the congregation must *virtualiter* commit [*übertragen*] the entire ministry of the word even to someone who is given care for only a part of it. In other words, preaching is the audible word; the holy sacraments are the visible word, that is, a visible preaching of the gospel; all church discipline, if we might say it this way, is the tangible word, that is, a manifest use of the law or gospel. All these parts that the preaching office administers differ neither in origin nor in use. They all flow from the word and have in mind the salvation of men. Therefore nothing else is possible than that the entire word belongs to each function of the office. What does the congregation commit to him who, for example, is only to baptize? Without doubt it is the keys to which baptism belongs. With these keys, which he administers according to divine order in the name of the congregation, he opens heaven and the treasures of God's grace to a particular part of the congregation. But he who only preaches does this same thing. Do both have different keys? Or is one key easier and more convenient than the other in opening [heaven]? Absolutely not! The difference is only this: heaven is audibly opened through preaching and visibly opened through the holy sacrament. If one hears person A open the house door and sees person B open it with the same key, no one would be so foolish as to believe that A has half the key and B has the other half. It can mean nothing else than that anyone who has even one function of the ministry of the word to administer must have the entire office to administer this one part. Even though he is only bound to administer one part of this office, still *virtualiter* he is qualified for the administration of the other parts. Otherwise, if our assertion was not correct, the human order according to which the congregation established grades was broken, for example, if at some time one of the function-holders resigned, then the congregation would be guilty of mutilating the ministry. Or again: consider a time when one who has been established to care for a certain part of the office takes over another's part for the sake of love. Could he do this with a peaceful conscience if he was not convinced of what we developed above? In short, the foundation of our second thesis is correct. And so the following simple syllogism is undeniable: If an office that is administered through the word is given to anyone, then thereby the office of the word is given. Person A administers an office in the church that is carried out through the word. It follows that person A also has the office of the word.

Note 2: Apostolic practice also establishes the correctness of our thesis. According to 1 Corinthians 1:17, St. Paul had given others the care for of administering the sacrament of baptism while he himself kept entirely busy with the oral proclamation of the gospel. In no way, however, had the apostle relinquished the right to baptize, as v. 14 and following prove. Although for the sake of usefulness he merely administered a part of the office of the word, he still knew that this right that he used in practice involved also the right to administer other parts of the office.

Nothing else is possible than that the entire word belongs to each function of the office.

Note 3: Therefore it says in the Smalcald Articles: "For the gospel commands those who lead the churches to preach the gospel, forgive sins, and administer the sacraments. And beyond this it gives them jurisdiction so that those who live in public vice can be put under the ban and those who wish to improve themselves can be released and absolved. Now everyone, even our enemies, must confess that all who lead the churches have this command in common, whether they are called pastors, presbyters, or bishops."[6] The celebrated Dr. John Karpzov interpreted this as follows: (1) All pastors of the church together have both types of authority [the *potestas ordinis et iurisdictionis*]; (2) These types of authority are conferred in entirety with ordination and are not given to one any *more* or *less* than any other.[7]

In the same Smalcald Articles it says further: "Just as in a time of need a mere layman can absolve another and become his pastor [*Pfarrherr*]" (*Triglotta,* 523). By the word *Pfarrherr* (in the Latin *minister et pastor*) we understand a person who has the office of the word and also all offices that are performed through the word. And so according to our confession a layman who absolves in an emergency already makes use of an essential part of the office of the word and is not only authorized to do so on account of his spiritual priesthood, but he is also the pastor of him whom he absolves. That is, he has the entire office although he only uses a part of the office of the word. In other words, in

emergencies he could *valide* administer all other parts of the ministry although only one single part makes him the minister or pastor of the other. For without possession of the spiritual priesthood he also could not do a single priestly work. Now, however, concerning the use of the ministry of the word, which originates from the conferral of the priestly rights,[8] we find that a minister of the word cannot use any part of it unless he has the entire office.

Finally, John Gerhard writes: "Although there are different orders in the ministry of the church, all ministers of the church have the *postestas ordinis*, which consists of the preaching of the word and the administration of the sacraments, and the *postestas iurisdictionis*, which consists in the use of the keys, in same manner."[9] We must either agree with this or deny it: that anyone who, for example, only baptizes is a minister of the church, a pastor. There is no third choice.

Note 4: The last sentence in the thesis was not originally in the plan of the author. An apparently unresolvable difference that came up during the debate moved him to make this addition. Even if this is not entirely the place for it, still he has the good intention of avoiding every misunderstanding. Namely, when the congregation establishes grades of the office, they make an order [*Ordnung*], even if it is only a human one. To break it would not in and of itself be a sin, but still it would be contrary to order in the church, yes, contrary to love. When, for example, in a large congregation the one who only administers the sacraments dies, the congregation is in no way compelled to give the administration of the sacraments to the pastor who only preaches. Rather, they could call someone else. If the second pastor permanently takes over the business of the first, the congregation must first explicitly authorize him to do such. It is, however, self-explanatory that in the case of a vacancy the remaining pastor takes over the functions of ministry of the other until this place is filled again. We also do not want the above addition to be understood as if the congregation must first explicitly commit the part of the ministry of the one to the other who takes it over. Rather, we only have in mind ecclesiastical order and benefit. Naturally it would be a terrible lack of order if he who, for example, is to baptize simply took to himself the activities of his colleagues.

Thesis 7: There are ministries that are indeed necessary to the governance of the church and therefore belong to the preaching office in the wider sense, which however do not necessarily involve the conducting of the office in the narrower sense. Therefore such helping ministries can be performed also by those who do not thereby become entitled to exercise also the office of the word and the sacraments.

Note 1: The goal of the present lecture has been partially completed through the previous theses. Namely, we know now that anyone who discharges an essential part of the office of the word can only do this because the entire office of the word has been conferred to him. He really occupies the entire preaching office. One difficulty has not yet been raised. Since the congregation without doubt has the right to give only one function of the preaching office to a certain person for administration, should she not have the right to confer the ministry of the word in a particular circumstance to someone who appeared qualified and was chosen from her midst? More precisely, if a congregation without a preacher wants to celebrate the holy supper once, may she not temporarily call someone from her midst for this administration and on this one occasion confer to him the holy office? The objection that then the preaching office would be mutilated cannot be raised in all circumstances. Still, the wish of the congregation to have a preacher to administer all the components of the ministry could be quickly fulfilled and the divine order upheld to establish the entire preaching office and not mutilate it. Everyone can see that for this difficulty to be solved the answer must be found to the question placed at the beginning of this lecture. The following theses will therefore show who ordinarily may administer the preaching office.

The Holy Scripture teaches that there are ministries in the church that are necessary for its ruling and therefore belong to the preaching office in the wider sense.

The present thesis concerns itself with the answer to the question whether the ministry of the word in the strict sense necessarily must be given to everyone who is called to a nonessential part of the office. We said necessarily. For here we are not really talking about whether a layman or someone placed in the office of ruling can *rate*, that is, validly, administer not only a part of the office but the entire preaching office. What we have in mind here is whether the office *sensu strictiori*, that is, the office of the word and sacraments, is contained in the office of lay-elder, which has certainly become a separate offshoot of the preaching office. Also, for example, we are concerned with whether the school teacher who indeed administers a part of the holy office is authorized for the carrying out of the entire ministry. Even if we must resolutely affirm that a person entrusted with a helping office in the church can *rate* administer the entire ministry, still we can answer the question whether such a person can also *legitime* administer the office of the word in the strict sense with a just as resolute *no*.

Note 2: The Holy Scripture teaches that there are ministries in the church that are necessary for its ruling and therefore belong to the preaching office in the wider sense. Already under Thesis 5, Note 2 we saw that the offices of the church of the higher order, as Scripture itself enumerates them, flow out of the apostles' ministry, the preaching office of today, and have their root in it. This relationship has its origin as much in the nature of human procedure as in the special divine decrees concerning the redemption of the world. When, for example, an organization is created that is to work toward a particular goal, its first offices already contain all the tasks, powers, and functions in themselves that become necessary later through growth of the organization. Everything that comes afterward is already present and is only a development of that which was first. So also the offices of the church. Evangelists,

pastors, elders, and deacons do not occupy offices that from time to time were newly instituted by God. Rather, they were instituted at the same time in and with the apostles' office. Also the offices of the church of the lower order are the products of two factors, the office of apostle and the congregation. While these offices were offshoots of the apostolate, so they were also necessary to the governance of the congregation. In the beginning the apostles oversaw all the offices of the congregation. The administration of the material goods of the congregation was entirely in their hands. Also the care of those in need, especially the widows, with bodily goods and other requirements of bodily support was their duty. And when they made use of the assistance of individual brothers, which certainly must have happened, this happened only in a casual fashion. Because of the continual growth of the congregation the twelve were not able to care for all the parts of the holy office in like fashion. They asked the congregation therefore to designate men who had good reputations and were full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom so that a part of the present load of the apostles' office could be committed to them. In accordance with this, the congregation chose seven deacons whose duty primarily was the care of the poor and administration of physical goods in the congregation. These ministers, whose moral qualifications are listed by St. Paul in 1 Timothy 3:8–13, whether they occupy the office of elder in the narrow sense (πρεσβύτεροι) or the ministry of ruling (προϊστάμενοι, ἡγούμενοι) or the office of deacon (διάκονοι) (Rom 12:8; Heb 13:7, 17, 24 and similar verses), bear a part of the office of the church and stand at the side of the office of the church κατ' ἐξοχήν, the preaching office. Therefore the offices of the rulers, elders, assistants to the poor, the school teachers, sacristans, cantors in our congregations are likewise to be considered as holy ecclesiastical [*kirchlich*] offices.

Note 3: Still, these offices in no way involve the conducting of the preaching office in the narrow sense. Already at the institution of the diaconate the apostles explicitly kept the office of the word for themselves (Acts 6:4). The deacons could "acquire a good rank for themselves" (1 Tim 3:13), and also become qualified for the preaching office in the narrow sense. Still herein it is stated that in and of themselves they in no way were already authorized for the conducting of the preaching office. The most important verse in question here, however, is 1 Timothy 5:17: "Let the elders who rule well be considered worthy of double honor, especially [μάλιστα] those who labor in word and doctrine." Here two classes of elders are put forth. There are those who labor in word and doctrine and occupy the ministry of the word in the narrow sense. There are also those with whom this is not the case whose ministry was different, namely, which was for the ruling of the congregation introduced for the censure of morals and the preservation of discipline in the church, Romans 12:8.

Note 4: When it is clear that the ministry of the word κατ' ἐξοχήν includes everything that is necessary for the ruling of the congregation, but on the other hand the so-called office of elder in no way involves the conducting of the preaching office *sensu strictiori,* then the office of elder must be comprised of helping ministries [*Hilfsdienste*] that can be administered by those who thereby do not become preachers and who do not have the authorization to administer the office of the word and sacraments. It has been believed that it takes something away from self-enlightening power of the Scripture when it is held that the difference between the ministers of the church installed especially for the proclamation of the gospel and the so-called lay-elders is more than something external and incidental. Some have thought that the non-hierarchical spirit of the Lutheran church needs to be brought to light so as no longer to permit there to be any lines of distinction between the two classes of elders. But, they think, the distinction lies so deep in the [historical] character of the church that it will not fade away. There are two things here upon which this matter depends. First, the knowledge of the Holy Scripture and the understanding of it in its many dogmatic, ethical, spiritual, legal, and other relationships, which can only be gained through years of long study, is such an essential presupposition of the ministry of the teaching elder that an office of elder from which this is lacking can only be considered an incomplete grade of that office. This being said in no way denies that a layman can come to a deep understanding of the Scripture through personal investigation in the Scripture, grasping its fundamental contents and judging doctrine according to it as according to a universal rule. Likewise we can in no way doubt that in innumerable circumstances the individual layman will far exceed the individual theologian in vivacity and truth of understanding Scripture, since faith, which is the key to the knowledge of Scripture, is not bound to professional study. The layman will only still lack in some degree the conscious theoretical and practical view through which all members of this spiritual organism are first united for working together and are put to use working together.

It is well to notice that the command to shepherd the church with God's word and to lead her to salvation does not apply to everyone who occupies an office in the church. It applies only to those who proclaim the gospel. The essential difference between lay-elders and teaching-elders was established fundamentally by the Lord himself.

The command to shepherd the church with God's word and to lead her to salvation does not apply to everyone who occupies an office in the church.

The school diaconate takes a middle position between the teaching ministry of the teaching elder and the above diaconate insofar as laboring in doctrine is one of its chief duties. But its ministry is confined only to a part of the congregation even if it is the most precious part. On the other hand the teaching presbyter is a bishop, that is, an overseer of the adults as well as the young. And when the preaching office and the teaching-diaconate coincide [in one office], still the essential part of the later is to lend parents assistance in training [their children] and to take care of the children personally in every detail. Its ruling side consists in school discipline. But this must remain the least important element. The personal ministry to every individual child is the most important matter. To watch over discipline must remain the mat-

ter of the bishop. The school teacher is placed under him not only in matters of office but also as the caregiver of his soul.

Note 5: Let us take notice here of a special circumstance. When someone merely gives external help in the administration of the holy supper, this demonstrates that the one helping has the preaching office as little as the sacristan helping in baptism demonstrates the same. An external helping with the ministry of the word in the strict sense indeed does not happen outside of or in addition to the word. It should be counted among the true functions of the ministry [*Ministeriums*]. But this helping concerns itself with a highly unessential part of the holy ministry. He who examines and authorizes the communicants holds the office of the word precisely in the narrow sense. See Walther, *American-Lutheran Pastoral Theology*, 186, footnote 10. Further, we wish again to make clear that in all circumstances where we grant only to the preachers the ministry of the word in the narrow sense, we only have in mind the legitimate order.

Note 6: Our confessions witness, even if only incidentally and indirectly, that the whole helping diaconate is connected with the ministry of the word and therefore is to be placed under it as an offshoot of the same. The Formula of Concord says: "We believe, teach, and confess, that . . . the entire congregation, yes, every Christian, but especially the ministers of the word, as the leaders of the congregations of God."[10]

Anyone who administers an essential part of the holy office must have the office of the word.

The following witnesses might find place here from the private writings of our orthodox fathers. Luther writes concerning deacons: "The office of deacon is not a ministry of reading the gospel or the epistles, as is common today, but rather to distribute the goods of the church to the poor, in order that the priests might be *freed* from the burden of temporal goods and may keep to prayer and the word of God more diligently and more freely" (Walch XIX, 140). Further, John Gerhard writes concerning the elders who rule: "In the apostolic and first churches there were two classes of presbyters, which in Latin were called seniors, as is seen in 1 Timothy 5:17. The one type administered the office of teaching, or as the Apostle himself says, labored in word and doctrine, who were called bishops, pastors etc. Others were established, however, for the censure of morals and the preservation of discipline in the church . . . these were called rulers and leaders [*Vorsteher*], as is seen in 1 Corinthians 12:28; Romans 12:8. Ambrose writes concerning 1 Timothy 5: 'Also the synagogue and afterwards the church had seniors, without whose knowledge nothing was undertaken in the church. And I do not know through what negligence this has fallen into disuse as if through laziness or more probably through the arrogance of the teachers in that they wanted all the honor.' Both classes carried the name 'leader' [*Vorsteher*] . . . and senior [*Vorgesetzte*] . . . The holy college that Paul calls the *presbyterium* was made up of both types together."[11] Danish Bishop Brochmand witnesses that the distinction between teaching elders and ruling elders is not simply arbitrary: "Saravia and Erastus strongly maintain that a presbyterium consisting of ecclesiastical and private persons is not a divine but rather a human invention. We use the verse 1 Timothy 5:17 against them . . . where the Apostle explicitly teaches that there are elders of two classes. The one perform their ministry through teaching but the other was given the care for ecclesiastical discipline. This interpretation is supported by Paul himself when in 1 Corinthians 12:28 there is mention of rulers, that is, such men who do not teach so much as rule the church. For they are distinct from the apostles, prophets, teachers."[12]

To see how the ministry of lay-elder was seen in the old Lutheran church, see the witnesses in Walther's *The True Form etc.*, 101ff. See also his *American-Lutheran Pastoral Theology,* where among other things the special functions of ministry of the elders and the deacons are mentioned.

Thesis 8: Whoever is to administer an essential part of the office of the word should be ordained or at any rate set apart for the ministry of the word.[13]

Note 1: Anyone who administers an essential part of the holy office must have the office of the word. But since a layman, even when he occupies an ecclesiastical office of lower order, is in no way authorized according to divine order to administer the public preaching office in the narrow sense, such a one must be called to this in a special way. We say therefore in the thesis: He should be ordained, or at any rate set apart for the ministry of the word.

Note 2: With the above we are far from assigning to ordination an absolute or divine necessity since the argument for its divine institution is an *argumentum a silentio*. Rather, along with the entire orthodox church we recognize ordination as an adiaphoron. Compare Walther, *The Voice of our Church etc.*, Th. II, Th. 6 B. Also in agreement with the church of God, however, we hold it to be relatively necessary. Ordination is an ecclesiastical order sanctioned by ancient apostolic practice which serves to clarify and publicly confirm that the call to the ministry of the word that has come before is legitimate. Danhauer writes: "Who is against this order? Who despises this usage? Such a one neither loves peace, because he is against the church, nor is a person of conscience, because he despises the means that serve unto peace of conscience. He is a an obstinate person."[14] Whoever omits ordination without need is a schismatic. He separates himself from the orthodox church of all time. Therefore when in the thesis we call ordination the *conditio sine qua non,* as it were, for the undertaking of the holy ministry, we do not want to be misunderstood as if this were the case on account of divine command; but we speak in this way in the sense of our church. Namely, by saying this we mean that no one can or may administer an essential part of the holy office of the word without a call declared to be legitimate by the church (1 Cor 12:29; Rom 10:15; Js 3:1). Why did it not simply say then that one must be properly called? It is clear that if we had formulated the thesis in this way one could still say: Someone whom the congregation has called to a single duty of the office has received the preaching office for this circumstance. But that is especially what we reject. If we do not wish to deny, for example,

that the administration of the holy supper by a non-ordained layman called only for a time by an entire congregation in an emergency is effective and legitimate (Walther, *Pastoral Theology*, 180),[15] still we must determinedly stress that only the most difficult of emergencies would permit this. If a congregation in ordinary circumstances calls an unordained person, she despises ecclesiastical order. The call to the office of the word must have some public witness on account of those who run and are not sent (Jer 23:21), and ordination gives this witness. If this is the case — and no Lutheran will deny it — then it is also correct when we claim: He who should administer an essential part of the holy ministry should be ordained.

Note 3: If circumstances arise in which it is impossible to hold to the order of ordination, then we must at least demand some type of setting apart of the person called to the holy office, for Acts 13:2 says: "When they had served the Lord and fasted, the Holy Spirit spoke: "Set apart for me (ἀφορίσατε) Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them" (see Rom 1:1).

Note 4: Johann Freder, born in Cöslin and a student of Luther, functioned as a preacher in Hamburg, Stralsund, Rügen, and Wismar without being ordained. When the Greifswald theologian Dr. Knipstrov demanded that he subsequently allow himself to be ordained in order to correct the offense given, Freder would not yield to this. Rather he called ordination a snare to the conscience. For this reason he was deposed in 1551. In a Wittenberg faculty opinion given on this matter in 1553 among other things was said: Although ordination in and of itself is not necessary, it serves as a publication and approval of the call. To consider it a snare of conscience is nothing else than to say that anyone can take up the preaching office even when no examination or confirmation of the call has gone before. That is contrary to order and cannot be condoned.[16] The Straßburger theologian Dannhauer writes concerning ordination: "Is ordination necessary on account of conscience? It is most certainly necessary: not on account of a necessity of its goal and means (as if the intended goal could only be accomplished though this means) . . . . Still it is necessary on account of an apostolic and positive (not moral) command: "Set apart," Acts 13:2, and an ancient apostolic practice (1 Tim 5:21). Likewise [it is necessary] according to the need to be able to distinguish between the proven and unproven teachers of the church and for showing reverence to the ministry. Therefore no one can complain that Lutherans often use students who have not yet been ordained as vicars and allow them to hear confession, visit the sick and administer the sacrament to them. [This is our practice] so that no one might think that a pastor and an attendant are the same thing."[17] Kromayer seems to contradict [the statement that only ordained men should work in the office of the word] when he writes: "In some places, as in the region of Württemberg, as well as from time to time even here in Swabian churches, students of theology administer the sacraments."[18] This apparent contradiction with the earlier citation from Dannhauer is solved by the following text found in the Wittenberg Judgments: "In many Württemberg, Schwabish, Alsatian, and other highland churches of the Augsburg Confession, it is customary that such *actiones sacrae* (preaching, administering the sacraments, comforting the sick, burying) are committed to ordained students of theology who do not yet have a parish or place of their own as helpers of the regular clergy." Without ordination or some analog they would not be able to do this. They must have the entire office in order to be able to use a part of it.

Thesis 9: Such a person cannot be called temporarily, and therefore even if he is ordained he cannot administer parts of the office in other congregations* legitime *without a regular call unless necessity compels him to do so.

Note 1: This thesis answers *no* to the question of whether a congregation can only temporarily commit the holy office to anyone whom they have called to care for an essential part of the office of the word — a question whose solution will bring this lecture to a close.

Note 2: If someone is truly called to the preaching office, he is called by God (Acts 20:28; Eph 4:11; 1 Cor 12:28; Ps 68:12; Is 41:27). The congregation is only the instrument for the selection of the person for the work that God has chosen him to do. No one, however, can prescribe to God how long he should entrust someone with the office. The congregation can therefore never relieve or dismiss a preacher from his office unless they can prove that God himself has relieved or dismissed him from his office. Therefore if the congregation wants to give a temporary call with the provision that they can arbitrarily dismiss the one who is called, or call him only for a certain term, such a call would not be valid or right. A temporary call is no call (see above the pertinent explanations in Walther loc. cit. 41ff.).

The congregation can therefore never relieve or dismiss a preacher from his office unless they can prove that God himself has relieved or dismissed him from his office.

Note 3: "But how is it," someone will object, "that a congregation cannot frequently call a foreign pastor to serve in their midst for only a period of time? Has this not always been the practice in the Lutheran Church? Therefore are there not circumstances where the congregation may therefore give a temporary call?" If a preacher preaches in a different congregation, he does this either when the congregation has a preacher and as a proxy in his call; or if the congregation is vacant and a different preacher serves in her midst, the congregation makes use of the preaching office that the congregation of this preacher has established. Then the congregation is the guest of the true congregation of the pastor or has borrowed from her. It is obvious that such a preacher in no way makes himself responsible to conduct his office on the basis of a temporary call. Compare what is written in *Pastoral Theology*, 44, *de theologis ad tempus commodatis*. Further, when students preach they do this in no way with the assumption that the ministry of the word is therefore conferred to them, but rather they serve in the call of the ordinary preacher as a proxy for a particu-

lar circumstance. Mißler writes concerning them in his *Opus novum*: "Indeed not a public call but a private mission" and "a call of love," which sounds better than the "private mission."

Note 4: If a congregation may not give a temporary call, it is clear that an ordained person may not perform duties of the office in the congregation outside of their office without being validly and rightly called. Our theologians therefore answer the question: "Can one who has been driven out of his ministry administer baptism, the Lord's Supper, and other parts of the ministry in different places?" in the following way: "If someone is not regularly called to a congregation, he cannot administer the sacraments there, even though earlier he was regularly called and ordained to the office. He also cannot administer baptism, the Lord's Supper, and other parts of the office. For he is called and ordained for a particular congregation. Now wherever this call has ceased, there has expired the authorization of the church received through ordination if the person involved is not given the care of a new congregation through a new and right call. God desires that everything should be orderly and fair [*ehrlich*]. Ordination to the office is not sufficient if there is not a call to a particular congregation [*Gemeinde*]. The sickle may not be used on another's crop. Indeed, such a person cannot mount the holy pulpit even once in a congregation in which he is not called without the knowledge and consent of the pastor of the place" (Mich. Walther and Kaspar Brochmand).

No fewer times do they answer the question: "Can a preacher who has left his office, during the time from then until his successor in ministry arrives, take care of the ministry of the church on account of his earlier call?" They answer: "He can preach and administer the sacraments without a new and public call. For the government[19] that takes care of the church as well as the leaders and heads of the church want and demand this. For even if it is not explicit, still the implicit consent is there when his labor is welcome" (the Leipzig Theologians). L. Hartmann writes: "If a congregation needs an orthodox pastor, it will be granted to another ordained [man] to administer the *Sacra,* since the congregation desires it."[20] One can see that our theologians recognize exceptional circumstances in which an ordained man temporarily may administer the ministry in a different congregation. Naturally this applies only when the ordained man in question has not already taken up another worldly call or entirely quit the ministry in the church and only when necessity demands it.

Note 5: Chemnitz in *loc. theol. de Eccles.* II. 31 and Kromayer *Theol. pos.* P. II. 530 both witness that a temporary call is invalid and incorrect (*Church and Ministry,* 310–311).

Thesis 10: The congregation under ordinary circumstances may only commit an essential part of the holy preaching office to him whom she has regularly called and set apart for the office of the word, namely, for as long as it pleases God, the Founder of the office.

Note: This thesis gives the answer to our question. If the previous theses were correct, this last one is correct also. To Jesus Christ, the highly praised head of his church, be honor, power, and praise from now until eternity. LOGIA

NOTES

*Translator's notes: In the translation of this article the intent was neither to be strictly literal nor to make the English perfect. Important terms in the argument that should be translated consistently with the same English words were identified so that a one-to-one correspondence would be set up. In sentence structure proper, however, English was followed as nearly as possible. Following are the important terms and their translations:

Amt. This word usually refers back to the Luther's translation of the Greek διακονία, as the article itself points out. This word is often used by Luther as a synonym for *Dienst.* It is translated "office" here.

Übertragen. I have used "commit" here.

Befehlen. The word literally means "command" and is tied up in New Testament and confessional vocabulary when the Christians "*befehlen*" the ministry to someone. The term is generally also translated "commit," since it is used basically as a synonym of *übertragen.*

Gemeinde. This noun is translated "congregation" since the context of the article's arguments makes it clear that is the meaning in the mind of the author, even if "congregation" is not explicitly necessary in his argument.

1. Article v of the Augsburg Confession and the Formula of Concord speak of the office *in abstracto:* the ministry of the word, that is, the word of God preached and heard.
2. *Demonstrat., quod electio praesul. et episc. non ad ecclesiast. solum, sed et ad laicos pertineat* (56).
3. *Exam. Conc. Trident.* loc. x, Sess. xiv, Can. xi, f.m. 456 a.
4. *Loc. de min. eccles.* §3.
5. *Conc. Trident.,* ed. Dr. Smets, 124.
6. In the Latin text: *Hanc potestatem communem esse etc.* (Tractate 60 f., *Triglotta,* 521).
7. *Isag. in libros eccles. luther. symbolicos.* Dresdae 1725, 924.
8. The original is *Das aber nun auf das durch die Uebertragung der priesterlichen Rechte entstandene Predigtamt angewendet . . . .*
9. *Loc. de min. eccles.* §ccvi.
10. FC X, 10, *Triglotta,* 1054.
11. *Loc. de min. eccl.* §232.
12. *Syst. univ. theol.* II. fol. 33. Cited by Walther, *The True Form of a Christian Congregation,* 53 f.
13. The conference accepted the Thesis in the following version: "Whoever . . . must be regularly called and so set apart, but also ordained according to church order." Although this edited sentence amounts to what we wanted to say in the above sentence, still we allow ourselves to place our sentence as the leading one since naturally the remarks come from it. We do not feel that we are authorized to change the notes, since they were accepted in form and in content by the conference. D. E.
14. *Lib. conscient.* P. I, 1006.
15. This text is on page 134 ff. of the recently published translation of *Pastoral Theology* [translator].
16. See *Hist. und theol. Einleitung in die Religionsstreitigk. der ev. -luth. Kirche usw. usw. von Joh. Geo. Walch,* Th. iv, 419 ff.
17. *Lib. conscientia* ii, 1005. Compare the witness of Joh. Fecht in Walther, loc. cit., 65 f.
18. *Theol. pos.,* 1059.
19. In America this is naturally the congregation.
20. *Pastorale ev.,* 144.

Colloquium Fratrum

"Through the mutual conversation and consolation of the brethren . . ."

Smalcald Articles III/IV

PAUL McCAIN

Response to "It's Jesus," *Logia* VI, no. 1 (Epiphany 1997)

The doctrine and practice of the holy ministry has been reduced in many segments of Christianity to a practical working out of the phrase "everyone a minister." It is hardly surprising therefore that Lutheran pastors who are passionately committed to Christ and his church are searching for better ways to articulate the scriptural and confessional doctrine of the ministry. Compounding the frustration of many pastors is the tendency they notice in ecclesiastical circles to label as troublemakers those who have the courage and conviction to ask the question, "Hey, where did the theology go?" Faithful pastors recognize that an impoverished theology is sweeping through American Christianity like the plague. Consequently, it is little wonder that in congregations today we sometimes encounter poor attitudes, improper actions and in some cases a near-total disregard for the authority of the office of the holy ministry and its role in the life of the local congregation. I do not believe that any thinking person would disagree that we do indeed live in challenging times for a genuine, confessing Lutheran theology and practice of the doctrine of the holy ministry.

This is the source of another problem. In reaction to problems and misunderstandings in the church today, there have arisen unfortunate ways of speaking about the ministry, ways of speaking that go beyond what we have been given to say in the sacred Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions. A good example of this unfortunate tendency is found in Pastor Douglas Fusselman's article "It's Jesus: The Minister as the Embodiment of Christ."[1] Pastor Fusselman wrote, "The minister is really nothing more or less than the ecclesiastical embodiment of the Father's only-begotten Son."[2] From this premise, Fusselman attempts to unpack a theology of what he terms the "ministerial union" of Christ with the pastor.

The Lutheran church believes, teaches, and confesses that God is present and active in the church's ministry, even as he promised he would be. Our confessions make it very clear that

> [t]he church has the command to appoint ministers; to this we must subscribe wholeheartedly, for we know that God approves this ministry and is present in it. It is good to extol the ministry of the Word with every possible kind of praise in opposition to the fanatics who dream the Holy Spirit does not come through the Word but because of their own preparations (Ap XIII, 12–13; Tappert, 212–213).

Consequently, we also clearly confess that the office of the holy ministry is instituted by God, not by man. As one Lutheran theologian so correctly put it,

> [t]he Preaching office, or Pastoral office, is not a human institution, but rather an office that God himself has established. It is evident that the holy preaching office, or the office of the New Testament, is not a human institution, or an ecclesiastical arrangement, but rather a work of divine wisdom, an institution of God himself . . . by the call of the holy apostles to the teaching office through the Son of God.[3]

The office is God's institution and his will for his church; therefore we have the joy of knowing that "when the called ministers of Christ . . . absolve those who repent of their sins . . . this is just as valid and certain, even in heaven, as if Christ our dear Lord dealt with us himself."[4] For, as Luther further explains in the Large Catechism, "By divine ordinance Christ himself has entrusted absolution to his Christian church and commanded us to absolve one another from sins" (LC, "A Brief Exhortation to Confession," 14 [Tappert, 458; *BSLK*, 728]).

Of course God is present in the person of our pastors—but not present in any way different from the indwelling of the most holy and blessed Trinity in every baptized child of God. Our Formula of Concord states this very clearly when it rejects the error "that not God, but only the gifts of God, dwell in believers" (FC SD III, 65). The *unio mystica* is so "real" in believers that Christians are said to be "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pt 1:4). And for that matter, how can we miss the clear references in Scripture that speak of all Christians being "in Christ" and Christ in them, as St. Paul said when he wrote, "Therefore, it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2:20). Perhaps we are missing the bigger picture here. Wouldn't it be great if people said, "It's Jesus!" of all members of the congregation because the love of God in Christ is seen so clearly in them?

I am continually impressed by the wisdom of our Confessions when they offer the comfort that our pastors

> do not represent their own persons but the person of Christ, because of the church's call, as Christ testifies (Lk 10:16), "He who hears you, hears me." When they offer the Word of Christ or the sacraments, they do so in Christ's place and stead. Christ's statement teaches us this in order that we

> may not be offended by the unworthiness of ministers" (Ap VII/VIII, 28; Tappert, 173).

Do we need to go further than this? May we? Can we? No—to all three questions. The point of so many of the statements cited by Pastor Fusselman, which clearly do offer us assurance about the certainty of our pastors' ministry, is not that there is an "embodiment" of Christ in the pastor, but that Christ is active and present through the word and sacraments the pastor is given to speak and to give. The *externum verbum* of the ministry is the means by which Christ is present. He is present in, with, and under the word and sacraments, not the pastor. We need to be clear about these things. The pastor is not Jesus. Jesus is Jesus and the pastor is the pastor. The pastor is Jesus' minister; he is not Jesus himself. The pastor is an ambassador of the King, not the King himself. When an ambassador speaks a word from the King, it is as if the King himself were speaking. Why? Not because the ambassador is the King, and not because the King is "embodied" in the ambassador, but because the ambassador's words are the King's words.

The preeminent teacher of the Church of the Augsburg Confession, Dr. Martin Luther, encourages us to recognize and thank God for the office of preaching, that is, the holy ministry. Luther recognized and confessed that the office of the holy ministry is a wonderful gift Christ has given to his church wherein the public proclamation of the gospel and public administration of the sacraments is accomplished both in and for the church. Thus, for Luther, the Christian's confidence that Christ is at work through the office of the holy ministry is not to be placed in a theory of the Son of God's embodiment in the pastor, but in the sure and certain word the pastoral office is given to proclaim.

Luther took great comfort in the powerful word of Christ. Permit me to cite a few comments by Luther from a sermon delivered to friends in the privacy of his own home. These quotations are from the House Postils of the mid-1530s. These were sermons delivered by the battle-hardened Luther who had to deal with the theological errors not only of the Romanists, but also the threat posed by the fanatical spirits. In addition to which, Luther was struggling with intense and deep frustrations as a preacher and minister in Wittenberg, working with people among whom the gospel did not seem to have any impact. If anyone might have found the "embodiment" theory helpful, it might have been Luther. But this is not to be found in Luther's exhortation to his friends. Luther repeatedly underscores the centrality of the word of Christ—the true treasure of the church. Luther's focus is on the gifts of Christ given through his word and sacrament—the all-powerful gifts that do what they are sent to accomplish (Is 55:11). The office of the holy ministry is subsumed under the gospel. The gospel is not subsumed under the office, and most certainly not "embodied" in the person of the pastor. This key principle comes through clearly in the following quotes.

> Every Christian has the command, not only that he can, but should, say to you when you are troubled by your sin: Why are you troubled? As your fellow Christian, I say to you, you are not fair to yourself, for God is not ungracious toward you; you ought to trust these words just as surely as though Christ were speaking to you personally from heaven, never questioning them because of the person of the one from whom you hear them.[5]
>
> [W]hen you go to the parish pastor, who has been given his office or to some other Christian, asking that he comfort you and absolve you from your sin, and he says to you, In the stead of God, I declare to you the forgiveness of all your sins through Christ, then you may be certain that through the external word your sins are really and truly forgiven.[6]
>
> We must not despise baptism, absolution, preaching, and the Sacrament, but seek and receive forgiveness of sins in this way. That is why God has ordained that there be pastors, fathers and mothers, and fellow Christians, and he places his word in their mouths, that we might seek comfort and forgiveness of sins through them. Even though it is just people who speak, nevertheless, it is not just they who speak but it is God's word. Therefore, trust it implicitly and do not despise it.[7]
>
> God has placed the forgiveness of sins in baptism, the Lord's Supper, and the Word; in fact, he has placed it in the mouth of every Christian, to comfort and pronounce to you God's grace for the sake of Christ's vicarious satisfaction. You can receive it nowhere else, for this is tantamount to Christ himself speaking it with His own mouth.[8]

Toward the end of his article Pastor Fusselman writes: "the use of sacramental language thus to describe the ministry may prove disquieting for some."[9] Disquieting? Yes, I admit to disquiet over this novel approach. I thought Jesus of Nazareth was the "embodiment" of the Son of God. Pastor Fusselman's speculations raise a number of important questions: Are we now to believe that there is an embodiment of the Embodiment? An incarnation of the Incarnation? Is Pastor Fusselman suggesting that as Christ is present in the bread and wine of the Holy Supper, so Christ may be said to be present in the body of the pastor? What is Pastor Fusselman saying that is not already said, or believed, with the words "In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ . . ."? Must we go beyond this? Is the way the words "christological" and "incarnational" are tossed around these days really helpful, or does it only serve to lessen the significance and importance of both terms? May we take churchly vocabulary with a long and precise use in articulating and defending pure doctrine, and use that same vocabulary to support novel theories? Is retrofitting historical language with new notions a pastoral concern?

The clear and certain word of God is enough, for it is what Christ has given. As Luther said, "Where the Gospel is, there is Christ. Where Christ is, there is the Holy Spirit and his kingdom, the true kingdom of heaven."[10] Note, Luther does not say, "Where the pastor is, there is Christ." No, where the gospel is, there is Christ. And of course, where the gospel is, there also are Christ's ministers and Christ's people—together. Sheep and their shepherds are always together, always under the Great Shepherd of the sheep, our Lord Jesus Christ. The church has always been tempted to locate the gospel in some place other than Christ and his gifts. Donatists tried it and failed. I fear we are trying other routes to certainty, and these too are doomed to failure. In our desire to rejoice in the gifts Christ gives the

church through his pastors' ministry of word and sacrament we should not find it necessary come up with speculative, erroneous, and irresponsible theories of Christ's presence in the person of the pastor. The itch for novelty is not helpful in the church. We have enough of that already. Pastor Fusselman's speculation is a wrong approach for the right reason.

Let us put the spotlight on the Lord of the feast, not on the servants at table. For in looking to the Lord, the attention is where it deserves to be: on him, and on his precious word and sacraments. We must decrease. He must increase. Even as God the Holy Spirit himself does not draw attention to himself, so we must surely not allow ourselves to fall into the trap of claiming for ourselves what has not been given. The faithful servant will receive his due, and if he does not, he knows he will hear the Master one day saying to him, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant." The Son of God has been embodied in the flesh of Jesus of Nazareth, and we who are called to his service are his spokesmen, for we are assured that he has instituted the office of preaching and called us to it through his church. He has graciously given us the privilege of sharing in his ministry. That is sufficient ground for rejoicing in the treasure of the gospel and the "embodiment" of that gospel in Christ's word and sacraments.

So, when a little child points to a pastor, and says, "Look, it's Jesus," the pastor should be humbled when he realizes that through his proclamation of the gospel, the love of Christ has been made known to the little one. But as far as this childish comment somehow offering evidence that the Son of God is "embodied" in our pastors, I think we could do without such novel speculations. One ancient theologian said it better than all the others when he wrote, "What we preach is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your slaves for Jesus' sake."

NOTES

1. Douglas Fusselman, "It's Jesus: The Minister as Embodiment of Christ," *Logia* 6, no. 1 (Epiphany 1997): 28–32.
2. Fusselman, 28.
3. C. F. W. Walther, *Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt* (Erlangen: Andreas Deichert, 1852), 214. Translation mine.
4. *Luther's Small Catechism with Explanation* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1991), 27.
5. Martin Luther, "Sermon for the Nineteenth Sunday After Trinity" (1533), in *Sermons of Martin Luther: The House Postils,* 3 vols., trans. and ed. Eugene Klug et al. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1996), 3: 80; original in St. Louis ed., 13b. 2432ff. Note that in this sermon Luther certainly does not restrict absolution only to the mouth of the pastor. How much more clearly can matters be than when we read in this sermon, "From today's Gospel [Matthew 9:1–8) we learn about the wondrously gracious ministry of the word which God has given to mankind here on earth, a word we can speak to one another, namely, Your sins are forgiven unto you! Wonder of wonders to every God-fearing person and something for which to thank God from the bottom of our hearts, because he has given such power unto people! It is truly a mighty power when on Christian can say to another, Dear Brother, be unafraid, God is gracious to you; only believe what he promises, as I declare it to you in Jesus' name, for it is as valid as if God himself were saying to you, Your sins are forgiven" (79).
6. Luther, 84.
7. Luther, 84–85.
8. Luther, 86.
9. Fusselman, 31.
10. Luther, "Second Sermon for the Twentieth Sunday after Trinity" (1533), in *Sermons of Martin Luther: The House Postils,* 3: 100.

MARTIN NOLAND

Response to "It's Jesus"

Pastor Fusselman has ably demonstrated how Christ is present with his church, but his article lacks the necessary balance.

The great Lutheran teaching that Fusselman presents is this: How is Christ present "with you always" (Mt 28:20)? Not by some ambiguous Reformed spiritual presence, but in the definite place of the *Predigtamt.* Therefore congregations must call a man to fill the *Predigtamt.* The command to fill the *Predigtamt* is on par with the commands to be baptized and to take, eat, and drink. As Norman Nagel puts it, these commands are in the "way of the gospel," not in the "way of the law."

What Fusselman lacks is the necessary distinction between the man and the office (*Predigtamt*). The pastor is like the Wizard of Oz, who is a combination of the godlike presence at the altar and the stuttering little man behind the veil. Although the littlest child may think that "he's God," the child Dorothy sees behind the veil with the help of a little dog (Dorothy was much younger in the book than in the movie). Did his unveiling make him any less wise or less respected by his people? Certainly not!

Fusselman also fails to explain that Christ's presence in the *Predigtamt* is conditional. This is clearly seen in the German Augustana VII. There we see that the church, and therefore Christ, is truly present *if* "there the gospel is preached in full accord with a pure understanding of it and the sacraments are administered in conformity with the divine Word." The whole point of the Reformation is the big "if." If the pastor wants Christ to be present in his preaching and sacramenting, then he is strictly limited to the pure *corpus doctrinae* and the scriptural regulations for the sacraments. If he talks or walks outside of these, he is just a stuttering little man, and a perverse one at that.

There are three views in Christendom regarding the office of the ministry: functional, charismatic, and institutional. The functional view is found among the Evangelicals and the Church-Growth crowd. It asserts that there is no office instituted by Christ, merely a series of functions that may be doled out to all the lay "ministers." The charismatic view is found among the Charismatics and the Roman Catholics. It asserts that God infuses the minister with his spirit, so that he embodies divine wisdom in a way superior to the commoners.

The institutional view is perhaps unique to Lutheranism, though we see its influence among other Reformation Protestants. It asserts that Christ instituted the *office,* which office both embodies a series of exclusive functions and a peculiar presence of Christ. Like the divine office of marriage, which also embodies a series of exclusive functions and a peculiar presence of "one flesh," it must be kept whole and undefiled by the office-holder. If the pastor adulterates the functions of the office, then he divorces himself from it, whether or not he or the church recognizes his error. The conditional nature of Christ's peculiar presence and the distinction between man and office allows the church to separate the man and the office when that regrettably becomes necessary.

DOUGLAS D. FUSSELMAN

Response to Martin Noland and Paul McCain

Martin R. Noland is correct in noting that Christ's presence in, with, and under the church's minister is in no way dependent upon the minister's person but is wholly dependent upon the minister's office. Noland is also correct in noting that "Christ's presence in the Predigtamt is conditional." Certainly the Lord cannot function in the ministry except in accord with his own commands, institutions, and teaching. Both of these points were briefly made in footnote 22. So Luther in a 1539 sermon:

> Whenever you hear me, you hear not me but Christ. I do not give you my baptism, my body and blood; I do not absolve you. But he that has an office, let him administer that office in such a way that he is certain that it comes from God and does everything according to the Word of God" (AE 51: 299).

Note well that dominical presence and activity are said here to be dependent upon both office and obedience—not personal holiness (see Ap VII/VIII, 47).

Perhaps, as Noland suggested, the importance of office and obedience should have been more thoroughly treated in the body of the essay. In retrospect, one little footnote hardly seems adequate.

Paul McCain is, of course, also correct in asserting that novel speculations are "not helpful in the church." (Irenaeus, less evangelical than McCain, called such speculation heresy.) It is a bit presumptuous, however, to promptly label as novel anything that does not easily fit into one's own personal or denominational system of dogma. Just because a doctrine is at present unknown in the church does not necessarily make that doctrine an heretical innovation. Sometimes the church boldly forges into error; sometimes she just forgets; but no matter how it happens, the doctrinal systems of every age are never perfect, never without gaps, and most importantly, never above scrutiny. This is what it means to confess that "the church is always in need of reformation" (*Ecclesia semper reformanda est*). Theologians, therefore, can never be satisfied with the doctrinal status quo; they must always be looking into the church's past, peering under her furniture, opening all her closets, rummaging through her drawers, making absolutely certain that nothing significant has been left behind.

Unfortunately, McCain seems unwilling to do this. Rather than actually deal with what Chemnitz had to say about the holy ministry and Christ's unique relationship with it, McCain simply characterized the whole approach as a novelty, then unceremoniously tossed it back under the church's bed with all the other dusty heresies. The second Martin deserves better than this. Chemnitz ought at least be given an honest hearing. He is saying something more than "Christ is present in the faithful" (which is certainly true). He is saying something more than "Christ is present in word and sacrament" (which is certainly also true). The modern church must listen carefully to what Chemnitz is saying, wrestle with it, and then, finally, determine its veracity and application.

The passages from Chemnitz's works cited in "It's Jesus" are not merely isolated instances of christological "presence talk." The mystery of Christ's continuing presence appears to be at the very heart of what Chemnitz believed and confessed about the ministry. This is certainly the case in his treatment of the topic in his Enchiridion:

> *For what reasons is it so very important that a minister of the church have a legitimate call?*
>
> One must not think that this is done by human arrangement or only for the sake of order; but there are many weighty reasons, consideration of which teaches many things and is very necessary for every minister of the church.
>
> I. Because God himself deals with us in the church through the ministry [*Predigtamt*] as through the ordinary means and instrument. For it is He Himself that speaks, exhorts, absolves, baptizes, etc. in the ministry and through the ministry. Lk 1:70; Heb 1:1; Jn 1:23 (God crying through the Baptist); 2 Cor 2:10, 17; 5:20; 13:3. It is therefore absolutely necessary that the minister [*Prediger*] as well as the church have sure proofs that God wants to use this very person for this His ordinary means and instrument, namely the ministry. . . .
>
> III. The chief thing of the ministry [*Predigtamt*] is that God wants to be present in it with His Spirit, grace and gifts and work effectively through it. But Paul says, Rom 10:15: "How shall they who are not sent preach" (namely in such a way that faith is engendered by hearing)? But God wants to give increase to the planting and watering of those who have been legitimately called to the ministry [*Amt*] and who set forth doctrine without guile and faithfully administer whatever belongs to the ministry (1 Cor 3:6; 15:58), that both they themselves and others might be saved. 1 Tm 4:16. . . .
>
> V. Finally, on this basis the hearers are stirred up to true reverence and obedience toward the ministry [*Ministerium*], namely since they are taught from the Word of God that God, present through this means [*Amt*], wants to deal with us in the church and work effectively among us (Martin Chemnitz, *Ministry, Word, and Sacraments; An Enchiridion,* trans. Luther Poellot [St. Louis: CPH, 1981], 29–30. Original taken from *Handbuchlein der vornehmsten hauptstucke der christlichen Lehre,* ed. A. L. Gräbner [Milwaukee: Verlag von Georg Brumder, 1886], 16–6.).

Chemnitz is not here talking about some abstract ministry as divine means and instrument. Neither does he limit God's presence to word and sacraments. He does not speak figuratively, "as if" God were exhorting, absolving, or baptizing. God himself is said to be actually doing the functions of the ministry in and through the particular person regularly placed into the office. This divine/human relationship is not in any way contingent upon the individual's faith (that would be Donatism), but is said to be entirely the result of vocation. For Chemnitz, everything hinges upon the minister's legitimate call (Rom 10:15).

The modern Lutheran Church dare not dismiss these gems from her past without serious consideration. Perhaps, with a little posthumous help from Martin Chemnitz, a fuller understanding of Christ's presence and activity in, with, and under the church's ministers can once again be restored.

Reviews

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

Review Essay

Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary. Mankato, MN: The Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 1996. 935 pages. Liturgical and ancillary materials: 233 pages; hymns: 702 pages.

Paul Grime — Executive Director, Commission on Worship, LCMS

The publication of a new or revised hymnal can generate emotions ranging anywhere from excitement to apprehension to dread and fear. Given the diverse expectations of those who sit in the pew and use the hymnal week after week, it almost becomes a necessity for a hymnal committee to repeat often the old saying: You can please all of the people some of the time, and some of the people all of the time, but you can never please all of the people all of the time.

That dictum is not lost on this reviewer; hence, what follows is offered with the realization that this reviewer and his committees will eventually be in the situation of receiving similar critiques. Because other reviewers have focused on the liturgical sections of the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary,* the following comments will deal in large part with the hymns.

First, some general remarks. After using *The Lutheran Hymnal* for more than half a century, the lay people of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod will find themselves quite at home with *ELH*. Partly that is the result of some intentional decisions, such as following the format of *TLH* by placing the information regarding text, tune, and meter immediately beneath the title of the hymn.

A far more significant correlation to *TLH* is seen in the cautious revisions of the hymn texts. In many cases no alterations have been made at all. While there has been tremendous upheaval in language usage over the past three decades, it may be that we are finally entering a period of consolidation where the pressure will not be so great to alter line after line just so we can avoid a *thee* or *thou.* More significant, however, is the attempt to translate the classic Lutheran chorales with an eye toward the sacramental theology that has often fallen through the cracks in past translations (for example, "Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying," — "To eat the Supper at Your call," 544: 2).

The *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary,* following the lead of the 1913 *Lutheran Hymnary*, is arranged differently from most modern hymnals. The organizing principle for nearly all the hymns is the church year. Unlike most hymnals, in which a section of hymns arranged according to the church year is followed by a topical arrangement of the remaining hymns, *ELH* assigns several hymns to each Sunday of the year. Thus for Advent 1 there are nine hymns, for Advent 2 there are six, and so on.

There are several matters that make this approach problematic. First, it is tied very closely to the first series of the one-year lectionary (202–203). The use of any other lectionary will not correspond to the arrangement of the hymns. Second, hymns on particular topics are located in rather unexpected places. For example, hymns on the topic of thanksgiving are found under Trinity 14. Hymns for confession and absolution come under Trinity 19. Though not a complete surprise, hymns for the Lord's Supper are found under Maundy Thursday. Given the fact that this arrangement was followed, it is unfortunate that a topical index of the hymns was not included among the indices. With such a structured ordering of the hymns, it is understandable that one could quibble about the placement of certain hymns. No doubt the committee struggled long and hard on that very point. One example might include the placement of "In Thee Is Gladness" on the First Sunday of Christmas. Though that is certainly an appropriate time to sing this hymn, one wonders if it will get lost during the rest of the year.

One issue that the editors of *ELH* dealt with rather effectively concerns the matter of "white space." Rather than leaving blank space at the end of hymns that do not fill the page, the committee chose to include biblical passages and prayers appropriate to the hymn. This approach has obvious merit, for it allows for the continual catechization of the worshipers and demonstrates how the church's song reflects biblical truth throughout.

One feature that will certainly be appreciated by many, especially pastors, was the editorial decision to include all of the stanzas of many of the old chorales. For example, "Salvation unto Us Has Come" is available not in the six-stanza version of *LW* or even the ten-stanza version of *TLH*; rather, all fourteen stanzas of the original chorale are available in translation. The clear benefit of this decision is that many excellent, gospel-centered stanzas are once again available for the people to sing. It will be important, however, to remind pastors that it should be the rare exception

that every stanza of these long chorales is sung by the congregation alone. Even in reformation times that was not the case. And on those occasions when selected stanzas are sung, pastors will have to be encouraged to do that with care, rather than simply choosing the first four stanzas or the first and last two stanzas.

One feature in *ELH* that may cause disruption in some congregations is the practice of including several rhythmic versions of the same chorale tune. For example, the tune *Wie schön leuchtet* is used five times; in two places the rhythmic version is given, while the other three occurrences utilize the isorhythmic setting. A similar approach is used on other chorales, such as *Es ist das Heil, Freu dich sehr, Wer nur den leiben, Vater unser,* and the familiar tune *Old Hundredth.* While this approach attempts to provide the best of both worlds, it has the potential of being very disruptive of congregational singing.

Regarding the representation of various strands of hymnody, *ELH* has done an admirable job on several fronts. German and Latin hymnody certainly provide the core of the hymn section. Scandinavian hymns are well represented, which is not surprising given the congregations for whom the hymnal was prepared. English hymnody also fares well. The only branch of hymnody that appears to be slighted is that from our own time. That is unfortunate, given the rich body of both text and tunes that have appeared in recent decades. This hymnal would have been significantly enriched with the inclusion of more hymns of Jaroslav Vajda and Timothy Dudley-Smith, who are represented with only one hymn each, and by other authors and composers who are not represented, including Carl Daw and Carl Schalk.

Every hymnal committee ultimately faces the same dilemma, namely, deciding what goes into the hymnal and what must be left out. While many factors are involved in that decision, there are three issues that outweigh all others: Do the choices reflect the teachings of Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions? Do the choices reveal the catholicity of the church? Will the contents of the hymnal serve the congregations for whom it has been prepared? On all three counts, the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* fares well. Theologically it is solidly Lutheran. It does demonstrate the catholicity of the church, though this reviewer would have hoped for a better representation of modern hymnody. And there can be no doubt that it will serve very well the needs of the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.

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By the early 1990s nearly every major denomination in North America had produced new liturgies, hymnals, and occasional services—*Lutheran Book of Worship* (1978), *Lutheran Worship* (1982), *Christian Worship* (1993); Episcopalian *Book of Common Prayer* (1979); Methodist *Book of Worship* (1989); and Presbyterian *Book of Common Worship* (1993). Most bear the characteristics of the modern liturgical movement, post-Vatican II "liturgical family." For both Roman Catholics and Protestants it has been an era of unprecedented change and ecumenical convergence.

What is next? Bryan Spinks and John Fenwick suggest that the liturgical similarity achieved in the liturgies of the 1960s through the early 1990s "is now under threat." There are a variety of forces and agendas at work (Church Growth Movement, indigenization, "enthusiasm," as well as feminist, homosexual and other "liberation theology" groups). Nevertheless, Spinks and Fenwick observe, "At present the Ecumenical Movement has slowed considerably, and many churches show signs not only of renewed interest in, but also of renewed allegiance to, older denominational roots. Whatever the motivation, it is not impossible that outwardly at least, the pendulum may begin to swing back" (*Worship in Transition*, 196–197).

Enter the 1996 *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* (*ELH*) of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS). It is either the last of the twentieth-century hymnal revisions or the first of the next generation of hymnal redactions, and a preview of the future. Then again it may be nothing more than a liturgical anomaly, an insignificant blip on the busy and confusing screen of twentieth- and twenty-first-century liturgical revision. Time will tell. In some respects the evaluation of the liturgy and hymnody of a particular denomination is best made by one within the communion who has lived in that liturgy for a long time and who is fully aware of the criterion on which the specific liturgy is founded.

The predecessor to the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* was the *Lutheran Hymnary.* The irony of history is that in 1996, most of the 128 congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod used *The Lutheran Hymnal* (1941), which was produced during the days when the Evangelical Lutheran Synodical Conference of North America was still intact. The *Lutheran Hymnary* was also used by some congregations, but was out of print, and worn-out books could not be replaced. In Eastern Lutheranism the general attitude was that a new book replaced the old. The attitude for many Lutherans in the midwest was that new books took their place alongside the old. Some ELS congregations used both *TLH* and *LH*, and now the new *ELH* is added to the others as yet another resource.

In the introduction to the 1523 Latin Mass, Luther offered balanced advice for all who would attempt the task of liturgical revision and reform. He wrote, "we must dare something in the name of Christ." He also warned against those constantly driven by the need for something new and exciting. Such people are "fickle and fastidious spirits who rush in like unclean swine without faith or reason, and who delight only in novelty and tire of it as quickly, when it has worn off" (AE 53: 19). Those who prepared *ELH* appear to share in Luther's prudent approach. What might look new to those unfamiliar with the Norwegian liturgical heritage turns out to be no novelty at all. The shape of the liturgy in *ELH* is simply the communion liturgy of the *Lutheran Hymnary* and the Norwegian liturgical heritage.

ELH made no attempt to include the classical eucharistic prayer form so important to the advocates of the modern liturgical movement. The eucharistic prayer was simply not an issue to be considered. Instead, the traditional Exhortation before Communion was retained. The authors of *ELH* are not ignorant of recent liturgical scholarship. For example, Rite III adopts the language of the ICET. The authors do retain a respect for and confidence in the rich Lutheran heritage.

The book follows *Lutheran Worship* in restoring the old title Divine Service (*Gottesdienst*) for the communion liturgy. *ELH* has four rites of the Divine Service. Rite I is the Order of Morning Service from the old *Lutheran Hymnary,* which is based on orders going back to Norway and ultimately to Bugenhagen and Luther. Rite II is based on the second order in *LH* (The Order of Morning Service or the Communion) with some updated language and other changes. In short, it is similar to that found in the Common Service of 1888 and *TLH*. The Preface to *LH* acknowledges Concordia Publishing House for permission to use the music for the second Morning and Evening Service.

Rite III was added in response to concerns expressed by some that there was a need for something new. Responding to a need for updated language, *ELH* utilized language from the International Consultation on the English Texts. The music (composed by Alfred Fremder) attempts to provide tunes with a twentieth-century sound, yet accessible to small congregations. Rite IV is based on the choral tradition of Luther's German Mass (1526).

ELH wisely avoids the blunder of the International Consultation on English Texts and retains the ancient wording of the pastoral greeting and response ("The Lord be with you, / And with your spirit"). What is involved goes beyond a mere preference for retaining ancient forms (*et cum spiritu tuo*—Καὶ μετὰ τοῦ πνεύματός σου*)*. The earliest surviving text dates to as early as 215 (possibly 165). "And also with you" does not equal "and with your spirit." The ancient greeting and response carries rich Christological, pneumatological, and ecclesiastical freight. Every hymnal produced since 1970 has adopted this inferior novelty. *Lutheran Worship* (1982) made the initial step to reverse the practice by partially retaining the ancient response in Divine Service I, Matins, Vespers, and the Agenda. In this regard, let us hope *ELH* is a preview of the future.

The rubric accompanying the distribution in Rite I reads, "As the pastor gives the consecrated bread to each communicant he shall say, "This is the true body of Christ." Similarly the rubric refers to that which is distributed as the "consecrated wine." The emphasis is properly on the consecration with the Verba, although the door is not entirely closed to receptionism. The words of distribution (retained from *LH*) do inform the communicant that he is receiving the body and blood. The rubric in Rite II, however, closes the door on the receptionist view. It reads, "The distribution of Christ's Body and Blood to the communicants may be accompanied by worthy hymns and anthems" (80). One should not underestimate the importance rubrics play in the public confession of a church. Note the changes in rubrics from Cranmer's 1548 and 1549 Orders of Communion to the 1552 Rite with the infamous "Black Rubric." The high view of consecration in the Sarum Rite slips into a Zwinglian view, which states, "concerning the natural body and bloud of our saviour Christ, they are in heaven and not here. For it is agaynst the truthe of Christes true natural body, to be in more places than in one at one tyme." Compare also the rubric in *LW*, "The minister and those who assist him are given the body and blood of Christ first and then give them to those who come to receive . . ." with *LBW,* "The presiding minister and the assisting ministers receive the bread and wine and then give them to those who come to receive. As the ministers give the bread and wine . . . ."

The change in the rubric prior to the Service of Holy Communion is subtle but significant. The previous *LH* rubric read, "When the Holy Communion is to be celebrated . . ." (11), or "If there be no Communion . . ." (27). The new *ELH* now reads, "When there are no communicants the service shall continue on page 57" (49). This is in line with the early sixteenth-century *evangelischen Kirchenordnungen.* Every-Sunday communion has always been the normal practice of the Christian church. This was the ancient practice. It has always been so in the East. By the sixteenth century the Lord's Supper was still celebrated every Sunday in the West, but the priest was often the sole communicant as the congregation merely observed the action and carried on with personal devotions. The *ELH* rubric suggests that the only reason for omitting The Service of Holy Communion is when there are no communicants present among the assembled congregation. This is consistent with the distribution rubric, which reads, "The communicants who have properly announced themselves to the pastor beforehand shall come to the altar to receive the Sacrament" (56). *ELH* thus encourages a weekly celebration with responsible pastoral oversight and responsible individual preparation. It is hoped that this is a preview of future church practice.

Following *LW* and *LBW* (and other contemporary hymnbooks), *ELH* orders the liturgy under the tri-part designation: The Service of Preparation, The Service of the Word, and The Service of Holy Communion. This reflects the historical shape and flow of the liturgy. Curiously, the entrance rite is combined with the confession of sin under the designation "The Service of Preparation."

Among the many good liturgical features one finds: (1) Pastoral chant is encouraged by the notes being included in the pew edition. (2) Singing of the Athanasian Creed is encouraged by inclusion of chant tones. (3) A rich, catholic liturgical calendar that includes Ambrose, Nicholas, Chrysostom, Athanasius, and Augustine. (4) The retention of Latin titles (Kyrie Eleison, Gloria in Excelsis, Agnus Dei, Invocavit, Quasimodogeniti, and the like) is a fine historical and catholic corrective for a culture in bondage to the relevancy of the present. (5) A proper understanding of the office of the holy ministry and certain bestowal of forgiveness is evident in the absolution, in which the pastor says, "By the authority of God and of my holy office I forgive you all your sins." Option three allows for the individual appropriation of forgiveness with the laying on of hands. (6) The Old Testament reading is added. (7) For the most part the liturgies are easy to follow. The sections are neatly laid out, rubrics kept to a reasonable limit, and the creeds incorporate the "sense line" format. The decision to include the entire musical accompaniment for the congregational parts rather than simply the melody line has rendered some pages visually distracting (for instance, page 50 and numerous "amens"). (8) Matins is well done. The Te Deum is not truncated, as it is in *LW* and *LBW*. The flow from the Te Deum through the Kyrie, Lord's Prayer, and collects is especially clear. Chanting the Lord's Prayer enhances the flow. Beginning Matins with confession and absolution (from the *Book of Common Prayer*) is debatable.

Other questionable features include: (1) Placing the Kyrie within the confession of sin. Historically, the Kyrie was not penitential but an announcement of the Lord's *parousia* in our presence. (2) The book lacks a preface explaining the historical con-

text and theological criteria (or criterion) shaping liturgy and song. (3) The opening and closing prayers seem out of place. It is best to let the Lord's word, Triune name, or apostolic greeting get things started and to let God's word of benediction have the last say. Rites III and IV eliminate these prayers.

The old *LH* and *Altar Book* assigned these prayers to a lay assistant. The prayers were introduced in Norway by Bishop Brochmann (1585–1652). The job of the assistant or *Klokker* (precentor) was to lead hymn singing, to pray the opening and closing prayers, and in some places to read the Epistle. The *Klokker* read the opening prayer while the pastor knelt before the altar. *ELH* does not provide a role for "assisting ministers" or "deacons." The image of a pastor kneeling before the altar is a welcome improvement to the vulgar practice, all too common today, in which the cheerleading pastor gets things going with mundane announcements and humorous chit-chat.

ELH has been well received. Within six months of publication it was in use in nearly forty congregations. In both the liturgical and hymn sections, the book did not come as a major change for the people. Many old hymns were retained and many new added. Hymn settings are easy to sing and in straight four-part harmony, as in *TLH* and *LH,* thus avoiding the constant complaints made against the 1982 *Lutheran Worship.* The ordering of hymns according to the church year and the inclusion of many longer hymns resulted in considerable empty space. This space was filled with over forty familiar hymns (without music), a few prayers, and several Scripture readings related to the text (an excellent example is the hymn "Isaiah, Mighty Seer, in Days of Old," which includes Isaiah 6:1–8 and Matthew 21:9).

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In *God's Song in a New Land* (1995), Dr. Carl Schalk surmised that the appearance of the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod's hymnal, *Christian Worship*, in 1993 completed the picture of Lutheran hymnals in America. The Evangelical Lutheran Synod has broadened the picture, however, by issuing its own new hymnal, *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary,* in 1996. This essay will seek to present a broad overview of a few selected portions of *ELH*'s liturgical and ancillary material; the *Hymnary*'s hymn section—for some, undoubtedly, the more important part of the book—will be left for analysis by those more musically competent than this reviewer.

At the outset, it is worth repeating what Paul Alliet noted in connection with his review in these pages of *Christian Worship*. Alliet reminds us that "evaluating a hymnal is different from evaluating most other books. A hymnal is a book for the church to pray and sing, not primarily a book to be studied by an individual. It is difficult to predict what congregations will find profitable, helpful, or simply useable." Alliet's observation is well taken. Hymnals are developed within a specific context and tradition; they reflect the authoring denomination's history, its current constituency, and theological direction. They are written to serve real people where they are liturgically and hymnologically, and where the church desires to go in this connection. Given this, since this reviewer is not intimately familiar with the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, to attempt to make a comprehensive evaluation would be more than a little presumptuous. As one who does not use *ELH* for worship, it is appropriate (and sufficient) to confine this evaluation in the main to answering for it the same question asked of other hymnals in these pages: Does the confession of the faith come through clearly, particularly in the liturgical portions of the book?

For Lutherans unfamiliar with the ELS's hymnal project, *ELH* unfortunately does not include a formal introduction or preface setting forth the history, goals, criteria, or other information that led to the book's formation. Certain emphases and characteristics are plain and readily discerned, however.

First, the liturgical portions of *ELH* are not new. An overall characterization of the *Hymnary's* liturgies might be that they represent a "preservationist revision" of the *Hymnary's* predecessor rites. Changes in most liturgical texts appear to be minimal, going little beyond the substitution of *you* for *thee,* the dropping of archaic verb endings, and the like. A cursory look at the musical settings for Divine Service: Rites I and II, which are the *Hymnary's* replacements for the rites of the *Lutheran Hymnary* (1913) and *The Lutheran Hymnal* (1941) respectively, reveals that most changes amount to no more than adjusting the musical pitch of the predecessor setting to make for easier singing. Thus the book is constructed very plainly to serve as a replacement hymnal that brings under one cover the desired elements of *LH* and *TLH* and which presents its users with minimal adjustments. It would seem that ELS congregations used to *LH* or *TLH* will require little experience with the corresponding services of *ELH* in order to feel at home.

Second, *ELH* presents a staunchly and overtly confessional face. Beginning with the Church Year (5) with its expanded emphasis on church fathers in the minor festivals, the book continues on page 7 with the Augsburg Confession, on page 28 with the Ecumenical Creeds, followed by Luther's Small Catechism (*LH* also included these). *ELH* thus supplies a compendium of the basic Lutheran confessional writings for the laity. One hopes that the restored practice of including the Augsburg Confession in the hymnal will result in greater lay familiarity with the Augustana. But the tradeoff is that the main liturgical rites do not begin until page 41 and are somewhat buried as a result.

Third, the *Hymnary* is clearly intended as a personal devotional book. The forms and resources it provides for individual prayer and worship include forms for the offices of Prime and Compline as well as the familiar Matins and Vespers. Daily and weekly prayers, a table for using the psalter on a monthly schedule, lectionary tables, and more are also included. The *Hymnary* thus continues the long tradition in Lutheranism of the hymnal-as-prayerbook.

Fourth, the *Hymnary* strikes a generally happy medium between the resources it includes in its pew edition for corporate and personal worship and those occasional services and resources it leaves out. It includes rites and forms for private and corporate confession, and holy baptism, but not for confirmation, marriage, or Christian funeral. Compared with other current U.S. Lutheran hymnals, the *Hymnary* has a moderate ratio of liturgical material to hymns with approximately 25 percent of the book invested in liturgical forms and ancillary material (including the various indices and appendices) to 75 percent invested in hymns.

ELH presents three full rites for the Divine Service plus the so-called Chorale Service in outline form as Rite IV. Rite I (known as the "Bugenhagen Service" in the ELS) preserves the form of the Divine Service of the *Lutheran Hymnary* (1913) produced by various groupings of Norwegian Lutherans in the United States. The "Bugenhagen liturgy" of *LH* was a reordering of the 1685 rite adopted by the Church of Norway in 1889 and the Norwegian Synod in 1899. Since Rite I of the *Hymnary* is the one most likely to be unfamiliar to the wider readership of *Logia*, it warrants more thorough consideration.

Rite I in outline looks like this:

I. The Service of Preparation
   1. Opening Prayer
   2. Entrance Hymn or Introit
   3. Confession of Sin
   4. Kyrie Eleison
   5. Absolution
   6. Gloria in Excelsis Deo
   7. Salutation
   8. Collect

II. The Service of the Word
   1. The Lesson (Old Testament)
   2. Psalm, Anthem, or Hymn
   3. Epistle
   4. Gospel
   5. Creed
   6. The Chief Hymn
   7. Sermon
   8. Prayer of the Church
   9. Apostolic Benediction
   10. Offering

III. The Service of Holy Communion
   1. Preface
   2. "General" Preface
   3. Sanctus
   4. Exhortation
   5. Lord's Prayer
   6. Words of Institution
   7. Agnus Dei
   8. Distribution
   9. Dismissal
   10. Hymn of Thanksgiving
   11. Collect of Thanksgiving
   12. (Aaronic) Benediction
   13. Closing Hymn
   14. Closing Prayer

A closer look at the service shows that Rite I begins with the Service of Preparation. An opening prayer substitutes for the familiar Trinitarian invocation or greeting. According to the *Hymnal Supplement* produced by the ELS's Worship Committee in the 1980s, a *Klokker*—a layman appointed for his theological knowledge and skill—read both this and the closing prayer in the Norwegian service. The *Supplement* urged the reinstatement of the practice. The prayer is followed by the Entrance Hymn or an Introit. Lacking supporting rubrics, the title of the hymn suggests that the opening prayer is said outside the chancel and that the clergy move to the chancel during the singing of this hymn. The Confession of Sin [*sic*] follows; two options are offered for the confession. The first form reproduces the familiar rugged confession included in both *LH* and *TLH*: "Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto You. . . ." The form is slightly revised to replace the *thee*s and *thou*s with *you,* and *wherefore* with *therefore.*

A second option for the confession, taken from the *Hymnal Supplement,* follows:

P Let us confess our sins to God and pray:

We poor sinners confess to You, O God, not only that we have been conceived and born in sin, but also that throughout life we have often and in many ways offended You, our Lord and Maker, in thought, word and deed, so that You could with perfect justice reject and condemn us for all eternity.

Therefore we come before You with sorrow of heart, in dread and terror of Your holy justice and of everlasting death. Our sins are a grievous foe, which we should hate in every way as long as we live.

O merciful God, You still grant us in this hour to be reminded of Your fatherly goodness. According to the promise of Your Word we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, and implore You, dearest Father, for the sake of Jesus Christ, Your only-begotten Son, our Brother, who was delivered up for trespasses and raised again for our justification:

Forgive us all our sins through faith, which the Holy Spirit increases in our hearts to full assurance.

C We therefore pray You, O Lord, through Your servant to declare to us the forgiveness of all our sins. We poor sinners are willing to forgive all who have offended against us. We earnestly desire to grow in true godliness. Help us, O God, for the sake of Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

This provides an example of the *Hymnary's* chief weakness to this reviewer's way of thinking. Although this form of the confession is biblically and confessionally *echt,* it is ponderous and clumsy to read (especially out loud). Moreover, while the *Hymnary's* language is not cast in modern English (which may be a strength in the minds of some), at the same time the mechanical replacement of *thee*s and *thou*s with *you* damages the majesty of its predecessor forms. Inserting *you* into the cadences and phraseology of Jacobean English does not modernize it, if that is the intent, nor is the language made more understandable to the modern English speaker. At the same time, it does flatten the original. The final result for this reviewer was that all too often the lofty archaisms, complex sentences, and "stained-glass" language made aural comprehension difficult; at the same time, one became mildly irritated by the intrusion of *you* falling with a thud in the Jacobean cadences and forms.

The congregation follows its portion of the confession with Kyrie Eleison:

O God the Father in heaven, have mercy upon us.

O God the Son, Redeemer of the world, have mercy upon us.

O God the Holy Ghost, true Comforter, have mercy upon us.

Although the *Hymnary* is reproducing the service order of *LH* in both its wording and placement of the Kyrie, the placement continues an old misunderstanding of the nature of the Kyrie as part of the confession of sins. In Rite II, based as it is on *TLH*'s "The Order of the Holy Communion" (the "Page 15" service), the Kyrie appears in its more historically accepted place and usage. While many congregations may opt for using only one of *ELH*'s three Divine Service rites, those that alternate using service orders may find this "halting between two opinions" of the Kyrie confusing.

The Absolution is presented under three options: Form I is the so-called announcement of grace that appears in both *LH* and *TLH* augmented by an opening phrase by the pastor: "Lift up your hearts unto God!" Form II is an actual absolution in form, and Form III invites "communicants" (are unconfirmed children permitted?) to come forward to receive individual absolution at the altar rail in keeping with a long-standing tradition of the Norwegian Lutheran Church.

The Gloria in Excelsis Deo follows. The pastor intones:

P Glory be to God in the highest
C And on earth peace, good will toward men.

The congregation then moves to singing the first verse of Decius's "All Glory Be to God on High," in keeping with the pattern set in *LH*.

ELH provides a set of 144 collects for the church year. In most cases, renditions of the historic collects that reflect the English style of *TLH* are listed along with a longer collect so that each Sunday and festival has at least two collects. The Sundays are all given headings based on the Gospel of the day, but the actual designation of each Sunday only appears in parentheses at the close of each collect. The collects appear in an individual section of the hymnal, as do the graduals and introits. The readings, too, are listed in separate tables, one for each year of the ILCW system, and one for the historic lessons. While this has economized on space, it makes finding the full range of propers for a particular Sunday somewhat awkward. After the Collect, the rite moves to the Service of the Word.

The Service of the Word follows the outline given above expanding the rite of the *Hymnary*'s predecessor with the addition of a first (Old Testament) Lesson and the provision for a chanted psalm, an anthem, or hymn. *ELH* includes a selection of forty-five psalms (including five sections of Psalm 119). Each psalm is pointed for chanting according to an instruction page. Only four chant tones are supplied for the entire collection. These tones are printed across the top of each page, and the worshiper is directed to one of them for each psalm. The Gloria Patri is pointed for chanting at the bottom of each page. Each psalm is printed out completely; the collection is augmented by six canticles (including the Benedicite Omnia Opera). The New King James Version supplies the translation of the psalms. The Apostles' and Nicene creeds are printed out in a revised form that avoids the controversies in former Synodical Conference circles caused by the version in *Christian Worship*: "Who for us men . . . and was made man" are the *Hymnary*'s renditions of the salient phrases in the Nicene Creed. The making of the sign of the cross at the words, "and the Life † everlasting," a forgotten rubric from *TLH,* is (gratifyingly) incorporated in the creeds; a sung congregational "Amen" is appended.

A "Chief Hymn" precedes the sermon. Rubrics for the sermon include the option of an introductory prayer and apostolic greeting beforehand and the Gloria Patri to close. This practice, coupled with the placement of the Prayer of the Church before the offering, happily avoids the common complaint of the offertory's misperception as the "end of the sermon" created by the service order of *TLH*. Likewise, the *Hymnary* has clearly avoided the misplacement of the Lord's Prayer at celebrations of the Sacrament as part of the Prayer of the Church by means of a clear rubric. In keeping with the predecessor rite of *LH,* the Word section is closed by the Apostolic Benediction. This results in the offering being somewhat orphaned between the Word section and the Service of Holy Communion that follows.

The Holy Communion opens with the Preface. *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* prints out the chant line for both pastor and congregation throughout its rite, something that reinforces the right use of pastoral chant whenever the people respond in song. A "General Preface" follows with the option of using a "preface appropriate to the season" in place of the general preface, which is set in italics. Proper prefaces, however, are not provided in the pew edition. For the Sanctus the *Hymnary* uses (essentially) the ICET text in a pleasing setting for congregational chant.

The Exhortation that follows is found in the predecessor rite of *LH*. Readers familiar with *TLH* will recognize it from the Confessional Service of that book. The *Hymnary* includes the Exhortation in all three rites of the Divine Service. As such, it serves to fill the vacuum long felt among some in Lutheranism left by Luther's radical recension of the canon at this point which left the *nuda Verba,* but neglected the liturgical action of thanksgiving in the Sacrament. The *Hymnary* continues the practice established by the predecessor rite(s) of setting the Lord's Prayer within the Communion before the Words of Institution. The prayer is set for pastoral chant with a congregational "Amen."

The chant for the Words of Institution is modeled after that of Luther's; the place for making the sign of the cross over the consecrated elements is indicated within the pastor's chant.

The Pax Domini is not used in Rite I, but does appear at this point in Rite II.

Following the Agnus Dei and Distribution, the pastor is directed to speak a dismissal to the communicants that reproduces (with minor revision) that of *LH*. The post-communion includes a hymn of thanksgiving, a collect of thanksgiving, and the Benediction. In keeping with the Norwegian liturgy, the Benediction is followed by a closing hymn and a closing prayer to actually end the service.

Does *ELH* confess the faith clearly in its liturgy? Rite I suggests a slightly qualified yes. Structurally and semantically, there is no question that the *Hymnary* is a strong representative of Lutheran confessionalism in worship. It is also laudable that the ELS has preserved the "Bugenhagen liturgy"—literally saving it from extinction—for regular use in its congregations. Rite I provides a unique witness to the Norwegian heritage of the ELS that simultaneously testifies to the true catholicity of Lutheran worship described in the Augsburg Confession. The gospel in word and

sacrament is plain and prominent. The mild qualification must come, however, in the decision to proclaim all this by means of the "surface structure" of revised Jacobean English. To confess *clearly* implies not just that the confession of the Lutheran church is upheld faithfully, but that it is also communicated in an idiom that is comprehensible. For late-twentieth-century Lutherans who have struggled with new Bible translations, catechism versions, and the like, this is becoming an old debate, and many will disagree that "the older form" is a liability to clear communication. Nonetheless, the debate is opened anew by the *Hymnary*. For those brought up within the cultus of the ELS, the *Hymnary* will undoubtedly seem like an old friend. But will it wear as well in the wider arena of the work of the ELS as she reaches beyond her present constituency? One sincerely hopes so in view of the book's accomplishments, but some skepticism remains. May the *Hymnary* prove this skepticism unwarranted!

The Royal Priesthood: Essays Ecclesiological and Ecumenical. By John Howard Yoder. Edited by Michael G. Cartwright, with a Foreword by Richard J. Mouw. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1994. xii + 388 pages. Paper. $22.99.

What can a member of a small denomination contribute to the ecumenical discussion? Quite a lot, as the collected essays of John Howard Yoder reveal. A Mennonite professor of theology at the University of Notre Dame, he speaks eloquently for the "free church" or "believers' church" viewpoint in the language mainstream Christianity can understand. Although the Lutheran reader may be rather disappointed with Yoder's knowledge of Luther and Lutheranism, this weakness is more than compensated for his thorough acquaintance with the Swiss Reformation and the modern ecumenical scene.

Yoder is worth reading if for no other reason than he must overcome two serious obstacles to present his case. First, the "believers' church" tradition encompasses a wide variety of groups: Mennonites, Quakers, Disciples, Baptists, and Plymouth Brethren (not to mention the numerous varieties of each group). Some of the positions Yoder defends (for instance, the disavowal of war) are not embraced by all adherents of the "believers' churches." Yet, though one always hears the Mennonite branch of the "believers' church" in Yoder's work, one can also detect resonances of a larger segment of Christianity. The second obstacle is that the "believers' churches" have not put the same emphasis on doctrine as other churches have. Even when they have upheld the same doctrines as the rest of Christianity, they have not necessarily used the same terminology. Yoder has attempted to engage mainline Christianity in dialogue by using its language whenever possible. Whenever he does eschew certain words or dichotomies, he always explains how the traditional terminology misconstrues the debate. Thus for the pastor or scholar interested in the ecumenical scene (and to be a truly confessional Lutheran, one must be), this book is a welcome addition to the dialogue. In addition to expounding the "believers' church" perspective to the reader, this book can serve as a model of how a group outside the mainstream can earn respect in ecumenical dialogue without sacrificing its integrity.

As Yoder expounds the views of the "believers' church," he makes it clear that he is not pleased with the way the modern ecumenical discussion has gone. He criticizes several ecumenical practices that have also made confessional Lutherans uncomfortable: the search for the lowest common denominator, the ignoring of deep doctrinal divides within denominations, the emphasis placed on merging denominational bureaucracies. Yoder places the blame for these practices on the failure to adopt a process of dialogue based on the model of church discipline in Matthew 18. Dialogue has taken place between denominational executives, not individual Christians or local churches. Creeds and hierarchical structures have been the matters for discussion, rather than moral accountability. Opposing theological systems have been simultaneously embraced rather than one side or the other having admitted that it was wrong.

Yoder's criticism of modern ecumenism flows from his understanding of the church. He argues that until the fourth century A.D., the church was always thought of as a visible entity, composed of people who had pledged to hold each other accountable in the light of Jesus' teachings. Constantine's legalization of the church changed this. The entire Roman society, pagan elements and all, became Christian, at least in name. The apologists for the church-state union then invented the doctrine of the invisibility of the church to gloss over the unregenerate elements within the "Christian" society. The magisterial Reformation, argues Yoder, retained the Constantinian arrangement, while the radical Reformation rejected the church-state or church-society union and called for a free association made up of true believers only.

Of all the challenges that Yoder issues to mainline denominations, his calls to reject Constantinianism and to reconsider the practice of infant baptism are the two criticisms of Lutheranism that deserve some comment in this review. Yoder is correct to reject Constantinianism, but does not accurately portray Lutheranism's attitude towards state and society. For example, he mistakenly believes that the Lutheran doctrine of vocation (which denies that there is a specifically Christian morality for secular occupations) is a blank check handed to the government to do whatever it wants, since this doctrine purportedly denies that one can use Christian teaching to criticize the behavior of government.

Had he chosen to, Yoder could have cited some evidence for his position: The Lutheran Frederick III of Denmark made absolutist claims long before Louis XIV of France; for a century after Luther's death, the state exerted an inordinate amount of influence in the life of the church. Yet Lutheranism also steadfastly resisted the state's claim to be on a par with or over the church: as kings proclaimed their absolute powers, the Lutherans penned such words as *Jesus Christus herrscht als König, alles wird ihm untertänig* and the other hymns celebrating the kingship of Christ. The most glorious hours of Lutheranism have been when the church stood fast against the power of the state, as during the Interims and the Prussian Union. Indeed, our own Missouri Synod owes its existence in large part to confessional Lutherans' refusal to yield to government pressure to alter one's confessional stance.

If we focus on the attitudes of *confessional* Lutherans (rather than merely mainstream Lutherans) towards the state, we will find a more adamant rejection of Constantinianism. We and our sister churches in Europe exist because we see most of the established

Lutheran churches acting more as a *Volkskirche* than a church committed to the Augsburg Confession. Granted, we are a minority within Lutheranism, and Yoder has focused his attention on the more numerous mainstream Lutherans. Yet, if the ecumenical discussion has focused on Lutheran doctrine, then we cannot grant that churches which have largely ignored the Lutheran Confessions are legitimate spokesmen for Lutheranism. For example, when the Church of Sweden allowed the unbaptized children of its members to be automatically considered members, it did so in express violation of the Lutheran Confessions. It did so as a *Volkskirche,* not as a representative of genuine Lutheranism.

At the same time, we confessional Lutherans will have to reemphasize those aspects of Luther that reject the Constantinian stance. For example, a careful reading of Luther leads to the discovery that he was not a warmonger, as he is often portrayed. Even Luther's infamous comments on the Peasant War, when read in their context, demonstrate that he placed the blood of the peasants squarely on the nobility's heads. Far from using the clause *christianis liceat . . . iure bellare* of CA XVI to justify any and every war, Luther urged war to be avoided at all costs. Engaging in war was like fishing with golden nets (AE, 45: 279); it would be better to pay off the enemy than to fight, for "victory never makes up for what is lost by war" (AE, 13: 57). Like most of the just-war advocates before him, Luther recognized that there were occasions when war might be justified, but he refused to countenance every instance of war and, when speaking about war in the abstract, tended to denounce it. Unfortunately, Luther's followers have not always paid attention to the *iure* in *iure bellare.*

If we examine our history more carefully, we can clear ourselves of the charge that Lutheranism is inherently Constantinian, even if we must grant that the Lutheran church has at times been too subservient to the interests of the state. But Yoder issues Lutherans a more stinging criticism: by defining the church in terms of administration of word and sacrament, Lutherans have focused on the magisterium rather than on the community of believers. Yoder sees this as a grievous error, since he defines the church primarily as a group of people who have entered into an agreement to hold themselves morally accountable to one another. For this reason Yoder cannot grant the validity of infant baptism, since the "one who requests baptism submits to the mutual obligation of giving and receiving counsel in the congregation; that is what a child cannot do" (338). Yoder, in effect, builds on Balthasar Hubmaier's thesis that fraternal admonition is the decisive mark of the church.

At first glance, it seems a better procedure to find the church where the church (and not merely its leaders) carries out a divinely mandated task. And yet it is not interest in maintaining a state-controlled magisterium that has led Lutheranism to emphasize the preaching of the word and administration of the sacraments as constitutive of the church, as Yoder avers. We Lutherans see the church fundamentally as a creation of God, not as a society of men. This means that it is illegitimate to say that discipleship is something one takes upon oneself. Discipleship is a gift from God. Even when a person becomes a Christian as an adult, that call to discipleship is an act of God, not of man. Thus in defining the church we look to where God is giving his gifts that can regenerate mankind—the word and sacraments. Where God is with his gifts, there the church must be. Even when the church has not always been a moral community clearly distinguished from the world (see 1 Corinthians, Rev 1–3, and Acts 5), the preaching of the word of God has sustained the church and called even more people out of darkness into God's marvelous light. If we were to downplay the divine gift of discipleship in order to emphasize the church as moral community, we would greatly distort Christianity. For Christianity is fundamentally about Christ's redemption of humanity, not about moral accountability. The scribes and Pharisees were a visible group of people committed to moral accountability, but Christ was not satisfied with such righteousness (Mt 5:20).

The preceding paragraph is, of course, only a thumbnail sketch of a Lutheran response to Yoder. As mainline denominations consider new ways to get out of the ecumenical quagmire, Yoder is receiving a greater hearing. It would be well worth while for Lutheran theologians to wrestle with him.

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The Christological Character of the Office of the Ministry and the Royal Priesthood. By Jobst Schöne. Cresbard, SD: Logia Books, 1996. 18 pages.

This is a timely booklet, offering instruction about a very important topic in the church today. The origin of the book indicates this very fact: it was presented originally as a lecture for laity and pastors sponsored by the Lutheran Laymen's League of Faith Lutheran Church, Hebron, Nebraska. This lecture was delivered at two venues in February 1996. This is explained in the Preface by Brent Kuhlman, pastor in Hebron, and John Pless, pastor at University Lutheran Chapel, Minneapolis, Minnesota. Pastor Pless also offers questions for discussion at the end of the booklet.

Dr. Schöne is the recently retired bishop of the *Selbständig Evangelische Lutherische Kirche* (SELK) in Germany, a partner church of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. He took part of his theological education at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis.

He discusses one of the most urgent topics of the church today. Of particular benefit is that he treats the royal priesthood along with the holy ministry. (Dr. John Kleinig, professor at Luther Seminary, North Adelaide, South Australia, has observed that the relation of these two doctrines is urgently in need of theological treatment today.)

The author's assertions are solidly based on the Scriptures with the citation of important texts. Nevertheless, he expresses his assertions in a language that may be unfamiliar to many North American readers. This is not because Bishop Schöne's mother tongue is German. It is rather that he brings a fresh perspective to the topic, a topic that he has studied over a long period and from a different perspective. At the same time there is a clarity to his presentation that is accessible to all readers.

Bishop Schöne is remarkably knowledgeable about North American Lutheranism. While he may not be familiar with the great variety of practices today, he is nevertheless aware of theological traditions and thus addresses us with salutary instruction.

Thus, for instance, he points out: "There is no doubt that Luther regarded ordination as absolutely necessary for full practice of the pastoral ministry, in particular, for administering the eucharist" (3). It is also instructive to learn that the "*rite vocatus* [AC XIV] refers to the canonical right of ordination." On this topic the bishop has written at length elsewhere.

The "Christological" of the title is explained very clearly:

> When St. Paul (2 Corinthians 5:20) speaks of the apostles as ambassadors for Christ imploring in Christ's stead, on Christ's behalf (ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ), he refers to the same basic fact. The Apostle, the ambassador, fulfills an office and carries out a task which is not of human origin. It is not invented by the church. It is not established for whatever good reason or order. It is divinely instituted and originates from Christ's own office and ministry (6).

On the divinity of this office, he explains, "God's gift in ordination then is the gift of the Spirit, the Spirit who enables men to practice the office of the holy ministry" (4). The role of the Holy Spirit is further described: "we learn from the pastoral epistles of St. Paul that he has authorized and given the gift of God, the gift of the Spirit, (χάρισμα τοῦ θεοῦ) to Timothy. To Timothy he speaks of the Spirit which is in you 'through the laying on of my hands . . .' (2 Timothy 1:6)" (7).

This Christological character means that the minister "is representing Christ." Quoting Apology VII, 28, he then explains that "on account of the call of the church (which refers to ordination) they represent the person of Christ and do not represent their own persons." As he says, "this is quite remarkable . . . It is Christ in him. It is Christ using him as a tool and an instrument" (7). Then follows something of a cautionary explanation. This is not, he asserts, "any kind of ontological quality which is ascribed or conferred on him [the minister]" (8). Here he also contrasts the Lutheran teaching with that the of Middle Ages.

Schöne's description of the royal priesthood is also clear. This priesthood "originates in holy baptism" (10). With it we "bear a crown" (11). He finds the scriptural roots of the doctrine in the Old Testament where the whole nation of Israel was a royal priesthood. "This is not in conflict with the fact that there are special priests set apart for the cult in the temple. The Israelites had no problem with this, although we probably do" (12).

In the New Testament also there is a distinction. "The New Testament nowhere addresses an individual (singular) when it speaks of royal priesthood . . . Royal priesthood is a corporate expression. 'Priest' (singular) always designates our high priest Jesus Christ and him alone" (13).

Bishop Schöne then addresses the "competitive thinking" that comes to the church between the clergy and the laity. He explains historically how the royal priesthood came to be forgotten in the Middle Ages (13). In Pietism the concept of the royal priesthood changed in a way that was akin to that of the Medieval corruption. "All of a sudden the royal priesthood is composed out of 'true believers,' individuals who confess their faith and give proof of their faith by living a holy life" (15). The consequences of this change and others (for example, expressions of democracy) are then outlined. Positively, the royal priesthood is described christologically—what we are in Christ, through our election, through baptism. This is evident in our vocation. The final section (17–18) is on the relationship between the royal priesthood and the office of the holy ministry. Schöne addresses, for instance, a widely held misconception when he asserts, "It is not Luther who says that every Christian is a minister." He identifies three views of the church, distinguishing those that are anthropologically based and that which is christological, those that are individualistic orientated from that which understands the corporateness (body of Christ) of the church.

Bishop Schöne's book, as said at the outset, is timely; this work serves us very well. It can give us the opportunity to hear the Scripture and Confessions afresh on the doctrines of ministry and priesthood.

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What Does This Mean? Catechesis in the Lutheran Congregation. By Alvin L. Barry. St. Louis: The office of the President, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1996. 98 pages. Paper.

Many books and manuals for catechesis seem to treat it merely as an academic exercise that finds its end in the rite of Confirmation. *What Does This Mean? Catechesis in the Lutheran Congregation* presents a refreshingly different view of catechesis. Dr. Barry asserts that catechesis is "much more than simply imparting facts about Christianity. Catechesis is the ongoing application of the Word of God to the lives of people . . . it is an ongoing process of spiritual nurture and formation" (1). Catechesis is a lively and life-giving encounter with the Word of God! This corrective assertion is central to the book.

The Reverend Doctor Alvin Barry, President of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, wrote this little book and distributed it to the pastors of the Missouri Synod so that they might all be more aware of the importance of sound catechesis for the life of the church. "Stated very simply, catechesis is the key to the church's health and survival. Just as our bodies become sick and weak when they are not properly nourished, so the Body of Christ suffers when it is spiritually starved, or put on minimal rations," says he (2). Without sound catechesis the church will wither.

The chapters in this book offer brief "snapshots" of various aspects of the subject of catechesis. The first chapter is a study of catechesis in the Old and New Testaments. In the study, Dr. Barry makes the valid point that catechesis is oral instruction by the Word of God that leads people into the Christian faith and life and helps them to grow in this life of faith. Catechesis is, for that reason, a lifelong activity that the Scriptures hold as fundamental to the well being of the Christian Church.

In the second chapter, which is a study of the significance of the Lutheran confessions for catechesis, Barry makes the point that the confessions are teaching tools for the church, not museum pieces or legal documents. They are catechetical documents. Especially is this the case in regard to the Large and Small Catechisms. Indeed, Dr. Barry demonstrates that much can be learned about catechesis simply by exploring what Dr. Luther has to say in his oft-overlooked introductions to the Catechisms.

The next two chapters present brief studies of two periods in church history which had the greatest impact on catechesis: the early church, and the time of Luther and the reformation. Special note is made of the development of an ordered catechumenate in the fourth century and of the development of the Small and Large Catechisms of Martin Luther during the time of the reformation.

In the final chapter of the book, Dr. Barry gives the present-day church some practical advice as she goes about the task of catechesis. In this very helpful chapter, Barry calls the synod to reorient itself around a more holistic view of catechesis—once again to learn that it is all about forming a Christian mind and heart in people and not just about moving through a textbook or a set of facts. According to Dr. Barry, the greatest challenge before the synod today is to work with this understanding of catechesis. To help meet this challenge he suggests that the proper use of the Small Catechism again be restored in our congregations. Proper use would include adhering to the actual text of the catechism, treating the catechism as a prayer book and a handbook for the Christian's daily life, putting the catechism back in the hands of the heads of households, and anchoring our catechetical work firmly to the Divine Service.

I like this little book. I found it to be thought-provoking and informative. It touched upon many of the issues that I have been struggling with in trying to improve the catechetical life of my congregation. The importance of sound catechesis for the life of the church is rightly recognized by Dr. Barry. His repeated call away from a shriveled understanding of catechesis (catechesis as nothing more than an accumulation of facts) strikes at the heart of much of what is wrong with catechesis today. His commending the use of Luther's Small Catechism and his discussion of how it is properly used is also particularly helpful.

The book is well worth reading. It is by no means a comprehensive treatment of catechesis—nor is it intended to be. It is, however, a good starting point for a broader discussion of the subject—that the church might recover the practice of sound Lutheran catechesis and thereby be nurtured in the life of faith, hope, and love that is given her in Christ Jesus.

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Honest to Jesus: Jesus for a New Millennium. By Robert W. Funk. San Francisco: Harper Collins, 1996. 342 pages. Cloth. $24.00.

Scripture teaches us that the problem with fallen man is that he hates God, and is God's enemy. A faithful pastor will proclaim this over and over again. But perhaps because of the curbing action of natural law, and societal pressure, this hatred is not always easily observed. Politicians in our society praise and thank a generic God. "Thank God" is a common expression. A television show in which angels help people learn morality and brotherly love is near the top of the ratings. Every veteran pastor has seen the irreligious affect a pious demeanor at funerals and talk about going to a better place. So in a society that profoundly masks its hatred of Christ and his people, Robert Funk's *Honest to Jesus* sounds a loud primal cry that shatters masks of false piety and screams forth a most rancorous hatred. It is not his intent that we view his work as a chilling glimpse of our fallen nature, but it is certainly one of the only redeeming features of the book.

Most of *Honest to Jesus* is dedicated to the same demythologizing criticism of the Gospels and church for which Funk became famous as the Jesus Seminar founder. But unlike Jesus Seminar productions, which have a thin veneer of civility, there is little modesty in Funk's approach. For example, he casts his readers into groups. One group "consists of those who are bitter from an initial deception by parent, clergy, or the church . . . they asked for bread but were given a stone" (11–12). Others are the "unwitting victims of clerical or parental tyrannies . . . [orthodox Christianity] forms of child abuse that are even more damaging than physical abuse" (12). The abusive clergy "suffer from theological dry rot: institutional fungi have eaten away the heart of the faith, leaving behind a soft skeleton, prone to disintegrate into dust" (13). Let the reader beware, because those who disagree with his insights, "while technically literate, read poorly, read with inattention, read only to confirm their own biases, read to find fault, or read to foster confrontation" (13–14).

Professor Funk writes that Christians are "enslaved by a Christ imposed on them by a narrow and rigid legacy. There are thousands, perhaps millions, of Americans who are the victims of a mythical Jesus conjured up by modern evangelists to whip their followers into a frenzy of guilt and remorse—and cash contributions" (19). To free Christians from Christ, Funk offers a new savior, himself. His book will "free my fellow human beings from that bondage, which can be as abusive as any form of slavery known to humankind" (19).

As the next chapters unfold, the reader is led through a series of objectionable facts to the implied conclusion: You need to listen to me—I know more than you. Occasionally, Funk stumbles into a helpful criticism. He demeans theologically lax ministers who allow the laity to define the Gospel (54). But he is not interested in genuinely reforming theological laxness. Rather, the entire book is a simple apologetic for the last generation of higher criticism. *Honest to Jesus* is really only a despairing attempt to find popular support for Funk's senesced scholarship as it recedes into insignificance elsewhere. So Funk echoes his mentors: the Bible is a human book and "human knowledge is finite" (26). Scholars are left to reconstruct the Spirit of Jesus by digging below the accumulated layers of institutional piety. They must search their minds and hearts to find the historic Jesus in "the content of the Sayings Gospel Q and the Gospel of Thomas" (144). This reaches its epitome in his description of the Jesus Seminar Bible, *The Scholar's Version.* Here, the book is peppered with personal anecdotes that show how he is an even more clever iconoclast than the other Jesus Seminarians.

Funk's criticisms of other translations are self-serving and self-congratulatory. As an acknowledged New Testament scholar he must know that most of his criticisms are groundless and even immature. For example, he argues that "brood of vipers" should really be "slimy bastards" (85). Close examination finds that Funk's many charts simply omit inconvenient information. Only those sayings that are "dissimilar" to what the church believes are authentic (145). He unfolds arguments consisting of unsubstantiated claims and outdated scholarship.

For example, he writes, "the earliest fragment of any part of the New Testament is a scrap from a papyrus codex of the Gospel of John variously dated from 125 to 160 C.E." (94). His statement ignores at least ten earlier fragments, including one from Mark that may date to the mid-50s A.D.

All of this serves to lead to his remarkable conclusions, which Funk calls "a quest designed for a new age" (300). For the sake of space, only a few lurid points of this quest will be mentioned. The original italics are preserved. "The aim of the quest is to set Jesus free from the scriptural and creedal and experiential prisons which have incarcerated him" (300). The quest must break "the Easter Barrier" (303) that promotes a supernatural Jesus, and reveal a Jesus who is a "subversive secular sage" who is "irreligious, irreverent, and impious" (302). Moreover, "Jesus himself is not the proper object of faith . . . Jesus pointed to something he called God's domain, something he did not create, something he did not control" (305). "We will have to abandon the doctrine of the blood atonement" (312). Funk seeks the liberation of lust. "Redeem sex and Mary, Jesus' mother, by restoring to Jesus a biological if not actual father. A bastard messiah is a more evocative figure . . . the virgin birth is contemptible" (313). From Freud to Funk, one abiding goal of secular scholarship is sex.

Still, we must laud what happens when a Christian reads *Honest to Jesus*. Funk's Christian readers can see that the good gifts of God are only apprehended by faith. Funk observes the wide array of God's gifts as he has given them throughout history, and fails to appreciate or appropriate any of them. As we read, we mourn for Funk and confess *sola fidei*. In Funk, we find a man genuinely willing to celebrate his reprobate nature. Dr. Funk's life's work demonstrates an impressive knowledge of Greek, the Roman era, and even the Scripture. Yet *Honest to Jesus* proves that unbelief is more and deeper than simple ignorance. No amount of information or effort brings saving faith. Faced with Funk, Christians must confess that human efforts at enlightenment fail, and drive us more deeply into sin. We are saved *sola gratia*. Finally, Funk's approach is a confession that to destroy Jesus and the atonement, he must first try to destroy the Scripture. Dr. Funk amply demonstrates that no enemy of the truth can stand where God's Word also stands. We see how human wisdom adds nothing to the grace bestowed through God's Word. So we joyfully confess *sola scriptura*.

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The Empty Church: The Suicide of Liberal Christianity. By Thomas C. Reeves. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996. xi + 276 pages. Hardcover. $19.95.

Sometimes a book does not live up to the promise inherent in its dramatic title. Fortunately this is not one of those times. Thomas Reeves offers a superb overview of the crisis facing mainline denominations. He includes as "mainline" churches the American Baptist Churches in the USA, the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), the Episcopal Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (USA), the United Church of Christ, and the United Methodist Church.

A topic like this could devolve into populist muck-raking, but Reeves is equipped to deal with these issues in a responsible way. He is a professor of history at the University of Wisconsin-Parkside and has done considerable work in American history and cultural trends. He approaches these issues from the vantage point of a committed and informed Episcopalian layman. The book is well organized and written in a clear, non-technical manner. In his preface, Reeves explains that this book has been written,

> for a broad, nonspecialized audience—the great majority, who may well know little about history or even the basics of Christianity but who ponder the deepest issues of life and wonder why so many churches in our time seem so consistently unappealing and irrelevant. Many such people are active in churches and a great many others are not (x).

That is a tall order, but Reeves achieves his goal with vigor and success.

Reeves's first chapter, titled "Confused and Helpless," offers example after example of the problems facing the mainline churches. His many examples of the shallow vapidity of religion in the mainline denominations is well summarized when he writes, "The mainline churches, light on questions of eternal importance, lacking a distinctive identity, and permissive to the bone, seem doomed" (31). He correctly perceives, however, the alternatives to liberal Protestantism, offered by Pentecostal tendencies in place at many "successful" Evangelical or Fundamentalist churches, will not attract a more reflective person, someone searching for depth. Reeves wisely observes that

> For many mainliners, of varying levels of education and income, there is a profound need for dignity, reverence, beauty, learning, tradition, and a sense of the numinous . . . few evangelical and fundamentalist churches are designed to satisfy the needs of such people. Warehouse-like buildings, sobbing pop gospel soloists, garish theatrics, shouting preachers, and boisterous worshippers cannot appeal to many of us. There is no sense in attempting to gloss over what often amounts to a basic incompatibility among equally devout Christians" (35).

Reeves rejects the explanation for the decline in the mainline that they are too stuffy. He is very critical of a trend within mainline churches.

> At the most basic level is what I call the "Sister Act" (after the popular movie) school of thought, which states in general that as soon as clergy start dancing and singing rock music, multitudes will pour through the doors. "Meeting the people where they are" is one way of stating the underlying principle. The less genteel might say simply that pandering pays off (26).

Lutherans are acquainted with similar claims, particularly from the spokesmen for insurance-company-sponsored "membership initiatives" within our circles.

The second chapter on "Consumer Christianity" summarizes the history of the relationship of church and state in our society. Reeves leads the reader to our present age, explaining and demonstrating that dramatic reversals in court decisions on religion merely reflect the prevailing culture of our day. Reeves observes that while popular polls continue to indicate that our culture is very religious, this "religion" is woefully lacking in any recognizable Christian orthodoxy. He attributes this to "a reflection of the individualism inherent in Protestantism and the Enlightenment. Americans, among many others, have long claimed the right to define truth as they see it" (57). Consequently, "faith" in America is not tied to churches and is terribly superficial. Reeves views this as a natural byproduct of a Christianity in America that is "in large part innocuous. It tends to be easy, upbeat, convenient, and compatible. It does not require self-sacrifice, discipline, humility, an other-worldly outlook, a zeal for souls, a fear as well as a love of God. There is little guilt and no punishment, and the payoff in heaven is virtually certain" (67). Again, Lutherans recognize that they are unable merely to sigh with relief that their church has not been affected by such attitudes.

In the third chapter of the book Reeves describes the three great "secular religions" that have affected the mainline: the Enlightenment, Communism, and modern science. He laments the fact that the mainline denominations did not grapple with these trends, but merely worked to accommodate themselves to popular thought. He goes on in the fourth chapter to describe the impact of the these three movements in the twentieth century. The fifth chapter, titled "Stuck in the Sixties," is a stinging rebuke of the church's attempt to embrace the revolutionary counter-cultural movement of the sixties, and its continuing impact on the mainline churches today.

What is the solution to all these challenges? Reeves plainly asserts in the sixth and last chapter, "Renewing the Mainline," that the key to the survival of the mainline churches is to be found in orthodox theology.

> Here we are at the root of things: the submission of liberal Protestantism to a secular gospel rests upon a failure to accept the essentials of the Christian faith. Alasdair MacIntrye once observed, "Theists are offering atheists less and less in which to disbelieve." The first and most critical step in halting the slide of the mainline churches is the restoration of their commitment to orthodox theology. Everything else depends upon that (175).

Reeves eloquently describes how hard this will be, because

> the recapture of orthodoxy requires faith in an all-powerful God who was and is capable of the miraculous . . . ultimately, the bodily resurrection of Jesus Christ . . . like the Incarnation, the Transfiguration, the Ascension, and numerous other awesome elements in the story of Jesus Christ . . . must be accepted on faith (175).

Reeves concludes his book by indicating that in the struggle to renew the faith in the mainline churches, compromises are difficult, if not impossible. "The clash is between two fundamentally different views of life: one based on the supernatural and the other on humanity itself. One is rooted in the gospel, the other in modernity. We are either under the guidance of a living God who has revealed himself to us and has told us, at least in general terms, how to live and die, or we are alone on an indifferent and dangerous planet, forced to devise truths for ourselves" (201). Reeves acknowledges that the battle may be lost, but he is unwilling to give up. "Renewed mainline churches would be vital and vigorous, commanding the loyalty, obedience, respect, and self-sacrifice of orthodox Christians" (211).

It would be misleading and a tragic error for confessional Lutherans simply to dismiss these concerns. This book will be an excellent tool that pastors can use to help them both understand and explain the broad trends affecting mainline churches and threatening even their own church.

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Briefly Noted

The Altar Guild Manual. By Lee Maxwell. Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1996.

This is a must for the parish library. Building on a solid understanding of the theology of *Gottesdienst*, the author offers a fairly comprehensive discussion of the work of the altar guild. There is a strong sacramental focus to the entire volume. A good case is made for the use of the common chalice. The author urges that altar guild meetings include a topical study relating to their work and provides an excellent list of topics for such a study. "Devotions and Prayers" for altar guild members enhances the devotional nature of this work. The book includes diagrams of liturgical furnishings.

A Map of Twentieth Century Theology: Readings from Karl Barth to Radical Pluralism. Edited and Introduced by Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995.

Braaten and Jenson provide a fairly broad overview of contemporary theology from the time of Schweitzer and Barth to the more recent contributions of Juengel, Pannenberg, and Ricoeur. The book is an anthology of readings from thirty different theologians, with several readings from Barth and Tillich. The readings are divided into thirteen categories. The editors provide an introduction to each category, giving historical background and thematic insights into the theologians included in the section. There are no entries representing more popular currents in contemporary theology: feminism, liberation theology, or charismatic theology, for example. While the editors' selections are defensible, some absences are noteworthy. Helmut Thielicke is not included in this anthology. Although chapter 9 is devoted to "Confessional Theologies," there is no selection from Edmund Schlink or Hermann Sasse. The title of this volume is apt. Braaten and Jenson have provided readers with a good *map* to the pluralistic contours of twentieth century theology.

The Earliest Christian Heretics: Readings from Their Opponents. Edited by Arland J. Hultgren and Steven A. Haggmark. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996.

This book is a compendium of readings gleaned from the writings of Justin, Hippolytus, Eusebius, Epiphanius, Irenaeus, Origen, Clement, and Tertullian against a variety of first- and second-century heretical movements. The bulk of the excerpts is against Gnostic heresies.

The Catholicity of the Reformation. Edited by Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996.

The majority of the essays in this book were first presented at a conference hosted in October, 1994, by the Center for Catholic and Evangelical Theology at St. Olaf College. As the title indicates, the authors attempt to demonstrate that the Lutheran Reformation was *catholic* in its foundation, substance, and intention. Robert Jenson unpacks the *communio* ecclesiology growing out of Vatican II and shaping much of current ecumenical consensus. David Yeago's chapter, "The Catholic Luther," argues that the Reformer's development in 1518 is "best described as a turn toward rather than away from the heart of the catholic tradition" (29). Frank Senn surveys Luther's liturgical reforms in light of the structure of the western mass in his chapter, "The Reform of the Mass: Evangelical, but Still Catholic." In "The Problem of Authority in the Church," Carl Braaten seeks to stress the "church-relatedness of Scripture" over against both fundamentalism and the historical-critical method's tendency to deconstruct the Scriptures as the book of the church. Braaten laments the lack of an authoritative "teaching office" in the Lutheran churches. James Crumley looks at the pastoral office in his essay "The Pastoral Office: Catholic and Ecumenical Perspective," calling on Lutherans to embrace a more ecumenical understanding of the ministry, yet remaining strangely silent on the ecumenical implications of the ordination of women. Robert Wilken's "Lutheran Pietism and Catholic Piety" is perhaps the most intriguing chapter in this book. Wilken sees similarities between the pietism of Johann Arndt and the medieval piety of the Roman Church. A final chapter by Guenther Gassmann, "The Church Is a Communion of Churches," argues that the church exists in the churches and is, therefore, a *koinonia* of the churches.

JTP

Inklings

Perks of the Office —
(Especially when you're out of java)

No, no, no . . . Nothing's up . . . Really! I just thought I'd drop by in a few minutes for a visit . . . and a cup of coffee . . . or two . . .

Logia Forum

Short Studies and Commentary

The Problem With Problem-Solving

Eugene Peterson has two fingers on the pulse of American religious life. His analysis of our society's perspective may well open our minds to appreciate our Lutheran heritage all the more. Consider this passage from The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction, *distributed by Word Books, 1989, pages 72–73.*

In running a church I solve problems. Wherever two or three are gathered together, problems develop. Egos are bruised, procedures get snarled, arrangements become confused, plans go awry. Temperaments clash. There are polity problems, marriage problems, work problems, child problems, committee problems, emotional problems. Someone has to interpret, explain, work out new plans, develop better procedures, organize, and administer. Most pastors like to do this. I know I do. It is satisfying to help make the rough places smooth.

The difficulty is that problems arrive in such a constant flow that problem solving becomes full-time work. Because it is useful and the pastor ordinarily does it well, we fail to see that the pastoral vocation has been subverted. Gabriel Marcel wrote that life is not so much a problem to be solved as a mystery to be explored. That is certainly the biblical stance: life is not something we manage to hammer together and keep in repair by our wits; it is an unfathomable gift. We are immersed in mysteries: incredible love, confounding evil, the creation, the cross, grace, God . . . .

We live in a cult of experts who explain and solve. The vast technological apparatus around us gives the impression that there is a tool for everything if we can only afford it. Pastors cast in the role of spiritual technologists are hard put to keep that role from absorbing everything else, since there are so many things that need to be and can, in fact, be fixed . . . .

If pastors become accomplices in treating every child as a problem to be figured out, every spouse as a problem to be dealt with, every clash of wills in choir or committee as a problem to be adjudicated, we abdicate our most important work, which is directing worship in the traffic, discovering the presence of the cross in the paradoxes and chaos between and, most of all, teaching a life of prayer to our friends and companions in the pilgrimage.

Iconophiles and Iconoclasts

Gene Edward Veith Jr. has steadily produced works that keep us in touch with cultural and philosophical sensitivities. We have made note of these in the past, and while we wait for his forthcoming book on classical education due out this fall, we commend another one: State of the Arts: From Bezalel to Mapplethorpe *(Wheaton, Illinois: Crossway Books, 1991). This excerpt comes from pages 23–24.*

Christianity has taken two extreme positions in regard to the arts. Some Christians, the "iconophiles," have exalted art, going so far as to make works of art central to their religious and devotional lives. Other Christians, the iconoclasts, have rejected art, going so far as to destroy works of art considered idolatrous. Some Christians have expressed their piety by making pilgrimages to the Black Madonna in Poland or by lighting candles to an icon of Christ. Others have expressed their piety by smashing stained glass windows and burning religious images . . . .

Many Christians today, however, are neither iconophiles nor iconoclasts, both of whom at least took art seriously. Many accept art, but uncritically, without considering its quality or significance. They welcome it solely as decoration, as part of the background, needing no attention or scrutiny. They listen to music that makes the top-forty chart, and they watch hours of television, without giving these works of art and their meaning a second thought. Many collect religious knickknacks because they are "cute" or for other emotional associations and never worry about their theological implications. Works of art that are more demanding (and thus could be more rewarding)

are passed over. The aesthetic quality or the meaning of a work of art is seldom considered.

From no fault of their own, many Christians—like most people in our culture today—simply know little about art. They may know what they like, but that is nothing more than knowledge about themselves. They do not know what to look for or how to read a visual image. Part of the blame, no doubt, lies with the current artistic establishment which has turned art into an elite and esoteric mystery, segregating the arts from ordinary people and everyday life. Those who are oblivious to the arts, or those who have had the arts stolen from them, are shut out of a realm that, for better or worse, is a critical dimension of human culture . . . .

Many scholars have shown that ours is an increasingly visual age. The visual images of television dominate our popular culture. Entertainment, information, politics, and sometimes even religion are visualized, a process which sometimes changes their very nature. Christians, who must be centered on the Word, must be cautious lest they surrender language to the graven images of the mass culture and the neopagan thought forms that they breed. The new graven images must be recognized and understood. This requires positive knowledge about art and something of the spirit of the iconoclasts.

Just as the art forms of the popular culture—music, videos, and film, as well as television—are unsurpassed in their influence, the art of the high culture has a profound effect on the intellectual climate. The decadence and nihilism of much contemporary art is part of the texture of our culture. To engage those for whom art has taken the place of religion and potentially to reach them with the gospel, Christians need to become both critics and makers of art. This requires a critical sensibility and something of the spirit of the iconophiles.

Biblioholism: Weakness or Disease

Biblioholism is "the habitual longing to purchase, read, store, admire and consume books in excess." Have you ever awakened the morning after a book-buying spree unable to remember how many you bought or how much you spent? Have you ever purchased or rented additional living space . . . just for your books? A hilarious guide for book lovers has been published that brings book addiction out of the closet: Biblioholism: The Literary Addiction, *by Tom Raabe (Golden, Colorado: Fulcrum Publishing, 1991). Aspects of this condition are diagnosed on pages 23–24.*

You've heard the charges; you've seen the sneers. Indeed, it is commonplace that our non-diseased peers stand back in arrogant contempt and attempt to drown us in a flood of guilt. They trot out the standard lexicon of pejorative epithets for our excessive behavior. They label us sordid and feckless creatures, no-count derelicts who flee their problems for a self-made nirvana or reading and book-love. Slobs. Losers. Cadging parasites. Dissolute gutter-bums with all the self-control of elected officials voting to raise their own pay.

And indeed, in our most candid and ingenuous moments, can we not mount the courage to ask ourselves: What sort of sap becomes addicted to books? They dangle no physical hook like alcohol or heroin. They promise no mind-bending Elysium like hallucinogenic drugs. They tempt us with no material rewards like shoplifting or gambling. Why, they don't even taste good. In some ways, we book addicts are like that crank down the block who has three million license plates in his garage.

And yet, the moral weakness explanation seems too easy. For there seem to be those among us who become so infatuated with books from our very first encounter—so compelled, so driven, so obsessed—that we clearly have no control over our buying. Is it we who are buying those books, or is it something inside of us crying, "Give me books! I need books!"? It is a question that drives to the very heart of wellness and self-image. How easy it is to lambaste the profligate bookaholic who sits in manic and mindless glee among twenty-five thousand volumes while loved ones go without food. And yet, does such an attitude help that maniac? Does it propel him or her down the path toward recovery?

Obviously, it is compassion that is needed, not fulmination. The truth is, we do not *become* biblioholic; we are *born* biblioholic. We are out-and-out *crazy*—in a clinical sense. This is the only loving way to approach it.

The Divine Service as Self-Denial

A mission-minded church wants to remove all obstacles from the paths of unbelievers to the gospel. "People today are turned off by the traditional worship. It is too cumbersome and difficult for them to learn." With this rationale, numerous pastors and people have been quick to abandon or rewrite substantial portions of the liturgy. They are loathe to attempt standard Lutheran hymns, but quick to embrace songs of another tradition that seems to suit people's fancy more easily.

What such well-intentioned folk fail to recognize, however, must not be overlooked. Even if they manage to make the liturgy and hymnody less of a stumbling block to "seekers" and "boomers," they have not and they will not ever be able to remove an even greater obstacle: Jesus Christ himself, who is the stone of stumbling and the rock of offense" (Rom 9:33; 1 Pt 2:6–8). This offense becomes evident in the lives of those who hear Christ's words, "Deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow me."

Worship is a crucial point of self-denial. The Divine Service is and must be offensive to our sinful nature. Real danger exists when the worship service is turned into an opportunity for self-centeredness. Terrible peril looms where the divine service abandons the theology of the cross in favor of a theology of glory. If people insist on promoting their own desires in the form of the service and in the hymns, they only show that they are lovers of themselves, having a form of godliness, but denying its power (2 Tim 3:2–5).

Liturgy and hymns bring the cross to us. That is to say, they are the setting in which Christ gives himself—his merciful love and forgiveness—through his holy and gracious gifts: holy baptism, holy absolution, holy communion, and the Holy Scriptures. If an

unfamiliar hymn tune should make us wince, we ought to attempt it with greater effort, saying, "Take *that,* you sinful nature!"

We ought to be very cautious of those who want to make worship fun, neat, and exciting if they are attempting to do so by turning the sanctuary into a theater with up-tempo tunes, cleverly-contrived double entendres, and flowery prayers. Such artificial means never amount to self-denial. They only appease the sinful nature. This is especially true for adults who behave in a childish manner, thinking that they serve children or high school students with all the panache of rock station disc jockies. Our children need to be taught from the earliest age what it means to deny themselves, take up the cross, and follow Christ.

Whether the realm is youth work or evangelism, whether in Sunday School or a new members' class, it is not a crime to want to remove all barriers to faith and life in Christ. We must never forget, however, that the kind of faith and life that come in Christ are diametrically opposed and entirely undesirable to the sinful nature. What better place than our liturgy and hymnody to examine and to observe that this is so? If people cannot endure the heritage of Lutheran liturgy and hymns, which in every aspect center us in Christ, then they are not likely ever to endure the greater difficulty: denying themselves, taking up the cross, following Christ.

JAB

Arguing With Gorgias

Sometimes it seems as though anything appearing to be an "argument" is utterly distasteful in the church. But it need not be so. Some 300+ years before Christ, Plato depicts Socrates as one who is considerate of others when engaging in a pointed dialogue. There are those who say that such discussions were more frequent in the last generation of pastors in the LCMS, but that pitched battles of the '70s decade lapsed into politicking and logomachy. Might we not reconsider that kind of attitude which Socrates demonstrates in his discussion with Gorgias, as translated by Robin Waterfield in the 1994 Oxford University Press publication, pages 21–22? (For those of a scholarly persuasion, this section comes from the middle portion lines 457c through 458b.)

There's a particular phenomenon that crops up during discussions, Gorgias, and you've experienced so many of them, like me, that I'm sure you've noticed it. People find it difficult to agree on exactly what it is they're trying to talk about, and this makes it hard for them to learn from one another and so bring their conversations to a mutually satisfactory conclusion.

What happens instead, when two people are arguing about something, is that one person tells the other that he's wrong or has expressed himself obscurely, and then they get angry and each thinks that his own point of view is being maliciously misinterpreted by the other person, and they start trying to win the argument rather than look into the issue they set out to discuss.

Sometimes the argument finally breaks up in an appalling state, with people hurling abuse and saying the kinds of things to each other which can only make the bystanders cross at themselves for having thought these people worth listening to.

You're probably wondering why I've brought this up. It's because I think that what you're saying now about rhetoric is incompatible and inconsistent to a certain extent with what you originally said. So I'm worried about subjecting your views to a thorough examination, in case you assume that the target of my argumentativeness is you, when all I really want to do is clarify the facts of the matter.

If you're the same kind of person as I am, I'd be glad to continue questioning you; otherwise, let's forget it. What kind of person am I? I'm happy to have a mistaken idea of mine proved wrong, and I'm happy to prove someone else's mistaken ideas wrong, I'm certainly not *less* happy if I'm proved wrong than if I've proved someone else wrong, because, as I see it, I've got the best of it: there's nothing worse than the state which I've been saved from, so that's better for me than saving someone else. You see, there's nothing worse for a person, in my opinion, than holding mistaken views about the matters we're discussing at the moment.

Anyway, if you tell me that you and I are alike in this respect, then let's carry on talking; but if you think we'd better forget it, then let's do so and call a halt to this discussion right now.

Gorgias says that he is of the same mind as Socrates in this respect and agrees to continue after considering the desires of the younger members in the audience. The latter express their desire and delight in hearing more, and the discussion continues.

Order Promoting Tranquillity

The motto of "creative worship" in Lutheran circles seems to be that "the community of God in every locality and every age has the authority to change such ceremonies according to circumstances" (FC Ep x, 4). Pastor Paul McCain wrote an excellent response to this motto in Logia Forum, titled "Resourcing the Resource," *Logia* 3 (Epiphany 1994): 73–75. His wisdom continues to fall on deaf ears. It is time to revisit this issue to consider whether the Confessions permit absolute liberty in matters of ceremonies and worship.

The Lutheran Confessions set forth at least four criteria for worship. These are stated most succinctly in the Formula of Concord: "There has been a controversy . . . concerning ceremonies and church rites which are neither commanded nor forbidden in the Word of God but which have been introduced into the church with good intentions for the sake of good order and decorum or else to preserve Christian discipline" [German: *guter Ordnung, Wohlstands, christlichen Zucht.* Greek: *eutaxin.* Latin: *ordinem, pium disciplinam. Eutaxin* refers to 1 Corinthians 14:40] (FC SD x, 1). "Neither are useless and foolish spectacles, which serve neither good order, Christian discipline, nor evangelical decorum in the church, true adiaphora or things indifferent" [German: *guter Ordnung christlicher Disziplin, evangelischer Wohlstand*] (FC SD x, 7). "The community [*Gemeine*] of God in every place and at every time has the right, authority, and power to change, to reduce, or increase ceremonies according to its circumstances, as long as it does so without frivolity and

offense but in an orderly and appropriate way, as at any time may seem to be most profitable, beneficial, and salutary for good order, Christian discipline, evangelical decorum, and the edification of the church [German: *guter Ordnung, christlicher Disziplin und Zucht, evangelischen Wohlstand und zu Erbauung der Kirchen*] (FC SD x, 9).

The last quotation makes crystal clear that confessional Lutheran worship is free, as long as it is not frivolous or offensive, but orderly and appropriate, and also profitable for good order, Christian discipline, evangelical decorum, and the edification of the church.

The rule of "Christian discipline" echoes the concern of the Apology: "[The papists] debated how it happened that they had come to worship God in so many ways, as though these observances were really acts of devotion rather than outward rules of discipline" (Ap vii, 32). "We like it when universal rites are observed for the sake of tranquillity. So in our churches we willingly observe the order of the Mass, the Lord's day, and other important feast days. With a very thankful spirit we cherish the useful and ancient ordinances, especially when they contain a discipline that serves to educate and instruct the people and the inexperienced" (Ap vii, 33). "We gladly keep the old traditions set up in the church because they are useful and promote tranquillity, 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" [Latin: *honesteriam;* reference to Vulgate 1 Cor 14:40] (Ap xv, 38–39). "It is evident that we diligently maintain church discipline, pious ceremonies, and the good customs of the church" (Ap xv, 44).

The rule of "good order" reflects the concern of both the Augustana and the Apology: "With regard to church usages that have been established by men, it is taught among us that those usages are to be observed which . . . contribute to peace and good order in the church" (AC xv, 1). "Bishops or pastors may make regulations so that everything in the churches is done in good order" (AC xxviii, 53). "It is proper for the Christian assembly to keep such ordinances for the sake of love and peace, to be obedient to the bishops and parish pastors in such matters, and to observe the regulations in such a way that one does not give offense to another, and so that there may be no disorder or unbecoming conduct in the church" (AC xxviii, 55, German).

"For the sake of love and tranquillity, and that they keep them, in so far as one does not offend another, so that everything in the churches may be done in order and without confusion" (AC xxviii, 55, Latin). "[The holy Fathers] instituted [traditions] for the sake of good order and tranquillity in the church" (Ap xv, 13). "[The holy Fathers] observed these human rites because they were profitable for good order . . . and because they provided an example of how all things could be done decently and in order [Latin: *ordine et graviter;* reference to 1 Cor 14:40]. For different seasons and various rites serve as reminders for the common folk. For these reasons the Fathers kept ceremonies, and for the same reasons we believe in keeping traditions" (Ap xv, 20).

"In Col. 2:23 Paul writes that traditions 'have an appearance of wisdom,' and indeed they have. This good order is very becoming in the church and is therefore necessary" (Ap xv, 22). "In the [Augsburg] Confession we nevertheless added the extent to which it is legitimate for [the bishops] to create traditions, namely, that they must not be necessary acts of worship but a means for preserving order in the church, for the sake of peace" (Ap xxviii, 15).

How were "good order, Christian discipline, evangelical decorum, and the edification of the church" understood by the authors of the Formula of Concord? Eleven years before the Formula of Concord was signed, Martin Chemnitz, its chief author, explained these four "apostolic rules" in his *Examination of the Council of Trent* (4 vols., trans. Fred Kramer [Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1971–1986]): "There is no doubt that the church after the apostles added certain other rites for the purpose of edification, order, and decorum. It can, indeed, not be proved with sure and firm testimonies which rites were certainly delivered by the apostles, although they cannot be shown from Scripture. We can nevertheless have a sure apostolic approach to the evaluation and use of traditions, to rites or external ceremonies regardless where they may have their origin" (1: 268). "Paul distinguished apostolic rites with these marks, that all things should be done decently, in an orderly way, and for edification. Thus he shows in 1 Corinthians 1 1:5–10 that the custom of the women veiling . . . serves decorum. In 1 Corinthians 14 . . . he mentions edification, decorum, and order. And I judge that such rites should certainly be retained and preserved which are (as has been well said) inducements and aids to piety, that is according to Paul's rule, which first of all make for edification, that men may be invited to the Word, to the sacraments, and to other exercises of piety, that the doctrine may be more aptly set forth, valued more, received more eagerly, and better retained; and that penitence, faith, prayer, piety, and mercy may be kindled and cherished, etc. Second, those which serve good order; for it is necessary that in the public meetings of the church there be order worthy of churchly dignity. Thirdly, those which make for decorum. Now by decorum we understand not theatrical pomp or courtly splendor but such decorum as shows by external rites the honor in which we hold the Word, the sacraments, and the remaining churchly functions, and by which others are invited to reverence toward the Word, the sacraments, and the assemblies of the church. Christian liberty places a limit on apostolic rites, namely, that ceremonies may be according to their nature adiaphora, few in number, good and profitable for edification, order, and decorum, and the whole kind, except in cases of offense, should be observed in freedom" (1: 269).

Chemnitz's rejection of "theatrical pomp" echoes Luther's concern in the Large Catechism, Third Commandment: "This commandment is violated . . . by that multitude of others who listen to God's Word as they would go to any other entertainment" (LC i, 96). This is a pointed rejection of "entertainment evangelism" and much of "contemporary worship," while Chemnitz's rejection of "courtly splendor" rejects the excesses of Roman Catholic ceremony even today.

The confessors were also concerned about the pedagogical role of worship: "With a very thankful spirit we cherish the

useful and ancient ordinances, especially when they contain a discipline that serves to educate and instruct the people and the inexperienced" (Ap VII, 33). "[Our] children chant the Psalms in order to learn; the people sing, too, in order to learn or worship" (Ap XV, 40). "[The worship ceremonies of the monks] could be tolerated if they were used as exercises, the way lessons are in school, with the purpose of teaching the listeners, and in the process of teaching, prompting some of them to fear or faith" (Ap XXVII, 54). "The special office of this day [Sunday] should be the ministry of the Word for the sake of the young and the poor common people" (LC I, 86).

The inherently conservative stance of the Lutheran Confessions in the realm of worship is revealed by the following: "The abrogation [of ceremonies] brings its own difficulties and problems" (Ap XV, 49). "Liberty in these matters should be used moderately, lest the weak be offended and become more hostile to the true teaching of the Gospel because of an abuse of liberty. Nothing should be changed in the accustomed rites without good reason, and to foster harmony those ancient customs should be kept which can be kept without sin or without great disadvantage" (Ap XV, 51).

Therefore, the Lutheran Confessions provide a wealth of criteria to apply to worship practices. The issue is not variety versus no variety. The issue is not tradition versus modern. The issue is whether contemporary worship practices adhere to the apostolic rules and confessional prescriptions for worship.

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Some Observations on Creative Worship

Do you know what to expect when you visit congregations for worship while on summer vacations? Do you find yourself wondering what degree of inventive variations on the liturgy will be printed in the bulletin as it is thrust into your hand?

As one ponders why this phenomenon has become so widespread among our congregations, one might begin by analyzing what is common. Elements such as the invocation, the opening versicles, and the confession-absolution all seem to be highly likely candidates for adaptation, while the *Verba* consecrating the elements for Holy Communion seem to be less likely (though not inviolable).

A preponderance of expanding the invocation seems as innocuous as it is frequent. For some reason, "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" isn't thought substantial enough for opening the service—and sometimes there is the urge to elaborate on this in the Rite of Holy Baptism. Once "Creative Camel" (no relation to Joe Camel) gets its nose in the tabernacle, the rest of the creature is bound to follow, crowding out the occupants with various sensations they would not originally care to have or imagine.

Various metaphors and similes, however they may be adapted from the Scriptures, are appended to each of the persons of the Trinity. For what purpose? Do liturgical innovators hope to make the Lord seem more lord-like to the congregation by building up his name with impressive epithets? Do they imagine that they are giving greater glory to God by beefing up their worshipful greeting to him? I wonder.

This may also be further expanded when it comes time for—if it comes time for—a creed to be confessed. The historic ecumenical creeds are discarded for something that appears to be more relevant. But relevant to what? If I ponder my sins, there is nothing more relevant (and succinct) than to confess, "who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven And was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary And was made man . . . ." Nothing could be more poignantly practical than that—unless the ultimate hidden agenda is to give the pastor an opportunity to show off his own clever creativeness or spiritual prowess.

This observation could extend to the members of the congregation as well if they were permitted to take turns writing and offering their own personally actualized creeds ("Oh, wasn't Sue's creed wonderful this morning?" "Yes, much better than Bill's was last week"), but I imagine that most pastors who engage in this kind of activity don't consider lay people astute enough to handle this solemn responsibility of providing religious words for corporate worship. Thanks be to God, however, for lay people who are astute enough to loathe the fool's gold conjured up by self-acclaimed liturgical alchemists.

Ambiguous and arbitrary standards are standard fare for these liturgical adepts. They perpetuate the idea that certain "necessary" parts of the divine service can be distilled from the unnecessary parts. Some of us have allowed ourselves to entertain the question "Which are the basic parts of the liturgy?" It is a question that ought to be rejected outright on the premise that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

We might ask where and how these pastors acquired the knack for souping up the liturgy. Rather than breaking into heated diatribes with colleagues who wish to let their creative juices flow into creative worship, we might embark upon a new direction. Simply ask, "If you were asked to teach at the seminary how to do the kind of relevance-modification and modernization of the liturgy that you practice, how would you do it? How would you tell future pastors which parts of the liturgy could be deposed in favor of creating something more colorful?"

Is not "creativeness" a rather difficult thing to teach? One can teach folks to paint, but few are likely to be acclaimed as true artists. Our seminaries ought be more inclined to promote the classic portraiture of the historical liturgy than to play any part in encouraging young pastors and second-career men to render the liturgical equivalent of cute children with saucer-sized eyes (or Elvis, the King, if you wish) painted on black velvet.

If we are to move forward as a synod, "perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment" (1 Cor 1:10), there are things we honestly need to know, like "Why did you feel it important to eliminate the Kyrie Eleison (and do you know the purpose for which it was positioned there in the service in the first place)?" Questions like this need to be asked without the asker being accused of being unloving or argumentative. Members of our churches must not consider all pointed

criticism as being equivalent to nasty sarcasm or cynicism. The questions need to be asked, but the same egotism that presumes to compose liturgies also chafes at any pretenders to its throne that threaten to depose it with each question.

If, however, there are any who would honestly and humbly field some questions, their answers may amount to little more than "I wanted to shorten the service." Or it may be that they really believe that their personal abilities in altering the liturgy will bring more people to faith. At least that point can be brought out in the open. One might then also offer some criteria by which this could be measured—to see whether creative liturgies really aid the creation of faith and life in unbelievers, or whether they simply draw those with Reformed tendencies into Lutheran congregations, people who were previously milling about without a church home until they found a nice Lutheran minister who appeared to be able to offer them things according to their own personal desires. What semi-religious person who wants some pleasant social interaction wouldn't be interested in that?

This issue is particularly before us now that the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has embarked upon the process of producing a new hymnal. As each setting for the divine service is scrutinized and as every hymn stanza is considered, these same questions are being considered. The criteria that mitigates against homespun liturgies applies equally to that which is composed for the church at large. We ought not be interested in having change for change's sake. Show us any liturgy that serves as a setting for the reading and expounding law and gospel throughout the various seasons of the church year, drawing sinners to the gifts mandated for them by their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and will we not be happy?

The table service of the ordinary ought not outdo the main course served up in the propers. All needs to be coordinated. Having had this in the common service, we are reluctant to leap into anything novel, especially in a generation that has failed to appreciate the depth and beauty of what it had, in an age where creativity is no longer adiaphora because of the *incurvatus in se* it has fostered among the Lord's people.

JAB

The Lost Tools of Learning

Paul M. Bechtel writes that Dorothy Leigh Sayers (1893–1967) briefly entered on a teaching career after graduating from Oxford. She published a long and popular series of detective novels, translated the Divine Comedy, *and wrote a series of radio plays and a defense of Christian belief. During World War II she lived in Oxford and was a member of the group that included C. S. Lewis, Charles Williams, J. R. R. Tolkien, and Owen Barfield. By nature and preference she was a scholar and an expert on the Middle Ages.*

In this essay, Miss Sayers suggests that we presently teach our children everything but how to learn. She proposes that we adopt a suitably modified version of the medieval scholastic curriculum for methodological reasons. "The Lost Tools of Learning" was first presented by Miss Sayers at Oxford in 1947. It is copyrighted by National Review, *150 East 35th Street, New York, NY 10016. The complete text can be downloaded from the internet.*

A glib speaker in the Brains Trust once entertained his audience (and reduced the late Charles Williams to helpless rage) by asserting that in the Middle Ages it was a matter of faith to know how many archangels could dance on the point of a needle. I need not say, I hope, that it never was a "matter of faith"; it was simply a debating exercise, whose set subject was the nature of angelic substance: were angels material, and if so, did they occupy space? The answer usually adjudged correct is, I believe, that angels are pure intelligences; not material, but limited, so that they may have location in space but not extension. An analogy might be drawn from human thought, which is similarly non-material and similarly limited. Thus, if your thought is concentrated upon one thing—say, the point of a needle—it is located there in the sense that it is not elsewhere; but although it is "there," it occupies no space there, and there is nothing to prevent an infinite number of different people's thoughts being concentrated upon the same needle-point at the same time. The proper subject of the argument is thus seen to be the distinction between location and extension in space; the matter on which the argument is exercised happens to be the nature of angels (although, as we have seen, it might equally well have been something else; the practical lesson to be drawn from the argument is not to use words like "there" in a loose and unscientific way, without specifying whether you mean "located there" or "occupying space there."

Scorn in plenty has been poured out upon the medieval passion for hair-splitting; but when we look at the shameless abuse made, in print and on the platform, of controversial expressions with shifting and ambiguous connotations, we may feel it in our hearts to wish that every reader and hearer had been so defensively armored by his education as to be able to cry: *Distinguo!*

For we let our young men and women go out unarmed, in a day when armor was never so necessary. By teaching them all to read, we have left them at the mercy of the printed word. By the invention of the film and the radio, we have made certain that no aversion to reading shall secure them from the incessant battery of words, words, words. They do not know what the words mean; they do not know how to ward them off or blunt their edge or fling them back; they are a prey to words in their emotions instead of being the masters of them in their intellects. We who were scandalized in 1940 when men were sent to fight armored tanks with rifles, are not scandalized when young men and women are sent into the world to fight massed propaganda with a smattering of "subjects"; and when whole classes and whole nations become hypnotized by the arts of the spell binder, we have the impudence to be astonished.

We dole out lip-service to the importance of education—lip-service and, just occasionally, a little grant of money; we postpone the school-leaving age, and plan to build bigger and better schools; the teachers slave conscientiously in and out of school hours; and yet, as I believe, all this devoted effort is largely frustrated, because we have lost the tools of learning, and in their absence can only make a botched and piecemeal job of it.

What, then, are we to do? We cannot go back to the Middle Ages. That is a cry to which we have become accustomed. We cannot go back—or can we? *Distinguo.* I should like every term

in that proposition defined. Does "go back" mean a retrogression in time, or the revision of an error? The first is clearly impossible per se; the second is a thing which wise men do every day. "Cannot"—does this mean that our behavior is determined irreversibly, or merely that such an action would be very difficult in view of the opposition it would provoke? Obviously the twentieth century is not and cannot be the fourteenth; but if "the Middle Ages" is, in this context, simply a picturesque phrase denoting a particular educational theory, there seems to be no *a priori* reason why we should not "go back" to it—with modifications—as we have already "gone back" with modifications, to, let us say, the idea of playing Shakespeare's plays as he wrote them, and not in the "modernized" versions of Cibber and Garrick, which once seemed to be the latest thing in theatrical progress.

Let us amuse ourselves by imagining that such progressive retrogression is possible. Let us make a clean sweep of all educational authorities, and furnish ourselves with a nice little school of boys and girls whom we may experimentally equip for the intellectual conflict along lines chosen by ourselves. We will endow them with exceptionally docile parents; we will staff our school with teachers who are themselves perfectly familiar with the aims and methods of the Trivium; we will have our building and staff large enough to allow our classes to be small enough for adequate handling; and we will postulate a Board of Examiners willing and qualified to test the products we turn out. Thus prepared, we will attempt to sketch out a syllabus—a modern Trivium "with modifications" and we will see where we get to.

Eating Cake or Having It

The LCMS will not get out of the battle over the ordination of women unscathed. Proponents of the non-catholic practice are more determined than the opponents, so it seems. With this one item on their agenda, they can concentrate all their forces in one part of the battlefield. Their opponents are more like volunteers putting out a prairie fire: put the blaze out in one spot and it already has gone somewhere else. A field fire travels unnoticed though the root system.

Promoters of the ordination of women still have to get around Pauline prohibitions in 1 Corinthians 14:34–35 and 1 Timothy 2:12. It can be awkward to be reading from a book in your hands (in this case the New Testament) that tells you that you should not be doing it. The Timothy citation can easily be assigned to Deutero-Pauline category. It is too catholic for Paul to have written. Someone more rigidly dogmatic than Paul wrote it. Some have pushed the Corinthian citation to the side in favor of Galatians 3:28 with its "neither male nor female." But 1 Corinthians is as much the authentic Paul as is Galatians. Paul in 1 Corinthians is like an organist playing an organ with multiple ranks: one problem after another, reaching the pinnacle in his dissertation on the resurrection. But right before Paul the resurrection at the foundation of Christian faith, he tells us that women should not preach.

An easy solution is excising the offensive 14:34–35 ["the women should keep silence in the churches. For they are not permitted to speak, but should be subordinate, as even the law says. If there is anything they desire to know, let them ask their husbands at home. For it is shameful for a woman to speak in church"] by claiming that it is a later insertion in the text. Paul could not have written something like this, so argued Hans Conzelmann, without bothering to examine the textual evidence. Gordon Fee, a well respected scholar in Evangelical exegetical circles, provides a solution in his commentary on 1 Corinthians: textual evidence points to an interpolation. A beautiful solution. It is not part of the original inspired text.

Enter Curt Nuccum of the University of Notre Dame, who pulls the plug on this argument in the April 1997 issue of *New Testament Studies,* "The Voice of the Manuscripts on the Silence of Women: External Evidence for 1 Cor 14:34–5" (242–255). Those who are up to the complex tedium of textual criticism can easily obtain a copy and review the evidence. Besides boasting a Notre Dame, Indiana, address, nothing of Curt Nuccum is known. He is not grinding anyone's axes. We are stuck with the prohibition that women should not preach. Paul said it. For the proponents of women's ordination, it might be easier simply to say that Paul was dead wrong and be done with the whole problem. But this would then also open the possibility that he was wrong in saying that men and women are equal. One cannot eat one's cake and have it, too.

Ed. Note: Dr. Scaer also suggests that some of our readers might wish to join in an electronic ecumenical dialogue on Canon 1024 of the Roman Catholic Church, which states, "Only a baptized man (vir) *validly receives sacred ordination." In order to subscribe to the list, send e-mail to:* majordomo@ecunet.org *with the following command in the body of your message:* subscribe canon1024 (*Note: "canon1024" should be typed as a single word, no space*). *You will then receive confirmation of your subscription and instructions on how to post to the list. This list is hosted by Luis T. Gutierrez* (*luisgutierrez@juno.com*) *of Gaithersburg, MD.*

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Whither Concordia?

What is happening to the LCMS Concordia University System (CUS) today and where is it going? A veteran professor recently explained to me that CUS now has three roughly equal constituencies. The first is the traditional church-work student. The second is the nominally Christian liberal arts or business major who comes from the local region and wants some values in his valediction. The third is the problem student who is accepted by the colleges "out of Christian charity" when no other college would accept him.

Is it wise for the Concordias to accept remedial students who have serious social problems, such as drug addiction, gang association, or a record of assault or rape? Don't such students put the gentler students at risk and destroy the public relations image of the Concordias as a "safe place" to send your kids? Don't the remedial students force the professors to lower their standards, thus resulting in a poor reputation for the Concordias in academia?

Is it wise for the Concordias to shape their programs around the nominally Christian student, who wants only ethics and values, not the hard dogma of the Bible and Confessions? Martin Luther began his reformation of the church by attacking the ethics of Aristotle, which he deemed to be the worst enemy of grace (AE 31: 12). Ethics and values without the gospel's *corpus doctrinae* only leads to legalism and works righteousness. The emphasis on ethics and values is characteristic of liberal Protestantism, which has little use for sacred dogma or pious worship.

What options remain? There are not enough church-work students to support all ten colleges by themselves. Some people have advocated closing all but two colleges, but I think that is regressive. On the other hand, I feel strongly that it is not ethical to persuade LCMS college students who are not in church work to go to a Concordia school, when they would then both pay more for their education and sacrifice a higher quality Bachelor's Degree at a state school. LCMS parents of college youth should not have to pay for the Missouri Synod's lack of vision out of their own pocket.

I propose a different vision from the present, which is not too dissimilar from the past. Before the late 1970s, all the colleges except for Seward, River Forest, and Saint Paul were junior colleges. The junior colleges served two functions: (1) as feeder schools to the teacher and pastor seminaries; (2) as a personalized, Lutheran context for core curriculum and lower-division courses in major fields for students who would transfer to secular/private universities for their B.A.

One of the biggest complaints of freshmen and sophomores today in the big schools is that classes are huge and their teachers are graduate assistants, because the tenured professors are only interested in teaching the upper-division students or doing research. The biggest complaint of parents of these same students is that their children get lost in the big schools, both socially and spiritually, primarily because it is their first time away from home. The biggest complaint of pastors of these same students is that they are brainwashed by professors in the humanities who are antagonistic to Christianity.

All these complaints can be allayed if the Concordias return to what they do best: (1) B.A. track for church-work students; (2) A.A. track for other students, offering a personalized, Lutheran context for core curriculum and lower-division courses in major fields. This would require that each Concordia collaborate with the local state university systems for the A.A. track, to ensure that all credits are transferable and that competent students are accepted. Core curriculum should be based on the Great Books in the humanities, the classic liberal arts, ample requirements for Lutheran theology, some worship/church music courses, one scholarly language (Hebrew, Greek, Latin, German, or French), and parish volunteer experience. I could encourage *every* Lutheran youth I know to enroll in such a program.

I expect that there are vested interests that would reject my proposal. Alumni departments would worry that fewer B.A.s would mean fewer loyal alumni to donate. Faculty who have pushed for "university" status would feel demeaned and demoted to a "junior college" level. Other faculty would be worried that curriculum changes might thin out or eliminate their department. CUS administrators with visions of a national university system fueled by "ethics and values" would deem my proposal too Lutheran, thus too sectarian. But the church should not let ivory-tower arrogance determine what is best for its youth.

What is best for Lutheran youth is the best Lutheran thinking about the humanities and liberal arts combined with the best secular thinking in the particular disciplines. Why can't our youth have the best of both worlds and so become the best prepared citizens and leaders for tomorrow?

Ed. Note: After perusing this article, LCMS readers might refer back to the overtures regarding the Concordia University System submitted to the last synodical convention (1995) and ponder what the 1998 convention might bring.

Martin R. Noland
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ELCA and Communion with the Reformed

At the time of this writing, the August 1997 Philadelphia convention of the ELCA is yet to come, but by the time this article is read, it is now history. It seems rather fitting that altar fellowship between Lutherans and the Reformed be consummated on this continent in the "City of Brotherly Love." In confessional Lutheran circles, the new fellowship arrangement will properly be compared to the nineteenth-century Prussian Union. That union was prepared by a Lutheran church laid prostrate by a dipsomaniacal thirst for Pietist intoxicants. Luther's conviction about altar fellowship with the Reformed is revealed in his 1531 letter to Martin Bucer of Strassburg, who was Calvin's mentor (AE 50: 8; see WA Br 6: 25–26):

> For you people can easily understand that, if unity were established between us, some of your people would commune in our congregations, and also some of ours in your congregations. Those who would commune with a different faith and with a different attitude of conscience would necessarily on both sides receive something different from that which they believe. Thus it would be unavoidable that through the ministry and our consciences either their faith would be made a mockery through hidden deceit and lies if the communicants were unaware of this difference, or, if they were aware of the difference, then their faith would be destroyed through a public sacrilege. You can see how devout and Christian this would be."

Luther asserts that when Lutherans and the Reformed switch altars, both "receive something different from that which they believe." The Reformed claimed the spiritual eating of Christ, which Luther did not contest. Only the Lutherans had both the spiritual and oral eating. Here Luther teaches that the individual communicant does not determine the character of the sacrament. The character of the sacrament is determined by the confession, catechesis, and teaching of the administering church; otherwise there would be no *manducatio indignorum* (eating by the unworthy; see FC SD VII, 32–33, 60, 88).

Confessional Lutheran synods today may rightly claim that they still administer the Lord's Supper, since they administer it according to his command, intent, and meaning. The Reformed denominations celebrate Calvin's sacrament or Zwingli's memorial meal. But what about the ELCA? The most charitable assessment is that the ELCA is of "mixed confession" (LCMS Constitution, Article VI.2). On the one hand, it does acknowledge that the Book of Concord is a valid interpretation of its faith (ELCA Constitution, Chapter 2); it uses liturgies that confess the oral eating of Christ's body and blood; and many of its pastors preach and catechize according to the Lutheran dogmas of Christology and the Sacrament of the Altar.

On the other hand, in the ELCA the Book of Concord is not an exclusive "standard" of doctrine (FC Ep Rule and Norm, 6), but one of many inclusive historical witnesses to the faith of the church; its eucharistic prayers strip the Lord's Supper of its gift character by making prayer the consecratory power instead of our Lord's institution (see William Thompson, "The Epiclesis and Lutheran Theology," *Logia* 4 [Epiphany 1995]: 31–35); many ELCA celebrants are women; the adopted confession "A Formula for Agreement" relegates the doctrines of Christ and Eucharist to the periphery of church teaching (see review of "A Common Calling" in *Logia* 3 [Epiphany 1994]: 59); and many ELCA pastors preach and catechize all over the theological map.

Confessional Lutheran synods will not be able to establish altar fellowship with an ELCA that relegates Christology and the Eucharist to the periphery of an already pluralistic confession, thereby failing to confess anything definitive about the Real Presence. If the Presence cannot be confessed, then it cannot be known. If it cannot be known, then the communicant believes nothing about what he or she eats. Better the spiritual eating of the Reformed than the official agnosticism of the ELCA!

We do not doubt that many Lutheran pastors in the ELCA will continue to preach, teach, catechize, and celebrate the sacraments according to Lutheran dogma. We also do not doubt that when they retire, their successors will be carefully chosen by the ELCA bishops to bring their congregations into alignment with the rest. If the confessionally Lutheran pastors in the ELCA wish to bequeath their teaching and practice to the next generation (Tappert, 47), they should realize that now is the time to take their congregations out of the ELCA, even though separation is always painful. The confessional Lutheran synods should be ready to assist any pastors and congregations that make such a change.

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The Judgment of Thamus

For those who might be inclined to opine, "If it's technology, it's got to be good," the following piece from Neil Postman's Technopoly: The Surrender of Culture to Technology (*New York: Knopf, 1992*) *might be considered necessary, as this portion from pages 3–5 suggests.*

You will find in Plato's *Phaedrus* a story about Thamus, the king of a great city of Upper Egypt. For people such as ourselves, who are inclined (in Thoreau's phrase) to be tools of our tools, few legends are more instructive than his. The story, as Socrates tells it to his friend Phaedrus, unfolds in the following way: Thamus once entertained the god Theuth, who was the inventor of many things, including number, calculation, geometry, astronomy, and writing. Theuth exhibited his inventions to King Thamus, claiming that they should be made widely known and available to the Egyptians. Socrates continues:

> Thamus inquired into the use of each of them, and as Theuth went through them, expressed approval or disapproval, according as he judged Theuth's claims to be well- or ill-founded. It would take too long to go through all that Thamus is reported to have said for and against each of Theuth's inventions. But when it came to writing, Theuth declared, "Here is an accomplishment, my lord the King, which will improve both the wisdom and the memory of the Egyptians. I have discovered a sure receipt for memory and wisdom."
>
> To this, Thamus replied, "Theuth, my paragon of inventors, the discoverer of an art is not the best judge of the good or harm which will accrue to those who practice it. So it is in this: you, who are the father of writing, have out of fondness for your off-spring attributed to it quite the opposite of its real function. Those who acquire it will cease to exercise their memory and become forgetful; they will rely on writing to bring things to their remembrance by external signs instead of by their own internal resources. What you have discovered is a receipt for recollection, not for memory.
>
> "And as for wisdom, your pupils will have the reputation for it without the reality: they will receive a quantity of information without proper instruction, and in consequence be thought very knowledgeable when they are for the most part quite ignorant. And because they are filled with the conceit of wisdom instead of real wisdom, they will be a burden to society."

I begin my book with this legend because in Thamus' response there are several sound principles from which we may begin to learn how to think with wise circumspection about a technological society. In fact, there is even one error in the judgment of Thamus, from which we may also learn something of importance. The error is not in his claim that writing will damage memory and create false wisdom. It is demonstrable that writing has had such an effect. Thamus' error is in his believing that writing will be a burden to society and *nothing but a burden.* For all his wisdom, he fails to imagine what writing's benefits might be, which, as we know, have been considerable. We may learn from this that it is a mistake to suppose that any technological innovation has a one-sided effect. Every technology is both a burden and a blessing, not either/or, but this-and-that.

Nothing could be more obvious, of course, especially to those who have given more than two minutes of thought to the matter. Nonetheless, we are currently surrounded by throngs of zealous Theuths, one-eyed prophets who see only what new tech-

nologies can do and are incapable of imagining what they will *undo*. We might call such people Technophiles. They gaze on technology as a lover does on his beloved, seeing it as without blemish and entertaining no apprehension for the future. They are therefore dangerous and are to be approached carefully.

On the other hand, some one-eyed prophets, such as I (or so I am accused), are inclined to speak only of burdens (in the manner of Thamus) and are silent about the opportunities that new technologies make possible. The Technophiles must speak for themselves, and do so all over the place. My defense is that a dissenting voice is sometimes needed to moderate the din made by the enthusiastic multitudes. If one is to err, it is better to err on the side of Thamusian skepticism. But it is an error nonetheless.

And I might note that, with the exception of his judgment on writing, Thamus does not repeat his error. You might notice on rereading the legend that he gives arguments for and *against* each of Theuth's inventions. For it is inescapable that every culture must negotiate with technology, whether it does so intelligently or not. A bargain is struck in which technology giveth and technology taketh away. The wise know this well, and are rarely impressed by dramatic technological changes, and never overjoyed.

New Commemorative Medallion

Marks 500th Anniversary of Melanchthon's Birth

When one considers the reformers of the church in the sixteenth century it is quite natural to think first of Dr. Martin Luther. But we also know that there were others who were great men in their own right—and one of these colleagues to Dr. Luther was Philipp Melanchthon (1497-1560).

It was Melanchthon who worked closest with Dr. Luther. He wrote the Augsburg Confession, authored the first Lutheran dogmatics, and assisted in the translation of the Scripture into German. A scholar of the Greek language and professor at the University of Wittenberg, he was a scholar and a gentleman in an age when the two seldom came together.

In honor of the 500th anniversary of his birth, Concordia Historical Institute presents the Philipp Melanchthon medallion, available in both silver and bronze. Each comes with a presentation stand for displaying this special collectable item in your home or office.

The medallion is designed by Rev. Scott Blazek, an LCMS pastor whose years of experience in design include the CHI medallion commemorating the 450th anniversary of Luther's death.

The Melanchthon medallion's obverse design depicts an original rendition of the Reformer, inspired from the studious reflection of his many portraits. The reverse design is a composition of Melanchthon and Luther, working on the translation of the Old Testament. Behind Melanchthon's right shoulder appears a "coat of arms" or emblem associated with him. Above, three titles recount important works Melanchthon contributed to the Reformation.

Concordia Historical Institute is offering the Melanchthon medallion at a cost of $100 for the silver and $35 for the bronze, including a presentation stand. The coin is 2¾ inches in diameter. Shipping and handling is $4 for up to three medallions and $1 to ship each additional medallion. Please write: Concordia Historical Institute, 801 DeMun Ave., St. Louis, MO 63105.

Delivery of orders begins Spring, 1997.

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