The Divine Service in Confessional Lutheranism and in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod

The Divine Service in Confessional Lutheranism and in the Evangelical Lutheran Synod

"Communion in a Danish Village Church," from Stub's *Vestments and Liturgies*

DAVID JAY WEBBER

Johannes Bugenhagen Liturgical Institute
Princeton, Minnesota
2025

"...we do not abolish the Mass but religiously retain and defend it. Among us the Mass is celebrated every Lord's day and on other festivals, when the sacrament is made available to those who wish to partake of it, after they have been examined and absolved. We also keep traditional liturgical forms, such as the order of readings, prayers, vestments, and other similar things."

"...the term 'liturgy'...does not really mean a sacrifice but a public service. Thus it squares with our position that a minister who consecrates shows forth the body and blood of the Lord to the people, just as a minister who preaches shows forth the gospel to the people, as Paul says, 'This is how one should regard us, as ministers of Christ and dispensers of the sacraments of God,' that is, of the Word and sacraments... Thus the term 'liturgy' squares well with the ministry."

Dedicated to the young pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod

Remember the days of old; consider the years of many generations;
ask your father, and he will show you, your elders, and they will tell you.
(Deuteronomy 32:7, ESV)

Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths,
where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls.
(Jeremiah 6:16, ESV)

They shall build up the ancient ruins; they shall raise up the former devastations;
they shall repair the ruined cities, the devastations of many generations.
(Isaiah 61:4, ESV)

Johannes Bugenhagen Liturgical Institute
801 6th Street South
Princeton, MN 55371

BugenhagenInstitute@gmail.com

https://bugenhagen.institute

First Edition, Sixth Printing

Table of Contents

INTRODUCTION: THE CHRISTIAN AND LUTHERAN LEGACY IN WORSHIP

As a Confessional Lutheran church body, the Evangelical Lutheran Synod – especially in its use of the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* (ELH), published in 1996 – is heir to a great and noble legacy in liturgy and hymnody. This living legacy is rooted in God's Word and is energized by the divinely-appointed means of grace, which the liturgy and hymnody of the church confess, teach, and convey. This legacy has been passed down over the centuries of Christian history from the time of the apostles and ancient Fathers, through the Reformation era and the Confessional Awakening of the nineteenth century, to the present day.

The Lutheran legacy of worship has survived, and recovered from, the many attacks – both subtle and direct – that have been brought to bear against it at various times in the past. This legacy has been twisted and distorted, mocked and ridiculed, both by people who did not understand it, and by people who did understand it but despised it. And this legacy is once again under attack today, from outside the institutional church and also from within it, by those who are employing the weapons of the world's fixation on tolerance and entertainment, and by those who are employing the weapons of enthusiast sectarian religion. But the church's enduring legacy of faith and worship will recover also from these attacks, and will survive also these attacks.

History has shown that at those times when Confessional theology was revived in the Lutheran Church, after a period of doctrinal weakness, traditional Lutheran worship forms also saw a revival. The best example of this is the Confessional Awakening in the nineteenth century, after Calvinism, Pietism, and Rationalism had wreaked havoc on the theology and worship of the church.

Calvinism – embodied ecclesiastically chiefly in "Reformed" and "Presbyterian" churches – understands itself to represent a "second reformation" over against the supposed incompleteness of the Lutheran Reformation. Calvinism has been an external yet intrusive threat to orthodox Lutheranism since the second half of the sixteenth century, with this threat intensifying in the push toward the Prussian Union of 1817 and in the aftermath of the Prussian Union. Classic Calvinism follows the distinctive theological teachings of the Swiss Reformer John Calvin in its rejection or modification of the doctrinal positions of Martin Luther and of the Lutheran Church on election and perseverance, the two natures in Christ, the sacraments, and other articles of faith. In matters of polity and practice, Calvinism was and is characterized by what Ernst Heinrich Klotsche describes as "a false Biblicism, i.e., strictest adherence to the letter of the Bible as the supreme law of the sovereign God, which led Calvin to conform all acts and forms of life to the words of the Bible." Klotsche goes on to observe that

> This Biblicism determines also the position of the Reformed Church in regard to church rites and ceremonies. Usages, customs, festivals that have been observed in the church for centuries but cannot be substantiated by express Scriptural command are to be abandoned. For example, Christ and his apostles knew nothing of the use of organs, altars, crucifixes, candles, vestments and the like; hence these things have no place in divine worship. Nor did Christ and his apostles use hymns in their worship, but they did use the Old Testament psalms; hence "it is the will of God that the songs contained in the book of psalms should be used in public service to the exclusion of the devotional compositions of uninspired men." (Klotsche, 232)

Most Reformed and Presbyterian churches today are not quite as strict as this, so that one will often hear the playing of an organ and the singing of hymns in their worship services. But in keeping with the general tone and tenor of historic Calvinism, conservative Calvinists still approach Scripture with the basic assumption that what is not commanded in the Bible is to be seen as forbidden. This stands in stark contrast to the Lutheran approach to Scripture, which assumes that what is not forbidden in the Bible is to be seen, in Christian freedom, as permitted. Some practical consequences of this difference are exemplified in the descriptions of the sights and sounds of

worship in the (still orthodox) Lutheran Church, in the (mostly Scottish) Presbyterian Church, and in the established Church of England, that were given in 1714 by William Dawes, the Archbishop of York. He observed that

> the Lutheran religion so far differs from the Presbyterians, and the fond persuasions of other sectaries and dissenters from the Established Church, that it carries matter[s] much higher than her, as [with] the use of trumpets, drums and kettle drums, besides the organs, which the zealots in Scotland call a box of whistles, and other instruments of music. Nay, they go much farther; and are not only more abundant in their ceremonies, but in the pomp and splendor of their churches, where images and pictures of saints and holy men are exposed to public view, on purpose to excite the frequenters of those sacred places to the imitation of their examples. (Dawes, 7)

Pietism, which also understood itself to represent a "second reformation," arose in the late seventeenth century, and became prominent in the first half of the eighteenth century. According to Martin Schmidt,

> Its avowed purpose was to bring about a second reformation. After a good start, so Pietism asserted, the Reformation had stranded in orthodoxism and was stuck in the shoals of institutionalism, dogmatism, and polemics. Favorite pietist concepts and slogans were: "Life versus doctrine," "Holy Spirit versus the office of the ministry," or "Reality versus the appearance of godliness"... The reformers and the orthodox theologians had given central place to the Word of God and the doctrine of justification. But Pietism's central subject was regeneration (conversion, rebirth). ... Pietism focused its attention on man, on individual man. ... As a result, Pietism also modified the concept "church." The church is no longer the community of those who have been called by the Word and Sacraments, but the association of the reborn, of those who "earnestly desire to be Christians." ... Only little weight is attached to the ministry of the Word, to worship services, the Sacraments, to confession and absolution, and to the observance of Christian customs; a thoroughly regenerated person does not need these crutches at all. Pietism stressed the personal element over against the institutional; voluntariness versus compulsion; the present versus tradition, and the rights of the laity over against the pastors. (Schmidt, III:1898-99)

Luther D. Reed makes the historical observation that as the spirit of Pietism "entered into the established church, the services of the latter became more and more subjective and emotional. The struggle for personal consciousness of conversion and regeneration led to an undervaluation of the objective means of grace" (Reed, 146). In its original and relatively conservative form, Pietism did not directly attack the Confessional faith, sacramental life, and liturgical worship of the church. But it did diminish people's understanding of, appreciation for, and commitment to, that faith, life, and worship.

Due to the effects of Pietism, the Lutheran Church as an institution was undermined in its theological foundation and enfeebled in its governance and discipline. And this made it vulnerable, in the second half of the eighteenth century, to the rise of Rationalism, which did take direct aim at all the defining features of true, orthodox Lutheranism, in the areas of both doctrine and devotion. John A. W. Haas summarizes the horrid effects of this insidious movement:

> Rationalism...changed the whole appearance and life of the Church. Churches were made lecture-rooms, the pulpit became the desk above the altar, which dwindled into insignificance. From the hymns all distinctively Christian thought was removed, and commonplace rhymes of the shallowest order were added, which praised reasonable virtue, delight of nature, and care of the body. Sermons were long-winded moral treatises on the utility of things. The old Church Orders and Agenda were mutilated, Baptism and the Lord's Supper

> robbed of their meaning, Private Confession totally abolished, and Confirmation degraded into a promise of virtue. (Haas, 402)

When various Lutheran churches at various times allowed themselves to come under the influence of Calvinism, Pietism, and Rationalism, the changes in what happened in a typical Lutheran congregation on a typical Sunday morning were noticeable and negative. But when orthodox doctrine was reclaimed for the Lutheran Church at the time of the Confessional Awakening, the "Old Lutheran" liturgy and hymns from the church's better and purer past were likewise reclaimed. Jesus promised his disciples, and through them he promises his church of all generations until this world comes to an end: "I am with you always, to the end of the age" (Matthew 28:20, ESV). So, when the church has needed reformers and confessors to defend and clarify "the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3, ESV), Christ, the loving Lord of the church, has raised up such reformers and confessors. He did this in the sixteenth century, and he did this in the nineteenth century. We can be confident, therefore, that he will graciously raise up such reformers and confessors once again. They will once again teach God's people:

> Remember those who led you, who spoke the word of God to you; and considering the result of their conduct, imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever. Do not be carried away by varied and strange teachings... (Hebrews 13:7-9, NASB)

And they will once again exhort God's people, and all people:

> Splendor and majesty are before him; strength and beauty are in his sanctuary. Ascribe to the LORD, O families of the peoples, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength! Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; bring an offering, and come into his courts! Worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness; tremble before him, all the earth! (Psalm 96:6-9, ESV)

Church life in Torslunde, Denmark, in the sixteenth century
(Alterbordsforside, Torslunde Kirke, 1561)

1: CHRISTIAN WORSHIP BEFORE THE REFORMATION

From the very beginning, the worship of the Lord's church on the Lord's day followed an ordered pattern with a dual derivation: the service of the Word, based on the synagogue service with which the apostles were familiar; and the service of the Sacrament, which fulfilled Jesus' eucharistic dominical mandate, "This do." The Book of Acts bears witness to this. In Jerusalem, the first Christians "continued to hold firmly to the apostles' teaching and to the fellowship, to the breaking of the bread, and to the prayers" (2:42, EHV). In Troas, "upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them" (20:7, KJV). And both parts of the service were indeed surrounded and permeated by "the prayers" of the church, as the church recalled St. Paul's directives "that in every place the men should pray, lifting holy hands"; and that the church should "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Timothy 2:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18, ESV). The earliest Christians also remembered St. Paul's exhortation in his Epistle to the Colossians: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, with gratitude in your hearts to God" (3:16, EHV). They likewise remembered the admonition of the Epistle to the Hebrews: "Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe, for our God is a consuming fire" (12:28-29, ESV). And as the Apology of the Augsburg Confession recounts, a nascent "church year" of sorts was established already in the era of the New Testament, when the apostles

> observed certain days...in order that the people might know at what time they should assemble. Whenever they assembled, they also observed some other rites and a sequence of lessons. Frequently, the people continued to observe certain Old Testament customs, which the apostles adapted in modified form to the gospel history, like Easter and Pentecost [see Acts 18:21; 20:16], so that by these examples as well as by instruction they might transmit to posterity the memory of those important events. (VII/VIII:40, K/W)

(See *Addendum I* for a fuller description of the instruction that the apostles gave, and the example that the apostles set, for the worship gatherings of the New Testament church.)

The liturgy of the church developed and grew organically through the centuries, with the addition of various canticles and texts, and with an increased use of ritual, symbolism, music, and art. Within Christendom as a whole, two primary liturgical rites gradually became prominent and influential: in the West, the Latin or Roman Rite; and in the East, the Greek or Byzantine Rite. In time the term "mass" came to be attached to the Service of Word and Sacrament according to the Roman Rite. None of this was seriously problematic, until the middle ages saw the emergence of certain beliefs and practices, associated with the Latin liturgy, that obscured and distorted the comfort of the gospel and the right use of the sacraments. Chief among these errors were the doctrine and ritual of the sacrifice of the mass; the invocation of saints within and outside of the service; and the teaching that the various ceremonies of the mass are human works that, when performed, merit God's grace and favor.

Divine Service in Schleswig-Holstein in the sixteenth century (Woodcut, 1590)

2: THE FIRST MOVEMENTS TOWARD LITURGICAL REFORM

As Luther was the leader of the sixteenth-century Reformation movement generally, so too did he take the lead in inaugurating liturgical reforms among those who had embraced the Reformation movement. Dirk G. Lange observes:

> Rather than being fearful of traditional liturgical practice...or even eliminating it (as later generations did), Luther sought to renew worship in both word and sacrament, that is, in both word and rite, removing those aspects that obscure the gospel but keeping those things that enhanced it.
>
> The focus of the majority of Luther's important treatises of the early Reformation period was proclamation in and through liturgical practice. The spate of tracts from 1519... and *The Babylonian Captivity* of 1520 were theological treatises that reflected on liturgical practices. In these treatises, Luther shaped practice and theology into one coherent proclamation of the gospel. ...
>
> Attention to the sacrament of the altar (Holy Communion) was even more urgent. Perhaps there was no single practice of the medieval church that Luther opposed as vehemently as he did the sacrifice of the Mass. For Luther, the medieval Mass embodied a theology opposed to faith. The Mass was a work performed by the priest for the people. The people could watch and thereby receive the benefits of the unbloodied sacrifice of Christ by the priest, but rarely participate and then only in the eating of the bread; or they could pay for the sacrament to be "said," thereby reducing the time one or one's loved ones might spend in purgatory. The sacrament was a sacrifice directed toward God.
>
> Luther reversed the direction, not only of the sacrament but also of worship in general. The sacrament was God's gift for the people, a benefit given to them and not a work that they needed to accomplish. ... *Sacrament* is no longer understood as sacrifice but as gift or benefit. Worship is admonition and comfort: God breaking into the assembly and opening a space for the Holy Spirit to create faith, and leading to prayer and thanksgiving. ...
>
> Luther's radical reversal of sacramental practice and theology was coupled with great reserve in his revisions of the Latin Mass. ... In 1523 Luther produced the *Formula Missae* (Latin Mass) based on the medieval Mass and grounded in the liturgical year and its lectionary. He made no substantial change to the order of service except for the elimination of the offertory prayers and the prayers of the canon spoken after the *Sanctus*, both of which in his opinion smacked of sacrifice or works righteousness. In 1526 he produced the German Mass, which was a simplification of the *Formula Missae* and designed for the uneducated. Rather than forcing German words into Latin chants, Luther used hymns with rhyme and meter that, he thought, matched the German way of singing.
>
> Luther's comments in the Preface to the German Mass reveal his approach to worship in general and specifically to liturgical practice. A liturgical order is not to be a "rigid law" that is to be imposed in every context and on every community. The liturgical order translates the gospel, through word and sacrament, shaping the worshiping community into a gospel community. This translation may vary from place to place. The one constant is the grounding of the liturgy in word and sacrament, two activities where God has promised to be always present. Luther was not opposed to innovation as long as it was in the service of the gospel, that is, as long as it continually proclaimed the Christ event for the gathered community. But even then innovation was to be rooted in the tradition. Luther noted favorably that there are many new experiments in worship but then also laments that some "have no more than an itch to produce something novel so that they might shine before others as leading lights, rather than being ordinary teachers." Luther's insistence on worship in word and sacrament drew attention to the reality of worship as proclamation in both words and rites. The spoken word and the embodied word (or "visible Word," a phrase in Augustine often cited by Luther) are integral components through which God's promise is continually given to the faith community. The liturgical order in word and sacrament shapes both the

> mind and the body of believers. For Luther, the liturgical order is essential, for it "may make Christians out of us." (Lange, 428-30)

The German Mass or *Deutsche Messe* did indeed embody some significant innovations. The most noticeable was the fact that it was in the vernacular – as compared to the *Formula Missae*, which was still in Latin. The *Formula Missae* had retained all five of the "chief parts" of the traditional western Mass: *Kyrie*, *Gloria in Excelsis*, *Credo*, *Sanctus*, and *Agnus Dei*. The *Deutsche Messe* retained a threefold *Kyrie*, omitted the *Gloria in Excelsis*, replaced the traditional forms of the *Credo* and *Sanctus* with hymn paraphrases of those texts, and replaced the traditional form of the *Agnus Dei* with the "German Agnus Dei." In the medieval Roman Rite the Words of Institution had been embedded within the sacrificial Canon prayer, which was whispered by the priest. Luther excised this prayer in both of his proposed orders. Frank C. Senn comments that "Luther's deletion of the Canon may strike us as an extreme measure," but in actuality "Few lay worshipers would have noticed the omission of a silent prayer" (Senn RM, 39). In Luther's *Formula Missae* the Words of Institution were incorporated instead into the prayer of the Preface, with directions that they be chanted aloud in the way that the Lord's Prayer was chanted. Luther took a different approach in the *Deutsche Messe*, where the Words of Institution now appeared in the Communion rite as a self-standing declaration, with directions that they be chanted in the way that the Gospel for each Sunday was chanted. The *Deutsche Messe* replaced the Preface and the Lord's Prayer with an exhortation that roughly followed the flow and structure of the Preface, and that included a paraphrase of the Lord's Prayer as a part of the exhortation.

Luther did not want his proposed German service to be seen simply as a replacement for, or as a successor to, his earlier proposed Latin service. But he did expect the German service (or something like it) to be used in villages where the level of education and the knowledge of Latin was lower, while he expected the Latin service (or something like it) to continue to be used in larger towns and cities where the people were better educated and were more conversant in Latin. In his Preface to the *Deutsche Messe* Luther spoke of the

> divine service or mass...in Latin which we published earlier under the title *Formula Missae*. It is not now my intention to abrogate or to change this service. It shall not be affected in the form which we have followed so far; but we shall continue to use it when or where we are pleased or prompted to do so. For in no wise would I want to discontinue the service in the Latin language... (LW 53:62-63)

During this period, the Lutheran linguistic principle, as far as the language of worship was concerned, was not that the vernacular always needs to be used; but it was that a language that is understood by the people should be used. In places where people understood Latin, Latin could remain, at least for a time, as a liturgical language.

When more and more cities, territories, and countries embraced the Lutheran Reformation, and adopted church orders for the regulation of public worship and other aspects of church life, they did borrow certain elements – to a greater or lesser degree – from Luther's two proposed orders. Luther had not been the only person in the early to mid 1520s who prepared revised orders of service under the inspiration of Reformation ideas, but his two liturgical offerings were by far the most influential. None of the later church orders copied either of Luther's orders exactly, but almost all of them adopted orders of service that were clearly derived from the historic Latin mass – as were Luther's suggested orders. Most of the Lutheran church orders of the sixteenth century combined the use of Latin and the use of the vernacular language in public worship. Especially on the high festivals would one often hear more Latin than usual. Luther's vernacular hymn paraphrases of the texts of the mass, together with Nikolaus Decius's popular hymn paraphrase of the *Gloria in Excelsis*, were also frequently used.

The official church orders of this era were often prepared by colleagues or former students of Luther. In particular – as Lange points out –

> Johannes Bugenhagen, Luther's pastor in Wittenberg, was an important contributor in the development and propagation of church orders (Braunschweig, 1528; Hamburg, 1529; Lübeck, 1531; Pomerania, 1535; Wolfenbüttel, 1543). Bugenhagen influenced the Wittenberg church order of 1533..., and he worked for two years in Denmark (1537-39) to establish a Danish (and Norwegian) church order, thus broadening the reach of liturgical reform. (Lange, 430)

Church life in Wittenberg in the sixteenth century (portraying Luther as preacher)
(Lucas Cranach the Younger, Woodcut, 1545)

3: PERMANENT REFORMS IN PUBLIC WORSHIP AND IN THE PUBLIC MINISTRY

Before the Reformation, the Roman Church had indeed come to redefine the essence of the Christian liturgy as basically a series of sacrifices and sacrificial rituals that the church and its ordained priesthood offer to God. On the basis of the New Testament the Lutheran Reformers corrected this misconception, and declared in the Apology that among the Lutherans,

> priests are not called to offer sacrifices for the people as in Old Testament law so that through them they might merit the forgiveness of sins for the people; instead they are called to preach the gospel and to administer the sacraments to the people.

The issuing of such calls to such men was not seen as optional, since "the church has the mandate to appoint ministers, which ought to please us greatly because we know that God approves this ministry and is present in it" (XIII:9, 12, K/W). Luther furthermore explained in the Large Catechism that such men are our true "spiritual fathers," who "govern and guide us by the Word of God" and "watch over" our souls (I:158, 161, K/W). The Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope was also speaking of such men when it declared that "The gospel" – that is, the New Testament revelation –

> bestows upon those who preside over the churches the commission to proclaim the gospel, forgive sins, and administer the sacraments. In addition, it bestows legal authority, that is, the charge to excommunicate those whose crimes are public knowledge and to absolve those who repent. It is universally acknowledged, even by our opponents, that this power is shared by divine right by all who preside in the churches, whether they are called pastors, presbyters, or bishops. (60-61, K/W)

And the ELS is still speaking of such men when, in its 2005 doctrinal statement on *The Public Ministry of the Word*, it declares – concerning "The Pastoral Office in its Various Manifestations" – that

> God commands that properly called men publicly preach, teach, administer the sacraments, forgive and retain sins, and have oversight of doctrine in the name of Christ and the church (1 Timothy 2:11-12). Therefore a presiding office, whether it is called that of pastor, shepherd, bishop, presbyter, elder or by any other name, is indispensable for the church (Luke 10:16, 1 Corinthians 12:27-31, Matthew 28:18-20, Hebrews 13:17, Acts 20:28, Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Peter 5:1-2).

The Large Catechism notes that through the sacrament of Baptism "we are initially received into the Christian community" (IV:2, K/W). Even when it is administered in a private setting, Baptism always has the whole church in view, since the Holy Spirit, through this sacrament, unites the person being baptized to the "one body" of Christ: "For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews or Greeks, slaves or free – and all were made to drink of one Spirit" (1 Corinthians 12:13, ESV). The Lord's Supper, too – in the words of the Smalcald Articles – is "the common sacrament of the church," which is not to be played with "apart from God's Word and outside the church community" (II, II:9, K/W). And this is why we confess in the Large Catechism that "the whole gospel and the article of the Creed, 'I believe in one holy Christian church...the forgiveness of sins,' are embodied in this sacrament and offered to us through the Word" (V:32, K/W) – that is, through the instituting and consecrating Word of Christ. The Lord's Supper is therefore also a sacrament of and for the "one body" of Christ: "Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread" (1 Corinthians 10:17, ESV).

For these reasons, according to God's regular order, the sacraments of the church of God are to be administered by those pastors, presbyters, or bishops who have been trained and called to "take care of the church of God" (1 Timothy 3:5, NASB). And St. Paul's statement to Titus that a presbyter or bishop in the church is "God's steward" (1:7, ESV) hearkens back to what he had

previously said in his First Epistle to the Corinthians concerning the "stewards of the mysteries of God," with the added thought there that "it is required of stewards that they be found faithful" (4:1-2, ESV).

The intimate relationship that properly exists between the ministry of the church's pastors, and the church's worship, was made clear in the Apology's explanation that

> the term "liturgy"...does not really mean a sacrifice but a public service. Thus it squares with our position that a minister who consecrates shows forth the body and blood of the Lord to the people, just as a minister who preaches shows forth the gospel to the people, as Paul says (1 Cor. 4:1), "This is how one should regard us, as ministers of Christ and dispensers of the sacraments of God," that is, of the Word and sacraments; and 2 Cor. 5:20, "We are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We beseech you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God." Thus the term "liturgy" squares well with the ministry. (XXIV: 79-81, Tap)

The "sacramental" character of good Lutheran preaching, in contrast to the kind of preaching one would generally have heard in Reformed churches, was described in the early twentieth century by George Henry Gerberding:

> To the Lutheran the sermon, as the preached Word, is a means of grace. Through it the Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian church on earth. It is a constant offer of pardon; a giving of life, as well as a nourishing and strengthening of life. In the Reformed churches the sermon is apt to be more hortatory and ethical. It partakes more of the sacrificial than of the sacramental character. The individuality of the preacher, the subjective choice of a text, the using of it merely for a motto, the discussion of secular subjects, the unrestrained platform style, lack of reverence, lack of dignity, and many other faults are common, and are not regarded as unbecoming the messenger of God in His temple. Where there is a properly trained Lutheran consciousness such things repel, shock, and are not tolerated. (Gerberding, 277-78)

The Apology also stated that those who

> hold office in the church...represent the person of Christ on account of the call of the church and do not represent their own persons, as Christ himself testifies [Luke 10:16], "Whoever listens to you listens to me." When they offer the Word of Christ or the sacraments, they offer them in the stead and place of Christ. (VII/VIII:28, K/W)

And in a fuller and truly beautiful statement, the Formula of Concord confessed that

> in his boundless kindness and mercy, God provides for the public proclamation of his divine, eternal law, and the wonderful counsel concerning our redemption, namely, the holy and only saving Gospel of his eternal Son, our only Saviour and Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Thereby he gathers an eternal church for himself out of the human race and works in the hearts of men true repentance and knowledge of their sins and true faith in the Son of God, Jesus Christ. And it is God's will to call men to eternal salvation, to draw them to himself, convert them, beget them anew, and sanctify them through this means and in no other way – namely, through his holy Word (when one hears it preached or reads it) and the sacraments (when they are used according to his Word). "For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, it pleased God through the folly of what we preach to save those who believe" (1 Cor. 1:21). "Peter will declare to you a message by which you will be saved, you and your household" (Acts 11:14). "Faith comes from what is heard, and what is heard comes by the preaching of Christ" (Rom. 10:17). "Sanctify them in the truth; thy Word is truth. I pray for those who are to believe in me through their Word" (John 17:

> 17, 20). Therefore the eternal Father calls out from heaven concerning his beloved Son and concerning all who in his name preach repentance and the remission of sins, "Listen to him" (Matt. 17:5). (SD II:50-51, Tap)

The Formula of Concord also confessed that "The distinction between law and Gospel is an especially brilliant light which serves the purpose that the Word of God may be rightly divided and the writings of the holy prophets and apostles may be explained and understood correctly" (SD V:1, Tap). This does not mean that every sermon needs to be about the doctrine of law and gospel *as such.* But it does mean that whatever is preached, is to be preached in *a law-gospel way*. And so, when the Lutheran Reformers declared in the Apology that "the chief worship of God is the preaching of the Gospel," they added that in their churches

> all sermons deal with topics like these: penitence, the fear of God, faith in Christ, the righteousness of faith, comfort for the conscience through faith, the exercise of faith, prayer and our assurance that it is efficacious and is heard, the cross, respect for rulers and for all civil ordinances, the distinction between the kingdom of Christ (or the spiritual kingdom) and political affairs, marriage, the education and instruction of children, chastity, and all the works of love. (XV:42-43, Tap)

Later in the Apology they stated that "Practical and clear sermons hold an audience," which they believed was the reason why "attendance in our churches is greater than among the opponents" (XXIV:50, K/W).

In the Large Catechism, Luther also emphasized the crucial importance of a regular and frequent administration of *the Lord's Supper* in and for the church. He acknowledged that Christians are indeed "born anew through Baptism," but also reminded everyone that "our human flesh and blood...have not lost their old skin." And as far as *external* trials and temptations are concerned, he pointed out that

> There are so many hindrances and attacks of the devil and the world that we often grow weary and faint and at times even stumble. Therefore the Lord's Supper is given as a daily food and sustenance so that our faith may be refreshed and strengthened and that it may not succumb in the struggle but become stronger and stronger. (V:23-24, K/W)

And in the Apology, while the Reformers affirmed that in places of worship "Candles, golden vessels, and similar adornments are appropriate," they also emphasized that "The true adornment of the churches is godly, useful, and clear doctrine, the devout use of the sacraments, ardent prayer, and the like" (XXIV:51, K/W).

In the light of the gospel, the Lutheran Reformers of the sixteenth century corrected the abuses that had gradually crept into the church's worship before their time, while cherishing and retaining the authentic and edifying core of the historic liturgy. Luther explained in the introduction to his *Formula Missae* that

> It is not now nor ever has been our intention to abolish the liturgical service of God completely, but rather to purify the one that is now in use from the wretched accretions which corrupt it and to point out an evangelical use. (LW 53:20)

The comments of Henry Eyster Jacobs are also to the point:

> The Lutheran Reformation was no revolutionary movement. It looked with disfavor upon all novelties. It did not break with tradition, except where tradition broke with Scripture. The Augsburg Confession protests: "In doctrine and ceremonies, nothing has been received on our part against Scripture or the Church Catholic." Its principle of liturgical reform is...: "It

> is a false and malicious charge that all the ceremonies, all the things instituted of old, are abolished in our churches. But it has been a common complaint that some abuses are connected with the ordinary rites. Inasmuch as these could not be approved with a good conscience, they have been corrected to some extent" [Conclusion: 5; Conclusion of Part One: 4-5]. (Jacobs PBLM, 73-74)

The Augsburg Confession further described the conservative reforms that were introduced by the Lutherans:

> Our people have been unjustly accused of having abolished the Mass. But it is obvious, without boasting, that the Mass is celebrated among us with greater devotion and earnestness than among our opponents. ... Moreover, no noticeable changes have been made in the public celebration of the Mass, except that in certain places German hymns are sung alongside the Latin responses for the instruction and exercise of the people. For after all, all ceremonies should serve the purpose of teaching the people what they need to know about Christ. (XXIV:1, 9, 2-3, K/W)

The reverence and seriousness that characterized a proper Lutheran worship service were highlighted in the Augsburg Confession's statement that

> it can readily be judged that nothing contributes so much to the maintenance of dignity in public worship and the cultivation of reverence and devotion among the people as the proper observance of ceremonies in the churches. (Part 2 Intro.:6, Tap)

Regarding ceremonies that are neither commanded nor forbidden by God's Word, the Formula of Concord taught, as a matter of principle, that

> the churches are not to condemn one another because of differences in ceremonies when in Christian freedom one has fewer or more than the other, as long as these churches are otherwise united in teaching and in all the articles of the faith as well as in the proper use of the holy sacraments. (SD X:31, K/W)

The Formula also taught that "the community of God in every time and place has the right, power, and authority to change, reduce, or expand such practices according to circumstances." But this was not an unrestrained and unregulated right, power, and authority. According to the Formula, such changes in ceremonies were to be made only

> in an orderly and appropriate manner, without frivolity or offense, as seems most useful, beneficial, and best for good order, Christian discipline, evangelical decorum, and the building up of the church.

The Formula was also quite clear that "useless, foolish spectacles, which are not beneficial for good order, Christian discipline, or evangelical decorum in the church, are not true *adiaphora*," and are therefore specifically ruled out as permissible for a Lutheran congregation (SD X:7,9, K/W). The instruction and warnings of Paul E. Kretzmann also need to be taken to heart, as he explained what kinds of things are matters of *adiaphora*, and what kinds of things are not:

> Divine worship in the Christian Church is not an *adiaphoron*. The Lord expressly commands that His Word be heard, John 8, 47. He has only severe censure for those who forsake the Christian assemblies, Hebrews 10, 25. He expressly enjoins public prayer, 1 Timothy 2, 1. 2. 8. He graciously promises His divine presence at such assemblies, Matthew 18, 20. He records with approval the public services of the early Christians, Acts 2, 42-47. But though He has prescribed the *general* content of public worship, though He is present in the sacramental acts of divine service, declaring and appropriating to the be-

> lievers the means of grace, and though He graciously receives the sacrificial acts of the assembled congregation, in confession and prayer and offerings, He has not commanded a definite form or order of divine service. It is a matter of Christian liberty whether a congregation wishes one or many prayers, one or several hymns, one or two sermons or homilies, whether the chief assembly be held in the morning or in the evening, whether the service be held on Sunday or on a ferial day.
>
> To argue from these facts, however, that it is a matter of complete indifference as to how the form of Christian worship is constituted would be bringing liberty dangerously near to license. The Lord says: "Let all things be done decently and in order," 1 Cor. 14, 40; and again: "Let all things be done for edification," v. 26. It cannot really be a matter of indifference to a Christian congregation when the order of service used in her midst shows so much similarity to a heterodox order as to confuse visitors. One may hardly argue that such *adiaphora* do not matter one way or the other... And a Lutheran congregation cannot justly divorce herself, not only not from the doctrinal, but also not from the historical side of its Church. (Kretzmann CA, 395-96)

(See *Addendum II* for a fuller discussion of what is and what is not a matter of *adiaphora* in public worship.)

A defining liturgical principle for the Lutheran Reformers was that nothing should be done in a worship service that is out of harmony with the fundamental conviction – expressed in the Large Catechism – that "Places, times, persons, and the entire outward order of worship have... been instituted and appointed in order that God's Word may exert its power publicly" (I:94, K/W). They acknowledged in the Apology that "different rites instituted by human beings do not undermine the true unity of the church," and there were in fact some variations among the sixteenth-century church orders that were adopted and used by the different Lutheran territories and cities. (See *Addendum III* for a discussion of the three types of Lutheran church orders that emerged in the Reformation era.) Still, the Lutheran Reformers also declared in the Apology that

> it pleases us when universal rites are kept for the sake of tranquillity. Thus, in our churches we willingly observe the order of the Mass, the Lord's day, and other more important festival days. With a very grateful spirit we cherish the useful and ancient ordinances, especially when they contain a discipline by which it is profitable to educate and teach [the] common folk and [the] ignorant." (VII/VIII:33, K/W)

The thoughtful retention of these "universal rites" and cherished "ancient ordinances" was understood to be "best practice" for the church under most circumstances, even if other less conservative approaches were also seen as permissible or tolerable under certain conditions. The retention of these rites and ordinances was not in itself a matter of absolute importance. But it was not a matter of careless or arbitrary indifference, either. In view of the close association that these rites and ordinances had with the faithful teaching and preaching of the gospel and with the reverent administration of the sacraments – which they respectfully supported and effectively facilitated – their retention was understood to be a matter of relative importance, and as something that was better to be done than not to be done.

What the reclaimed and cleansed order of the mass, or Lutheran Divine Service, looked and sounded like in the majority of Lutheran territories and cities in the sixteenth century, was described elsewhere in the Apology:

> ...we do not abolish the Mass but religiously retain and defend it. Among us the Mass is celebrated every Lord's day and on other festivals, when the sacrament is made available to those who wish to partake of it, after they have been examined and absolved. We also keep traditional liturgical forms, such as the order of readings, prayers, vestments, and other similar things. ... Ceremonies should be observed both so that people may learn the

> Scriptures and so that, admonished by the Word, they might experience faith and fear and finally even pray. For these are the purposes of the ceremonies. We keep the Latin for the sake of those who learn and understand it. We also use German hymns in order that the [common] people might have something to learn, something that will arouse their faith and fear. (XXIV:1, 3, K/W)

The examination and absolution mentioned here as components in a communicant's preparation for receiving the Lord's Supper, were explained in more detail in Luther's *Formula Missae*. Concerning the examination, Luther wrote that the "bishop" or pastor should

> be informed of those who want to commune. They should request in person to receive the Lord's Supper so that he may be able to know both their names and manner of life. And let him not admit the applicants unless they can give a reason for their faith and can answer questions about what the Lord's Supper is, what its benefits are, and what they expect to derive from it. In other words, they should be able to repeat the Words of Institution from memory and to explain that they are coming because they are troubled by the consciousness of their sin, the fear of death, or some other evil, such as temptation of the flesh, the world, or the devil, and now hunger and thirst to receive the word and sign of grace and salvation from the Lord himself through the ministry of the bishop, so that they may be consoled and comforted; this was Christ's purpose, when he in priceless love gave and instituted this Supper, and said, "Take and eat," etc.
>
> But I think it enough for the applicants for communion to be examined or explored once a year. Indeed, a man may be so understanding that he needs to be questioned only once in his lifetime or not at all. For, by this practice, we want to guard lest the worthy and unworthy alike rush to the Lord's Supper... (LW 53:32-33)

And Luther wrote, "concerning private confession before communion," that "it neither is necessary nor should be demanded. Nevertheless, it is useful and should not be despised..." (LW 53:34) In a sermon from 1531 Luther also said that

> To confess sin does not mean (as among the papists) to recite a long catalog of sins, but to desire absolution. This is in itself a sufficient confession, that is, acknowledging yourself guilty and confessing that you are a sinner. And no more should be demanded and required, no naming and recitation of all or some, many or a few sins, unless you of your own accord desire to indicate something that especially burdens your conscience and calls for instruction and advice or specific comfort... (quoted in WLS I:331)

Absolution – whether private or public – is indeed something to be desired, because of the certainty regarding God's reconciling grace and forgiveness that it brings. St. John's Gospel reports that Jesus told his disciples: "If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them" (20:23, ESV). We therefore believe that when a pastor solemnly announces to us, "By the authority of God and of my holy office I forgive you all your sins"; or when a "called and ordained servant of the Word" declares to us, "in the stead and by the command of our Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins" (ELH, 43, 61), Jesus himself is speaking through that minister. Lutherans confess in the Apology that

> when the gospel is heard, when absolution is heard, the conscience is uplifted and receives consolation. Because God truly makes alive through the Word, the keys truly forgive sins before God according to [Luke 10:16], "Whoever listens to you listens to me." Therefore we must believe the voice of the one absolving no less than we would believe a voice from heaven. (XII:39-40, K/W)

4: THE FORMS AND CHARACTER OF REFORMATION-ERA LUTHERAN WORSHIP

This more detailed description of a typical Communion Service in Luther's Wittenberg, from the travel diary of Wolfgang Musculus (an unsympathetic observer), comes from the year 1536:

> At the seventh hour we returned to the city church and observed by which rite they celebrated the Liturgy; namely thus: First, the Introit was played on the organ, accompanied by the choir in Latin, as in the mass offering. Indeed, the minister meanwhile proceeded from the sacristy dressed sacrificially [i.e. in traditional mass vestments] and, kneeling before the altar, made his confession together with the assisting sacristan. After the confession he ascended to the altar to the book that was located on the right side, according to papist custom. After the Introit the organ was played and the *Kyrie eleison* sung in alternation by the boys. When it was done the minister sang *Gloria in excelsis*, which song was completed in alternation by the organ and choir. Thereafter the minister at the altar sang "Dominus vobiscum," the choir responding "Et cum spiritu tuo." The Collect for that day followed in Latin, then he sang the Epistle in Latin, after which the organ was played, the choir following with *Herr Gott Vater, wohn uns bei*. When it was done the Gospel for that Sunday was sung by the minister in Latin on the left side of the altar, as is the custom of the adherents of the pope. After this the organ played, and the choir followed with *Wir glauben all an einen Gott*. After this song came the sermon, ...delivered on the Gospel for that Sunday... After the sermon the choir sang *Da pacem domine*, followed by the prayer for peace by the minister at the altar, this in Latin as well.
>
> The Communion followed, which the minister began with the Lord's Prayer sung in German. Then he sang the words of the Supper, and these in German with his back turned toward the people, first those of the bread, which, when the words had been offered, he then elevated to the sounding of bells; likewise with the chalice, which he also elevated to the sounding of bells. Immediately communion was held. ... During the communion the *Agnus Dei* was sung in Latin. The minister served the bread in common dress [i.e. in a black robe] but [he served] the chalice dressed sacrificially [i.e. in mass vestments]. They followed the singing of the *Agnus Dei* with a German song: *Jesus Christus* [*unser Heiland*] and *Gott sei gelobet*. After the sermon the majority of the people departed. ... The minister ended the Communion with a certain thanksgiving sung in German. He followed this, facing the people, with the Benediction, singing "The Lord make his face to shine on you, etc." And thus was the mass ended. (quoted in Herl, 195-96)

Musculus also visited Eisenach, where he observed the Lutheran worship life of that city, and described it as follows in his travel diary:

> At 7:00 we entered the church where the Office of the Mass, as they call it, was held in the following manner:
>
> First the boys and the headmaster sang the Introit for Cantate Sunday in Latin, set apart in the chancel in an entirely papistical fashion. Then came the *Kyrie eleison* with the organ being played in alternation. Thirdly a deacon, dressed entirely according to the papistical fashion and standing by the altar, which was likewise adorned with candles and other things, sang in Latin "*Gloria in excelsis Deo*" (Glory to God in the highest); this canticle the choir and organist again completed. When this was finished the deacon sang a collect, as they call it, in German, facing the altar with his back turned toward the congregation, and appended a reading from the Epistle of James, facing the congregation, also in German.
>
> Again the organ was played while the choir sang, "*Victimae paschali*" and the congregation sang responsively, "*Christ ist erstanden!*" Upon this the deacon sang a portion of the Gospel in German, "But now I am going to Him who sent Me," etc. (John 16:5), while facing the congregation. After this reading the organ was played as the congregation sang, "We All Believe in One True God." When this was finished Justus Menius preached, dressed in the usual manner [in a black robe], not in any special [ecclesiastical] robe.

After the sermon the deacon, standing at the altar in priestly garb, exhorted the people to prayer for some particularly enumerated concerns and closed with Christ's promise: "Whatever you ask the Father," etc. (John 15:16, 16:23). Next he briefly recalled the institution of the Lord's Supper, then he sang the Words of Institution first over the bread, whereby he elevated it entirely according to the papistical fashion while genuflecting away from the people; then over the chalice, which he likewise elevated after finishing the Words of Institution. When this was over the organ played and the choir sang the *Agnus Dei* (Lamb of God). Meanwhile Communion began. A deacon dressed in the usual manner [i.e., in a black robe] administered the chalice. Not a single man was seen going to Communion, but a few little women were communed. Following this, the deacon communed himself at the altar, after having first adored the bread, although he did not do so with the chalice. This he carefully emptied and then washed with newly poured wine, so that nothing of the blood remained.

After Communion he sang a prayer while facing the altar. When this was finished he dismissed the people with a benediction that he sang while facing them. Finally, as the congregation left the church the choir sang *Da pacem, Domine* in German. And with that this celebration was ended.

Vespers was held at 1:00 in the afternoon, entirely after the papistical fashion, in the chancel, except that a boy sang the Sunday Gospel down to the congregation from the loft in the ordinary manner. After Vespers there was a sermon on the Second Commandment, "You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain," etc., after which "Christ is arisen" was sung. (quoted in Zeeden, 12-14)

Four years earlier, in 1532, English diplomat Sir Thomas Elyot had described the Lutheran "Mass" he witnessed in the city of Nürnberg:

> The priest, in vestments after our manner, singeth everything in Latin, as we use, omitting suffrages. The Epistle he readeth in Latin. In the meantime the sub-deacon goeth into the pulpit and readeth to the people the Epistle in their vulgar; after, they peruse other things as our priests do. Then the priest readeth softly the Gospel in Latin. In the mean space the deacon goeth into the pulpit and readeth aloud the Gospel in the Almaigne tongue. ... After, the priest and the quirer [choir] do sing the *Credo* as we do; the secrets and preface they omit, and the priest singeth with a high voice the words of the consecration; and after the [e]levation the deacon turneth to the people, telling them in the Almaigne tongue a long process how they should prepare themselves to the communion of the flesh and blood of Christ; and then may every man come that listeth, without going to any confession. (quoted in Spinks, 178-79)

With respect to the decorum of public worship and the dignity of the pastoral office, the 1533 Brandenburg-Nürnberg Church Order maintained that while "vestments, altar cloths, gold and silver vessels, candles, etc., are free, and do not at all affect faith and conscience," they are nevertheless – for the sake of order and reverence – "to be retained and used, *especially the vestments*, in order that the ministers may not be in their ordinary clothes, but may fitly minister to the congregation" (Horn LWJB, 280-81). The Danish-Norwegian Church Order of 1537, prepared under Bugenhagen's guiding hand, included this basic description of what Sunday worship in a Danish or Norwegian Lutheran church should be like: "One public Mass should be celebrated on the Lord's Day for communicants, in the customary vestments, at a covered altar, with the customary vessels and lights" (RW, 259).

We have two interesting descriptions by twentieth-century historians of how the Divine Service was conducted in Denmark and Norway during this time frame. The first description comes from Loui Novac, focusing specifically on how things were done in Denmark:

The Priest, kneeling before the altar, offered the *Confiteor* ("Confession") and prayer. Meanwhile the people sang the *Introit* (this could be read if necessary) or Psalm in Danish. During High Festivals an *Introit* in Latin was to be used. The *Kyrie* was sung. The Priest here inserted the *Gloria* in Latin or in Danish. The People sang the *Gloria* to the end. During High Festivals it was to be done completely in Latin. The Priest, facing the People, offered the *Dominus vobiscum*. Then he read one or two Collects in Danish, facing the altar. The People responded with *Amen*. The Priest read the Epistle in Danish while facing the People. Children sang the *Alleluia* with verse. Then the *Gradual* was offered with two verses or a Psalm in the vernacular Danish. During the festival seasons there was to be a Sequence in Latin with Danish interpolated. The Priest, facing the People, read the Gospel in Danish. The Priest, facing the altar, inserted the Creed. The Sermon was preached from the pulpit. A Pulpit Text was read. The General Prayer of the Church was offered. There followed the Lord's Prayer and a song of peace.

The Priest prepared the Bread and Wine. Communicants then assembled by the altar. The Priest, facing the People, offered the Exhortation of the Sacrament. During the High Festivals the Latin Preface or the Latin *Sanctus* could be done, but this was optional. The Priest, facing the altar, sang the Lord's Prayer in Danish. During High Festivals the Lord's Prayer was sung in Latin. The Priest, facing the altar, sang the Words of Institution using the Danish language. At the point of Elevation, the altar bells were rung. Distribution of the Sacrament *sub utraque* (in both kinds). Meanwhile songs were sung in Danish. During High Festivals, an optional addition was the Latin *Agnus Dei* or a similar form. The Priest, facing the People, offered the *Dominus vobiscum* and then, facing the altar, he read a Collect of Thanks in the vernacular Danish. The People responded with *Amen*. The Priest, facing the People, offered the *Dominus vobiscum* again and concluded with a Blessing or Benediction. A short Danish song came here at the end of the worship service. Meanwhile the Priest took off his vestments and belt in silent thanksgiving before the altar. (Novac, 184-85)

The second description comes from Johannes Bergsma, focusing specifically on how things were done in Norway:

In appearance the service looked very much like the pre-Reformation liturgy. The pastor was vested in the usual vestments (alb, chasuble). The altar was also vested with the usual paraments, chalice, candles, etc.

The pastor, kneeling at the altar, would read his *Confiteor,* and pray for the preaching of the Gospel, for the king, and for the government, while the *Introit* or Psalm proper to the day was sung. Where there was no choir a Norwegian hymn was sung.

The *Kyrie eleison* was sung according to the melody proper to the day or season. Then the pastor would intone the Song of the Angels (in Norwegian on regular Sundays or Latin on the festivals) and the congregation would continue the song until its conclusion.

The pastor, turning to the congregation, would sing the salutation and the choir would respond. Then, turning to the altar, he would pray one or two collects, proper to the day, or appropriate for the needs of the time. The people answer "Amen".

Then the pastor would turn to the congregation and read the Epistle for the day, in Norwegian, after which the children would sing *Alleluia* (the eternal song of the church) and the appropriate verse. Then a *Gradual* of two verses, or a Norwegian hymn would be sung. On Festival days one of the old (but pure) Sequence hymns (Christmas to Presentation: *Grates nunc omnes;* Easter to Pentecost: *Victimae paschali laudes;* Pentecost: *Veni Sancte Spiritus*) would be sung in alternation with the appropriate vernacular hymn.

Then the pastor would turn to the people and read the Gospel for the day, in Norwegian, after which he would turn again to the altar and sing, "*Credo in unum deum*" followed by the congregation singing, "We All Believe in One True God, Who Created...".

The sermon would follow, in the vernacular, of course, but never to last longer than one hour. At the end of the sermon the pastor would bid the people to pray, including

petitions for all spiritual and temporal needs, concluding with the Lord's Prayer. Then the schoolmaster would lead the singing of a vernacular hymn for peace (Grant peace, we pray) or another hymn. At times the Litany and a Collect would have been sung or said, the people responding, "Amen".

If there were any communicants the pastor would go to the altar to prepare the bread and wine. He would then turn to the communicants and read an Exhortation. Then, facing the altar, he would sing the Lord's Prayer in a loud voice followed by the Words of Institution, which of all parts of the service must always be in the vernacular. On the high festivals the Preface, proper preface and *Sanctus* would have been sung (in Latin) between the Exhortation and the Lord's Prayer, and the *Agnus Dei* would follow the Words of Institution.

It was very important that the sacristan would have prepared the right amount of elements for the number of communicants so that the Institution would not need to be sung or said again during the communion.

The schoolmaster directed the singing of "Jesus Christ, Our Blessed Savior" and other hymns during the communion, as they were needed for the duration of the distribution.

Then the pastor would turn again to the people for the Salutation and, facing the altar, pray the Collect of Thanks, and the people would answer "Amen". Finally, facing the people, the pastor blessed the congregation according to the form of Numbers 6. The cantor would then lead the singing of a short closing hymn, in Norwegian, while the pastor removed the mass vestments and knelt at the altar for a private prayer of thanks.

...if there were no communicants there would be no consecration, for a consecration without communicants would be a misuse of the sacrament. Instead the pastor, vested in an alb without the chasuble, would stand in the pulpit for the pulpit service and prayers, and the service would conclude with the singing of one or two hymns and the usual Benediction. (Bergsma, 121-27; quoted in Marzolf MA)

In its descriptions of the rites and ceremonies that were to be followed in public worship, the 1537 Danish-Norwegian Church Order often spoke in general terms and without detail. Apparently it was assumed that when the provisions of the church order were simply maintaining what was theretofore already being done, everyone would know what was being referred to. It was not necessary to get specific except when changes from familiar medieval usages were being introduced.

But the very influential Danish-Norwegian *Ritual* of 1685 and *Agenda* of 1688, which preserved the basic structure and content of the 1537 church order, added that detail and that specificity. Some changes were also made, such as the omission of public confession and absolution, the deletion of the Introit, and the substitution of a hymn for the Hallelujah. Craig A. Ferkenstad offers a helpful summary of the chief features of the Divine Service as outlined in the 1685 *Ritual:*

2. OPENING PRAYER

"God's service begins...when the Deacon [*Degnen*] stands in the door of the Chancel, or in the middle of the Church, and with a loud voice reads as follows: *O Lord! We have assembled in this Your house... Our Father, who art in heaven...*"

6. KYRIE

"Then the Deacon begins to sing [the *Kyrie*]." (Alternatives are provided for the seasons "from Christmas until the Purification of the Holy Virgin" and "from Easter until Whitsunday.")

8. GLORIA IN EXCELSIS

"When the *Kyrie* is sung, the pastor [*Praesten*], facing the Altar, sings the first words of this hymn and then the congregation joins until the end: *All Glory Be to God on High*, etc."

9. COLLECT

"...the pastor shall turn to the People and sing in the usual tone: *The Lord be with you!* After which the Choir responds: *And with your spirit!* Then he turns again to the Altar and sings the Collect... The Choir and People respond: *Amen*."

10. EPISTLE

"Then he turns again to the People, and with the usual tone loudly sings the Epistle (Lection)... *The Epistle written by N. N. Apostle to the N. N., or This is the Holy Lection written in, or by N. N.* And he sings the entire Epistle (Lection) to the end."

11. HYMN

"When the Epistle has been read he turns to the Altar, and instead of the *Hallelujah* a short hymn is sung, which corresponds to the Epistle and is found in the hymnbook; and it is accompanied by the organ, if and when they have it."

12. HYMN

"And then [is sung]: *O Holy Ghost To Thee We Pray*." (Alternates are provided for the seasons "from Christmas to Candlemas," "from Easter to our Lord's Ascension," and "on Ascension Day.")

13. GOSPEL

"Then the pastor shall turn to the People, and with a high and loud voice sings the Gospel, with this beginning: *This is the Holy Gospel written by N. N.* The Choir responds: *God be praised for His Joyous Tidings*, or *Praise and Honor be to God*. Then he sings the whole Gospel which corresponds to the Day ["After the Gospel is sung at the Altar a little bell is rung in the pulpit as usual."], and at the end he turns to the Altar and begins to sing:

14. CREED

We All Believe in One True God."

15. HYMN

"...in the cities and in the countries [country towns and villages], where it happens, one or two verses from the hymnbook concerning the Day's Gospel are sung together with the organ's accompaniment."

16. SERMON

"Then the pastor goes to the pulpit and preaches the usual sermon based on the Day's Gospel. ... The pastor, or whoever preaches, shall first of all commend the people to prayer and call for God's help in this holy ceremony; and then as usual read the Lord's Prayer..." During certain seasons "they sing after the Lord's Prayer and before the Gospel is read from the pulpit" special hymn verses as specified for the seasons: "between Christmas and Candlemas," "between Easter and Christ's Ascension," "between Christ's Ascension and Pentecost," and "on the Feast of Pentecost." "At the three great Holy Days they sing each verse three times and also on Ascension Day, but after that only one time, and then the pastor always gives the congregation a very short speech about each of these Holy Days' joy and [significance for] salvation."

18. HYMN

A hymn is here sung with designated selections for the seasons: "from Christmas until Candlemas," "from Easter until Christ's Ascension," "from Christ's Ascension until Pentecost," "on Pentecost Day," "All Saints Day," "Michael's Day and Thanksgiving."

"After this he [the pastor] Baptizes the children if there are some to be Baptized." "After Baptism they sing the last verse of this hymn: *He That Believes and Is Baptized*."

"Thereafter he [the pastor] celebrates Communion...but if there are none who wish to commune, then the priest without his chasuble [*Messehagel*] turns to the Congregation and sings:

19. COLLECT

The Lord be with you! The Choir responds: *And with your spirit!* Then he turns to the Altar and sings the following Collect: *O Lord God, Heavenly Father! We thank You*

for this fatherly benefit... The Choir responds: *Amen*."

20. BENEDICTION

"After the Collect is sung, he turns to the People again and gives the usual blessing to them: *The Lord be with you!* The choir responds: *And with your spirit!* The pastor sings: *The Lord bless you and keep you.* ... The People respond: *Amen*."

21. HYMN

"...they sing a hymn which corresponds with the Day's Gospel. ...the pastor meanwhile...is standing before the Altar until everything is at an end."

22. CLOSING PRAYER

"The aforesaid service is concluded in like manner [as at the Opening Prayer] with this prayer and the Lord's Prayer: *O Lord! We thank You most heartily that You have taught us... Our Father, who art in heaven...*"

When communicants had announced their intention to receive the Lord's body and blood on a given Sunday or festival, the service continued in this way, as Ferkenstad again summarizes it:

CHRIST'S SUPPER

"The pastor shall be attired in both the surplice [*Messeskjorte*] and chasuble [*Messehagelen*] while the Communion is [being] performed, and also the Altar should always be covered with a fair linen, [and have placed on it the] Chalice, and Paten, and two lit candles, [for] as long as the Communion will be [taking place]..."

21. EXHORTATION

"When everything in this manner is in order, and the singing is completed before the Communion, then the priest turns to the Congregation and reads first of all the usual exhortation to them [the communicants]... Then he turns to the Altar again and with a loud voice in Danish sings the entire Communion-Mass as follows:

22. LORD'S PRAYER

Let us all pray: Our Father, who art in heaven... To which the Congregation responds: *Amen*."

23. WORDS OF INSTITUTION

"Then he begins in like manner the Words of Institution: *Our Lord Jesus Christ...*"

24. DISTRIBUTION

"When this is performed, then the priest with respect takes first the Paten with the consecrated Bread...and when he gives it he says to each one in particular: *This is Jesus' True Body...* [and when offering the Chalice] *This is Jesus' True Blood*. When the distribution in this manner is completed with both parts, Bread and Wine, then the pastor who has distributed the Chalice turns to the communicants and says as follows: *The crucified and risen Jesus Christ...* Then the ones who have communed stand up and with respect bow their knee together with their heart, and go to their place again."

25 HYMN OF THANKSGIVING

"During the Communion they sing either: *O Lamb of God Most Holy*, or another of the [hymns from the]...hymnbook, ...and finally end with either this song of praise: *May God Be Praised Henceforth and Blest Forever*, or another hymn of thanksgiving."

26 COLLECT OF THANKSGIVING

"Then the pastor turns to the Congregation and sings with a loud voice: *The Lord be with you!* The Congregation responds: *And with your spirit!* He turns to the Altar again and reads according to custom the following Collect: *Let us all pray: We thank You, Lord, almighty, eternal God...* The Congregation responds: *Amen*."

27 BENEDICTION

"Then the pastor turns again to the Congregation and closes the entire Mass with the customary blessing..." (Ferkenstad AGS, 15-21)

5: THE LORD'S SUPPER ON THE LORD'S DAY

With few exceptions, it was the standard practice among the Lutherans of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries for the full Divine Service to be held on each Sunday, and also on other occasions as needed, if there were communicants who wished to partake of the Lord's Supper and who were properly prepared to do so. And this was not a new idea:

> There is a great deal of evidence from the history of the church that supports an every-Sunday communion in addition to an every-Sunday sermon. That the early Christians received the supper whenever they gathered on the Lord's day is obvious as one reads in the Acts and 1 Corinthians. (CWH, 44)

Hermann Sasse summarizes the full and balanced sacramental piety of the ancient church in his observation that, for the apostles and early Fathers, the Lord's Supper

> was in every respect the life of the church. It was never to be separated from the Gospel. The church of the first centuries was the church of the Eucharist. A Sunday, a Lord's Day, was unthinkable without the Lord's Supper. But if ever the church was a preaching church, the church of the apostles and the Church Fathers was. The same is true of all great periods of the church. The sacrament and the sermon belong together, and it is always a sign of the decay of the church if one is emphasized at the expense of the other. (Sasse TMB, 2)

This was the sacramental piety that the Lutheran Reformers wanted to reclaim and restore. Herman A. Preus describes the two-front struggle in which Luther and his coworkers were engaged, in their efforts to do this, as they contended against the errors and imbalances both of the Roman Church and of the Reformed and sectarian churches. Preus notes, first, that

> It would be a mistake to regard Luther's tangle with Rome on the Sacrament of the Altar as an effort to minimize the importance of it. He did indeed accuse the Romans of de-emphasizing the Word. And his concern was to restore the Word to its proper place beside the sacraments of Baptism and Eucharist. ... At the same time it must be said that Luther maintained the church's reverence for the Sacrament. And what is more, he gave it back to the people. He rejected as unbiblical the idea that the priest could celebrate Mass for the people while they sat in their pews praying with their rosaries instead of partaking of the body and blood of the Lord. And both in his preaching and writing he impressed on the people the necessity of frequent Communion for the sustaining and strengthening of their Christian life. ... The balance between Word and Sacrament must be maintained.

Preus goes on to observe that

> While the Romans tipped the balance to the Sacrament at the expense of the Word, Luther saw the Swiss reformers and the enthusiasts as reversing this and de-emphasizing the sacraments to the point of neglect. Most serious of all to him was their rejection of the real presence of the body and blood in the Sacrament. This was taking the very heart out of the Supper and was a blatant denial of the clear words of Christ. (Preus TLB, 156-57)

When in 1528 the city of Nürnberg, through Lazarus Spengler, sought Luther's guidance on when and how the Lord's Supper should be celebrated and made available to the people, he replied and advised

> that one or two masses should be celebrated on Sundays or on the days of the saints in the two parish churches, depending on whether there is a great or small number of communicants. If there were a need for it, or if it were considered desirable, the same could be done

> at the *Spital* [the Hospital]. ...during the week mass could be celebrated on whatever day there is a need for it, that is, if there are some communicants present who ask for it and desire it. In this way no one would be forced to come to the sacrament, and yet everyone would be served [with the sacrament] in an orderly and sufficient way. If the ministers complain about this, however, alleging that they are thus forced [to celebrate the Lord's Supper], or lamenting that they are unworthy [to celebrate the Lord's Supper], I would tell them that no one compels them except God himself through his call. For since they have the office, they are already obliged and compelled (on the basis of their calling and office) to administer the sacrament when it is requested of them; thus their excuses are void. This is the same as their obligation to preach, comfort, absolve, help the poor, and visit the sick, as often as these services are needed and demanded. (LW 49:206-07)

The great Missouri Synod liturgiologist Friedrich Lochner elaborated on the proper Lutheran understanding of these matters in his 1895 book on *The Chief Divine Service of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church*:

> On the basis of Acts 2:42 and 1 Corinthians 11, and following the pattern of the Ancient church, the Lutheran church considers the *Communion service* the most glorious and most important of all public services, having also fitted it out liturgically in the richest and most thoughtful manner. There is therefore a distinction between the *chief service* and the *incidental service* [*Haupt- und Nebengottesdienst*]. It is not by the Sunday or festival nor by the season nor by the liturgical richness that a service becomes a *chief service*, but (as determined by the scriptural relationship of Word and Sacrament), *when the proclamation of the Word of the Gospel is immediately followed by the administration of the sacrament of Christ's body and blood, so that this, as the seal of the Word, forms the goal and keystone* of the service. All other services in which the administration of the Sacrament is not intended from the outset are rendered incidental services, however richly many of these may have been ordered liturgically in the past. Having regard for the interconnectedness of Word and Sacrament, as well as for Christian antiquity, when even in the days of Augustine (AD 400) the Supper was received by the whole congregation every Sunday at least, assuming there was a longing for it – the *mid-morning service* which followed the early Matins service in the Reformation era and long afterward *was regularly a Communion service, and thus a Chief Divine Service*, at least in congregations of greater number. In contrast to the private masses of the papacy in which only the officiating priest receives the Sacrament, the Apology, Article VIII [33] emphasizes: "Among us, however, the people partake of the Holy Sacrament every Sunday willingly, without compulsion"; likewise Article XXIV [1]: "Masses are celebrated in our churches every Sunday and on all festivals, in which the Sacrament is offered to those who wish to use it, provided they have first been examined and absolved." Thus it was that, when for lack of communicants the Supper could not be celebrated in such a service, there was still an attempt to leave the form of the Divine Service intact in all other respects. In a number of places, however, the sermon was followed by the reading of a prescribed exhortation, such as in Pomerania (1563), Liegnitz (1594), or the delivery of a freer exhortation, as in Wittenberg (1559, 1565) and Mecklenburg (1540, 1552). In such exhortations, the lack of the communicants was lamented and a frequent use of the most worthy supper was exhorted and encouraged (yet without constraint of the Law). (Lochner, 5)

At least in regard to the church's observance of the Lord's day and of major Christian festivals, we might therefore say – as Jacobs did say – that "There is no proper Service, without the preaching of the Word; there is no complete Service, without Word and Sacrament" (Jacobs LME, 305). (See *Addendum IV* for a fuller discussion of the balanced approach of the Lutheran Reformation in regard to the content and character of public worship.)

6: PASTORAL OVERSIGHT OF COMMUNION AND COMMUNICANTS

In the Reformation era and later, communicants were not pressured to receive the sacrament just because it was available. Luther himself, while calling for the sacrament to be *available* every week, did not himself *commune* every week. His friend Veit Dietrich remembered in 1548 that "it was always Luther's practice that he generally went to the sacrament every 14 days or at least every 3 weeks and desired absolution beforehand..." (quoted in WA 48:326). And while Luther did usually seek out an opportunity for private confession and absolution before going to communion, he also declared in 1528: "And I, Doctor Martin Luther myself, sometimes go unconfessed, just so that I shall not myself make it a necessary habit in my conscience" (quoted in Preuss, 195).

But while Lutheran communicants were not *coerced* to commune, they were encouraged to grow in their *desire* for a more frequent reception. In view of the spiritual dangers that constantly surround Christians, Luther wrote in the Large Catechism: "If you could see how many daggers, spears, and arrows are aimed at you every moment, you would be glad to come to the sacrament as often as you can" (V:82, K/W). And those who *did* wish to commune on any given Sunday or festival were able to do so, since Holy Communion *was indeed available* on any given Sunday or festival. Or at least it was available whenever a *pastor* was available to serve as the overseer and steward of the sacrament, "which God ordained should be administered to Christians through the clerical office" – to quote Luther's 1533 treatise on "The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests" (LW 38:152). The incumbents of what Luther described as "the clerical office" are described by the Epistle to the Hebrews as the church's "leaders," who "keep watch over your souls," and "who will give an account" to the Lord for the souls under their care (13:17, NASB). In this treatise Luther furthermore described "a true Christian mass according to the ordinance and institution of Christ, as well as according to the true intention of Christ and the church," as a mass in which

> our pastor, bishop, or minister in the pastoral office, rightly and honorably and publicly called, ...goes before the altar. Publicly and plainly he sings what Christ has ordained and instituted in the Lord's Supper. He takes the bread and wine, gives thanks, distributes and gives them to the rest of us who are there and want to receive them, on the strength of the words of Christ: "This is my body, this is my blood. Do this," etc. Particularly we who want to receive the sacrament kneel beside, behind, and around him... (LW 38:208)

This is what Luther was talking about in another statement from this treatise – which was incorporated into the Formula of Concord – when he said, in his capacity as a called minister of Word and Sacrament, that the Lord's Supper "is administered daily through our ministry or office" (LW 38: 199; quoted in SD VII:77).

Also in his capacity as a called minister of Word and Sacrament, Luther wrote in the Large Catechism that "we do not intend to admit to the sacrament, and administer it to, those who do not know what they seek or why they come" (V:2, K/W); and he wrote in the Smalcald Articles that "public, obstinate sinners should not be admitted to the sacrament or other fellowship in the church until they improve their behavior and avoid sin" (III:9, K/W). As far as the mechanics of the distribution of the Lord's Supper are concerned, Charles J. Evanson does explain that

> One or more assisting ministers, chosen and instructed for this purpose, may assist in the distribution of the Sacrament by administering the blood of Christ. The presiding minister himself always administers the body of Christ, because the administration of the Lord's body indicates admission to the Sacrament. The presiding minister bears responsibility both for the celebration and for the administration of the Sacrament, and he is to exercise pastoral judgment in admitting communicants to the table. This responsibility may not be borne by vicars, field workers, or other lay persons. (Evanson, 432)

Regarding ordination, Luther and the Lutherans generally did not believe that a special charism was bestowed on a pastor through this rite. According to the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope, ordination with the laying on of hands is "nothing other than" a "confirmation" of the church's call (70, K/W). But Luther did believe that ordination served as an important public attestation of the legitimacy of a new pastor's call, and as a beneficial public testimony to that new pastor's fitness for the duties of his office – including the duties of examining, instructing, absolving, and admitting communicants. In 1531 Luther wrote to John Sutel, who had been called as a preacher in the city of Göttingen, that he should not officiate at the Lord's Supper there until he had been ordained. Luther explained to Sutel that "then publicly before the altar, by the other ministers with prayer and laying on of hands, you shall receive the testimony and authority to handle the Supper" (quoted in Lieberg, 159). *The Public Ministry of the Word* of the ELS also states that "In the Lutheran Confessions ordination is understood as the rite by which the church confirms a man to be suitable for a call to the pastoral office (SA Part III, Art. X, Treatise 66-69)."

For those who are called to a ministry of sacramental oversight and stewardship in the church, their role in presiding at the altar and consecrating the bread and wine, and their role in providing soul-care to communicants and supervising their participation in the sacrament, are completely intertwined. From his "First Homily on the Betrayal of Judas," St. John Chrysostom was quoted in the Formula of Concord to say that it is through the very words of Jesus, "This is my body," etc., that "the elements that have been presented in the Supper are consecrated by God's power and grace"; and that "these words…are powerful and do their work in our day and until his return, so that in the Supper as celebrated in the church his true body and blood are present." And the Formula approvingly quoted Chrysostom's statement that, in this Supper as celebrated in the church, it is "by the mouth of the priest" that the powerful words of Jesus are spoken over the bread and wine (SD VII:76, K/W). On this point the Formula also quoted from Luther's 1528 "Confession concerning Christ's Supper," as Luther spoke yet again in his capacity as a called minister of Word and Sacrament:

> Here, too, if I were to say over all the bread there is, "This is the body of Christ," nothing would happen, but when we follow his institution and command in the Supper and say, "This is my body," then it is his body, not because of our speaking or our declarative word, but because of his command in which he has told us to speak and to do and has attached his own command and deed to our speaking. (LW 37:184; quoted in SD VII:78, K/W)

In the Lord's Supper, the objective presence of the Lord's body and blood in the bread and wine depends on the Lord's own Word and institution, and not on the personal faith of either the minister or the communicants. By means of their approving quotation from the Wittenberg Concord of 1536, the authors of the Formula of Concord accordingly confessed their belief

> that the body and blood of Christ are truly distributed even to the unworthy and that the unworthy truly receive the body and blood when the sacrament is conducted according to Christ's institution and command. But they receive it to judgment, as St. Paul says [1 Cor. 11:27-32], for they misuse the holy sacrament because they receive it without true repentance and without faith. (SD VII:16, K/W)

The Augsburg Confession likewise recalls that

> Paul severely threatens those who treat the Eucharist unworthily, when he says [1 Cor. 11: 27]: "Whoever, therefore, eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be answerable for the body and blood of the Lord." (XXIV:12, K/W)

For this reason the orthodox Lutheran Church has therefore always recognized that the presiding minister has the authority to *decline* to commune those who are not properly prepared for this sacramental encounter with Christ, or who are otherwise ineligible. The Augsburg Confession approv-

ingly observed that in his “Third Homily on Ephesians,” “Chrysostom says that the priest stands daily at the altar, inviting some to Communion and keeping others away” (XXIV:36, K/W). According to the Brandenburg-Nürnberg Church Order,

> Those are to be excluded from the Communion who live in willful error and heresy, or in open undeniable vice, or scorn the express Word of God. Also the irrational and fools, children who cannot understand, and those who neither know nor will learn the Ten Commandments, the Creed nor the Lord’s Prayer. (Horn LWJB, 283)

Also to be excluded from orthodox Lutheran altars, according to Martin Chemnitz, are those who adhere to a different confession, since “fellowship at the Lord’s table is a testimony of consensus, harmony, and unity in doctrine and faith, as Paul says: ‘We who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread’ (1 Cor. 10:17)” (Chemnitz, II:302).

Divine Service in Sweden in the nineteenth century
(Bengt Nordenberg, “Altergang i en Svensk Landskirke,” 1856)

7: THE POWER OF CHRIST'S WORD AND INSTITUTION AND THE REGULAR CALL

With reference to the Word of God, Baptism, the Sacrament of the Altar, and the Keys (that is, the authority to forgive and retain sins), Luther explained in his 1539 treatise "On the Councils and the Church" that

> There must be bishops, pastors, or preachers, who publicly and privately give, administer, and use the aforementioned four things or holy possessions in behalf of and in the name of the church, or rather by reason of their institution by Christ, as St. Paul states in Ephesians 4[:8], "He received gifts among men..." – his gifts were that some should be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some teachers and governors, etc. The people as a whole cannot do these things, but must entrust or have them entrusted to one person..., and he alone should be allowed to preach, to baptize, to absolve, and to administer the sacraments.

Luther added, however, that

> the Holy Spirit has excepted women, children, and incompetent people from this function, but chooses (except in emergencies) only competent males to fill this office, as one reads here and there in the epistles of St. Paul [I Tim. 3:2, Tit. 1:6] that a bishop must be pious, able to teach, and the husband of one wife – and in I Corinthians 14[:34] he says, "The women should keep silence in the churches." In summary, it must be a competent and chosen man. Children, women, and other persons are not qualified for this office, even though they are able to hear God's Word, to receive Baptism, the Sacrament, absolution, and are also true, holy Christians, as St. Peter says [I Pet. 3:7].

With respect to Eve and Adam in particular, and women and men in general, Luther also drew attention to the fact that, in the Old Testament,

> Moses says in Genesis 3[:16], "You shall be subject to man." The Gospel, however, does not abrogate this natural law, but confirms it as the ordinance and creation of God. (LW 41:154-55)

Klotsche concurs, and gives expression to the enduring conviction of orthodox Lutheranism on this matter when he affirms that

> only those who are properly called have the right publicly to teach in the church and administer the sacraments. And the church that follows Christ's example and obeys his word, commits those public functions to men and not to women. Scripture plainly says that it is not permitted unto women publicly to teach in the church, 1 Cor. 14:34-35; 1 Tim. 2:11-15. (Klotsche, 293-94)

Yet in "The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests," Luther emphasized that it is faithfulness to the external Word and institution of Christ that causes his body and blood to be present in any given observance of his Supper, and that this is not affected by the sex, character, or vocational status of the officiant. Regarding the "conversion" of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ through the speaking of Christ's Words of Institution over them – as this would have been described and understood by the medieval church – Luther wrote: "I do not want to say, as the papists do, that neither an angel nor Mary could effect conversion, etc." And this was because

> our faith and the sacrament must not be based on the person, whether he is godly or evil, consecrated or unconsecrated, called or an impostor, whether he is the devil or his mother, but upon Christ, upon his word, upon his office, upon his command and ordinance; where

> these are in force, there everything will be carried out properly, no matter who or what the person might happen to be. (LW 38: 200-01)

This does not mean that Luther would have approved of an illicit and disorderly celebration of the sacrament by a woman or by an uncalled or improperly-called man. He did not stand by silently when a loud-mouthed layman simply *said* that this sort of thing would be acceptable. Martin Brecht reports that

> In February 1536, Matthes Lotther, a painter of cards from Freiberg in Ducal Saxony, made unguarded statements about evangelical worship, and, among other things, claimed that laypersons could also administer the sacrament. Thereupon, Luther cautioned his fellow citizens about him. This had grave consequences for Lotther. He feared for his life and fled. Luther interceded for him with Duke Henry of Saxony, who was responsible for the government of Freiberg. Luther thought an appropriate punishment would be not exile from the land, but imprisonment for a time, combined with the requirement that he forever refrain from repeating his earlier statements. (Brecht, 37)

But it does mean that such vocational disorders, in themselves, do not cause the Word and institution of Christ to become inefficacious, or cause the body and blood of Christ not to be present. The truth of St. Augustine's dictum, as Luther cited it in the Large Catechism, would remain: "When the Word is joined to the external element, it becomes a sacrament" (quoted in V:10, K/W). It would, however, be a sinful *dishonoring* of Christ and of his body and blood if such a thing were done – apart from any legitimate extraordinary need. A pious Christian should therefore not receive the sacrament in such a circumstance from such a person. But when a pious Christian *does* receive the sacrament from a properly-called male pastor of good reputation, his confidence that the body and blood of Christ are truly present would not be based on these factors pertaining to the pastor. It would be based on the pastor's faithfulness in following "Christ's word and ordinance" in his celebration of the Supper.

We are reminded of what Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession states: that "no one should teach publicly in the church or administer the sacraments unless properly called" (K/W). The Augsburg Confession is here telling us what *should not* be done. It is not telling us what *cannot* be done. It is indeed possible to commit the sin of administering the sacrament of our Lord's body and blood to a communicant or communicants, without any call at all; or without a *proper*, *orderly*, and *regular* call.

The Norwegian Synod, an American Lutheran church body organized by Norwegian emigrants in 1853, addressed these issues in its own way as it dealt with the pietistic Norwegian-American lay preacher Elling Eielsen (who had been ordained irregularly if at all) and with his "Ellingian" followers on the American frontier. The Norwegian Synod's focus of concern was not only on the celebration of the Lord's Supper by those who lacked a regular call, but it was on preaching and leading public worship in general without a proper call to do so. These comments, from 1867, come from Norwegian Synod President Herman Amberg Preus (grandfather of the Herman A. Preus from whom we have already quoted):

> With respect to the fourteenth article of the Augsburg Confession, the Ellingians maintained that every Christian by virtue of his spiritual priesthood has the power and authority to preach publicly and does not therefore require any external call whatsoever. "It is enough that he is called by God," as it is usually said. In contradistinction to this we teach that all Christians have the right privately to admonish, teach, and pray, and indeed also in public assembly to teach, rebuke, and admonish one another. On the other hand, we believe that whenever a layman steps up in meetings organized for public edification and prays aloud, teaches, and admonishes, then he is, in fact, exercising the public office of the ministry, but according to God's Word and the fourteenth article of the Augsburg Confession he has no

right to this office. Only where an actual emergency prevails is it appropriate to breach this ordinance. Where, for example, there is no pastor, or he propounds false doctrine, or where he is so miserly in serving the congregation that Christians starve for lack of food and supervision, then there is an emergency and every Christian has the right and the duty to execute the pastor's task in the public assembly. He does not do this by virtue of his spiritual priesthood, but as the congregation's temporary pastor who must breach God's ordinance in time of need. (Preus VD, 125)

Previously, Chemnitz had considered it to be a great and notorious *slander* against the Lutherans, when they were accused by the Roman party of not distinguishing between called public ministers and laymen. In his defense of the Lutheran Church's adherence to standards of good order in this respect, Chemnitz also set forth a helpful summary of the theology and duties of the public ministry of Word and Sacrament, according to the Lutheran understanding, and as these duties would be carried out in the church by faithful bishops, pastors, and preachers:

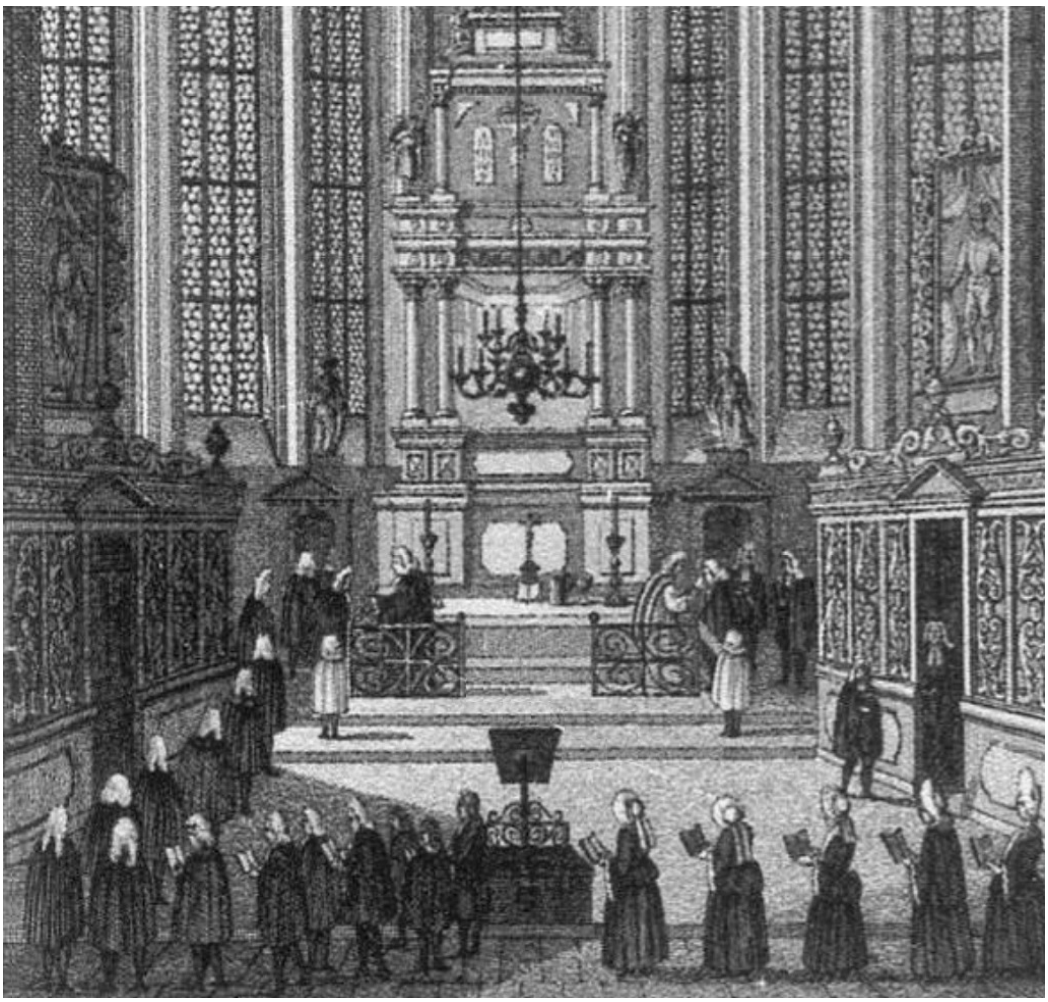
> They shout loudly that those who do not approve the priesthood of the papalists take away all order out of the church, that with infinite confusion they prostitute the ministry to any one of the common people and (something which Tertullian ascribes to the heretics) make laymen out of priests and enjoin priestly functions to laymen, with the result that there is neither any authority nor dignity of the ministry, etc. Therefore this slander must first of all be removed.
>
> Now the Anabaptists and Enthusiasts are rightly disapproved, who either take the use of the external ministry of Word and sacrament entirely out of the church, or imagine that it is useless and unnecessary. For they teach that new and special revelations should rather be sought and expected from God without the use of the external ministry of Word and sacrament, and that this kind of calling, illumination, and conversion is much more excellent and worthy of honor than if we use the voice of the ministry. And indeed, it is God by whose power, working, efficacy, impulse, and inspiration whatever pertains to calling, illumination, conversion, repentance, faith, renewal, and in short, to the business of our salvation is begun, effected, increased, and preserved in men. But God arranged by a certain counsel of His that He wills to dispense these things, not by infusing new and special revelations, illuminations, and movements into the minds of men without any means, but through the outward ministry of the Word. This ministry He did not commit to angels, so that their appearances are to be sought and expected, but He put the Word of reconciliation into men, and He wills that the proclamation of the Gospel, divinely revealed, should sound forth through them.
>
> All Christians are indeed priests (1 Pet. 2:9; Rev. 1:6), because they offer spiritual sacrifices to God. Everyone also can and should teach the Word of God in his own house (Deut. 6:7; 1 Cor. 14:35). Nevertheless, not everyone ought to take and arrogate to himself the public ministry of Word and sacrament. For not all are apostles; not all are teachers (1 Cor. 12:29), but those who have been set apart for this ministry by God through a particular and legitimate call (Acts 13:2; Jer. 23:21; Rom. 10:15). This is done either immediately or mediately. Paul prescribes a legitimate manner of calling which is made through the voice of the church (1 Tim. 3:2-7; and Titus 1:5-9). Christ Himself indeed called certain men to this ministry immediately, in order to show that He approves the ministry of those who are chosen and called by the voice of the church according to the rule prescribed by the apostles... There is added also the promise that God will truly work effectively through the ministry of those who teach the Gospel, which the Son of God wills to preserve in the church through perpetual calling, as Paul says in Eph. 4:8 ff.: He ascended; He gave gifts to men; and He gave some to be apostles, some prophets, others evangelists, others however pastors and teachers for perfecting of the saints in the work of ministry, in edification of the body of Christ. To this use of the ministry, which God both instituted and preserves in the church, men must therefore be guided, and taught that through this ministry there are offered to us eternal blessings, and indeed that God in this way receives us, rescues us from

sin and the power of the devil and from eternal death, and restores to us righteousness and eternal life.

This ministry does indeed have power, divinely bestowed (2 Cor. 10:4-6; 13:2-4), but circumscribed with certain duties and limitations, namely, to preach the Word of God, teach the erring, reprove those who sin, admonish the dilatory, comfort the troubled, strengthen the weak, resist those who speak against the truth, reproach and condemn false teaching, censure evil customs, dispense the divinely instituted sacraments, remit and retain sins, be an example to the flock, pray for the church privately and lead the church in public prayers, be in charge of care for the poor, publicly excommunicate the stubborn and again receive those who repent and reconcile them with the church, appoint pastors to the church according to the instruction of Paul, with consent of the church institute rites that serve the ministry and do not militate against the Word of God nor burden consciences but serve good order, dignity, decorum, tranquillity, edification, etc. (Chemnitz, II:677-79)

According to how the Lutheran Reformers and the Norwegian Synod fathers conceived of this,

> The church's "public" Ministry is an official service that is exercised on behalf of "the people," for the benefit of "the people," and *with authority over* "the people." Certain spiritual duties are inherently public *in themselves*, both when they are carried out with proper authorization or in an emergency, and when they are carried out by usurpers without proper authorization. (Webber, 112)



Divine Service in Dresden in the eighteenth century
("Chor der alten Kreuzkirche vor 1760 mit Spendung des Abendmahls," 1888)

8: PRESIDING AT THE ALTAR: PASTORAL COMPETENCY AND PASTORAL RESPONSIBILITY

In the seventeenth century the Danish Lutheran theologian Jesper Rasmussen Brochmand taught in his *Systematis Universae Theologiae* that

> The only administrators of the Holy Communion are the ministers of the Word, who have been legitimately called, ...like Aaron, Heb. 5:4; also because those alone should administer this Sacrament who are able to examine the faith of the men using this Sacrament. (quoted in LCSA, 55)

Even if a pastor does not require all communicants to speak with him each time they intend to commune, for an examination of their faith, he does reserve the right to ask a guest or a parishioner to speak with him beforehand on any occasion when he judges that this is necessary. Pastoral aptitude is required not only within such a private conversation, but also for determining whether such a conversation needs to take place.

In the early twentieth century, the Wisconsin Synod's Adolf Hoenecke taught in his *Evangelical Lutheran Dogmatics* that "The administration of the Lord's Supper is the responsibility of none but the ordained servants of the church," for the following reasons:

> [1.] According to Scripture, in the regular course of events, the regularly called servants of the church are the administrators of the mysteries of God, and only in real emergency cases may the lay people also administer them. [2.] According to Scripture, there is no such emergency case in regard to the Lord's Supper as there is in regard to Baptism. Our dogmaticians, therefore, have decided that if a sick person desires the Lord's Supper and a pastor cannot be reached, we should convince him that spiritual partaking is enough for him and that more anxiety than comfort must come from a partaking of the Lord's Supper that departs from the order of God.

Hoenecke added that "More on this point is to be found in discussions of casuistry," and he acknowledged – regarding the possibility of "emergency" administrations of the Lord's Supper – that "There are also differing views among the Lutheran dogmaticians" (Hoenecke, IV:140-41). In our own century, John F. Brug, also of the Wisconsin Synod, writes that "Anyone who accepts the present WELS statements on church and ministry won't find anything in Hoenecke (or for that matter in [C. F. W.] Walther) that contradicts those statements or even anything that makes them very uncomfortable" (Brug R, 316). And Brug in his own right explains that

> It is clear that the Lord's Supper should be administered by the pastor. It is not our practice to have a layman officiate at the Lord's Supper. Even when congregations were quite isolated and some did not have a pastor present every Sunday, the Lord's Supper was celebrated only when the pastor was present. Proper administration of the Lord's Supper involves more than being able to read the right words. It involves pastoral responsibility for the souls of those who attend. (Brug MW, 221)

Are there ever exceptions to this rule? We know that there are such exceptions with respect to Baptism and Absolution, such as when an unbaptized person is in mortal danger or when a dying person craves the comfort of knowing that his sins are forgiven. The Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope clearly teaches that

> in an emergency even a layperson grants absolution and becomes the minister or pastor of another. So Augustine tells the story of two Christians in a boat, one of whom baptized the other (a catechumen) and then the latter, having been baptized, absolved the former. (67, K/W).

But as the Missouri Synod's C. F. W. Walther notes,

> Starting with Luther, the vast majority of our theologians maintain that the Holy Supper should never be administered privately by a person not holding the public preaching office or by a so-called layman – partly because, unlike with Baptism or Absolution, there cannot be an emergency regarding Holy Communion which would justify straying from God's order (1 Cor. 4:1; Rom. 10:15; Heb. 5:4); partly because the Holy Supper "is a manifest confession and should thus have manifest ministers"; partly because divisions can easily be caused by such private [acts of] Communion.

Walther personally agreed with this majority opinion, but he knew that there was also a minority opinion, since "a whole series of strictly orthodox Lutheran theologians, all above suspicion, have taught that the Holy Supper could even be validly administered...by a layman in a (presumed) case of necessity" (Walther ALPT, 206-07).

Based on what was said by the theologians of the past who held to this minority viewpoint, John H. C. Fritz suggests that "Such an exceptional case might arise when an orthodox pastor cannot be called, as when a Christian is at the point of death, at high sea, or when he has been taken captive by barbarians, and the like." He adds that "Even under such exceptional circumstances, however, we would advise a Christian not to insist that the Sacrament be administered to him contrary to the regular established order" (Fritz, 126). Brug expresses a similar opinion when he points out that

> The administration of the Lord's Supper involves spiritual judgment. Decisions commonly need to be made by the administrator about who is properly prepared to receive the Sacrament, both in public worship services and in the visitation of shut-ins. At times, there is a responsibility to exclude some from receiving the Sacrament. This requires a shepherd's knowledge of the sheep, and it is definitely the work of spiritual oversight. This means that administration of the Lord's Supper will normally remain with the pastor, even if others are trained to assist him with the distribution. The kind of disorder that arose in the Lord's Supper at Corinth is most easily prevented if the administration is in the hands of properly prepared pastors.

Brug does, however, envision the possibility of *abnormal* circumstances in which a layman might be *called* to serve as a "temporary pastor," and to administer the Lord's Supper to a gathering of Christians. But according to Brug, the kind of "exceptional cases" in which such a thing might be contemplated would be "Cases of war and extreme isolation" and similar times of extraordinary need (Brug MW, 118-19). A pastor being away on vacation for a couple weeks, or a congregation being vacant but able to be served periodically by a pastor from a neighboring community, are not the kind of "exceptional cases" that would justify a suspension of the normal order of vocation.

Fritz also raises the question of whether a call to administer the Lord's Supper might under certain circumstances be issued to someone who would otherwise not be seen as qualified for a *regular* call to carry out such a duty. Referring both to ordinary laymen and to seminary students, he asks:

> May an entire congregation under exceptional circumstances *call* a layman (or a student of theology) to administer to them the Sacrament? We need not hesitate to answer this question affirmatively; for under such circumstances the layman, by virtue of his having been called to do so by the entire congregation, *acts* as the congregation's representative, even as a regularly called minister would do. In due respect, however, to God's own established order of the ministry and His precise mention of the necessary qualifications a layman should not be called to administer the Sacrament unless *very exceptional* circumstances justify it. (Fritz, 126)

Again, a pastor being away on vacation for a couple weeks, or a congregation being vacant but able to be served periodically by a pastor from a neighboring community, are not the kind of "exceptional circumstances" that would justify a suspension of the normal order of vocation.

The Wisconsin Synod's Irwin J. Habeck endorses the practice of "having a theological student assist with the distribution of the Lord's Supper," and he concedes that "in an emergency" such a student might even be allowed to "function alone" as a celebrant. His qualification that this might be done *in an emergency* demonstrates that he would be opposed to such a practice becoming a normal feature of seminary training, since he also says that "what is done in an emergency, as a case of casuistry, dare not become the basis for a general practice" (Habeck, 197, 205).

In his book on *The Church & the Office of the Ministry*, Walther had quoted, with approval, a statement from Johann Conrad Dannhauer's *Liber conscientiae apertus* that one of the benefits of ordination was

> that the examined and unexamined teachers of the church can be distinguished, so that a certain Besold may not rightfully complain that "the Lutherans often use as vicars certain scholars who are not yet ordained with the laying on of hands, permitting them to hear confession, feed the sick, and administer their [Lord's] Supper." (quoted in Walther COM, 260)

Christoph Besold, a Roman Catholic convert from Lutheranism, may indeed have been aware of occasions when the kind of laxity about which he complained had been allowed or tolerated among certain Lutherans. But if such disorders had occurred, Dannhauer clearly wanted them to come to an end, and not to be repeated. Walther misunderstood a statement in Hieronymus Kromayer's *Theologia positiva-polemica* that he thought contradicted the position of Dannhauer, so that he wrote in a footnote to the Dannhauer quote:

> But here we cannot deny what Kromayer writes: "Students of theology in certain places, as in the congregations at Wittenberg [Württemberg?], sometimes also here in Swabia, administer the Sacraments." (Walther COM, 260)

This misunderstanding was, however, later corrected by Walther's younger friend and colleague E. W. Kaehler, who demonstrated – on the basis of a statement in the *Wittenberg Judgments* – that Kromayer was actually describing the custom of "many Württemberg, Schwabish, Alsatian, and other highland churches of the Augsburg Confession," according to which "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" (Kaehler, 45).

Walther differentiated, however, between the disorder of unordained theological students presiding at the altar, and the useful exercise of unordained theological students preaching from the pulpit. In this he was following the example of David Hollaz, who had written that

> There is a distinction between preaching exercises and the regular office of preaching. The sermons of students are exercises in which they modestly offer to the Church services that are hereafter to be rendered, but do not claim for themselves the regular office of preaching. (quoted in Jacobs SCF, 430)

Lutherans have always been more flexible in allowing non-ordained theological students or lay readers to preach or proclaim the Word of God, especially when a pastor is not available, due to their conviction – as expressed in the German version of the Apology – that

> of all acts of worship, 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. (XV:42, CT)

Luther also wrote in "The Private Mass and the Consecration of Priests" that

> the word of God is the greatest, most necessary and most sublime part in Christendom (for the sacraments cannot exist without the word, but indeed the word can exist without the sacraments, and in an emergency one could be saved without the sacraments – as for example, those who die before receiving the desired baptism – but not without the word)... (LW 38:189)

This is why Walther explained in a letter to Norwegian Synod Pastor Jakob Aall Ottesen, "Regarding students and candidates who also occasionally preach," that

> these men preach in order to maintain the order of the preaching office, not to overturn it. Their sermons are exercises, preparations, and examinations so that in the future, they may be placed into and established in the preaching office. They do this therefore not as laymen, but as Tertullian says, as "episcopi aut presbyteri aut diaconi discentes" (bishops or elders or deacons in the process of learning)... To that end it happens that their sermons are thoroughly evaluated. They subject themselves thereby at the same time to the election of the Church. (AHHF, 139-40)

Most properly, a theological student's sermons are "thoroughly evaluated" not only *as* or *after* they are preached, but also *before* they are preached. The professor or pastor who reviews the manuscript of such a sermon, and who makes any necessary corrections or improvements in it before the student is allowed to deliver it, thereby validates the soundness of the sermon as an extension of his own teaching and preaching office. The student in such a case does not validate the soundness of his own sermon.

Walther served for many years as president of Concordia Seminary in Saint Louis. In that capacity he did allow men who might be described in a certain sense as "bishops or elders or deacons in the process of learning" to deliver approved sermons. But he did *not* allow those same men to administer the Lord's Supper until they were *actual* "bishops or elders or deacons" who had *completed* the process of learning. Through this "process of learning" those who are to serve in the church's preaching office or *Predigtamt*, as spiritual overseers of God's people in various settings, are carefully trained and tested. For Lutherans this is very important. Erling T. Teigen, of the ELS, explains that

> the *Predigtamt*...is the office which exercises the keys on the public behalf, which administers word and sacrament in the place of Christ. One is called to this *Amt* (Rom 10:15), mediately by the royal priesthood, but is set in the office by God (Acts 20:28) and has the specific appointment by Christ (Jn 20:21) along with the promise of Christ, "He who hears you hears Me" (Lk 10:16). The incumbents of this office hold an apostolic ministry and are "stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor 4:1). There are specific qualifications for the office, e.g. 1 Tim 2:12, 3:1-7, 1 Cor 14:34; the office holders are to have their livelihood by that work (1 Tim 5:17) and they are to be seminary graduates, i.e. not in form, but in substance, properly trained (2 Tim 2:2, 1 Tim 3:8-17, Ti 1:9).

Teigen also explains that "the pastor in a local congregation," together with "A missionary, a seminary professor, a college or hospital chaplain," all "certainly have the *Predigtamt* " (Teigen, 13-14).

Similar to the practice of allowing a theological student to deliver an approved sermon is the occasional use of a "lay reader," who in the absence of a pastor is authorized to deliver a sermon

written by a pastor while also conducting a "Service of the Word" (without Communion) for a Lutheran congregation. The use of lay readers was more common than it is today, in the frontier conditions within which many Lutheran congregations struggled to survive and function in earlier periods of American history. Times of persecution – such as occurred in the Hapsburg domains in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and in the Soviet Union in the twentieth century – have also been occasions when lay readers filled a necessary role in the very survival of the Lutheran Church.

Again, the historic Lutheran standard has been that, according to the normal order of vocation, only fully trained and properly ordained pastors are to be authorized to officiate at the Sacrament of the Altar. And returning to the question of possible exceptions to this normal order, we should not forget that most orthodox Lutherans, through most of Lutheran history, have followed the lead of the older Luther in this matter. Most Lutherans of the past were *not* willing to make the kind of exceptions for the administration of the Lord's Supper in *presumed* emergency situations that they *were* willing to make for the administration of Holy Baptism in *certain and definite* emergency situations.

In the 1520 treatise that he addressed "To the Christian Nobility of the German Nation," Luther had discussed a scenario wherein he would allow for a layman to become an emergency pastor and to perform all the duties of the pastoral office – including the duty of saying mass (that is, administering the Lord's Supper):

> ...suppose a group of earnest Christian laymen were taken prisoner and set down in a desert without an episcopally ordained priest among them. And suppose they were to come to a common mind there and then in the desert and elect one of their number, whether he were married or not, and charge him to baptize, say mass, pronounce absolution, and preach the Gospel. Such a man would be as truly a priest as though he had been ordained by all the bishops and popes in the world. That is why in cases of necessity anyone can baptize and give absolution. (LW 44:128)

But by 1523, when he penned his treatise "Concerning the Ministry," Luther had backed away from this. In the 1523 writing he discussed the "atrocious and cruel conditions" under which some Bohemian Hussites were then living, which he compared to the Babylonian Captivity of the Jews. The Bohemians' circumstances did not allow them to have a properly-ordered church life or a properly-ordered public ministry. Luther advised them that it would be safe and wholesome

> for the father of the household to read the gospel and, since the universal custom and use allows it to the laity, to baptize those who are born in his home, and so to govern himself and his according to the doctrine of Christ, even if throughout life they did not dare or could not receive the Eucharist. For the Eucharist is not so necessary that salvation depends on it. The gospel and baptism are sufficient, since faith alone justifies and love alone lives rightly.

When Luther went on to discuss a possible network of several or many households, beyond a single family – which ostensibly could join together in forming a congregation or congregations with the right and power of ecclesiastical vocation – he still did not want them to arrange for the Lord's Supper to be administered among themselves without a regularly-ordained pastor to do it. He wrote that

> if in this way two, three, or ten homes, or a whole city, or several cities agreed thus among themselves to live in faith and love by the use of the gospel in the home, and even if no ordained man...ever came to them or in any other way was placed over them as minister to administer the Eucharist and other sacraments, Christ without a doubt would be in their midst and would own them as his church. ... For He himself said "One thing only is neces-

> sary" [Luke 10:42], the Word of God, in which man has his life. For if he lives in the Word and has the Word, he is able to forego all else...

Luther then returned to his earlier thought, restating that

> The father in the home...can provide his own with the necessities through the Word and in pious humility do without the nonessentials as long as he is in captivity. In this regard we follow the custom and law of the Jewish captives who were not able to be in Jerusalem or to make offering there. Upheld in their faith alone by the Word of God they passed their lives among enemies while yearning for Jerusalem. So in this case the head of the household suffering under the tyranny of the pope would act most appropriately and safely if while longing for the Eucharist, which he neither would dare nor could receive, in the meantime zealously and faithfully propagated faith in his home through the Word of God until God on high in his mercy either brought the captivity to an end or sent a true minister of the Word. (LW 40:9-10)

And later, in a 1536 letter to Wolfgang Brauer, Luther reasserted the same viewpoint when he wrote that the housefather of a family that is not able to receive the Lord's Supper from an orthodox pastor

> is not in duty bound to go ahead in this matter and commune himself and his household. Nor is this necessary, since he has neither call nor command to do so. ... It would also give great offense to administer the Sacrament here and there in the homes, and in the end no good would come of it, for there will be factions and sects... But if a father wishes to teach the Word of God to his family, that is right and should be done, for it is God's mandate that we should teach and bring up our children and household; that is commanded to everyone. But the Sacrament is a public confession and should have public ministers, because, as Christ says, we should do it in remembrance of Him; that is, as St. Paul explains it, we should show forth or preach the Lord's death till He comes [cf. 1 Corinthians 11:26]. And here [Paul] also says that we should come together, and he severely rebukes those who, each in his own way, use the Lord's Supper individually. On the other hand, it is not forbidden but rather commanded that everyone individually should instruct his household in God's Word, as well as himself... For there is a great difference between a public office in the church and [the office of] a father in his household. Hence the two must neither be mingled into each other nor be separated from each other. Since there is neither an emergency nor a call here, we must do nothing out of our own devotion without God's definite mandate, for no good will come from it. (quoted in Walther COM, 163-64)

The office of housefather is a domestic office, not an ecclesiastical office. In itself it therefore does not include the duty of administering the sacraments, since the sacraments are ecclesiastical institutions and not domestic institutions. When a housefather administers a baptism in an emergency situation, he does this, not as a housefather *per se*, but as an emergency pastor. But Luther also would not have considered it to be in keeping with God's order of vocation for the members of a household, in effect, to constitute themselves as an informal "congregation" and to issue an informal "call" to their head and father to become their "pastor," for the purpose of communing them. As Luther saw it, there was no emergency need for the Lord's Supper in such a situation, and therefore such a "call" would not be a proper and legitimate call.

We can summarize and conclude all of this with these words of Kaehler:

> If we do not wish to deny...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, 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.

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 Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them'" (see Rom 1:1). (Kaehler, 44-45)

Divine Service in Berlin, Brandenburg, in the sixteenth century
(Hermann Knackfuß, "Die Räte von Berlin und Cölln erhalten das Abendmahl," 1882)

9: "COMMUNION SUNDAYS" AND "NON-COMMUNION SUNDAYS"

Ordinarily, among the Lutherans of the Reformation era, it was the presence of communicants who had made their desire to receive the sacrament known to the pastor beforehand, that determined that a church service would in fact be a Communion service. A Sunday service without Communion was the result of there not being any parishioners who wished to commune that day. It was *not* the result of an arbitrarily-scheduled rotation of "Communion Sundays" and "non-Communion Sundays" planned out as such in advance.

The practice of offering the Lord's Supper only on certain predesignated Sundays came into the church largely through the influence of Pietism and Rationalism. Pietism exaggerated the experiential dimension of preparation for communion, while also turning this preparation into a drawn-out, emotionally-charged, collective congregational activity. Rationalism minimized the importance of the sacrament by rejecting any belief in a supernatural divine power being connected to it. As a result of these influences the Lord's Supper came to be observed in a typical Lutheran congregation, by the latter part of the eighteenth century, only a few times a year.

But offering the Lord's Supper only on certain Sundays, and not by default on every Sunday, was not the normative practice of the Lutheran Reformation! In 1531 Philip Melanchthon described the Reformation approach and its practical effects in his response to a request from George, the Margrave of Brandenburg-Ansbach, for information about how the Lord's Supper was celebrated among the Lutherans in Saxony:

> As to your Highness's inquiry how it is held here, I would say that we hold no Mass when there are no communicants; and here at Wittenberg and at many other places there are always many communicants on Sundays, and the Churches are full (quoted in Horn RWCN, 138).

The Confessional Awakening of the nineteenth century restored to the church the sacramental *theology* of the Reformation, but with few exceptions it did not fully restore to the church the sacramental *practice* of the Reformation. In more recent times, however, the weekly availability of the Lord's Supper has been increasingly reintroduced in Confessional Lutheran circles, and is still in the process of being reintroduced.

Kurt E. Marquart explains that

> in the Lutheran Confessions as in the New Testament the Eucharist is not an occasional extra, an exceptional additive for especially pious occasions, but a regular, central and constitutive feature of Christian worship. Preaching and the Sacrament belong together not anyhow, or helter-skelter, by statistical coincidence, but as mutually corresponding elements within one integrated whole. (Marquart, 335)

This does not mean that a congregation's weekly services of Word and Sacrament should always be the same, without any variety or differing emphases from Sunday to Sunday. And the services that are held in a liturgical and sacramental Lutheran church are in fact *not* always the same. According to Marquart, "there is a variety-principle built into the liturgy," which is "the rhythm of the church-year. The basic units of this gentle, natural rhythm are the week and the year," with its structured annual cycle of days and seasons. But as far as the church's celebration of the Lord's Supper is concerned,

> This cycle is...broken by the false off-on or even off-off-off-on *staccato* of "Communion Sundays" and "non-Communion Sundays." The proper change from Sunday to Sunday should be in the specific meaning and application of the Sacrament, not in having or not having it. The Eucharist is the whole Gospel in action. This one Gospel, like a precious diamond, has

> many facets or aspects, of which one or two are especially highlighted in each Sunday's or festival's Gospel pericope. And through whatever concrete facet the full Gospel is celebrated on a given day, that is the specific meaning, or the mode of application of the Sacrament on that day. The Sacrament is always the full Gospel-gift, of course. But on Christmas Day we receive it under the aspect of the Lord's Nativity, on Epiphany in celebration of His Baptism, on Laetare Sunday as the Divine Bread of Life revealed in the miraculous feeding of the multitude, and so on. In other words, the Sacrament, like the Gospel itself, must never be seen as some one narrow aspect or some unvarying "standard ration" in the feast that is Christianity. It is rather the whole reality, under many wonderful aspects, each especially observed and celebrated at various times. Each time it is as new and fresh as are the daily mercies of God. We have here the Kaleidoscope of God, which, at each weekly or seasonal tilt, exhibits the same divine generosity in ever new and exciting configurations. (Marquart, 343-44)

In the Large Catechism, Luther unfolded the implications of the Lord's statement that the sacrament of his body and blood should be celebrated and received "often," in noting that Jesus here means to say:

> "I am instituting a Passover or Supper for you, which you shall enjoy not just on this one evening of the year, but frequently, whenever and wherever you will, according to everyone's opportunity and need, being bound to no special place or time"... (V:47, K/W)

And in the Preface to the Small Catechism, Luther emphasized that

> we should not compel anyone to believe or to receive the sacrament and should not fix any law or time or place for it. Instead, we should preach in such a way that the people make themselves come without our law and just plain compel us pastors to administer the sacrament to them. (21-22, K/W).

Congregations that are served by a pastor every week, but that do not provide their communicant members with an opportunity to receive the sacrament every week, should consider if their practice is unnecessarily out of step with the principles that are here articulated in our Catechisms. We do also note that if the pastors' preaching about Christians needing the blessings of the Supper is sound and effective, then the laity will "compel us pastors to administer the sacrament to them." They will not compel their fellow laity to administer the sacrament to them.

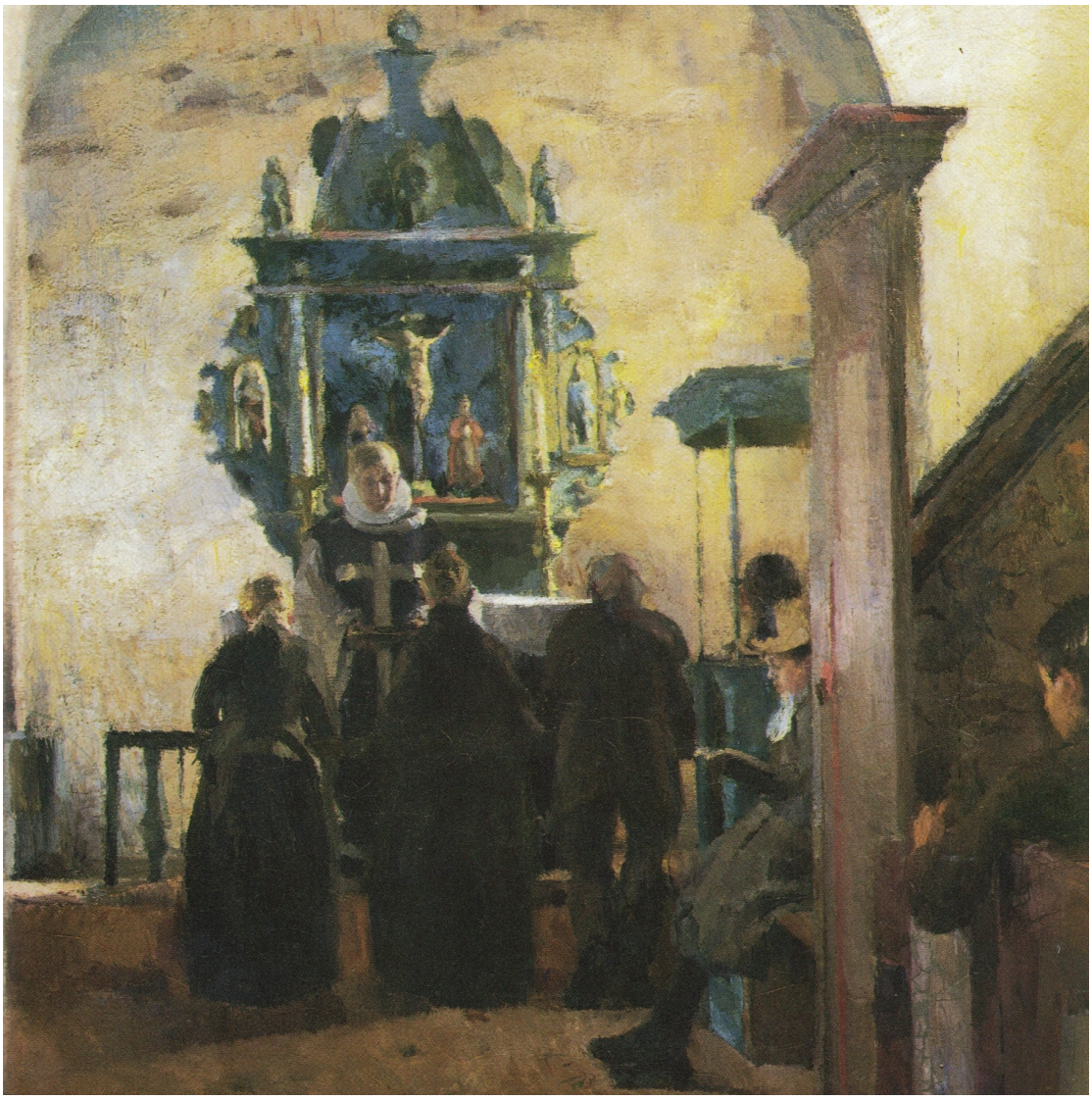
Chemnitz offered some helpful guidance on the important questions of how often communicants should wish to receive Holy Communion, and for what reasons:

> Christ...did not want to permit believers to use Communion arbitrarily, so that it would make no difference whether they used it occasionally or not at all or when they pleased, as one does in matters indifferent. For He does not say: "When it pleases you," as in indifferent matters, but says: "As often as you do this." It is not the same as with Baptism; we are baptized only once, but it is not sufficient to use the Lord's Supper only once. For He says: "As often as," in order that we may eat of that bread and drink of that cup as often as we recognize and feel that that medicine and remedy which our Good Samaritan pours into our wounds is useful and necessary to us, so long only as we examine ourselves lest we receive it to judgment. For the rule about when and how often one should go to Communion must be taken: I. From the teaching about the fruit and power of the Eucharist, namely, when and as often as we recognize that we have need of this power; II. From the teaching about self-examination, lest we receive it unworthily.
>
> On this basis people are to be taught, admonished, and exhorted to more diligent and frequent use of the Eucharist. For because Christ says: "As often as you do this," it is wholly His will that those who are His disciples should do this frequently. Therefore those

> are not true and faithful ministers of Christ who in any manner whatever lead or frighten people away from more frequent use and reception of the Eucharist. There are beautiful examples of frequent use of the Eucharist from the true antiquity. Some had the custom of receiving the Eucharist daily, some twice a week, some on the Lord's day, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, some only on the Lord's Day. (Chemnitz, II:330-31)

Many Lutheran hymnals – past and present – include directions for how a Sunday service should conclude when there is no Communion. But the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* properly states instead that the service will conclude in a certain way, without Communion, "When there are no communicants" or "if there are no communicants" (ELH, 49, 57, 72, 85). The implication is (or should be) that if there *are* communicants, then there will be *Communion*. Johann Gerhard articulated a proper Lutheran respect for the faith and conscience of each communicant when he wrote in his *Loci theologici*:

> How often this sacrament should be taken every year, cannot be prescribed definitely and by some general rule, but must be left free for the approval of each one's conscience and for his piety. (quoted in Kalb, 123)



Divine Service in Bærum, Norway, in the nineteenth century
(Harriet Backer, "Alteret i Tanum Kirke," 1891)

10: THE RITES AND CEREMONIES OF CLASSIC LUTHERAN WORSHIP

In 1897 the German Lutheran scholar Rudolf Rocholl described the worship life of the orthodox Lutheran Church in Germany during Lutheranism's "golden age" in the seventeenth century:

> According to the Brunswick Agenda of Duke Augustus, 1657, the pastors went to the altar clad in alb, chasuble, and mass vestments. Sacristans and elders held a fair cloth before the altar during the administration, that no particle of the consecrated Elements should fall to the ground. The altar was adorned with costly stuffs, with lights and fresh flowers. "I would," cries [Christian] Scriver, "that one could make the whole church, and especially the altar, look like a little Heaven." Until the nineteenth century the ministers at St. Sebald in Nuremberg wore chasubles at the administration of the Holy Supper. The alb was generally worn over the Talar, even in the sermon. [Valerius] Herberger calls it his natural *Säetuch* [seed-cloth], from which he scatters the seed of the Divine Word. The alb was worn also in the Westphalian cities. At Closter-Lüne in 1608 the minister wore a garment of yellow gauze, and over it a chasuble on which was worked in needlework a "Passion." ... The churches stood open all day. When the Nuremberg Council ordered that they should be closed except at the hours of service, it aroused such an uproar in the city that the council had to yield. In 1619 all the churches in the Archbishopric of Magdeburg were strictly charged to pray the Litany. In Magdeburg itself there were in 1692 four *Readers*, two for the Epistle, two for the Gospel. The Nicene Creed was intoned by a Deacon in Latin. Then the sermon and general prayer having been said, the Deacon with two Readers and two Vicars, clad in Mass garment and gowns, went in procession to the altar, bearing the Cup, the Bread, and what pertained to the preparation for the Holy Supper, and the *Cüster* [Verger] took a silver censer with glowing coals and incense, and incensed them, while another (the *Citharmeister?*) clothed and arranged the altar, lit two wax candles, and placed on it two books bound in red velvet and silver containing the Latin Epistles and Gospels set to notes, and on festivals set on the altar also a silver or golden crucifix, according to the order of George of Anhalt in 1542. The *Preface* and *Sanctus* were in Latin. After the Preface the communicants were summoned into the choir by a bell hanging there. The Nuremberg *Officium Sacrum* (1664) bids all the ministers be present in their stalls, in white *Chorrocken*, standing or sitting, to sing after the *Frühmesse* [Morning Mass], "Lord, Keep Us Steadfast." The minister said his prayer kneeling with his face to the altar, with a deacon kneeling on either side. He arranged the wafers on the paten in piles of ten, like the shew-bread, while the *Introit* and *Kyrie* were sung. The responses by the choir were in Latin. Up to 1690 the Latin service was still said at St. Sebald's and St. Lawrence's [in Nuremberg]. Throughout this century we find daily Matins and Vespers, with the singing of German psalms. There were sermons on weekdays. There were no churches in which they did not kneel in confession and at the Consecration of the Elements. (Rocholl, 300-02; quoted in Horn CLC, 83)

Lochner described some common Lutheran liturgical usages in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and then pointed out some examples of these usages remaining until well into the eighteenth century and even to his own time:

> The usual clerical attire consisted of a long, ankle-length black *Priesterrock* ["priest's robe"], now called the *Chorrock* ["choir or chancel robe"] or *Talar* ["ankle-length"], and a white linen garment worn over this, approximately of knee-length, called the *Alba* or *Chorhemd* ["chancel smock"]. The latter derives from the Ancient Church, in which the white garment was worn as a symbol of the peace, purity, and dignity of those persons involved in the Divine Service. Until the first quarter of our [nineteenth] century, the pastors in the Lutheran churches in Germany wore the *Chorhemd* during the administration of the Sacraments and the performance of the liturgy at the altar. It is still in use in certain churches, such as that of Thuringia, and even in a few places in liturgically impoverished Württemberg. In this country [the United States] too, it is, as far as I know, still being used in the

> handful of congregations which migrated into Texas and belong to the Missouri Synod, as well as among our local Norwegian brethren. In Saxony, in Braunschweig, in the region of Brandenburg-Nürnberg, and elsewhere, the liturgist appeared for the administration of the Supper in the proper eucharistic vestments, among which was, in addition to the *Chorrock* and *Chorhemd*, the *Casula* or chasuble, the sleeveless covering of various colors and decorated with a cross of gold brocade. For example, there is a description of the Divine service from Alt-Dresden from the time of the two hundredth jubilee of the Reformation [in 1717], which says: "After this [the sermon], Communion begins, for which purpose the deacon, dressed in the alb and chasuble [*Messgewand*], and accompanied by two boys specially vested for the purpose and appointed to hold the Communion cloths or veils [*Fächel*], approaches the altar [set with paten, chalice, and candles burning throughout the service and] adorned [with two linen cloths]." Similarly, in a description of the consecration of the new Friedrichstadt church in Dresden in 1730, at which Dr. Valentin Löscher gave the sermon, it says: "Then the *Te Deum laudamus* was intoned with trumpets and timpani... Meanwhile, the ordained pastor of the church, Rev. David Mehner [1694-1756], in a green chasuble, approached the altar and sang both the Our Father and the Words of Institution for the Holy Communion." In Nürnberg, the author's [Lochner's] native city, the chasuble was still in use during the celebration of the Supper until the year 1790. In fact, at the dedication of a Norwegian Lutheran church in Wisconsin, which the author attended about forty years ago, the synodical president at that time was vested in a chasuble.

The Norwegian Synod president whom Lochner saw vested in a chasuble, about the year 1855, would have been Adolf Carl Preus. He was a cousin of Herman Amberg Preus, who also later served as Norwegian Synod president. Lochner concluded his account with the sad observation that "It was Rationalism which for 'the improvement of religion' committed such vandalism even with regard to the office vestment, at least in the German Lutheran church" (Lochner, 17-18).

The conservative approach in matters of ritual and symbolism that is evident in the many examples of "high" liturgical practice to which Rocholl and Lochner refer, demonstrates how the Lutheran Church over time continued to apply the basic principle that had been articulated by the Augsburg Confession concerning inherited "church rites." That Confession declared that

> those rites should be observed when they can be observed without sin and when they contribute to peace and good order in the church, for example, certain holy days, festivals, and the like. (XV:1, K/W)

The Lutherans' catholic-minded attitude regarding these things stood in marked contrast to the attitude of the Calvinist and sectarian churches, which abolished the order of the mass, and which set aside many other historic customs and church appointments that for centuries had helpfully contributed to the devotional life of Christian worshipers. This totally changed the character and content of public worship for the people who attended those churches. Already in 1530, in a letter to M. Görlitz, Bugenhagen had felt it necessary to respond to certain persons who were prohibiting the use of vestments – and in particular chasubles – even to the point of making this prohibition a matter of conscience. He wrote:

> There is a twofold doctrine on chasubles. ... One is truth, namely, that chasubles can be used; this does not give scandal to those who are accustomed to hearing the Gospel. The other is a Satanic lie out of the doctrines of devils, namely, that it is never lawful to use chasubles; this gives scandal to the people where they hear and believe such lies from the ministers. (quoted in Piepkorn)

These two differing approaches regarding the rites and ceremonies of Christian worship were perpetuated over the years by the respective heirs and descendants of those opposing Reformation-era traditions, so that Walther could speak, in an 1871 convention essay, of the contrast

that remained even then between the (renewed) Lutheran Divine Service and the worship of other Protestant churches:

> It creates a solemn impression on the Christian mind when one is reminded by the solemnity of the divine service that one is in the house of God where the children of God, in childlike love to their heavenly Father, also give expression to their joy in such a lovely manner. We are not insisting that there be uniformity in perception or feeling or taste among all believing Christians – neither dare anyone demand that all be minded as he. Nevertheless, it remains true that the Lutheran liturgy distinguishes Lutheran worship from the worship of other churches to such an extent that the houses of worship of the latter look like lecture halls in which the hearers are merely addressed or instructed, while our churches are in truth houses of prayer in which Christians serve the great God publicly before the world. (Walther EC, I:194)

Divine Service in Copenhagen, Denmark, in the nineteenth century
(Johan Ludwig Lund, “Luthersk Gudstjeneste,” 1843)

11: THE CATHOLIC SPIRIT OF CONFESSIONAL LUTHERANISM

As has already been noted, over time the theology and worship life of Lutherans in Europe, and later in America, came under the harmful influences, successively, of Calvinism, Pietism, and Rationalism. These trends and movements were imbued with assumptions and beliefs that were inimical to the spirit of the Lutheran Reformation. (See *Addendum V* for a fuller historical discussion of why and how this deleterious process occurred.) Critics of so-called "contemporary worship" in the Lutheran Church of our day often see many historical parallels between this phenomenon and the approach and attitude of the Pietists of the past, but there are actually more and greater historical parallels between the thinking of today's "contemporary worship" advocates and the agenda of the Rationalists. Joseph Herl recounts that

> Calls for liturgical reform written from a Rationalist perspective began to appear in the 1780s. They called for drastic modifications to the traditional liturgy or even wholesale abandonment of it. ... Johann Wilhelm Rau argued in 1786 that the old formulas were no longer usable because the expressions in them were in part no longer understandable and in part objectionable. Fixed forms in general were not good, and even the Lord's Prayer was meant only as an example to follow and not as a prayer to be repeated. Some said that liturgical formulas served to ease the task of the pastor and preserve order in the service. But [according to Rau] the advantages were specious: very few pastors had so little time left over from other duties that they could not prepare a service, and in Dortmund (for example) no liturgical formulas were prescribed, without disruption to the service. Each pastor used his own self-written order or spoke extemporaneously. According to Rau, the most important abuses to curb were the too-frequent use of the Lord's Prayer, the making of the sign of the cross, the Aaronic benediction, chanting by the pastor, the use of candles on the altar, private confession, the use of the appointed lectionary texts for sermons, and various superstitious practices surrounding communion, such as carrying the houseling cloth to catch crumbs that might fall and referring to the "true" body and blood of Christ. ... Peter Burdorf, writing in 1795, argued that repetition in the liturgy weakened the attention of the listener and the impact of the form. The current liturgy did not hold people's attention, nor did the sermon. ... Some liturgy was necessary for public services to be held, but it should be as simple as possible in order to meet the needs of contemporary Christians.
>
> Rationalist writers backed up their words with deeds and produced a number of new liturgies written with the above concerns in mind. Luther Reed...offered the opinion that these liturgies "ranged in character from empty sentimentality to moralizing soliloquy and verbosity." ... Hymns were rewritten as well with a view to removing "superstition" and outdated theology. ... This, then, was the situation around the turn of the nineteenth century. In 1817, the three hundredth anniversary of the Lutheran Reformation, Claus Harms published his anti-Rationalistic Ninety-Five Theses, which marked the beginning of a revival of Lutheran theology and liturgy that was to continue for more than a century. (Herl, 127-29)

Harms and other leaders of the Confessional Awakening, who saw the need for a return to the doctrine of the Book of Concord, did indeed also see a corresponding need for reform and restoration in the area of the church's worship. They therefore led the way in a liturgical movement that strove for the reappropriation and restoration of Lutheranism's historic rites and ceremonies: for the sake of the pure gospel that these rites and ceremonies confessed, for the sake of the reverence in worship that these rites and ceremonies fostered, and as a testimony against the errors of the Reformed and sectarian churches. Walther, an adherent of the Confessional Awakening, accordingly wrote in his American context that

> as we continue to hold and to restore our wonderful divine services in places where they have been forgotten, let us boldly confess that our worship forms do not tie us with the modern sects or with the church of Rome; rather, they join us to the one, holy Christian

> Church that is as old as the world and is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. (Walther L, 163)

Elsewhere, Walther addressed certain prejudices born of ignorance, with which he was contending, when he added the thought that

> It is truly distressing that many of our fellow Christians find the difference between Lutheranism and Roman Catholicism in outward things. It is a pity and dreadful cowardice when a person sacrifices the good ancient church customs to please the deluded American denominations just so they won't accuse us of being Roman Catholic! Indeed! Am I to be afraid of a Methodist, who perverts the saving Word, or be ashamed in the matter of my good cause, and not rather rejoice that they can tell by our ceremonies that I do not belong to them? (Walther EC, I:194)

And in another place Walther argued his point in yet another way, when he pointed out that,

> in regard to the ceremonies of the Lutheran Church, for which it is charged that she is related to the Roman Church and has inclinations towards the same, every reasonable person must admit that if the Lutheran Church has a few things that are also found in the Catholic Church, this, in and of itself, could not prove that the former has inclinations towards the latter. For, if that were so, this charge would apply to every Christian denomination. For don't all parties in Christianity also have the same Bible, the same Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian Creeds, the same Baptism, the same preaching office, the same Sabbath observance, etc., as the Romanists? Don't even other so-called Protestants also have church buildings with steeples on them, bells, organs, the custom of folding hands, kneeling, uncovering the head when praying, and the like? Who would charge the Reformed, the Methodists, the Evangelicals, etc., with Catholic tendencies for those things? Certainly no one. Whoever regards the mere acceptance of certain innocent ceremonies...as papism cannot possibly know what papism actually is... (Walther DOLLR, 266-67)

To be sure, patient instruction was needed for those who incorrectly thought that some or many of the historic Christian customs that had traditionally been embraced and followed by Lutherans, and that Walther and other Lutherans of the Confessional Awakening wanted to restore, are distinctively Roman Catholic. But to Walther the pastor, this instruction, and this restoration, were worth the effort.

Martin Guenther, who served with Walther on the faculty at Concordia Seminary, suggested that German-speaking Confessional and liturgical Lutherans in America should look also to the larger world of Lutheranism in America for opportunities to have a positive influence – for the sake of the pure gospel – in the area of worship, liturgy, and ceremonies. He wrote in 1881 that

> it appears to be our duty to aid in spreading a knowledge of the rich treasures of our Lutheran church among those in our country who are unacquainted with German. ... A good liturgy, the beautiful Lutheran service form part of those treasures. Church usages, except in the case when the confession of a divine truth is required, are indeed *adiaphora*. But they are nevertheless not without an importance of their own. Congregations that adopt the church usages of the sects that surround them, will be apt to conform to their doctrines also, more easily and quickly than those that retain their Lutheran ceremonies. We should in Lutheran services, also when held in the English language, as much as possible use the old Lutheran forms, though they be said to be antiquated and not suiting this country.
>
> We will mention here the words of a pious Lutheran duchess, Elisabeth Magdalena of Brunswick-Luneburg. Her court-chaplain [Hieronymus] Prunner relates as follows: "Although her ladyship well knew that the ceremonies and purposes of this chapter (at which Prunner officiated) must have the appearance and repute of popery with some people, she

> still remembered the instructions which that dear and venerable man, Luther, had once given to her father [Joachim II, Elector of Brandenburg] concerning such ceremonies. I remember in particular that her ladyship several times told me that she did not desire at these present times to begin discontinuing any of those church usages, since she hoped that so long as such ceremonies continued, *Calvinistic temerity would be held back from the public office of the church*." (Guenther, 77-78)

Roman Catholicism is certainly not the only ecclesiastical tradition in Western Christendom that claims and celebrates a continuity with the pre-Reformation church. Anglicanism claims and celebrates such a continuity. And Lutheranism also claims and celebrates such a continuity! The momentous events of the sixteenth century have accordingly always been characterized by Lutherans *as a reformation*, and not as a revolution. The Lutheran Reformers did indeed bring about some necessary corrections and clarifications, on the basis of Holy Scripture, where the gospel of God's grace and forgiveness in Christ had been distorted and obscured during the middle ages. But they did not reject or repudiate all or even most of what had gone before in the history of the church. A fairly high degree of similarity between Roman Catholicism and Lutheranism – not only in matters of ceremony and ritual, but also in many areas of doctrine and practice – is therefore only to be expected. Regarding the Roman Church even of his own day – and in contrast to the sectarian attitudes of the Anabaptists – Luther could write in his 1528 treatise *Von der Wiedertaufe* ("on Anabaptism"):

> It is our confession that in the papacy there are the right Holy Scriptures, the right Baptism, the right Sacrament of the Altar, the right keys for forgiveness of sins, the right preaching office, the right catechism, such as the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the Creed. ... Now if Christianity exists under the pope, it must be Christ's true body and members. If it is His body, then it has the right Spirit, Gospel, Creed, Baptism, Sacrament, keys, preaching office, prayer, Holy Scriptures, and everything that Christianity should have. Therefore we do not rave like the "enthusiasts" that we reject everything in the papacy. (quoted in Fagerberg, 49-50)

After the threat and challenge of Calvinism had emerged, Polycarp Leyser expressed the general sentiment of the second generation of Lutheran Reformers when he wrote in 1602, to the Saxon Elector Christian II, that it was actually better to be "papist than Calvinist," since Calvinists were "enemies of all ceremonies and good order, and real trouble makers" (quoted in Heal, 591). We can get a glimpse into the way in which Lutherans were still vigorously distinguishing and distancing themselves from Calvinists as late as 1714, in a pamphlet published that year by Church of England clergyman Thomas Brett, entitled *A Review of the Lutheran Principles.* This pamphlet, addressed to an anonymous friend, recalled what that friend had previously pointed out to Brett concerning the constitution and character of the Lutheran Church in Europe at that time. Brett reminded his friend that he had observed that

> the Lutherans were more ceremonious in their worship, than the Church of England; that they not only retained the surplice, the [sign of the] cross at baptism, Godfathers and Godmothers, and kneeling at the Holy Communion (which were the main points that the Scots and our English Presbyterians, and the others called Reformed, have quarreled with from King Edward's days, when our [*Book of*] *Common Prayer* was established), to this time, that is, almost two hundred years; but they have also images and pictures of our Saviour, the Virgin Mary, the Apostles, and other saints, set up in their churches... They have also a Liturgy or Book of Common Prayer, not much differing from ours; and not only organs, but all sorts of the finest music in their churches. And they are such enemies to the Calvinists, or those who call themselves the Reformed, that they hate such, as bad as a Turk; and that in the great church at Leipsick in Saxony, Luther's own country, they have the pictures of the devil, [of] Ignatius Loyola the founder of the Jesuits, and of John Calvin, all in one frame, with this subscription: *The three great Enemies of Christ, and of our Christian Re-*

ligion. Nay, more than this, they, to this very day, retain auricular confession, and go to the priest every Saturday evening to be confessed and absolved. And though they have not bishops, yet they have superintendents to oversee and govern the other clergy, which you conceived differed from bishops only in name. (Brett, 5-6)

And Sasse has written more recently that

> Lutheran theology differs from Reformed theology in that it lays great emphasis on the fact that the evangelical church is none other than the medieval Catholic Church purged of certain heresies and abuses. The Lutheran theologian acknowledges that he belongs to the same visible church to which Thomas Aquinas and Bernard of Clairvaux, Augustine and Tertullian, Athanasius and Ireneaus once belonged. The orthodox evangelical church is the legitimate continuation of the medieval Catholic Church, not the church of the Council of Trent..., which renounced evangelical truth when it rejected the Reformation. For the orthodox evangelical church is really identical with the orthodox catholic church of all times. And just as the very nature of the Reformed Church emphasizes its strong opposition to the medieval church, so the very nature of the Lutheran Church requires it to go to the farthest possible limit in its insistence on its solidarity and identity with the Catholic Church. It was no mere ecclesiastico-political diplomacy which dictated the emphatic assertion in the Augsburg Confession that the teachings of the Evangelicals were identical with those of the orthodox catholic church of all ages, and no more was it romanticism or false conservatism which made our church anxious to retain as much of the old canonical law as possible, and to cling tenaciously to the old forms of worship. (Sasse HWS, 102-03)

None of this is intended to minimize the significance of the errors of Rome. But it is to remind all of how serious the Lutherans of past generations considered the errors of the sectarian and Reformed churches also to be; and of the great contrast that there is between the evangelical catholic ethos of classic Confessional Lutheranism, and the very different iconoclastic ethos of enthusiast sectarianism and Calvinism.

Divine Service in Repperndorf bei Kitzingen in the seventeenth century
(Hans Heunisch, Altargemälde, 1608)

12: THEOLOGICAL AND LITURGICAL DECLINE AND RESTORATION

The old Norwegian Synod – the predecessor church of today's ELS – was more conservative and churchly in its liturgical piety than were many American Lutheran groups in the nineteenth century. In this it was perpetuating certain unique emphases that had always characterized Scandinavian Lutheranism with respect to matters of ritual, ceremony, and vestments. On the retention of vestments in particular, Arthur Carl Piepkorn explains that "the Scandinavian national Churches in the sixteenth century," together with "Lutheran theologians in many German and Central European communities, especially those that had been rescued from or were threatened by Calvinism," regarded "vestments as things indifferent, but held that the retention of some or all of the medieval vestments was a desirable thing as a symbol of the unbroken continuity of the Church of the Augsburg Confession with her Catholic past and as a witness against Enthusiasts, Sacramentarians, and other radical reformers" (Piepkorn).

The Church of Sweden was the most tradition-conscious of the Scandinavian Lutheran national churches. Peder Severinsen observes that

> In Sweden all the Communion vestments were retained. Archbishop Laurentius Petri would not have it otherwise. [King] Charles the IX was of a different turn of mind and in the parliament of 1618 made an attack on the Communion vestments. The leading churchmen would not hear anything of this, however. They remarked in their reply to the king that some of the old customs were retained at the Reformation [so] that everything in the churches might be done decently and in order, and also to show liberty in these indifferent matters. It was but fitting that a poor priest celebrating the Holy Communion should also have a fitting garment and not his outworn clothes – making him a laughing stock for people. Everyone would know that it was not done to follow the pope. That decided it – as far as Sweden is concerned. (Severinsen)

The Swedish churchmen's argument was very similar to an opinion that Luther had once shared with Duke John of Anhalt specifically about the wearing of a cope while preaching. Luther had said that, "especially in the smaller cities and villages where the poor priests are wearing clothes so worn that one cannot tell who is the priest, a citizen or farmer," it would be his "wish that the priest had a cope on, that he might be taken for a different and higher person" (Severinson).

Regarding the continuing use of historic vestments among German Lutherans, historian Ernst Walter Zeeden gives examples of Lutheran churches in Germany for many decades also retaining, *and when necessary restoring*, the use of clerical vestments, even and especially against the onslaughts of Calvinist demands for plainness and austerity. But he also sadly reports that the use of vestments was finally abolished in most places when Enlightenment Rationalism invaded the church. Zeeden writes:

> Lutherans continued to use the five ancient liturgical colors as well as the liturgical vestments in the service and for sacramental acts; this usage lasted amazingly long, partly up to the brink of the nineteenth century. Insofar as Calvinism hadn't discredited these earlier, they mostly disappeared first under the influence of the Enlightenment in the late eighteenth century. ...liturgical vestments enjoyed the greatest favor in [the] Lutheranism of northern and central Germany. ...the 1555 visitation in the archiepiscopal-Magdeburg subdistrict (*Amt*) of Querfurt...showed that only three parishes still had chasubles in use; after that, all churches in the county were required to use them again; the parsons whose chasubles had disappeared had to go to Querfert Castle and there be given new vestments. ...the ecclesiastical vestments remain in Weissenfels until 1588 and in Silesia until 1811. In Hamburg the celebrants wore an ornate chasuble during the Lord's Supper until 1785; in Lusatia the choir boys wore surplices until 1850 (they wore these while holding the houseling cloths during Communion).

> Chasubles, which were regarded as a worthy ornament and therefore gladly retained, were also occasionally reinstated even in the later evangelical period. Thus they were used in 1740 in Silesia for consecrating new congregations; in 1659 they were reintroduced into Mecklenburg, in order thereby to serve a counterblow to the "libertinism and negligence of divine worship, which unfortunately are growing ever more prevalent from day to day." The chasuble was, like the ceremonies, regarded as a symbol of the difference between Calvinism [and Lutheranism] and as a criterion for pure Lutheranism, just as conversely, wherever Calvinism gained access, it immediately insisted on abolishing the surplice and chasuble. (Zeeden, 31-32)

For many decades the Lutherans who lived in the territories of Brandenburg-Prussia endured various forms of interference and oppression at the hands of their Reformed electors and kings – beginning with the conversion of Elector John Sigismund from Lutheranism to Calvinism in 1613; and culminating in the imposition of the Prussian Union in 1817, which combined Lutheran and Reformed congregations into one confessionally-ambiguous national church body. John Sigismund unsuccessfully tried to turn the Lutheran Church of his Electorate into a thoroughgoing Reformed church immediately after his own conversion. (See *Addendum VI* for a description of the controversy that raged between Lutheran and Reformed theologians in Brandenburg at that time.) His descendants and heirs then took a more gradual approach in their efforts to de-Lutheranize the Lutheran Church in their territories. Elector Frederick William I (1620-1688) disallowed the use of the Formula of Concord as a symbolical book for the Lutherans in Brandenburg, and forbade Lutheran pastors from publicly criticizing Calvinism. This resulted in the famous Lutheran hymn-writer Paul Gerhardt being ejected from his pastoral position in Berlin. Another egregious example of such interference and oppression can be seen in what took place in the 1730s, at the hands of King Frederick William I (1688-1740). In 1924 Severinsen recounted *that* discouraging history:

> Through a Decision of 1733 he "prohibited the remnants of Popery in the Lutheran Church: copes, Communion vestments, candles, Latin song, chants, and the sign of the cross." Many priests sanctioned this step, but conservatism was also very strong. Many complained and counted the whole event a "betrayal of genuine and pure Lutheranism." Many reports were also given of the disappointments of the congregations. The brutal king repeated the decision in 1737, with the addition: "Should there be those who hesitate or who desire to make it a matter of conscience, we wish to make it known that we are ready to give them their demission." At least one priest was discharged for refusal to submit. ...
>
> In a supplement [to V. E. Löscher's *Unschuldige Nachrichten*] of 1737...we find the following: ... These things are admittedly not of any inner necessity, but they have become no insignificant mark of our church, and must therefore be safeguarded under these circumstances. The king gives to the Papists and the Jews full liberty in matters of worship. Should then the Evangelical Lutheran Christians not be able to obtain the same protection and liberty from their *Landesvater* – their king? ...
>
> One might think that the Pietists, with their dread of externalism, would wholeheartedly support the royal command. This is, however, not the case, for their chief city, Halle, was among those who protested against the royal dictatorship. The Danish Hallensian, Enevold Ewald, shows no sympathy in his account of the event. He says: "Some obeyed the royal decision, but a number of places protested, for instance, Königsberg, Pomerania, Magdeburg, Halle, etc. This led to a repetition and strengthening of the royal command in 1737. A number of priests chose to be dismissed from their office rather than make submission." ...
>
> Frederick [William] I was succeeded in 1740 by his son Frederick II. Immediately on ascending the throne, he issued a cabinet order allowing the churches and their priests full liberty in the matter of religious services. A number made use of the liberty granted. The Communion vestments were restored in Berlin and other places. A number of Prussian churches, such as the Maria Church in Danzig and the Cathedral Church of Brandenburg, possess even today the greatest collections of Communion vestments in Christendom. ...

> Some years of prohibition put the vestments out of use in many places, and the time of Frederick II was the time of Rationalism. ... Rationalism flourished, and it had an infinite dread of all that was "mystic" or that was handed down from the "Middle Ages." The use of the Communion vestments was decidedly "catholic" to the mind of Rationalism. Rationalism completed what the Reformed king of Prussia had begun. (Severinsen)

In German Lutheran lands the attacks of the Rationalists on the church's vestments and on their reverent use were merciless and unrelenting. Most of the German Lutheran churches that had retained their historic vestments longer than others had, did finally succumb to the pressure soon before the beginning of the nineteenth century. Piepkorn writes:

> In Leisnig, Mass vestments were in use until 1787 on Sundays and until a later date at weekday Eucharists; in Gersdorf-bei-Leisnig they survived until 1797. ... Mass vestments were still in use in St. Nicholas' Church, Berlin, in 1787. In Hamburg, a chasuble richly embroidered with pearls and gold thread was in use until 1788. Simultaneously the Rationalist Karl Spazier complained that even in some of the chief churches of enlightened Berlin "the preacher gets up in a frightful white linen surplice like a spook in the midst of an assembled multitude of people." He also refers to "the loud-colored embroidered chasubles" extant particularly in the Saxon principalities and to the "ludicrously vested boy servers" who kneel behind the celebrant. ...
>
> The proposals for liturgical reform in Silesia put forth by Senior Engelmann of Steinau (Scinawa) in 1791 discountenanced the retention of chasubles. In 1795, Gottfried Elisenschmid of Gera complained that chasubles, against which he inveighed as "theatrical garb which dates entirely from the dark ages of superstitious worship," were worn "in many places of our Protestant Churches," and that some Lutheran pastors were even restoring them in places where they had been abolished years earlier. Chasubles were finally abolished in Leipzig on January 1, 1795, and in Zwickau in 1796. ...
>
> On February 10, 1797, an inventory of vestments from the Lutheran churches of Nuremberg offered for sale in order to raise money for the depleted city treasury included: From St. Sebald's Church, a pearl-embroidered red chasuble, two similarly embroidered red dalmatics, and a similarly embroidered blue chasuble; and from St. Lawrence's Church, a partly-colored, gold-and-pearl-embroidered chasuble with two matching dalmatics, a blue pearl-embroidered chasuble, a white chasuble, and a blue-and-gold chasuble each with a matching dalmatic, and three brown silk chasubles. The pearls alone were sold by the three successful Jewish bidders for 2300 florins. (Piepkorn)

We ponder that final degrading humiliation with great sadness, as we recall Rocholl's and Lochner's descriptions of what could be heard and seen during the Divine Service in those historic Nuremberg churches in earlier times. And with much less sadness we ponder the anxiety and distress that was felt by the Rationalists – and that may still be felt today by those who share their prejudices – when orthodox Lutheran pastors, with patient instruction, restore the use of chasubles and other historic vestments even "in places where they had been abolished years earlier."

In spite of the pressure from Rationalism, a small number of German Lutheran churches held out for several more years – right up to the time of the Confessional Awakening. Again, Piepkorn writes:

> Chasubles were not abolished in Halle until 1801/1802. At Schweidnitz (Swidnica) in Silesia both the rector and his two assistants wore chasubles for an anniversary service in the Friedenskirche in 1802... In the same year, ...[D. G. W.] Rullmann described the common garb of Lutheran clergymen officiating at divine service as consisting of a cassock (*Summar*), a white surplice, and, at the Holy Eucharist, a chasuble. ... Chasubles in the liturgical colors were in use in Lübeck until 1805. In November, 1810, the Nuremberg clergy wore their surplices and Mass vestments for the last time. Karl Friedrich Michahelles, rector of St. John's

> Church [in Nuremberg], stresses in an entry in the parish records that on December 2 [1810] he celebrated the Holy Eucharist without a chasuble for the first time.

It would seem, then, that while the best and most ornate chasubles in Nuremberg had been sold off in 1797, some that were still serviceable remained, and remained in use for 13 more years. Piepkorn continues:

> Chasubles and surplices continued in use in Hannover until 1817. The chasuble was likewise in use in Dresden in the early part of the nineteenth century, and the Germanic Museum in Nuremberg preserved a red chasuble which was worn at Regelsbach near Nuremberg well into the eighteen hundreds. ...
>
> In 1825, use of the chasuble was discontinued in Grimma, Saxony. ... In 1832, [Peter Wilhelm] Behrends stated that "albs and chasubles have remained in use until the present time in many large Evangelical city churches." That year the wearing of Mass vestments was finally discontinued in Zorbau-bei-Weissenfels. ... In Holstein, the "so offensive white overgarment and the so-called chasubles that are still in use elsewhere" had been altogether abolished by 1837. (Piepkorn)

The Saxon emigrants under the leadership of Martin Stephan – who later, in America, came under the leadership of Walther; and who led the way in organizing the Missouri Synod in 1847 – were a unique body of German Lutherans. Like many in their time, they embraced the principles and practices of the Confessional Awakening. But they stood out from many others in their desire also to restore a full array of ecclesiastical vestments in their church life, after the destructive depredations of the Rationalists in their home region decades earlier. Once again, Piepkorn writes:

> Prior to their departure from Germany, the Saxon immigrants had supplied themselves with sketches of Roman Catholic vestments used in Dresden. Yet there was at that time no intention of Romanizing, as the minutes of the meeting of the immigrants on December 6, 1837, show: "Sacerdotal vesture of the kind that was abolished forty years ago must be made up. At that time they had different vestures for different cultic functions. They were different for preaching and assisting (*Diaconieren*) from what they were for celebrating the Sacrament (*Consecrieren*). Different also for the various feasts, as they still are in the decoration of a Church: Easter red; Whitsunday green; Christmas blue. Priestly vestments (*Priesterzeug*) must be firm and good in quality. To this also the alb, of fine white linen with lace trimming, with sleeves, for those without sleeves are reminiscent of the Leipzig Interim."

Piepkorn adds that "On the matter of colors and the association of sleeveless albs with the Leipzig Interim the minutes may have been incorrectly recorded; or the speaker's recollection may have been inaccurate" (Piepkorn). Yet it is interesting to see that in the Saxons' minds, it was only a certain kind of vestment that they associated with the Leipzig Interim of 1549 – with its attempted imposition of Romanist rites and ceremonies onto Lutheranism – and not vestments in general.

> An important point made in the Formula of Concord concerning *adiaphora,* is that
>
> we must not include among the truly free *adiaphora* or indifferent matters ceremonies that give the appearance…that our religion does not differ greatly from the papist religion or that their religion were not completely contrary to ours... (SD X:5, K/W).

The context of this statement was the context of the Augsburg and Leipzig Interims, in which the Roman Catholic Church and a Roman Catholic Emperor were attempting – through political and military pressure – to draw Lutherans into the Roman Catholic fold, and to acclimate them to Romanist doctrine and worship by imposing upon them and their churches certain Romanist rites and ceremonies under the guise of *adiaphora*. Historic Christian ceremonies that most Lutheran

churches had always retained – such as clerical vestments, altar and chancel appointments, chanting, and the sign of the cross – would not in themselves have been seen by Lutherans as symbols of Roman error, even if such ceremonies also happened to be found in the Roman Church. However, if ceremonies that had been set aside by most Lutherans, but that were still common among Romanists, would now be forcibly reintroduced under such circumstances, then this could indeed signal an impending submission to Roman authority and an impending return to Roman error, and could be seen as preparing the way for that kind of ecclesiastical shift.

In other times and places, though, this principle of the Formula – originally articulated in opposition to the threats and deceptions of the Roman Church in the sixteenth century – was rearticulated in different ways, and was applied in response to different threats. As has already been noted, the Prussian King Frederick William I, who was a Calvinist, took it upon himself in the 1730s to make the Lutheran congregations of his realm look and sound like Reformed congregations. His long-term goal was no doubt to get the Lutherans accustomed to the Reformed way of worship, so that someday they could more easily *become* Reformed. The Confessional Lutherans in Prussia resisted the king's demands, and they were supported in this resistence by Confessional Lutherans outside of Prussia.

The Formula of Concord also confessed that

> in a time when confession is necessary, as when the enemies of God's Word want to suppress the pure teaching of the holy gospel, the entire community of God, indeed, every Christian, especially servants of the Word as the leaders of the community of God, are obligated according to God's Word to confess true teaching and everything that pertains to the whole of religion freely and publicly. They are to do so not only with words but also in actions and deeds. In such a time they shall not yield to the opponents even in indifferent matters... (SD X:10, K/W)

In America – both in the time of Walther and in our time – Reformed and sectarian churches dominate the religious culture. Such churches therefore were and are in a position to be able to confuse or mislead weak Lutherans through the gradual intrusion of their distinctive church usages into the worship life of the Lutherans. Concerning "ceremonies involving confession," Walther explained in 1871 that

> Circumstances can occur in which Lutheran Christians dare not yield in the least in matters that are adiaphora, namely when confession is at stake. This principle, valid for all time, is expressed in...Art. X of the Formula of Concord... Thus our fathers at the time of the Interims and of the adiaphoristic controversies did not yield to the adversaries also in indifferent matters. ...
>
> We are constantly reproached as if we were acting against our own doctrine of Christian liberty because we, whenever confession [of faith] is involved, are so strict in the matter of adiaphora, and thus make a distinction between adiaphora from which one may refrain, and adiaphora the observance or omission of which involves yielding to false doctrine. ... For "at a time of confession," the Formula of Concord says quite correctly, "one dare not yield." Now, however, that "time" is for us "always," because we are everywhere surrounded by Reformed and other sects.

In the immediate context of these remarks, Walther specifically mentioned "the Reformed sects with the breaking of the bread at the Lord's Supper and the Baptists with their immersion at Baptism." These usages, which are *in themselves* matters of *adiaphora*, are turned into dogmatically necessary rites by the Reformed and the Baptists, who furthermore "connect and confess their false doctrine" with these rites. Lutherans in the American environment who understand the importance of preserving their Biblical teaching regarding the sacraments "can and must not yield" to the demands of the Reformed and the Baptists, or allow themselves to be perceived as doing so. Lu-

therans will not ceremonially break the bread in Holy Communion, and Lutherans will not administer Baptism by immersion. Instead, we "must for the sake of the confession of the pure doctrine continue the use of wafers and pouring, in order that we may not 'yield to the false brethren even for one moment, that the truth of the Gospel might be preserved'" (Walther EC, I:197). (See *Addendum VII* for a fuller discussion of when and how ceremonies that are in themselves *adiaphora* can become necessary marks of confession.)

These were, of course, not the only issues to which Walther's teaching on ceremonies and confession would have applied in his day. And they are not the only issues to which his teaching would apply in our day, either, since we too are still "everywhere surrounded by Reformed and other sects."

Severinsen, after his historical account of what happened in Prussia in the 1730s, added this reflection on how things stood within European and American Lutheranism, in the area of ceremonies and vestments, in the early years of the twentieth century:

> Taken as a whole the German Lutheran priest appears at the present time in the black Calvinistic cloak handed him by the Reformed king of Prussia. The whole affair proved one tremendous defeat – a colossal yielding and giving up of typical Lutheran ways and customs. The condition was reached through protests and objections on the part of the Lutheran population, and through dismissals and threats of dismissal from office on the part of the king. And the force of the tyrant was superior.
>
> It should always be remembered that the Calvinistic *blackness* of the clergy in the present-day German Lutheran churches – and in her daughters – is not only not Lutheran, but is a remnant and constant reminder of a period of the greatest helplessness and degradation of the German Lutheran people. The brutal Prussian king, followed by the overwhelming power of Rationalism, did accomplish one thing (insofar as externals are concerned). They shifted the German branch of the Lutheran Church, and her daughter churches, from her natural position among the great historic communions of Christendom, to a place among the sectarian, Calvinistic denominations. Her place there has so far been one of continued yielding in order to make herself acceptable. Lutheran in theory and increasingly Reformed in practice...
>
> The original and typical apparel of the German Lutheran – as of all Lutheran clergy when officiating in the sanctuary – is not that of *blackness and gloom*, but the festive apparel of the historic church through the ages. We of Scandinavian ancestry cannot be too grateful for the better conditions prevailing in the Mother-Countries [of Scandinavia]. (Severinsen)

C. F. W. Walther at the organ

13: THE CONFESSIONAL AND LITURGICAL CHARACTER OF THE NORWEGIAN SYNOD

The Norwegian Synod's strong identity in America as an orthodox and liturgical church body was not only an outgrowth of the "better conditions" that had prevailed in its mother-country, but was also shaped by the influence of the Confessional Awakening, which sought to recover for the Lutheran Church a theology and a worship life that were better and purer than what the church had fallen into through the influence of Pietism and Rationalism. The Synod's orthodox and liturgical identity was further reinforced and crystalized in the context of its ongoing struggle with the "Ellingians" – who represented a more extreme form of Pietism than what would generally have been seen among the Norwegian Lutheran "Haugeans," who took their ideas and their name from the more moderate Norwegian Pietist lay preacher Hans Nielsen Hauge. Elling Eielsen and his followers severely criticized the Confessional doctrine and practice of the Norwegian Synod, and therefore also criticized the liturgical usages that embodied, testified to, and accompanied that doctrine and practice. They decried the Synod's high standards for the pastoral office, and its adherence to the historic rites of the Church of Norway, as an elitist clericalism and a superficial formalism that inhibited the development of a genuine interior Christian spirituality. Article 6 of "The Old Constitution" of the Ellingians declared:

> With popish authority and also the common ministerial garb we henceforth have absolutely nothing to do, since there is no proof in the New Testament that Jesus or his disciples have used or enjoined it. On the contrary, we can read in Matt. XXVIII.5, Mark XXI.38, and Luke XX.46 that Jesus chastised those who went about in long clothes and performed [acts of] piety to be well thought of by men. Experience also teaches, that both minister and hearer [worshiper] often place a blind confidence in the dead church ceremonies and clerical garb, and through this do away with God's command because of their custom (Matt. XV.6). (Nelson/Fevold, I:338)

Historian John Magnus Rohne describes Elling Eielsen's idiosyncratic version of Pietist worship:

> Eielsen...believed in an extremely free, almost unorderly, form of church worship in which the spirit should be untrammeled. Anyone who had the inner call could preach, whether man or woman; indeed it was said that Mrs. Elling Eielsen preached better than her husband did. Eielsen also had something that approached the "inner light" of the Quakers. Eielsen, of course, did not share the Quaker view that the Sacraments should be dispensed with, but he laid such stress on subjective feeling, particularly in conversion, that the objective need of the Sacrament was somewhat left out of consideration. In such a scheme of things the pastor was not of much use, as he was by no means to have undisputed right to religious leadership in this spiritual priesthood of believers. Nor were his services in connection with the administration of the Sacraments of paramount importance where subjective values overshadowed the objective. (Rohne, 50)

Pastor J. A. O. Stub – a grandson of one of the Norwegian Synod's leading ministers – intrigues and inspires us with his first-hand reminiscences of a typical Divine Service in the old Synod, which had very little in common with what went on in the worship gatherings of the Ellingians:

> My sainted grandfather, Jacob Aall Ottesen, always celebrated the Communion, robed in the colorful, and, as it seemed to me, beautiful vestments of the Lutheran Church. On ordinary Sundays he wore the narrow-sleeved cassock, with its long satin stole, and the white "ruff," or collar. But on "Communion days" and on all festival days he also wore the white surplice or cotta. As he stood reverentially before the altar with its lighted candles and gleaming silver, the old deacon, or verger, placed over his shoulders the scarlet, gold embroidered, silk chasuble. This ancient Communion vestment was shaped somewhat like a shield. As it was double, one side covered his back and the other his chest. Upon the side, which faced the congregation when he turned to the altar, was a large cross in gold em-

> broidery; upon the other was a chalice of similar materials. As a child I instinctively knew that the most sacred of all observances of the church was about to be witnessed. As grandfather turned to the altar and intoned the Lord's Prayer and the words of consecration, with the elevation of the host and the chalice, I felt as if God was near. The congregation standing reverentially about those kneeling before the altar, made me think of Him who, though unseen, was in our midst. I forgot the old, cold church with its bare walls, its home-made pews and its plain glass windows. I early came to know some words of that service, such as: "This is the true body, the true blood of Christ"; "Forgiveness of sins"; "Eternal life." I venture that all who, like me, early received such impressions of the Lord's Supper, will approach the altar or the Communion with a reverence that time will but slowly efface. (Stub, 3-4)

Stub also informs us, regarding his then-current ministry as pastor of Central Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, that

> The chasuble...I now use was presented to me by...Dr. J. A. Aasgaard. He had used it while pastor at Norway Grove [Wisconsin]. A former pastor of this congregation, the sainted President H. A. Preus, undoubtedly regularly used a chasuble at the Communion, as did so many of the fathers of our Church. (Stub, 18)

Another early leader in the Norwegian Synod was Pastor Ulrik Vilhelm Koren. When he began his ministry in northeastern Iowa in December of 1853, his congregation had no church building in which to meet. So, services were held in the house of one of the members. But these rustic frontier conditions did not cause Koren or his parishioners to forget that they were, even in such an improvised setting, gathered as the holy church of God, in his fear and with reverence before him. In her diary entry for Epiphany Day, 1854, Koren's wife Elisabeth noted:

> A crowd gathered today, and there was communion for the first time. It is really remarkable that the service can be conducted with as much order and dignity as it is. (Koren, 119)

In a contemporary home mission setting, where services may be held in a private residence or in a rented facility, there is likewise no valid reason for a twenty-first century pastor to lower his liturgical standards. He, too, should still seek to conduct his ministry "with as much order and dignity" as circumstances permit. What John Schaller said in 1891 about the unique challenges and opportunities of Lutheran home missions is likewise always applicable:

> The first care, then, of...pastors and laymen alike, ought ever to be that they steadfastly adhere to the biblical doctrine in all its parts. Lutheran hymns, Lutheran liturgies, Lutheran prayers, above all Lutheran sermons ought to be heard wherever our missionary work is carried on. True Lutheranism need not fear any criticism. It has stood the test of centuries, and no modern weapon of offence will subvert it. It is an impregnable fortress. Be not afraid, then, to show its beauties to all who come to hear. They expect to be treated to something new in our churches, and they ought not to be disappointed.
>
> To follow the example set by sectarian clergymen, to sermonize on anything else rather than upon questions of doctrine, or to fill the hearers' ears with weak generalizations and pasture them on fine, poetic language alone, would be worse than folly. To make a good impression, to effect some real, living good, solid meat must be offered, which alone can satisfy the soul's desires. Emphasize doctrine, if you would accomplish your aim. Else why should we expend money and labor, only to do what others may do as well? ... Having laid a good foundation, we may hope to build up congregations [that are] really Lutheran. Having sown good, living seed, we may look forward to a rich harvest. (Schaller, 58)

The Divine Service as conducted in Norwegian Synod congregations – wherever they may have met – was very different from the emotion-laden and unstructured services of the Ellingians.

And the Lutheran Divine Service nurtured within worshipers a different kind of spirituality. This truly Lutheran spirituality was oriented around the forgiveness, life, and salvation that God graciously bestows upon Christians by means of the external Word and sacraments of Christ, through which the Holy Spirit engenders and sustains the faith that receives these blessings.

Divine Service in Hamburg in the seventeenth century
(Otto Wagenfeldt, “Das Abendmahl,” 1650)

14: WORSHIP IN NORWAY AND IN THE NORWEGIAN SYNOD IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY

The influences that were brought to bear on the liturgical practice of Norwegian Lutheranism, between the adoption of the *Ritual* and *Agenda* in the 1680s, and the time of Norwegian emigration to America in the nineteenth century, are described by Ferkenstad:

> The Seventeenth and Eighteenth Century movements of Pietism and Rationalism affected not only individuals, institutions, and dogma, but also the liturgy of the church. In Norway, Pietism was strong. It was opposed by the official church but [was] widespread among the people. ...an over-emphasis was placed on such matters as personal experience. ... Pietism prepared the way for Rationalism, which attempted to find religious truths from the use of reason. ... In Norway such was also the case.
>
> The *Ritual* of 1685 and *Agenda* of 1688 remained the official basis for liturgical forms; however, the use of such was not completely followed. One example...is seen in 1802 when a rescript was issued. The rescript officially abolished the singing of the *Kyrie*. With the omission of the *Kyrie*, the *Gloria in Excelsis* (in hymn form) became the opening hymn. In time other opening hymns were used and such became a part of the service. In other changes, the Creed and *Gloria in Excelsis* were being used alternately every other Sunday and soon were completely omitted except on the great festivals. The Gospel was no longer read from the Altar.
>
> Eventually this led to the development of what was known as the "Shorter Order" of service. It was the "Shorter Order" which was in common use when the Norwegian immigrants came to America. This was the service used by the Norwegian Synod's pastors... (Ferkenstad AGS, 22-24)

The Norwegian Synod's first constitution in 1853 stated: "The Ritual of 1685 of the Church of Norway and Denmark and the altar book used in the same kingdoms are approved for use, modified, however, as the synod may decide." The 1868 revised constitution stated:

> To preserve uniformity in the ceremonies connected with public worship, Synod recommends to its congregations, so far as this is possible, to continue employing the Norwegian church-ritual of 1685 and the Liturgy of 1688.

But it was an abbreviated order, with modifications and abridgments similar to what had been called for in the 1802 *Rescript*, that was actually followed. This abbreviated order was, however, followed in a reverent and churchly manner, contrary to the spirit of the Pietism and Rationalism that had originally inspired those modifications and abridgements. Rohne describes a Sunday service as it would have been held in a typical congregation of the Norwegian Synod in its earlier years:

> First and foremost stands the pastor. Much to the disgust of Eielsen and some extreme Haugeans, who flocked to Eielsen for this reason, Dietrichson and the Synod pastors wore the Norwegian clerical garb. This consists of a black gown hanging straight from the shoulders to within a few inches of the floor. Over the gown is a stiffly padded, inch-wide, satin-covered stole, or "yoke," which hangs around the neck and down both sides of the front the full length of the gown. This stole, or "yoke," was mistakenly taken to symbolize the complete surrender ("going under the yoke") of the pastor to the sovereign will of God. At the back of the neck, the stole, or "yoke," is raised somewhat so as to support the white, fluted collar or ruff. The ruff, which is three inches wide and one inch thick, is worn...over the pastor's ordinary wing collar, and symbolizes the purity and glory of the pastoral office. This white fluted collar with the black gown gives the pastor a worthy and dignified appearance when he approaches the Altar of God or preaches God's Word from the pulpit. On the three major church festivals and on other very important occasions, the pastor wore a white surplice over the black gown. ...
>
> Of the services, the *höimesse* (high mass), or morning service, was overwhelmingly

preferred to the more informal *aftensang* (literally even-song or vesper). Even in the early days when the service was held at whatever time the travel-worn pastor arrived in the settlement, the liturgical forms of the *höimesse* were retained as far as time and circumstances would permit. In the more favored congregations where there was a church building and a church bell, ...on special days the stately *höimesse* began on Saturday evening when the bell was tolled at five, or at sundown in the country congregations. On Sunday morning, the *kirkevärge*, or the church-warden, tolled the bell at three separate half-hour intervals. At the third tolling of the bell, the people quietly took their places in church, the men on the right, and the women on the left. The pastor meanwhile having proceeded to the altar, the service was formally opened by the three concluding taps of the bell, whereby the Holy Trinity is symbolically invoked. The *klokker*, or sexton, who was usually also *forsanger*, or precentor, stepped with great dignity to the chancel and read the opening prayer, which prayer for this reason was called *klokker bön* (bön=prayer), even when read by the pastor. The pastor, who had knelt before the altar during the opening prayer, rose and faced the altar during the singing of the first hymn by the congregation under the vocal leadership of the *forsanger*, who was held responsible for the pitch of the tune as well as its proper singing. The hymn sung, the pastor turned to the congregation and, after the proper pastoral salutations and congregational responses, chanted the *Collect for the Day* and read the *Epistle for the Day*, the congregation standing meanwhile. After a second hymn, the pastor read the *Gospel for the Day*. The congregation, having risen to hear the Gospel lesson, remained standing while the *Creed* was repeated in unison by pastor and congregation. The congregation again sang a hymn, at the concluding words of which the pastor mounted the pulpit and, after three taps of the bell, offered a free prayer, usually along the general lines of his sermon. He then read his text to the risen congregation and preached his sermon, the sermon culminating in the *Lesser Gloria*. Thereupon the pastor read, while yet in the pulpit, the *General Prayer*, in which are remembered the government of the United States, the sick, the fatherless, other right-believing denominations, and those who suffer for the sake of Christ's name. This was concluded with the *Lord's Prayer*, and after the announcements were made the congregation rose to receive the *Apostolic Benediction*. The congregation then sang another hymn. If there were no Baptism nor Holy Communion, the pastor chanted, with the proper salutations and responses, the *Collect for the Word* and the *Aaronitic Blessing*. Then followed the fifth, and closing, hymn, whereupon the *klokker* read the closing prayer from the chancel, the pastor kneeling meanwhile.

Rohne also explains that when it is administered,

> Baptism is an integral part of the Lutheran service. The font is placed at the worshiper's left and the pulpit at his right as he faces the altar, which is in the center. After the hymn at the close of the sermon the first verse of the baptismal hymn was sung, during which the child was brought forward by the godmother and the sponsors. After the reading of the baptismal formula, in which Bible passages are quoted to explain the nature and regenerating power of Baptism, the child is baptized by "sprinkling" into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. In early times the *forsanger* assisted by certain responses.

And in regard to the Sacrament of the Altar, Rohne observes that the common practice of the old Norwegian Synod was that

> The Lord's Supper, though theoretically a part of every Lutheran service and to be administered at any church service at the demand of five, was usually administered at stated seasons of the year. ... At those stated seasons, the whole service was dedicated to the intent and meaning of the Communion. The communicants knelt at the circular altar-railing when absolved and communed by the pastor. Non-members, unbaptized adults, and the unconfirmed were not admitted to Communion... Both sexes communed at the same time, the men kneeling at the right half of the railing and the women at the left half. (Rohne, 85-87)

In 1899 the Norwegian Synod formally adopted a new agenda, which was very similar to the new agenda that had been adopted by the Church of Norway in 1889. These agendas were actually more *old* than "new," in that they restored, at an official level, the essential components of the historic *Ritual* of 1685 and *Agenda* of 1688; and became the mechanism through which a fuller and richer liturgical practice was brought about in Norwegian Lutheran congregations. Arve Brunvoll describes the significance of the improved order of service for Lutherans in Norway, and by extension for Norwegian Lutherans in America, when he writes that, before it was issued, "the Norwegian service was essentially a 'hymn' Mass, i.e. the Ordinary was sung in metrical form to hymn tunes, following the tradition from Luther's German Mass." The introduction of the new service therefore represented "a minor liturgical revolution, first of all by introducing a 'prose' Mass for the first time in two centuries, and for the first time one totally in the vernacular." He adds that this new order "was, of course, a Norwegian reflection of the liturgical movement of the nineteenth century" (Brunvoll, 68). One place where the Norwegian Synod version differed from the Church of Norway version was in its inclusion of public absolution (after the confession of sins), which had become a very meaningful and highly valued practice among the Lutherans of the Norwegian Synod.

Ferkenstad comments on the impact of this liturgical revision and renewal on the congregations of the Norwegian Synod in particular, especially when the more historic form of service first appeared in print:

> ...in 1903, the synod's *Salmebog* was revised and reprinted by the Norwegian Synod. ... For the first time the "liturgy" was printed in a hymnbook! Even though the "liturgy" covered only five pages, it was the first time...musical notes [had been] printed in a church hymnbook. ...until this time, ...Norwegian Synod congregation[s] had used a service which was very simple and was referred to as the "Shorter Order" of Service. But in Norway a royal decree had authorized a new Book of Service and restored a fuller use of the Ritual of 1685. The Norwegian Synod felt the impact of this decree and urged their congregations to use this longer form of the liturgy. On June 17,1899, the following constitutional revision appeared in the Norwegian Synod's *Synoden*: "In order to preserve unity in liturgical forms and ceremonies, the Synod advises its congregations to use, as far as possible, the liturgy of 1685 and agenda of 1688 of the Church of Norway, or the new liturgy and agenda adopted by the Synod at Spring Grove, Minnesota, June 1899, according as the several congregations may decide" (the "new liturgy and agenda" was basically the New Liturgy of the Church of Norway). (Ferkenstad SSS, 4)

A description of the liturgy in the Norwegian Synod as it would have been conducted in this later period comes from Leigh D. Jordahl's essay on "Worship at First Lutheran Church" in Decorah, Iowa – a church "which was constructed in 1876 as the temple of the Norwegian Synod" (Ferkenstad ELS, 78). Jordahl writes:

> The service adapted at First Lutheran...consisted, in modified form, of the Catholic mass up to the communion. According to that church order, the bell was rung during which the pastor stationed himself facing the altar, the *klokker* read the opening prayer (by the 1900s *klokkers* were disappearing and the pastor himself read the prayer), then an opening hymn, followed by the confession of sins with a sung *kyrie* (*Oh God, the Father in Heaven*...), the absolution pronounced by the pastor, the so-called "short gloria" sung as versicle and response by pastor and congregation, then the collect for the day chanted by the pastor, followed by the epistle or gospel for the day. The sermon hymn was sung, and the pastor mounted the steps of the pulpit. The text was read (depending upon which of the two lessons for the day had been read at the altar) and the sermon preached. Sermons...rarely lasted less than thirty minutes. ...the long "general prayer" was read from the pulpit after the sermon and concluded with the Lord's Prayer. A hymn followed during which an offering might be taken. On Christmas, Easter, Pentecost, and "mission Sunday" the people walked in procession to the chancel where they deposited their offerings on the altar. ... The Sun-

day service concluded with the pastor chanting both the "collect for the Word" and the benediction. (There were some pastors who couldn't chant and that was always regarded by the people as a liability.) A closing hymn was sung and the final prayer was read by the pastor, or, in early days, by the *klokker*. The Lord's Prayer was sometimes prayed a second time and then the bell was rung nine times.

Norwegian Synod pastors invariably wore the old church gown. It was a slightly loose black robe coming to the ankles. Over the gown was a stiffly padded, inch-wide satin yoke which hung down the full length of the gown. It symbolized the yoke of Christ. The yoke was raised in the back so as to support the white, three inch wide ruff (a "Sir Walter Raleigh collar"). ... On the three major festivals the pastor wore an ankle length white surplice open in the back like a hospital gown and tied together with a string. ...

Communion services at First Lutheran were mostly scheduled...for a Sunday afternoon or evening. They were occasions of great solemnity and prospective communicants announced themselves to the pastor the afternoon before in the sacristy or during the hour before the service. The liturgy began with a hymn, a Bible reading, and then a confessional sermon. Following the sermon the entire congregation crowded into the chancel area where they knelt in turn at the rail for individual absolution with the laying on of hands. ... And even in the days when men and women sat separately, families usually came to the communion rail as a unit. Women often took their hats off for the laying on of hands and left them off until after receiving communion. Following the sermon and absolution, the pastor proceeded with the communion liturgy. It reached its climax when the pastor sang the Lord's Prayer and the Words of Institution. Again..., the communicants came up to the chancel and took their places at the rail. The bread was always placed directly on the tongue and never were there lay assistants at the rail. In fact, pastors generally waited to receive communion until they could go to a pastors' conference. What is certain is that no one went to communion without serious thought. It had, after all, been drilled into Lutheran confirmands that communion was a most awesome event and that it was better not to go at all than to go unworthily. (quoted in Ferkenstad ELS, 78-80)

Not only was the celebration of the Lord's Supper in the old Norwegian Synod usually limited to a relatively few "stated seasons of the year," but when it was celebrated, the Preface and Sanctus were generally not used in the service. This followed an unfortunate pattern that we see in much of Reformation-era Lutheranism (reflected also in the Danish-Norwegian Church Order), according to which – except for major festivals – those stately and ancient components of the historic Christian liturgy were often replaced by an exhortation to communicants. So too in the Communion services of the Norwegian Synod, where the Preface and Sanctus would traditionally have been found in the western rite, what would usually have been found instead were a preparatory Communion hymn sung by the congregation and an exhortation read by the pastor. This was followed by the Lord's Prayer and the Words of Institution, both chanted by the pastor. This way of celebrating Holy Communion remained in general use even into the early twentieth century. Improvements in the liturgical and sacramental practice of today's ELS can be seen in the fact that the Preface and Sanctus are now almost always used when the Lord's Supper is celebrated, and in the fact that the Lord's Supper is now celebrated more often than just at those relatively few "stated seasons."

Chanting and singing have always been an important component of traditional Christian and Lutheran worship. The Apology describes this:

> We gladly keep the old traditions set up in the church because they are useful and promote tranquillity... Our enemies falsely accuse us of abolishing good ordinances and church discipline. We can truthfully claim that in our churches the public liturgy is more decent than in theirs... Every Lord's Day many in our circles use the Lord's Supper, but only after they have been instructed, examined, and absolved. The children chant the Psalms in order to learn; the people sing, too, in order to learn or to worship. (XV:38-40, Tap)

As we would expect, chanting and singing were especially prominent in the services in Norwegian Synod congregations. Among other things, the new agenda called for the chanting of the Epistle and Gospel, by the pastor, in the Sunday service. This was a longstanding custom in Christian and Lutheran worship. In his *Deutsche Messe* of 1526 Luther gave very detailed instructions on how it was to be done (LW 53: 72-78, 84-89). ELS Pastor Christian Anderson observed in 1957, however, that "It seems that by common consent the chanting of the Gospel and Epistle lessons has not been carried out except perhaps at the great festivals" (Anderson C, 14). And there are several ELS congregations still today in which this is done – especially with the Gospel for the day – "at the great festivals" of the church year. But otherwise, as Historian O. Rolf Olson observes,

> The liturgical practices of the Dano-Norwegian Church were carefully followed by the Synod. Traditional forms of worship were maintained, including the chanting of the collects (prayers), the benediction, and the communion service. Five congregational hymns were standard for Sunday worship. Worship in Synod congregations was always very formal. The old forms were maintained. The entire worship heritage was scrupulously preserved. In all forms of worship, the Synod employed and contributed greatly to church music. The historic vestments of the Norwegian state church pastors were carefully preserved: the loose-fitting black cassock, the stole, and the white-fluted collar. (Photos show that pioneer pastor J. W. C. Dietrichson also wore a heavy chasuble.) (Olson, 57)

Regarding that last point, Pastor Dietrichson – who served congregations in and near Koshkonong, Wisconsin, from 1844 to 1850 – was certainly not the only Norwegian clergyman in America who wore a chasuble for the celebration of Holy Communion. Once the Norwegian Synod was organized, this was the normal practice for the pastors of that church body. And this practice never fell into disuse during the entire history of the Norwegian Synod – until it put itself out of existence through its merger with two other less orthodox and less liturgical church bodies: the United Norwegian Lutheran Church and the Hauge Synod. Piepkorn reports:

> Dr. Herman A. Preus of Luther Theological Seminary, St. Paul, in 1953 told this writer that the chasuble was used on occasion in the chapel there until the absorption of the United Norwegian Lutheran Church into the Norwegian (later Evangelical) Lutheran Church of America in 1917. (Piepkorn)

Luther Theological Seminary, before the merger, was the seminary of the Norwegian Synod. The use of the chasuble there had *in a sense* been emblematic of the orthodoxy of the old Synod. The setting aside of the chasuble in 1917 was *in a sense* emblematic of the heterodoxy of the new merger church.

Yet there were some liturgical pastors in the United Church (such as Aasgaard) who wore a chasuble for administering Holy Communion and who continued to do so after they entered the merger. In some of the Norwegian Synod congregations that went into the merger, and in the practice of some of the pastors in the merger who were originally from the Norwegian Synod (such as Stub), the use of the chasuble continued until well into the twentieth century. Rodney L. Ronneberg recalls, for example, that

> "The chasuble...was always worn for Holy Communion in our ELC churches in Lead, South Dakota, and Longmont, Colorado." "The congregation in Lead was part of the Norwegian Synod prior to the merger." "I was born in 1945 and my first recollection of church came when I was three... It was a "Communion Sunday," and the church was super-full because there were displaced persons from Germany who had come to the Black Hills for work. The Pastor wore, in addition to the long surplice, a beautiful black silk chasuble with silver bandings and a large cross on the back. He wore it every Communion Sunday. We moved to Colorado in 1952."
>
> "The Longmont congregation was formed in 1925." "A good number of the founding

members were immigrants as well as first generation folks who came from Wisconsin and the Dakotas to farm just outside of town." "I do remember that the South Dakota District, ELC, President, Dr. Pierson, wore the dark red chasuble – similar to the black one in Lead – when Pastor Braaten was installed in 1955 at the Longmont church. That chasuble was in use when we arrived in 1952. I remember my mother commenting on the fact [that] it was different from the ones she had seen in use over the years. I do know it fell out of use when Pastor Sather arrived in late 1958. The full gothic chasuble came into use when Pastor Isernhagen came to Longmont in the mid 1980s. ... I don't know what happened to that beautiful dark red fiddleback chasuble." (personal communication, 2024)

The 1980s was also when the wearing of a chasuble began to be restored in the ELS, at first in the Pinewood congregation in Burlington, Massachusetts.

Most Lutheran pastors who currently use this vestment wear the Gothic style, which was not used by the pastors of the old Norwegian Synod. Many Lutheran pastors who wear a chasuble have it on throughout the entire Communion service, while in the old Synod the chasuble was worn only in the chancel, and only for the Communion Rite. (It was occasionally worn by the officiating minister also for certain special occasions – such as church dedications and ordinations – even if the Sacrament was not celebrated.) For the administration of Holy Communion, the most common usage in the days of the old Synod – which was also the practice in Norway – involved the chasuble being placed on the left side of the altar before the service, with part of it resting on the top of the altar and part of it hanging down and visible at the front of the altar. After the sermon, when the pastor entered the chancel, the klokker (referred to as the "deacon" or "verger" by Stub), or another assistant, would help him put it on. Then after the distribution, before the pastor left the chancel at the conclusion of the service, the klokker or another assistant would help him take it off and return it to the altar.

A service of ordination for four new Church of Norway priests,
held in Strängnäs, Sweden, on March 19, 1944, among wartime Norwegian refugees.
Rodney L. Ronneberg states: "The chasuble fourth from the left is very similar to the chasuble I remember from childhood."

15: THE LITURGICAL PATRIMONY OF THE NORWEGIAN SYNOD

From the perspective of his own ministry in the twentieth century, Stub writes:

> Of one thing I am convinced by experience, and that is, that "Young America" will love and revere the historic and colorful vestments of our beloved Church. ... If possible I would like to prevent that any visitor at my services, departs with the impression that we Lutherans are one of the Reformed Church denominations. Particularly does this hold in reference to the Communion services. Though we are Protestants, we are a distinct communion with a doctrine, faith, hymnology, liturgy, and church practice all our own. We believe that historically and doctrinally we are the true heirs of the ancient Christian Church. ... Let us not be ashamed of, nor disinclined to confess in every way, the faith, usage, and practice of our fathers. Why should we American Lutherans be so influenced by the Calvinistic-rationalistic customs of the old countries, and the "kill-joy" usages of Puritanism, as to deny to ourselves and to our children the joy of beauty in color, music, and architecture? God certainly paints in glorious colors the works of nature, and the wonders of His creation are past finding out. (Stub, 18)

The honorable liturgical patrimony of the old Norwegian Synod does indeed beckon its heirs in the ELS of today to come home to the house of their fathers, and with discernment to reclaim these worthy and beneficial usages for themselves and for their children. This edifying liturgical patrimony offers great blessings to *all* Lutherans, in the way that its usages adorn and underscore the faith-creating ministry of Word and Sacrament that is carried out among them. And this evangelical catholic liturgical patrimony calls upon *all Christians* to renounce, and push back against, the frivolity and worldliness that are in our age constantly sneaking and seeping into the worship life of God's people.

The liturgical patrimony of the Norwegian Synod can also be compared to the very different patrimony of the "old" Wisconsin Synod, which started out in 1850 as a pietistic and unionistic German-speaking church body. In time Wisconsin did reorient itself toward a more Confessional theological position, so that the Norwegian Synod was eventually able to enter into church fellowship with Wisconsin through a common recognition of the fundamental doctrinal unity that they had come to share. This fellowship remains in place, and on the same basis – although now it is between a smaller ELS, as reorganized in 1918 by a remnant of the Norwegian Synod after the majority of the old Synod had entered into an ill-advised merger the previous year; and a larger Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod, as augmented in 1917 by a well-advised merger with the Minnesota and Michigan Synods. But especially in those earlier decades of the two original synods' existence, in the nineteenth century, the two bodies diverged greatly in the areas of ecclesiastical culture and liturgical and historical consciousness.

In his account of "The Formation and Flow of Worship Attitudes in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod," James P. Tiefel observes that

> Wisconsin's move away from Pietism was neither smooth nor swift, ...and its halting steps often can be observed in its worship practices. The constitution of [Johannes] Muehlhaeuser's Grace congregation in Milwaukee, for example, includes this paragraph: "Be it resolved that our congregation, founded on the ground of the apostles and prophets, whereon Jesus is the cornerstone, makes confession of the Augsburg Confession and Luther's Small Catechism. However, never may or shall a preacher of the said congregation use the rite of the old Lutheran church, whether in Baptism or the Lord's Supper." The pastors and people who were attracted to the Wisconsin Synod tended to have similar attitudes about worship forms. Now and then convention speakers in the 1850s and 60s asked the synod to adopt an order of service that was more Lutheran in its orientation and history, but no acceptable rite could be found or produced. Congregations continued to use the

> nonliturgical orders brought from their homeland. ... So weak was the synod's early resolve in the matter of hymnody that its first official hymnal (1870) had to endure an immediate revision to cleanse it of nine hymns that should not have been included. (Tiefel, 147-48)

Church historian David L. Holmes, an outside observer, offered these comments in 1992:

> Although the Wisconsin Synod is high church in doctrine, most of its churches have had a minimum interest in liturgy. The roots of WELS are in German Pietism, which deplored formal structure in worship and exhibited great antipathy towards the historic Lutheran service (much as evangelicalism in the American South opposed Anglican worship). Adolph Hoenecke (1835-1908), the synod's formative theologian, placed a strong emphasis on preaching; a study of liturgics was not added to his seminary's curriculum until after he died. WELS was originally a poor and rural church and had little interest in liturgics, architecture, or art. More important, many in the Wisconsin Synod suspected that liturgical renewal and liberal theology walked hand in hand. For all of these reasons, liturgical change and anything that seemed "high church" was suspect during the first century of the Wisconsin Synod's existence. When the Lutheran Common Service – used from the late nineteenth century on by most English-speaking Lutherans in America – was introduced to the Wisconsin Synod in 1941, many older pastors opposed it. "A man who wears a white robe," a WELS pastor declared in the 1950s, "is making up for his theological inadequacies." Another observation went: "Those who can't preach it, wear it."

Holmes did recognize, however, that

> The last twenty years have seen many changes. Today some Wisconsin Synod pastors wear albs and clerical collars, chant, have vested choirs, and approach worship in higher-church ways. (Holmes, 605-06)

And of course, since 1992 there have been even more changes in the Wisconsin Synod, with many congregations becoming more liturgical than they were 30 years ago; but with other congregations, unfortunately, becoming less liturgical.

Divine Service in Langenbernsdorf bei Zwickau, Saxony, in the sixteenth century
(Christof Leschka Müller, Altarpredella, 1590)

16: A DUAL HERITAGE: NORWEGIAN AND MISSOURIAN

The ELS's primary roots – historically and liturgically – are indeed in the Norwegian Synod, and in Norwegian Lutheranism in general. But over time – especially beginning in the 1960s – many congregations with origins in the German-heritage Missouri Synod, and many individuals with personal roots in the Missouri Synod, have also become a part of the ELS. They possess, and perpetuate, their own significant legacy of worship.

Walther, who was the foremost leader of the Missouri Synod in the nineteenth century, and a close friend to some of the leading pastors of the Norwegian Synod, was a strong advocate for a return to historic Lutheran worship forms. Yet many of the German emigrants who comprised the membership of the congregations that belonged to the Missouri Synod in its earlier years – due to the influence of Calvinism, Pietism, and Rationalism in their homeland – were uncomfortable with certain worship practices that he and his pastoral colleagues wanted to reintroduce. Such practices had previously been very common among German Lutherans, and were still at that time very common in the Norwegian Synod. But many of the Germans in the Missouri Synod mistakenly thought that these practices were unique to the Roman Catholic Church. Walther observed in a convention essay:

> Those who have immigrated from Germany do not always find the ceremonies to which they were accustomed from home, and when they see the truly Lutheran practices of chanting at the altar, burning of candles, the crucifix, kneeling, etc., they often think: "That is all papistic."

Walther wanted to correct these misunderstandings and to persuade his people to see the benefit and value of a restoration of these usages. When a convention attendee objected – stating that "these practices cannot simply be called 'nicer' than what is practiced somewhere else," and that "in such matters much depends on custom and on personal taste" – Walther responded that this was not a matter of *personal* taste but of *churchly* taste, and therefore that "We most certainly can say that these practices are more beautiful; however, in order to make such a judgment, we must first of all develop our churchly taste" (Walther EC, I:129).

One area in particular where there were such misunderstandings was in regard to chanting and singing. Walther wrote:

> Whenever the divine service once again follows the old Evangelical-Lutheran agendas (or church books), it seems that many raise a great cry that it is "Roman Catholic": "Roman Catholic" when the pastor chants "The Lord be with you" and the congregation responds by chanting "and with thy spirit"; "Roman Catholic" when the pastor chants the collect and the blessing and the people respond with a chanted "Amen." Even the simplest Christian can respond to this outcry: "Prove to me that this chanting is contrary to the Word of God, then I too will call it 'Roman Catholic' and have nothing more to do with it. However, you cannot prove this to me." If you insist upon calling every element in the divine service "Romish" that has been used by the Roman Catholic Church, it must follow that the reading of the Epistle and Gospel is also "Romish." Indeed, it is mischief to sing or preach in church, for the Roman Church has done this also...
>
> Those who cry out should remember that the Roman Catholic Church possesses every beautiful song of the old orthodox church. The chants and antiphons and responses were brought into the church long before the false teachings of Rome crept in. This Christian Church since the beginning, even in the Old Testament, has derived great joy from chanting... For more than 1700 years orthodox Christians have participated joyfully in the divine service. Should we, today, carry on by saying that such joyful participation is "Roman Catholic"? God forbid! (Walther L, 163)

The success of Walther and others in explaining, promoting, and reintroducing the historic worship customs of the Lutheran Church, within the Missouri Synod, can perhaps be gauged by the report that was prepared in 1857 by Norwegian Synod Pastors Ottesen and Nils O. Brandt, following visits to the Missouri Synod's two seminaries and to several Missouri Synod congregations:

> We have described the zeal with which the young theologians are indoctrinated in the pure old-Lutheran faith at this university [Concordia Seminary in Saint Louis]. The same situation obtains in the congregations throughout the entire church [the entire Missouri Synod]. The complete old-Lutheran ritual and altarbooks from the days of the Reformation are very faithfully followed. The lovely old Lutheran hymns, chanting from the altar, lighted candles at Holy Communion, intercessions for the sick, publishing of the banns [before a wedding], vestments – in short, their whole worship life is marked by a deep love for the fidelity to the traditions of the fathers. In this regard, their worship life has much in common with our own. (Ottesen/Brandt, 71)

The texts, music, and ceremonies of the liturgy continued to be matters of mutual fraternal interest among leaders of the Norwegian and Missouri Synods. Gerhard Lee Belgum tells us that

> In the spring of 1873 Koren was engaged in preparing...a revised order of service for the Norwegian Synod. Walther answered his appeal for help, writing a brief letter extolling the historic musical setting for the liturgy, and sending selections from the Roman Gradual for Koren's consideration. Walther was relatively unconcerned about the threat of Rome as compared with the weaknesses of Protestantism. Above all he feared that Lutheranism itself might lose its distinctiveness, its confessional character, and its mission. Liturgically therefore he was not iconoclastic with respect to Rome, and in this respect also he reinforced the moderately high-church views of the [Norwegian] Synod pastors. (Belgum, 372)

When Missouri Synod congregations were worshiping in German, most of them originally followed the Saxon Church Order. But the Missouri Synod's Franconian congregations in Michigan originally followed a church agenda that had been prepared by Pastor Wilhelm Loehe of Bavaria. Walther served as editor for a new German-language *Agenda*, published by the Missouri Synod in 1856, which was based on the Saxon Church Order. Dennis W. Marzolf, in an essay on Walther as "Musician and Liturgiologist," observes that "While the Waltherian *Agenda* tended to be simpler than the liturgical service edited by Loehe..., it was no less churchly" (Marzolf WML, 89). Marzolf offers an outline of the "Chief Service for Sundays and Festival Days" from the 1856 *Agenda*:

> At the beginning of the service, "Kyrie, God Father in Heav'n Above," shall be sung.
>
> Following this the minister shall face the congregation and intone, "Glory be to God on High," then "All Glory Be to God on High" shall be sung by the congregation.
>
> The salutation shall be sung, followed by two suitable versicles for the season/festival. The collect shall be sung by the minister. The congregation shall respond with a sung "Amen."
>
> The Epistle is read. The Chief Hymn is sung. The Holy Gospel is read.
>
> After the Gospel has been read, the Creed [Hymn], "We all believe in One True God, Who created earth," is sung. At the words, "Who the Church, His Own Creation Keeps," the minister shall enter the pulpit. After this hymn he begins, on festival days with a prayer (from the heart), on ordinary Sundays with an apostolic greeting, to introduce the sermon. When he has articulated his theme in this introduction he invites the congregation to join him in prayer (a silent "Our Father"). He then announces the pulpit verse which is to be sung. After this hymn has been sung, the minister kneels and, with the whole congregation prays a silent "Our Father." He then stands and reads the sermon text (the Gospel of the Day), for which the people stand. The exposition follows. After the sermon the minister prays a prayer from the heart (on ordinary Sundays), proceeding immediately to the Confession and Absolution.

> The Prayer of the Church follows. After this prayer intercessions and thanksgivings appropriate to the circumstances of the parish are read. Announcements are made (spiritual events in the parish, i.e. death, birth, marriage, excommunication), after which the minister prays an audible “Our Father” and, after blessing the congregation, leaves the pulpit.
>
> The congregation stands to sing “Create in me a clean heart, O God.” During this hymn the minister goes to the altar to prepare the elements for the consecration.
>
> After the hymn is sung, the minister faces the people and intones the preface to the Holy Communion. A general (ordinary) or proper preface is sung by the minister. The congregation joins in singing the Sanctus. (The Sanctus has two forms of the “Benedictus qui venit”: ... “Blessed be the Son of Mary Who comes...” and... “Blessed be the Paschal Lamb Who comes...”).
>
> The Lord's Prayer is sung by the minister, the people joining at “For thine is the kingdom...”
>
> The Words of Institution are sung by the minister.
>
> The congregation sings “O Christ, Thou Lamb of God.”
>
> An appropriate hymn is sung during the distribution of the sacrament.
>
> Following the distribution a suitable antiphon and collect are sung.
>
> The minister blesses the congregation, after which “O Lord, We Praise Thee, Bless Thee and Adore Thee,” or another appropriate concluding verse is sung. Following a silent “Our Father” the congregation may depart from the House of the Lord. (Marzolf WML, 91-92)

(The English translation of this service that was published in 1881 as *Church Liturgy for Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession* saw relatively little use. It would be a while before most Missouri Synod congregations were ready to worship in English.)

In addition to their unique liturgical rite, another distinctive feature of the Michigan Franconian churches of the Missouri Synod is that they were more successful than most other Lutherans of the nineteenth century in restoring the original Lutheran practice regarding Communion frequency. In 1890 Pastor Johann Heinrich Philipp Graebner recalled his ministry, in earlier years, in Frankentrost, Michigan:

> In general our public worship services and also our daily Matins and Vespers followed the liturgical method as given in the Loehe agenda. According to the constitution which Rev. Loehe sent along with us, [in] all Sunday [services] as well as [in] all special festival services, on the first day thereof, holy communion shall be observed and the exclusive use of private confession shall be practised. During the six years that I was in Frankentrost it was very rare that there were no Communicants on Sunday or high festivals. (Graebner)

The sacramental practice of the Norwegian Synod did not align with the original practice of the sixteenth-century Reformers as much as the sacramental practice of the Franconians did – although the Norwegians did preserve some salutary Reformation-era customs with respect to the pastoral care of communicants that have largely been lost today, even among conservative Lutherans. Regarding the pastoral practice of two of the earliest Norwegian Lutheran ministers in the state of Wisconsin, Rohne recounts that

> Rev. C. L. Clausen, at the suggestion of Rev. J. W. C. Dietrichson, insisted that the people of [his congregation in] Muskego announce themselves for Communion on Saturdays in order to give time for a proper confessional and also to avoid possible embarrassment in case someone had to be denied Communion on account of his sinful life. (Rohne, 87)

17: THE COMMON SERVICE

The English *Common Service* – originally issued in 1888 – was produced by liturgical scholars from the "east coast" tradition of American Lutheranism, which traced its history to colonial-era settlers. A large number of congregations in this tradition had already been worshiping primarily in English for a few generations, and others were then making that transition. This tradition of American Lutheranism had also suffered from serious theological and liturgical decay, under influences similar to the influences that had caused so much damage in the Lutheran churches in Europe. William Julius Mann, in 1855, described the depths to which much of east coast Lutheranism had sunk, and the degenerative process that over time had brought it there:

> Gradually a desire manifested itself to gain popularity for the Lutheran Church in this country. The hard dogmatical knots of the old Lutheran oak were to give way under the Puritan plane. The body was deprived of its bones and its heart, and the empty skin might be filled with whatever was most pleasing, if only the Lutheran name was retained! The statement of the seventh article of the Augsburg Confession, that "unto the true unity of the Church it is not necessary that human traditions, rites, or ceremonies instituted by men, should be everywhere alike," was most extensively used, and in the desire to make the Lutheran Church as much as possible like others, her leaders were much more ready to adopt foreign elements than to retain her own distinctive features. Thus the Liturgy, the ancient lessons of the Gospels and Epistles, the festivals of the Church Year, the gown, and other usages were given up, in order that as little as possible might be seen of these Lutheran peculiarities. Hoping to gain others, they lost themselves. The Lutheran Church had given away her own spirit, her own original life and character. (quoted in Spaeth CPK, I:354-55)

But the Confessional Awakening was now also having an impact among these Lutherans, and the movement toward the preparation of the Common Service was a direct outgrowth of that impact. With respect to the Confessional theology that had prevailed in the Lutheran Church in the era of the Reformation, and in the age of Orthodoxy that followed the Reformation, Charles Philip Krauth of the Lutheran Seminary in Gettysburg lamented in 1849 that

> there are thousands who call themselves by the name of the venerable Luther and glory in him as a great instrument in the liberation of the church from Romish bondage, who have no correct views either of what he taught, or what was taught by his immediate associates. Both clergy and laity are, in our country, to a considerable degree ignorant of the [theological] system which prëeminently distinguishes the Lutheran church, and particularly as it is exhibited in the Symbolical books and the writings of the eminent divines who remained faithful to those books in their exposition of Christianity. (Krauth, 119-20)

Krauth had a remedy for this problem:

> Our verdict is unequivocally in behalf of the study, the thorough study of this theology. We would have it thrown over our church with a liberal hand; we would have all our ministers acquainted with the Symbolical books; we would have them all versed in the distinctive theology of the church. We would have introduced into our theological schools the study of the symbols, and didactic and polemic theology so administered as to bring before the view pure, unadulterated Lutheranism. The gain to our ministry and to our church would be immense... (Krauth, 128-29)

In complete harmony with this conviction regarding the need for a restoration of sound theology within American Lutheranism, Krauth in 1857 expressed another desire that was ultimately fulfilled in the Common Service, when he wrote to his son Charles Porterfield Krauth:

> I very much wish we could agree on forms of worship in accordance with the liturgical character of our Church, and erect a barrier against the Fanaticism and Methodism which so powerfully control some of our ministers and people. (quoted in Spaeth CPK, I:380)

The guiding principle in the preparation of the Common Service was that it would embody "the common consent of the pure Lutheran liturgies of the sixteenth century; and, where there is not an entire agreement, the consent of the largest number of those of greatest weight." Among the three general church bodies that contributed scholars to this project (the General Synod, the General Council, and the United Synod in the South), the General Council was the most Confessional, and was also most interested in reclaiming a historic Lutheran order of service. In 1868, U. V. Koren commented positively on an earlier effort in this respect that was then underway within the General Council (in the Pennsylvania Ministerium), in the preparation of the *Church Book for the Use of Evangelical Lutheran Congregations*, which was published later that year:

> The book will include most of what our [Danish-Norwegian] *Altar Book* contains (liturgy), along with Luther's *Small Catechism*, the *Augsburg Confession*, forms for home devotion, and a collection of hymns [or psalms]. Publishing such a book must now be regarded as very beneficial, if, as we have reason to hope, it is drawn from the glorious and rich sources which the Lutheran church in this respect has in its heritage from the 16th and 17th centuries. And it would be very beautiful and edifying if Lutherans everywhere in their churches could rediscover the same church customs, the same hymns and prayers, so that somehow they "could with one mouth praise the Lord." (KW 3:74)

When the Common Service finally emerged from within this ecclesiastical milieu two decades later, it was very similar to the order of service that had been published in the *Church Book*.

Important elements of the Norwegian Synod's Scandinavian heritage were brought into English through the publication of the *Lutheran Hymnary* (LH) in 1913. This was a joint project of the Norwegian Synod, the United Church, and the Hauge Synod. The Norwegian heritage in worship can be seen in this hymnal especially in the translation of the Norwegian "Order of Morning Service or Communion," with full musical notation, that it included. This "Bugenhagen" service is still to be heard in those congregations of today's ELS that worship according to Rite One in the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* of 1996.

In addition to an English translation of this Norwegian order, the 1913 *Lutheran Hymnary* also included the Common Service. One does not get the impression that the Common Service was used by very many Norwegian Synod congregations, if it was used by any of them. But it did become a liturgical resource for the Synod with its appearance in the 1913 hymnal. Other English-language Lutheran hymnals published in America during this time period – such as the Missouri Synod's *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book* (ELHB) in 1912 – likewise included the Common Service. The ELHB, originally published in 1889, had been the hymnal of the *English* Synod of Missouri (organized in 1888), which had roots in the east coast tradition of Lutheranism (specifically in the Tennessee and Holston Synods), but which was theologically aligned with the *German* Synod of Missouri. A revised 1893 edition of ELHB included the insertion of the Common Service as a liturgical order. When the English Synod became the non-geographical English District of the larger Missouri Synod in 1911, its hymnal was adopted as the official English hymnal of the Missouri Synod, which published another revised edition of it in 1912. The only liturgical order included in the 1912 ELHB was the Common Service. So, when Missouri Synod congregations in other districts transitioned to the use of English for worship, and began using ELHB, they also began using the Common Service, rather than an English translation of the Saxon Church Order.

In *The Lutheran Hymnal* (TLH), published by the Synodical Conference in 1941 and used almost universally in the Missouri Synod in the decades that followed, the Common Service was the only order provided for the main Sunday service. This was, then, the order of service that the

Missouri Synod congregations that later joined the ELS brought with them, and this is the order of service that appears in the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* as Rite Two. (In 1941 the Synodical Conference was comprised of the Missouri, Wisconsin, Slovak, and "little" Norwegian Synods. The "little" Norwegian Synod later changed its name to the Evangelical Lutheran Synod.)

Soon after the publication of *The Lutheran Hymnal* in 1941, two significant companion volumes also appeared, which were intended to shape and influence the way in which the Common Service, as printed in the hymnal, would be implemented. They were *The Music for the Liturgy of The Lutheran Hymnal*, published in 1944, and *The Lutheran Liturgy*, published in 1947.

The Lutheran Liturgy of 1947 included extensive rubrics for the conducting of the service. A very interesting section pertains to chanting and singing:

> Liturgical chant, more so than any other type of church music, is not a musical interpretation of the text: it is only the bearer of the text and hence should be sung in a simple, straightforward manner. To a lesser extent, the same thing is true of Hymn tunes. This is in keeping with the spirit of the objective character of liturgical worship, which disdains sentimentalization and tawdriness, musical and otherwise. The Officiant shall chant those portions of the Service to which the Choir or the Congregation responds with chanting. (LL, 418-19)

With respect to that last sentence, Paul H. D. Lang points out that

> This means, for example, that if the congregation chants the response: "And with thy spirit," the officiant is to chant the salutation: "The Lord be with you." The rubric is a "shall" rubric and refers to all those parts of the service in which there is a dialog between the officiant and the congregation or in which a portion of a part is done by the officiant and another portion by the congregation or choir. It means that all such parts are either spoken or chanted by both the officiant and the congregation and not, as one so often finds, that the officiant speaks his portion and the congregation chants the other portion; for example, the officiant reads the Collect, but the congregation chants the Amen.

Lang accordingly observes that this rubric is one "which many officiants either ignore or do not seem to know" (Lang, 84-85).

The most likely reason why the aesthetically awkward speak-chant-speak-chant practice became so common in English-speaking Lutheran circles, is because the rubrics in earlier printings of the Common Service – such as in the 1912 *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book* and in the 1913 *Lutheran Hymnary* – directed that the minister "shall say" his parts of the service, while allowing the congregation either to "sing or say" its responses. This liturgical oddity was corrected in the rubrics in the 1941 hymnal, which indicated that the minister may also "say or chant" his parts of the service. But musical notation for his chanting was not included! So, based on what was actually printed in the hymnal, pastors were not strongly encouraged to try the "chant" option in the rubrics. Many years ago at an ELS pastors' conference, when some of the then-younger pastors were encouraging a musically fuller and richer use of the Common Service – particularly in the area of the pastor's chant – a now-deceased prominent ELS pastor said that he had always thought that the "Bugenhagen" Service in the *Lutheran Hymnary* was supposed to be chanted, but that the Common Service in *The Lutheran Hymnal* was *not* supposed to be chanted. Apparently that was the general perception, even though it was an inaccurate perception.

Four years after the publication of *The Lutheran Hymnal*, *The Music for the Liturgy* of 1944 did finally provide musical notation for the pastor's parts of the service. One of the features of that 1944 resource was the notation for the pastor's chanting of the Words of Institution in the consecration of the bread and wine of the Lord's Supper (ML, 68-69). The Formula of Concord confesses that "in the administration of the Holy Supper the Words of Institution are to be clearly and plainly

spoken or sung publicly in the congregation, and in no case are they to be omitted" (SD VII:79, K/W). The necessity of audibly enunciating these Words was not a matter of *adiaphora*, but whether these Words were enunciated through speaking or through singing *was* a matter of *adiaphora*. Even so, the preferred and most common usage among the Lutherans was that they were sung rather than spoken. In the Reformation era and later, the pastor's chanting of these Words over the bread and wine was a distinctively Lutheran usage, and was understood to be a mark of confession over against churches which erred in their teaching on the sacrament. In Roman Catholic churches at that time these words were whispered quietly by the priest, and in Reformed churches the minister read or recited these words to the congregation in the form of a historical narrative.

Also provided in *The Music for the Liturgy* was the notation for an accompanied chanting of the Apostles' and Nicene Creeds by the congregation (ML, 27-29, 47-51). In his *Formula Missae* Luther had stated that "the custom of singing the Nicene Creed does not displease us" (LW 53:25), and this custom likewise did not displease the Synodical Conference fathers who edited *The Lutheran Hymnal* and its companion volumes. The singing of the creed is seldom done today in American Lutheran churches – although in the Ukrainian Lutheran Church, a Byzantine Rite sister church of the ELS, it is the universal practice. Reintroducing this custom here – at least on certain important festivals – might provide a beneficial enrichment of the service on those special occasions.

In the Common Service as it appears in the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary*, most of the pastor's chant notation is now printed, together with the congregation's chant notation. This encourages the more balanced and symmetrical usage that the rubric in *The Lutheran Liturgy* called for, with both congregation *and pastor* ordinarily chanting their respective parts of the service. The *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* also includes pointing for the chanting of the Psalms and of the Psalm-based propers of the service. The Book of Psalms is the hymnal of the Old Testament. To earlier generations, speaking a Psalm, an Introit, or a Gradual, rather than chanting it, would have seemed as strange as it would seem to us today if on Reformation Sunday we were directed to speak responsively the verses of "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" rather than singing them.

Divine Service in Salzhemmendorf, Hanover, in the seventeenth century
(Altarpredella, 1620)

18. THE TRADITION OF LUTHERAN HYMNODY

Adolph Spaeth describes the unique character of the hymnody of the Lutheran Reformation of the sixteenth century within the broad sweep of the entire history of Christian hymnody:

> While the Lutheran Church fully recognized and wisely preserved the hymnological treasures of the first fifteen centuries, the Psalms and Canticles of the Old and New Testament, the Latin hymns of the patristic and mediaeval period, and even the first efforts (since the twelfth century) to introduce into the service of the Church sacred songs in the language of the people, it is nevertheless true, that the Reformation of the sixteenth century is the mother of true evangelical church song. The message of God's free grace put a new song into the heart and mouth of the justified believer. The general priesthood of believers demanded the active participation of laymen in the service of the sanctuary, and particularly in the service of song... The translation and propagation of the Word of God in the language of the people, and the introduction of the vernacular into public worship, gave additional impulse to the production of popular sacred hymns in which the whole congregation could unite... (Spaeth HHB, 235-36)

So, while the Reformation did embrace and perpetuate the heritage of church song that had been passed down to it from past centuries and epochs, the Reformation also built on this heritage in some new and unique ways, and took this tradition in some new and unique directions, under the influence of the key accents of Reformation theology.

In 1874 the Reformed church historian Philip Schaff honored Lutheranism with the following compliment: "To the Lutheran Church unquestionably belongs the first place in the history of church song" (quoted in Spaeth HHB, 235). And among the important figures of the sixteenth-century Lutheran Reformation who contributed to the renewal of Christian hymnody, to Martin Luther unquestionably belongs the first place, as the chief exemplar of the distinctively Lutheran culture of Christian hymnody that lives on still today, especially among Confessional, orthodox Lutherans.

As Luther had led the way in reforming the order of the mass among the sixteenth-century evangelicals, so too did he lead the way in producing a new and vibrant hymnody for this evangelical movement. The liturgical texts and canticles of the *Formula Missae*, as published in 1523, were in Latin. But Luther knew even then that over the long term, the exclusive use of Latin in public worship would not suffice, especially for the uneducated who did not know Latin. And so it does not surprise us to hear Luther, in the *Formula Missae*, saying this:

> I also wish that we had as many songs as possible in the vernacular which the people could sing during mass, immediately after the gradual and also after the *Sanctus* and *Agnus Dei*. For who doubts that originally all the people sang these which now only the choir sings or responds to while the bishop is consecrating? The bishops may have these [congregational] hymns sung either after the Latin chants, or use the Latin on one [Sun]day and the vernacular on the next, until the time comes that the whole mass is sung in the vernacular.

Luther then bemoans the fact that "poets are wanting among us, or not yet known, who could compose evangelical and spiritual songs, as Paul calls them, worthy to be used in the church of God" (LW 53:36). Yet even at the time of this writing, Luther himself had already begun to use his own poetic and musical gifts to write and compose hymns and tunes that were indeed "worthy to be used in the church of God," and that are still used in the church of God.

In his proposals for reform in the order of the mass – especially in his *Deutsche Messe* – Luther was not afraid to suggest some new and innovative ways of drawing the common people into a fuller participation in the service. But as Bartlett R. Butler explains, Luther – as an author of hymns, and as a composer of hymn tunes –

> was unconcerned with innovation or originality. On the contrary, his work was extraordinarily conservative, borrowing from the past and adapting it to the present. He knew from experience that vigorous metrical poetry and simple, rhythmic melody were essential for a congregation to sing together "by heart" with confidence, unity, and understanding. (Butler, 2:290)

Luther and his generation had grown up with a piety that was marked musically by the chanting of the clergy and by the prayerful singing of monastic communities and choirs. But in the western church of the late middle ages, examples of *congregational* singing were few and far between – even though it had not always been that way. In the fourth century, for example, under the influence of St. Ambrose of Milan and others like him, congregational singing had been a prominent feature of Christian worship. And now, in the Reformation era and under the influence especially of Luther, congregational singing would be restored to such prominence once again. Butler recounts that

> The Reformation returned to the laity an active and essential role in the liturgy in the form of vernacular hymns. Historically, the term *hymn* has had many meanings... For the Reformation it has meant sacred metric poetry sung in the vernacular by the congregation in corporate worship and set to a simple, sturdy melody repeated for each of its stanzas. Because many songs of this type have been written that were not used in church until some later time, the definition is usually extended to include them as well. ...hymns have not been limited to praise but have also embraced prayer, thanksgiving, proclamation, confession, teaching, exhortation, personal experience, communal memory, and so on, usually in connection with the scriptures. For example, much early Reformation hymnody takes its inspiration directly from the Psalms... The familiar term *chorale* for the hymn of the Lutheran tradition derives from the German word for Latin chant and only gradually came to be used for the hymn... (Butler, 2:290)

Gracia Grindal explains that

> Luther was heir to the rich tradition of church song. He knew the Psalter in Latin, Hebrew, and then in his own German, plus the Greek and Latin hymns and canticles of the daily offices. He knew well the Pauline list of "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs," which he interpreted to mean the Psalter, other biblical hymns, and the later songs and hymns of the church, respectively. Another secular form that Luther appropriated for his hymns was the ballad, a simple rhyming form popular throughout Europe. He realized early how important resources in the vernacular were. He confided to [George] Spalatin that in "following the example of the prophets and fathers of the church, I intend to make German Psalms for the people, i.e. spiritual songs, so that the Word of God even by means of song may live among the people." Luther clearly thought that the new Evangelical hymn was in fact the Word of God, capable of kindling faith in the heart of the hearer. He assumed that the purpose of his hymns was evangelical. Their rhetoric was to be directed to the congregation. All singers were, to some extent, preachers of the Word.
>
> As he began writing hymns, he appropriated the ballad form. ... Luther's most famous hymn, "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God," is a sermon on the conflict between Christ and Satan. There is little praise directed to God, only rejoicing at the fact that God's kingdom lasts forever.
>
> Luther also paraphrased Psalms and rewrote some Latin hymns... He wrote hymns for the Ordinary of the Mass, translating them from Latin... He wrote hymns for the various parts of the Small Catechism, knowing that students would memorize more easily if they could sing the meanings to a tune with rhyming words. He also wrote hymns as prayers addressed directly to God... (Grindal, 350)

Senn informs us that "Luther took a personal interest in the publication of hymns and hymnals," even as he had "led the way in writing them. In the forward to the first edition of Johann Walther's *Geistliches Gesängbüchlein* (1524)" – which was the very first Lutheran hymnal –

> Luther wrote that "I, too, in order to make a start and to give an incentive to those who can do better, have with the help of others compiled several hymns, so that the holy gospel which now by the grace of God has risen anew may be noised and spread abroad." (Senn CL, 286)

In the opinion of Cyriacus Spangenberg, however, no one else could do better than Luther. Of Luther and his hymnic output, Spangenberg wrote with superlative praise in 1545 – while Luther still lived – that

> One must certainly let this be true, and remain true, that among all master singers, from the days of the Apostles until now, Luther is and always will be the best and most accomplished. In his hymns and songs one does not find a vain or needless word. All flows and falls in the sweetest and neatest manner, full of spirit and doctrine, so that his every word gives outright a sermon of his own, or at least a singular reminiscence. There is nothing forced, nothing foisted or patched-up, nothing fragmentary. The rhymes are easy and good, the words choice and proper, the meaning clear and intelligible, the melodies lovely and hearty, and, in short, all is so rare and majestic, so full of pith and power, so cheering and comforting that, forsooth, you will not find his equal, much less his master. (quoted in Lambert, 9)

As Butler also notes, Luther's work as a hymnist did inspire his poetically- and musically-gifted friends and coworkers to join him in this movement to produce ever more hymns for God's people:

> The movement begun by Luther was continued by others in German-speaking territories. Among those close to him were Paul Speratus (1484-1551)...; Justus Jonas (1493-1555)...; Johann Walt[h]er (1496-1570)...; Philipp Melanchthon (1497-1560), whose Latin hymns were translated into German by others; Elisabeth Creutziger (c.1504-1535)...; Erasmus Alber (1500?-1553); Johann Gramman (1487-1541); Erhart Hegenwald; Johann Agricola (1492?-1566); and Paul Eber (1511-1569)... (Butler, 2:291-92)

And this hymn-writing movement did not stop with Luther's German friends and coworkers, and did not stop in the sixteenth century. Grindal continues:

> Luther's work spawned a movement of hymn writers that defined Lutheran piety through the next 500 years. Hymns written by those who came after Luther, such as Philip Nikolai's (1556-1608) "Wake, Awake" and "How Lovely Shines the Morning Star," became central to Lutheran worship. The Orthodox period of Lutheranism produced thousands of hymns. Most treasured are those by Paul Gerhardt (1607-74). Gerhardt's hymns, meditations on biblical texts or Christian themes, developed from Luther's model...
>
> Many international students were studying in Wittenberg when Luther began writing hymns and liturgies. They were also exposed to the lively humanist tradition of Latin poetry, fostered by Philip Melanchthon. They returned to their own countries to do what they had been taught.

These eager young reformers, and other gifted individuals in their circles of association in their homelands, did indeed write many of their own hymns. But they also "paid homage to Luther by translating his work into their own vernacular." In view of the Norwegian Synod's distinctive heritage in the Lutheranism of Denmark and Norway, we are especially interested to know that

> In Denmark, Claus Mortensen completed the first hymnal and service book (1528), followed by Hans Thomissøn's (1532-73) *The Danish Hymnal* (1569). Denmark and Norway received an authorized hymnal when Thomas Hansen Kingo (1634-1703) finally got his hymnal approved in 1699. Kingo's book remained in use throughout most of the eighteenth century. The work of Hans Adolph Brorson (1694-1764) was popularized by Erik Pontoppidan (1698-1764), the bishop of Bergen, and later professor in Copenhagen. ...
>
> Norway had its own Luther in the poet-pastor Petter Dass (1647-1707). His sermon hymns on the catechism were beloved long before they would be included in any hymnal. An equally gifted contemporary, Dorothea Engelbretsdatter (1634-1716), began to edify people with her many hymns, none of which were printed in official hymnals until the nineteenth century, when Magnus Brostrup Landstad (1802-80) included some in the first official Norwegian hymnal (1869). (Grindal, 350-51).

Following the Reformation, over many succeeding generations, Lutherans continued to write hymns and to compose music for hymns in the tradition of the Reformation chorales, leaving us now with a broad and deep repertoire of didactic and devotional hymns that are rich in evangelical content and in literary and musical quality. Due credit must also be given to the gifted translators who have for our benefit brought these masterworks of theological and doxological verbal artistry from the Lutheran mother tongues of Europe into the English language – and into other languages in which Lutherans of the twenty-first century worship. Worthy additions to this repertoire are still being produced, as the faith which inspired the great hymnists of the past continues to inspire gifted individuals in our time, whose texts and tunes also confess and carry this faith, and offer worship to the Almighty according to this faith.

The Lutheran chorale tradition has also had an impact beyond the confessional boundaries of the Lutheran Church. The best illustration of this comes from Britain. The Church of England had traditionally allowed the singing of metrical psalms during worship, but did not officially sanction the use of freely-composed hymns until the beginning of the nineteenth century. In this context the poetically-gifted Catherine Winkworth put a very large number of Lutheran hymns into English, with the first of her four published collections of translated German chorales coming out in 1854. Her renderings were sometimes tainted by Calvinist assumptions, but for the most part they accurately reproduced the strength and depth of the originals. This infusion of Lutheran hymnody into England then influenced the way in which many native English hymns were written, so that a hymn like "The Church's One Foundation," authored by the Anglican Samuel John Stone in 1866, has the sound and "feel" of a Lutheran hymn. Lutheran hymns today can be heard in the services also of other communions, with "A Mighty Fortress Is Our God" occasionally making an appearance even in the Roman Catholic Church.

The era of Pietism, in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, saw the production of hymns that were generally more subjective and emotional than the classic theologically-rich chorales of the Reformation era and the age of Lutheran Orthodoxy. Some hymns of enduring value were nevertheless written during this time. We do need to say, however, that the bombastic and spiritually sterile hymns that were brought forth under the influence of Rationalism, in the second half of the eighteenth century, were not and never will be of any value. Thankfully, the Confessional Awakening of the nineteenth century buried them forever.

But also in the nineteenth century, many Lutherans in America were lured away from the hymnody of their own church – which would have cultivated and reinforced within them a piety and spirituality built upon the external Word of God – and were drawn instead to the kind of "gospel hymns" that were promoted and popularized by revivalist preachers and song-writers such as Dwight L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey. Norwegian-American Lutherans did not remain untouched by these influences in their adopted homeland. Those of a Pietist bent were easily drawn to this kind of music, but some within the Norwegian Synod were also adversely affected.

Gerhard Cartford explains that

> Most Lutheran hymns dealt with doctrines fundamental to the faith. These the people were accustomed to from church, and many of them were dear to them. But in the nineteenth century there was an insistent demand for a new type of expression. It sprang from the revivals of the century, and with the revivals came a type of music which was at the same time more superficial and more emotional than the regular hymns of the church. The Norwegians were caught up in it, as were most of the Americans around them.

In analyzing these compositions, Cartford observes that "There is a sameness about the music due to the fact that it relies to such a great extent on melodic, rhythmic and harmonic cliches"; and he furthermore observes that there is "a general lack of creative imagination in the writing of this music." For those who allow their piety and spirituality to be transformed and reshaped by a regular diet of this revivalist music, those "gospel hymns" will "eventually dull musical sensitivities and stunt musical growth" (Cartford). Verlyn Dean Anderson adds that

> These so-called "Gospel hymns" employed catchy, lilting tunes which usually had a refrain or chorus which was repeated after every stanza. The texts of these "Gospel hymns" were often as inferior as the music. (Anderson VD)

Norwegian-language versions of these "gospel hymns" were made available in hymnals or song books with names like *Harpen* ("Harp") and *Frydetoner* ("Joyful Tones"). The Norwegian Synod wanted to protect its people from this material, and wanted to avoid giving the impression that either the synod or its agencies endorsed or encouraged its use. And so at its convention in 1896 the Norwegian Synod passed this resolution: "Books such as *Harpen* and *Frydetoner* ought not to be distributed by Lutheran Publishing House in Decorah" (quoted in DeGarmeaux).

Divine Service in Mühlberg an der Elbe in the sixteenth century
(Heinrich Göding, Altarpredella, 1569)

19: SOUND AND SUITABLE HYMNS FOR AMERICA

Firm guidance on the quality and character of the hymns that are used in public worship has always beed needed from Confessional Lutheran leaders in America, in order to counteract the influence of the Reformed and sectarian churches that surround Lutherans in this country. (See *Addendum VIII* for a fuller discussion of the current struggle in the Lutheran Church between the defenders of sound worship practices and advocates for so-called "contemporary worship.") The hymns we sing should be hymns that are rich in good theology and good poetry, that are set to dignified tunes, that teach the faith of the church, and that guide worshipers in offering to God prayers of petition, praise, and thanksgiving, on the basis of what Scripture tells us is pleasing to him. As Mark E. DeGarmeaux would remind us,

> Hymnody is not something to be taken lightly. Which hymns and what kind of hymns we use in the Church matters tremendously. ...we remember the principle: we use only the best in the service of God. Hymnody has become an important and indeed integral part of our worship and devotional life. Hymns are to be studied, learned, and used with care and devotion. (DeGarmeaux)

In the Missouri Synod, Walther's own congregation, under his guidance and direction, took the lead in compiling and issuing a German hymnal that showcased the great Lutheran chorales of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, and that excluded more recent hymns tainted with Rationalism or Unionism. *Kirchengesangbuch für Evangelisch-Lutherische Gemeinden* was published by Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church in Saint Louis in 1847 – the same year in which the Missouri Synod was organized. This hymnal soon became, in effect, the unofficial hymnal of the new synod. In 1862 the congregation made it official by donating the hymnal to the synod, so that all editions and printings after that date were released under the synod's imprimatur.

For many years after its organization in 1853, the Norwegian Synod made use of hymnals published in Denmark and Norway that included much-loved hymns by Brorson, Kingo, and Landstad; and that also included translations of the more important German Lutheran chorales. The synod finally published its own Norwegian-language hymnal, or *Salmebog,* in 1870. Koren was one of five editors for this project, but as Laurence N. Field observes,

> Koren did the bulk of the work and was represented by twenty-seven original hymns and twenty-one translations. In fact, he, with Brorson, Kingo, Landstad, and Luther account for about three-fifths of the hymns. (Field, 381)

In time – especially among the children and grandchildren of the emigrant generations of the Missouri and Norwegian Synods, and of other American Lutheran bodies with recent roots in the Old World – the need for English-language worship resources outstripped the availability of English translations of many of the standard Lutheran hymns. So, when the switch began to be made from singing in the European mother tongues to singing in English, too often this was also a switch from singing distinctly Lutheran hymns to singing hymns that had arisen within church traditions of British origin, and that were not fully imbued with a Lutheran spirit. This helped to set in motion a still-troubling dangerous tendency among many American Lutherans, to latch onto and even to prefer non-Lutheran hymns and worship songs, and thereby always to be tempted to embrace the non-Lutheran pieties that are frequently reflected in and exuded from those hymns and worship songs.

With respect to Christian hymnody in general, a frustrated and annoyed Kretzmann – from within the Missouri Synod – scolded American Lutherans in 1929 for turning away from the sound hymns of their own church, and for embracing in their place the weak religious songs of the larger Protestant world – and specifically of the religious world of Moody and Sankey's revivalist successors in the twentieth century:

> We must take note also of a most deplorable tendency of our times, namely, that of preferring the shallow modern "Gospel anthem" to the classical hymns of our Church. The reference is both to the text and to the tunes in use in many churches. On all sides the criticism is heard that the old Lutheran hymns are "too heavy, too doctrinal; that our age does not understand them." Strange that the Lutherans of four centuries and of countless languages could understand and appreciate them, even as late as a generation ago! Is the present generation less intelligent or merely more frivolous? (Kretzmann M, 216-17)

From within the "little" Norwegian Synod – now the ELS – Walter E. Buszin, a member of the faculty of Bethany Lutheran College, expressed similar frustrations in a 1932 convention essay:

> The reason why so much that is un-Lutheran in spirit and expression is sung in our churches is because there are some in our circles who no longer appreciate the beauty of the Lord as it is expressed so beautifully and so nobly in the Lutheran hymn. It is stylish to join in with the crowd and crowds like what is rather trivial. It is hard to be different and somewhat separate; unionism is in the air and distinct Lutheranism is unpopular; this spirit is reflected in the music which some of our own circles prefer. Some of the sectarian bodies have been forced to realize that they have lost out through their shallow music; but there are people in our circles who insist on learning through their own experiences and not through the experience of others. This is certainly a foolhardy attitude, but what makes the situation all the more serious is the fact that it affects not only an individual here and there, but the Church at large. (Buszin MCSH, 40)

One can easily imagine what Kretzmann and Buszin would think of the inane praise songs that many misguided American Lutheran congregations are now filching from sectarian sources, which are much more theologically vacuous and musically trite even than the "shallow" and "trivial" songs that Kretzmann and Buszin so strongly criticized decades ago.

Regarding hymnody for the church's children and youth in particular, these concerns and recommendations were offered in the Introduction to the *Lutheran Hymnary, Junior,* of 1916 – a companion volume to the 1913 *Lutheran Hymnary:*

> The songs of childhood should be essentially of the same character as the songs of maturity. The child should therefore learn the easiest and best of the songs he is to sing as a communicant member of the Christian Congregation. Old age delights in the songs learned in childhood. The religious songs learned in childhood should therefore be worthwhile. We want childlike songs, but not childish songs. ... In the same manner as he is taught the rudiments of Christian theology through Luther's *Smaller Catechism* and the chief Bible stories through the *Bible History*, should he also be taught the words and tunes of our most priceless church songs and chorales. ... It should be done, for a child should be trained up in the way he should go (Prov. 22:6). The songs of Lutheran children and youth should be essentially from Lutheran sources. The Lutheran Church is especially rich in songs and hymns of sound doctrine, high poetical value and fitting musical setting. They express the teachings and spirit of the Lutheran Church and help one to feel at home in this Church. Of course, there are songs of high merit and sound Biblical doctrine written by Christians in other denominations also, and some of these could and should find a place in a Lutheran song treasury. But the bulk of the songs in a Lutheran song book should be drawn from Lutheran sources. We should teach our children to remain in the Lutheran Church instead of to sing themselves into some Reformed sect. (LHJ)

Both the *Lutheran Hymnary* and the *Lutheran Hymnary, Junior*, did include English translations of many classic Lutheran chorales, and of many beloved Lutheran hymns of Scandinavian origin. Regarding the 1913 *Lutheran Hymnary*, Carl F. Schalk writes:

> In its return to the hymnody of the 16th century Reformation, it was by far the best of the English hymnbooks produced by the various Scandinavian groups. In its return to the use of that normative core of Reformation hymnody, it was exceeded only by the Ohio Synod's *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnal* of 1880 and by the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book* of the Missouri Synod published a year earlier than *The Lutheran Hymnary*. (Schalk, 156)

Gene Edward Veith addresses some of the challenges that are being brought to bear in *our* time against the Lutheran Church's unique outlook on sacred music and on its purpose in worship – which differs significantly from the outlook of the entertainment world on the styles and uses of *secular* music:

> When we are singing hymns in church, we are not following the preferred "style" of anyone in the congregation. This is church music, wholly different, whatever its origins, from the currently preferred musical taste of any of the generations assembled to worship. No one is offended; no one is excluded; everyone is lifted out of a particular time, generation or in-group, into the extraordinary experience of worship. ...pop music of every kind is excluded, since fashions, by their very nature, come and go. Furthermore, church music is to have a very different use than the music put out by the entertainment industry, namely, to be sung corporately (most pop music works at best only as a solo performance) under the Word and in the presence of God. Music with origins in the folk culture (the old hymns specifically passed down from generation to generation) or the high culture (compositions old or new of artistic greatness) has the capacity to be universal, transcending time and place as Christ's church is supposed to do. (Veith, 9)

The hymns that are available on the pages of the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* were carefully chosen with these Biblical and Confessional criteria in mind. Their authors and composers lived and worked at various times throughout the centuries of Christian history, and in many different nations. Within parameters that align with the sacred use for which they are intended, these hymns also reflect a healthy variety in poetic and musical style. But all of these hymns, collectively and as individual works, encourage and promote the same orthodox doctrine, the same evangelical faith, and the same reverent piety.

Divine Service, from the 1538 Danish edition of Luther's Small Catechism

CONCLUSION: THE PAST AND FUTURE OF LUTHERAN FAITH AND WORSHIP

In the twentieth century, many if not most Lutherans in America began to slip away from the strongly Christ-centered and means-of-grace-oriented piety that the Confessional Awakening had restored to the church in the nineteenth century: with respect to the non-Lutheran hymns that were increasingly preferred over Lutheran hymns; and with respect to changes also in other areas of liturgical and ceremonial practice. Lutherans allowed their thoughts and feelings about worship to be shaped more and more by the dominant non-Lutheran and even anti-Lutheran Protestant religious culture of the country. The irrational fear of, and visceral reaction to, anything that looked or sounded "catholic" – which increasingly came to characterize the attitude of many Americanized Lutherans – certainly did not have a Confessional Lutheran origin. Buszin noticed this trend, and warned against it in a 1950 essay on "The Genius of Lutheran Corporate Worship":

> America is to a very great extent Calvinistic and Protestant. It is not at all surprising to note, therefore, that Lutherans are constantly exposed to Calvinistic thoughts and ideals. Many Lutherans see no danger in such developments. Those who are afflicted with catholicophobia will rarely admit that Calvinism has made more perilous inroads into Lutheran worship life in America than has Roman Catholicism.
>
> ...Calvinistic worship has torn itself away from the great historical expressions of Christian worship of pre-Reformation days and has thus become sectarian. Although the Reformed bodies have disavowed many of Calvin's austere principles and practices of corporate worship, the sectarian spirit persists among them to the present day. ...
>
> This same Calvinistic spirit is strong among many Lutherans. We find among such Lutherans an antipathetic attitude against sound liturgical practice, undue emphasis on stark simplicity, and a disdainful attitude towards great and genuine church art. These attitudes by no means bespeak the spirit of unadulterated Lutheranism. They are basically unevangelical and at times "teach for doctrines the commandments of men." There are indeed good reasons to believe that much catholicophobia has been injected into Lutheranism by... Calvinistic sources. ...
>
> Much of what has been said of the Reformed may, of course, be said also of other Protestant groups. However, ...while the Calvinists still insist upon decency and order, some Protestant groups employ means to worship God which are not only anthropocentric in character, but which plainly and flagrantly militate against all good taste. The church building is to them a meeting house rather than a sanctuary. While Lutherans today are not building churches of the meeting-house type, some are trying to introduce revivalism and the Gospel hymn into the Lutheran concept and spirit of worship. ...that it is being done... indicates clearly that those involved are not taking into serious consideration the great damage that has been done to the corporate worship services of others who have introduced revivalistic practices in the past...
>
> Church history proves that those church bodies have fared best in the long run which have conducted a decent type of worship, a type of worship which...shows due regard for the holiness and majesty of God. We owe God not only our love, but also our respect; our worship life should indicate this... The Lutheran Church will best serve her exalted purpose and objective if she will adhere to the Word of God and likewise make diligent use of the rich and unique liturgical, musical, and hymnological heritage God has given her. (Buszin GLCW, 270-72)

Unfortunately, in many corners of American Lutheranism in the twenty-first century, the situation is now much worse than it was in Buszin's time. Theologically, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – formed by a merger in 1988 – can scarcely be thought of as a Lutheran church body any more, in view of the liberal doctrinal and moral teachings that it now embraces, and in view of the formal altar and pulpit fellowship relationships into which it has entered with a wide assortment of non-Lutheran churches. But the more "conservative" Lutheran synods in America also seem to be having a difficult time retaining their orthodox Lutheran character and identity.

Some congregations, affiliated with reputedly conservative Lutheran bodies, have ceased to call themselves "Lutheran," and for their worship have wholeheartedly adopted the trappings and techniques of sectarian Evangelical Protestantism. Others are not quite as brazen, yet are dabbling in and experimenting with these things to one degree or another.

But the Lutheran Church in America does not need to destroy itself in this way. This destructive trend can be halted and reversed. And in many congregations it has in fact been halted and reversed. May a new trend toward rediscovering and restoring the treasures of the past – for the benefit of the future – prevail ever more, as Lutherans, under sound teaching and sound leadership, return in their worship to where they should have been all along. What Frederick H. Knubel wrote a century ago may sound today more like a wish than like a description of our current reality, but it is a wish that we sincerely believe can come true under the grace and guidance of Jesus Christ, the loving Lord of his church:

> The Lutheran Church is a liturgical Church. Everywhere in her sanctuaries, even among heathen people, something in the form of a historical liturgy is to be found. Nevertheless she is in no danger of formalism, for she exercises no restraint in this respect upon pastors and congregations. For good reasons she simply chooses to be liturgical in her worship, and her people with all of their freedom universally follow the choice.
>
> One of her reasons is that public worship must be preserved from individualism. The Church is a social organism, a divine and the only enduring social organism. The man who "goes to church" only for his personal spiritual profit has mistaken the character of a church service. His conception of worship is an entirely selfish one. He has failed to distinguish between private devotions and public worship, both of which are necessary. The Christian as he "goes to church" should as far as possible cease to be an individual, should realize himself as an integral part of a congregation, of a fellowship of men, of the communion of saints. The worship is a social function. He prays with others for the whole and for many great interests, not primarily for his individual needs. The Lord's Prayer, with its "we" and "us" and "our," is the ideal prayer for public worship. The worshiper may rightly go beyond even the one congregation and recognize himself as in unity with all congregations of Christians. The effort to worship publicly in this manner will soon open up an increasing joy for the Christian, as he realizes the new richness of his worship. It becomes manifest however that from this point of view a well-conceived liturgy is needed, and that no passing thought of a single minister should determine how the many shall worship.
>
> A second reason for liturgical worship grows out of the first one. The fellowship of ideal worship is greater than the whole company of Christians now upon earth. We may know ourselves as one in our praise of the Lord with the saints of all ages. There is unity with those who now worship Him in heaven. This is the powerful thought in the *Te Deum: "*Heaven and earth are full of the Majesty of Thy Glory. The glorious company of the Apostles praise Thee. The goodly fellowship of the Prophets praise Thee. The noble army of Martyrs praise Thee. The holy Church throughout all the world doth acknowledge Thee." It is the same thought of the united worship of heaven and earth which is found in all doxologies: "Praise Him all creatures here below; praise Him above, ye heavenly host." So also the *Preface* in the Communion Office repeats it: "Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the Company of Heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name; evermore praising Thee, and saying: "Holy, Holy, Holy, etc." It is an added joy therefore to the true worshiper if he may realize that he is using forms which the saints of the ages have employed. Such is the case with the historic Liturgy. It has not been prepared by some committee, however wise and pious. It has grown with the centuries. The piety of all times has tested it, added what was worthy, cleansed it from what was unworthy. The fragrant incense of a ceaseless devotion of multitudes to the Saviour comes to us with the Liturgy.
>
> The Lutheran Church believes furthermore that she is justified in recommending a liturgy to its people because she has a definite faith to express. It is a distinctive faith, and is great enough to mould all of life. The places of worship are also places for the proclama-

> tion of that faith. Everything connected with the sanctuary and with the mode of worship should be shaped so as to express most clearly, most beautifully, and most effectively what the Church confesses to be the truth. It is evident therefore that greatest care is necessary so that the building and that which takes place within it shall be in harmony with the faith of the Church. (Knubel, ix-x)

As far as the ELS in particular is concerned, the synod does indeed believe itself to be justified in formally and officially recommending a liturgy (or liturgies) to its people, in chapter I of its bylaws:

> In order to preserve unity in liturgical forms and ceremonies, the synod recommends to its congregations that they use the Order of Worship based on the Danish-Norwegian liturgy of 1685 and agenda of 1688, or the Common Order of Worship [the Common Service], as each congregation may decide.

As in the past, so also today and into the future, Lutheran churches should employ recognizably Lutheran rites and ceremonies in their worship, and should not imitate the rites and ceremonies of the sectarian churches that surround them. For the sake of fraternal love and harmony, for the sake of a clear confession of the whole truth of God, and for the sake of instilling the faith of the church into the minds and hearts of worshipers, congregations of the ELS in particular should follow the counsel of their synod's bylaws whenever it is possible to do so.

As in the past, so also today and into the future, in a Lutheran worship service the singing of hymns with a Lutheran origin – which more clearly teach Biblical doctrine, and which more fully reflect and exude a Christ-centered piety oriented toward the means of grace – should predominate over the singing of weaker hymns with a different origin. Again, for the sake of fraternal love and harmony, for the sake of a clear confession of the whole truth of God, and for the sake of instilling the faith of the church into the minds and hearts of worshipers, congregations of the ELS should make regular use of the sound and suitable hymns that are available in the pages of the synod's approved hymnal, the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary*, whenever it is possible to do so. Of course, *The Lutheran Hymnal* of the former Synodical Conference was *also* an approved hymnal of the ELS, and congregations that still have it in their pews should make regular use of the sound and suitable hymns that are available in *its* pages. But songs from sectarian sources that are designed to manipulate the will and the emotions, to implement the Arminian doctrine of conversion and faith, and to create a false sensation of closeness to God through the *music* of the song (rather than to teach the faith through the *words* of the song), are especially to be avoided by *all* congregations.

As we look with some measure of human fear and trepidation toward an uncertain future – wondering if the faith and worship of our beloved Lutheran church will be able to survive in the hostile cultural and religious environment in which we now find ourselves – we can be encouraged by some faith-filled words of Charles Porterfield Krauth. These words were originally addressed to Matthias Loy in 1876. They are also addressed to us, today:

> Our Church has a terrible battle before her, but with her great divine principles and God blessing her, she need not fear the issue. The true Church will always be relatively a little flock, but it will be nonetheless the hope of the world. (quoted in Spaeth CPK, II:235)

ADDENDUM I: THE WORSHIP GATHERINGS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT CHURCH

An excerpt from Martin Chemnitz, Loci Theologici, *2 vols. (trans. by Jacob A. O. Preus), (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1989), II:392-93.*

...it is useful to make a comparison as to how the prophetic and apostolic handling of this [third] commandment agree and refer us back to those fundamentals laid down in the Decalog. ...the reader should note when the words of the Decalog are used in other passages, although with a change of terminology. For example, in the New Testament the apostles, when they speak of matters pertaining to the Third Commandment, because it has been abrogated, do not often use the actual words of the commandment. But the Old Testament Scripture, in describing a rite of the people of God who have been called together and have gathered in a public meeting to hear the preaching of the Law and the prophets, or for prayers or other acts of worship, do use the words of the Third Commandment. Joel 2:15-16, "Sanctify a fast. Call a solemn assembly. Gather the people, sanctify the congregation"; cf. 2 Kings 10:20; Job 1:5. Therefore pertinent here are the testimonies written regarding the meeting and gathering of the faithful for public services, as those which have been repeated in the Acts of the Apostles. Compare also 1 Cor. 11:17 ff. and 14:26 ff.; Matt. 18:20. In Heb. 10:25 it is commanded that "We be together gladly, and not forsake the assembling of ourselves together."

The following passages show with what spirit the public gatherings of the church were to be approached and how the people were to behave in them: 1 Cor. 11:17; Matt. 18:20; 1 Cor. 5:4; Lev. 26:2; Is. 1:13; 1 Cor. 14:26, 40. The words of the Decalog teach us that the soul must be called away from all other concerns and give itself entirely over to the public divine services. In Matt. 18:20 Christ repeats the promise given in Ex. 25:8 and Ezek. 37:26, "I will be in the midst of them and I will hear." In 1 Cor. 14:24-25: "A person who comes into the church should be convinced, so that he will report that God truly is among us."

At this point we might add testimonies which show what pious people should be doing in the public meetings of the church. They include the following: (1) Acts 13:14-15, the words of the prophets are read every Sabbath; cf. Acts 15:21; 20:7; 13:44 ff. (2) There were prayers, Acts 16:13; Luke 1:10; 1 Tim. 2:1, 8. (3) They praised God with psalms and encouraged one another, Col. 3:16; 1 Cor. 14:26; Ps. 42:5. (4) The Lord's Supper was administered, 1 Cor. 11:20 ff.; Acts 2:42; 20:7. (5) They collected alms, 1 Cor. 16:1-2. ...

The statement in the New Testament which is particularly pertinent to the Third Commandment is Eph. 4:11-13, "He gave some apostles, some teachers...for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, until we all come into the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God. ..." Therefore it is correct to deal with the duties of ministers and their hearers under this commandment. Paul, to be sure, describes the duty of ministers in one word when he says in 1 Cor. 4:2, "It is required in servants that they be faithful." To this faithfulness pertains the fact that they should have at least a fair knowledge of those things which are required for service or ministry and that they show diligence and constancy in performing their duties. There are several aspects of ministry: (1) The preaching of the Word, for which is required: (a) that "he speak as the oracles of God," 1 Peter 4:11. (b) that he "not teach false doctrine," 1 Tim. 1:3; but "guard the treasure which has been put into your charge," 2 Tim. 1:13; "rightly dividing" the Law and the Gospel, 2 Tim. 2:15. (2) The proper administration of the sacraments. (3) The use of the keys in absolution and excommunication. (4) Praying for the whole church. (5) An example to the believers, 1 Tim. 4:12; Titus 2:7, 1 Peter 5:3, "that the ministry be not discredited," 2 Cor. 6:3. (6) The care of the poor, such as visiting the sick, comforting the afflicted, etc.

Furthermore, Paul divides the handling of the Word or preaching into different categories. At one point the Word is dealt with in meetings of the learned. Paul seems to be referring to these meetings in 1 Cor. 14:6 when he lists such things as tongues, revelation, interpretation (v. 26), and knowledge. But "when the whole church," which Paul describes as consisting of both unlearned and learned, "comes together, it is foolish," he says, if they all speak in tongues, v. 23. But for meetings of this kind he proposes instruction (*katēchēsis*), prophecy, (*prophēteia*), and teaching (*didachē*), 1 Cor. 14:19, 22, 26. These terms can be distinguished: *Katēchēsis* refers to teaching the basic

principles to the unlearned and partially instructed, Luke 1:4; Heb. 6:1; 1 Cor. 3:1, while *prophēteia* is interpreted of those who have advanced to a higher knowledge of Scripture. *Didachaē*, applies the teachings of Scripture to regular statements of doctrine (*loci communes*), which it explains in keeping with a logical method. To these three terms Paul adds the following kinds of teaching in 2 Tim. 3:16: *Didaskalia* is correct teaching; *elegchos* refutes false teachings; *paideia* guides our life and morals; and *epanorthōsis* condemns and refutes wickedness and evil morals in order to correct them. In Rom. 15:4 *paraklēsis* means comfort; *hypomonē* is an exhortation to perseverance and patience. In 1 Cor. 10:11 *nouthesia* signifies either a warning or reminder (*Erinnerung*) which is impressed upon the mind or thoughts, or the application of certain examples. 1 Cor. 14:3 has *oikodomē* (upbuilding), *paraklēsis* (comfort), and *parathymia* (encouragement). Again in v. 24 he uses the concept of convicting and judging which seem to point to the rule according to which judgments in doctrine are to be made. Likewise 1 Peter 3:15 gives a general description of the practice of apologetics. And 2 Tim. 4:2 says that certain exhortations are to be "with all long-suffering," while 1 Peter 3:16 says that this must take place with "meekness." 1 Thess. 2:7, "Gentle as a nurse cherishing her children." But when "they will not endure sound doctrine," 2 Tim. 4:3, then "be prepared in season and out of season to rebuke and encourage." 1 Tim. 1:3 and 4:11, "command them" and condemn them by the authority of your office. Titus 2:15, "Rebuke with all authority." Titus 1:13, "Reprove them severely." In 1 Cor. 14:29 Paul directs that when two or three prophets have spoken that the rest then judge their teaching. Acts 15:6, when controversies arise, then the elders come together for discussion. Acts 20:28, 31, be on guard against wolves; tend the flock. Titus 1:9, "Convince the gainsayers." 2 Tim. 2:25, "Instruct those who stand in opposition." Titus 1:5, "Appoint elders," 2 Tim. 2:2, "committing them to faithful men." 1 Corinthians 14; establish order in the church. See also 1 Timothy 3; Titus 1; and 2 Corinthians 6.

The duties of the hearers are: gladly to be present at public services, Heb. 10:25; to hear and to learn, 1 Cor. 14:28, 31. Luke 8:15, to keep (*retineo*) the Word. John 14:23, to protect (*servare*) the Word. Rom. 10:9, to confess the Word. 1 Cor. 11:20, to use the sacraments. Titus 2:10, "To make attractive the profession of the doctrine by an upright life"; cf. Rom. 2:24. 1Tim. 2:1, to add our prayers, cf. Acts 2:42. 1 Cor. 16:1, to bestow alms. To love, esteem, and obey the ministry, 1 Thess. 5:13; Heb. 13:17; 1 Tim. 5:17; Phil. 2:2. Likewise to be zealous in support of sincere preachers, 2 Cor. 7:7. To imitate the faith and examples of godly teachers, Phil. 3:17; Heb. 13:7. To pray for the ministers, Eph. 6:18; 2 Thess. 3:1; Heb. 13:18. To chime in with the amen, 1 Cor. 14:16. To test the spirits, 1 John 4:1; 1 Thess. 5:21. To give gifts to support those who teach and those who learn in the churches and schools, Gal. 6:6; 1 Cor. 9:14; 2 Cor. 11:9; 2 Thess. 3:8; Phil. 4:14 ff.; 1 Tim. 5:17; Matt. 10:42. To uphold and help also those who serve in other churches, Rom. 16:1-2; 3 John 5; Phil. 4:3. To refrain from bidding godspeed to those who have been excommunicated, 2 John 10; 1 Cor. 5:11. To do the other things which are set forth in the preceding passages, cf. Is. 49:23.

Divine Service in Weißenburg, Bayern, in the seventeenth century
(Wolff Eisenmann, Konfessionsbild, 1606)

ADDENDUM II: ADIAPHORA IN PUBLIC WORSHIP

An excerpt from "Walking Together in Faith and Worship" by David Jay Webber,
Lutheran Synod Quarterly *52:2/3 (June-September 2012): 215-26*.

We can appreciate the systematic presentation of the Formula of Concord in particular regarding the matter of *adiaphora*, as a guide for our own consideration of these matters. An *adiaphoron* is, in principle, acceptable and desirable for use among God's people when it is beneficial for "good order, Christian discipline, evangelical decorum, and the building up of the church." But before we go any further in applying these criteria to the ceremonial and liturgical issues of our day, we need to make sure that we accurately grasp how the Formula actually intends its use of the term "adiaphora" to be understood. The Concordists themselves do not apply the concept of "adiaphora" as broadly as we often do. Martin Chemnitz provides us with the larger sixteenth-century lexical context for the Formula's use of this specific term, in [Part II of] his *Examination of the Council of Trent:*

> The ceremonies of the Mass are not all of one kind. For some have a divine command and examples of Scripture that they should be done at the celebration of the Lord's Supper, being as it were essential, e.g., to take bread and the cup in the public assembly, to bless, distribute, eat, drink, proclaim the death of the Lord. Some indeed do not have an express command of God, that they must of necessity be done thus in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, nevertheless they are in their nature good and godly if they are used rightly for edification, such as psalms, readings from Scripture, godly prayers and giving of thanks, confession of the Creed, etc. Some are *per se* superstitious and ungodly, for instance the sacrifice of the Mass for the living and the dead, invocation of the saints, satisfaction for the souls in purgatory, the private Mass, consecration of salt, blessing of water, etc. Some ceremonies indeed are adiaphora, such as vestments, vessels, ornaments, words, rites, and things which are not against the Word of God. Things which are of the first kind must of necessity be observed, for they belong to the substance of the Lord's Supper. Of the things that belong to the second and fourth kind, many which make for the edification of people are observed in our churches without infringing on Christian liberty. The third kind, however, being superstitious and godless, has deservedly, rightly, and of necessity been abrogated and done away with.

Chemnitz divides the various kinds of religious "ceremonies" into four distinct categories. His first category pertains to those ceremonies that are commanded by God, and that therefore cannot be dispensed with. Christian worship is not a matter of Quaker-like mysticism. Jesus has told us physically to *do* certain things in the administration of the means of grace, and this sacramental *doing* is a matter of sacred *ceremony* – that is, outward actions that accompany the spoken Word, according to the Lord's institution and command. Chemnitz's third category pertains to those ceremonies that are inherently wrong, and that therefore must not be used. Such ceremonies enact, or invariably testify to, things that God's Word forbids. But there are also *two remaining categories*, and not just one.

Chemnitz's second category pertains to certain historic usages that admittedly are not, in themselves, commanded by God. But these usages are so well established in the church, and are so widely recognized as serving inherently good and godly purposes in worship, that there would be hardly any conceivable reason why a faithful pastor would want to do away with them – at least if his goal and desire would be to have a worship service that edifies his congregation with the unchanging gospel of Jesus Christ. Ceremonies of this category invariably testify to the truth of God's Word, and always serve the purposes of a proper liturgical theology as based on that Word. Hence the inevitable impression that would be left among informed observers by the removal of such ceremonies, is that those who are removing them are thereby rejecting the truth and the proper theology that everyone understands them to represent. And so, even though the Bible does not explicitly command the use of an order of service that employs "psalms, readings from Scripture, godly prayers and giving of thanks, [and] confession of the Creed," this kind of liturgical format has become, for all practical purposes, virtually "untouchable" in an orthodox church.

In Chemnitz's *Examination*, the concept of *adiaphora* does not come into view until his fourth category. This category pertains to the kind of ceremonies that can with little fanfare be adjusted or revised, diminished or increased, according to the needs and circumstances of the church. Ceremonial changes of this nature, if they are implemented in an orderly and pastorally-responsible way and with the right motives, will not be a cause of scandal or offense, or give a testimony of heterodoxy to those who witness such changes.

According to this category of genuine *adiaphora*, a pastor can either chant or speak his parts of the service. As he conducts the service, he can wear a white alb, a black talar, or a colored chasuble. He can administer the Lord's Supper with vessels of silver or gold, of glass or porcelain. Communicants can kneel or stand. They can make the sign of the cross and bow when they are dismissed and depart, or not. The service can be comprised of plainsong canticles, or of metered hymns, or of a combination of both.

However, Chemnitz would not have considered it to be a proper application of the principle of *adiaphora* to revamp totally the whole concept and framework of Christian worship. He would not have considered it to be a proper example of evangelical freedom to get rid of an historically-based order of service that accentuates and underscores the means of grace; and to replace it with a format that arises from, and reflects, the entertainment and variety-show culture, the restaurant and coffee-shop culture, the talk-show and psycho-therapy culture, or the big-business and corporate culture. One of the important points that is made by the Formula is that "useless and foolish spectacles" are not to be counted among the *adiaphora*. They are inherently contrary to the requirement for "evangelical decorum" that applies to any Lutheran worship service. Frivolous gimmicks that are introduced into the worship services of a church, for the deliberate purpose of creating a casual and unserious atmosphere, are beyond the pale of what is acceptable. They offend the pious, and disrupt the larger unity of the church.

It is often thought that such things should be done by a church that is interested in outreach, so that any unbelievers who might be present, and who might be "put off" by too much reverence, would not be made to feel uncomfortable in worship. But unbelievers *should* actually feel a little uncomfortable in a gathering that honors the First Commandment, and that is comprised of worshipers who humbly recognize the holiness of the God whom they are therein enjoined to *fear, love, and trust* above all things. Pastors and worship leaders who intentionally try to craft a service that does not reflect and promote the fear of God, love for God, and trust in God above all things – whatever their motive may be – are thereby sinning against the First Table of the law.

The Epistle to the Hebrews gives us this instruction: "Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe" (Hebrews 12:28, NIV). In the New Testament era, God does not prescribe for his people a detailed ritual – such as he did for the nation of Israel in the Old Testament. But even in the New Testament era, there still is such a thing as "acceptable" worship. And this means that there is *also* such a thing as *unacceptable* worship. Worship that is irreverent is unacceptable. Worship that is not permeated by sound Biblical doctrine, and that does not convey sound Biblical doctrine in its songs and texts to those who are present, is also unacceptable.

Christians do not gather chiefly for the purpose of telling God what they think or how they feel, but for the purpose of listening in faith to what God has to tell them, and for the purpose of learning from God how to respond to his Word – in prayers of petition, praise, and thanksgiving that have been molded and shaped by that Word. As St. Paul writes: "Let *the word of Christ* dwell in you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom, and as you sing psalms, hymns and spiritual songs with gratitude in your hearts to God" (Colossians 3:16, NIV). ...

None of this should be taken to mean that there is one and only one order of service that every Lutheran church or church body must follow. There is more than one way to worship God acceptably with reverence and awe. The Confessors of our church knew this, not only as a matter of Scriptural doctrine, but also by their own experience. Luther and Melanchthon – who authored several of our Confessional documents – were, of course, members of the church in Wittenberg, in Electoral Saxony. In its public worship, the church of Wittenberg employed an order of service that was based on the ancient and medieval Latin Mass. This description of a typical service in Wittenberg – written by an unsympathetic observer [Wolfgang Musculus] – comes from the year

1536:

> At the seventh hour we returned to the city church and observed by which rite they celebrated the Liturgy; namely thus: First, the Introit was played on the organ, accompanied by the choir in Latin, as in the mass offering. Indeed, the minister meanwhile proceeded from the sacristy dressed sacrificially [i.e. in traditional mass vestments] and, kneeling before the altar, made his confession together with the assisting sacristan. After the confession he ascended to the altar to the book that was located on the right side, according to papist custom. After the Introit the organ was played and the *Kyrie eleison* sung in alternation by the boys. When it was done the minister sang *Gloria in excelsis*, which song was completed in alternation by the organ and choir. Thereafter the minister at the altar sang "Dominus vobiscum," the choir responding "Et cum spiritu tuo." The Collect for that day followed in Latin, then he sang the Epistle in Latin, after which the organ was played, the choir following with *Herr Gott Vater, wohn uns bei*. When it was done the Gospel for that Sunday was sung by the minister in Latin on the left side of the altar, as is the custom of the adherents of the pope. After this the organ played, and the choir followed with *Wir glauben all an einen Gott*. After this song came the sermon, ...delivered on the Gospel for that Sunday... After the sermon the choir sang *Da pacem domine*, followed by the prayer for peace by the minister at the altar, this in Latin as well.
>
> The Communion followed, which the minister began with the Lord's Prayer sung in German. Then he sang the words of the Supper, and these in German with his back turned toward the people, first those of the bread, which, when the words had been offered, he then elevated to the sounding of bells; likewise with the chalice, which he also elevated to the sounding of bells. Immediately communion was held. ... During the communion the *Agnus Dei* was sung in Latin. The minister served the bread in common dress [in a cassock?] but [he served] the chalice dressed sacrificially [i.e. in mass vestments]. They followed the singing of the *Agnus Dei* with a German song: *Jesus Christus* [*unser Heiland*] and *Gott sei gelobet*. After the sermon the majority of the people departed. ... The minister ended the Communion with a certain thanksgiving sung in German. He followed this, facing the people, with the Benediction, singing "The Lord make his face to shine on you, etc." And thus was the mass ended.

Jacob Andreae, a coauthor of the Formula of Concord, was from Tübingen, in the Duchy of Württemberg. The church of Württemberg did not use an order of service that was based on the Latin Mass. But it also did not use a "made-up" service that was invented from scratch by the Reformers of that region, without historical roots. Rather, the Württembergers used an order of service that was based on the medieval Preaching Service. Andreae himself, together with colleagues from the theological faculty at Tübingen, described this service in their 1577 correspondence with the Patriarch of Constantinople:

> The All-Holy Communion is celebrated among us today with a minimum of ceremonial. The church assembles at an appointed time. Hymns are sung. Sermons are preached concerning the benefits of Christ for mankind. Again, hymns are sung. An awesome exhortation is read, which in part explains the words of institution of the Most-Holy Supper, and in part demands that each person should prepare for a worthy communion. A general but sincere confession of sins is made. Forgiveness is publicly pronounced. With devout prayers we ask the Lord to make us partakers of the heavenly gifts and benefits. The Words of Institution of the sacrament are read, after which the congregation approaches with reverence and receives (offered by the holy minister) the body and the blood of Christ. Again we give thanks to God in prescribed words for the heavenly gifts. Finally, the holy minister of God says the blessing over the assembled congregation, and all are dismissed to go to their homes.

These two orders of service were certainly different from each other. In the sixteenth century and later, most Lutherans followed an order of service similar to that of Wittenberg. The "Common Service," familiar in American Lutheran history, is an heir of this "majority" tradition. But some Lutherans in the sixteenth century and later followed an order of service similar to that of Württemberg. Wittenberg used a fuller and more elaborate ritual, with a richer ceremonial. Württemberg used a

more streamlined and simplified ritual, with a minimized ceremonial. But, what these orders of service had *in common* was that they were both rooted in the earlier tradition of the church's worship, and therefore testified to Lutheranism's continuity with the church of all ages; they both focused the attention of the worshipers on the means of grace, and faithfully conveyed the means of grace to the people; and they were both serious and dignified in spirit, without any frivolous or irreverent elements. ...

(Since 1933, world Lutheranism has been able to claim for itself yet another type of historic liturgical service. The Ukrainian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession, which then existed in the Galicia region of Poland (now Ukraine), published in that year an order of the Divine Liturgy that was based on the historic Byzantine Rite of Eastern Christendom. This rite is used now in the Ukrainian Lutheran Church, which preserves the legacy of the former Ukrainian Evangelical Church of the Augsburg Confession.)

Among the articles of faith that are to be taught in and through the liturgy and its ceremonies, is the essential point of Lutheran ecclesiology that "one holy church will remain forever" – to quote...from the Augsburg Confession. This is why the Reformers are so adamant in demonstrating and defending their unity with the church of the apostles and ancient Fathers, and their adherence to the evangelical teachings of the apostles and the Fathers.

Some Lutherans, in their anti-Roman polemics, actually end up sounding like Mormons in their seeming willingness to agree with the Romanist accusation that the Lutheran Reformers established a "new" church that was not in continuity with the church of pre-Reformation times. But this is heresy! We should absolutely refuse to be tarred by this. In our desire to preserve and confess the doctrinal unity on this point that God wants us to have, we will do what we can – in the testimony that we give with our lips, and in the testimony that we give *with our ceremonies* – to refute this accusation, and to show forth in word and deed that it is not true.

If there would be a weighing and an evaluating of *old* ceremonies, and of potential *new* ceremonies, Lutherans would be expected to embrace a "preferential option" for the *old* ceremonies. An old ceremony and a new ceremony may each be able, with equal effectiveness, to teach and reenforce a certain Scriptural truth. But the old ceremony, by its very *oldness*, is also able to teach and reenforce the fact that this Scriptural truth is what faithful Christians of all times have believed. The *newness* of a new ceremony severely diminishes the ability of such a new ceremony to impress upon people a sense of the *oldness* of the doctrine that it is devised to symbolize.

There is indeed a catholic and historic spirit in true Lutheranism that is lacking in Calvinism, and in the various Protestant sects within Christendom that Calvinism has spawned over the centuries. ... It does not surprise us, then, that there is a noticeable convergence between some of the outward forms of the Lutheran Church, and some of the outward forms of the Catholic Church – and indeed of any other church (Anglican or Orthodox) that, like ours, deliberately cultivates an identity of "connectedness" to the historic church of past centuries.

We do have an obligation to confess the pure and whole truth, and thereby to cultivate our unity with other Lutherans who with us confess this truth. And this means that in our ceremonial usages, we will not employ customs and practices that testify to, and teach, the *distinctive errors* of "the papist religion." Neither will we employ customs and practices that testify to, and teach, the distinctive errors of Protestant sectarianism, and that would make people feel in our worship services as if they were in a typical Baptist or Evangelical church and not in a Lutheran church.

But returning to the matter at hand, not everything that is *in* Rome is *of* Rome. We need not refrain from ceremonially accentuating those articles of faith that we actually do to some degree still share with Rome. In fact, since the Protestant Evangelical movement poses much more of a threat to our existence in America than does the church of Rome at this time in history, we should probably accentuate even more than in the past those sacramental and incarnational distinctives of our confession that set us apart from the enthusiasm and rationalism of American Evangelicalism. At the very least, we certainly would not deliberately try to make ourselves look and sound like the Evangelicals, by adopting the distinctive usages and ceremonies of the Evangelicals. Such a way of proceeding would directly threaten the unity in doctrine that God wants the orthodox to maintain among themselves, and together to show forth to the world.

ADDENDUM III: THE THREE TYPES OF LUTHERAN CHURCH ORDERS

An excerpt from "The Liturgies of the Lutheran Church" by Henry Eyster Jacobs, in Christian Worship: Ten Lectures... *(New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1897), 149-59.*

The Lutheran Church has peculiar capacities for adaptation to diverse gifts, and degrees of culture, and preferences of men, with respect to the externals of worship. Laying all stress upon unity in faith and confession, it is thankful that it is able to express this one faith in so many diversified forms both of government and cultus. ... Lutheranism knows how to discriminate between what is desirable and what is essential. Uniformity in worship, if attainable, is often highly desirable; but there are greater questions at stake than that of mere external conformity to a given model. ...no less than one hundred and thirty-two Lutheran orders were published between 1523 and 1555. Nevertheless this does not indicate general confusion. In every respect, many of these orders are identical, and may be regarded as substantial reprints. A very few became the standards, which some with more, and others with less, revision, followed. They have been classified according to three distinct types: –

1. *The Ultra Conservative*, where the effort is the greatest to reproduce the Mediæval Service, with only such changes as seem to be imperatively demanded for doctrinal reasons. Of this type, the Mark-Brandenburg Order of 1540, the Pfalz-Neuburg of 1543, and the Austrian of 1571, are types. In the first of these, the chants are sung in Latin; the prayers are made in German; the Gospel and Epistle are first chanted in Latin, and then read in German, with the preface: "This is the Epistle, beloved, which you have heard sung in Latin." In the consecration, both the bread and the cup are elevated *cum modica inclinatione*. The words of Institution and the Lord's Prayer are sung in German; while, following the *Agnus Dei*, are three Collects, said in Latin, for the forgiveness of sins. The service ends with a German, followed by a Latin, Collect. ... While in 1539, Luther declares his indifference as to the extent to which external conformity with Roman ceremonies may be carried, provided only that the gospel be purely preached, the sacraments be properly administered, and no invocation of saints, or consecration of holy water, or Masses for the dead, or sacramental processions be admitted, nevertheless, at other times, he speaks freely concerning his apprehensions as to whither merely archaistic tendencies may lead. Problems were presented by the *Leipzig Interim* of 1548, concerning which the *Formula of Concord* had to make a definite statement as to the limitations with which ceremonies should be regarded as mere *adiaphora*. Rites which, of themselves, are matters of indifference, may become marks or badges of a false Confession. ...

2. *The Conservative type*, following the principles set forth by [Martin] Luther in his liturgical treatises. The general structure of the Gregorian Order which underlies the Latin Mass is here retained, but with important changes and adaptations. Of these, the most influential, probably, was the Brandenburg-Nürnberg, prepared by [Andreas] Osiander and [Johannes] Brentz in 1533, and revised by the Wittenberg Faculty. The Orders prepared by [Johannes] Bugenhagen for a number of States and cities in Northern Germany, as Brunswick (1528), Hamburg (1529), Lübeck (1531), Pomerania (1535); the Hanover Order (1536), prepared by [Urbanus] Regius; and the Order prepared in 1536 for Duke Henry of Saxony by Justus Jonas, belong to the same class. So also do the Swedish Order, and the Danish Order, prepared by Bugenhagen. Another most important Order of this type was the one prepared by [Philip] Melanchthon and [Martin] Bucer in 1547 for Archbishop Hermann in his proposed Reformation of Cologne. It was based upon the Brandenburg-Nürnberg Order, and, although never introduced, lives in the Prayer Book of the Church of England, through the first Prayer Book of Edward VI., which drew largely upon it, and which we claim as one of the members of this group of Lutheran liturgies.

3. *The liturgies of Southwest Germany*, the Brandenburg-Nürnberg excepted. While Lutheran in doctrine, they show the influence of the earlier efforts of Dr. John Brentz, the Würtemberg reformer, in the revision of the service, in which he had less regard for historical precedents than at a later period. ... These liturgies are recognized, therefore, as mediating between the Lutheran and Reformed types. They assume a fixed form in *The greater Würtemburg Order* of 1553, providing for two orders, one for communion days, and the other for other occasions. On communion

days, the order is: 1. Hymn to the Holy Spirit, a German Psalm, or any hymn suitable to the time. 2. Sermon, followed by the General Prayer. 3. Creed (German). 4. Admonition concerning the Lord's Supper. 5. Brief prayer read. 6. Chanting of the Lord's Prayer. 7. Words of Institution. 8. Administration, a hymn being sung while communicants go to the altar. 9. Prayer of thanksgiving. 10. Patriarchal Benediction. For other Sundays: 1. A Latin Introit or a German Hymn. 2. Sermon. 3. Reading of the General Prayer. 4. Psalm or Hymn. 5. Benediction. Some elements are omitted in the enumeration, clearly because the pastors were assumed to understand that they were inseparable from elements that are mentioned, as, for example, the reading of the Gospel, before the sermon. Here the responsive features of the service have vanished, except that the Litany may be used for the General Prayer, or at special services on appointed days.

In all these Orders, however, even in those of the first class, provision is made for a considerable degree of flexibility, by express directions in the Rubrics, that, in the country churches and villages, a much simpler form might be followed, without destroying the organism of the worship, while a more elaborate rendering of the service was desirable in the cities, where the necessary musical resources were accessible. In thus seeking to adapt the principles of the service to the conditions of the people, while at the same time preserving all its parts, Bugenhagen's Order provides for no less than seven hymns, as *Introit*, *Gloria in Excelsis*, and *Agnus Dei* assume a hymnal form.

Underlying the Lutheran conception of the service are certain principles, necessary to be kept in mind in order to appreciate the mutual relations of its several parts. All true worship is the communion of man with God, in response to an assurance of favor and a divine invitation encouraging such approach. Upon some word and promise of God every prayer must rest. Two factors, therefore, are found in all true worship; namely, the divine invitation and the human response. God is ever graciously giving, and man is ever thankfully receiving. The former is the sacramental, and the latter the sacrificial, element of worship. A clear statement of this distinction is made by Melanchthon in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession. The sacramental element is not limited to the two Sacraments, but, in a general sense, comprises every act in which God brings man a blessing, and thus belongs to the preaching and reading of the Word, as well as to Baptism and the Lord's Supper. A sacrifice, however, is any act whereby man brings something to God, in order to afford Him honor. Sacrifices are of two kinds. The propitiatory sacrifice, whereby God's wrath is appeased and His favor gained, is found only in the sacrifice of Christ for us on the Cross. But eucharistic sacrifices of prayer, praise, and thanksgiving are to be continual, offered by those who, through the one propitiatory sacrifice once offered, are reconciled to God. ...

The Reformed and Lutheran conceptions of the public service are alike based upon a combination of the thought of the eucharistic sacrifice with that of the sacrament. The proportion, however, is different; or there is a variation in the side emphasized. The question involved is, as to whether the main end be the rendering to God of the sincere offering of grateful hearts, or the receiving of God's riches of forgiving, renewing, enlightening, and strengthening grace. Are the hearing of God's Word and the reception of the Holy Supper chiefly incentives to prayer and praise? Or do prayer and praise only prepare for and accompany Word and Sacrament, and help us to receive them? Is the Lord's Supper principally an act whereby man professes his faith, or one whereby God comes, with a peculiar blessing, to man? Which part of the minister's duty is the more important, that whereby he stands before God as the leader of the congregation, or that whereby he stands before the congregation as the representative of God?

According to the Lutheran conception, the sacramental is the main element. Not the prayers and chants and hymns of the people, or even the word of the pastor, testifying from the depth of his Christian experience, but the Word of God, is itself the chief part of every service. The reading and repeating of this Word have a sacramental force; as with the Word, and only through the Word, comes the divine blessing. The Lord's Supper is no sacrifice that the worshipper offers, or that any priest offers for him. He thanks God for the sacrifice made for him, once for all, ages ago, when his Lord declared: "It is finished." Of this complete redemption he finds a sure pledge in the gift to him, with the bread and wine, of the very Body and Blood that have paid the price for his sins, and bought him back from the bondage of Satan to the sonship of God. ...

The entire life of the service is dependent upon the reciprocal action of these two elements;

just as the life of the body continues by the twofold process of inhalation and expiration. God speaks. Man responds; and then God speaks again. In the eucharistic sacrifice the heart turns to God, and opens for the blessing, which is immediately followed by the word of divine grace. But no sooner is the blessing received than it immediately awakens new emotions. The heart overflows with gratitude, with the sense of unworthiness of the blessings received, and with the desire for closer union with God, and a more worthy service of so gracious a benefactor. The expression of this is another eucharistic act, to which God responds in a new blessing.

Thus the entire service is a conversation between God and man; a continual giving and receiving. Now the pastor acts as the representative of the people before God, when he leads their prayers; and then, as the representative of God to the people, as he reads or proclaims the Word, or administers the sacrament. Now the people exercise the function of their spiritual priesthood, in their united hymns and prayers, – the eucharistic act; and then, again, stand and speak in God's name, as, in their responses, they announce to one another the consolations and admonitions of God's Word, – the sacramental act.

So also the various parts of the service are directed towards a common end. The entire plan of salvation, from its beginnings in the counsels of eternity to its completion in the new heavens and the new earth, is gradually unfolded. A portion of the service, like the needs of the Christian life and their supply, is permanent; while another portion is variable with the change of times and seasons; yet so as to present each year (such, at least, is the aim) the leading features of the life of Christ, all the doctrines of the Christian faith, and all the duties of the Christian life.

Divine Service in Stange, Norway, in the twentieth century
(Harriet Backer, "Altergang i Stange Kirke," 1903)

ADDENDUM IV: THE LUTHERAN BALANCE IN PUBLIC WORSHIP

An excerpt from Lutheranism in America *by William Julius Mann*
(Philadelphia: Lindsay & Blakiston, 1857), 54-62.

Christ, the Lord, has established his Church on earth upon two immovable pillars, namely, *the Word, and the Sacraments*. Where one of these is wanting, there, in fact, the Church is wanting also. The Augsburg Confession, therefore, very correctly teaches that the Church is “the congregation of believers in Christ, among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity, and the holy sacraments are administered in accordance with the Gospel." (Art. VII.)

According to this, the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments form, in conjunction with prayers, the centre of the Divine worship of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. It is not necessary here to make special mention of the fact, that the whole Reformation of the sixteenth century owes its entire success to the preaching of the Word that quickeneth. How deeply anxious Luther was to make the people acquainted with the sacred Scriptures, is abundantly evident from the great pains he took to translate them into the German language, and the zeal he manifested in imparting, both to old and young, religious instruction, and the active interest he displayed in the preaching of the Gospel, and in the education and preparation of evangelical ministers. What here more especially claims our attention is, not that which the Lutheran Church possesses in her worship, in common with other evangelical denominations, but that in which she differs from them. ...

And first, we must again remind the reader that the Lutheran Church has, from the beginning, clearly laid down the principle, and stoutly maintained it, that the greatest possible importance is to be attached to *purity of doctrine according to the Word of God*, but that in matters pertaining merely to the outward mode and manner of worship, Christian liberty should be granted, as long as nothing be done contrary to the Divine Word. The Christian worship is not, like that of the Jews under Moses, regulated by “special law.” ... This liberty the Lutheran Church freely accords to all. Yet its exercise must necessarily depend on, and be regulated by, local, temporary, ethnological, and national relations and circumstances. And whatever usages and customs may grow out of the cooperation of these different relations, in any Christian community, those will become the established customs and usages of that community, and as such should enjoy the respect of its members. ... In view of that liberal spirit which, in reference to this point, has prevailed in the Lutheran Church from the beginning, we are not surprised that no inconsiderable differences in the mode and manner of her worship have always existed among her members, both in the different parts of Germany itself, as well as in other countries. We will, as much as possible, confine ourselves to an enumeration of what she has, in the main, in common.

There are two elements in particular, which, in the arrangement of the worship of the Lutheran Church in Germany, were of importance, ...namely, a conservative, and esthetic or artistic element. Luther was anxious to retain of the old, what the Word of God did not prohibit. He respected prevailing customs, as long as they were not in opposition to the Divine law. Himself an ardent admirer of the fine arts, ...he...availed himself of art, the beautiful, to add to the solemnity of public worship. For this purpose he employed the clerical vestments of the officiating minister; availed himself of sacred music, by causing alternate singing between the minister and the choir; was not offended by artistically embellished altars and churches, and even would permit lighted candles upon the altar, as the symbol of the light of the Gospel in this darksome world. He also retained in the Church the dearest and most sacred memorial, the cross, and other similar things. And this was the man who had given the deathblow to Popery; this was the Church which first of all replaced the candlestick of the Gospel. Was Luther, was the Lutheran Church on that account Popish? Let us not judge that which is to be received by us as Christian, by the accidental standard we may have adopted under the influence of surrounding circumstances, the contractedness of our own habits, the ever changing opinions of any particular age, no matter whether the influences to which we are exposed be Quaker, Puritanic, or Episcopalian. It is deeply to be regretted that the great mass of our ministers and laity possess so little acquaintance with the history of Christian customs and Church usages. Were they better informed on these subjects, they would, in many

instances, form quite a different opinion. In illustration of this fact, we will merely relate the following circumstance. Luther usually made the sign of the cross with his hand, etc.; he gives directions in his Smaller Catechism to all Christians to do the same. Is this anything Popish? Some will be inclined to say, Yes. Yet Tertullian, who lived during the second century, when the Papacy was not yet dreamed of, and what we now call Romish customs did not obtain, says of his time, that Christians were in the habit daily of making the sign of the cross on their foreheads when performing all manner of business, at their outgoings and incomings, mornings and evenings, etc. ...

The statement that the Christians of the first three centuries conducted their public worship with Puritanic simplicity, is purely imaginary; and those who make it, fabricate a history in opposition to the testimony of history to suit their own predilections. Whoever resorts to the opinion that the Church rapidly degenerated immediately after the Apostolic age, should remember that the Christians of that time poured out, with the zeal of true and faithful witnesses, their very life-blood in honor of their faith and hope. ...

In regard to the Lutheran worship it must be remarked, that in its arrangement Luther aimed especially at securing the claims of three things, namely, *adoration*, or prayer; the preaching of the Word; and the celebration of the Holy Sacraments. And in this too he exhibited that soundness of judgment which was peculiar to himself, and under the guidance of which he always avoided extremes. In the Romish Church the preaching of the Word had been almost entirely abandoned, and her worship consisted almost exclusively of ceremonial acts of devotion. In this state of things ignorance in religion could not but continue to increase. On the other hand, in extreme Protestantism, and more especially in Puritanism, the preaching of the Word has formed the principal part of divine worship, whilst the adoration of God – worship in a more specific sense – has almost entirely disappeared. People resort to the house of God to hear the sermon, the eloquent speaker, the great orator. They come as censorious and critical hearers. A true spirit of devotion is evidently too much wanting in most of our Protestant religious assemblies...

Luther was desirous of according to the preaching of the Word all that prominency which it deserves. And he did it. But he was equally desirous, on the other hand, of securing to the other part its right. He well knew how vastly the congregation at large, as well as each individual member, would be benefited by cultivating a deep and sincere feeling of adoration and devotion. This is something more than simply being an attentive *listener* to a preached sermon, or an eloquent prayer. The regular singing of chorales by choirs was a means of uniting the congregation in common prayer. This was still more the case by making the service *liturgical;* these were set prayers, which the officiating minister read, and in which the congregation took an active part, by giving the responses, ...as, according to the united testimony of the ancient Church fathers, ...was customary in the Christian Church from the beginning. ... It is...designed to pronounce the faith of the Church, her acknowledged Confession; prevents arbitrary alterations and changes; and by being often repeated by the people becomes familiar to them. A good prayer is always edifying, no matter how often repeated. Every pious soul experiences this in the use of the Lord's Prayer. ... Luther has bequeathed to the Church a treasure of the most precious prayers, partly such as gushed forth from his own heart, and partly such as had been in use in the Church for centuries, and from which he expurgated all Romish additions. O, would that our ministers were more generally acquainted with the rich treasure of the ancient prayers of our Church and the Christian Church as a whole, which breathe, in the language of the Holy Scriptures, a power of faith hardly known to our times.

In the primitive Lutheran Church, therefore, the preaching of the Word constituted one part; another consisted in the exercise of adoration, conducted as a special act – although prayer was also joined to preaching. The whole service was so arranged that adoration or prayer, the reading of the Scriptures, preaching, and the Lord's Supper, formed integral parts of the whole, so that the order of the principal service on every Lord's day was as follows:

A. The *Introit:* a short prayer, commencing with a passage taken from the Psalms, with reference to the course of the ecclesiastical year.

B. The *Kyrie Eleison*: Lord have mercy on us, miserable sinners.

C. The *Gloria in Excelsis*.

D. The *Collect*, with introductory passages from the Bible: a short and comprehensive

prayer for the preparation of the spirit to listen to the reading of the lessons of the day – the Epistle and Gospel.

E. The Epistle for the day. The Epistles were read in the apostolic congregations before the Gospels had been committed to writing, and before they were read. On this account the custom of reading the Epistle first was continued.

F. The Gradual: passages from the Psalms, sung by the choir.

G. The Gospel of the day.

H. The united singing of the Creed.

I. The Sermon.

K. *Praefatio:* a prayer of praise, which always referred to the times and festivals of the ecclesiastical year, and concluded with the Holy, Holy, Holy, etc.

L. The Consecration of the bread and wine, by pronouncing the words of Institution and the Lord's Prayer.

M. The Distribution of the Lord's Supper, whilst the congregation sang, "O, Lamb of God," etc., and which was received by the communicants kneeling around the altar.

N. Finally, the Prayer of Thanks for the enjoyment of the Holy Supper, and the dismissal of the congregation with the blessing.

This is the order in which Luther arranged the principal service of the day, in 1523. It was his wish to celebrate the solemn service of the Lord's Supper every Sunday, for the primitive Christians celebrated it during the apostolic age, as is well known, at the close of every regular service. Luther even declared at that time, that if any one felt disposed to light candles or burn incense, as in the Old Testament, they might do so, for such things were neither prohibited nor commanded. At first, he permitted even the use of some Latin in German churches, in consideration of its having been an ancient custom, and because most men were, at that time, familiar with the language.

Divine Service in Wittenberg in the sixteenth century
(Woodcut, 1558)

ADDENDUM V: THE DELETERIOUS EFFECTS OF PIETISM AND RATIONALISM

An excerpt from "The Liturgical Deterioration of the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries" by Jeremiah Franklin Ohl, in Memoirs of the Lutheran Liturgical Association *IV (1901-1902): 69-72, 78.*

... It was the professed purpose of Pietism to make the truth vital, and to convert "the outward orthodox confession into an inner living theology of the heart," the evidence of which was to be seen in a godly life. To bring about this result it adopted new methods and went new ways. Though at first by no means disposed to break with the confessions, institutions and usages of the Church, it nevertheless deemed it necessary to supplement these. To the public meetings for worship, public communion, and private confession and absolution, it added private religious meetings in houses (*collegia pietatis*), private communion, and private religious conversation in the pastor's study. Thus Pietism endeavored to bring the Church into the house, a living Christianity into everyday life, so that not only public worship might again become a worship in spirit and in truth, but that the whole walk and conversation of each one might be a sacrifice well-pleasing to God.

But the very methods by which the earlier Pietism hoped to revive spiritual life ultimately proved destructive to the Church's Cultus. ...the objective and sacramental elements came to be underestimated..., and public worship became more and more subjective and sacrificial. Its value and the value of its component parts were gauged altogether according to subjective results; the claim was made that spiritual life could be awakened only by those who were themselves spiritually alive; and edification was sought not so much in the worship of the whole congregation as in the exercises of the small private assemblies. ...

The more the personal character and the spiritual ripeness of the officiating minister came to be looked upon as conditioning edification – and indeed the saving efficacy of the Word itself – the greater became the antipathy to everything that limited freedom of expression, and the higher was the estimate placed upon those acts of public worship that could serve as a channel for the utterance of individual reflections and emotions. Thus the fixed, liturgical element was made to yield to the subjective element; extempore prayer was substituted for the Church prayer; the objective Church hymn gave way to hymns descriptive of the soul's changing conditions, experiences and feelings; the hymn-books were arranged according to the Order of Salvation instead of the Church Year; new melodies suited to the emotional character of the new hymns displaced the vigorous old Church tunes; the sentimental aria and strains patterned after the prevailing style in opera completely crowded out the noble polyphonic choir music of the early masters; the order of the Christian Year was broken in the choice of texts (Thus Gottfried Arnold spoke of the system of Pericopes as "a vicious and abominable mutilation of the Bible;" and [Philip Jakob] Spener himself declared: "How I wish, with all my heart, that our Church had never adopted the use of the Pericopes, but had either allowed a free choice, or else had made the Epistles instead of the Gospels the chief texts.")... Public worship ceased to be a celebration of redemption, and became only an act of edification. ...the pendulum had swung to the...extreme of an emotional piety that regarded all fixed forms and churchly order as a detriment to spiritual life, and a hindrance to its expression.

But far more destructive was the influence of Rationalism. ...Rationalism could have no sympathy with a Cultus that was in every part a confession of the faith which it rejected. Whilst Pietism regarded the historic Service as too objective and sacramental, and therefore broke with its fixed forms rather than with its contents, Rationalism rejected both its forms and its contents. What sort of appreciation for the Church Year could a theology have that based its belief not on the great historic facts of redemption, but on its own speculations? How could such a religion of reason permit the Service on its sacramental side to remain what it originally was in the Lutheran Church – a real communication of Divine grace through the audible and visible Word? What spiritual pleasure could it find in the hymns and prayers and liturgical formularies in which the living faith begotten by Word and Sacrament was once wont to bring its sacrifice of thanksgiving and praise? Or how could it even understand the meaning of a Cultus with whose history it did not care to become familiar, and that stood for a past to which it was absolutely indifferent?

Like the later Pietism, so Rationalism could not tolerate the fixed and recurring, but was ever seeking something new, to the confusion of the congregation and the ever-increasing destruc-

tion of the Liturgy. Under its influence the Church edifice became a mere lecture-hall, and the minister a moral instructor, unfettered by anything traditional and fixed, and therefore free to say and do in public worship what he pleased; the Church Year was rearranged and to a great extent abolished; the Chief Service was mutilated beyond recognition; the Minor Services with their scheme of Lessons fell into decay; all the most ancient and beautiful liturgical parts – Introits, Kyries, Creed, Prefaces, Litany, Canticles, etc. – were consigned to oblivion; the brief, sententious old Collects were exchanged for verbose and sentimental new fabrications; the Words of Institution and Distribution, the Lord's Prayer, and the Benediction were recast; the great Church hymns were diluted and "modernized," or else gave way entirely to new ones reflecting the moralizing, sentimentalizing spirit of the age; and with the old hymns also disappeared the vigorous and fresh rhythm of the old melodies, and the very last trace of a proper churchly style in the music of the sanctuary. Even the so-called "Ministerial Acts" became individual products, and were "made up" in a moralizing fashion as the occasion and circumstances seemed to demand, or were taken from one or the other of the many private Agendas that made their appearance. Thus what Pietism began, but did not really mean to do, Rationalism finished, and the destruction of the Church Service was complete. ...

To such frightful and incredible depths had the Cultus of the Church sunk when the work of restoration was once more begun in the nineteenth century. That movement is still in progress, and to the impulse it gave and the literature it produced, we of the Lutheran Church in America are indebted for the revival of a Cultus that, like our faith, links us again with the purest and best period of the Church's history.

Distribution of the body and blood of Christ in Zwickau, Saxony, in the seventeenth century
(Lederantependium, St. Katharinenkirche, 1661)

ADDENDUM VI: LUTHERAN RESISTENCE TO REFORMED ATTACKS IN BRANDENBURG

An excerpt from Prince, People, and Confession: The Second Reformation in Brandenburg *by Bodo Nischan (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994), 137-42.*

[Reformed] Elector Johann Sigismund thought that Luther had done much to set the gospel free, but "still had remained deeply stuck in the darkness of the papacy...and therefore had not been able to extricate himself completely from all human teaching." "All of which proved," [Adam] Agricola concluded, "that the Lutheran church and religion needed another reformation" – a reformation, [Abraham] Scultetus added, in which "the leftover papal dung is to be swept completely out of Christ's stable." The result of this Second Reformation would be a "fully reformed" church in which "all idols, ghosts and superstitions of the papal church had been completely exorcised."

Since the sacrament of the altar was the principal issue between Lutherans and Calvinists, liturgical differences in the celebration of the Lord's Supper were bound to cause disagreement and controversy. To the Reformed the ritual and ceremonial of the traditional mass, which had been retained in Brandenburg, suggested an understanding of the eucharist that was, to put it simply, papal rather than evangelical. ...the main point over which they were arguing was the doctrine of the Real Presence, specifically the teaching of the *communicatio idiomatum*, which many orthodox Lutherans used to explain Christ's physical presence. Accordingly, the divine attributes of Christ's nature – his omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence – are communicated to his human nature so that, in the words of the Formula of Concord, he "can be and is present wherever he wills," particularly in the communion elements. The Reformed countered that a physical body could only be in one place at any given time; since Christ had ascended into heaven, he certainly could not also be physically present in the bread and wine. They spoke derogatorily of the Lutheran dogma of "ubiquity." It "turns the sacrament into a miracle," insisted [Simon Ulrich] Pistoris, and "opens the doors and gates to old heresies," complained [Martin] Füssel. "Ubiquity" is like a poison that will destroy the gospel message. It is a first step toward Catholic transubstantiation and amounts to a return to "magical consecration" of the "papal mass." "What superstitious papal ceremonies still survive in the Lutheran church derive largely from this faulty doctrine," maintained Pistoris. ...

"Your communion," [Reformed] Margrave Johann Georg told [Simon] Gedicke in 1613, "contains still many papal superstitions, yet does not observe the things Christ instituted and ordered us to do." One rite specifically commanded, but omitted by Lutherans, was the *fractio panis*, "the ceremonial breaking of the eucharistic bread for distribution." ... Hardly any other rite...caused more arguments between Lutherans and Reformed in Brandenburg than did the fraction. ... The issue, according to Lazarus Theodorus, "was not whether Christ had broken the bread in the first communion service, but whether the bread had to be broken in the calvinistic manner...and whether Christ had instituted and ordered it." The Reformed definitely thought so; the Lutherans clearly did not.

...the fraction was essential to the Reformed because it constituted a sacramental analogy to Christ's martyrdom on the cross. In addition, the *fractio panis* was important as a symbolic denial of the Real Presence. ... "With their theatrical fraction [*scenica fractione*]," Gedicke wrote, "Calvinists do not merely wish to break the bread, but [wish to] signify the absent body...of Christ" in the sacrament. ... The fraction thus had become an issue because it mirrored underlying confessional differences. In a very real and graphic manner that even the most illiterate church goer could readily comprehend, it symbolized the religious change that the new reformers were trying to realize in Brandenburg.

While the Reformed wanted to see the fraction restored, there were other parts in the Lutheran communion service which they wished to eliminate. "Such things as candles, pictures, albs, chasubles, and mass vestments generally, are useless and vain papal relics that deform the Lord's Supper more than they adorn it," insisted Job Friedrich. [Solomon] Finck thought that the doctrine of the Real Presence, "that monstrance fetish with all its accompanying ceremonies, was prostituting the church and turning Lutherans into Papists." "God wants all popish idols to be eliminated, not only from our hearts, but from our sight as well," proclaimed Martin Füssel in his *Christian Ceremonies*. Since "altars with their panels, mass vestments, chasubles, copes, and other liturgical

utensils were and continue to be used for idolatrous purposes by papists," they must be cast aside immediately.

The continued use of communion wafers rather than real bread in the Lord's Supper violated "Christ's commandments and confirms old superstitions," asserted Solomon Finck. ... "Their form, especially the crucifix that is stamped on the wafer, deludes the common man into believing that Christ is actually present in the bread." The basic problem, explained Füssel, was that these "round, thin mass wafers" insinuated the "papal sacrifice of the mass"; they constituted a "first step towards Catholic transubstantiation."

Further complicating this issue, according to Finck, was the Lutheran consecration formula, which essentially reaffirmed "the papal notion that the spoken words transform the dead wafer...into Christ's living body." Of course the Lutherans denied this. "Their consecration has nothing to do with papal magic," countered Gedicke; "by repeating the proper words of institution we are merely setting aside and blessing the bread and wine for special sacramental usage." The Reformed remained unconvinced. Facing the altar and "addressing the words of institution to the bread and wine rather than to the people" encourages "old papal superstitions." It suggests that the pastor's "secret murmuring...actually was creating the sacrament," a belief further encouraged by the ringing of altar bells at the time of consecration. Bells, the Lutherans retorted, were useful because "they wake up people...and remind them why they have come to church." ...

Genuflecting at the altar likewise came under attack. "We do this," explained Gedicke, "not because we adore the communion bread as if it had been truly transformed into the body of Christ, but rather...to remind ourselves that through the sacrament our faith is strengthened." We "abstain from genuflecting...to avoid all papal superstition or even the appearance of idolatry," the Reformed contended. The altars and candles in Lutheran churches were another "papal relic" the new reformers found objectionable. Candles made sense in the early church when Christians were persecuted and had to meet secretly at night, observed Scultetus. "Thanks to God, we are now able to celebrate the sacrament during the bright daylight hours and do not need candle light any longer." Candles also were misleading because they detracted from "Christ, the true light of the world," and suggested a papal eucharist. For the same reason, altars had to be replaced by communion tables. Old Testament priests used them for burned offerings, and papal priests for the sacrifice of the mass. But such "idols and pyramids are totally inappropriate and useless" in evangelical churches, thought Solomon Finck. ... "Not the table altars, only the sacrificial altars are to be eliminated," explained Füssel; like communion wafers and candles they suggested a papal eucharist and therefore had to go.

Similar arguments were cited against the traditional and very elaborate vestments still used by Brandenburg's pastors. The colorful copes and chasubles may look pretty but remain the "attire of papal mass priests," asserted Finck. Scultetus referred to them as "the garments of anti-Christ," noting that neither Christ nor the apostles had worn such ecclesiastical garb." Traditional vestments, Lutherans protested, are far more appropriate for the celebration of the sacrament than "the ordinary burgher dress, short business coats, high pointed hats, blue ruffles and bows, and similar un-priestly garb" favored by some. The Reformed disagreed. The Lutheran insistence on traditional vestments, they charged, had created a new type of ceremonial legalism that was confusing people and undermining the basic gospel message. ... Scultetus therefore urged "preachers to throw away their mass vestments...and wear plain clothing instead"; a white coat such as an alb, he thought, belonged in the bathroom, not in the pulpit! Agricola even went so far as to condemn the wearing of mass vestments as a sin. Most Reformed felt that the "customary and plain black robe" was enough. ...

By eliminating communion wafers, candles, altars, and vestments..., "the Reformed hoped to eradicate from the hearts and minds of the foolish and simple-minded the childish superstition that Christ's true body and blood were really present in the bread and wine." But the harder the Reformed pressed for change, the more doggedly the Lutherans defended what they wanted to eliminate. "The common man especially is greatly angered and offended when those papal ceremonies which have survived in our churches are eliminated," noted Job Friedrich.

ADDENDUM VII: CEREMONIES AS MARKS OF CONFESSION

An excerpt from "Ritual and Protestant Identity in Late Reformation Germany" by Bodo Nischan, in Protestant History and Identity in Sixteenth-Century Europe, *2 vols., edited by Bruce Gordon (Aldershot, England: Ashgate, 1996), 2:144-48.*

...Matthias Flacius Illyricus of Magdeburg...rejected the liturgical compromises of the [Leipzig] Interim that the victorious Catholics had sought to impose on the evangelicals after the Schmalkald War, noting:

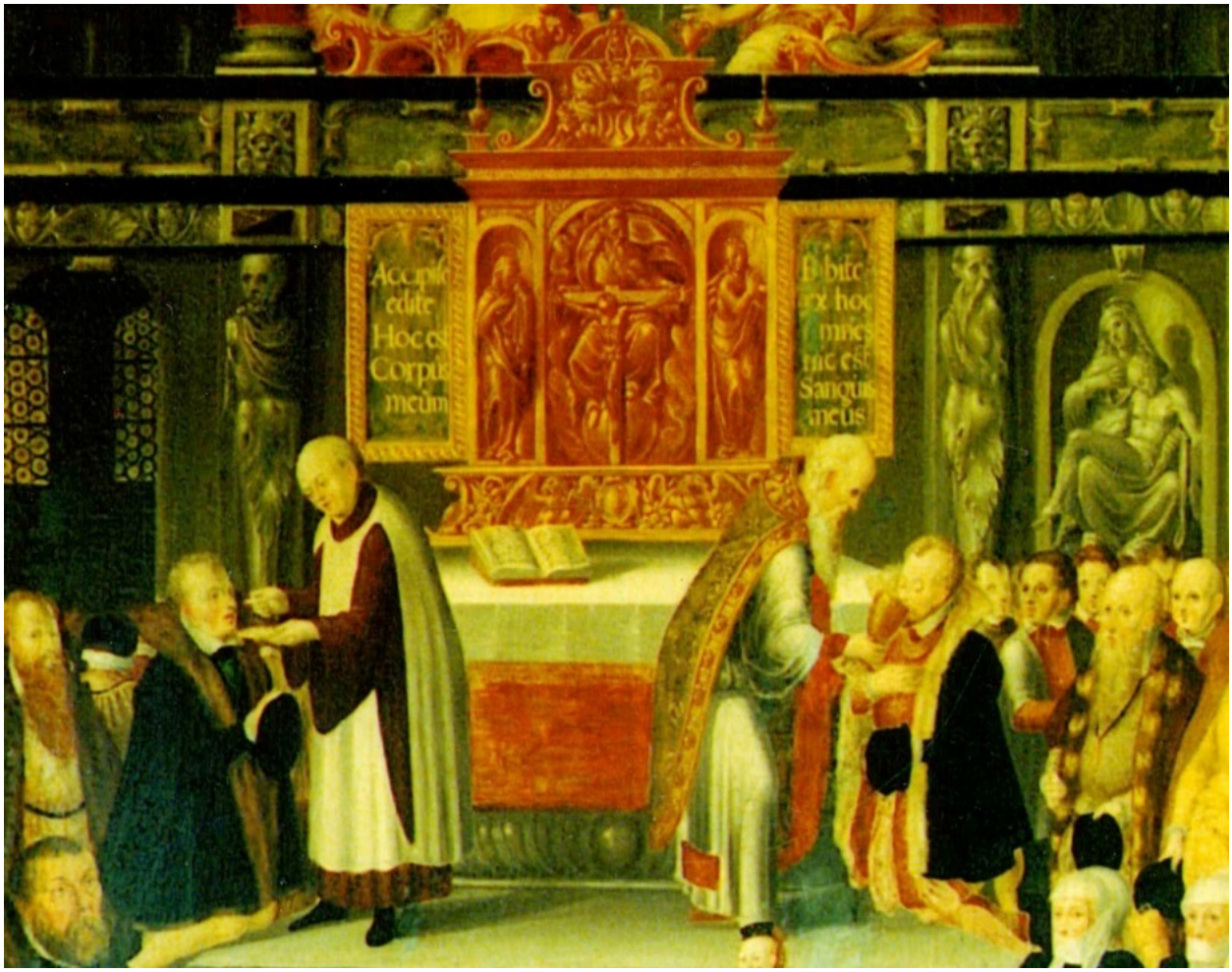
> All ceremonies and ecclesiastical usages are free in themselves, as ever. But when they are imposed through coercion, or through the erroneous impression that they are required for worship, or through deceit, scandal, or public pressure from the godless, and when they do not benefit God's church in some way, but disrupt it and mock God, then they are no longer adiaphora.

Flacius's 'general rule regarding ceremonies' was seconded by other Gnesio-Lutherans, notably Nikolaus Gallus, also from Magdeburg, and Joachim Westphal of Hamburg. It was also endorsed by the Formula of Concord (1577) and frequently reiterated as churches were jousting for people's confessional allegiance. 'To distinguish ourselves from Anabaptists, Sacramentarians, Papists, Interimists, Adiaphorists, and others with novel and strange teachings...we are taking the right middle road by neither rejecting nor endorsing all ceremonies', explained Gallus. Lutherans, observed Tilemann Hesshusen in 1585, were involved in a two-front war with 'Jesuits and Calvinists' in which ritual and ceremonial count. Hesshusen cautioned people to beware of 'the wolf's howling of the Adiaphorists, who insist that our confession is not reflected in surplices or external garb and ceremonies'. 'Ceremonies...serve to promote our true and pure teaching of the Holy Gospel', observed the Rostock superintendent Simon Pauli. They enable us 'to distinguish true from false doctrine... and reveal our sectarian adversaries – Papists, Calvinists, and their ilk'. Much the same, Balthasar Meisner, professor at Wittenberg, reminded his listeners that false prophets expose themselves not only by their erroneous teachings but also by their ceremonies: 'For heretics are in the habit of always using unique and strange church rites under the pretext...of Christian liberty. Liturgy and ritual thus had become much more than merely an indifferent matter for Lutherans in the late Reformation; they clearly were regarded as marks of confessional identity.

Concurrently there had occurred another subtle but important shift in the way Lutherans were treating church usages, notably in regions where they were vying with Calvinists for people's confessional loyalty. Some of the very same liturgical practices which earlier critics of the Interim had condemned as 'Catholicising', many followers of the Augsburg Confession were now defending as a useful prophylactic against Reformed and other sacramentarian perversions. Old rituals are 'like a good disciplinarian in that they provide helpful instruction on how to keep the true faith', thought Achatius, member of the Brandenburg consistory. He even published a lengthy compendium of excerpts from the writings of notable Lutherans to demonstrate that doctrinal orthodoxy and ceremonial traditionalism went hand in hand. 'As long as the old ceremonies are kept in the Mark of Brandenburg, Calvinists also will be kept at bay', observed Elisabeth Magdalene, sister of the archconservative elector Johann Georg (ruled 1571-98). In a book which he dedicated to the duchess, Zacharias Rivander of Saxony, where another [Calvinist] reformation had just been aborted, listed the marks whereby a 'simple layman' could easily spot a Calvinist minister. 'If he distributes Holy Communion without reverence...[and] runs to the altar like a hog to its trough...he surely is a secret sacramentarian.' Similarly, Theodosius Fabricius of Göttingen, in a history of the current communion disputes which appeared in 1593, compared in separate columns the teachings and practices of Germany's three major denominations. His goal, the author explained, 'is not to contrast Protestants and Papists, but to compare the teachings of Lutherans with Zwinglians or Calvinists'. Thus, for the year 1563 Fabricius's chronicle recorded: 'Heidelberg becomes Reformed and Luther's catechism is eliminated. ... Calvinists remove pictures from churches, abolish auricular confession, delete exorcism [from baptism] and numerous festivals, and discard altars and baptismal fonts'. Johann Olearius of Halle, who witnessed the introduction of Calvinism in neighbouring Anhalt in the early 1590s, thought that the new [Calvinist] reformers were purposefully eliminating

'the public ceremonies of the mass that we [Lutherans] have kept to instruct people: ...florid descant, church organs, altars, wax candles, mass vestments, golden vessels, communion hosts, genuflecting as one approaches the Lord's Table, and similar practices'.

Olearius's assessment was accurate, for the Reformed, like the Lutherans, had come to view church rites and usages from a mostly confessional perspective. Unlike the Lutherans, however, they had a much stricter notion of just what ceremonies were permitted. 'Those matters about which we have no commandment of God are in our liberty', John Calvin had observed; but he added, 'how much more true then, that which leads to stumbling, and serves as an instrument of idolatry and gives rise to misleading opinions, ought in no way be allowed'. Carlos Eire has argued that, for the Genevan, 'the Reformation...was not so much one of doctrine, but one of piety, which involved profound social and cultural changes. To be properly "Reformed", a community would not only have to change its theology, but also its outward expression of faith.' The results of this war against idolatry became most evident in late Reformation Germany. 'Because ceremonies indicate the confession one has either embraced or rejected, it is...most crucial that one shun and avoid all suspicious ones', insisted Anhalt's new [Calvinist] reformers. 'Exorcism [in baptism]..., altars, crucifixes, pictures, chasubles, mass vestments, capes, candles, etc., do [not] belong among Christian ceremonies' and therefore must go, observed [Calvinist] Duke Johann Georg of Anhalt. 'For the sake of the people the current emendation was necessary so that doctrine and ceremony alike will reflect the truth, and the many remaining superstitious rituals...will not mislead people any longer', declared [Calvinist] Christoph Pezel of Bremen.



Divine Service in Rengersdorf am Queis, Silesia, in the sixteenth century
(Epitaph des Abraham von Nostiz, 1572)

ADDENDUM VIII: LUTHERAN WORSHIP VERSUS SECTARIAN WORSHIP

An excerpt from "Walking Together in Faith and Worship" by David Jay Webber,
Lutheran Synod Quarterly *52:2/3 (June-September 2012): 233-36.*

Lutheran pastors who look with envying eyes upon the large numbers in attendance at the heterodox churches of our land, and who think that their own attendance will increase if they imitate the worship practices of those churches, need to realize that such churches *worship* the way they do because they *believe* the way they do. The theology of Arminian churches in particular requires them to devise techniques of persuading and enticing people to make a "decision" to turn their hearts toward God, and to follow Christ. The praise songs that one finds in such churches, which "market" God as one who is available and able to satisfy the felt needs of religious seekers, fit exactly with the false doctrine of such churches.

Even when such songs do not explicitly teach this false doctrine, one should notice that in the majority of cases they do not teach very much sound doctrine either. Most of the time, the words of praise songs are not really being used to teach much of anything. With mantra-like repetitions of innocuous phrases from the Bible, wed to a musical style that appeals directly to the physiological pulsations of the human body, the words of such songs are being used instead to manipulate the will and the emotions of those who sing them. How can Lutherans imitate any of that, and still remain Lutheran? The Revivalists and Pentecostals who invented the genre of the praise song knew exactly what they were doing, governed as they were by their sincerely-held but erroneous doctrines of original sin and free will, conversion and faith. As we put the best construction on the actions of Lutherans who introduce such songs into their churches, we would have to say that they naively do not know what they are doing.

What goes on in the popular Evangelical megachurches of our day is not theologically neutral. Heterodox people go to heterodox churches because they like the heterodoxy that they find there. They like churches where the focus of attention is on them: on entertaining them, and on satisfying their needs as they define those needs. We should be saddened by their embracing of such heterodoxy, and we should wish and pray that they would be turned away from this wrong thinking. But if such heterodox Christians visit an orthodox Lutheran service, and decide that they do not like it, the fundamental problem is not in the orthodox service. The fundamental problem is in the heterodox visitors. Indeed, the orthodox evangelical doctrine that is embedded in a Lutheran service is actually their only hope, if they would only believe it instead of the fluff that they currently believe. It should not be discarded for their sake. It should instead be preserved and accentuated for their sake – and for the sake of the Lutherans who come regularly to their own church, to be renewed regularly in their orthodox evangelical faith by this orthodox evangelical doctrine.

It is the considered opinion of the present essayist that a full-bodied liturgical service, which preserves the intended flow and rhythm of the liturgy, and which is accompanied by purposeful ceremonial ornamentation, actually recommends itself to the church as a better instrument for congregational worship, *and for outreach*, than a more "low-church" option. We do have to admit that in some corners of conservative Lutheranism in America, a way of conducting the service has developed that can fairly be called "boring." Ministers plod through the texts of the printed order with little sense of the grandeur and pageantry of the liturgy, or of the organic and logical flow of the successive parts of the service. The flow of the service is also broken up by the frequent insertion of wordy rubrical announcements about what is coming next, what page things are on, and so forth.

Many today have proposed that this "boring" way of conducting the service be replaced by an "entertaining" way of conducting it – either by substituting for the church's liturgy a locally-produced flashy concoction each week; or by seeking to "enliven" the service, and make it more "meaningful," through a stronger intrusion of the pastor's personality into the conducting of the service. In contrast, we would propose that this "boring" way of conducting the service be replaced instead by an *intriguing* way of conducting it – that is, by a way of leading the Lord's people in the worship of almighty God that testifies to the fact that something special and other-worldly is there taking place.

Any unchurched guests who may be present for such a sacred gathering would not be ex-

pected to be able to grasp everything that is going on. A desire to change the liturgy so as to make it immediately understandable in all respects to first-time visitors is a misguided desire. As Christians over time mature in their faith, the liturgy should be something that they *grow into*, and not something that they quickly *grow out of*. But first-time visitors, even if they are unbelievers, can still be *intrigued* by a *well-done* liturgy that they do not immediately understand in all particulars. They can tell that something special and other-worldly is indeed taking place – something unlike anything else they have ever experienced – and this can draw them back again, to learn more.

On the basis of the natural knowledge of God, even an unbeliever would sense that if there is a God to be worshiped, those who do worship him will be serious about it. To the extent that a public worship service can serve an evangelistic purpose, then, the best way for it to do so, is for that service to exude an attitude of joyful yet sublime reverence, and deep respect for all that is holy. An unregenerated person, in his spiritual darkness, does not yet know where to find God. But he does at least know that if God can be found anywhere, it will likely not be in a setting or atmosphere of frivolity and silliness.

The interior of Santiago Norwegian Lutheran Church, near Princeton, Minnesota, in 1902. Pastors J. E. Engebretson and P. O. Langseth are pictured. This Norwegian Synod congregation went into the 1917 merger. It still exists as a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and is now known as Glendorado Lutheran Church. It is the "mother" church of Our Savior's Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELS) near Princeton, which was organized by members of the Santiago congregation in 1920. It is the "grandmother" church of Bethany Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELS) in Princeton, which was organized by members of Our Savior's in 1953.

CITED SOURCES

Bible Translations:

EHV: *Holy Bible: Evangelical Heritage Version*, copyright 2019 by the Wartburg Project, Inc.

ESV: *The Holy Bible, English Standard Version*, copyright 2001 by Crossway Bibles (a division of Good News Publishers).

KJV: *The Holy Bible: King James (Authorized) Version,* public domain.

NASB: *New American Standard Bible*, copyright 2020 by The Lockman Foundation.

Editions of the Book of Concord:

CT: *Concordia Triglotta,* edited by Friedrich Bente (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921).

K/W: *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2000).

Tap: *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church*, edited by Theodore G. Tappert (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959).

Hymnals:

ELH: *Evangelical Lutheran Hymnary* (Saint Louis: MorningStar Music Publishers, Inc., 1996).

ELHB: *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1912).

LH: *The Lutheran Hymnary* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1913).

LHJ: *Lutheran Hymnary, Junior* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1916).

TLH: *The Lutheran Hymnal* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1941).

Other Cited Sources:

AHHF: *At Home in the House of My Fathers,* edited by Matthew C. Harrison (Fort Wayne, Indiana: Lutheran Legacy, 2009).

Anderson C: Christian Anderson, “Our Liturgy,” *Clergy Bulletin* XVII:2 (October 1957).

Anderson VD: Verlyn Dean Anderson, *The History and Acculturation of the English Language Hymnals of the Norwegian-American Lutheran Churches, 1879-1958* (1972).

Belgum: Gerhard Lee Belgum, *The Old Norwegian Synod in America* (1957).

Bergsma: Johannes Bergsma, *Die Reform der Messliturgie durch Johannes Bugenhagen* (Hildesheim: Bernward Verlag, 1966).

Brecht: Martin Brecht, *Martin Luther: The Preservation of the Church, 1532-1546* (trans. by James L. Schaaf) (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1993).

Brett: Thomas Brett, *A Review of the Lutheran Principles...* (London: Printed for Henry Clements at the Half-Moon in St. Paul’s Churchyard, 1714).

Brug MW: John F. Brug, *The Ministry of the Word* (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 2009).

Brug R: John F. Brug, book review of *Evangelical Lutheran Dogmatics*, Vol. IV, by Adolf Hoenecke, *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* 97:4 (Fall 2000).

Brunvoll: Arve Brunvoll, "Tradition and Renewal," *Liturgical Review* 9:2 (November 1979).

Buszin GLCW: Walter E. Buszin, "The Genius of Lutheran Corporate Worship," *Concordia Theological Monthly* 21:4 (April 1950).

Buszin MCSH: Walter E. Buszin, "Music in the Church, School and Home" [convention essay], in *Report of the Fourteenth Annual Convention of the Norwegian Synod* (1932).

Butler: Bartlett R. Butler, "Hymns," *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Reformation*, 4 vols. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996).

Cartford: Gerhard Cartford, *Music in the Norwegian Lutheran Church: A Study of Its Development in Norway and Its Transfer to America, 1825-1917* (1962).

Chemnitz: Martin Chemnitz, *Examination of the Council of Trent*, 4 parts (trans. by Fred Kramer) (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1971-1986).

CWH: *Christian Worship: Handbook*, edited by Gary Baumler and Kermit Moldenhauer (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1993).

Dawes: William Dawes, *An Exact Account of King George's Religion: With the Manner of His Majesty's Worship in the English and Lutheran Church; and the First Rise of the Lutheran Religion* (London: Printed for J. Churchell in Paternoster-Row, 1714).

DeGarmeaux: Mark E. DeGarmeaux, *O Come, Let Us Worship!: A Study in Lutheran Liturgy and Hymnody* (presented to the 78th Annual Convention of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod, 1995).

Evanson: Charles J. Evanson, "The Divine Service: The Service of the Sacrament," in *Lutheran Worship: History and Practice*, edited by Fred L. Precht (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1993).

Fagerberg: Holsten Fagerberg, *A New Look at the Lutheran Confessions, 1529-1537* (trans. by Gene J. Lund) (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1972).

Ferkenstad AGS: Craig A. Ferkenstad, "About God's Service in the Church," *Lutheran Synod Quarterly* 22:2 (June 1982).

Ferkenstad ELS: Craig A. Ferkenstad, "ELS: An Introspective," *Lutheran Synod Quarterly* 59:1 (March 2019).

Ferkenstad SSS: Craig A. Ferkenstad, "Singing the Same Song," *Oak Leaves* 4:2 (Summer 2000).

Field: Laurence N. Field, "Our Heritage of Music," in *Norsemen Found a Church: An Old Heritage in a New Land*," edited by J. C. K. Preus, T. F. Gullixson, and E. C. Reinertson (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1953).

Fritz: John H. C. Fritz, *Pastoral Theology*, second edition (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1945).

Gerberding: George Henry Gerberding, *The Lutheran Pastor,* seventh edition (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1915).

Graebner: Johann Heinrich Philipp Graebner, *Die frankischen Colonien des Saginaw Thales, im Staate Michigan* [The Franconian Colonies of the Saginaw Valley, in the State of Michigan] (trans. by Esther Meyer Stahlke) (1890).

Grindal: Gracia Grindal, “Hymnody,” *Dictionary of Luther and the Lutheran Traditions* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2017).

Guenther: Martin Guenther, book review of *Church Liturgy for Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession*, *The St. Louis Theological Monthly* 1:4 (August 1881). The review is signed “G.” but Guenther is almost definitely the author.

Haas: John A. W. Haas, “Rationalism,” *Lutheran Cyclopedia* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899).

Habeck: Irwin J. Habeck, “Who May Officiate at the Lord’s Supper?,” *Wisconsin Lutheran Quarterly* 65:3 (July 1968).

Heal: Bridget Heal, “‘Better Papist than Calvinist’: Art and Identity in Later Lutheran Germany,” *German History* 29:4 (December 2011).

Herl: Joseph Herl, *Worship Wars in Early Lutheranism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2004).

Hoenecke: Adolf Hoenecke, *Evangelical Lutheran Dogmatic*s, 4 vols. (multiple translators) (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 1999-2009).

Holmes: David L. Holmes, “Pietism and Old Lutheranism in the Wisconsin Synod,” *Anglican and Episcopal History* 62:4 (December 1993).

Horn CLC: Edward Traill Horn, “Ceremonies in the Lutheran Church,” *Lutheran Cyclopedia* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1899).

Horn LWJB: Edward Traill Horn, “Liturgical Work of John Brenz,” *The Lutheran Church Review* I:4 (October 1882).

Horn RWCN: Edward Traill Horn, “The Reformation of Worship in the City of Nürnberg,” *Lutheran Church Review* XI:2 (April 1882).

Jacobs LME: Henry Eyster Jacobs, *The Lutheran Movement in England,* revised edition (Philadelphia: General Council Publication House, 1908).

Jacobs PBLM: Henry Eyster Jacobs, “Prebendary Burbidge and ‘The Lutheran Movement,’” *Lutheran Church Review* X:1 (January 1891).

Jacobs SCF: Henry Eyster Jacobs, *A Summary of the Christian Faith* (Philadelphia: General Council Publication House, 1907).

Kaehler: E. W. Kaehler, “Does a Congregation Ordinarily Have the Right Temporarily to Commit an Essential Part of the Holy Preaching Office to a Layman?” (trans. by Mark D. Nispel), *Logia* VI:3 (Holy Trinity 1997).

Kalb: Friedrich Kalb, *Theology of Worship in 17th-Century Lutheranism* (trans. by Henry P. A. Hamann) (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965).

Klotsche: Ernst Heinrich Klotsche, *Christian Symbolics*, revised edition (Des Moines, Iowa: The Lutheran Literary Board, 1929).

Knubel: Frederick H. Knubel, Introduction to *A Manual on Worship*, revised edition, by Paul Zeller Strodach (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1946).

Koren: Elisabeth Koren, *The Diary of Elisabeth Koren, 1853-1855* (trans. by David T. Nelson) (Northfield, Minnesota: Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1955).

Krauth: Charles Philip Krauth, “Schmid’s Dogmatik of the Lutheran Church,” *Evangelical Review* I (July 1849).

Kretzmann CA: Paul E. Kretzmann, *Christian Art in the Place and in the Form of Lutheran Worship* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1921)

Kretzmann M: Paul E. Kretzmann, *Magazin für evangelisch-lutherische Homiletik und Pastoraltheologie* 53:6 (June 1929).

KW: *U. V. Koren's Works*, 4 vols., edited by Mark E. DeGarmeaux (Mankato, Minnesota: Evangelical Lutheran Synod Historical Society, 2014-2017).

Lambert: James F. Lambert, *Luther's Hymns* (Philadelphia: General Council Publication House, 1917).

Lang: Paul H. D. Lang, *Ceremony and Celebration: An Evangelical Guide for Christian Practice in Corporate Worship* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965).

Lange: Dirk G. Lange, "Liturgy and Worship," *Dictionary of Luther and the Lutheran Traditions* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2017).

LCSA: "Lay Celebration of the Sacrament of the Altar," *Logia* II:1 (Epiphany/January 1993).

Lieberg: Hellmut Lieberg, *Office and Ordination in Luther and Melanchthon* (trans. by Matthew Carver) (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2020).

LL: *The Lutheran Liturgy* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1947).

Lochner: Friedrich Lochner, *The Chief Divine Service of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church* (trans. by Matthew Carver) (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2020).

LW: *Luther's Works* (American Edition), multiple vols. (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1955-).

Marzolf MA: Dennis W. Marzolf, "Mass Appeal: Discernment in Liturgical Innovation" (2010).

Marzolf WML: Dennis W. Marzolf, "C. F. W. Walther: The Musician and Liturgiologist," *C. F. W. Walther: The American Luther*, edited by Arthur H. Drevlow (Mankato, Minnesota: Walther Press, 1987).

ML: *The Music for the Liturgy of The Lutheran Hymnal* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1944).

Novac: Loui Novac, *An Historical Survey of the Liturgical Forms in the Church Orders of Johannes Bugenhagen* (Denver: Iliff School of Theology, 1974).

Nelson/Fevold: E. Clifford Nelson and Eugene L. Fevold, *The Lutheran Church Among Norwegian-Americans* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1960).

Olson: O. Rolf Olson, *The Norwegian Synod, 1853-1917: A Short History of a Premier Predecessor Church Body* (Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press, 2016).

Ottesen/Brandt: Jakob Aall Ottesen and Nils O. Brandt, "Report of Pastors Ottesen and Brandt...," in Carl S. Meyer, *Pioneers Find Friends* (Decorah, Iowa: Luther College Press, 1963).

Piepkorn: Arthur Carl Piepkorn, *The Survival of the Historic Vestments in the Lutheran Church after 1555,* second edition (Saint Louis: School for Graduate Studies, Concordia Seminary, 1958).

Preus TLB: Herman A. Preus, *A Theology to Live By: The Practical Luther for the Practicing Christian* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1977).

Preus VD: Herman Amberg Preus, *Vivacious Daughter: Seven Lectures on the Religious Situation Among Norwegians in America* (trans. by Todd W. Nichol) (Northfield, Minnesota: The Norwegian-American Historical Association, 1990).

Preuss: Hans Preuss, "Luther as Communicant," *Lutheran Church Quarterly* XIV:2 (April 1941).

Reed: Luther D. Reed, *The Lutheran Liturgy,* revised edition (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1947).

Rocholl: Rudolf Rocholl, *Geschichte der evangelischen Kirche in Deutschland* (Leipzig: A. Deichert, 1897).

Rohne: John Magnus Rohne, *Norwegian American Lutheranism Up to 1872* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1926).

RW: *Reformation Worship: Liturgies from the Past for the Present*, edited by Jonathan Gibson and Mark Earngey (Greensboro, North Carolina: New Growth Press, 2018).

Sasse HWS: Herman Sasse, *Here We Stand: Nature and Character of the Lutheran Faith* (trans. by Theodore G. Tappert) (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1938).

Sasse TMB: *Hermann Sasse, This Is My Body: Luther's Contention for the Real Presence in the Sacrament of the Altar*, revised edition (Adelaide, South Australia: Lutheran Publishing House, 1977).

Schalk: Carl F. Schalk, *God's Song in a New Land: Lutheran Hymnals in America* (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1995).

Schaller: John Schaller, "Danger Ahead!", *Lutheran Witness* 10:8 (September 21, 1891).

Schmidt: Martin Schmidt, "Pietism," *Encyclopedia of the Lutheran Church*, 3 vols. (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1965).

Senn CL: Frank C. Senn, *Christian Liturgy: Catholic and Evangelical* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997).

Senn RM: Frank C. Senn, "The Reform of the Mass: Evangelical, but Still Catholic," in *The Catholicity of the Reformation*, edited by Carl E. Braaten and Robert W. Jenson (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1996).

Severinsen: Peder Severinsen, *The Proper Communion Vestments* (trans. by J. Madsen) (1924).

Spaeth CPK: Adolph Spaeth, *Charles Porterfield Krauth,* 2 vols. (New York: The Christian Literature Company, 1898-1909).

Spaeth HHB: Adolph Spaeth, "Hymnody, Hymn-Books, Lutheran," *Lutheran Cyclopedia* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1899).

Spinks: Bryan D. Spinks, "German Influence on Edwardian Liturgies," in *Sister Reformations: The Reformation in Germany and in England*, edited by Dorothea Wendebourg (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2010).

Stub: Jacob Aall Ottesen Stub, *Vestments and Liturgies* (no date).

Teigen: Erling T. Teigen, "The Universal Priesthood in the Lutheran Confessions," *Logia* 1:1 (Reformation/October 1992).

Tiefel: James P. Tiefel, "The Formation and Flow of Worship Attitudes in the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod," in *Not unto Us: A Celebration of the Ministry of Kurt J. Eggert*, edited by William H. Braun (Milwaukee: Northwestern Publishing House, 2001).

Veith: Gene Edward Veith, “Through All Generations,” *For the Life of the World* 2:1 (March 1998).

WA: *D. Martin Luthers Werke* (Weimarer Ausgabe), multiple vols.

Walther ALPT: Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther, *American-Lutheran Pastoral Theology* (trans. by Christian C. Tiews) (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2017).

Walther COM: Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther, *The Church & the Office of the Ministry* (trans. by Matthew C. Harrison) (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2012).

Walther DOLLR: Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther, “Does Old Lutheranism Lead to Rome?,” in *Missouri Synod in Formation: Essays of the Founding Fathers (1844-‘47)* (trans. by Joel R. Baseley) (Dearborn, Michigan: Mark V Publications, 2012).

Walther EC: Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther, *Essays for the Church,* 2 vols. (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1992).

Walther L: Carl Ferdinand Wilhelm Walther, “Ob denn die Wechselgesaenge in unserem Evangelisch-Lutherischen Gottesdienste wirklich roemisch-katolisch seien?” [“Is the Chanting in the Evangelical Lutheran Church Really Roman Catholic?”], *Der Lutheraner* 9:24 (July 19, 1853). The article is unsigned but Walther as editor is presumed to be the author.

Webber: David Jay Webber, *Spiritual Fathers: A Treatise on the Lutheran Doctrine of the Public Ministry*, second edition (Phoenix: Klotsche-Little Publishing, 2015).

WLS: *What Luther Says: An Anthology*, 3 vols., edited by Ewald M. Plass (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1959).

Zeeden: Ernst Walter Zeeden, *Faith and Act: The Survival of Medieval Ceremonies in the Lutheran Reformation* (trans. by Kevin G. Walker) (Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2012).

Divine Service in Wittenberg in the sixteenth century (portraying Luther as celebrant)
(Woodcut, 1523)

Sermon in Tinglev, Denmark, in the sixteenth century
(Altertavlen i Tinglev Kirke)

Pastor Ulrik Vilhelm Koren at his altar and in his pulpit at Washington Prairie Lutheran Church,
near Decorah, Iowa. This Norwegian Synod congregation went into the 1917 merger,
and is now a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Three altars in churches in Norway prepared for the celebration of the Lord's Supper, with chasuble and communion vessels:

Jostedal, 1898

Egersund, 1912 (with a chasuble from 1721)

Tingvoll, early twentieth century

Chasuble worn by Pastor J. W. C. Dietrichson and his successors in Norwegian Lutheran congregations in and near Koshkonong, Wisconsin, beginning in 1844.
It is currently on display at East Koshkonong Lutheran Church near Cambridge, Wisconsin.

Chalice, manufactured in Norway in 1833,
used by Pastor Dietrichson and his successors beginning in 1846

The cover photo is of the interior of Saude Lutheran Church in rural Lawler, Iowa:
a historic congregation of the old Norwegian Synod and now of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod