

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. (**Walter E. Buszin**, 1932 *Norwegian Synod Convention Essay*)

“...the doctrinal and expository sermons of the Lutheran Church will rarely require, in most cases not even permit, the use of pictures.”

The scope of this book [*Screen and Projector in Christian Education* by Paul H. Janes] is more exactly shown by its subtitle: How to Use Motion Pictures and Projected Still Pictures in Worship, Study, and Recreation. The author rightly says: “With the addition of motion-pictures, projected still pictures, prints, photographs, models, maps, school journeys and reproduced sound, the educator has set out to stimulate a wealth of experiences to be used in the classroom to facilitate the understanding of the verbal symbols in books” (p. 14). We should like to emphasize the words “in the classroom” and add “in the church hall,” because visual education has proved an invaluable aid in the work of our parish-school, Sunday-schools, young people’s societies, and the various auxiliary organizations of the congregation. Every pastor who desires to have accurate information concerning the use of visual education helps will be glad to use the information contained in this book. We cannot endorse the larger part of Chapter V, on “The Use of Visual Aids in Worship,” because the doctrinal and expository sermons of the Lutheran Church will rarely require, in most cases not even permit, the use of pictures. There are other dangers connected with the indiscriminate use of visual aids, especially if the emotional element is stressed. (**Paul E. Kretzmann**, book review, *Concordia Theological Monthly*, January 1933)

“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...” (Heb. 13:7-9a, NASB)

“Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, let us be thankful, and so worship God acceptably with reverence and awe...” (Heb. 12:28, NIV)

COMPILED BY DAVID JAY WEBBER
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WISDOM FROM THE FATHERS PERTAINING TO THE ESTABLISHMENT OF LUTHERAN HOME MISSION CONGREGATIONS

*“True Lutheranism...has stood the test of centuries...
Be not afraid, then, to show its beauties to all who come to hear.”*

The first care, then, of all who work in the field of English Mission, 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 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? It is not our intention to insist upon *polemical* preaching. Polemics have their season, the determination of which must be committed to the wise discretion of the preacher, who must also make quite sure that his sermons offer no just reason for being offended [attacked]. But *doctrinal* preaching is ever in season; it alone will do the work we wish to accomplish. Having laid a good foundation, we may hope to build up congregations really Lutheran. Having sown good, living seed, we may look forward to a rich harvest. We shall reap the first-fruits; they will ripen before our eyes. Our English congregations will give proof of spiritual life. In the great battle against worldliness we shall find them fighting shoulder to shoulder with their elder German sisters. From them, streams of living waters will flow, and their influence will be widespread. For is not this promised as a certain effect of THE WORD? (**John Schaller**, “Danger Ahead!”, *Lutheran Witness*, Vol. 10, No. 8 [Sept. 21, 1891], pp. 57-58)

“...I instinctively knew that the most sacred of all observances of the church was about to be witnessed. ...I felt as if God was near.”

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 embroidery; 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. ... The chasuble...I now use was presented to me by the president of our Church, Dr. J. A. Aasgaard. He had used it while pastor at Norway Grove. A former pastor of this congregation, the sainted [Norwegian Synod] President H. A. Preus, undoubtedly regularly used a chasuble at the Communion, as did so many of the fathers of our Church. (J. A. O. Stub, *Vestments and Liturgies* [n.d.], pp. 3-4, 18)

“Congregations that adopt the church usages of the sects... will be likely to conform to their doctrines more easily and quickly...”

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 likely to conform to their doctrines 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, even if they are said to be antiquated and not suitable in this country. We will mention here the words of a pious Lutheran duchess, Elisabeth Magdalena of Brunswick-Lueneburg. Her court-chaplain Prunner relates as follows: “Although her ladyship well knew that the ceremonies and purposes of this chapter (at which Prunner officiated) must have appeared to some to be, and were even said by some people to be, ‘Popery,’ she still remembered the instructions which the dear, venerable man, Luther, had once given to her father 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 these 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.” (August L. Graebner, “Review of *Church Liturgy for Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession*,” *Saint Louis Theological Quarterly*, August 1881, pp. 77-78)

“...some in our circles...no longer appreciate the beauty of the Lord as it is expressed so beautifully and so nobly in the Lutheran hymn.”

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