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REGISTER OF ATTENDANCEPASTORAL DELEGATES

Bloedel, Paul R.
 Luedtke, James W.
 Mensing, H. David
 Natterer, M. L.
 Schaefer, O. W.*

REGISTER OF LAY DELEGATES

<u>CONGREGATION</u>	<u>DELEGATES</u>	<u>ALTERNATES</u>
Peace Ev. Lutheran Church Tinley Park, Illinois	David T. Mensing Jeffery W. Styx	Randall D. Styx Gerald H. Luedtke
St. John's Lutheran Church Lebanon, Oregon	Larry Turner Michael Fischer	Paul Natterer Bill Schrader
St. Luke's Lutheran Church Seattle, Washington	Dale Ellis Ronald Schlaht	Paul F. Luedtke Robert Bloedel
St. Stephen's Lutheran Church Wilmot, South Dakota	Howard Wenck** Victor Reil	Elmer Frerichs** Loren Reil
Trinity Lutheran Church Coos Bay (Eastside) Ore.	Ted Fischer Loren Dirksen	John Dirksen -----

*in an advisory capacity as President of the Seminary and a bonafide pastor and officer of the Conference.

**Mr. Frerichs replaced Mr. Wenck, who was unable to attend the convention.

SERMON PREACHED AT THE OPENING SERVICE

by the Rev. H. David Mensing, President

Tinley Park, Illinois

Ephesians 4:1-6

Dear Brethren in Christ our Savior and His Word:

In his Second Epistle to Timothy the Apostle Paul writes: "God hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." Behold, what a high and holy calling we have as Christians! For we are saved, rescued from the guilt and dominion of our sins, from the claim and power of the devil, from death and hell. And we are the called, called out of the darkness of sin, ignorance, and unbelief into the marvelous light of God's heavenly salvation. Therefore the Holy Scriptures designate us and all who truly believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior as the ekklesia, the Greek word for church, which word means literally "those called out."

And all this is not due to our own works, to our merit and credit, but due alone to God's eternal purpose and grace in Christ Jesus and therefore to His glory alone. "For God hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

This brief passage, however, is but a summary of the detailed description of our high calling given in the Epistle to the Ephesians, especially the first three chapters. We cannot of course exhaustively treat these chapters here and now. Let us rather individually and carefully read and study them. But let us here note their high-lights, so that we will then also rightly understand the text before us and, in fact, the whole second part of the Epistle, which begins with chapter 4. Here our Lord and God deigns to call us by such high and holy names as "the faithful in Christ Jesus," the "predestinated," "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein He hath made us accepted in the beloved," "In whom we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace." He says that, though we "were dead in trespasses and sins," "God hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." He assures us therefore that we "are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God," "an holy temple in the Lord," "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone." Yes, he plainly calls us "the church, which is His body," "the whole family in heaven and earth," since those who have gone before are already in the church triumphant, while we are still in the church militant here below. This, then, is God's description of His church. It is the holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints, the Una Sancta, that is, the one holy, saving church. It is indeed all the true believers, the faithful in Christ Jesus, already perfectly united in one body, one family of God, by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God. Oh, what a high and holy calling we all have as Christians!

But will we now, in view of this, live in our visible relationships with the Lord and with one another worthy of the vocation wherewith we have been called? This is the challenge of our text and, in fact, of the whole second part of the Epistle to the Ephesians. In our text the Lord of the Church begins his discussion of our whole Christian life in relation to our high and holy calling with the very first admonition:

Keep the Unity of the Spirit!

In the study of this text, let us observe:

- I. What this unity really is, and
- II. How we are zealously to keep it.

I.

Let us then first see what that unity really is which we Christians are exhorted and besought to keep.

We all know, dear Brethren, that the words of our text are often quoted as a supposed proof that all Christians and their churches should join together into one great external union, regardless of, and in fact simply ignoring, any differences that exist in their ^{doctrine} faith, and confession. The pastors of the various churches, they say, should exchange pulpits with each other; and all the people, no matter what they believe, should work together in such things as union services, radio broadcasting, mission work, and the like. And if some are unwilling to take part in such merely outward unions, they are branded as enemies of Christian unity and are told: "Have you never read or heard the words of the Apostle Paul: 'Endeavor to keep unity!'"

When we are challenged thus; and surely all or almost all of us have at some time been approached in this way; let us not jump to hasty conclusions, but let us rather carefully and honestly consider what the Apostle here teaches.

Let us ask ourselves first of all: Do these words tell us to establish any kind of union, or even unity? Do they tell us to go after and get something that is not already there? Certainly not. They tell us only to keep the unity which we as Christians already have.

And what is that unity? Is it only some kind of outward union of those who teach, believe, and confess different and conflicting things? Why of course not. For consider what the Apostle tells us in our text. He says: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye have been called, ...Endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit, ... one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Note first the word "therefore." For this refers back to the first three chapters, in which we have just been apprised of our vocation, our high and holy calling in Christ Jesus, not half or a part of Christ Jesus, as though we may acknowledge Him as Savior but ignore what He teaches. We have been called to be "the faithful in Christ Jesus," and so to be members of "the whole family in heaven and earth," the one holy Christian Church, the one body, in which God Himself has graciously established perfect unity in Christ and His Word; even as Paul writes also to the Corinthians: "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment. ...Is Christ divided?" (I Cor. 1:10,13)

Furthermore, the Apostle calls this perfect unity "the unity of the Spirit." The unity of which he speaks is therefore not some kind of outward arrangement that we ourselves are to, or even can devise, not something that we human beings could even produce if we wanted to, but the inner, unity of heart, mind, and soul brought about alone by the Holy Spirit of God through the Word of Christ. This is the unity that really did exist in the first Christian congregation at Jerusalem, of which we read in Acts 4:32: "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul."

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Such true unity is therefore, in a word, unity of faith, as the Apostle further points out, saying: "There is one body, and one Spirit, even as we are called in one hope of your calling: One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." The true unity of Christians is then nothing else than this, that they all believe in and confess one Lord, namely, the only true God revealed in Holy Scripture, the Triune God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; that they are brought into fellowship with this Lord not only by the Word but also by one baptism as it was instituted by the Lord Jesus; that they are all the children of one heavenly Father by faith in His dear Son, the only Savior of mankind; and that they all rest their faith alone upon His Word of Truth.

Oh verily, how wonderful is that true unity of Christians and the Christian Church! Would to God that all Christians had kept this unity perfect and unmarred, as the Apostle here urges all to do! Indeed, it is true that when people subjectively or personally believe in Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, whether their faith be strong or weak, and even in erring denominations, where the Gospel is not entirely lost, children of God are born, are members of the holy Christian Church and heirs of salvation. But that is not the Apostle's point here in our text. It is the fact that the ground, substance, and truth on which saving faith is founded are always one and only one. Therefore those who deviate from the unifying Word of the Spirit in any way damage and destroy the perfect unity of the Spirit. And it often happens that those who persist in doing this at length lose their justifying faith and depart from the holy Christian Church itself. Surely then, when external unions are brought about under such conditions, these can be nothing but fake unions, like a sepulchre that is beautiful without but inwardly full of dead bones, an outward appearance that is different from the real thing within. Against all such merely external unions the Word of God very precisely and earnestly warns us, as we shall observe in detail through our study of the Convention Essay.

II.

What the Apostle, in our text, beseeches and urges us to do with the unity of the Spirit we have as Christians is that we "endeavor to keep" it. That is, even more precisely from the original language, "that we be diligent and exert ourselves to guard it and preserve it." But how is this to be accomplished?

Should we as members of the church simply arrange for matters of doctrine and practice to be governed, as some suggest, by a leading official, by the pronouncements of a synod or conference, or even by just the pastors in our midst? Shall such decide for us what is right and wrong and then compel us to abide by their decision? By no means, dear Brethren; for such an arrangement, while producing to some extent a kind of outward, organizational union, actually destroys the true unity of the Spirit, the inner oneness of faith that is based alone on the Word of God, and not the word of men.

Well, should we then simply tolerate, ignore, and keep silent about departures from the true faith, doctrine, and confession that arise within the church, preferring just to give in to them to keep peace? Indeed not, my brethren; for then we would be nothing but moral cowards, afraid for our own sakes to defend our Savior and His Word of Truth, which he in many passages of Scripture commands us to do, saying for example, "Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." (Jude 3)

But how then can and should we Christians be diligent and exert ourselves to keep, to maintain, to guard and preserve the unity of the Spirit among us? The Apostle indeed answers: "Endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." And he immediately explains this as he says first of all: "With all lowliness and meekness; -- one Lord, one faith." We Christians then are to be lowly and meek, first of all, in relationship to our Lord. We are not to make ourselves lords,

as when one says: I want this; and another says, I want that. But we are to recognize that Christ is our only Lord and Master, and that His Word -- not what we think it says or would like it to say, -- but His Word; being the objective Truth, is our one and only authority. If we then all together, in such lowliness and meekness, submit to His Word in doctrine and practice, how can we have anything but peace, peace with God and peace with one another? How could we then possibly disturb or destroy the unity of the Spirit?

But furthermore, this virtue of lowliness and meekness is to be practiced by us Christians also in relationship with one another. Therefore the Apostle yet adds: "With longsuffering forbearing one another in love." The phrase "in love" makes it clear that our longsuffering and forbearing does not exclude but rather includes rebuking a brother for sin; God's Word expressly instructs us: "Thou shalt not hate thy brother in thine heart; thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbor, and not suffer sin upon him. ...Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." (Lev. 19:17-18) But also such rebuke is to be done with "lowliness and meekness," "considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." (Gal. 6:1) Love is also to be the guiding factor in adjudicating matters of Christian liberty, as the Apostle writes to the Galatians, "Only use not liberty as an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another." (Gal. 5:13) And besides, we are also lovingly and with longsuffering to forbear one another as to all the purely personal failings and peculiarities that manifest themselves in our various personalities as the result of our sin-spoiled human nature. All of you, and I too, have many such vexations piling upon us, and we must lovingly, patiently, and with a longsuffering frame of mind bear up under their load. For by picking, fussing, and quarreling about just such things even, many Christians have already forfeited the real and only thing that counts, namely the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, -- one faith.

Therefore, my beloved Brethren, if you would, according to this admonition of the Apostle, earnestly endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; then learn more and more, first of all, in lowliness and meekness, to acknowledge Christ as your Lord and Master in Christian doctrine and practice! And in all those other, lesser things, learn more and more from your dear Savior, who richly and daily forgives you many grievous sins, who is "longsuffering and abundant in goodness and truth," (Ex. 34:6-7) to forgive and forbear one another in love. Thus and thus alone will you be able, by the grace of God, to keep that precious treasure of your Christian and heavenly calling, the unity of the Spirit, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

Lord Jesus help, Thy Church uphold,
 For we are sluggish, thoughtless, cold.
 Oh, prosper well Thy Word of grace
 And spread its truth in ev'ry place!" Amen.
 (TLH #292 v.3)

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SERMON PREACHED AT THE SUNDAY SERVICE

by the Rev. James W. Luedtke
Wilmot, South Dakota

Psalm 133:1

In the name of Jesus Christ, who alone enables us to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, beloved fellow members of the Concordia Lutheran Conference:

One of the most important influences in history for the cause of true unity was the confession of the Evangelical Lutheran Church known as the Formula of Concord. This confession came at a time following the death of Martin Luther when the Lutheran Church was racked with such troublesome divisions that it almost looked as though the work of the great Reformer was all for nothing. One of the most outstanding names connected with the writing of this wonderful confession is the name of Jakob Andreae. Although you may never have heard of this man and may soon forget his name, yet I speak of him this morning to give to you an example from history to show that there have always been those who are vitally concerned with the true unity of the church, and are willing to go to great lengths so that unity can be achieved and maintained.

In his hard efforts to help solve the problems of unity, Jakob Andreae met with much opposition. Not only did he have to put up with the ridicule of the Catholic theologians who pointed their finger at the Lutherans and said that there were not even ten among them who were united in their confession, but he had to put up with the opposition of his own Lutheran brethren as well. Of the two major factions among the Lutherans, it seemed that no one would accept the sincere, heartfelt efforts of Andreae to reunite them on the basis of God's pure Word. He was accused of seeking self-glory and of compromising God's Word. Concerning his attackers he wrote, "From both groups I put up with no little insulting, mockery, and ridicule, which I have borne until now with patience, by God's grace." (Andreae and the Formula of Concord, by Robt. Kolb, p. 63)

Now, what were the simple Christians of that day to think? Many of them could not even read or write--how were they to judge the opposing doctrinal issues of the learned theologians? It is no doubt that the disunity was a terrible offense to their faith. To help them understand and to further the cause of unity, Andreae wrote six sermons for the laymen showing them the issues involved and teaching them how to judge the truth from their Catechism. These six sermons so clearly set forth the heart of the issues and so plainly resolved them on the basis of God's Word that they were used as a fundamental basis for that important confession itself, the Formula of Concord. When the confession finally appeared, it was distributed among all the Lutherans for approval. It was so widely received and so warmly accepted by true Lutherans everywhere that peace and harmony were again restored. Much of the credit goes to the diligent, faithful efforts of Jakob Andreae. The pure Gospel that had been brought to light by Martin Luther was again enjoyed and the truth of our text for this morning was experienced by the Lutheran churches, as the Psalmist describes it, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

The importance of real unity, as Andreae fully realized, has not changed from the time of the Formula of Concord until now. In order to survive, we need it today just as much as they did. In order, then, that we truly desire Christian unity,

Let Us Accept the Psalmist's Invitation to See the Goodness and Pleasantness of Unity Among Brethren.

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We want to see it so that we:

- I. Understand it,
- II. Have it,
- III. Keep it, and
- IV. Share it with others.

I.

In a recent religious newspaper, the headlines read, "Protestants, Catholics Find Unity In the Spirit at Charismatic Rally." The article went on to speak about the unity that 55,000 participants enjoyed at a rally in New Jersey called "Jesus '78." A person may be tempted to become rather envious that 55,000 people can achieve such an apparently wonderful unity so spontaneously when we of the CLC have found that over the years, having, keeping, and spreading true unity is such a difficult task. The answer to this is simply that the unity they shared at their Charismatic rally and the unity among brethren that we have, that the Bible speaks of, and the the Psalmist David invites us to look at, are two entirely different things.

What ever the unity was that the people of the "Jesus '78" rally experienced, it was not unity in the teachings of the Bible. That is evident from the headline itself which speaks of both Catholic and Protestant participants. The basic issues that originally divided Lutheran Protestants from the Catholic Church and from other Protestants are still unresolved today and still stand between us and them as a barrier to true unity. No, if we want to see the goodness and pleasantness of unity that David praises in our text, we have to look where God shows this unity to us, we have to look into the Bible itself. Only there will we find the understanding of unity that He wants us to have because, as we have always confessed and taught, the Bible is nothing else than God's Word, His revelation to men.

There is a story in the Bible that gives us a key to a better understanding of unity. On one occasion a certain man came to Jesus with a question. In answering this man, Jesus said, among other things, "There is none good but one, that is, God." (Matt. 19:17) From this it is clear that since God alone is absolutely good, all goodness must flow from God--and that includes the goodness and pleasantness of unity among brethren.

The Father, Son and Holy Ghost are perfectly united with one another. Although this might seem quite obvious, just think about it for a minute. God the Father, before the world was created, devised the perfect plan of salvation for all men, through faith in Christ Jesus as the Savior from sin. Jesus, the Son of God, when He first saw God's plan, didn't begin arguing with His Father, "Just a minute here-- why should I be the one who has to die for the sins of the world? Why don't you do it yourself or let the Holy Ghost do it." No, He gladly and willingly, in perfect unity with His Father, took upon Himself the sins of the world and suffered and died for us. And the Holy Ghost continues actively yet silently to work faith within the hearts of men, faith in Christ Jesus. He doesn't complain, "Why don't I get a more important job, one that people will notice more?"

So in God, you see, we have the ideal model of the goodness and pleasantness of unity, actually the very Source of unity itself. When we look, then, into the Word of God, we shouldn't expect to find anything else but an identical goodness and unity. The Bible itself is united in all its parts; its one unifying theme is Jesus Christ. Even to suspect error or contradiction in the Bible is either to deny that it is God's Word or to imply that God, its Author, is not perfectly good. Because God has given us Christians His very Word, we are now perfectly equipped through its pure teachings to see and understand true God-pleasing unity.

Just as St. Paul wrote to his dear young companion, Timothy, he could have also written to many of us, "From a child thou hast know the Holy Scriptures, which are

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able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be perfect (and that means according to the original Greek, "complete, fully equipped, whole") thoroughly furnished unto all good works."

So then, each and every Christian has in his Bible, all the equipment he needs for real unity. Because he sees the unity that exists in God Himself and sees the unity God has placed in His Word, he is able to understand what true unity is and he is moved to desire that unity from the invitation of the Psalmist, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

II.

But for someone to see and understand the Bible's picture of unity is something far different than for him actually to have that unity with all its goodness. The leaders of the Charismatic rally "Jesus '78" are no doubt intellectually gifted. They probably have greater gifts intellectually than you or I. If we were to sit down and discuss unity with them, they could no doubt see and understand the unity presented in the Scriptures. They may even admit that true unity in the teachings of the Bible is desirable. But that does not mean that they would automatically have it. That does not mean that they would take to heart and make their very own all that the Bible teaches about unity. They probably would feel that other, more important factors ought to shape our thinking on unity.

Now in order for us Christians of the CLC to have the goodness and pleasantness of unity among one another as brethren, of course we first have to see it and understand it clearly as it is presented in God's Word. But actually to have it for our own is another thing entirely. It will not do for us to carry our Bibles under our arms and simply ask one another, "Do you believe the Bible?" as though just saying so would be all that is necessary. To be truly united as brethren, we have to do what most Christians consider to be too much bother, we have to open our Bibles and take out the wealth of pure unity the Lord has placed into it.

We ought to be thankful that many concerned Lutherans have helped us do this in the past by diligently studying God's Word and writing down their findings in what we call our Lutheran Confessions. And, so that we are not simply to accept blindly what they have written, we ought to be thankful that our pastors have always done their best thoroughly to instruct all members of our churches so that they are able to judge for themselves that what they believe is truly God's Word. Therefore, seeing and understanding that God's Word is our perfect Source of unity, both pastor and layman ought to value the promise and encouragement of their Lord Jesus who said, "If ye continue in My Word, then are ye My disciples indeed," --yes, value true unity in God's Word so highly that they make sure that they really have it at all times.

We must not think that when we insist upon a unity that is based solidly upon the unity which God has placed in His Word, that we will be lifeless or inactive Christians. Perhaps there is no better example of the life-giving power of God's Word to create an active and joyful unity than the example of the first Christians in Jerusalem. Their unity was so strong that they did things none of us would probably ever consider seriously. Listen to the Bible's description: "And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul: neither said any of them that ought of the things which he possessed was his own; but they had all things common." (Acts 4:32) They had for their very own a wonderful unity because they saw and understood "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

III.

But someone might think, "It all sounds fine, but I personally think that a lot of other groups of Christians seem to have a lot more joyful and pleasant unity than

we of the CLC have." If we could read the hearts of each member of our Conference, I wonder just what we would find. But no matter what it would be, just the thought of this ought to show us that we not only have to see, understand and have true unity, but we have to work hard to maintain and keep it if we want to experience the goodness and pleasantness of real unity--the joyful, spontaneous, energetic attitude that makes us realize what a blessing of God unity really is--unity in teaching, work, worship, and life, all based upon God's Word.

One of the primary threats to this blessing is indifference, the "big deal" "I don't care" attitude. It shows itself among laymen in their attitude toward God's Word, toward their fellow Christians, toward the work that must be done in the church, toward the financial support of God's Kingdom. It shows itself among pastors when they do not do their work as carefully and diligently as they should, when they mix up their priorities, when they find their work loathsome. The Bible uses the term "lukewarm" to describe indifference. It gives a kind of deadness to everything. It makes us want to shirk our responsibilities and to get by with doing as little as possible, thinking that what we're supposed to do isn't really worthwhile, or it probably won't work out right or be noticed or appreciated anyway. Isn't that attitude of indifference bound to affect our unity? Isn't it bound to make someone look with amusement and disbelief at the Psalmist, who practically jumps for joy as he invites, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

And, when we know that God's Word must always be the basis of true unity, then we will also readily see that by requiring either more or less than the Bible requires will threaten the unity which we have. The American Lutheran Church, for example, requires for unity only an agreement on the basic teachings of the Bible. Differences in less important doctrines, it believes, should not keep us apart. So that church body requires less than God's Word requires for unity. It is saying in effect that all of God's Word is not important to have in its truth and purity and that therefore it is not necessary, as St. Paul teaches us, to mark and avoid those who teach contrary to certain doctrines of Scripture. (Rom. 16:17)

On the other hand, unity is threatened where we require more than the Bible requires. Where God's Word is silent, Christians have liberty and the Apostle admonishes us, "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free." (Gal. 5:1) Every pastor ought to be able always to open his Bible and show his people in everything, "Thus saith the Lord," otherwise he dare not bind their consciences. And the people must know that everything they believe and do is solidly based upon the same authority of God. If these things are not followed, unity is impaired and the goodness and pleasantness that results from unity is spoiled.

Still another major threat to true unity is the thought that unity is inherent with a particular group of Christians or even with an individual person. This is an error that the immigrants from Germany, who later made up the Missouri Synod, had to learn about the hard way. They came to America to find religious freedom. They looked up to their leader, Martin Stephan, with such admiration that they began to think that apart from him the church did not exist. When they found that they had been disillusioned, that Stephan was a fraud and had to be deposed, they were at the brink of despair. The unity that they had trusted in under Stephan's leadership had crumbled. Many of them were ready to pull up stakes in humiliation and to return to the established church in Germany. Then a young pastor from their midst, C. F. W. Walther, later to be the 1st president of the Missouri Synod, showed them that the Church is not dependent upon any person, like Martin Stephan, or any outward group, like the established church in Germany, but the Church, being made up of believers, exists wherever the Word of God is in use. And so the true unity of the church is based solely on the Word of God.

Therefore, brethren, if we want to maintain true unity with all its goodness

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and pleasantness, then we cannot build our faith or our foundation for unity upon the CIC, because being made up of sinful people like you and me, it is fallible and it can err. Won't we then as sincere and concerned Christians, take the true, genuine unity which God has placed into His Word, not adding to it or subtracting from it, not thinking, "its not that important to me,"--take that wonderful unity and work hard against all obstacles to maintain it and make it close to our hearts? Then we can really rejoice in a unity which we continually share with one another, understanding "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

IV.

But do you realize that if we would, as the Psalmist invites us, see the goodness and pleasantness of unity among brethren so that we would understand it well, have it and work hard to maintain and keep it throughout the years, still our responsibility would not be finished? We have definite responsibility also to spread our unity and to share its goodness and pleasantness with others. Actually, if we are really maintaining unity among ourselves as brethren in the CIC, then we won't be able to stop ourselves from endeavoring to share it with others.

As a Conference, our Mission Committee focuses on this part of our work for unity. It's no secret that we don't have missions in far away countries. But if the spirit of willingness is present in our Conference--the spirit that constantly searches for opportunities--then none of our Mission Committee members, none of our pastors or laymen, will spare their prayers, time, efforts or money to do what can be done right now and prepare to do what can be done in the future. We ought to want to share unity with others now, just as we want to share it with them perfectly in heaven some day. Jesus points the way when He says, "I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear My voice; and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd." (John 10:15,16) Seeking this unity, let us now do our part faithfully to make disciples for Jesus through our Mission Committee, Seminary and personal mission work, teaching them to observe all the things which He has commanded.

And let's not forget our CIU. Its job is to find other Lutherans and seek to establish God-pleasing unions with them. Since our Conference left the Missouri Synod in the early '50's, that church body and most other Lutheran bodies are no longer interested in Scriptural unity. They prefer the more glorious Ecumenical Movement which tends toward one large outward organization with outward unity at the expense of inner purity. Therefore we have to seek opportunities for union and pursue them, even when these seem slim, even when much time and effort and expense are involved. We have to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit also regarding other Lutherans and be willing to discuss and iron out our differences in doctrine, requiring no more and expecting no less than God's Word requires.

Brethren, I hope that from our convention this year with its theme, "Keep the Unity of the Spirit!" from our essays and from our sermons and united worship, we have been reawakened, revitalized concerning the importance of unity. Let's go home from this convention and do our best to remain concerned, do our best to spread interest and concern among our fellow Christians. Let's arouse discussion in our Voters' Meetings, seeking information from our pastors about the progression of our work together and also then sharing our concern and interest for unity by our conversation and example at home. Let us, as the Apostle urged the Philippians, "Stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel." (Phil. 1:27) And if you ever grow tired of it all, and begin feeling that true unity it too much bother to have, keep, and share, then open your Bible and, looking at the invitation of the Psalmist and at all the Scriptures teach, be renewed and refreshed in your spirit, for, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Amen.

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PRESIDENTIAL REPORT

Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth,
 Who, as on wings of an eagle, uplifteth, sustaineth;
 Hast thou not seen How thy desires all have been Granted in what
 He ordaineth? (TLH #39 v. 2)

We indeed feel compelled to begin our annual Presidential Report with these lines of praise to our Lord and God. By the Savior's unmerited grace, our Conference has experienced another year of blessing, during which the Means of Grace, God's true Word and the Holy Sacraments according to their institution by Christ have continued to be with us as our all-sufficient stay and comfort, the sure defense against all our enemies of body and soul. Thus to praise our God, we need not consider what great strides ahead we have made during the past year; for we have made none in great measure, although we have made some progress in our work. But especially when we keep in sight the godless and immoral world in which we live and work today, and when we survey the state of the church in other church bodies around about us and then take note of how wondrously the Lord, Savior and Head of the Church has sustained us in His work, in the true unity of the Spirit, for another year of grace, our hearts must overflow with still further praise, saying and singing:

Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and defend thee,
 Who from the heavens the streams of His mercy doth send thee.
 Ponder anew What the Almighty can do, Who with His love doth be-
 friend thee. (TLH #39 v.4)

We also take this opportunity to thank the other officers and all the brethren for their faithful support of our work, and especially the Vice President for his valued help and counsel.

On the other hand, we take comfort in the Savior's grace for all our own fail-ings and inefficiencies.

My dear Brethren in Christ and His Word, may we all praise the Lord God, how- ever, not only with lips and voices but also with our hearts and hands and with all the powers graciously granted us, as we now cheerfully turn to the work of the Lord before us at this present convention.

The motto of this present convention, taken directly from Scripture, is, "Keep the unity of the Spirit!" (Eph. 4:3) Your Presidium, after brotherly suggestion and consultation, chose this as a timely subject for our day and time. It has planned to present this subject both from the positive and negative side, as does the Holy Scripture itself. The former is to be emphasized by the president's opening sermon and by the Sunday sermon; while the latter is to be emphasized by the convention essay, which will be presented in two parts.

The business will be laid before us by reports and recommendations of the vari-ous standing committees, the floor committees, the Board of Directors, a memorial (unprinted in the Prospectus because it arrived too late to be included, but provided in separate form nevertheless), and possibly directly from the floor. Let me here call your particular attention to several matters regarding which some special com-ment should be helpful both in recognizing progress made and in guiding further decision and disposition.

The Committee on Lutheran Union report will surely show that our labors toward finding others in the unity of the Spirit are not in vain in the Lord, that some real progress has been made in several directions, and that we need to continue our ef-forts with zeal, but also with caution that our work stay Scripturally founded. In connection with this committee report and its recommendations, we may well deem it

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expedient also to consider the (unprinted) memorial regarding the COIO, that is, the Church of the Lutheran Confession.

The Committee on Missions, at this convention, will include a request for financial subsidy. This request is also progress. It has been made possible by the Lord's blessing upon our Seminary, which on June 11 graduated its second student, now Candidate of the Reverend Ministry Randall D. Styx, to whom our congregation in Coos Bay (Eastside), Oregon, Trinity Lutheran Church, has sent a Divine call. This request will no doubt also overlap into the sphere of the Finance Committee. May we give this matter of our Lord's harvest field our most heartfelt consideration!

Regarding the Committee on Theological Education, one problem manifests itself continually in a very prominent manner -- the need for more young men who, being able to do so, will dedicate their hearts and lives to proper study and preparation for the Holy Ministry of the Word and Sacraments, a most pressing need for the future, so that our children and the generations to come have the pure Word and Sacrament, which the Lord of the Church has in a unique way granted unto us and do not become the pitiable people which the Savior characterizes as "sheep without a shepherd."

The report of the Editorial Committee and the report of the Publishing House Board of Control also merit our particular attention because this work has to do with "the printed Word" and with the impression that our Conference of the pure Word and Doctrine makes upon Christians outside of our confession and upon the world. One of our most pressing problems, increasing in intensity, is that our conference periodical often does not appear "on time" and that even scheduled issues do not appear in print at all. This can be truly embarrassing to explain to those who ask us and who do not understand well the particular problems involved. It does not help our light to shine before men or give free, unhindered course to the true Gospel which we represent. Let us not debate these bare facts, dear Brethren. And regarding this problem, let us above all not sit in self-righteous personal judgment against any brother or brethren and thereby endanger the precious unity of the Spirit with which the Lord has blessed us. But let us rather, in truly Christian, fraternal discussion, devote ourselves to a God-pleasing solution of the problems involved.

The Finance Committee will no doubt review to you the past fiscal year, including the last year's referendum, and also propose a budget for the coming year (June 1, 1978 to May 31, 1979). To this end a planning sheet has been provided in your PROSPECTUS. Our delegates should make use of this sheet when considering the Finance Committee's recommendations. But above all our delegates and all our brethren should ever keep in mind the words of our Lord Jesus, how He said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts 20:35) "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich." (II Cor. 8:9)

In conclusion, let us earnestly lift up our hearts in prayer to Him, our dear Lord and Savior, to whom alone we look for strength, guidance, and success in the work ahead of us at this convention and in our congregations at home. May we all fervently pray with the Psalmist of the Lord: "Let Thy work appear unto Thy servants, and Thy glory unto their children. And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us; and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it." (Psalm 90:16-17) Amen.

Respectfully submitted,

H. David Mensing, President

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REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Our committee has reviewed the Presidential Report and found it to be informative, factual and edifying. We give thanks to our dear heavenly Father for the grace given to our president to fulfill his responsibilities in such a conscientious manner.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. H. L. Matterer
Victor Reil
Paul F. Luedtke

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CONVENTION ESSAY:

HOW THE UNITY OF THE SPIRIT IS DESTROYED

General Introduction:

The topic which has been assigned for the convention essay this year is, How the Unity of the Spirit Is Destroyed. This topic is to be treated in two parts. The first part of the essay, treated by the Rev. P. R. Bloedel, is to show particularly how the sin of unionism destroys the unity of the Spirit. The second part, treated by Professor O. W. Schaefer, will show how the unity of the Spirit is destroyed by separatism and selective fellowship.

Both parts of the essay are extremely important, timely, and practical. Important, because the destruction of the unity of the Spirit by unionism, separatism, or selective fellowship annihilates the true visible church; timely, because unionism is the pride and joy of modern liberal theologians and of the ecumenically minded church bodies, and because separatism and selective fellowship are largely practiced and defended by the so-called conservatives of our day; practical, because of the lessons and warnings of which each one of us should be aware so that we as pastors, laymen, congregations, and Conference may the more conscientiously endeavor to preserve for ourselves and for our children the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

PART I

How Unionism in Particular
Destroys the Unity of the Spirit

by Rev. P. R. Bloedel

As far as I can determine, the English word "unity" is found only three times in our King James Version of the Bible: twice in the New Testament (in the fourth chapter of Ephesians) and once in the Old Testament (in the Book of Psalms).^{*} The

^{*}Young's Analytical Concordance to the Bible, p.1015.

Greek word which is translated "unity" in the New Testament passages is henotees, and the Hebrew word which is translated "unity" in Psalm 133 is yachad. Both words are correctly translated into English in the Authorized Version.

In the fourth chapter of Ephesians, verse three, the Apostle Paul admonishes his Christian readers to endeavor to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." In the verses which follow, the Apostle beautifully describes this blessed unity, saying, "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." All of those people throughout the world who believe in Jesus as their Savior and trust only in Him for their salvation are One Body before the Lord. They are kept in this close unity by the One Spirit who constantly lives in them. It is the Holy Ghost who brings about this wonderful unity. He it is who "calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies the whole Christian Church on earth and keeps it with Jesus Christ in the One true Faith." And He does this only through the written and spoken Word of God and the Holy Sacraments. The true Christians press onward toward one goal: They have One glorious and blessed Hope of salvation provided for them freely through the sacrifice of their Savior on the cross for the sins of mankind. We Christians therefore sing: "One is our calling, One our name; The end of all our hopes the same: A crown of life with Thee!" All Christians belong to One Lord who is the Head of the Body, the Church, who has redeemed us with His holy precious blood and by His innocent suffering and death, who is our Lord Christ, at whose name every knee should bow of things in heaven and things in earth and things under the earth. In Christ, all true Christians are united in One Faith. They recognize and acknowledge Christ as their Lord whose pure and saving Word they confess with their lips and follow in their lives, and with Christ they are united by One Baptism for the remission of sins. God is the One God and Father of all true Christians. He has adopted them as His own dear children in Christ Jesus, our Lord. He is "above all" Christians, guiding and directing them; guarding and protecting them. "Through all" true Christians He has determined to carry out the great work of His Kingdom. He is "in all" Christians--for all Christians are His living Temple and constant abode.

Such true Christian unity is a unity which is worked by the Holy Ghost--a unity which prevails in the Holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints--a unity which binds all true believing Christians together in the invisible Church where "the Lord knoweth them that are His." (II Tim. 2:19) It is a true spiritual unity which perfectly unites all true believers in Christ throughout the world with whom and for whom we pray when we say in the Lord's Prayer, "OUR Father who art in heaven!" It is moreover a unity which is founded, built, and based upon the pure teachings of God's Word for it is only through the pure teachings of Scripture that the true believers throughout the world are perfectly united in ONE body, in ONE Spirit, in ONE hope, in ONE Lord, in ONE faith, in ONE Baptism, in ONE God and Father of all. It is this unity which the Apostle Paul admonishes us to emulate in the true visible church "endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace!" This can be accomplished only by the power of the Holy Ghost through the preaching and teaching of the Word of God in its full truth and purity and the administration of the Sacraments according to Christ's institution, and, through these means, by "striving against sin" (Heb. 12:4) and after sanctification in the fear of God by putting God's Word to practice in our lives, II Cor. 7:1, "till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." (Eph. 4:13)

Although the word "unity" itself is found so seldom in Scripture, nevertheless, the concept of the unity of the Spirit is spoken of in a multitude of passages. St. Paul writes to the Corinthians, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body," (I Cor. 12:13), and again in I Cor 10:17, "For we, being many, are one bread and one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread." The term "brethren" expresses

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this unity as when the Lord Jesus says, "One is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren." (Matt. 23:8) In the Book of Acts, the early Christians in Jerusalem are described as "continuing with one accord," (Acts 1:14; 2:46), being like-minded with no schisms, no divided interests, no discordant purposes. In Acts 4:32, we are told that "the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and of one soul." The Apostle Paul exhorts the Christians at Rome, "Be of the same mind one toward another," (Rom. 12:16), and he prays for such unity among them, saying in Romans 15:5,6: "Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another, according to Christ Jesus: the ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." We read in St. Paul's letter to the Philippians, "Let your conversation be as it becometh the Gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel," Phil. 1:27; "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind." (Phil. 2:2) "Let us walk by the same rule, let us mind the same thing." (Phil. 3:16) In II Cor. 13:11, the Christians are told, "Be of one mind," and in I Cor. 1:10 we find the familiar words, "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (cp. also v. 13) And in Psalm 133:1 such unity is spoken of in the words, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

When the Lord, through His holy Apostle, urges us to endeavor "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," we must remember that the spiritual unity which the Lord has created in the Holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints, has been in existence a long time and it will continue to exist until the end of the world. The Apostle Paul's admonition in Ephesians 4:3 is therefore similar in nature to the words of Peter, "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure!" (II Pet. 1:10) We make our calling and election sure when, by God's grace, we strive to remain members of the Holy Christian Church (the invisible Church) by sincere faith in Jesus our Savior, when we earnestly strive to live our lives in harmony with God's Word, and when we hate and avoid sin. So also the unity of the Spirit, which has been created in each one of us by the Holy Ghost at the time when we were made children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, is preserved and retained among us in the true visible church by the constant and conscientious exercise of certain Christian virtues and by avoiding whatever would destroy such unity. Such positive Christian virtues are humility, gentleness, meekness, gladly serving and giving rather than wanting others to serve us and making demands of them, not being easily embittered by personal defects in others, exercising patience and forbearance with the peculiarities in our fellow Christians, not lording it over the brethren, defending, speaking well of others, and putting the best construction on everything, practicing genuine love without a show of superiority or pride. By earnestly striving to practice those and other virtues the unity of the Spirit will be kept in the bond of peace in our Conference and in our congregations.

The unity of the Spirit is therefore threatened when Christians are in any way motivated by pride, selfishness; lack of sympathy, compassion, or understanding; when a Christian is quick to judge and condemn, easily angered, hurt, or disturbed by super-sensitivity, negative in his thinking, and impatient with the weak; when a Christian is given to gossip, slander, back-biting; when one seeks to bind his conscience upon others in matters of adiaphora; when legalism and materialism prevail; when false doctrine and practice is not immediately stifled and when church discipline is not properly exercised.

There are some activities which not only threaten but actually destroy the unity of the Spirit. Such is the sin of unionism which we will consider as the chief topic of this first portion of our essay.

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I.

We will consider: What Unionism is; what passages in Scripture forbid this particular sin; how the sin of unionism is defended by those who practice it, and how unionism obviously destroys the unity of the Spirit.

What is Unionism? Stated briefly, unionism is the joining together in religious work and worship by people who are not agreed with one another with regard to what they believe or practice. It involves joint ecclesiastical efforts for religious work and particularly joint worship including prayer among those who confess the truth of God's Word and those who deny any part of it.

The great majority of sectarian pastors, congregations, and church bodies are unionistic to the core and their unionistic activities are stimulated by various evangelical crusades, revivals, and vast ecumenical drives, projects, and endeavors. The large Lutheran bodies--even the so-called conservatives among them--participate freely in unionistic activities. Some Protestant sects, besides exercising religious fellowship among themselves in spite of doctrinal differences, even clasp hands in religious work and worship with the heathen--with Buddhists, Mormons, Mohammedans and Jews. The Roman Catholic Church, of course, has always been unionistic as long as it has benefited by unionistic activities.

It is true that in the invisible Church, the Una Sancta, both here on earth and in heaven, there is perfect unity before the Lord God, and that in heaven there are no Lutherans, Baptists, Presbyterians, Nazarenes, United Brethren, or Episcopalians. But in the visible church as we see it about us in this world, there will always be errorists, false teachers, and false churches--those who teach and defend that which is contrary to the Word of God--and it is with regard to such that the Lord in His Word teaches us plainly what our attitude must be and how we must conduct ourselves.

In Romans 16:17, we find two commands of the Lord which are very unpopular in the church world of today. They are the words "mark" and "avoid!" "Mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them!" When Judaizing preachers came into some of the early Christian congregations with their false doctrines and practices, the Apostle Paul immediately marked them, labelled them as false teachers, separated himself from them, and urged the Christians to do likewise. It is certainly obvious that the Apostle Paul is not speaking of close contact with errorists or false teachers in a civil or business relationship. Christians are always to be good citizens and good neighbors according to the second table of the Law. But we are not to join with them in worship, or treat them as brethren in the faith, or pray with them, or sing hymns or religious songs with them, or join them in various religious projects if they are not one in faith with us. The Lord's Word is sharp and clear, "avoid them!" (Luther's translation: "Withdraw from them!")

Evidently there are many who believe, teach, tolerate, and uphold false doctrine through ignorance or weakness of faith. There are indeed Christians in sectarian churches, and we should be concerned about them and show them their errors whenever an opportunity in harmony with the Word of God presents itself. But to have religious fellowship with them is another matter, and for this the Lord gives us a plain directive as to what He wants us to do. He says, "Avoid them!" The position of the unionist and ecumenicist is plainly condemned in all those texts of Scripture which bid us to beware of false prophets and to be separate from those who deny any truth of God's Word. Notice in particular: Deut. 13:3; Jer. 23:16, 30-32; Matt. 7:15, 16a; Acts 20:29; II Cor. 6:17, 18; Col 2:6-8; II Thess. 3:6; I Tim. 6:3-5; II Tim. 3:5; Titus 1:13, 14; 3:10; II Pet. 2:1; I John 4:1; II John 10, 11.

The friends of unionism naturally rise in defense of their pet theory and en-

deavor to bolster it with many passages from the Bible. They quote I Thess. 5:14, "Support the weak, be patient toward all men." Or, I Cor. 9:22, "To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak." We should indeed have patience with all those who have not yet truly grasped the truths of God's Word, as St. Paul writes in Romans 15:1, "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." All longsuffering, however, and bearing with the weak which is not coupled with proper instruction from the Word of God is contrary to Scripture, for St. Paul writes to Timothy, "Reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and DOCTRINE!" Unionism resents a frank and free discussion of doctrinal differences and does not consider unity of faith essential to Christian fellowship.*

The proponents of unionism appeal to the law of Christian charity and love in defense of their position. Their reasoning is thus: Because there are true Christians in heterodox churches it is therefore morally right and demanded by Christian love to fellowship with them. In response, let us hear what Luther says about the law of love. He writes: "This Law of love permeates all laws, and all laws must be performed in the spirit of love. She regulates all laws, and is mistress of them, for all must be observed in the spirit of love. She acts and breaks laws, irrespective of the other commandments," and then Luther continues to say, "Faith alone can give orders to her, otherwise she is supreme to all other laws." It is certainly a great violation of love if we ignore the Word of God. He who loves the Lord Jesus, loves the Scriptures. Jesus says (John 14:23,24), "If a man love Me, he will keep My Words, and My Father will love him, and We will come unto him, and make Our abode with him. He that loveth Me not keepeth not My sayings; and the Word which ye hear is not Mine, but the Father's which sent Me." (See also, Lev. 19:17,18; I Cor. 13:6; Luke 17:3.)

Here another quotation from Luther is in place. He writes (1532), "The blessing (of the Word) is so great that no human heart can comprehend it. This is why its retention requires a stout stiff battle. Even then it is easy to lose it forever if we do not hold to the Word with all our might. By no means is the Word to be considered as lightly as the world considers it, and as some foolish spirits, deceived by the devil in regard to the Sacrament or other heresies, represent it to be. They tell us that one is not to quarrel so violently over one article and disrupt Christian love because of it. Nor should we consign one another to the devil because of it. But, they say, one might well yield and surrender a bit and keep up fraternal and Christian unity and fellowship with those who err in an unimportant point--as long as one agrees with them otherwise. No, my good man, for me none of that peace and unity one gains by the loss of God's Word! For in that case eternal

*Luther on I Cor. 5:6-8. "The Word must be kept perfectly pure and unadulterated; otherwise it is already corrupt and unprofitable. And the worst thing is that such perverting of the Word gains ground so rapidly and intrenches itself so firmly that it cannot be got rid of. ... They want to mediate and bring about a compromise between us and our opponents of the papacy. They would permit the Gospel to be preached, but at the same time they would still retain the papistical abuses. They say that because of those who are weak in the faith we are not to censure and reject all such things; for the sake of peace and unity we should somewhat moderate our demands and approach each other, the one side yielding a point to the other and each bearing the other with patience even though everything may not be entirely pure. ... No, not so! For you hear that St. Paul would not mix even a small quantity of yeast with the good dough. God had forbidden it. For it works its way through and through and corrupts everything. Where in one point we mingle the correct pure doctrine with human additions, the injury is done; the truth is thereby obscured and souls are led astray. Therefore the making of such a doctrinal hodgepodge and patchwork is not to be tolerated in Christendom."

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life and everything else would already be lost. In this matter we dare not budge or concede anything to please you or any man; but all things must yield to the Word, be they friendly or hostile. For the Word is given not in order to achieve external or secular peace but life eternal. Word and doctrine are to create unity or fellowship. Where they are one and the same, the rest will naturally follow; if not, no unity will abide anyway. Therefore, do not speak to me of love or friendship when anything is to be detracted from the Word or the faith; for we are told that not love but the Word brings eternal life, God's grace, and all heavenly treasures. We will gladly keep the peace with them in an external way, as we should do with everybody in the world, even with our worst enemies...but in doctrine and Christian fellowship we want to have nothing to do with them. Nor do we want to consider them brethren. They are enemies, because they knowingly insist on their error; and we intend to fight against them in our spiritual struggle. Therefore nothing but a satanic, seductive, and sinister strategy is involved when we are called upon to yield a bit and to connive at an error for the sake of unity. In this way the devil is trying cunningly to lead us away from the Word. For if we adopt this course and get together in the matter, he has already gained ground; and if we were to yield him a fingerbreadth, he would soon have an ell."

II.

By now it should be obvious how the sin of unionism destroys the unity of the Spirit. Church fellowship where there is not fellowship of faith does not at all emulate or reflect the wonderful unity of the *Una Sancta*, the Holy Christian Church, the Communion of Saints. It is rather a sham and a caricature of true Christian unity. There simply is no unity of the Spirit in a unionistic fellowship.

Unionism ignores and condones error, involves a denial of the Truth, blunts the sense of God's pure Word, and breeds indifference to the pure teachings of the Bible. A unionist is therefore more dangerous than an outright false teacher because an outright false teacher can easily be recognized and identified but a unionist hides behind a position of vacillation. An outright false teacher may have a high regard for the Word of God and instill this high regard for God's Word in his hearers, but a unionist minimizes the importance of God's Word and promotes indifference to the teachings of the Bible. By way of illustration: God says, "Salvation is by grace alone!" The false prophet says, "Salvation is by faith and works!" The unionist says, "Tolerate the false prophet!" God says, "The world was created in six days!" The false prophet says, "The days were long eons of time and before the first day God had already created the mass of matter from which the world evolved!" The unionist says: "Let the false prophet be heard!" God says, "Conversion is wrought by the Holy Ghost through the Gospel." The false prophet says, "Man can make his own decision whether or not he wants to believe!" The unionist says, "There is nothing so bad about what the man says, it sounds reasonable!" The Lord Jesus says, "This is My body!" The false prophet says, "It is mere bread!" The unionist says, "Let's both commune at the same table!" The Lord Jesus says, "Baptize all nations!" The false prophet says, "But not infants and little children!" The unionist says, "Forget your differences and let's worship and pray together!" Thus unionism destroys the unity of the Spirit.

Those who teach false doctrine cause divisions and offenses in the church. They destroy the unity which God wants His believers to enjoy. Unionism sustains the false teaching and keeps the error alive. It perpetuates division and tolerates the original cause of division. Unionism represents the diversities in doctrine as simply being varieties of the same truth and that it doesn't matter much if only minor errors are involved. Unionism therefore produces an intolerable situation in the church; it produces an outward union where there is no unity in doctrine and practice; it permits and encourages divisions to continue under the guise of unity. It permits a union to exist which is a deceitful lie. It is therefore immoral and a gross violation of Christian love, and it carries with it a loss of the Truth alto-

gether for the Bible says, "A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump." (Gal. 2:9)

False doctrine is an evil and malignant thing. Teaching that which is contrary to God's Word causes people to stumble, to fall, to lose their faith in Jesus their Savior. The acceptance of some errors destroys faith in Christ immediately. But the acceptance of even so-called small errors puts a person at once in opposition to God's Word and may lead him away from the Word of God entirely, and that means loss of faith because faith rests on God's Word and lives by means of God's Word. Where error is therefore tolerated or allowed to exist; where fellowship with false teachers--pulpit and altar and prayer fellowship--prevails; where praying and other worshipping together is practiced by those who are not one in faith, there false doctrine is allowed a hearing and is acknowledged as something with which we should not be too much concerned--even though it is able to deprive us of our soul's salvation. It is common sense to refuse to associate with the morally depraved and with those who would lead us into crime and vice. We refuse to associate with them because of their evil influence upon our bodies and minds. What about our souls? What about our church? What about our Conference? Unionism gnaws at the very vitals of Christianity and makes a mockery of true Christian unity! It has dealt the death blow to many a large church body. Let us prize most highly the unity of the Spirit which we, by God's grace, enjoy. We may be reviled and mocked by those who are caught up in the ecumenical movement and in the popularity which unionism brings--but the Lord says: "Come out from among them and be ye separate and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord almighty." (II Cor. 6:17-18)

PART II

How Separatism and Selective Fellowship in Particular Destroy the Unity of the Spirit

by Prof. O.W. Schaefer

As we take up the second portion of our Convention Essay, it is well for us to review three objects of our Conference which have a direct bearing on the subject before us. They are as follows: First, the conservation of the unity in the true faith (Eph. 4:3-6); second, joint testimony and defense against all public errors in doctrine and practice (II Thess. 3:14-15; Rom. 16:17-18); and third, joint effort toward a god-pleasing union with other Lutherans, namely, such union as is based upon the unity of the Spirit--full agreement in doctrine and practice on the basis of God's Word (Acts 2:42; I Cor. 1:10). These important objects of our Concordia Lutheran Conference, together with the others stated in our Constitution, have been the official doctrinal stand and practice in our midst for over 20 years. However, because of the religious confusion and the liberal trends which seek to gain entrance into every church, also into our congregations, it is imperative that these objects of our Conference be re-emphasized from time to time lest we lose sight of their significance.

By the grace of God the congregations of our Conference are united in a confessional fellowship, teaching and practicing the same doctrine in conformity with the Bible and with the Lutheran Confessions. This has led to the establishment of church fellowship, that is, the practice of joint worship and work in the religious sphere. This is a blessed unity which the Holy Spirit has brought about through the power of God's Word and for which we ought to praise and glorify Him every day. As long as we continue in the pure Word of our Lord and Savior (John 3:31,32), speak the same thing, and remain perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment (I Cor. 1:10), this God-given unity will remain, despite all attempts of Satan to disrupt or destroy it.

This unity carries with it sacred duties and obligations as outlined in Holy Scripture. All of us together are to give testimony and defense against all public errors in doctrine and practice. We are to admonish the brother (II Thess. 3:15), restore one in meekness (Gal. 6:1), reject the heretic (Titus 3:10), beware of false prophets (Matt. 7:15), and mark and avoid all who teach contrary to the truth of Christ and their adherents (Romans 16:17-18). Together we are also to work toward a god-pleasing union with others, seeking out those who truly share our Scriptural position in doctrine and practice, urging the mutual public acknowledgment of such god-given unity, and thereafter practicing a god-pleasing church fellowship with them. Thus being united in the common bond of faith, we obligate ourselves to arrange all matters pertaining to church fellowship TOGETHER. Not only good order and due consideration for the brethren in the faith require this, but also the necessity of allowing ample time for mutual study and mature deliberation in order to assure all concerned that confessional unity actually exists between our Conference and another church body and is not merely apparent and that it controls the church practice of those who profess it.

What wonderful objects our Conference has set up with regard to unity, union, and fellowship! God grant that we and generations to come may always act in accord with the Scriptural directives which underlie these vital purposes of our church body!

However, as long as we live in this sinful world, Satan will endeavor by various means to destroy that blessed unity which we enjoy as a gift from our heavenly Father. The first portion of this essay treated some of these methods, in particular, unionism. Now let us consider two other forms of attack upon the unity of the Spirit. They are separatism and selective fellowship.

First, what is meant by separatism? Let us note that there are two types: one is Scriptural and pleasing to the Lord; the other is contrary to the Bible and is condemned by the Lord. That separation is god-pleasing which is enjoined in Romans 16:17 (mark and avoid) as the only means of retaining the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Eph. 4:3). When Christians leave an erring church or synod on account of its unsound doctrine and unscriptural practice, this in accord also with II Cor. 6:17-18 where the Lord beseeches His people, "Come out from among them and be ye separate! ...and I will receive you and will be a Father unto you and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty!" Hence, to apply the term "separatists" in a derogatory and condemnatory sense to those who followed the Word of God is unjustified, for the Bible enjoins rejection of and separation from all error and errorists. When therefore many members of our Conference congregations severed their affiliation with heterodox churches and synods, not precipitously, but after all testimony against doctrinal error had been in vain, this was an act in conformity with Holy Scripture, having the approval and blessing of the Lord. It was a god-pleasing separation.

What, then, is sinful separatism? From Holy Writ we learn that there are two kinds: the first is the severance of Christian fellowship because of adiaphora (things neither commanded nor forbidden in the Bible), such as differences in church customs, church terms, order of worship, and the like, or severance because of offenses in the sphere of Christian life. The second kind of sinful separatism is the refusal earnestly to seek the establishment of unity in doctrine and to unite in fellowship with such as are in doctrinal agreement.

With regard to the first kind of sinful separatism, the apostle Paul had to contend with a serious situation among the Corinthians as divisions and contentions arose in the field of adiaphora, including pure personalities, which moved him to write and to warn against this growing evil in their midst. In his first letter to them he writes, "It hath been declared unto me of you ... that there are contentions among you. Now this I say ... were ye baptized in the name of Paul?" (I Cor. 1:11,13)

The context of these verses reveals that factions were dividing the congregation, some members preferring Paul; others, Apollos; others, Cephas; and still others, Christ. Later on in this letter the apostle writes, "When ye come together in the church, I hear that there be divisions among you ... I praise you not!" (I Cor. 11: 18,22) Here he rebukes them for their improper conduct in the house of God as the various parties in that congregation assembled and held a meal in a most frivolous manner and then proceeded to observe Lord's Supper in their midst. Paul pointed out how blasphemous their actions had become, and firmly reprimanding them, he sought to restore unity among them. In this way he dealt with the grave situation that had adversely affected the fellowship of the Corinthians.

As to the second kind of sinful separatism, namely, avoiding fellowship where doctrinal unity exists, we turn to Paul's letter to the Ephesians, in which he urges the Christians as ONE body of believers to endeavor "to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4:3) To the young pastor Timothy he wrote, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me His prisoner, but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the Gospel according to the power of God!" (II Tim. 1:8) In that same letter the apostle commends a man named Onesiphorus, who, he said, "oft refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chain, but when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently and found me!" (II Tim. 1:16-17)

It is clear from these passages of Scripture that faithful Christians who teach and practice according to the Word of God should seek out one another and establish and practice church fellowship to the glory of God and the welfare of their souls. To do otherwise is to come under the condemnation of the Lord for being separatistic. It is following in the footsteps of such a man as Diotrophes, of whom the apostle John writes in his third epistle (v.9), "(He) loveth to have the preeminence among them (and) receiveth us not! (He) prates against us with malicious words, and not content therewith, neither doth he himself receive the brethren, and forbiddeth them that would, and casteth them out of the church!" This man refused to welcome and support Christian brethren and even hindered others from doing so. Here is a sad example of one who put himself first, who no longer acknowledged apostolic authority, and who has become, as Dr. Stoeckhardt said in his Exegetical Lectures, "a real autocratic hierarch." This was an act of sinful separatism.

A similar spirit and attitude today can only destroy the unity of the Spirit. If Christians united in the faith think themselves better than others; if they refuse to seek out all who share their Scriptural doctrine and practice and will not strive for the mutual public acknowledgment of this fact and for the consequent exercise of church fellowship; if they remain in a state of isolation, this must be labeled and condemned, in the light of Holy Writ, as sinful separatism. Let us never as individual Christians, as individual congregations, or as a conference give the impression that we have a separatistic spirit! May we never declare, "If there should be others who confess the full Truth as we do, they must come to us, not we to them!" Such an attitude is not Christlike, and only Scriptural enlightenment and Christian love can dispel it.

In the middle 1800's Dr. Walther sought out confessional brethren in America, and as he looked for likely prospects, some of his fellow-brethren became suspicious and rebuked him for what they considered a lax and dangerous manner. To them Walther replied, "Let foolish zealots think I am capitulating to the heterodox! ... I hate separatism and exclusiveness!" (Briefe, I) And in a sermon delivered on the 300th anniversary of Luther's death Walther declared, "Let us not give room to the spirit of separatism, but ... give the hand of brotherhood to and unite also publically before the world with all those who, for the joint prosecution of the work of the Lord, will remain with us in the old doctrine and Church and contend with us for these treasures." (Der Lutheraner, 1946)

Accordingly, it will not do for us to shut our eyes to the opportunities which

the Lord provides for promoting confessional fellowship and eventually church fellowship. An essayist at the first convention of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference (1951) stated, "We are not and should never become a separatistic group!" We stand on that statement today yet, and may He who is the Head of the Church strengthen us therein so that we always follow the principle of separation from error but avoid becoming separatistic! This will maintain the unity of the Spirit among us and preserve it from harm and destruction.

We now turn our attention to another form of attack upon the unity of the Spirit, and that is "Selective Fellowship." This term refers to the arbitrary decision of an individual Christian or a Christian congregation, according to personal judgment, without consultation with and the assent of the other brethren united in the faith, to regard another Christian or Christian congregation as orthodox, although in a denomination of a different fellowship, or independent, and to enter into the exercise of fellowship with such person or church. Such action was considered unsupportable from the very beginning of our Conference, for at the second convention of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference in 1952 a Confession of Faith was drawn up which stated the following with regard to this subject: "Selective fellowship ... is bound to involve those who practice it in a relation that is contrary to the fellowship which, according to the will of God, is to obtain between those who wish to be regarded as brethren; it is thus contrary to the law of love, which requires primary allegiance to those with whom honest confessors of the full truth are united in doctrinal fellowship." (Proceedings, O.L.C. 1952)

We have heard that when Christians find that they are in doctrinal agreement, it is proper for them to have fellowship with each other. It is in keeping with God's will that this mutual relation be given expression, Eph. 4:1-3. However, there are considerations that dare not be overlooked. Is the recognition of other pastors and congregations outside of our fellowship of such urgency that the action of the whole church body cannot be awaited? While our Conference is not a divine institution, it was established in keeping with God's will, and we perform our church work as pertains to all our congregations and in relation to others outside of our fellowship by means of it. The establishment of fellowship with those not belonging to our Conference should be attended to by our entire church body and not by segments of it. It should also be pointed out that there is a great advantage in having joint prayerful deliberation and study by our entire Conference center on a fellowship problem. Hence to act independently of sister churches in this matter is an offense against faithfulness to one's membership pledge to the Conference and is a breach of confidence. For one congregation to force the issue and establish an outward fellowship militates against the law of Christian love and the spirit of fellowship. It is dangerous to the unity of the Spirit.

Therefore no course should be initiated that will needlessly vex or grieve sister congregations or prove harmful to their relationship. As brethren in the faith they should strive to follow proper procedure, working together and through the Committee on Lutheran Union on any proposed step of establishing fraternal relations. After all, no blessings can be expected from a course which ignores an orderly process mutually agreed upon by those united in the faith, for Paul admonishes, "Let all things be done decently and in order!" (I Cor. 14:40) If a congregation exercises fellowship without consultation with and full assent of the brethren, this will cause confusion and work great harm on the unity of the Spirit. Let us remember that we have formed a conference for the very purpose of acting jointly in many areas, such as seeking to establish fellowship with others, and therefore we should not proceed in a manner that is independent of our church body. The apostle Paul writes, "In lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others!" (Phil. 2:3-4) "By love serve one another!" (Gal. 5:13)

With regard to separatism and selective fellowship, the position of our Con-

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cordia Lutheran Conference is no different from that of the Missouri Synod in the days of its orthodoxy. It is sad that liberal teachings within the last several decades of that Synod's history have beclouded the Scriptural principles that condemn these evils. It is alone by the grace of God that we are holding fast to the position of the Bible on these matters. Let no one imagine that we are judging the hearts of those who are not united with us in faith and doctrine! Ours is not a separatistic and intolerant spirit; ours is not a desire to remain in a state of isolation. Rather, our conviction and practice are based alone on the fact that God Himself enjoins all Christians not to practice religious fellowship with persons of different faiths. (Rom. 16:17-18) One of our Lutheran Confessions states, "It is a hard thing to be separated from so many people and to maintain separate doctrine, but here stands the divine command that everyone should beware of and not be joined with those who teach falsely!" (Smalcald Art. Sec.42) With the Formula of Concord we declare that we are "anxious to advance that unity ... by which His glory remains to God uninjured (and) nothing of the divine truth of the Holy Gospel is surrendered!" We now conclude this essay with the final words of the Apology: "We pray God to extend His grace to the end that His holy Gospel may be known and honored by all, for His glory, and for the peace, unity, and salvation of all of us!"

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REPORT OF THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Dear Brethren:

In accord with the directives given to your Editorial Staff at the 1976 Convention in Seattle, Washington, a list of topics was drawn up for 1977 and 1978. A copy designating the article, the author, the number of words, and the deadline for each article, was sent to each pastor in our Conference. The response on the part of our pastors was very gratifying. The articles received during the latter part of 1977 were not only timely but also well written.

We need but think of Pastor Mensing's article "On Memorizing the Small Catechism, Scripture, and Hymns" appearing in the September-October issue. How pertinent in view of the fact that memorization has been relegated to the background not only by many of our public schools but also by ever so many churches, including Lutheran congregations. We would also refer to Professor Schaefer's article on "Unionism and Separatism" appearing in the November-December issue. Very carefully he set forth wherein these two evils consisted and appropriately reminded us that "it is alone by the grace of God that we in our Conference are holding fast to the position of Scripture with regard to the sins treated in this article."

Included in the November-December issue was a reprint of an article appearing in the 1948 issue of the Concordia Theological Monthly written by Dr. A.M. Rehwinkel entitled, "Euthanasia or Mercy Killing." It was felt by our Editor that our readers would derive much benefit from an article of this nature since it has become a subject which is being currently debated not only among the members of the medical and legal professions but also among the members of the clergy. We are confident that our readers have also appreciated the splendid devotional articles by Pastor Luedtke as well as the other articles published.

With the busy Christmas season some of the brethren simply did not find it pos-

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sible to write and submit the assigned articles by the stipulated deadline. And we can well understand the heavy workload which our pastors must shoulder, not only in behalf of our Conference but also in their respective congregations; consequently, your Editor and Assistant Editor deemed it necessary to inform the subscribers of this situation by letter that "we regretfully found it necessary to cancel the first two issues of our CONCORDIA LUTHERAN in 1978. The Lord willing, we shall resume publication with the May-June issue." (March 31, 1978). We also assured our subscribers that their subscriptions would be extended two issues beyond the expiration date of their present subscription. We expressed the confidence that our subscribers would understand our situation and bear with us under such circumstances. As of this writing (June 15th) your Editor has received no unfavorable letters concerning the action which we have taken.

Brethren, it is the prayer of your Editorial Staff that the Lord's blessings may rest upon our work as we seek to hold aloft that Lamp which shows us the Light of the World -- Christ Jesus, who alone is the Way, the Truth, and the Life!

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. H. L. Mattereder, Editor

 REPORT OF THE PUBLISHING HOUSE BOARD OF CONTROL

Dear Brethren:

Another year has flown by since our last convention in which our motto was, "The Love of Christ Constraineth Us!" We pointed out in our report that Christ's love for us also constrains us in the area of the printed Word. This year our motto is, "Keep the Unity of the Spirit!" Also in accord with this motto, our Publishing House, through the printed Word, hopes to preserve and maintain the Unity of the Spirit among us and to demonstrate such unity to all who hear and read the materials printed.

The referendum, early in the fiscal year, was interpreted by the Publishing House to mean that the non-passage of it would curtail the publication of our Conference periodical because of lack of funds. It was therefore determined not to print the "Concordia Lutheran" until the final results of the referendum were in and we could proceed with the full backing of the Conference.

For this year also, in order to continue our printing and publishing work, we recommend that the Conference allocate the sum of \$1000.00.

During the past year, Mr. Julius Schmitt has again served our Conference well in the area of linotyping the "Concordia Lutheran", the Convention Agenda, and the tract from our Mission Committee. He also printed all of the Sunday School leaflets for our Conference use. So that there is no misunderstanding with regard to the token monetary reimbursement for Mr. Schmitt's work, it is recommended that the Conference encourage the Publishing House to continue to pay Mr. Schmitt \$5.00 per linotyped and proof-read page of the "Concordia Lutheran."

No progress has been made in the area of establishing a working arrangement with book companies to have an assortment of orthodox Christian literature available for the members of our Conference. We recommend that the Conference continue to have at least \$1000 available when and if the prospect for such a Book House becomes possible.

Discussion is heard among convention delegates about the possibility of having

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our "Concordia Lutheran" printed more economically by another printer. The following reasons explain why this is not at all feasible, at least at this time: 1) The most reasonable offer for the mere printing of the "Concordia Lutheran" is \$1482.00 per year--\$903 more than the amount which we expend at present. 2) The rent of the shop building for our offset equipment would necessarily continue for the printing of our Seminary Catalog, our Conference Constitution, booklets, Sunday school materials, and tracts.

It is felt also in place at this time to call to the attention of our delegates the unique temporary situation of our Publishing House Board of Control, and we would recommend, A) that the Conference recognize the fact that the Publishing House set-up in the Constitution is not capable of full implementation at this time and will not be really in effect until the Publishing House is capable of financially sustaining its operations. As of now the Board itself has the obligation to perform manual activities which will later be taken care of by plant operatives. To this end, we recommend, B) that the Publishing House Board of Control always be chosen among brethren in or near the area of our business equipment.*

We ask the members of our Conference to continue to remember our Publishing House in their prayers that this important work of our Conference will help, in its way, to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. P. R. Bloedel, chairman
Board of Control, Scriptural Publications

*NOTE: For the disposition of this recommendation see minutes of Saturday afternoon session and Resolution #1 of the Resolutions Committee.

SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS (CIC) FINANCIAL REPORT (6/1/77 - 5/31/78)

Cash Balance, June 1, 1977		\$ 66.35
<u>Add Cash Receipts:</u>		
Sunday School Lessons	\$ 379.63	
Books, tracts	-	
Concordia Lutheran:		
Subscriptions	241.00	
Special Distribution	1000.00	
Other Conference Printing	-	
Total Cash Receipts		1620.63
Total Cash Available		1686.98
<u>Less Disbursements:</u>		
Gas	79.64	
Rent (P. F. Luedtke Bldg)	650.00	
Material and Labor costs:		
Sunday School Lessons	172.32	
Concordia Lutheran	626.37*	
Other Conference Printing	-	
Mailing Costs:		
Sunday School Lessons	-	
Concordia Lutheran	70.00	

*Including printer labor, \$380.00

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Personal Property Taxes	63.75
Equipment Purchased	-
Equipment Repairs	-
Misc. Supplies, Postage, etc	-
Total Cash Expenditures	1662.00
Cash Balance, May 31, 1978	\$ 24.90
Petty Cash	6.61
Fixed Assets (Orig. investment - not adjusted for depreciation)	5033.29
Payables	None

Respectfully submitted,

V. K. Bloedel, Business Manager

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LUTHERAN UNION

Dear Brethren in the Lord:

With all praise to God for His continued guidance and blessing we present to you our report of the activities which engaged your Committee since we last met in convention. The year has been a busy one, and with the help of the Lord we have endeavored to meet our responsibilities. This, then, is our report, and once more we see in it the hand of our dear Savior at work.

At last year's convention our Seminary President mentioned a monetary gift from Concord Free Lutheran Church of Westlake, Ohio, the Rev. E. C. Mueller, pastor. This independent Lutheran congregation had learned of our Conference and of our Seminary and was moved to give periodic donations to our work of training faithful pastors for the future. Upon hearing this report, a member of Peace Lutheran Church, Mr. Jeffrey Styx, had inquired whether he might visit Pastor Mueller personally since he would be in that area in July for a wedding. He was directed to consult our Union Committee on this matter. With the approval of the Committee Mr. Styx made that unofficial contact on July 10, 1977, had a very pleasant visit with Pastor Mueller, and engaged in an informal discussion of church and doctrinal matters. Mr. Styx was cordially received, and a wonderful contact between Pastor Mueller and his congregation and our Conference was thereby established.

I am happy to report of an interesting follow-up to this contact. In the fall of 1977 Pastor Mueller wrote and inquired whether he might meet with Pastor Mensing and your chairman at Tinley Park. We were happy to arrange such an unofficial meeting, especially to get better acquainted with him and his congregation and their doctrinal background and present stand. Pastor Mensing and your chairman met with him for several hours on each of three days, Sept. 22, 23, and 25th, 1977. We learned that he is of advanced middle age, was a member of the Missouri Synod until he withdrew in 1965, had no Seminary training, but taught Sunday School in the Cleveland area for many years and studied Mueller's Christian Dogmatics under the guidance of a local Lutheran pastor. Around 1967 he was asked to serve a small group of Lutheran Christians who also had left the Missouri Synod for doctrinal reasons, and he accepted. The congregation has 8 souls, holds to the verbally inspired Scriptures and to the Lutheran Confessions, practices close communion, and is firmly opposed to any unionistic activity. In our meetings with Pastor Mueller we discussed such matters as god-pleasing unity, unionism, separatism, divorce, church and ministry, lodges, Scouting, Christian giving, church fellowship, church and state, and such church bodies as the Lutheran Churches of the Reformation and the Church of the Lutheran Confession,

We are pleased to report that agreement was expressed in all points treated. This was most encouraging, and for this we praise our heavenly Father. We encouraged Pastor Mueller to keep in touch with us, attend our conventions, if possible, and contact us for any further information, should he and his congregation be interested in joining our fellowship. Let us remember him and his little flock in our prayers that, if God wills, unity be established between them and us.

With regard to certain pastors and congregations which left the Lutheran Churches of the Reformation because they claimed a change in the latter's doctrinal position, we have had no further contact with them to date, in spite of our writing to their representative, but we remain willing to meet with them as a group or as individuals, if this can be arranged.

Next in our report is the account of the third meeting held between the Commission on Doctrine and Practice of the Lutheran Churches of the Reformation and our Committee on Lutheran Union. It took place at Peace Lutheran Church in Tinley Park on November 12, 1977. Representing the ICR was its newly-elected Committee: Rev. Paul Koch, chairman, LaCrosse, Indiana; Rev. Sheldon Twenge, Minneapolis; Rev. E. Erickson, Midland, Michigan; and Mr. Herbert Gade, Minneapolis. Our representation, the same as last year, consisted of your chairman, Professor Mensing, Rev. James Lucdtke, and Mr. David T. Mensing, substituting for Mr. Victor Bloedel of Seattle, who could not attend.

The agenda for this meeting, mutually agreed upon by both committees at the last meeting, was as follows: "To settle ourselves on what constitutes a state of confession in the light of Holy Scripture and then to discuss the application of the doctrines involved to specific cases, especially to the O.L.C. split." It was also mutually agreed at the start of this third meeting to include a brief explanation of the reasons for which several men had in recent years left the ICR. Pastor Paul Koch summarized the entire situation by pointing out that the matter concerned proper, Scriptural practice in the third step of Christian church discipline. Some held that Matt. 18:17 does not require a face-to-face meeting, although this is desirable, but that if the one in discipline refuses to hear the church, either by rejecting its admonition in person or by deliberately absenting himself from the meeting of the congregation without just cause, the church has the right to excommunicate such an individual. Those who severed their affiliation with the ICR held to the former position and claimed that the ICR was no longer faithful to God's Word on this point. However, a study of Matt. 18:17 in the original Greek will show that a face-to-face confrontation before the step of excommunication is taken is not absolutely required by these words of the Lord.

Following this, the meeting between our doctrinal committees continued with further study of Pastor Bloedel's essay at the 1957 Convention of our Conference on "The Nature of a True State of Confession." The following sections were read and discussed, also in the light of the Bible passages contained therein: Admonition and Exhortation, Patience and Love, Severance of Fellowship, and Acknowledgement of true Brethren and the Establishment of True Fellowship. The term "state of confession" was thoroughly discussed and explained as an act of protest over against doctrinal error, and when admonition has been given but not heeded, the process leads to severance of fellowship. Thereupon our two committees expressed their unanimous agreement in the Scriptural principles expressed in Pastor Bloedel's essay. Both groups praised the Lord for His grace in leading us thus far in our meetings and resolved to meet again, if possible, shortly after Easter. After a session of some four hours, the meeting closed with silent prayer.

In early April of this year your chairman contacted Pastor Koch to try to arrange another meeting of our doctrinal committees. He regretfully informed us that because of the financial picture in their church body, their Commission would not be able to meet with us, and he added, "We have had some defections recently," but he

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did not explain further, only implying that this development produced a financial strain on the remaining member congregations. We indicated our regret, too, and expressed the hope that our committees might meet again in the fall.

We rejoice that to date our meetings with the ICR have been most friendly and cordial and under God considerable progress has been made. There still are doctrinal and practical issues to be discussed and agreed upon as we strive for a truly god-pleasing unity. We assure you again that we will proceed cautiously in this matter so as to avoid the development of an unscriptural fellowship, and we will be guided alone by the Word of God in all decisions. We beseech your continued prayers that God's blessing might rest upon future meetings with the Lutheran Churches of the Reformation.

At last year's convention your Committee was instructed to complete its work on the Guidelines for Colloquy and "submit them to all our pastors for their brotherly consideration, suggestions, and approval." This work has been completed, and the proposed Guidelines were submitted to our pastors for study at this year's Pastoral Conference held last Wednesday. Upon approval they will be put into use with such individual pastors who, with their congregations, show interest in and desire to establish fellowship with our Conference.

At our convention last year your Committee expressed the conviction that with regard to the Church of the Lutheran Confession, it would accomplish nothing to resume negotiations with that church body at the present time or in the near future because our meeting with them in 1968 reached an impasse on the doctrine of Church and Ministry with definite disagreement between both groups. However, the door was left open for possible further discussions.

This year one of our sister congregations, St. Stephen's of Wilmot, has brought a Memorial to the attention of our Conference, desiring that negotiations be resumed with the COIC in the light of its amplified Theses for the members of our Union Committee for their study and evaluation. While our Committee was not able to meet officially on this matter, a preliminary perusal of the material seems to indicate no change in the position of this church body on Church and Ministry. However, until our Committee as such comes to a decision on this matter, future action must be held in abeyance. We believe that if thorough and prayerful study of the Theses of the Church of the Lutheran Confession reveals that a new approach to this group is warranted, we would endeavor to arrange such a meeting with them at the earliest possible time.

In closing this report, we now submit to you the following recommendations:

- 1) That our Committee on Lutheran Union hold further meetings with the ICR as long as the agenda agreed upon is followed and further progress is made toward finding true unity;
- 2) That the newly-elected Union Committee retain the same individuals as a negotiating committee with the ICR because of their familiarity, after thorough study, with the matters under discussion in our meetings with that church body; and
- 3) That the newly-elected Union Committee prayerfully study the Theses on Church and Ministry of the Church of the Lutheran Confession and our own Theses and determine whether they warrant resumption of meetings between our Conference and the COIC, a positive decision to be based on firm evidence that their official doctrinal position on these teachings has changed and agrees with Holy Writ; or, if we do not find their position to have changed, that, upon an inquiry initiated by our Committee on Lutheran Union, they indicate their willingness to meet with

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us to study, examine, and possibly to re-evaluate their position on the basis of Scripture alone and give us at the same time opportunity to explain and defend our theses on the same basis."

How may the Lord of the Church help us to continue faithfully in this important work of fellowship negotiations and to pray with Luther, "May God, the Father of all mercy, give unto us through Christ Jesus, His Son, the Spirit of unity and the power to do His will!"

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. O.W. Schaefer, chairman
 Professor H. David Mensing
 Rev. James W. Luedtke
 Mr. Victor K. Bloedel

GUIDELINES FOR COLLOQUY

(Adopted. Please see Minutes of Saturday's session.)

- I. Personal Information of Applicant:
 - A. Name:
 - B. Address:
 - C. Phone:
 - D. Birthdate and place:
 - E. Are you a citizen of the United States?
 - F. Marital status (if divorced, specify):
 - G. Number of children and their present status:
 - H. Years in active Ministry:
 - I. Parishes served (give dates and reasons for leaving):
 - J. Former Synodical Affiliation:
 - K. Reasons for Severance:
 - L. How were your relations otherwise:
 - M. Reasons for desiring colloquy in the Concordia Lutheran Conference:
 - N. Current Occupation and Financial Status:
 - O. Condition of Health:

- II. Educational Information of Applicant:
 - A. Elementary and Secondary Schools attended (give dates):
 - B. Colleges and/or universities attended (give dates and degrees earned and submit transcript of credits):
 - C. Seminary attended (give dates and submit transcript of credits):
 - D. Were you graduated?
 - E. Other study pursued after graduation:
 - F. Personal talents and interests (music, language, public speaking, sports, hobbies, etc.):

- III. Information regarding Applicant's public testimony on matters of doctrine and life:
 - A. Pertinent Correspondence:
 - B. Official records:
 - C. Letters of Protest:
 - D. Convention and Pastoral Conference Essays:
 - E. Other public writings:

- IV. Information regarding Applicant's aptness to teach and preach:
 - A. Examination of materials used in various instructional classes

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- B. Study of several sermon manuscripts preached on regular or special occasions
 - C. Audit of at least two sermons by the applicant, at least one by personal audit and observation; others via tapes or otherwise
 - D. Examples of proper division of Law and Gospel
 - E. Pastoral Theology: A discussion of various cases
 - F. Catechization of Children and Adults - theory and actual examples
- V. Information regarding Applicant's qualifications for the ministry in the light of I Timothy 3 and Titus 1:
(Consideration of each item here set forth.)
- VI. Information regarding Applicant's agreement with the Confessional Position of the Concordia Lutheran Conference:
- A. Brief dogmatics review.
 - B. Applicant's position as to the Lutheran Confessions
 - C. Unity, Union, Unionism, Separatism, Selective Fellowship
 - D. Authority of local congregation and of conference, and their relation
 - E. Lodges, Scouting, and other Organizations
 - F. The popular dance and similar sins and temptations of our day
 - G. Freewill offerings vs. Bazaars, Suppers, etc. Ministerial salary.
 - H. Adiaphora and Christian liberty
 - I. Other matters of Doctrine and Practice (including Bible Translations)
- VII. Information regarding Applicant from other pastors and/or laymen:
- VIII. Submit, in your own handwriting, a monograph of about 500 words concerning your desire to enter our ministry.

MEMORIAL TO THE 1978 CONVENTION OF THE CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE

Submitted by St. Stephen's Ev. Lutheran Church, Wilmot, South Dakota

PLEASE NOTE: Concerning the action of the convention on this memorial, please see the Minutes of the Friday afternoon session.

- WHEREAS our Concordia Lutheran Conference Constitution states that one of its objects is, "Joint effort toward god-pleasing union with other Lutherans, namely such union as is based upon the unity of the spirit--full agreement in doctrine and practice on the basis of God's Word," (Art. III, Sec. 3); and
- WHEREAS the Church of the Lutheran Confession is a conservative Lutheran body which is always willing to give testimony concerning its faith and doctrinal position "in meekness and reverence toward God's Holy Word," as its latest Proceedings indicate (1976, p. 26); and
- WHEREAS our Conference's doctrinal position appears to be very close to that of the Church of the Lutheran Confession's in all areas with the exception of the doctrines of the Church and Ministry; and
- WHEREAS our Conference states in its Theses on these doctrines (entitled, "This Scriptural Position We Still Hold") that "representatives of the Concordia Lutheran Conference will be happy to meet with representatives of the church bodies comprised of our former brethren who desire to discuss with us these Theses in the interest of true Lutheran unity;" (p. 3); and
- WHEREAS it has been 10 years since our Conference has met with the Church of the

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Lutheran Confession to discuss the doctrines of the Church and Ministry, at which time the door was left open to further discussion of the matter; and

- WHEREAS the Church of the Lutheran Confession has since that time amplified and explained further its Theses on Church and Ministry in printed form; and
- WHEREAS further discussions based alone upon God's Word concerning the doctrines of the Church and Ministry could produce abundant fruit and lead to a god-pleasing unity between our church bodies under the Lord, who is able to do "exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think," (Eph. 3:20); therefore
- BE IT RESOLVED that the opinion expressed in our Conference's official Proceedings in the Report of the Committee on Lutheran Union (1977 p. 24) be reversed, namely the opinion which states, "because of the impasse that was reached (i.e., in the 1968 meetings with the COIC) your Committee believes that it would accomplish nothing to resume negotiations with the Church of the Lutheran Confession at the present time or in the near future;" and
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the members of our Committee on Lutheran Union obtain copies of the Church of the Lutheran Confession's amplified Theses on the Church and Ministry and study these diligently as individuals and as a group in order to prepare for doctrinal discussions with the Church of the Lutheran Confession; and
- BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that our Conference through its Committee on Lutheran Union make definite and concrete efforts to meet with that Church body in the interest of a god-pleasing unity and at the same time solicit the prayers, encouragement and financial support of the lay members of our Conference.

(This memorial was approved by a special Voters' Meeting of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, held Sunday, May 7, 1978.)

Signed, Rev. James W. Luedtke, Pastor

 REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS

Dear Brethren:

"A Christian is a missionary by virtue of his Christianity. And the pastor not only because of his personal Christianity, but also because of his calling and his leadership in the church, is pre-eminently such. A Christian congregation therefore dare not be satisfied to have the Gospel only for itself and of its children, but must preach it also to the unchurched in its own community, in adjacent territory, in distant parts of the world, even to the uttermost parts of the earth, Acts 1:8. A Christian pastor is in duty bound to instruct his congregation accordingly and to persuade it to be active in the mission-work of the Church by prayer, by personal testimony and efforts in winning the unchurched, and by supporting the work of the Church at large...by their liberal contributions. The pastor himself ought to be a missionary leader; he ought to have a passion for souls, Matt. 9:36; II Cor. 5:14; Matt. 19:27-29; 20:25-28." (Fritz, Pastoral Theology, p. 283, 1932 Ed.)

This quotation from a former professor of Pastoral Theology in Concordia Theological Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri, serves to introduce our mission report this year and to point us to the important fact that mission work is the individual responsibility of every Christian as well as the group responsibility of the congregation and of the Church at large, such as our Concordia Lutheran Conference. We of the Mission Committee are well aware that zeal for mission work must come first

of all from the hearts of each individual member and that only through such zeal will any mission endeavor of our Conference ever succeed. It is for this reason that your committee saw fit during this year to write and develop a mission tract entitled "Helpful Hints for Personal Christian Mission Work." As the title itself shows, this tract aims at helping the individual Christian in his everyday mission opportunities.

This tract grew out of a presentation that your present Mission Committee chairman gave to his own congregation last Fall in connection with its annual Mission Festival. In the form of ten guidelines, it was afterward submitted to the Conference president for review and approval, at which time it underwent appropriate changes. Then, copies of the president-approved draft were sent to all Mission Committee members. Some of the committee members had other suggestions and changes which were gratefully received, and, after consideration, incorporated into the proposed tract. As the Mission Committee chairman, it was very gratifying for me to receive thoughtful responses from the committee members and I believe that they appreciated having the opportunity to participate in the Conference's work during the year.

In its final form, "Helpful Hints for Personal Christian Mission Work" was submitted to our Publishing House about the end of March for publication as an official Conference tract. It was left up to the good judgment of the Publishing House to set the tract into an appropriate and pleasing format for publication. Hopefully, under the Lord's blessing, this tract will soon be available for distribution. It is the recommendation of the Mission Committee that this tract, when ready, be advertised in our official organ, The Concordia Lutheran, so that there is opportunity for sales that will make its printing economically feasible.

Your committee recognizes that a mission tract is not a magical formula that will solve all the missions problems of our Conference. However, we are aware of the feelings of individual Christians when they are suddenly faced with mission opportunities in their daily lives. As one of our committee members expressed it, "It seems it is always so easy to confess our faith when we are around other Christians but we are afraid (ashamed?) when talking with unbelievers." It is our hope therefore that this tract, by its simple, straightforward and concise form will be an aid and encouragement for each of us in our day to day mission work.

Turning now briefly to one other item concerning the Mission Committee, your committee chairman received a letter from Trinity Lutheran Church, Coos Bay (Eastside) Oregon dated June 4, 1978. As our delegates know, Trinity congregation is presently without a regular pastor and is being served by Pastor Watterer of Lebanon, Oregon. The letter from Trinity stated, "The Voters of Trinity Lutheran Church do hereby request Mission Subsidy for the fiscal year 78-79 in the amount of \$4800.00* effective upon the acceptance of a Divine Call."

To refresh our memories, in 1975 Trinity congregation, then called St. John's Lutheran Mission, was granted a subsidy of \$400 a month or \$4800 a year, "to be begun upon the acceptance of a Divine Call, the subsidy to be reviewed annually at the convention." (1975 Proceedings, p.40) As is shown in this year's convention Prospectus, p.4, the amount of \$4800 was incorporated into the Conference's finances under the Mission Fund in the '77-78 budget. It is the recommendation, then, of the Mission Committee to this convention that the amount of \$4800* for Mission Subsidy be made available to Trinity Lutheran Church, Coos Bay (Eastside), Ore. for the fiscal year 1978-79 according to their request, i.e., "effective upon the acceptance of a Divine Call."

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. James W. Luedtke, chairman

*For the revision of this figure to \$5180, see Minutes, Sunday's session.

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REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Dear Brethren:

The highlight in our Seminary program this last year was the graduation of Mr. Randall Styx on Sunday, June 11th. The President of our Seminary had requested the undersigned to preach the sermon at the Graduation Service, but due to reasons of a very practical nature it was not thought advisable for him to make the trip to Tinley Park, Illinois; consequently, President Schaefer preached the sermon and Professor Mensing was the liturgist at the service. Our prayers ascend to the Throne of Grace in behalf of our Candidate for the Pastoral Office that the Lord of the Church may pour out upon him the sevenfold gifts of His Holy Spirit that he might prove to be a faithful steward in the Lord's Vineyard! (Isaiah 11:2)

We are also pleased to report that Mr. David T. Mensing, a student of theology at our Seminary, has completed his third academic year and is preparing to enter his year of vicarage. Our Seminary Faculty sent out notification of this fact last month to find out if any of our congregations were interested in requesting him as a vicar. If not, then beginning with September, 1978, Student Mensing would serve his vicarage in his home congregation, Peace Ev. Lutheran Church of Tinley Park, Illinois. Again, we pray that the Lord's blessings may accompany the work done by Vicar Mensing so that the congregation in which he serves as vicar may also reap the fruits of his labors!

As in the past, so also now, we earnestly plead with the individual members of the congregations in our Conference to flood the Throne of Grace with their fervent prayers to increase the number of qualified students in our Seminary. After all, does not the Lord of the Church command us, "Pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He will send forth laborers into His harvest?" (Matt. 9:38) And does not He also assure us, "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much?" (James 5:16) "Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." (Heb. 4:16)

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. H. L. Natterer, Chairman

REPORT OF THE SEMINARY PRESIDENT

Dear Brethren in the Lord:

"The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad." (Ps. 126:3) "Be thankful unto Him, and bless His name!" (Ps. 100:4b) In the light of these words of the beloved Psalmist, we, the faculty and students of our beloved Seminary, ask you delegates and all the members of our Conference, to join us in declaring our gratitude to God for His many blessings upon the work of our Seminary during its ninth year of operation. Once more His mercies were new unto us every morning, and His faithfulness toward us continued with each passing day. But where we have failed because of our sinful weakness, we beseech God to pardon us, for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Lord. It is He alone who has guided and blessed us during the past year of teaching and learning, and to Him we turn for our direction and strength also in the future.

The ninth year of our Seminary began on Monday, October 3, 1977. The student body consisted of Mr. Gerald Luedtke of Park Forest, Illinois; Mr. David T. Mensing of Orland Park, Ill.; and Mr. Randall Styx of Tinley Park, Ill. Because of the

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necessary secular work of the students, certain adjustments had to be made in the scheduling of classes, but the requirements for courses were in no way sacrificed, and the standards of the Seminary remained as high as always.

During the first semester Professor Mensing taught Dogmatics III, New Testament Greek (Grammar), and a supervisory Homiletics course. Your President taught Logic, Symbolics I, Pastoral Theology, Liturgics, and a supervisory Homiletics course. Together with church duties for which each professor was also responsible, the schedule every week was very full and demanded most careful budgeting of time for study and proper preparation. The first semester closed on February 3, 1978, following final examinations.

After a semester break of one week classes resumed on February 13, 1978. Following the pattern of the first semester, classes were held on Monday and Thursday evenings and on Friday morning. During the second semester Professor Mensing taught New Testament Greek (Advanced Grammar) and a supervisory Homiletics course; your President taught Dogmatics I, Symbolics I, New Testament Isagogics, Pastoral Theology, and a supervisory Homiletics course. The second semester concluded on June 9th after three days on which examinations were given. We are happy to report that it was possible to accelerate the work in many of the courses to some degree in accord with the resolution of the convention three years ago.

During the past Seminary year Students Mensing and Styx had opportunity to gain further practical experience by assisting with the liturgy and by preaching in the pulpit of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church in the regular services and also in midweek Lenten services. The messages of these students are thoroughly Christ-centered, a joy to hear, truly edifying, and delivered with fervor and conviction.

Less than two weeks ago, Mr. Randall Styx was graduated from our Seminary in the second service of its kind since the establishment of our institution in Tinley Park in 1969. It took place in the Sunday service of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church on June 11th. Your President delivered the sermon on the topic, "The Beauty of the Christian Ministry," basing his message on Is 6:8, and also conducted the Graduation ceremony, assisted by Associate Professor Mensing, who was also liturgist for the special service. Congratulatory communications were during the service from the Committee on Theological Education and from our sister churches in the Conference. The Lord granted beautiful weather for this occasion, and after the service a delicious buffet luncheon and reception were held on the grounds of Peace Church. A pleasant afternoon of Christian fellowship was enjoyed by all in attendance.

Around the middle of May a letter was sent to all our congregations, informing them that Mr. Styx would complete the prescribed curriculum of our Seminary by the end of the first full week in June and upon graduation would become a Candidate of the Reverend Ministry (c.r.m.) and eligible for a Solemn Call. As of this writing, Mr. Styx has received a divine call from Trinity Lutheran Church of Eastside, Oregon, but no decision has been reached to date. We extend our sincerest congratulations to him upon his graduation and pray God to guide him in his prayerful deliberations and shower His richest blessings upon his labors as a faithful worker in the vineyard of the Lord.

During the past school year we acquired various theological books, many of which, long out of print, were obtained at a reasonable price from the libraries of deceased or retired Lutheran pastors with whose families we established contact and from them received wonderful cooperation and assistance in supplying our needs. For this help we are most grateful.

This year our Seminary also acquired a program clock and buzzer intended to regulate the prompt beginning and closing of classes and other meetings. It was felt that this would be a worthwhile addition to our equipment, and monies given in the

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past for just such needs covered the expense. We intend to install this clock during the summer months so as to be ready for use at the start of the fall semester.

Speaking of monetary gifts for Seminary purposes, we received during the past year a gift of ten dollars from the Young People's Group of Peace Lutheran Church, Tinley Park, for the previously mentioned "bell" system. We also received three donations totaling \$33.65 from Concord Free Lutheran Church in Westlake, Ohio, the Rev. E.C. Mueller, pastor. This independent congregation of less than a dozen souls has been sending periodic gifts to our Seminary for over a year because, as its pastor stated in a letter, this church wants "to aid those who, like us, are striving to spread and maintain the pure Word of God with His help." All gifts have been duly acknowledged by an official letter from your Seminary President. May the fine Christian example of these donors move others to bring special gifts for our Seminary as well as for other Conference endeavors as the Lord has prospered them! Such offerings given in His name and to His glory will be graciously rewarded by our loving Savior, and they will continue to serve His cause long after we have departed this life and entered our home above.

During the coming summer months it is our hope to complete the project of a new Seminary Catalog with its necessary revisions and additions as well as the inclusion of suitable pictures. As soon as this is available, our congregations will be notified.

As we review the past Seminary year, faculty and students are most grateful to almighty God for His many blessings, especially for His pure Word, which guided and sustained us every day and around which we gathered each week in solemn chapel devotions to be strengthened and inspired for our tasks. Here we must acknowledge again with profound thanks the loving service of Mrs. H. David Mensing, who faithfully served as organist for these devotions.

As we look ahead to the tenth year of our Seminary work, Student Gerald H. Luedtke will be taking such courses as can be conveniently scheduled for him. Student David T. Mensing, having completed his third academic year, is eligible to be a Vicar starting in September of this year. As we know, the purpose of a vicarage is to give the student adequate practical training in regular preaching, teaching, pastoral counseling, and all other phases of pastoral theology in a local congregation of our fellowship under the supervision of its pastor or pastors. This experience will be of substantial benefit to the student not only during his final year of study, but also for his future labors as a pastor of a Christian congregation. Accordingly, around the middle of May the faculty addressed a letter to all our churches, asking if any desired the services of a Vicar for the coming year. Since no requests were received, Peace Lutheran Church extended a diploma of Vicarage to Mr. Mensing to be in effect from September 15, 1978 to June 15, 1979. Mr. Mensing also plans to take at least one course in our Seminary during his vicarage. May the blessing of the Lord rest upon the labors of our students as they continue their preparation for service in His vineyard!

As we bring our report to a close, it cannot be emphasized enough that our vital work in the Seminary must go forward and that we desperately need ministerial students now and in years to come if our children and theirs are to have the pure Word and Sacraments in their midst. The fact that we have NO prospects at this time continues to be a serious matter requiring prayerful consideration by every congregation in our Conference and by every member in those churches. Lay people, parents, and pastors, let us all continue to offer fervent prayers for our Seminary, asking God to "send forth laborers into His harvest," (Matt. 9:38); let us do all we can to recruit new students, for it is a fact that our pastors are growing older and the possibility of death or incapacitating illness is ever present; and let us contribute to our pastoral training program as the Lord has blessed us so that His Word may reign in truth and purity among us and among generations to come! May this be the firm re-

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solve of each and every one of us to do his part to keep our Seminary functioning to God's glory and the welfare of the Church of today and tomorrow!

On behalf of the faculty and students I sincerely thank all our conference members for their prayers and gifts in the past as well as Peach Congregation for the continued use of its facilities. God bless you richly for your interest and support! May He enable you to continue to pray and give for this vital cause in our midst! To that end we say with the hymn writer:

Lord, bless Thy Word alway,
Our souls forever feeding;
And may we never lack
A faithful shepherd's leading!

Respectfully submitted,

O. W. Schaefer, Seminary President

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR THE PAST FISCAL YEAR, 1977 - 1978

Dear Brethren in Christ:

The past year has been a busy one for your Treasurer and for the Finance Committee. To begin, the loan authorized by last year's convention was made from the General to the Seminary Fund. To keep the figures simple, \$1,400 was transferred to cover the \$1,303.33 deficit existing at that time in the Seminary Fund. The status of this loan has been reflected in most of the monthly Treasurer's Reports. Since receipts in the Seminary Fund during the first three months of the fiscal year were still quite low, it became necessary to make an additional loan of \$600 during the month of August, making the total amount loaned from the General Fund to the Seminary Fund \$2,000.

During those first few months your committee was also busy in sending out the budget referendum which was submitted to the congregations by the convention. Apparently not all of the congregations were able to respond by August 15, as had been requested, for all the responses were not received by the Treasurer until a week into September. Then, since the response of the referendum was somewhat offset by very low receipts during the summer, your committee conferred by letter and by phone, to determine, to the best of its ability, the will of the Conference, so that it could report the results of the referendum to the Conference President and the financial work of the Conference could proceed. As you will recall, the referendum passed "Plan A" in both funds, with the exception that salary increases would commence in September instead of at the beginning of the fiscal year.

Since that time receipts in both our working funds have kept pace fairly well with on going expenses. In November there were sufficient funds in the Seminary Fund to make a partial repayment of the loan from the General Fund and \$400 was therefore transferred back to the General Fund. Since, however, sufficient funds to offset the summer deficit were not received, the Seminary Fund experienced a net loss for the year of \$114.93. (This of course does not include the amount loaned.) The General Fund (not counting the loan) experienced a net gain of \$73:74.

During the Fall of this year it came to the attention of your Treasurer that the conference should have what is called a "tax number" to comply with federal regulations regarding incorporated organizations. (Each of our congregations should also have such a number.) The Treasurer therefore conferred with the Internal Revenue

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Service office in his locality and made application for such a number. There was no special fee or requirements for this application. The number which has been issued to our conference is 36-2949860. This number is used in such things as report forms for our professors to use in making out their federal income tax returns. At this point the question still remained as to whether the conference (as well as our individual congregations) needed also to make application for and have on file in IRS records official "tax exempt status," the application and processing of which is quite involved. Further study of IRS publications indicated however that our churches and our conference are among those organizations which are tax exempt automatically, and therefore, while they may have official record on file with IRS, are not required to make formal application.

Finally, toward the end of March, requests for pledges for the next fiscal year were sent to the member congregations. The committee wishes to thank all the congregations for the quickness of their responses. The details of these responses will be taken up in the Report of the Budget which is scheduled for tomorrow afternoon.

In general we have much for which to be thankful this past year. Your committee chairman believes the year to have been somewhat of a turning point in our conference finances, for although there were some difficult times at the start, the continually increasing deficit in the Seminary Fund is no longer a part of our financial picture and a steady growth in all other funds is evident, so that our current balance in all funds now exceeds \$41,000. May we all truly give thanks for these and all of the many rich blessings which the Lord has bestowed upon us.

Respectfully Submitted,

Randall D. Styx, chairman

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL, 1978 - 1979

Dear Brethren in Christ:

As was reported to you in our letter of May 6, the results of our request for pledges is as follows:

	GENERAL FUND		SEMINARY FUND	
	per month	for the year	per month	for the year
Trinity	14.00	168.00	35.00	420.00
Peace	75.00	900.00	450.00	5,400.00
St. John's	10.00	120.00	250.00	3,000.00
St. Luke's	18.00	216.00	72.00	864.00
St. Stephen's	30.00	360.00	310.00	3,720.00
	<u>\$117.00</u>	<u>\$1,764.00</u>	<u>\$1,117.00</u>	<u>\$13,404.00</u>

MISSION FUND

	per month	for the year
Trinity	-----	-----
Peace	200.00	2,400.00
St. John's	30.00	360.00
St. Luke's	10.00	120.00
St. Stephen's	100.00	1,200.00
	<u>\$340.00</u>	<u>\$4,080.00</u>

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With these pledges and with the needs of our conference in mind your committee has prepared the following initial budget proposal:

GENERAL FUND		SEMINARY FUND	
Concordia Lutheran, S.D.	664.00	Professor's Salary	7,264.80
Telephone Expense	200.00	Housing Allowance	3,600.00
Travel Expense	450.00	Assoc. Prof. Sal.	2,288.40
Convention Expense	300.00	Facilities	100.00
Miscellaneous	150.00	Library	10.00
TOTAL	\$1,764.00	Stock	65.00
		Periodicals	65.00
		Miscellaneous	10.00
			\$13,403.20

MISSION FUND: To be determined upon receipt of a request. The limit authorized for this past year was \$4,800. This amount is subject to annual review. Funds available this year are \$4,080 in pledges plus possibly interest (\$ 1,100 last year) and/or funds from current balance of \$ 22,000+.

In the above figures you will note some changes from those last year. Their explanation follows:

GENERAL FUND: Concordia Lutheran, Special Distribution: Last year the figure was \$1000. Since no request for additional funds was received from the publishing house or Editorial Committee, the figure of \$1000 was again chosen to be the base figure. Furthermore, since the publishing has already been paid \$333.33 for 666.67 copies (average figures for two issues) which, due to the cancellation of the first two issues of 1978, were not sent out, this amount has been applied to the new fiscal year; the remaining amount to come from fiscal 1978-79. A minor additional adjustment of \$3.00 (for six copies) was made so that the total budget figure would not exceed the amount pledged.

Travel Fund: Increased from \$200 to cover the cost of long distance travel expense for the Seminary President's convention trip and for additional anticipated cost for travel of the Committee on Lutheran Union in attending meetings with other conservative groups. Furthermore, we should really change the current payment rate of 5¢ per mile for auto travel expense to a realistic figure.

SEMINARY FUND: Salary items reflect an increase of only 1.3%. Periodicals and stock items are both increased from \$50.00 due to rising costs of periodicals and of books purchased for eventual repurchase by seminary students. Library is again low since most expenditures are to come from the special Library Fund.

Since no revision of pledges has been received by your committee, your committee recommends adoption of this budget as presented. It is to be noted that all proposed expenditures are covered by pledged receipts from our member congregations. There should therefore be no need for a referendum which, under the circumstances, would cause unnecessary delay and confusion in our financial work, especially considering the fact that we have elected a new man to the office of Treasurer who will of necessity need some time to become fully acquainted with our financial workings.

Your committee further recommends that the convention authorize at least \$4800 to be available to Trinity Lutheran Church, our sister congregation in Coos Bay (East-side), upon the acceptance of their extended Divine Call, should they request such assistance.

To cover this expenditure there are \$4,080 in pledged receipts plus an estimated income of more than \$1000 in interest. Thus there should be no need to dip into the balance of that fund at this time, but it can rather be reserved for some other special

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mission endeavor.

Your committee also recommends we continue to authorize the availability of \$1000 from the General Fund to the Publishing House for the purpose of implementing the program of establishing and maintaining a stock of orthodox Christian books and other literature for purchase by our people.

Please note that the Board of Directors has formulated two recommendations for your consideration regarding finances (see Minutes of Saturday afternoon session).

As we look ahead, then, may we all with one accord approach our Lord in prayer that He would guide our decisions now concerning our budget that they may be truly god-pleasing. And let us also give thanks to Him for the evident prospect that also our joint financial workings will continue to grow and become stronger, to His praise and glory.

Respectfully submitted,

Randall D. Styx, chairman
 Ronald Schlaht
 Larry Reil
 Glen Frerichs

FINAL REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

- WHEREAS: The convention has recommitted to this committee the matter of the budget with regard to the General and Seminary Funds; and
- WHEREAS: The convention approved the amendment changing the General Fund item, "Concordia Lutheran, Special Distribution" to "Operational Subsidy - Scriptural Publications" and changing the amount budgeted from \$664.00 to \$1000.00; and
- WHEREAS: This committee was requested to include in its final report some provision for the cost of printing the conference Constitution and the seminary catalog--the estimated cost of which, as ascertained from the Chairman of the Publishing House Board of Control, is approximately \$170.00; and
- WHEREAS: It has been the expressed will of the conference and its member congregations that budgets passed by the convention not exceed the amount pledged by our member congregations; and
- WHEREAS: The Seminary Fund budget as initially presented by the Finance Committee is within the amount pledged by our member congregations; and
- WHEREAS: The General Fund budget proposal as amended by the convention exceeds the amount pledged in this fund; and
- WHEREAS: The publishing house has continuing costs which still exist even if no Concordia Lutheran were printed, which costs amount to approximately \$810, and
- WHEREAS: Receipts from other sources still leave approximately \$190 yet requiring receipts; and
- WHEREAS: The current balance in our publishing house treasury is quite low at this time, which means it needs some income immediately before further work can proceed; and

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WHEREAS: The amount currently pledged in the General Fund would cover the costs of only half the normal amount or size of Concordia Lutheran; therefore

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDS we adopt the Seminary Fund budget as proposed initially by the Finance Committee, the understanding being--as was resolved last year--that the loan continue to be repaid as sufficient monies are available. (See Proceedings 1977, p. 40.)

THE COMMITTEE FURTHER RECOMMENDS we consider the following budget for the General Fund and that passage of same be subject to a referendum of our member congregations (the understanding being that we would this year dip into the General Fund balance to meet these expenditures; thus the referendum would be decided by a yes or no vote):

Oper. Sub., Script. Pub.	\$1000.00	Telephone Expense	\$200.00
Travel Expense	\$750.00	Convention Expense	\$300.00
Constitution and Seminary		Miscellaneous	\$150.00
catalog printing costs	\$170.00		
TOTAL:	<u>\$2,570.00</u>		

THE COMMITTEE FURTHER RECOMMENDS that a payment of \$500 be made immediately to the publishing house to cover immediate on-going expenses;

THE COMMITTEE FURTHER RECOMMENDS that if the referendum should be lost, the Editorial Committee be authorized to decrease by one half the amount or size of Concordia Lutherans published this fiscal year.

Respectfully submitted,

Randall D. Styx, chairman

FINAL BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR, 1978 - 1979

GENERAL FUND --

Operational Subsidy:	
Scriptural Publications	\$ 1,000.00
Telephone Expense	200.00
Travel Expense	750.00
Convention Expense	300.00
Miscellaneous	150.00
TOTAL	<u>\$ 2,570.00</u>

SEMINARY FUND --

Professor's Salary	\$ 7,264.80
Housing Allowance	3,600.00
Assoc. Prof.'s Salary	2,288.40
Facilities	100.00
Library	10.00
Stock	65.00
Periodicals	65.00
Miscellaneous	10.00
TOTAL	<u>\$13,403.20</u>

MISSION FUND -- A total of \$5,160.00 has been allocated for Mission Subsidy to Trinity Lutheran Church, Coos Bay (Eastside), Oregon.

INITIAL REPORT OF THE AUDITING COMMITTEE

- A. We have examined the books of the Treasurer of the Conference and have found them to be in good order.

On behalf of the Conference, we wish to extend our sincere thanks to Mr. Randall Styx for his careful, exacting, diligent and faithful work during the past three years as Conference Treasurer. We wish the Lord's gracious blessings upon him in the future as a graduate of our Seminary and as a Candidate for the Reverend Ministry in our midst.

- B. Up to this time, the books of the Business Manager of our Publishing House, Scriptural Publications, were not available to the Auditing Committee for examination. Therefore we are not able to report on the condition of these books at this time. The committee hopes to audit these books yet during this convention and bring our findings at a later session.
- C. The auditing committee has one recommendation to the convention as follows: that the Conference change its method of auditing the Treasurer's books, substituting a paid, professional audit for the former method of audit by appointed committee and that such professional audit of past records be conducted every four years and upon every change of treasurer.*

Respectfully submitted,
 Rev. James W. Luedtke, chairman
 Loren Dirksen
 Larry Turner

*The disposition of "C" was to commit this recommendation to the Finance Committee for study, and that this committee's recommendation be brought to the 1979 convention for consideration. (See Minutes of Saturday's session.)

FINAL REPORT OF THE AUDITING COMMITTEE

We have examined the books of the Business Manager of the Publishing House, Scriptural Publications, and have found them to be in good order.

Respectfully submitted,
 Rev. James W. Luedtke, chairman
 Loren Dirksen
 Larry Turner

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REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION AND EXCUSES

I. Initial Report:

A. The following are eligible for seating as delegates:

St. John's Congregation:	Pastor M. L. Natterer Larry Turner Michael Fischer
St. Luke's Congregation:	Pastor P. R. Bloedel Dale Ellis Ronald Schlaht
Peace Congregation:	Pastor H. David Mensing David T. Mensing Jeffrey Styx
St. Stephen's Congregation:	Pastor James W. Luedtke Mr. Howard Wenck* Mr. Victor Reil
Trinity Congregation:	Pastor M. L. Natterer, Vacancy Pastor Ted Fischer Loren Dirksen

*Mr. Elmer Frerichs replaced Mr. Wenck, who was unable to attend.

B. The following are alternate delegates:

St. John's -- Paul Natterer, Bill Schrader
 St. Luke's -- Paul F. Luedtke, Robert Bloedel
 Peace -- Randall D. Styx, Gerald M. Luedtke
 St. Stephen's -- Loren Reil, Elmer Frerichs
 Trinity -- John Dirksen

C. All delegates have one vote each. This renders a total of 15 votes.

II. In this final report we inform the convention that the following registered for this 27th annual meeting: Five pastors, including Prof. O. W. Schaefer in advisory capacity; seventeen (17) lay delegates, including alternates; forty-nine (49) visitors; Total registered number, seventy-one (71).

Total attending convention Sunday service: 123.

Respectfully submitted,

Prof. O. W. Schaefer
 Dale E. Ellis
 Ted D. Fischer

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MINUTES OF THE 27th ANNUAL CONVENTION
of the CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE

The 27th Annual Convention of the Concordia Lutheran Conference opened on June 23, 1978 at 9:30 a.m. with a Divine Service in which President H. David Mensing preached an edifying sermon on the basis of Eph. 4:1-6, expounding upon the theme and motto of the convention, "Keep the Unity of the Spirit!" The liturgy for this service was conducted by the local pastor, the Rev. H. L. Hatterer.

The convention proper and the morning session opened at 11:40 a.m. with a brief devotion by President Mensing. A prayer was offered and Heb. 4:14-16 was read.

The appointed committees, as outlined in the mimeographed Prospectus p. 3, were specified as they had been named in the June 22nd Board of Directors Meeting.

The initial report of the Committee on Registration and Excuses was given by Professor O. W. Schaefer. It was reported at the time that in the Wilmet Congregation alternate delegate Mr. Elmer Frerichs would take the place of delegate Mr. Howard Wenck throughout the convention, and that for the Seattle Congregation, Pastor P. R. Bloedel was absent, the congregation thus having only one representative, alternate Paul F. Luedtke at the present time. This yielded for all delegates a total of 14 votes, every congregation having 3 votes with the exception of St. Luke's, Seattle.

Following this report, President Mensing gave the chair to Vice-President O. W. Schaefer and then presented his Annual Report. He began with praise to the Lord for another year of blessing upon our CLC. After setting forth the motto of the convention, "Keep the Unity of the Spirit," he reviewed briefly the work of the committees and thus pointed the direction that our convention should be taking.

It was moved and seconded to accept the President's Report, subject to the usual review. Carried. Vice-president Schaefer proceeded to appoint the Committee to Review the President's Report. Rev. H. L. Hatterer, chairman, Victor Reil, and Paul F. Luedtke were appointed.

In the presentation of the agenda, President Mensing again took the chair. After various adjustments the convention agreed by motion to follow as closely as possible the printed agenda provided.

Since there were no new members to receive into our Conference, the agenda proceeded to the Press Committee Report. Vice-president Schaefer reported that the local pastor, H. L. Hatterer was submitting an article to the local press, including the basic facts concerning the convention, and that the Press Committee had approved the release of the article.

It was moved and seconded to accept the Press Committee Report. Carried.

The local pastor announced a late luncheon, to be held at 12:30 p.m. and that therefore the opening devotion following would be moved to 1:30 p.m. It was then moved and seconded to adjourn. Adjournment followed at 12:00 noon.

The afternoon session was opened with a devotion by Rev. P. R. Bloedel. Hymn 477 was sung and Romans 12:1-16 and a prayer were read. (Pastor Bloedel's presence at the convention gave his congregation a full complement of votes. This yielded a total of 15 votes for all congregations as reported in the Report of the Committee on Registration and Excuses. See p. 43.)

The convention essay entitled, "How the Unity of the Spirit is Destroyed" was

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then presented. Part I, "How Unionism in Particular Destroys the Unity of the Spirit," by Pastor Bloedel was begun. The General Introduction and the Introduction to Part I were read. It was pointed out in these portions what other factors besides unionism destroy the unity of the Spirit.

The report of the Finance Committee concerning the past fiscal year was then given by committee chairman, Randall D. Styx. Mimeographed Financial Reports for fiscal year 1977-78 were first passed out to the delegates. After these were carefully examined, the chairman read his report concerning the past fiscal year.

It was moved and seconded to adopt the Finance Committee's report of the past fiscal year. Carried.

At 3:00 p.m. the afternoon recess was observed.

At 3:20 p.m. the Nominating and Elections Committee began its work. The elections proceeded as follows:

Nominations for President: Pastors H. David Mensing, O. W. Schaefer, James W. Luedtke, H. L. Mattereder.

Elected: Rev. H. David Mensing

Nominations for Vice-president: Pastors James W. Luedtke, H. L. Mattereder, P. R. Bloedel.

Elected: Rev. H. L. Mattereder

Nominations for Secretary: Pastors James W. Luedtke, P. R. Bloedel, O. W. Schaefer.

Elected: Rev. James W. Luedtke

Nominations for Treasurer: Jeffery W. Styx, Glen Frerichs, Victor Bloedel.

Elected: Jeffery W. Styx

Nominations for Board Member-at-large (Far West): Walter F. Fischer, Ted D. Fischer, Ronald Schlaht, Victor K. Bloedel.

Elected: Walter F. Fischer

Proposed slates for the Editorial Committee:

A.	B.	C.
Rev. H. L. Mattereder	Rev. James W. Luedtke	Rev. O. W. Schaefer
Rev. P. R. Bloedel	Rev. H. L. Mattereder	Rev. H. L. Mattereder
Gerald H. Luedtke	Gerald H. Luedtke	Gerald H. Luedtke

Elected: Slate C

Proposed slates for the Committee on Theological Education:

A.	B.	C.
Rev. H. L. Mattereder	Rev. H. L. Mattereder	Rev. P. R. Bloedel
Rev. P. R. Bloedel	Rev. James W. Luedtke	Rev. James W. Luedtke
Kent Frerichs	Lloyd E. Martin	Ted D. Fischer
Ted D. Fischer	Victor K. Bloedel	Lloyd D. Martin

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Elected: Slate BProposed slates for the Committee on Missions:

A.	B.
Rev. James W. Luedtke	Rev. James W. Luedtke
Rev. M. L. Natterer	Rev. M. L. Natterer
Lloyd E. Martin	Loren Dirksen
Ted D. Fischer	Ronald Schlaht
Dale Ellis	Jeffery W. Styx

Elected: Slate BProposed slates for the Committee on Lutheran Union:

A.	B.
Rev. M. L. Natterer	Rev. M. L. Natterer
Rev. James W. Luedtke	Rev. James W. Luedtke
Rev. H. David Mensing	Rev. O. W. Schaefer
Victor K. Bloedel	David T. Mensing

Elected: Slate BProposed slates for the Publishing House Board of Control:

A.	B.
Rev. P. R. Bloedel	Rev. P. R. Bloedel
Rev. M. L. Natterer	Rev. James W. Luedtke
Ronald Schlaht	Walter Fischer
Victor K. Bloedel	H. Daniel Mensing
Paul F. Luedtke	John Dirksen

Elected: Slate B (But see below.)

Following the election of the Publishing House Board of Control, Pastor Bloedel brought to light certain difficulties that he foresaw with the election of Slate B since the Board of Control now consists of members from congregations far removed from the Publishing House printing equipment who would not be able to carry out the work that the former members had carried out in connection with the printing of the Concordia Lutheran and other Conference literature.

Pastor Natterer then made the following motion: "In view of the information given to the convention by the chairman of our Publishing House showing the impracticality and unwise stewardship involved in not having the business manager live in the same area as the chairman of the Publishing House, I would therefore make a motion that we reconsider the election of Slate B."

The chairman ruled that the above motion was a motion to reconsider and that it therefore required a 2/3 majority for passage. Upon voting, the motion was carried by the necessary 2/3 majority.

It was moved and seconded to leave Slates A and B the same, without adding a third slate, and revote. Carried.

Elected: Slate A.Proposed slates for the Finance Committee:

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A.

Jeffery W. Styx
 Glen Frerichs
 Larry Reil
 Ronald Schlaht

B.

Jeffery W. Styx
 Loren Dirksen
 Bill Schrader
 Larry Reil

Elected: Slate B.

It was moved and seconded to accept the work of the Nominating and Elections Committee with thanks and that all elections be made unanimous. Carried unanimously.

It was moved and seconded to conduct an evening session, beginning at 7:00 p.m. to finish the scheduled business for Friday's sessions. Carried.

Before the supper hour, scheduled for 5:30 p.m. Pastor Mattereder gave his Editorial Report, ahead of the scheduled Committee on Lutheran Union Report. He called attention to several articles that had appeared in the past year's issues of the Concordia Lutheran. He also pointed out a difficulty that prevented the Concordia Lutheran from appearing without interruption during the last fiscal year, for two issues.

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the afternoon session for the supper hour. Carried. Adjournment followed at 5:25 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer in unison.

The delegates reconvened for the evening session at 7:05 p.m. Discussion followed concerning the Editorial Report. Length and content of articles was discussed, some expressing the thought that shorter, simpler articles should make up the bulk of material, others feeling that a variety of lengths and a variety of contents be offered, some articles being shorter and simpler, others longer and more in-depth and challenging. The problems involved in the Concordia Lutheran not appearing at all, or not appearing on time were also discussed.

It was moved and seconded to accept the report of the Editorial Committee. Carried.

The report of the Committee on Lutheran Union was then presented by Prof. O. W. Schaefer. He spoke of the Committee's contacts during the past year, both unofficial, with a pastor from Westlake, Ohio, Rev. E. C. Mueller, and official, with the Lutheran Churches of the Reformation (ICR). A memorial from St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, Wilmot, South Dakota, encouraging efforts to meet again with the COIC, was also mentioned. The report laid before the delegates three recommendations (The text of these are found on p. 29 and 30).

It was moved and seconded to accept the report. Carried.

Individually it was moved and seconded to adopt the 1st and 2nd Recommendations of the Committee on Lutheran Union. Both motions were carried.

It was moved and seconded to adopt Recommendation #3, which dealt with the possibility of meeting with the Church of the Lutheran Confessions (CCLC) to discuss the Doctrines of the Church and Ministry.

A subsidiary motion was then presented to hear the reading of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church's memorial, also concerning meetings with the COIC. This was seconded and carried.

Upon the reading of the Memorial, the vote was taken on the 3rd Recommendation of the CLU. Carried.

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It was moved and seconded that since the 3rd Recommendation of the CIU satisfies the true intent of the St. Stephen's Memorial, that the specific action of Recommendation #3 be substituted for the actions requested in the Memorial. (Compare the Recommendation #3 on p. 29,30 with the Memorial, p. 31,32.) Carried.

It was moved and seconded that definite efforts be made by the CIU to contact the group of pastors formerly affiliated with the ICR to determine the position of this group on the final step of church discipline (Matt. 18:17). Carried.

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the special evening session. Carried.

Adjournment followed at 9:15 p.m.

Saturday

The morning session opened with a devotion by Pastor Luedtke. Hymn 536 was sung followed by the reading of James 1:2-27, a prayer, and a closing hymn, 424.

After the minutes of Friday's session were read and discussed briefly, it was moved and seconded to accept these minutes. Carried.

At 9:45 a.m. Pastor Bloedel continued his part of the convention essay. He finished the entire part of his essay. This was followed by a brief discussion of unionism which amplified and illustrated the points of the essay.

A recess was held at 10:45. Sessions resumed at 11:05.

Pastor Mattered then gave his report as chairman of the Committee on Theological Education. He spoke of the June 11th Seminary graduation of student Randall D. Styx and of the readiness of Student David T. Mensing for his vicarage, to begin in September, 1978. He closed with encouragement to the brethren to pray for the Lord's continued blessing upon the Seminary's work.

It was moved and seconded to accept the Report of the CTE. Carried.

Immediately following, the Seminary president, Professor O. W. Schaefer, gave his report of the past Seminary year. A summary of the past year's classes and activities was presented. Details of the June 11th graduation were given, together with mention of the call that Trinity Lutheran Church of Coos Bay (Eastside), Oregon had extended to the graduate, Randall D. Styx. Mention of the various gifts and acquisitions was made. The Seminary is looking ahead to its 10th year this fall. Two students, David T. Mensing and Gerald H. Luedtke will be enrolled, Mr. Mensing to be entering his vicarage year. The report closed with a strong urging to consider the need for students for the continuation of our Seminary and through it, the ministry of the pure Word and Sacraments.

It was moved and seconded to accept this report.

Before the motion was carried discussion by the laymen centered around the necessity of seminary students. II Cor. 3:4-6 was cited as an encouragement to men who are not sure of their ability to serve as a pastor. Mention was also made of the wonderful progress of our present students under the guidance of the Seminary professors. As was also pointed out, II Cor. 4:7ff shows especially that all glory belongs to the Lord in everything.

After this spontaneous discussion, the motion to accept the Report of the Seminary President was carried.

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David T. Mensing, on behalf of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church once again offered his congregation's facilities to the Seminary for the coming year at the token maintenance amount of \$100 per year.

The congregation's kind offer was accepted by the convention by motion.

At 11:50 a.m. the convention recessed for the Noon Lunch Hour.

At 1:20 p.m. the afternoon session began with a devotion by Pastor H. L. Mattered. Hymn 427 was sung, followed by the reading of Is. 40:18-31, and a prayer.

The business manager of Scriptural Publications, Mr. Victor Bloedel, then presented his financial report. After reading the report he was asked to give a breakdown of the costs of printing the Concordia Lutheran.

After further discussion it was moved and seconded to accept the report of the Business Manager. Carried.

Next on the agenda was the Report of the Publishing House Board of Control. Pastor Bloedel spoke of the Publishing House's interpretation of last year's budget Referendum, viz., that it limited funds to the Publishing House until the Referendum was definitely passed. Rev. Bloedel pointed out that although estimates for having the Concordia Lutheran printed elsewhere have been considered, it was still financially unfeasible when compared with the present cost of printing. Three recommendations were submitted by the Publishing House.

It was moved and seconded to accept the report of the Publishing House. Carried.

It was moved and seconded to adopt Recommendation #1 of the report, that the Publishing House continue to pay the Conference printer, Mr. Julius Schmitt, for his work on the Concordia Lutheran \$5.00 per linotyped and proofread page as a token monetary reimbursement. Carried.

Recommendation #2 was also moved and seconded, that \$1000 be made available again this year to invest toward a Conference book house, if this becomes feasible. Carried.

Recommendation #3 stated, "that the Conference recognize the fact that the Publishing House set-up in the Constitution is not capable of full implementation at this time and will not be really in effect until the Publishing House is capable of financially sustaining its operations," and, because of this, "that the Publishing House Board of Control always be chosen among the brethren in or near the area of our business equipment."

It was moved and seconded that this recommendation be submitted to the Resolutions Committee for further study and formulation in conjunction with the Publishing House Board of Control, and that the results be presented to the convention at a later session. Carried.

Recess followed at 3:25 p.m.

At 3:40 p.m. the session reconvened, and the Mission Committee chairman, Pastor Luedtke, presented his report. The report contained two recommendations.

It was moved and seconded to accept the Mission Committee Report. Carried.

Recommendation #1 was moved and seconded. It referred to the tract, "Helpful Hints for Personal Christian Mission Work," produced by the Mission Committee during

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1977-78 and stated "that this tract, when ready, be advertised in our official organ, the Concordia Lutheran, so that there is opportunity for sales that will make its printing economically feasible." This was carried.

Recommendation #2 was also moved and seconded, "that the amount of \$4800.00 for mission subsidy be made available to Trinity Lutheran Church, Coos Bay (Eastside), Oregon, for the fiscal year 1978-79 according to their request, i.e., 'effective upon the acceptance of a Divine Call.'"

Upon a discussion that centered around the stated figure of \$4800, it was moved and seconded to recommit Recommendation #2 to the Mission Committee for reconsideration of that figure in consultation with the delegates of Trinity Lutheran Church. Carried.

The report of the Committee to Review the President's Report was then given. It was moved and seconded to accept this report. Carried.

Following, the Auditing Committee presented its report concerning the Treasurer's books for the past fiscal year. Since the books of the Publishing House Board of Control were not available to the Committee at the time of audit, the Committee reported that it would return at a later time to give its report of these books. There was one recommendation in connection with the Auditing Committee's Report.

It was moved and seconded to accept this report. Carried.

The recommendation of the Auditing Committee was moved by the committee and seconded, "that the Conference change its method of auditing the Treasurer's books, substituting a paid, professional audit for the former method of audit by appointed committee and that such professional audit of past records be conducted every four years and upon every change of treasurer."

It was moved and seconded to commit the matter of auditing the Conference books to the Finance Committee for study during the year and that it bring its recommendation to the 1979 convention for consideration. Carried.

The treasurer, Mr. Randall D. Styx, then presented the Initial Report of the Finance Committee concerning the 1978-79 Budget. He referred the delegates to the Prospectus p. 4. Discussion of the report followed.

It was moved and seconded to accept this initial report. Carried.

The recommendations of the Finance Committee contained in the above report were then presented for action. Recommendation #1 was that the budget be adopted as proposed by the committee. This was moved and seconded.

A subsidiary motion was then made and seconded to amend the wording of the Budget Worksheet (Prospectus p.4) in item #1 from the words, "Concordia Lutheran, Special Distribution" to, "Operational Subsidy: Scriptural Publications," and the figure under "Initial Proposal" from \$664 to \$1000. Carried.

It was moved and seconded to recommit Recommendation #1 and the budget to the Finance Committee to be presented in its next report. Carried.

Recommendation #2 of the Finance Committee concerning the \$4800 subsidy to Trinity Lutheran Church, Coos Bay (Eastside), Oregon had already been handled by the Mission Committee, thus requiring no action in connection with the Finance Committee.

Recommendation #3 of the Finance Committee concerning \$1000 toward a Conference

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book house was also previously handled by another committee report, that of the Publishing House Board of Control.

The Finance Committee also presented two recommendations from the Board of Directors' meeting held prior to the convention. Board of Directors' Recommendation #2 stated, "that the Finance Committee, in consultation with the Committee on Theological Education, devise a plan of action to supplement the Guidelines for the Professorial Retirement Fund to give direction to the treasurer of the Conference in case an emergency situation should arise and that this plan be submitted to the 1979 convention for approval." This was moved, seconded and carried.

The 3rd Recommendation of the Board of Directors was also accepted by motion. It stated: "that the convention change the Conference Auto Travel Figure to 15¢ per mile from the old figure of 5¢."

Although time was allotted in the agenda, there was no report of the Resolutions Committee at this time.

Recommendation #1 from the Board of Directors concerning Guidelines for Colloquy was then presented, namely, "that the convention adopt the 'Guidelines For Colloquy' (prepared by the Committee on Lutheran Union and discussed and amended in this year's Pastoral Conference) for use in our Conference." The "Guidelines" themselves were read by the secretary to the delegates. (Please find these "Guidelines in the Proceedings, p. 30.)

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the afternoon session. Carried. Adjournment followed at 5:25 p.m.

Sunday

The Sunday Morning Divine Service began at 10:00 a.m. The local pastor, Rev. M. L. Natterer conducted the liturgy. The sermon was preached by Rev. James W. Luedtke on the basis of Ps. 133:1, "Behold how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" Holy Communion was administered with Pastor Luedtke giving the bread and Pastor Natterer giving the cup.

The Sunday session proper began at 2:15 p.m. with a devotion conducted by Prof. O. W. Schaefer. Hymn 472 was sung; selected verses from the Epistle of Jude and a prayer were read.

Upon the reading of the minutes of Saturday's session, the motion to accept the minutes was made seconded and carried.

At 2:45 p.m. Prof. Schaefer began his part of the convention essay. He prefaced his part by pointing out that it was not an in-depth study but rather a summary treatment of the subject. The first section of this part was concerning the sin of separatism; the second dealt with the sin of selective fellowship.

It was moved and seconded to accept the entire essay in both parts with thanks to the essayists Pastor Bloedel and Prof. Schaefer. Carried.

The second report of the Auditing Committee concerning the books of the Publishing House Board of Control was then presented. It was moved and seconded to accept this report. Carried.

The Mission Committee then gave its report on the revised Recommendation #2. After consultation with the delegates of Trinity congregation, the subsidy figure of

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\$4800 in the original recommendation was raised to \$5180. Although this higher figure was above the amount recommended in the budget of 1978-79, it was justified by the committee since the total congregational pledges of \$4080 toward the Mission Fund plus the annual interest accrued by the large balance in that fund (approx. \$1100 in interest) yielded the recommended figure of \$5180 without any necessity of increased congregational pledges.

It was moved and seconded to accept Recommendation #2 of the Mission Committee as revised. Carried.

This next item on the agenda was concerning the duplication of the Proceedings for this convention. It was moved, seconded and carried to leave this responsibility in the hands of the secretary, as specified in the Constitution.

The final report of the Committee on Registration and Excuses was given by committee member Mr. Dale Ellis. It was moved and seconded to accept this final report. Carried.

Concerning the time and place of the 1979 convention, Pastor H. David Mensing announced that the Tinley Park congregation, Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, unanimously voted to offer to host the 1979 convention. (The time is traditionally over the 4th Sunday in June each year.)

It was moved and seconded to accept the offer of Peace Congregation to host the 1979 convention and to hold this convention from June 22-24, 1979. Carried.

It was moved and seconded to have the minutes of this final session of the convention checked by the President and Vice-president in lieu of having them read at the present time. Carried.

The Resolutions Committee then gave its report. It presented Resolution #1 concerning Recommendation #3 of the Publishing House Board of Control. It was moved and seconded to accept this Resolution. Carried.

The following Resolutions were individually presented and accepted by motion:

Resolution #2 re: the facilities provided by Peace Congregation for the Seminary.
Resolution #3 re: sermons, essays, devotions, etc.
Resolution #4 re: thanks to Pastor Natterer for use of office machines and space.
Resolution #5 re: thanks to committees for past work and prayer for the Holy Spirit's blessing upon committee work in the coming year.

Committee member Mr. David T. Mensing, who presented the resolutions, announced that at a later time, after the final report of the Finance Committee, he would present the committee's last resolution.

Following a 5 minute recess, Finance Committee chairman, Mr. Randall D. Styx presented his final report. In the report four recommendations were presented.

Recommendation #1 was moved and seconded, namely, "that we adopt the Seminary Fund budget as proposed initially by the Finance Committee, the understanding being-- as was resolved last year -- that the loan continue to be repaid as sufficient monies are available (See Proceedings, 1977, p. 40)." This was carried.

Recommendation #2 dealing with the General Fund budget was then read. (See p. 41 of these Proceedings for the itemized budget proposed, together with the text of this recommendation.) It was moved and seconded to accept the General Fund budget as recommended in Recommendation #2, subject to a referendum. Carried.

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Recommendation #3 was moved and seconded. It stated, "that a payment of \$500 be paid immediately to the Publishing House to cover immediate on-going expenses." Carried.

Recommendation #4 was read, stating; "that if the referendum should be lost (the one mentioned in Recommendation #2), the Editorial Committee be authorized to decrease by one half the amount or size of Concordia Lutherans published this fiscal year." Questions of information and extensive discussion followed.

It was moved and seconded to recess until after the Supper Hour. Carried. The session recessed at 5:25 p.m. and reconvened at 7:00 p.m.

As a substitute for Recommendation #4, it was moved and seconded that if the referendum be lost, all of the budget figures in the Genral Fund be adjusted proportionately. Carried.

It was moved and seconded that the referendum be structured in two parts: 1) Informational: "what will be your congregation's monthly pledge to the General Fund for this fiscal year?" In connection with this section, the increased needs of the General Fund should be briefly outlined. 2) A decision: "should the funds pledged in the referendum fall short of the budget as adopted by the convention, shall the Conference treasurer attach funds from the current cash balance?" (with a blank for a "yes" or "no" answer) this latter part to give direction to the Conference treasurer. This was carried.

It was then moved and seconded:

WHEREAS there is absolutely no precedent for a "yes" or "no" referendum for the Constitution-authorized use of available funds, and
 WHEREAS THE needs of our Publishing House (Scriptural Publications--Concordia Lutheran Conference) are acknowledged by all of our delegates and congregations as legitimate and worthy needs, and
 WHEREAS it is necessary to have a Publishing House to perform a specific and important constitutional function of our Conference in the area of the printed Word, and
 WHEREAS our Publishing House saves our Conference hundreds and potentially thousands of dollars yearly in the publication of booklets, Sunday School materials, the Concordia Lutheran, the Conference convention Agenda, and tracts, and
 WHEREAS not to use available funds for the necessary use of a constitutionally authorized committee sheds doubt upon the necessity of such a committee's existence, and
 WHEREAS our Conference delegates have been sent to the convention to decide, under the Lord, the use of available Conference funds for the constitutionally authorized work of the Conference,
 BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that the resolution to submit the General Fund budget to our congregations for referendum BE RESCINDED and that the convention decide, as it is authorized to do, at this time, on this constitutional use of monies available.

Discussion followed on each "WHEREAS" clause of the motion.

The above motion to rescind was carried and the General Fund budget was opened for further discussion, amendment and adoption.

It was moved and seconded to adopt the General Fund budget (as itemized in Recommendation #2 of the Finance Committee's final report -- see p. 41).

It was moved and seconded to amend the previous motion under the "Travel Expense" fund from \$450 to \$750. Carried.

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The primary motion as amended was then carried.

The Resolutions Committee presented its final resolution, #6, concerning thanks to St. John's Lutheran Church for its hospitality in hosting the convention, etc. This was moved, seconded, and carried.

A resolution proposed from the floor was also moved and seconded, that the president of our Conference, Pastor Mensing, who chaired the convention, be commended for his fair and impartial conducting of our convention sessions. Carried.

It was moved and seconded to adjourn the 1978 convention of the Concordia Lutheran Conference. Carried. The convention stood adjourned at 9:00 p.m. following the closing devotion by President Mensing.

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE 27th ANNUAL CONVENTION

Resolution #1:

WHEREAS the provisions of Article XII of our Conference Constitution on the duties of the members of the Board of Control (Scriptural Publications) were flexibly drawn to permit judicious latitude in the administration of the Publishing House; but

WHEREAS the members of the Board of Control have, since the inception of the Publishing House, been engaged in a variety of technical, clerical and even menial tasks necessary to the operation of Scriptural Publications in addition to their constitutionally specified duties; and

WHEREAS the brethren involved have carried out these tasks gratis on a volunteer basis, thus saving our Conference considerable money over the years; and

WHEREAS neither our Conference nor its publishing arm, Scriptural Publications, is at present financially able to hire and salary technical, clerical and custodial personnel to carry out all the tasks performed currently by the volunteer labor of the members of the Board of Control;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that our Conference recognize with gratitude these additional services of love rendered by the brethren on this Board to facilitate our work in the Publishing House at minimal cost; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, at least until sufficient funds are available for the hiring of publishing house staff, our delegates in convention assembled give serious consideration to the election of men to this Board who live in the area where the Publishing House is located at the time.

Resolution #2:

WHEREAS our Conference Seminary has continued to enjoy the use of the physical facilities of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Tinley Park, Ill. during the past fiscal year; and

WHEREAS Peace Congregation has continued to provide these quarters for our classroom instruction, library facilities and chapel for a token maintenance cost of \$100 per year, thus aiding the Conference in keeping at a minimum its expenses for the physical aspects of its seminary program;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we express our gratitude in the Lord to Peace Ev. Lutheran Church for its continued brotherly cooperation, generosity and sacrifice in its promotion of this very necessary work among us.

Resolution #3:

WHEREAS the sermon delivered by our President at the opening service of this convention, as well as that delivered in the Sunday Divine Service by our Sec-

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retary, were found to be especially edifying to the delegates, guests and visitors in attendance; and

WHEREAS the delegates and guests at this convention received also special encouragement and strength from the various devotions conducted by our pastors during the sessions; and

WHEREAS we were particularly edified by the special two-part essay presented during this convention;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the convention thank Pastors Mensing and Luedtke for their edifying messages, and Pastors Bloedel and Schaefer for their thorough and timely essays, and that we express our gratitude also to the pastors as a group for the special devotions conducted by them at this convention.

Resolution #4:

WHEREAS a convention of this nature requires that its various officers and committees have at their disposal a variety of business machines as well as office space for the preparation of reports and resolutions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we express special thanks to the pastor of St. John's Lutheran Church for placing a variety of such machines at the disposal of convention committees and for permitting them to use both his private study and the sacristy of the church as meeting places.

Resolution #5:

WHEREAS the officers, standing committees, and appointed committees have served our beloved Conference faithfully during the past fiscal year under the continued blessing of the Lord of the Church;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we express our gratitude for all that these brethren have wrought in their dedicated Christian service to our Conference during the past year of grace; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we call upon the Holy Spirit to grant a rich measure of His grace to those brethren who have been elected to positions of leadership in our midst for the coming fiscal year, so that all they think, say and do may be in accordance with God's Holy Word, to His glory alone, and for the continued prosperity of His kingdom among us.

Resolution #6:

WHEREAS St. John's Lutheran Church of Lebanon, Oregon, has shown itself to be a most gracious host to the 1978 convention of the CLC by extending to delegates and guests loving Christian hospitality in its church building and in the homes of its members; and

WHEREAS the devotions and divine services conducted during this convention were beautified by special organ and choral music to the praise of our Lord and Savior, the Head of His Church;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Concordia Lutheran Conference express its whole-hearted gratitude to the pastor and members of this congregation for their most loving and liberal hospitality and Christian fellowship which contributed to the general success of the convention, to our spiritual edification, and to our physical comfort; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conference especially Mr. Stephen Bloedel for serving as the organist for this convention, and that we express our gratitude also to the choir of St. Luke's Lutheran Church of Seattle, Washington, for the special choral offering at the Sunday Divine Service, and to those ladies of St. John's who provided special floral arrangements for the beautification of the sanctuary; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, above all others, we praise and magnify the Lord of the Church, our gracious Savior, for the bountiful blessings He has continued to bestow upon our Conference by His never-failing grace, particularly that by His Holy Spirit, through the Word, He has kept us in the true unity of

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the Spirit in spite of adversities on every side, and that we beseech Him to keep us and the generations to come in that true unity so that by His grace, we continue to speak the same thing, actively combat any disruption of our unity and be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment by firm adherence to His precious Word. (I Cor. 1:10)

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