

THE CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE

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Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church, Tinley Park, Illinois
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St. John's Lutheran Church, Lebanon, Oregon
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DOCTRINAL SECTION

Lord Jesus Christ, with us abide,
 For round us falls the eventide;
 Nor let Thy Word, that heavenly light,
 For us be ever veiled in night.

In these last days of sore distress
 Grant us, dear Lord, true steadfastness
 That pure we keep, till life is spent,
 Thy holy Word and Sacrament.

Lord Jesus, help, Thy Church uphold,
 For we are sluggish, thoughtless, cold.
 Oh, prosper well Thy Word of grace
 And spread its truth in every place!

Oh, keep us in Thy Word, we pray;
 The guile and rage of satan stay!
 Oh, may Thy mercy never cease!
 Give concord, patience, courage, peace.

O God, how sin's dread works abound!
 Throughout the earth no rest is found,
 And falsehood's spirit wide has spread,
 And error boldly rears its head.

The haughty empires, Lord, restrain
 Who o'er Thy Church with might would reign
 And always set forth something new,
 Devised to change Thy doctrine true.

And since the cause and glory, Lord,
 Are Thine, not ours, to us afford
 Thy help and strength and constancy.
 With all our heart we trust in Thee

A trusty weapon is Thy Word,
 Thy Church's buckler, shield, and sword.
 Oh, let us in its power confide
 That we may seek no other guide!

Oh, grant that in Thy holy Word
 We here may live and die, dear Lord;
 And when our journey endeth here,
 Receive us into glory there.

Amen.

SERMON PREACHED AT THE OPENING SERVICE

by the Rev. M. L. Natterer, President
Lebanon, Oregon

John 7: 25 - 31

My dear fellow-believers in Christ Jesus, our only Savior:

The golden image extending some 90 feet up into the air had been completed. The command was given by Nebuchadnezzar the king that whoever refused to worship that image would be cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace. Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego refused to obey Nebuchadnezzar, saying, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and He will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up." (Daniel 3) As children in Sunday School we marveled at the boldness and fearlessness, the courage and conviction of these men as we listened to our Sunday School Teacher tell us this story from the Word of God. But this is merely one example from many. Joseph, when in the land of Egypt, was tempted by the evil wife of Potiphar. Yet, he did not succumb to evil; instead, we hear him boldly and courageously exclaim, "How, then, can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" (Genesis 39) David, the King of Israel after Saul, revealed his boldness and trust in the Lord already as a mere youth when he battled against the dreaded Philistine giant, Goliath. Boldly, David went forth to battle in the name of the Lord God of Israel. (1 Samuel 17) And then think of the prophet Elijah who so boldly spoke the truth to wicked King Ahab who had unjustly accused the prophet of disturbing the land of Israel. (1 Kings 18) These are some examples of boldness merely from the Old Testament. And while these examples "were written for our learning" (Romans 15:4), we know that we can not and should not follow EVERYTHING that these men have done. For a close examination of the lives of all such Biblical characters generally reveals certain sins of which that individual has been guilty. And, even if the Bible reports no specific sin, nonetheless, that individual still sinned, "for ALL have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Romans 3:23) We have, however, one example which is always perfect. One who could truthfully exclaim, "Which of you convinceth Me of sin?" (John 8:46) How fitting it is, therefore, that as we observe the anniversaries of our Lutheran Confessions at this Convention we direct our attention to the perfect example of our Lord Jesus Christ, concerning whom the people acknowledged -

"HE SPEAKETH BOLDLY!"

We note from the context that the Lord Jesus was at Jerusalem. "Then said some of them of Jerusalem, Is not this he, whom they seek to kill?" The people refer to Him as one whom the rulers, the leaders of the Jewish nation, sought to kill. Yet, Jesus boldly, fearlessly, went where the duties of His office called Him. The people said, "But, lo, He speaketh boldly, and they say nothing unto Him. Do the rulers know indeed that this is the very Christ?" Jesus spoke boldly. He was the Prophet of the heavenly Father, and it was His duty to proclaim the will of God and teach the way to salvation, calling sinners to Himself. Very plainly and unmistakably the Savior told the people, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on Me hath everlasting life." (John 6:47)

As we see from our text it appears that some had the idea that there was to be some mystery about the Messiah's parentage. We read, "Howbeit we know this man whence he is: but when Christ cometh, no man knoweth whence he is."

Since they knew Christ's lineage, they did not think that He could possibly be the Promised One. They simply looked upon Him as the natural son of Joseph and Mary. The Jews had expressed this before already as we are told in chapter 6. "The Jews then murmured at Him, because He said, I am the bread which came down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He saith, I came down from heaven?" (41,42) But Jesus tells them, "Ye both know Me, and ye know whence I am: and I am not come of Myself, but He that sent Me is true, whom ye know not. But I know Him: for I am from Him, and He hath sent Me." Christ boldly tells them that He was sent by the heavenly Father whom they knew not. For in rejecting Him, they were, at the same time, rejecting the Father! This, my fellow-believers, required great boldness, because Christ thereby placed Himself in direct opposition to the highest authorities then known among the Jews, (note verse 48). We also see that the reference to his divine origin brought down upon Him the wrath of the people and their leaders. "Then they sought to take Him: but no man laid hands on Him, because His hour was not yet come." Thus the Lord Jesus had the boldness to shatter the false notions of the people and to breach a doctrine that was distasteful to the mighty and one by which he was certain to incur their bitter hatred!

"He speaketh boldly!" From our dear Savior let us learn true boldness. We should be fearless in doing our duty according to the Word of God, regardless of the consequences, as individual Christians, as a Christian congregation, and as a Conference consisting of local congregations. Boldness is required to uphold our precious Lutheran Scriptural teachings: The Scriptures alone; Grace alone; Faith alone! Boldness not only in asserting the Biblical teachings but also in refuting error. How sad that we note such a cowardly spirit prevailing within ever so many churches; every one seems to be in mortal fear of offending the adherents of false teachings. Ministers, professors, and lay-people, seem to hide behind that much-abused dictum of our Lord: "Judge not - condemn not" (Matthew 7:1), forgetting that the Lord forbids all false judging and condemning. In this day of spineless Christianity, let us by God's grace both publicly and privately raise our voice against the spirit of indifference over against the Word of God and with the clear sound of the trumpet let us continue as faithful Lutheran Christians to let it be known that the Bible is THE TRUTH as Jesus our Savior declares in His highpriestly prayer, "Thy WORD is truth." (John 17:17)

What makes us bold? What made Christ bold? We read that Jesus told the people, "But I know Him: for I am from Him, and He hath sent Me." He was sure of His ground. He talked with authority. In the Gospel of Matthew we are told, "And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended these sayings, the people were astonished at His doctrine: for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes." (Matthew 7:28,29) So we should be sure of our ground, certain that we are right. Obviously, uncertainty is not conducive to boldness. These Jews were uncertain. Why? They were blindly following their leaders, traditions, opinions of men, etc. If only they would have given heed to the Scriptures, then they would have recognized Christ as the promised Messiah! Jesus had told them, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and they are they which testify of ME." (John 5:39)

In our day we observe that UNCertainty is actually made a virtue. And when we speak to others claiming that our doctrinal position is correct we are criticized and chided. Now what makes the Christian so sure? The Holy Scriptures: Observe that certainty with the Apostle Paul: "I am persuaded that neither death nor life nor angels nor principalities nor powers nor things present nor things to come nor height nor depth nor any other creature

shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord." (Romans 8:38,39) And again in writing to his co-laborer, Timothy, "I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that Day." (2Timothy 3:16) How can the deniers of verbal inspiration have true Christian boldness? They are not really sure what is God's Word and what is not: Making use of the Historical-Critical method many so-called teachers and professors in the visible church exalt their puny wisdom above the Word of God and think that they possess the authority to distinguish between "the facts which matter and the facts which don't."

We dare not forget that our faith in God's redeeming love in Christ is based upon and supported by our faith in the inerrancy of Holy Scripture: "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." (Romans 10:17) How dare we separate Christ from His Word: Jesus says, "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of Me and of My words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of Him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when He cometh in the glory of His Father with the holy angels." (Mark 8:38) Only by holding steadfast to that Word of God can there be true boldness: This wonderful virtue of true Christian boldness was revealed by the believers in Christ down through the centuries. After the conversion of the Apostle Paul, Barnabas brought him to the apostles and told them how Paul "had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus." (Acts 9:27) Not only the Apostles spoke boldly of the Lord Jesus but ALL true believers in Jesus have attempted with the aid of the Holy Spirit to speak boldly and courageously. Think of our Lutheran forefathers: Standing before the Emperor himself, King Charles the V, they boldly and fearlessly gave public confession of their faith in the city of Augsburg, that memorable Wednesday of June 25, 1530: They declared, "We offer, in this matter of religion, the Confession of our preachers and of ourselves, showing what manner of doctrine from the Holy Scriptures and the pure Word of God has been up to this time set forth in our lands, dukedoms, dominions, and cities, and taught in our churches." (Concordia Triglotta, p.39)

True Christian boldness is produced by faith in Christ and not the outgrowth of pride and arrogance. Look at the boldness of John the Baptist: He told King Herod, "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife." (Mark 6:18) He told the Pharisees and Sadducees, "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" (Matthew 3:7) Yet, behold John's humility. He declared, "He (Christ) must increase, but I must decrease." (John 3:30) So also with Paul the Apostle. "I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle." (1 Corinthians 15:9) To take one's own reason captive and to submit it to the Word of God - that, my dear fellow-believers, is true humility:

Look at the effect of such boldness. We read, "Many of the people believed on Him, and said, When Christ cometh, will He do more miracles than these which this man hath done?" While boldness in preaching will bring out those teachings which are distasteful to natural man, at the same time, they are necessary for his salvation: How are we born again? The Apostle answers, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." (1 Peter 1:23) That Word which Christ has commanded us to preach until the end of the world is not a dead word, but a living word, through which God the Holy Spirit engenders faith within the heart of the hearer. Therefore, we are to be bold in preaching, bold in confessing, bold in reproving, bold in bringing our petitions before the throne of grace (Hebrews 4:16), "that we may have boldness in the Day of Judgment." (1 John 4:17) Amen.

SERMON PREACHED AT THE SUNDAY SERVICE

by the Rev. O. W. Schaefer
Orland Park, Illinois

Text: 2 Cor. 4: 13 - "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe and therefore speak."

In Christ Jesus, the Head of the Church, dearly beloved pastors and lay members of our Conference, visitors and friends:

The 29th convention of our beloved Conference is gradually drawing to a close. The sessions today will bring to an end another annual convention of our delegates. As we began on Friday with an inspiring service filled with blessing and comfort from God's Word, so this morning we once more assemble for worship and await further strength and assurance for the tasks that lie ahead. Our service today bears a festive air as we gather together at the beginning of a week which is especially significant in Lutheran church history. This coming Wednesday, June 25th, marks the 450th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession and the 400th anniversary of the Book of Concord. What memorable milestones these are, all made possible by God Himself through His chosen instruments, Luther, Melancthon in his earlier years, Andraea, Selnecker, and Chemnitz! Through their faithful labors the pure Word of God was proclaimed and defended before friend and foe, and great was the blessing of the Lord upon their work as it presented the clear distinction between the true teachings of Scripture and the false position of the errorists. It is by God's grace that we still hold to the doctrines given in Holy Writ and reiterated in our Lutheran Confessions. With David we declare, "I will praise Thy name for Thy loving kindness and for Thy truth!" (Ps. 138:2) An abundance of gratitude and love should pour from our hearts that God has united us in a common bond of faith around His pure Word and has preserved us from falling into the snares of liberalism and unionism and making shipwreck of our faith. It is sad that among the 69½ million Lutherans in the world many will not observe these two great anniversaries in a God-pleasing manner, for they have drifted away from the true doctrine and practice and follow new paths of teaching and thinking, which however disrupt true unity and contribute to religious confusion in the world. God preserve us from ever joining their ranks, but let us as humble 20th century disciples sit at Jesus' feet and be guided by His wisdom for time and for eternity! Then our faith will grow and become stronger and we will be moved to share the blessings of God's Word with others. To this we are encouraged by the words of our text, a passage that is the basis for our convention motto: "We Believe and therefore Speak!" On the basis of this Word of God let us, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, consider today:

THE TIMELY CALL FROM HOLY SCRIPTURE AND OUR CONFESSIONS: HOLD FAST TO THE TRUTH AND CONFESS IT!

To heed this call:

- I. Let us reaffirm our faith in the pure Teachings of God's Word.
- II. Let us resolve anew, with God's help, to testify to His truth at every opportunity.

I.

Our text is taken from the second letter which Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians. In this chapter he declares how he preached the Gospel of Christ

with all sincerity and diligence, but also had to endure many afflictions which nearly overwhelmed him, such as beatings and stoning at the hands of enemies and also perils of all kinds. Yet he does not murmur or complain, but speaks of himself as an earthen vessel, a frail, human being, subject to these experiences so that through his ministry the power of God might be manifest to all. What courage and certainty are evident in his words! (Read verses 8 and 9)

How could this apostle be so serene and confident? What enabled him to endure sufferings while eagerly dispensing the treasures of salvation in Christ to others? It was not some stoical attitude: that's life, you take the good with the bad; no, the key is to be found in Paul's faith and trust in God, a faith that came into his heart on the way to Damascus when the heavenly vision of Jesus changed him from an enemy of the Church and Christianity into a child of God and later a preacher and defender of the Gospel. He was filled with the Holy Ghost and spoke in words which the Holy Ghost teaches. He knew the Old Testament, in particular the Psalms, and in our text he refers to Psalm 116 where David speaks of being greatly afflicted, but when he remembered the foundation of his faith, he said, "I believed and therefore have I spoken;" (v.10) and then he added gratefully, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits toward me?" (v.12)

Holding up the great faith of David as a model, Paul made the statement of the psalmist his very own, saying, We have the same spirit of faith, we also believe! Paul knew that his faith had a sure foundation, for it rested on the living Christ, a foundation that would not shake or crumble with time. He assured the Corinthians that his spirit of faith is the same as that which all true children of God have, and the goal of that faith is the glorious resurrection of the Last Day and life eternal.

Dear hearers, have we the same spirit of faith as David and Paul had? Holy Scripture and all our Confessions call to us to hold fast to the truth in these latter days. Thanks be to God, our Conference has by His grace continued to walk on the old paths while round about us orthodoxy is regarded as old-fashioned, an ecumenical spirit is praised, and the Church is no longer considered useful and productive unless it adapts itself to modern religious thinking. These are critical times for the followers of Jesus, but if we treasure the rich storehouse of spiritual blessings which are ours in His Word, and if we reaffirm our stand on that Word as the only sure foundation of our faith, then we can heed that call to hold fast to the truth and remain His disciples indeed.

When we think of our convention motto, "Loyalty to our Lutheran Confessions," let no one say this is taking the place of faithfulness to Holy Scripture. We desire to be loyal to all our Confessions because they correctly present the true teachings of the Bible, and our faith rests on a definite word of God, on clear passages which state what we are to believe on inspiration, justification, sanctification, creation, prayer, marriage, Church and Ministry, baptism, Lord's Supper, and other doctrines. With many of these teachings being mutilated and even obliterated today, it is imperative that we re-read and re-study those precious truths of the Bible so beautifully explained in our Confessions and then stand firm on them without doubt and wavering, defending them against all error from within and without the Church. This glorious heritage which by God's grace has been preserved to us to this day is too valuable to lose. May it be said of us as was once declared by the Duke of Bavaria when he had heard the Augsburg Confession: "The Lutherans are IN the Scriptures and we are OUTSIDE of them!" let us state boldly with those Lutheran heroes of faith 400 years ago in the Formula of Concord: "We testify to those now living and those who shall come after us that his declaration is our faith, doctrine and confession; we will neither privately nor publicly speak or write anything contrary to it, but by the help of God's grace intend to abide thereby!" (Triglott, p.1103)

Dear fellow-Lutherans, praise God for His grace if you have the same spirit of faith that Paul had! Let nothing affect it adversely or destroy it, but say

with the psalmist: "Thy Word have I hid in mine heart ... Thy Word is very pure, therefore Thy servant loveth it!" (Ps. 119:11 and 140)

But to heed the call of Scripture and the Confessions let us also resolve anew to testify to the truth at every opportunity! Paul says in our text, "We also believe and therefore speak!" (v.13) The faith of the apostle was so firm and sure and his convictions so deep that despite the troubles and dangers which he encountered he could not remain silent but witnessed and testified for his Lord, who also reassured him, "Be not afraid, but speak ... for I am with thee!" (Acts 18:9-10)

Bold confession of the truth we also find in the lives of Peter and John. When they were arrested by Jewish leaders for their fearless preaching and commanded no longer to teach in Jesus' name, their reply was: "We cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard!" (Acts 4:20) And they continued to preach God's Word with boldness, proudly declaring, "We are His witnesses!" (Acts 5:32)

And what a powerful example the faith of Luther is as he spoke and wrote against the doctrinal errors in the Church, nobly defended the truth at the Diet of Worms, and translated the Bible into German so that many others might find their Savior, believe in Him, and also testify to His name. The courageous confession of the Reformer will stand as a monument to the power of the Word to the end of time.

Equally noteworthy was the faithful testimony of other theologians and leaders in Luther's day and after his death who seized every opportunity to confess their faith, state their doctrinal position, and clearly demonstrate that Lutherans were not another fanatical religious sect. This is shown by the motto which appeared below the title of the Augsburg Confession - Ps. 119:46 - "I will speak of Thy testimonies also before kings and will not be ashamed!" In that spirit they declared loyalty to Christ, protested against abuses in the Church, and vigorously condemned all teachings which conflicted with Holy Writ. With the adoption of the Augsburg Confession a new era of civil and religious freedom was inaugurated which has extended to our times. It is another but higher Declaration of Independence. Similar testimony poured forth from the Formula of Concord which under God served as a unifying factor in the Church after 30 years of very disturbing doctrinal controversies. What a significant confession of faith, and what joy reigned among Lutherans when in 1580 the Book of Concord was published containing the three Creeds and all our Confessions as a solemn reaffirmation of the truths of the Gospel!

How shall we react to all this? David reminds us in Psalm 145, "Thy saints shall speak of the glory of Thy kingdom and talk of Thy power!" Lest we try to excuse ourselves and feel unqualified for the task, Jesus encourages us, "Take no thought how or what ye shall speak; for it shall be given you ... what ye shall speak!" (Matt. 10:19-20) Here then is the challenge from the two anniversaries we are observing: Share the truths of the Bible with others and confess your faith at every opportunity! Each of us is to work hard for the cause of the Gospel and give it our best efforts, even if that means suffering for Jesus' sake, knowing that God will sustain and strengthen us. Let us publicize our existence as a Conference that has and teaches the pure Word of God, that maintains a Seminary where all courses are permeated with the wisdom of the Lord and not with the liberal and modernistic trends of religious thought! We need to confess our faith over against the continuing inroads of unbelief and error and testify to that Word of our Lord which produces faith and gives life and in which lie the answers to problems arising in home, church, and State. Can there be anything but holy enthusiasm and earnest activity on our part when we realize what an unmerited treasure we have in our Bible and our Confessions - a storehouse of truths which alone can direct the eyes of others to things eternal so that they with us might enjoy the bliss of heaven?

O dear Christians, as you leave this convention and return to your respective homes and churches, say in the spirit of Paul, David, and many other faithful

confessors of the truth, As God gives grace, we will continue to believe and to speak! And the Lord promises, "Whosoever therefore shall confess Me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven!" (Matt. 10:32)
So let us sing with the hymn writer:

Onward then, for naught despairing,
Calm we follow at His Word,
Thus through joy and sorrow bearing
Faithful witness to our Lord. Amen.

(LH 461:4)

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Convention Essay

THE AUTHORITY OF SCRIPTURE ACCORDING TO THE LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS

by Rev. Randall D. Styx

We as Christians have many things for which we can rejoice and give thanks: a Savior who loves us in spite of our sins and who gave Himself in sacrifice so that we might escape the terrible results of those sins; the complete forgiveness of our sins because of that sacrifice; the precious Word of God which brings us the good news of our salvation in Christ, and by that Word the Holy Spirit of God who gently and lovingly turns our hearts to faith and trust in His Gospel; together with us, also others whose hearts have likewise been regenerated and are preserved in saving faith, with whom we can unite and join in thanking and praising God, and toward whom we can exercise faith's fruit of love in an especially joyful way; ... One could go on and on listing all the wonderful blessings freely given us by our Lord and Savior!

Among these blessings are two special products of the events of history, the Augsburg Confession and the Book of Concord (which includes the Augsburg Confession as well as other confessions of the early Lutheran Church). With these the Lord has preserved even unto us in these latter days the purity and truth of His Gospel, His Holy Scriptures. As we mark the 450th and 400th anniversaries of these precious documents, it is fitting that in our conference periodical and in our activities in convention assembled we take time and space specially to consider these blessings of the Lord: the Lutheran Confessions.

There are some, however, who ask, "What place do the Lutheran Confessions have in our lives today? Do the confessions make us Christians? Do we not base our faith on Scripture and not on the writings of men? Why confine the doctrine of the Church to the opinions of an ancient body of men? The Scriptures are to be our only norm, rule, and standard!"

Indeed, the Scriptures are the only fount of faith, as we read, Romans 10:17, "So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. Of a truth, all doctrine and teaching is to come only from the Holy Scriptures, for it is written, 'He that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully.'" (Jer. 23:28) "Whatsoever I (God) command thee observe to do it: thou shalt not add thereto nor diminish from it." (Deut. 12:32) "Ye shall not add unto the word which I command you, neither shall ye diminish aught from it." (Deut. 4:2) "Blessed are they that keep His testimonies. 'Let thy mercies come also unto me, O Lord, even thy salvation, according to thy Word.'" (Ps. 119:2,42) "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things written in this book." (Rev. 22:18,19)

But it was this very principle which had come to be forsaken by many in visible Christendom. The Roman Catholic Church had replaced the Bible with the decrees of AntiChrist and with all sorts of human traditions. Saving faith was propounded as a product, not of the Holy Spirit through the Word, but of the official visibly organized Roman Catholic Church. There were those also in the early Lutheran Church who replaced the principle of Scripture being the only norm and source of faith and doctrine with the leanings and ideas of their own minds and reason. As a result, many false and dangerous teachings arose alongside the truth and even almost obscured the Lord's truth completely.

Lest this happen and the Lord's true Church cease to exist -- which could not be -- the Holy Spirit moved certain to champion the cause of truth, to reaffirm

and re-establish the Word of God as the sole standard for faith and doctrine. The confessions which came as a result of this work, of a surity, have as a primary purpose the reaffirmation of the principle of the absolute authority of the Scripture, and Scripture alone.

Just how these confessions accomplish this is the topic of this present essay, as we consider:

The Authority of Scripture According to the Lutheran Confessions

I

The Lutheran Confessions proclaim the absolute authority of Scripture, first, by stating this principle forthright, simply and plainly. Now, some may wonder at this, for when they peruse the contents of the Confessions they find no one article treating just the authority of the Holy Scriptures; and, indeed, this is so. Many ask, accordingly, 'Why not? Had the writers of the Confessions forsaken the Scripture principle?' Not at all. To understand the lack of a specific article on the authority of Scripture, one must see the context of attitude toward Scripture at the time the Confessions were written.

Examination of this attitude will reveal that, even though the exercise of the Scripture principle had, in truth, been forsaken, to its theory people still held. Even the promoters of false doctrine outside Lutheranism claimed a Scriptural foundation, though when pressed for proof they would cite only the fathers (i.e. reknowned Christians of times past), the decrees of the visibly organized Church, or human reason. So also within Lutheranism, true and false teachers alike agreed on the authority of Scriptures -- even though the presence of a false doctrine necessarily implies an inconsistency with this principle. Now, the Confessions were drawn up primarily to clear up matters on controversy and division, not matters where there was agreement. And so, as A.C. Piepkorn words it, concerning all parties in Reformation times, "If there was one point of universal agreement, it was the authority, the inspiration, and the inerrancy of the Sacred Scriptures. It is not surprising, therefore, that we do not have an explicit article on the Sacred Scriptures in the Lutheran Symbols." (A.C. Piepkorn, "The Position of the Church and Her Symbols", Concordia Theological Monthly, Vol. XXV #10, October, 1954, p.740; as quoted in Kurt E. Marquart, Anatomy of an Explosion, Concordia Theological Seminary Press, Fort Wayne, Indiana, 1977 p.35)

Nevertheless, the principle of the absolute authority of Scriptures is plainly taught and confessed in the Lutheran Confessions, and that with regard to both its authority to engender and preserve faith (what has been called "causative authority"), and that authority by which Scripture is the only rule and norm of faith, the only divinely appointed judge between truth and falsehood. (what is known as "normative authority") (Compare: J.T. Mueller, Christian Dogmatics C.P.H., St. Louis, 1955, p. 121)

Causative Authority

There are probably those who would argue that the Lutheran Confessions do not credit the Scriptures with being the only source of faith. To substantiate their claim they might cite Luther's Large Catechism, where in his treatment of the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed he states, 'I believe that the Holy Ghost makes me holy, as His name implies. But whereby does He accomplish this, and what are His method and means to this end? Answer: By the Christian Church, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting, For, in the first place, He has a peculiar (special) congregation in the world which is the mother that begets and bears every Christian...'

Such a misquotation would seem to show that the Confessions ascribe causative authority to the Christian Church (which would be but a step away from the Roman idea that the Roman Church has this as well as all authority). But to see clearly that such is not the case, all one need do is keep the book open and keep reading, for the complete quotation continues, "He has a peculiar congregation in the world which is the mother that begets and bears every Christian through the Word of God, which He reveals and preaches (and through which) He illumines and enkindles hearts, that they understand, accept it, cling to it, and persevere in it. For where He does not cause it (i.e. the Word of God) to be preached and made alive in the heart, so that it is understood, it is lost, as was the case under the Papacy, where faith was entirely put under the bench, and no one recognized Christ as his Lord, or the Holy Ghost as his Sanctifier; that is, no one believed that Christ is our Lord in the sense that He has acquired this treasure for us, without our works and merit, and made us acceptable to the Father." (Large Catechism, 3rd Article, §§ 41 - 43; Triglotta p. 689)

Indeed, the Large Catechism plainly states that it is the Word of God through which the Holy Ghost illumines and enkindles hearts to believe. But the Large Catechism is not alone in this testimony; for we read also in the Augsburg Confession, "For through the Word and Sacrament, as through instruments, the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith where and when it pleases God." (Art. V, §§ 1,2; Trig. p. 45) The Apology, too, plainly states, "Justification occurs through the Word, just as St. Paul says, Rom. 1: 16, 'The Gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth.' Likewise 10: 17, 'Faith cometh by hearing.'" (Art. IV, § 67; Trig. p. 139) So also in the Smalkald Articles we read, "And in those things which concern the spoken outward Word, we most firmly hold that God grants His Spirit or grace to no one, except through or with the preceding outward Word." (Art. III, VIII, § 3; Trig. p. 495) Again the Smalkald Articles plainly state, "Therefore we ought and must maintain this point, that God does not wish to deal with us otherwise than through the spoken Word and the Sacraments." (Art. III, VIII, § 10; Trig. p. 497) Moreover, lest we think that the Sacraments are set forth as something separate from God's Word, note the testimony of the Small Catechism: First, regarding the great Baptismal blessings of the working of the forgiveness of sins, deliverance from death and the devil, and the giving of eternal salvation, we read, "It is not the water indeed that does them, but the Word of God which is in and with the water, and faith which trusts such Word of God in the water." (Baptism III, § 10; Trig. p. 551) So also, regarding the great benefit of eating and drinking in the Sacrament of the Altar, we read, "It is not the eating and drinking indeed that does them, but the words here written, 'Given and shed for you for the remission of sins'; which words, besides the bodily eating and drinking, are the chief thing in the Sacrament, and he that believes these words has what they say and express, namely, the forgiveness of sins." (Sacrament of the Altar, § 8; Trig. p. 557) Furthermore, regarding Cornelius of Acts 10, who had come to Old Testament faith, the Smalkald Articles state, "...without such preceding word and hearing could not have believed or been righteous." (Art. III, VIII, § 8; Trig. p. 495)

This efficacy and power of the Scriptures to produce faith is furthermore confessed by the Lutheran Symbols to be present even though it be administered by sinful and unbelieving men, as we find in the Augsburg Confession, "Both the Sacrament and the Word are effectual by reason of the institution and commandment of God, notwithstanding they be administered by evil men." (Art. VIII, § 2; Trig. p. 46)

The authority to produce and preserve faith, moreover, is not limited by the Confessions to faith in general, but is shown to provide assurance and convic-

tion also with regard to specific doctrines, as for example, to infant Baptism. Note the words of the Large Catechism: "We bring the child in the conviction and hope that it believes, and we pray that God may grant it faith; but we do not baptize it upon that, but solely on the command of God. Why so? Because we know that God does not lie. I and my neighbor and, in short, all men may err and deceive, but the Word of God cannot err." In short, the Word of God, by its testimony of inerrancy produces in us assurance in the command and promise of God for infant Baptism -- from which assurance and faith we act. (Quote from Infant Baptism, § 57; Trig. p. 747)

It is to be noted here that, as the Scriptures themselves are they which produce faith in all the teachings of God, so also it is the Scriptures which produce faith even in the authority of Scriptures to do so. Note how this is put by J.T. Mueller (Christian Dogmatics, p. 122), "The same causative authority as St. Paul ascribes to the divine Word in these passages (i.e. those he had just quoted) Christ asserts, when He says: 'If any man will do His will, He shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God or whether I speak of myself.' John 7, 17. From John 6, 40 we learn that 'to do His will' means to hear and believe the divine Word, so that He ascribes the working of divine assurance to the divine Word itself. In this way, then, and only in this way do we receive divine assurance of the truth of God's Word: Scripture attests itself as the true Word of God through the power of the Holy Ghost, who operates through the divine Word. This truth is of practical importance; for whenever doubts arise in the heart of the Christian regarding the divine Word, the only way in which to dispel them is to 'search the Scriptures', John 5, 39, since they are the divine means by which the Holy Spirit enlightens and confirms him in the truth, 1 John 5, 9, 10; John 3, 33; 2 Cor. 1, 20 - 22; Eph. 1, 13."

Is this an argument in a circle -- deriving proof that Scripture has authority from the Scripture's own testimony thereto? Not at all! For to claim that this is arguing in a circle is, as one Phillippi said, "That is the same thing as when a blind man accuses his seeing neighbor of arguing in a circle, claiming that the sun shines, since he sees by its light," and as Gottfried Hoffman puts it, "As the first principles are known of themselves and shine in their own light, and as in the realm of nature light bears witness of itself and has no need of an outside light, so, too, the testimony of the Holy Ghost has no need of outside testimony, but shines in its own light and abundantly proves itself to be divine by its own divine efficacy and power, in which it rejoices, although another cannot be persuaded of this unless he himself attentively reads Scripture and thus shares in this internal testimony." (Both quoted from F. Pieper, Christian Dogmatics, Vol. I, p. 309)

(Regarding this specific aspect of Scripture's causative authority (namely, to produce faith in Scriptures own causative authority) the Confessions do not explicitly speak. But this should cause no concern; for they, as we have already seen, clearly testify of this authority with regard to all matters of faith; and what pertains to all pertains to every specific portion thereof.)

Normative Authority

As we have seen above, the Confessions clearly attest to the authority of Scripture to produce and preserve faith -- faith in our eternal salvation and faith in all the teachings of Scripture. This faith, with regard to the causative authority of Scripture, leads directly to another firm conviction: that, as Scripture is an absolutely true and faith producing witness of the truths of God and a source of doctrine, it is also the only ultimate source and basis of comparison for what is true with respect to God and His ways.

This principle, that Scripture is the only ultimate rule and standard upon which we are to identify truth and error, is the plain teaching of Scripture itself, when it says, "Search the Scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life, and they are they which testify of me." (John 5: 39) Again, "If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed, and ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free." (John 8: 31, 32) And, as the Confessions plainly attested to the causative authority of Scripture, so also they plainly attest to this: the normative authority of God's Word.

The Romanists had repeatedly appealed, in defence of their positions, to the history of visible Christendom, to the traditions and writings of famous early Christians -- the "fathers", to the decisions of the Church in councils and meetings, to early written works of Christians which had been compiled into what was called the Canon (not to be confused with that "Canon" which is the truly divinely inspired books of the Scriptures), and to the purported authority of the Pope of Rome. The Calvinists and humanists of that time, on the other hand, subtly appealed to a test by human reason and understanding; for, while they said their views were Scriptural, their argumentation was by an approach of logic and reason -- albeit necessary in our apprehension of God's teachings, but in their case -- without the overseeing guide of clear Scripture passages. Indeed, instead of making their reason captive and subject to the Scriptures, they made the teachings of Scripture subject to their reason and understanding.

Regarding the Romanist view, Luther leaves no doubt as to his faith concerning the authority to establish doctrine. In his "Thesis on the Authority of the Christian Church", St. Louis ed. XIX, 958, he says, "The Christian Church has no power to establish any articles of faith, has never established one, and will never do so." Again in XII, 1414, he writes, "Let them scream themselves into a frenzy crying Church, Church! -- without God's Word it is nothing!"

Can there be any doubt that this same truth is plainly taught by the Confessions when we read in the Apology, "We concede neither to the Pope nor to the Church the power to make decrees against this consensus of the prophets," (Art. XII, § 67; Trig. p. 271) and again in the Smalkald Articles, "...it will not do to frame articles of faith from the works or words of the holy Fathers; otherwise their kind of fare, ornaments, of house, etc., would have to become an article of faith, as was done with the relics. We have, however, another rule; namely: the Word of God shall establish articles of faith, and no one else, not even an angel."? (Part II, Art. II, § 15; Trig. p. 467)

And, concerning the humanistic viewpoint, note the following: In discussion of the Scripture teaching of the Real Presence in the Lord's Supper, upon pointing to the clear words of Christ, "This is my body..." and, "This is my blood," the Formula of Concord reads, "We are certainly in duty bound not to interpret and explain these words of the eternal, true, and almighty Son of God our Lord, Creator and Redeemer Jesus Christ, differently, as allegorical, figurative tropical expressions, according as it seems agreeable to our reason, but with simple faith and due obedience to receive the words as they read in their proper and plain sense, and allow ourselves to be diverted therefrom (Latin: from this express testament of Christ) by no objections or human contradictions spun from human reason, however charming they may appear to reason.

"Even as Abraham, when he hears God's Word concerning offering his son, although, indeed, he had cause enough for disputing as to whether the words should be understood according to the letter or with a tolerable or mild interpretation since they conflicted openly not only with all reason and with the divine and natural law, but also with the chief article of faith concerning the promised Seed, Christ, who was to be born of Isaac, nevertheless, just as previously,

when the promise of the blessed seed from Isaac was given him, he gave God the honor of truth, and most confidently concluded and believed that what God had promised He could also do, although it appeared impossible to his reason; so also here he understands and believes God's Word and command plainly and simply, as they read according to the letter, and commits the matter to God's omnipotence and wisdom, which, he knows, has many more modes and ways to fulfil the promise of the Seed from Isaac than he can comprehend with his blind reason; —

"Thus we, too, are simply to believe with all humility and obedience the plain, firm, clear, and solemn words and commands of our Creator and Redeemer, without any doubt and disputation as to how it agrees with our reason or is possible. For these words were spoken by that Lord who is infinite Wisdom and Truth itself, and also can execute and accomplish everything which He promises." (Thorough Declaration, Art. VII, §§ 45 - 47; Trig. p. 987, 989)

Note also the words of the Apology in answer to the Roman Catholic claim that monasticism had a Scriptural basis -- a "basis" founded on the examples of the Nazarenes (Num. 6: 2 ff.), and the Rechabites' not having possessions nor drinking wine (Jer. 35: 6 ff.): After showing how even these examples were no basis at all, the Confession continues, "Besides, examples ought to be interpreted according to the rule, i.e. according to certain and clear passages of Scripture, not contrary to the rule, that is, contrary to Scripture." (Art. XXVII, § 60; Trig. p. 441) The Formula of Concord, moreover, sets forth this same principle when it approvingly says of Luther that he, "has expressly drawn this distinction; namely, that the Word of God alone should be and remain the only standard and rule of doctrine, to which the writings of no man should be regarded as equal, but to which everything should be subjected." (Thorough Declaration, Comprehensive Summary, § 9b; Trig. p. 855)

Indeed, the Confessions clearly set forth the Scriptural principle that Scripture alone is to be the rule and standard of all doctrine and teaching in the Christian Church, in theological terminology, the Rule which rules (Norma normans), even as the Epitome of the Formula of Concord declares in its opening words:

"We believe, teach, and confess that the sole rule and standard according to which all dogmas together with (all) teachers should be estimated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament alone, as it is written Ps. 119, 105; 'Thy Word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path.' And St. Paul: 'Though an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you, let him be accursed,' Gal. 1, 8 "

"To this direction, as above announced, all doctrines are to be conformed, and what is contrary thereto is to be rejected and condemned, as opposed to the unanimous declaration of our faith.

"In this way the distinction between the Holy Scriptures of the Old and of the New Testament and all other writing is preserved, and the Holy Scriptures alone remain the only judge, rule, and standard, according to which, as the only test-stone, all dogmas shall and must be discerned and judged, as to whether they are good or evil, right or wrong." (Summary, Content, Rule, and Standard; §§ 1,6,7; Trig. p. 777, 779)

(Side note: From the above quotations it should be evident that the Confessions admit no room for the idea that there is a difference between the Word of God and the Scriptures -- as if we are bound in doctrine to the infallible Word of God, but not to the "fallible human Scriptures". The Word of God and the Scriptures are identical and are so presented in the Confessions, even as they are repeatedly put side by side, in apposition (See, for example, the Apology Art. II, § 4; Trig. p. 105). Note also how the Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, Comprehensive Summary, throughout contrasts divine and human writings; how there the Latin text (§9) has for "Word of God", "sacred letters

(sacris litteris)"; and how, as put by Kurt E. Marquart (Anatomy of an Explosion, p. 131), the Smalkald Articles "use 'Scripture' and 'Word of God' quite interchangeably in the paragraphs leading up to the classic assertion of the great Reformation sola scriptura principle: 'The Word of God shall establish articles of faith, and no one else, not even an angel.'"")

II

Without a doubt, the Lutheran Confessions powerfully attest to the absolute authority of the Scriptures by stating the sola scriptura principle plainly and clearly. But there is another important way in which they do this; for not only did the writers of the Confessions plainly state that Scripture was and is the only absolute authority, but they also followed that principle in setting down their articles of faith. Yes, it was to the Scriptures they pointed to convince others to join in their Confession and to show that their Confession was, in fact, truth.

There are many who claim that the Lutheran Confessions add something to the Scriptures. Some will argue this claim by saying, "Look, even the Confessions themselves call Luther's catechisms 'the Bible of the laity', thereby adding human works to and even with pre-eminence over the Bible."

But such is nothing less than a deceitful argument, totally ignoring the whole presentation of the Confessions, as well as the immediate context of where this phrase is used. Given the firm conviction held by those writers as we have seen it in the first part of this essay, there is only one way in which the catechisms could be called "the Bible of the laity". Note the words of the Confession where this phrase is found: "We also confess the Small and Large Catechisms of Dr. Luther, as they are included in Luther's works, as the Bible of the laity, wherein everything is comprised which is treated at greater length in Holy Scripture, and is necessary for a Christian man to know for his salvation." (Epitome, Summary, etc., § 5; Trig. p. 777) Note also the reference to Luther's catechisms in the Thorough Declaration of the Formula of Concord, "In the pure churches and schools these public common writings have been always regarded as the sum and model of the doctrine which Dr. Luther, of blessed memory, has admirably deduced from God's Word." (Comprehensive Summary, § 9a; Trig. p. 853)

Indeed, just so we repeatedly find in our well known Small Catechism, as we read, "What does God say...?" (Close of the Commandments § 21; Trig. p. 543), "Which is that Word of God?" (Baptism I, § 3), "Which are such words and promises of God?" (Baptism II, § 7), "Where is this written?" (Baptism IV, § 13 and sacrament of the Altar, § 3; Trig. pp. 553, 555), and "as St. Paul says Titus chapter third,..." (Baptism III, § 10; Trig. p. 551).

In the same manner all the Confessions follow the principle of convincing the readers and substantiating their articles of faith by the clear Word of Scripture. So it is that in the Augsburg Confession alone are more than sixty-five places where Bible passages are cited for bases and proof -- most of which are incorporated into the text of the Confession. Of these the following are a few examples:

In the discussion of whether or not prayer is to be made to the departed saints, Article XXI, § 2 (Trig. p. 57) reads, "But Scripture teaches not the invocation of saints, or to ask help of saints, since it sets before us the one Christ as the Mediator, Propitiation, High Priest, and Intercessor... ..this worship He approves above all, to wit, that in all affliction He be called upon, 1 John 2: 1, 'If any man sin we have an Advocate with the Father, etc.'" (The German text includes the words,

"Jesus Christ, the Righteous" -- "der gerecht ist, JGsum.")

Concerning whether, contrary to Roman Catholic teaching, also the wine should be administered to the lay Christian in the Sacrament of the Altar, Article XXII, §1 (Trig. p. 59) reads, "To the laity are given both kinds in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, because this usage has the commandment of the Lord in Matt. 26: 27, 'Drink ye all of it', where Christ has manifestly commanded concerning the cup that all should drink."

For the presentation of the doctrine of Justification the Confession cites all of Romans chapters 3 and 4; and repeatedly, in one article of faith after another, one finds, "as also the voice of Christ attests, '___' Lk. 17: 10" (Art. VI, § 2; Trig. p. 46), "as St. Paul says, '___' Eph. 4: 5,6" (Art. VII, § 4; Trig. p. 46), "according to the saying of Christ, '___' Matt. 23: 2" (Art. VIII, § 1; Trig. p. 46), etc.. Scripture passages are used to support the truth and to refute error, as are John 14: 6, in Article XX, § 10 (Trig. p. 55), and Psalm 19: 12, in Article XI, § 2 (Trig. p. 46), where we read, "In confession an enumeration of all sins is not necessary. For it is impossible according to the Psalm, 'Who can understand his errors?'"

So it is that the writers of the Augsburg Confession could truthfully affirm in the opening and closing sentences: "We offer, in this matter of religion, the Confession of our preachers and of ourselves, showing what manner of doctrine from the Holy Scriptures and the pure Word of God has been up to this time set forth in our lands, dukedoms, dominions, and cities, and taught in our churches." (Preface, § 8; Trig. p. 39) "This is the sum of our doctrine, in which, as can be seen, there is nothing that varies from the Scriptures..." (conclusion to the Chief Articles of Faith § 1; Trig. p. 59) "Only those things have been recounted whereof we thought that it was necessary to speak in order that it might be understood that in doctrine and ceremonies nothing has been received on our part against Scripture or the Church Catholic." "If there is anything that any one might desire in this Confession, we are ready, God willing, to present ampler information according to the Scriptures." (conclusion to controverted articles and to the entire Confession, §§ 5, 7; Trig. p. 95)

As the Scripture principle was faithfully followed in the Augsburg Confession so it was followed also in the other Confessions. Right from the start the Apology, in defense of the teaching of the Trinity, reads, "This article we have always taught and defended, and we believe that it has, in Holy Scripture, sure and firm testimonies that cannot be overthrown." (Art. I, § 2; Trig. p. 103) In teaching the important doctrine of Justification this Confession also quotes, "even Paul says, Romans 3: 28, 'We conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.' Again Eph. 2: 8,9, 'It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast.'" (Art. IV, § 73; Trig. p. 141) The Smalkald Articles, too, follow suit. Note, for example, how the Second Part (which "Treats of the Articles which refer to the Office and Work of Jesus Christ, or Our Redemption") begins: "The first and chief article is this, That Jesus Christ, our God and Lord, died for our sins and was raised again for our justification, Rom. 4: 25. And He alone is the lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world, John 1: 29; and God has laid on Him the iniquity of us all, Is. 53: 6. Likewise: All have sinned and are justified without merit (Latin: freely and without their own works or merits) by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, in His blood, Rom. 3: 23, ff," (Art. II, I, §§ 1-3; Trig. p. 461) So also the Catechisms: Regarding our need to pray, the Large Catechism, in its opening paragraphs on the Lord's Prayer, reads, "In the second place we should be the more urged and incited to pray because God has also added a promise, and declared that it shall surely be done to us as we pray; as He says, Ps. 50: 15, 'Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee.' And Christ in the Gospel of St. Matthew 7: 7, 'Ask and it shall be given

you, For every one that asketh receiveth.'" (Lord's Prayer, § 19; Trig. p. 703) Likewise the Formula of Concord, right through to its last article, as we read concerning God's eternal election, "We should accustom ourselves not to speculate concerning the bare, secret, concealed inscrutable foreknowledge of God, but how the counsel, purpose, and ordination of God in Christ Jesus, who is the true Book of life, is revealed to us through the Word, namely, that the entire doctrine... should be taken together, as Paul treats and has explained this article, Rom. 8: 29ff; Eph. 1: 4; as also Christ in the parable, Matt. 22: 1ff, namely that God in His purpose and counsel ordained (Latin: decreed): ..." (at which point the Confession presents its outline of this doctrine.) (Thorough Declaration, Art. XI, §§ 13, 14; Trig. pp. 1069, 1071)

One could go on and on quoting sections of the Confessions to show how completely they carry out the principle that the Scriptures are the only source, norm, and standard of and for faith and doctrine, thereby affirming in all their parts, by statement and example, the authority of the Holy Scriptures. Indeed, one would need almost to copy the entire Book of Concord to include every such witness. But these should suffice to show clearly that the Confessions proclaim and, in fact, are in all their parts founded upon, the authority of Scripture -- and Scripture alone.

Conclusions

No, the Confessions are not merely the opinions of ancient men, but a repetition and rephrasing of the very Word of God, taken from the Scriptures, in the light of doctrinal controversies of their day. Are the Confessions perfect? Let me divide the question. First, are they complete? The Bible itself does not present all there is to know about God, nor even all that can be known about nature. But the Bible most assuredly presents all that we need to know for our salvation, and much more which is of interest, all of it serving to bring us to and preserve us in the true faith to life eternal. The Confessions, on the other hand, do not present all that the Bible includes, so it may be said that the Confessions are incomplete. Nevertheless, they are complete in presenting all that is necessary for salvation and eternal life. One cannot prove this statement except to say: Study the Scriptures and the Confessions thoroughly. Because of the great care exercised by the writers of the Confessions, if you can find anything necessary that has not been included, the only place that such a "requirement" could come from is outside the Word of God.

As to the second part of perfection -- whether they are without error -- what must be said is this: The Bible is without error in all respects; in its teachings and in its manner of presentation -- in every way the right words, the right length, the right style, the true doctrine. Now, the Confessions are human writings, as they themselves confess, and are not in all their parts and for all people without errors of presentation; i.e. the most understandable language, the right length for all, etc.. Some may consider parts too short and brief; others consider them lengthy and difficult. Even the authors of the Formula of Concord saw the problems such a lengthy confession would pose to the common people and therefore prepared the Epitome, or summary. It may even be argued that here or there the best Scripture sedes possible was not used in proof of a specific teaching. But, and this is very important, because the writers of the Confessions were convinced by God's Word that only God's Word is to establish articles of faith, and because they followed that principle throughout their writing, the Lutheran Confessions are without error as to content and doctrine. Read the Confessions; search the Scriptures; and compare. The Bible will show and convince you that this is so.

For this reason the Confessions have great value for us today, as the Confessions themselves declare. Having clearly laid down the sola scriptura principle, the Formula of Concord continues, "But hereby other good, useful, pure books, expositions of the Scriptures, refutations of errors, explanations of doctrinal articles, are not rejected; for as far as they are consistent with the above-mentioned type of doctrine, these are useful expositions and explanations, and can be used with advantage." (Thorough Declaration, Comprehensive Summary, § 10; Trig. p. 855) With certain other writings they serve "as witnesses (Latin: which are to show) in what manner after the time of the apostles, and at what places, this (pure) doctrine of the prophets and apostles was preserved." (Formula of Concord, Epitome, Summary, § 2b; Trig. p. 777) The Lutheran Confessions specifically are "a testimony and declaration of the faith, as to how at any time the Holy Scriptures have been understood and explained in the articles of controversy in the Church of God by those then living, and how the opposite dogma was rejected and condemned," or, as the Latin text reads, "by what arguments the dogmas conflicting with the Holy Scriptures were rejected and condemned." (Formula of Concord, Epitome, Summary, § 2; Trig. p. 779)

The Lutheran Confessions, however, have a special place among human writings; their value goes beyond one of interest and historical witness. To be sure, they, as they themselves declare, "are not judges as are the Holy Scriptures." (Formula of Concord, Epitome, Summary, § 8a; Trig. p. 779) Together with other human writings they "must not be regarded as equal to the Holy Scriptures, but all of them together be subjected to them." (Formula of Concord, Epitome, Summary, § 2a; Trig. p. 777) Nevertheless, because upon being subjected to the Holy Scriptures the Lutheran Confessions are found to be without error in doctrinal content, because they are ruled by the Rule which rules, they also can well be used as a supplementary standard and guide for keeping our doctrine and preaching pure and faithful to the Word of God. In fact, because the Lutheran Confessions are so completely ruled by God's Word, to conflict with the Lutheran Symbols necessarily involves conflicting with the Word of God. Thus, as the Scriptures are called the Rule which rules (norma normans), the Lutheran Confessions are called a rule which is ruled (norma normata).

This truth the Confessions themselves also declare. Hear the testimony of the Formula of Concord: "What has thus far been said concerning the summary of our Christian doctrine is intended to mean only this, that we should have a unanimously accepted, definite, common form of doctrine, which all our evangelical churches together and in common confess, from and according to which, because it had been derived from God's Word, all other writings should be judged and adjusted as to how far they are to be approved and accepted.

"For that we embodied the above-mentioned writings, namely, the Augsburg Confession, Apology, Smalkald Articles, Luther's Large and Small Catechisms, in the oft-mentioned Sum of our Christian doctrine, was done for the reason that these have always and everywhere been regarded as the common, unanimously accepted meaning of our churches, and, moreover, have been subscribed at that time by the chief and most enlightened theologians, and have held sway in all evangelical churches and schools. So also, as before mentioned, they were all written and sent forth before the divisions among the theologians of the Augsburg Confession arose; therefore, since they are held to be impartial, and neither can nor should be rejected by either part of those who have entered into controversy, and no one who without guile is an adherent of the Augsburg Confession will complain of these writings, but will cheerfully accept and tolerate them as witnesses (of the truth), no one can think ill of (blame) us that we derive from them an explanation and decision of the articles in controversy, and that, as we lay down God's Word, the eternal truth, as the foundation, so we introduce and quote also these writings as a witness of the truth and as the unanimously received correct understanding of our predecessors who have steadfastly held to

the pure doctrine." (Thorough Declaration, Comprehensive Summary, §§ 10 - 13; Trig. p. 855)

Again, in § 16, we read regarding the Formula of Concord itself, "Now, although the aforesaid writings afford the Christian reader, who delights in and has a love for the divine truth, clear and correct information concerning each and every controverted article of our Christian religion, as to what he should regard and receive as right and true according to God's Word of the Prophetic and Apostolic Scriptures, and what he should reject, shun, and avoid as false and wrong; yet in order that the truth may be preserved the more distinctly and clearly, and be distinguished from all errors, and that nothing be hidden and concealed under ordinary terms (Latin: rather general words and phrases), we have clearly and expressly declared ourselves to one another concerning the chief and most important articles, taking one by one, which at the present time have come into controversy, so that there might be a public, definite testimony, not only for those now living, but also for our posterity, what is and should remain the unanimous understanding and judgment (decision) of our churches in reference to the articles in controversy." (Trig. p. 857)

Yes, the Lutheran Confessions may and are to be used as a supplementary guide to examine and decide between truth and error. But as they are so used, we should never forget why this is true. Why did the confessors take it to write down their refutation of certain teachings? Why were these teachings "in no way to be tolerated in our dominions, churches, and schools"? "Because these errors conflict with the express Word of God, and that, too, in such a way that they cannot be reconciled with it." (German: "cannot stand beside it"; "neben solchem nicht bestehen können") Why can we confess the Augsburg and other Lutheran Confessions? As the Formula of Concord answers, "We confess also the First, Unaltered Augsburg Confession as our symbol for this time, not because it was composed by our theologians, but because it has been taken from God's Word and is founded firmly and well therein." (Preface to the Book of Concord, p. 19 ¶ 2; Formula of Concord, Thorough Declaration, Comprehensive Summary, § 5; Trig. p. 851)

Oh, what a wonderful blessing we have in the Lutheran Confessions! In spite of all the attacks of evil men, in spite of all the attempts of satan to becloud and eliminate the truth of God's Word, His Word did not perish -- for it could not. Rather, men were moved by His precious Gospel to give strong witness and testimony for the truth and to refute false doctrine completely. That witness and defense we have today in the Lutheran Symbols.

Now, when those false doctrines and evil spirits try again -- for in all the false teachings of today there is nothing really new -- we have a wonderful tool to use to keep our minds well grounded in the Holy Scriptures and to guide our tongue to the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. May we all, therefore, get to know all these special writings, and use them in our lives. Indeed, may we all, as do our pastors, pledge ourselves never to stray from the doctrines of the Lutheran Confessions, for they are the doctrines of the Word of God.

Respectfully submitted,
the Rev. Randall D. Styx

SOLI DEO GLORIA

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CONVENTION ESSAY

THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION ACCORDING TO OUR LUTHERAN CONFESSIONS

by Rev. H. David Mensing

Introductory

We accept and hold ourselves to the Lutheran Confessions comprising the Book of Concord, not indeed as something in addition to the Bible as the foundation of faith, nor in as far as they correctly set forth Scripture, but because they truly and correctly set forth the Scripture doctrines which they treat.

This consideration will determine the scope of our essay. We shall therefore not attempt to go into a study of the history introductory to the study of the Confessions nor of the many controversies after Luther's death that led up to the Formula of Concord in particular. But our aim is simply to show that our Confessions correctly set forth the Scripture doctrine of Justification.

What Justification Is

The doctrine of Justification is defined as that doctrine of Holy Scripture which teaches that God on His part, in view of the vicarious satisfaction of Christ, has already justified or forgiven the sins of the whole sinful, wicked, and guilty world, that He freely offers this forgiveness or reconciliation with God to all men in the Gospel through His Holy Spirit, and that an individual sinner accepts, receives, and has this forgiveness and is declared righteous before God alone by grace, for Christ's sake, alone through faith, apart from any works of merit or good qualities of his own. The first part of this, God's justification of the whole world we call "general or objective justification." This doctrine is plainly taught in Scripture, among many other passages, in 2 Corinthians 5:19-21: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them; and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation. Now then we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God. For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

Now this Scripture doctrine is indeed correctly set forth in our Lutheran Confessions. The first and simplest statement is in the words of Luther's Explanation of the Third Article of the Apostles' Creed (Enchiridion, 1529): "He richly and daily forgives all sins to me and all believers." Since the doctrine of Justification is the "material principle" of Luther's Reformation, that is, the chief thing it was all about, we also have the true confession of this Doctrine already in 1530, in Article IV of the Augsburg Confession (Concordia Triglot, p. 45): "Men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who by His death has made satisfaction for our sins. This faith God imputes for righteousness in His sight, Romans 3 and 4."

By pronouncing upon this comforting doctrine of Scripture its anathema, or curse, the Church of Rome has proved itself to be the Church of the very Antichrist. (See 2 Thess. 2; also the Apology (explanation) of the Augsburg Confession, Art. XIV, 98, C. T. 419: "And it seems that this Baalitic worship will endure as long as the Pope, until Christ will come to judge, and by the glory of His advent destroy the reign of Antichrist.") (Cp. also the Smalcald Articles, of the Power and Primacy of the Pope, 39, C. T. 515.)

It should be self-evident, in view of our observations this far, that the doctrine of Justification presupposes as necessary postulates or prerequisites to its clear understanding the objective justification of the world, the vicarious atonement, universal grace, salvation alone by grace, the Means of Grace or giving means, and faith or the receiving means.

Some Further Details

By grace alone (Sola Gratia), for Christ's sake, through faith alone (Sola Fide). These terms exclude from this article all works of men, either preceding, present, or following justification.

By grace means in Scripture by grace alone. For Scripture says, Romans 3:24 "Being justified freely by his grace;" and Ephesians 2:8-9 "By grace are ye saved ... It is the gift of God, not of works." And again, Romans 11:6: "If by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace."

For Christ's sake can only mean "in view of the vicarious atonement made by Christ;" as it is written, Ephesians 4:32: "...forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you." Romans 3:24: "...justified... through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." and v. 25: "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation (payment)...to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past." 2 Corinthians 5:19: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." And Isaiah 53:5: "With his stripes we are healed."

Through faith can likewise only mean through faith alone. This is made clear especially by use of the exclusive particles such as "by faith without the deeds of the law," Romans 3:28; "by works..not," Romans 4:3; "no more of works," Romans 11:6; "not of works," Ephesians 2:8-9.

The Papists at the time of the Reformation and still today, together with especially Andrew Osiander after Luther's death; and with enthusiasts, who base justification on "Christ in us" instead of for us, namely upon his indwelling and sanctifying influence in the heart; and with modern rationalistic theologians, who define justification as an ethical process in man, a transformation of a sinner into a good and deserving person (infused grace, faith infused with love), --- all these refer indeed to certain passages of Scripture as supposed proofs for their position. Such is, for example, "Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much," (Luke 7:47); but it is evident from the context that "for" here is inferential, not causal. For in verse 50 the Savior says not, "Thy faith and love have saved thee," but "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Again they refer to Galatians 5:6; "faith which worketh by love." But again a mere reference to the context shows love here not as a cause of justification or salvation, but a fruit stemming from it or following it. For verse 22 speaks of love as the fruit of the Spirit. And still further they refer to James 2:14-26, with the false contention that James differs with Paul, saying for example in verse 21: "Was not Abraham justified by works," etc. Here they fail to see that Paul and James are speaking of two different things, -- Paul of justification before God (Galatians 3:11 a), and James of one's justification before men. Notice the words "show thee" in verse 18.

Justification before God, then, is to be compared not to a medical treatment, by which a physician makes a good and healthy person out of one who has been sick, but to a forensic act, by which the Lord, like a president or governor pardoning a criminal, simply declares the guilty sinner free. God "justifieth the ungodly." (Romans 4:5)

Works have their proper place in the Christian's life; not, however, as a cause of justification, but as a necessary fruit of justification; -- necessary because they follow faith and because they are God's will for the Christian (John 15:12; 14:15; " Corinthians 9:8; etc.); but at the same time voluntary because they are done willingly, from a voluntary spirit by those whom the Son of God has made free. (Psalm 110:3; 54:6; Romans 6:17-18; 2 Corinthians 9:7; etc.)

Our Confessions, Further

Now hear, though in summary, what is very lengthily, correctly and beautifully presented in our Confessions.

We have already quoted Article IV of the Augsburg Confession, which may be referred to above. We now also quote from the Apology, IV, 41, C.T. 131: "The promise of the remission of sins and of justification has been given us for Christ's sake, who was given for us in order that He might make satisfaction for the sins of the world, and has been appointed the only Mediator and Propitiator." Again, Art. IV, 42, C.T. 133: "Romans 11:6: If it be by works, then it is no more by grace."

Concerning what justifying faith is, we read further in the Apology, IV, 48-50, C.T. 135: "That faith which justifies is not merely knowledge of history...but it is the faith which receives the benefits offered by God." And in Par. 80, C.T. 143: "Sin terrifies the conscience; this occurs through the Law, which shows the wrath of God against sin. But we gain the victory through Christ...By faith...by confidence in God's mercy for Christ's sake."

Of justification's forensic sense it also states, III, 185, C.T. 205: "Moreover in this passage (Romans 5:1, q.v.) to justify signifies according to the forensic usage, to acquit a guilty one and to declare him righteous, but on the account of another, namely of Christ, which righteousness of another is communicated to us by faith. Therefore, since in this passage is the imputation of the righteousness of another, we must here speak concerning righteousness otherwise than we speak when in philosophy or in a civil court we speak after the righteousness of one's own work." (Here compare or contrast the passage in Proverbs 17:15.)

The Formula of Concord also states, Thorough Declaration, III, 8 ff., C.T. 919: "...poor sinful man is justified before God, that is, absolved and declared free and exempt from all his sins ... without any preceding, present, or any subsequent works, out of pure grace, because of the sole merit, complete obedience, bitter suffering, death, and resurrection of our Lord Christ alone, whose obedience is reckoned to us for righteousness."

Paragraph 10: "These treasures are offered us by the Holy Ghost in the promise of the holy Gospel; and faith alone is the only means by which we lay hold upon, and apply, and appropriate them to ourselves."

Paragraph 13: "Faith justifies, not for this cause and reason that it is a good work, and so a good virtue, but because it lays hold of and accepts the merit of Christ in the promise of the holy Gospel."

Paragraph 17: "The word justify here means to declare righteous and free from sins, and to absolve one from eternal punishment for the sake of Christ's righteousness, which is imputed by God to faith, Philippians 3:9."

Article IV, 22, C.T. 945: "Here we must be well on our guard lest works are drawn and mingled into justification and salvation. ... For they are directly contrary to the exclusive particles." As to good works being a

necessary fruit following justification, and so also voluntary on the part of true believers, the Formula of Concord also states, Art. IV, 16 ff., C.T. 943: "When this word necessary is employed, it should be understood not of coercion, but only of the ordinance of the immutable will of God, whose debtors we are; ...For such specious (hypocritical) works God does not want, but the people of the New Testament are to be a willing people, Psalm 110:3, and sacrifice freely, Psalm 54:6, not grudgingly or of necessity, but are to be obedient from the heart, 2 Corinthians 9:7; Romans 6:17. For God loveth a cheerful giver, 2 Corinthians 9:7."

Justification: The Central Doctrine of the Christian Religion

This doctrine of Justification is indeed the central doctrine of the Christian religion, the most fundamental of all, upon which the Christian Church stands and apart from which it falls, as Luther specifically calls it. And this it is for several reasons: 1) Wherever it is believed, there the Christian Church, the communion of saints, exists; but wherever it is not believed, there can be no Christian church; since the church has for its members only those who believe that Christ died for them and rose again. (Mark 16:15-16; John 3:18,36; Acts 2:47b compared with 5:14; 1 Corinthians 15:1-4.) 2) All of salvation's teachings either point forward to it (Luke 24:25-27) or back to it (Revelation 5:9-14). 3) It is the paramount theme of both the Old Testament and New Testament (Isaiah 53:4-6; Acts 10:43; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21). And we note in Romans 4, especially verses 1-8, that this is the way also the ancient fathers such as Abraham and David were justified.

Thus the Smalcald Articles declare, Second Part, 4 & 5, C.T. 461: "Since it is necessary to believe this and it cannot be otherwise acquired or apprehended by any work, law, or merit, it is clear and certain that this faith alone justifies us, as St. Paul says Romans 3:26,28. Of this article nothing can be yielded or surrendered (nor can anything be yielded or granted contrary to the same), even though heaven and earth, and whatever will not abide, should sink to ruin. 'For there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved,' says Peter, Acts 4:12. 'And with His stripes we are healed,' Isaiah 53:5. And upon this article all things depend which we teach and practice in opposition to the Pope, the devil, and the world. Therefore we must be sure concerning this doctrine and not doubt; for otherwise all is lost, and the Pope and devil and all things gain the victory and suit over us."

The Formula of Concord likewise states, Art. III, 6, C.T. 917: "This article concerning justification by faith, as the Apology says, is the chief article in the entire Christian doctrine, without which no poor conscience can have any firm consolation or can truly know the riches of the grace of Christ, as Dr. Luther also has written: 'If this only article remains pure on the battlefield, the Christian Church also remains pure and in goodly harmony and without any sects; but if it does not remain pure, it is not possible that any error or fanatical spirit can be resisted.'"

And as to the finding of this doctrine throughout the Bible, by which also our ancient fathers were saved, we quote once more, briefly, from the Apology, IV, 57-59, C.T. 137: "And throughout the prophets and the psalms, this worship ...is highly praised, although the Law does not teach the gratuitous remission of sins. But the fathers knew the promise concerning Christ, that God for Christ's sake wished to remit sins. ... Therefore the fathers also were justified, not by the Law, but by the promise and faith."

My dear brethren, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." (Romans 5:1-2)

SOLI DEO GLORIA

BUSINESS SECTION

PRESIDENTIAL REPORT

As we look back over the past months that have so rapidly passed by since our last Convention we must surely acknowledge the goodness and mercy which the Lord has revealed unto us! As we contemplate the fact that His pure Word has once again been preached in our midst for the upbuilding of our holy faith, we must exclaim with the Psalmist, "Not unto us, O Lord; not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth's sake." (Ps. 115: 1) We are deeply conscious of our frailties and sins. Although our intentions have often been sincere and laudable, we have had to confess with the Apostle Paul, "The good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do." (Rom. 7: 17) Because of our own miserable flesh we have often neglected to take advantage of opportunities to serve Him who has called us out of darkness into His marvellous light. How comforting, when confronted by the accusing finger of the Law, to hear that sweet sentence by our dear Savior, "Don, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee!" (Matt. 9: 2) This is the balm for our weary souls in these last evil days of the world, so that waiting upon the Lord, our strength shall be renewed and with God the Holy Spirit's help we shall run the way of His commandments: (Is. 40: 29 - 31; Ps. 119: 32)

The Lord's blessings have certainly been evident in our Seminary as we shall presently hear from our Seminary President. On June 8th, the third student, Mr. David Mensing, was graduated and is now a Candidate of the Reverend Ministry. The need for more qualified young men to dedicate themselves -- their hearts, minds, and bodies -- toward the attainment of the highest office in the Church, should be obvious to all of us and should, therefore, incite us earnestly to petition the Lord of the Harvest "that He will send forth laborers into His harvest." (Matt. 9: 38)

According to the decision of our 1979 Convention, a referendum dealing with a constitutional amendment to Article IX, Section 1, C of our Conference Constitution was sent to each of our congregations. On December 3, 1979, I directed our Conference Secretary to inform the congregations of our Conference that the amendment had passed unanimously. The Constitutional Amendment now reads as follows: "Requests for subsidy, in order to be included in convention business, shall ordinarily be submitted through the Committee on Missions at least four (4) months before the end of each fiscal year."

The 1979 Convention had requested me, as President, to respond to the offer of \$500.00 from the Aid Association for Lutherans to assist us in observing the anniversaries of our Lutheran Confessions. According to the directives of our 1979 Convention, I informed Mr. Fred C. Pahl, the manager for General Benevolences of the AAL that, while we gratefully acknowledge their kindness as expressed in their offer, at the same time, we were constrained to reject that offer of \$500.00. Our refusal to accept the offer was being carried out in the spirit of our Lutheran Confessions based upon Holy Scripture as a protest against the unionistic activity of the AAL. In my letter I referred to their financial support of such liberal church bodies as the LCA, ALC, etc., plus the fact that they give grants and scholarships to men who do not profess the true Lutheran teachings. I showed that such activity is certainly not in harmony with Scriptural principles and our dear Lutheran Confessions. Nothing further has been heard from the AAL representatives.

One of the resolutions adopted at our 1979 Convention directed that the congregations of our Conference and our 1980 Convention be encouraged to observe the anniversaries of our Lutheran Confessions. We pray that this is being carried out by our congregations. The praesidium of our Conference has attempted to carry out this resolution in this present Convention by commemorating these

anniversaries with appropriate sermons and essays. You will note that this year we have two brief essays. One is being presented by Rev. R. Styx, "The Authority of the Scriptures According to our Lutheran Confessions", and the other by Rev. H.D. Mensing, "The Doctrine of Justification According to our Lutheran Confessions". We are confident that the presentation and discussion of these two vital doctrines will be both instructive and edifying.

I would like to conclude my report by stating that it is with a profound sense of sadness that we shall not have our dear brother, Walter Fischer, to join us in the deliberations at this Convention as he had faithfully done for so many years. Our hearts, however, are comforted by the knowledge that having remained steadfast in the true faith in Jesus his Savior, Walter has been granted a blessed end and graciously taken from this vale of tears to the everlasting joys of heaven on November 9, 1979. The Lord Jesus assures us, "he that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." (John 3: 36)

Now may our dear heavenly Father guide and lead us in all our deliberations so that all we say and do may be for the glory of His holy Name and the welfare of our souls for Jesus' sake.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. M.L. Mattereder,
President

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE PRESIDENTIAL REPORT

Your committee has reviewed the annual report of our President to this Convention and finds it to be informative, factual, and edifying.

We heartily thank our President for his faithful labors of love in this past Conference year and we pray the Lord and Head of His Church, our dear Savior, graciously to continue pouring out His blessings upon him in the new Conference year.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul F. Luedtke
John R. Dirksen
the Rev. H. David Mensing,
Chairman

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION AND EXCUSESI. Initial Report:

The following are eligible for seating as delegates:

Peace Lutheran Church	Rev. H. David Mensing Jeff Styx David Mensing
Trinity Lutheran Church	Rev. Randall D. Styx John R. Dirksen Loren Dirksen
St. John's Lutheran Church	Rev. M. L. Natterer Michael Fischer Larry Turner
St. Luke's Lutheran Church	Rev. P. R. Bloedel Paul Luedtke Victor Bloedel
St. Stephen's Lutheran Church	Rev. James W. Luedtke

In the absence of lay delegates from St. Stephen's Lutheran Church the pastoral delegate receives two (2) votes.

Total of 14 votes.

II. In this final report of the Committee, we inform the convention that the following were registered for the 29th annual convention:

- A. Pastors: Six (including Prof. O. W. Schaefer in an advisory capacity)
- B. Lay Delegates: Thirteen (including 5 alternates)
- C. Visitors: Forty-two (42)
- D. Observers: Mr. Ray Kusumi
- E. Total Number Registered: Thirty-seven (37)

Attendance at the Sunday Service: Eighty-two (82)

REPORT OF THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Dear Brethren in the Lord:

Since our last convention your Editorial Committee has, by the grace of God, produced and published six bi-monthly issues of the Concordia Lutheran. We have tried to provide a balance of Christ-centered articles which were informative, inspirational, and edifying to all our readers. Whether the subject was doctrinal or practical, our one aim was to show that God's Word alone is the sure Guide for our faith and life. With the fine cooperation of Pastor Bloedel and the Publishing House staff our issues have appeared on time, and we are most grateful for all the help of our brethren here in Seattle.

Throughout the year articles were solicited from our pastors and also from our laymen in sister congregations upon the approval of their pastors. The cooperation of all was most gratifying, and this made for great joy in compiling each issue. Our heartfelt thanks for such commendable assistance in helping us to carry out our responsibilities. For shortcomings in the production of our periodical we ask the Lord's pardon and praise and glorify His holy name for His guidance and blessing in the past year.

Upon the suggestion of the Board of Directors at its meeting in Tinley Park last June we will throughout this year feature articles which treat the history, personalities, and content of the Book of Concord as part of our observance of the 400th anniversary of that Book and the 450th anniversary of the Augsburg Confession. To date we have presented articles on the Creeds and Confessions, Article VII of the Augsburg Confession, and the life and work of Athanasius and Martin Chemnitz. Still to come are articles on Melancthon, Jacob Andreae, and others. We trust that our readers will be edified by this special material and be moved to join us in praising God for all the blessings which have come to us through the work of Luther and other faithful confessors of the truth.

There is nothing to report on the writing or production of tracts since your Committee did not have opportunity to meet or to consult on the matter. But we will endeavor to act on this in the near future. There is also no report on the revision of Sunday School materials by your Editor assisted by Candidate David T. Mensing and Pastor Randall Styx. For this we plead the press of duties during the past year. However, such revision will be undertaken as soon as feasible.

At last year's convention St. John's, Lebanon, Oregon, presented a Memorial which offered Guidelines for the Concordia Lutheran. After some discussion this Memorial was committed to the Editorial Staff for study and report to this convention. We now propose that in the opening paragraph, 1 Peter 2:2 be deleted, because it is not pertinent in the context, and that the following Bible passage be included: Hebrews 5:12-14, showing the distinction between the Word of God as "milk" - something easy to digest, and the Word of God as "meat" - something required by the mature Christian for the growth of his faith. Also in the paragraph on Subscriptions, which states that every family in our Conference should subscribe, we propose that this read; "should be encouraged to subscribe..." With this addition and change we recommend that the Memorial from St. John's be adopted at this convention.

Brethren, pray for us and for the continued blessing of the Lord upon our periodical to the glory of His name and the welfare of souls!

Respectfully submitted,
O. W. Schaefer, Editor

REPORT OF THE PUBLISHING HOUSE BOARD OF CONTROL

Scriptural Publications (Concordia Lutheran Conference) has concluded another year of service to our Conference in the area of the printed Word. During the past year the Concordia Lutheran periodical was printed (a total of 106 printed pages), together with all of the Sunday School leaflets and worksheets used by our congregations, as well as our Conference Constitution and the Agenda for this convention. We thank the Lord that our Publishing House was able to supply these worthwhile materials at a very modest expense to the Conference.

During the past year we acquired some needed fonts of mats for our linotype (as authorized by our last convention) so that the publication of our Conference materials may continue with as much facility as possible.

Our printer, Mr. Julius A. Schmitt, has again provided us with valuable, capable, and dependable work. He has been very careful to give of his time immediately and diligently as soon as the necessary copy for printing reaches his hands. This year it is RECOMMENDED that the so-called Publishing House subsidy be increased by \$ 200.00, making a total of \$ 1,200.00, to meet the rising costs of paper and to increase our printer's personal remuneration by \$ 1.00 per page in our Conference official organ. In this connection we also RECOMMEND that the \$ 1,000.00 held available for a Conference Book House be discontinued until such time as the revitalization of such a fund be needed.

In our last Publishing House report at Tinley Park we indicated that we would inform our Conference of the amount of money our printer makes personally by using our Conference machinery for secular job printing. This amount is exactly \$ 138.00 for the year 1979. It is understood, of course, that this figure will vary one way or the other from year to year relative to the number of job printing orders.

The Bloedel Print Shop (a licensed business) also serves a few printing accounts with the use of Conference machinery, but it is felt by our Board that such a modest use more than justifies itself in benefits which the Bloedel Print Shop supplies our Publishing House free of charge. It should, of course, be taken for granted that a proper use of the printing machinery is beneficial for the machinery itself and the facility of its use.

Our Publishing House is looking forward in the new fiscal year toward the printing of our Seminary Catalogue and perhaps some initial material on a revised Catechism and a popular history of our Conference together with our regular Conference printing obligations. May the Lord continue to bless our endeavors and efforts to His glory, the spiritual growth of the members of our Conference, the spiritual enlightenment of those outside our Conference, and the extension of His Kingdom. To this end, O Lord, through our humble efforts, send out Thy Light and Thy Truth! Amen.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul R. Bloedel, Chairman
(In consultation with the other pastoral
member of the Board, Randall D. Styx)



SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS
(Concordia Lutheran Conference)
FINANCIAL REPORT

6/1/79 - 5/31/80

Cash Balance, June 1, 1979		\$. 135.07
<u>Add Cash Receipts:</u>		
Sunday School Lessons	\$ 433.17	
Special Printing	43.81	
Concordia Lutheran Subscriptions	433.00	
Conference Subsidy	1,000.00	
Special Conference Allocations for mats	300.00	
Total Receipts		2,209.98
Total Cash Available		\$ 2,345.05
<u>Less Disbursements:</u>		
Gas and Electricity	--- --	
Rent (P.F. Luedtke Building)	600.00	
Material and Labor Costs:		
Sunday School Lessons	144.04	
Concordia Lutheran	849.40	
Other Conference Printing	123.81	
Mailing Costs:		
Sunday School Lessons	--- --	
Concordia Lutheran	115.00	
Equipment and Supplies Purchased	452.81	
Equipment Repairs	--- --	
Property Tax	39.18	
Total Expenditures		\$ 2,324.24
Cash Balance, May 31, 1980		\$ 20.81
Petty Cash	\$ 6.61	
Fixed Assets	5,033.29*	

* Original Investment -- not adjusted for Depreciation.

V.K. Bloedel, Business Manager

REPORT OF THE CONVENTION 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. We commend him for his complete and accurate records.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. O.H. Schaefer, Chairman
John R. Dirksen
Paul F. Luedtke

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Dear Brethren,

Your Committee on Theological Education rejoices with the faculty of our Seminary and with all the members of our Conference over the fact that 1980 has marked the graduation of another student, David T. Mensing--now Candidate for the Reverend Ministry. May the Lord graciously bless our new candidate as he looks forward into the future and keeps himself fit (through continued use of the Word) for the office of the ministry until the Lord calls him to fill such an office--the highest and only God-ordained office in the Church.

In the capacity of supervising both faculty and student body of our Seminary, the chairman of this committee met with the faculty after the close of our 1979 Convention at Tinley Park and discussed the curriculum as scheduled at that time for the part-time students as well as other matters relating to the administration of the Seminary.

Several months before this Convention the members of the faculty were contacted respectively by this Committee through its chairman for the purpose of discussing frankly with them their livelihood under their present salaries. Both professors indicated that although they could use an increase in salary because of the sharp increase in the present inflation raging throughout our nation, yet, by God's grace, they have been "making ends meet" and that, taking into consideration the present financial condition of our Conference, they would be willing to accept no raise in salary at this time. In the meantime, the professors were encouraged to get in touch with our Committee in the event any unusual need for financial help were to arise.

During the past year several young men have expressed an interest in our Seminary and it is our earnest hope and prayer that some of them will soon make attendance at our Seminary a reality. Actually, we have, before the Lord, the best little Seminary in the world. How fervently we should remember it in our prayers to the Lord that it may continue yet among us for many years and that many more men may sit at the feet of the professors whom our congregations have jointly called that the divinely ordained ministry of the Word may continue among us and among our children for generations to come. Oh dear Lord, hear us, be with us, and help us to this end for Thy mercy's sake! Amen.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul R. Bloodel, chairman
(in consultation with the other pastoral
member of this committee, Randall D. Styx)

REPORT OF THE SEMINARY PRESIDENT

Dear Brethren in the Lord:

"The Lord hath done great things for us; whereof we are glad!" Psalm 126:3. In these words of the beloved psalmist we, the faculty and students of our Seminary, ask you delegates and all the members of our Conference to join in declaring our gratitude to God for His many blessings upon the work of our Seminary during its eleventh year of operation. Again our heavenly Father has been good and faithful toward us all. Where we have failed because of our sinful weakness, we ask Him to pardon us, for Jesus' sake, and we turn to Him alone for our direction and strength also in the future.

The eleventh year of our Seminary began on Tuesday, October 2, 1979. The student body consisted of Mr. Gerald Luedtke of Park Forest, Illinois, and Mr. David T. Mensing of Orland Park, Illinois. Despite adjustments in the scheduling of classes because of the necessary secular work of the students the requirements for each course were in no way sacrificed, and the standards of the Seminary remained as high as always.

During the first semester Professor Mensing taught Homiletics II and Hebrew Grammar. Your President taught Old Testament Isagogics, Dogmatics II, Symbolics III, and Comparative Symbolics. Wherever possible, the program was accelerated in accord with the resolution of our Conference five years ago. Together with church duties for which each professor is also responsible, the weekly schedule was very full and demanded careful time budgeting for study and preparation. The first semester officially closed on February 1, 1980, followed by final examinations.

After a semester break classes resumed on February 19, 1980. During the second semester Professor Mensing taught Homiletics II and Hebrew Grammar. Your President taught Old Testament Isagogics, Symbolics III, and Comparative Symbolics. Toward the end of March Student Luedtke discontinued his studies temporarily because of very serious problems affecting his home and family. He felt compelled to devote all his time to the resolution of these matters, and the Faculty agreed with his decision, guiding him with God's Word to bring the issues involved to a proper conclusion. Mr. Luedtke does intend, God willing, to resume his studies in the fall and pursue that training which is still his chief desire. Meanwhile we pray that God would sustain him and direct all matters to a favorable resolution. The second semester concluded on May 20, 1980, followed by final examinations.

Less than two weeks ago Mr. David T. Mensing was graduated from our Seminary as a Candidate of the Reverend Ministry (c.r.m.) in the third service of its kind since the establishment of our institution at Tinley Park in 1969. It took place in the Sunday service of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church on June 8th. Associate Professor Mensing preached the sermon on the topic: "Why You Must Continue in the Things You Have Learned." basing his message on II Timothy 3:12-17. Your President was liturgist for this special service and also conducted the Graduation ceremony, assisted by Associate Professor Mensing, who gave the graduate his diploma and pronounced a special benediction on him. Congratulatory communications were read during the service from the Committee on Theological Education and from our sister churches in the Conference. The Lord granted sunny and cool 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. Just where Candidate Mensing will be used in the service of the Church only God knows, but all our Conference members should keep in mind that he is available so that his talents might be used through a regular call into the ministry as soon as opportunity for such service presents itself. We all wish Candidate Mensing the Lord's richest blessings upon His future labors. Incidentally, copies of the specially printed Graduation program are available to be shared with our brethren at this convention.

During the past school year we acquired some more out-of-print theological books from the libraries of deceased or retired Lutheran pastors from whose families we received wonderful assistance and for which we are most grateful.

We continue to receive monetary gifts from Concord Free Lutheran Church in Westlake, Ohio, the Rev. E. C. Mueller, pastor. This independent congregation has for several years shown its interest in our work through these gifts, and we have informed them of our gratitude.

Speaking of gifts, I wish to inform you that our sister congregation, St. Stephen's of Wilnot, S. D., has given our Seminary library a special gift of two books in memory of our departed brother, Mr. Walter Fischer. They are Profiles in Belief, by A. C. Piepkorn, Vol. I on Catholic Churches, and Vols. III and IV (combined) on Holiness, Pentecostal, Evangelical, Fundamentalist and other Christian bodies. Our sincere appreciation to the Wilnot church for these books as well as to others who gave monetary gifts to our Seminary also in memory of Mr. Fischer.

During the past school year we received two letters of inquiry about our entire Seminary training program. One was from a Mr. James L. Minnich of Bloomington, Illinois, who gave no further information about himself; the other was from a Mr. Raymond Kusumi at the University of Washington in Seattle. He stated that he would like to find a seminary "that offers a sound theological education, solidly grounded in the belief of the Holy Scripture as the Word of God." Your President wrote to both men and gave them all the necessary information about our institution. Mr. Minnich was encouraged to arrange for a personal visit with us, since he lives in Illinois. Mr. Kusumi was urged to get in touch with our Committee on Theological Education, Pastor Bloedel, chairman, and if possible, to attend our convention here in this city for any further information and personal contact with the Seminary staff. To date there has been no written reply from either man, but once again it becomes evident that our Conference and our Seminary are known to others outside of our fellowship. (Since the writing of this report, we have learned that Mr. Kusumi has been in touch with the C.T.E. and is also in attendance at this convention where the Seminary staff has become acquainted with him.)

We hope to have a new Seminary Catalog ready for printing this year. The body of material is being prepared, and several appropriate pictures must still be taken. Our congregations will be notified when it is available.

We again acknowledge with profound thanks the loving service of Mrs. H. David Mensing, who faithfully served as organist for our chapel devotions each Tuesday evening as faculty and students gathered about God's Word for inspiration and strength.

As we look ahead to the twelfth year of our Seminary work, there will be, as of this writing, only ONE student, Mr. Gerald Luedtke, who will take such courses as can be conveniently scheduled for him. We have NO definite prospects at this time; we want more students, and toward this goal we all must pray and work! Mindful that our pastors are growing older and that the possibility of death or incapacitating illness is ever present, let us do all we can to recruit new students, and let us continue to give generously to our pastoral training program so that God's pure Word may reign among us and among generations to come! May each one of us do his part to keep our Seminary functioning to the glory of God and to the welfare of the Church of today and of tomorrow!

On behalf of the faculty and students I sincerely thank all the members of our Conference for their prayers and gifts in the past as well as Peace Congregation for the continued use of its facilities. God bless you richly and enable you to continue to pray and give for this vital work in our midst! We conclude with the prayer:

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 COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS

Dear brethren in Christ:

The past year was not a busy year for the Committee on Missions. Not having any organized mission program for the Conference, no accomplishments in such an area can be reported. Nevertheless, in accordance with the constitutional requirements of this committee and in keeping with its responsibilities, your chairman has the following report.

In connection with our mission congregation, Trinity Lutheran Church, Coos Bay, Oregon, a request has again been submitted for subsidy. In the mid year report of its pastor, Trinity stated, "Financially our congregation is stable (with the subsidy currently being provided by the conference). Our savings have not increased very much over the past year, but at no time has there been a financial crisis. Considering this and considering the desire the men have here one day to be able to stand more and more on their own, the congregation decided in January not to ask for any increase in the subsidy figure but to request that it remain the same." This figure is currently \$5,180 per year. However the Conference treasurer requested that for ease in bookkeeping, checkwriting, etc., this figure be adjusted to \$5,184, an increase of a mere four dollars annually.

Since Pastor Styx of Trinity Lutheran Church will be submitting an interest report to the convention following this report, I will not duplicate his material at this time by discussing other matters relating to the past year's activities in our mission congregation.

Concerning the Mission articles that have been appearing regularly in the The Concordia Lutheran, your chairman, who was asked to write the series, is happy to report that the final two parts, 10 and 11, have been submitted for print. These will be printed in subsequent issues at the discretion of the editorial staff. Again the hope is expressed that these have in some way been beneficial to the readers.

Relating to still another matter, the change of wording suggested last convention by the Mission Committee in Article IX, Sec. 1, C of the Conference Constitution, I would simply report that the matter was disposed of in favor of the suggestion by a referendum of our congregations. You will recall that the change dealt with the matter of the deadline for submitting subsidy requests. (For the wording of the change, see 1979 Proceedings p. 28, recommendation 2.) Dated Dec. 3, 1979, a letter was addressed to each congregation informing them that the referendum had passed in favor of the constitutional amendment.

It was with joy and gladness in the Lord that our congregations also received the news of the graduation of Mr. David T. Mensing on June 8, 1980 from the Concordia Theological Seminary, (CLC) Tinley Park, Illinois. Regretfully, however, we note that in our Conference there are no congregations vacant at this time. The responsibility which this lays upon the Mission Committee of our Conference ought to be obvious. Plans for some organized mission outreach ought now soon to be studied and put into action under the supervision of this committee. However, since this area of endeavor has been virtually unexplored in our Conference, your present committee chairman, as well as most of the Mission Committee, have had no experience in organizing such an undertaking.

A further difficulty is seen in the lack of money in our Conference Mission

Fund, because even though there is an excess of \$25,000 in that fund, it has taken many years to build up. Besides, the interest that this money produces has been necessary to meet our obligations to Trinity, Coos Bay, since the present pledges from the congregations do not reach the \$5,180 subsidy which they have been receiving from the Conference. Thus if the present arrangements are to be sustained, the sum in the Mission Fund is virtually untouchable. This means that in order to continue our present operation and at the same time reach out into a new mission field, by for example, calling Mr. Mensing as a Conference missionary, a very substantial increase in spending would be required, an increase that would be impossible without increased pledges by our congregations. These difficulties as well as means of overcoming them ought seriously to be considered, if we are a mission-minded organization.

In the light of this report, your committee would like to make the following recommendations to the Conference at this convention:

- 1.) that a subsidy of \$5,184 be granted Trinity Lutheran Church, Coos Bay, Oregon (according to their request as altered by the Treasurer), yielding a monthly subsidy of an even \$432.00 instead of the previous odd figure of \$431.66; and
- 2.) that the Conference discuss the problem of expanding our organized mission outreach and instruct the Mission Committee how to proceed in exploring new mission fields, and expanding and developing our Mission Program, so that we may inform our people of a tangible need for increased mission offerings and encourage and exhort one another to meet this need out of love to our Savior who has instructed us, "Preach the Gospel to every creature." (Mark 16:15)

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. James W. Luedtke, chairman

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LUTHERAN UNION

Dear Brethren in the Lord:

We herewith present a report of the activity which engaged your Committee since we last met in convention. Because of pressing circumstances we have not been able to fulfil all our responsibilities, but we praise God for His continued guidance and blessing and beseech Him, for Jesus' sake, to grant us pardon for all our failings and shortcomings.

First of all, you will recall that last year's convention directed your Committee to determine the feasibility of further meetings with the Lutheran Churches of the Reformation in view of developments affecting its constituency during the past several years and that in the event meetings resume, they be held only as long as the agenda agreed upon is followed and further progress is made toward finding true unity. However, because of the press of church and Seminary work it was impossible for your Committee to meet and to make a thorough study of the developments in the L.C.R. For the present, negotiations remain at a standstill. With God's help we shall endeavor during the coming year to carry out the directive of the 1979 convention (with necessary limitations) and report our findings to the delegates next June.

Last year's convention also directed your Committee to endeavor to arrange a meeting with the Church of the Lutheran Confession at the earliest possible date, if a favorable reply were received from that group to our proposal of March 8, 1979, which initiated an inquiry whether their Board of Doctrine was willing "to meet with us to study, examine, and possibly re-evaluate their position (on Church and Ministry) on the basis of Scripture alone and give us at the same time opportunity to explain and defend our Theses on the same basis." On July 19, 1979 we received a response from President Albrecht of the CoLC, in which he stated that their Board of Doctrine had met on July 11th and considered our letter of inquiry. The decision of the Board was as follows: "We respectfully decline your invitation, since your Synod's resolution declares from the outset that our position is heretical. A meeting of our two groups was held on May 14-15, 1968, in which the doctrine of Church and Ministry was thoroughly discussed. Since there was no agreement then, and since there has been no change in the position of either side since then, we can see little hope of any fruitful results from another meeting." In the light of this decision the CoLC has made it impossible for us to arrange a meeting with them and has closed the matter.

At our 1979 convention the suggestion was made that your Committee look into the doctrinal position of Lutherans Alert, a group striving to combat liberalism and modernistic trends within the ALC. Since it was impossible for your Committee to meet, as we have stated above, also this matter was not attended to, but as time permits, we shall endeavor to make a study of this group and bring a report to the Conference.

With regard to pastors and congregations which left the L.C.R. because they claimed a change in the latter's doctrinal position, our 1978 convention had passed the resolution that definite efforts be made by your Committee to contact them, offering them an opportunity to present their doctrinal position to us. At that time these pastors had not yet formally organized. Last year's convention reaffirmed that resolution, and your Committee proposed to write to or meet with these pastors as individuals or as a group, if that could be arranged. In the spring of this year we learned that these pastors (there are six on their clergy roster) had formed an organization called Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations. Pastor R. J. Lietz of Oak Park, Illinois, is President,

and Pastor Dale Ness of St. Charles, Missouri, is Secretary.

On May 7th your Committee chairman wrote a letter to Pastor Lietz and inquired whether their Doctrinal Committee would be interested in meeting with our Union Committee to discuss doctrine and practice in the light of Holy Scripture. On May 13th we received a reply from Pastor Lietz in which he asked several questions of information, listed the pastors in their group, and requested materials pertaining to our Conference. We sent him a copy of our Constitution, copies of the 1978 and 1979 Proceedings, and two recent issues of the Concordia Lutheran. Since this church body will not meet again until April, 1981, we requested some preliminary decision from them which could then be reported to our delegates here in Seattle. Pastor Lietz assured us that he would convey something definite to us before this convention.

On June 14th we received another letter from Pastor Lietz in which he stated the following: "Speaking for our Doctrinal Committee, I want to inform you that in view of the fact that your 1979 Convention left open the possibility of further meetings with the LCR, we will have to decline meetings with your Committee on Lutheran Union at the present time. When you complete your meetings with the LCR, we would appreciate knowing the results of those sessions. Furthermore, we desire not to enter into discussions with other bodies (not only your CLC) unless we are instructed to do so by our convention. Also, since we of the FLC cannot accept some of the doctrine and practice in the present LCR, I am sure that you can well understand why we have no choice but to wait on any definite decision on discussions with you until we know the outcome of your meetings with LCR. We will look forward to hearing from you in the future." In the light of this letter the matter of meeting with this group of pastors is held in abeyance.

In closing this report, we offer the following recommendations:

- a) That the Committee on Lutheran Union resume its study of developments in the LCR and determine the feasibility of further negotiations with this church body.
- b) That the Committee on Lutheran Union look into the doctrinal position of Lutherans Alert National and bring a report of its findings to the next convention.

Now 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 Jesus Christ, His Son, the Spirit of unity and the power to do His will!"

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. O. W. Schaefer, chairman
Rev. James W. Luedtke
Prof. H. David Mensing
Mr. David T. Mensing

1979-1980 STATISTICAL REPORT
 June 1, 1979 to May 31, 1980

I. PAROCHIAL (of member congregations):

Number of Congregations	5
Ordained Pastors (inc. 1 assistant pastor)	6
Baptized Members	344
Communicant Members	246
Voting Members	74
Children in the Sunday Schools	74
Adults Regularly Attending the Bible Class	114
Communicants Received	8
Severances	11
Baptisms	12
Confirmations (Adults and Children)	8
Marriages	2
Burials	4
Sunday School Teachers	19
Superintendents	1
Elected Church Officers	40
Organists	10
Choir Members	15
Congregations Owning their Church Property	5
Total Acreage	9.4
Total Valuation of Real Estate\$ 542,000.00 (Est)

II. INSTITUTIONAL (of our Seminary):

Professors	2
Current Students	2
Graduates to Date	2

Respectfully submitted,

David T. Mensing, Statistician
 Board Member-at-Large (Midwest)

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR FISCAL 1979 - 80

RECEIPTS	GENERAL	SEMINARY	MISSIONS		
St. John's - Lebanon	600.00	3,000.00	508.00		
St. Luke's - Seattle	216.00	864.00	120.00		
Peace - Tinley Park	1,080.00	5,740.00†	3,325.00†		
St. Stephen's - Wilmot	360.00	3,720.00	1,200.00		
Trinity - Coos Bay	145.00	380.00			
Interest*	193.20		2,741.69		
Convention Collection	75.42				
Loan Payment (from Seminary)	200.00				
Concord Free Luth. Ch. (Ohio)**		147.00			
Stock Payments		21.65			
Joint West Coast Reformation Fest.			72.17		
TOTAL	\$ 2,869.62	\$ 13,872.65	\$ 7,966.86		
EXPENDITURES	BUDGETED	EXPENDED	UNEXPENDED		
- GENERAL FUND -					
Scrip. Pub. Oper. Sbsy.	1,000.00	1,000.00	---		
Telephone	200.00	107.92	92.08		
Travel	750.00	860.00	- 110.00		
Convention	300.00	307.44	- 7.44		
Miscellaneous	250.00	610.28	- 360.28		
Printing -- Const. & Catalogue	170.00	---	170.00		
Tuition Matching Program		178.00	- 178.00		
TOTAL	\$ 2,670.00	\$ 3,063.64	- \$ 393.64		
- SEMINARY FUND -					
Professor's Salary	7,266.00	7,266.00	---		
Housing Allowance	3,846.00	3,846.00	---		
Assoc. Prof. Salary	2,340.00	2,340.00	---		
Facilities	100.00	100.00	---		
Library	10.00	12.00	- 2.00		
Stock	65.00	110.72	- 45.72		
Periodicals	85.00	60.50	24.50		
Miscellaneous	25.00	216.34	- 191.34		
TOTAL	\$ 13,737.00	\$ 13,951.56	- \$ 214.56		
Loan from General Fund Status:	Payments: \$ 200.00	Balance Due: \$ 1,400.00			
- MISSION FUND -					
Subsidy - Trinity, Coos Bay	\$ 5,180.00	\$ 5,180.00	---		
SUMMARY OF FUNDS	PREVIOUS BALANCE	RECEIPTS	EXPENSES	CURRENT BALANCE	NET CHANGE
General	3,093.11	2,869.62†	3,063.64	2,899.09	- 194.00
Seminary	250.40	13,872.65‡	13,951.56	171.49††	- 78.91
Mission	23,137.76	7,966.86‡	5,180.00	25,924.62	+ 2,786.86
Library	1,292.12	198.15‡‡	129.01	1,361.26	+ 69.14
Building	6,480.87	739.89*	---	7,218.76	+ 737.89
Retirement	6,738.94	807.52*	---	7,546.46	+ 807.52
Travel	90.31	5.00*	---	95.31	+ 5.00
Tuition	1,270.79	766.94***	---	2,037.73	+ 766.94
TOTAL	\$ 42,354.30	\$ 27,224.63	\$ 22,324.21	\$ 47,254.72	+ \$ 4,900.42

* Interest earnings; Total for fiscal year: \$ 4,794.39 ** An independent Lutheran body interested in our Conference † This figure should read \$ 250.85 on the March report. †† This figure should read \$ 171.49 on the May report. ‡ Includes Memorial for Walter F. Fischer from Peace; Seminary: \$ 40.00; Mission \$ 300.00 ‡‡ Includes \$ 148.15 interest & 50.00 Memorial for Walter F. Fischer from St. Stephen's *** Includes \$ 160.94 interest; \$ 178.00 Tuition matching; & \$ 428.00 Tuition payments

Respectfully submitted,

Jeffery W. Styx, Treasurer - C.L.C.

REPORT OF THE AUDITING COMMITTEE

Pursuant to the decision of the 28th Annual Convention that, in lieu of an audit at the time of conventions by an appointed convention committee, "two or three members of the congregation in which the Treasurer is located carefully and thoroughly audit the records of the Treasurer before the convention takes place...bringing their report to the convention when it convenes." Peace Congregation in Tinley Park elected the undersigned members of its Voters' Assembly to carry out this task.

This committee met with the Conference Treasurer, Jeffery W. Styx, on June 10, 1980, and examined his financial records in minute detail. At the conclusion of this exhaustive audit, the members of the Auditing Committee unanimously agreed that the records of the Treasurer are in good order, that all funds are properly accounted for, and that the Treasurer's methods and procedures have been and are thoroughly sound.

The Auditing Committee would also commend the Treasurer for his wise stewardship of Conference funds, in that those monies which are not needed for day-to-day disbursements are invested in interest-bearing certificates of deposit with the highest possible rate of return. The additional monies realized in this manner are of significant benefit to the overall financial outlook of our Conference. We herewith express gratitude to the Lord of the Church for the rich measure of wisdom with which He has blessed our Treasurer for the ultimate good of His kingdom among us.

Respectfully submitted,

The Auditing Committee:
Gerald M. Luedtke
Lloyd D. Martin
David T. Mensing

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE FOR THE PAST FISCAL YEAR, 1979-80

Dear Brethren in Christ,

"Oh give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good.!" Yes, indeed: How richly our Lord has blessed our conference's finances! For we note the total balance in all funds has increased nearly \$ 5,000.00, in spite of the negative economic situation in our nation over the past year.

During the past year the one four year certificate of deposit reached maturity and was transferred to a "Super T" certificate of deposit for a better interest rate. At present there are seven active accounts: one checking account, three passbook savings accounts, and three "Super T" accounts. Super T certificates of deposit this year have paid record high interest rates, at times exceeding 16%. The rate on one of our accounts was approximately 15%. It should be noted that this interest rate is always fluctuating, the current rate being approximately 7%. Since the majority of our funds are in these accounts, we have gained a substantial amount of interest. Passbook savings received $5\frac{3}{4}$ % interest this year. The total interest in all accounts for the year was approximately \$ 4,800.00. One way that we could receive more interest would be to invest in our mission endeavors, where our gain would be spiritual and far more valuable.

We have also received this year approximately \$ 400.00 in special memorials in loving memory of our brother in Christ, Walter F. Fischer. This is a wonderful expression of our love for him and his efforts for our conference -- efforts which we will miss greatly -- as well as an expression of thanks to the Lord for having given us such a faithful servant.

We note also the substantial amount received from Concord Free Lutheran Church of Westlake, Ohio (an independent Lutheran congregation interested in our Seminary), of which \$ 100.00 was a memorial for one of their members who passed away.

Another special receipt this year came from our West Coast congregations; namely, a collection from their special joint Reformation Festival held in the fall.

In our Seminary Fund we had a positive condition in our balance, due mostly to special donations to this fund, and your Treasurer was able to pay back to the General Fund \$ 200.00 of the monies loaned.

Requests for pledges to the Conference were sent to the congregations at the end of March. Upon receipt of these pledges your Finance Committee set up a proposed budget for the coming year based on these pledges, requests, and the needs of the individual funds. (This will be gone over in the report concerning the budget.)

The year on the whole has been a positive one. Even though our net change in all funds is only \$ 100.00 more than the interest earnings, we seem in general to have held our own in the working funds. This is very good to see and certainly a mark of our Lord's governing hand and blessings. Now may we continue with the prayer that the Lord will bless our labor and sacrifices so that we may ever be solvent financially, carry out our joint efforts, and reap their blessings. Because of conditions at these last times, it may not be easy, humanly speaking. Still, let us go ahead with the strength of our Lord to meet and overcome the stones in our path and to continue this positive direction and attitude, always to His glory.

Respectfully submitted,
The Finance Committee
Loren Dirksen
Larry Reil
Bill Schrader
Jeffery W. Styx, Chairman

REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE BUDGET FOR FISCAL YEAR 1980 - 1981

Dear Brethren in Christ,

Your Finance Committee was very concerned this year about the effects of the current economic conditions in our country on the pledges to the conference. The results of the pledges, however, have wonderfully relieved that concern.

Looking at the responses to our letter requesting pledges, we note the results, as follows:

(see next page)

	GENERAL	SEMINARY	MISSION	(all/mc.)
St. John's	\$ 50.00	\$ 250.00	\$ 30.00	
St. Luke's	18.00	72.00	10.00	
Peace	90.00	475.00	250.00	
St. Stephen's	30.00	310.00	100.00	
Trinity	<u>15.00</u>	<u>62.00</u>	<u> </u>	
Total/month	\$ 203.00	\$ 1,169.00	\$ 390.00	
Total/year	\$ 2,436.00	\$ 14,028.00	\$ 4,680.00	

In spite of trying times for some, all our congregations have continued their past year's pledge and one congregation has even increased their pledge. By the grace of God, Trinity congregation has almost doubled their pledge to the Seminary Fund. This has pleased our committee, for we are greatly concerned for our professors and the effects of inflation on their livelihood. With this pledge we are able to give a slight increase in our professors' salaries, though previously we could not foresee such action this year. Here we can truly see the results of spiritual growth in their congregation.

In light of the needs in the conference and considering the funds available, some changes from the budget of last year were made in this year's proposed budget, and are reflected on page 4 of the Prospectus. The proposed budget is as follows:

GENERAL FUND		SEMINARY FUND		MISSION FUND
Scrip. Pub. Op. Subsidy	1,200.00	Prof. Salary	7,272.00	
Telephone	150.00	House. Allow.	4,092.00	Mission Subsidy;
Travel	600.00	Assoc. Prof. Sal.	2,388.00	Trinity, Coos Bay
Convention	300.00	Facilities	100.00	
Tuition Matching	100.00	Library	12.00	\$ 5,184.00
Miscellaneous	300.00	Stock	69.00	
		Periodicals	75.00	
		Miscellaneous	20.00	
Total:	\$ 2,650.00	Total:	\$ 14,028.00	Total:
				\$ 5,184.00

Explanation of the changes are as follows:

General Fund: This year a request was made by the Publishing House Board of Control to increase their subsidy by \$ 200.00. Also included was the Tuition Matching Program of \$ 100.00. In order to make these revisions, changes had to be made in the other budgeted items, since pledged receipts have not changed. Therefore, the telephone was cut \$ 50.00; for last year this item was well in the black. Anticipated travel for this coming year is not seen to be as great and therefore this was cut \$ 150.00. The item for Constitution and Seminary Catalogue was deleted in favor of simply taking this expense out of the General Fund balance; for this item has been budgeted for two years with no activity. If we are to have expenditures for these items, we suggest the above payment procedure; for they would not be a regular on-going expenditure.

Seminary Fund: With the increase in the pledges here an increase in salaries of approximately 2% was possible. In order to make these figures come out even, noting also the red balances on some of the indi-

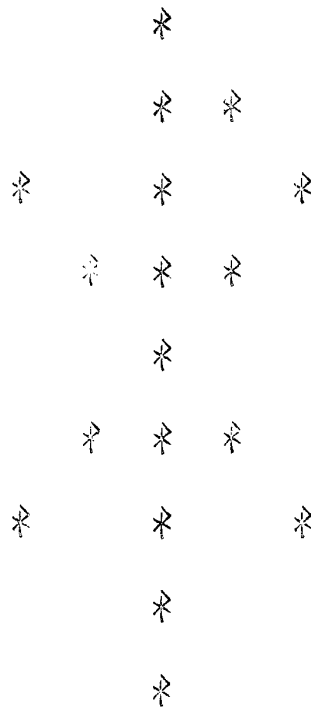
vidual items, other figures have been slightly changed.

Mission Fund: Although Trinity Congregation requested no change, your Treasurer requested this \$ 4 increase to make the monthly figure an even \$ 432.00 per month, thus making bookkeeping a little easier.

These changes were made by the Finance Committee to reflect the needs of the various funds more accurately, based on information received by this Committee. Under the Lord's blessing let us make our decisions.

Respectfully Submitted,

The Finance Committee
Loren Dirksen
Larry Reil
Bill Schrader
Jeffery W. Styx, Chairman



MINUTES

of the 29th Annual Convention of the Concordia Lutheran Conference

The 29th Annual Convention of the Concordia Lutheran Conference opened on June 20, 1980, at 9:30 a.m., with a Divine Service in which President M.L. Natterer of Lebanon, Oregon, preached the sermon based on John 7: 25 - 31, with the theme, "He Speaketh Boldly". The host pastor, the Rev. P.R. Bloedel, served as liturgist.

The Convention proper as well as the first session convened at 11:35 a.m., with a brief devotion by the President. Immediately the Convention committees were appointed as outlined in the Convention Prospectus, p. 2.

The Initial Report of the Committee on Registration and Excuses (Proceedings, page 29) was given by committee member Mr. Michael Fischer. It was reported that all but two delegates were present, the lay delegates from St. Stephen's being unable to attend, yielding a total number of fourteen (14) possible votes. It was moved and seconded to accept this report. The motion was carried.

President Natterer then gave his annual report. Vice-president O.W. Schaefer took the chair during this report. In his Presidential Report (Proceedings, p. 27) Pastor Natterer reviewed some of the events of the past year; including the referendum on the constitutional amendment, his actions regarding the Aid Association for Lutherans pursuant to the directions of the last convention, and his part in fulfilling the desire of the Conference to dedicate this Convention to the anniversaries of the Lutheran Confessions. It was moved and seconded to accept this report, subject to review. The motion was carried and the Vice-president appointed the following review committee:

the Rev. H. D. Mensing
Mr. Paul F. Luedtke
Mr. John Dirksen

After a brief scan of the printed Agenda, it was moved and seconded to accept it as adjusted by the Convention. The motion was carried.

The oral Report of the Press Committee, given by the Rev. O.W. Schaefer, stated that no article had been submitted to local papers concerning our Convention. It was moved and seconded to receive this brief oral report.

Mr. David T. Mensing (the Conference statistician, as appointed by the Board of Directors) handed out mimeographed sheets listing the pertinent statistics of our Conference congregations. After reviewing orally the material, the report was received by motion.

The morning session adjourned at 12:00 noon for the noon lunch hour.

The sessions reconvened at 1:15 p.m., with a devotion conducted by the Rev. H. David Mensing during which Hymn 292 was sung, Eph. 2 was read, and a prayer was offered to the Lord.

The agenda then continued with the reading of Part I of the first convention essay commemorating the anniversaries of our Lutheran Confessions. It was delivered by the Rev. Randall D. Styx and was entitled, "The Authority of Scripture According to the Lutheran Confessions" (Proceedings, p. 10 - 21). The first part of the essay treated how the Confessions plainly state and confess the absolute authority of Scripture with regard to matters of faith and doctrine. Brief discussion centered on the concepts of causative and normative authority.

At 2:30 p.m., Prof. O.W. Schaefer, Secretary pro-tem of the Board of Directors, gave the recommendations of the Board.

* The first recommendation, dealing with the question of whether recording devices ought to be allowed at various Conference meetings, read as follows: "That in the official meetings of our Conference (pastoral conferences, Board meetings, and convention sessions) we do not permit that recording devices be used, but that only written notes by the Secretary be kept for our official record." The rationale for this recommendation was two-fold; namely, that sometimes, due to our sinful flesh, we say things that ought not be said and, charitably, these things ought not be preserved permanently; also, practically speaking, some individuals feel too inhibited to speak when they know they are being recorded. It was moved and seconded to adopt this recommendation. The motion was carried.

* The second recommendation of the Board stated: "That the Rev. H.D. Mensing, as agent for the Conference, be authorized to explore the matter of re-incorporation of the Conference as a 'religions corporation' in the State of Illinois, and that this authorization include reasonable legal consultation, if necessary, as well as the actual filing of the proper form." The purpose of the recommendation was to eliminate the present need of re-filing forms each year, since the Conference is presently incorporated as 'a not-for-profit organization', which status requires this. This recommendation of the Board was also adopted by motion.

Following a recess at 2:45 p.m., the Convention reconvened at 3:20 with the Report of the Finance Committee for the past fiscal year (Proceedings, p. 42), given by the Treasurer, Mr. Jeffery W. Styx. It was moved and seconded to receive this report. The motion was carried.

The Elections Committee began its work with a request that the Convention set aside a moment of time in memory of Walter F. Fischer, who had the past year been taken to his eternal rest and who had for many years served as an officer in our Conference, and, to that end, that his former pastor, the Rev. M.L. Natter, lead the delegates and visitors in a brief prayer. President Natterer offered the following prayer in his memory:

O dearest heavenly Father, at this time we call to mind the blessings Thou didst bestow upon our Conference through the faithful labors of our dear departed brother, Walter Fischer. Thou didst call him to appear before Thee in the noontide of his life and labors. We humble ourselves under Thy Holy Will and reverence Thy Ways, although Thy judgments are unsearchable and Thy Ways past finding out. Enable us to comfort ourselves with the consideration that we have not lost him; but only sent him before, firmly believing that on the Last Day Thou wilt raise him up and that then we shall see one another in eternal life. Help us, we beseech Thee, that we may, like Walter, always strive to reveal the fruits of faith in an ever-increasing measure through faithful service in Thy Kingdom, for Jesus' sake. Amen.

The nominations and elections then proceeded as follows:

Nominated for President: Pastors Mensing, Natterer, Bloedel, and Schaefer
Elected: M.L. Natterer

Nominated for Vice-President: Pastors Schaefer, Mensing, and Styx
Elected: O.W. Schaefer

Nominations for Secretary: Pastors Luedtke and Styx
 Elected: Randall D. Styx

Nominations for Treasurer: Messrs. Jeffery W. Styx and Victor K. Bloedel
 Elected: Jeffery W. Styx

Nominated for Board Member-at-Large -- Far West: Messrs. John R. Dirksen, Paul F. Luedtke, Victor K. Bloedel, Loren R. Dirksen, Henry Fischer, and Michael Fischer

Elected: John R. Dirksen

Nominated for Board Member-at-Large -- Mid-West: Messrs. David T. Mensing (CRM), Lloyd E. (Bud) Martin, and Charles Miller.

Elected: David T. Mensing (CRM)

Proposed slates and election of standing committees: (first named as chairman)

Editorial Committee:

A.	B.	C.	<u>D. Elected</u>
Pastor Schaefer	Pastor Styx	Pastor Styx	<u>Pastor Schaefer</u>
Pastor Mattereder	Pastor Luedtke	Pastor Luedtke	<u>Pastor Luedtke</u>
Michael Fischer	Lloyd E. Martin	Michael Fischer	<u>Michael Fischer</u>

Committee on Theological Education:

<u>A. Elected</u>	B.
Pastor Bloedel	Pastor Bloedel
Pastor Styx	Pastor Luedtke
Lloyd E. Martin	Lloyd E. Martin
Victor K. Bloedel	Robert G. Bloedel

Committee on Missions:

<u>A. Elected</u>	B.
Pastor Luedtke	Pastor Schaefer
Pastor Mattereder	Pastor Bloedel
Loren R. Dirksen	Lloyd E. Martin
Ronald Schlaht	Larry Turner
Jeffery W. Styx	Stephen Bloedel

Committee on Lutheran Union:

<u>A. Elected</u>	B.
Vice-President (O.W.S.) by Constitution	
Secretary (R.D.S.) by Constitution	
Professor Mensing	Professor Mensing
David T. Mensing (CRM)	Robert G. Bloedel

Publishing House Board of Control

<u>A. Elected</u>	B.
Pastor Bloedel	Pastor Bloedel
Pastor Styx	Pastor Mensing
Dale Ellis	Ronald Schlaht
Victor K. Bloedel	Victor K. Bloedel
Paul F. Luedtke	Paul F. Luedtke

Finance Committee

A.	B. Elected
Treasurer, J. Styx	Treasurer, J. Styx
Loren Dirksen	Loren Dirksen
Bill Schrader	Ment Frerichs
Larry Reil	Dale Ellis

Following the completion of the elections it was moved and seconded to make all elections unanimous. The motion was unanimously carried.

Next the Report of the Committee on Missions (Proceedings, p. 36) was given by Pastor Luedtke. It contained two recommendations. Along with this report an oral interest report was presented by Pastor Styx concerning our mission congregation, Trinity Lutheran of Coos Bay, Oregon, in which he summarized the activities of the pastor and congregation over the past year. The motion to receive both reports was carried.

Adjournment of the Friday sessions followed at 5:35 p.m., with the intention of taking up the Mission Committee recommendations in the Saturday sessions.

Saturday, June 21, 1980

The Saturday morning session was begun with a devotion by Pastor Luedtke. Hymn 536 was sung, followed by Isaiah 55 and a prayer. The devotion closed with Hymn 276.

The minutes of the Friday session were presented and adopted as read.

Pastor Styx then continued with Part II of his essay on the Authority of Scripture according to the Lutheran Confessions. Remarks and comments following the reading emphasized the frequency with which the Confessions refer to and quote Scripture (estimated over 1,000 times) as compared with the writings of other church bodies, as, for example, the Roman Catholic Church and Reformed Churches, which place church councils, opinions of men, etc., on a par with Scripture in practice and frequently elevate them above the Scripture. Also discussed was the fine distinction we make in accepting the Confessions; namely, that we do not hold to them merely "in so far as" (Latin: quatenus) they teach the Scripture truth; rather, we subscribe to the Lutheran Confessions "because" (Latin: quia) they teach the Scripture truth. Following the discussion the essay was accepted with thanks to the essayist for his thorough work.

The Chairman of the Mission Committee, the Rev. James W. Luedtke, then resumed the leading of the discussion of the recommendations of his committee. Pastor Styx assisted him at this time in his secretarial duties.

- * The Mission Committee's first Recommendation, to grant Trinity Lutheran Church of Coos Bay, Oregon, a subsidy of \$ 5,184.00 per year (\$ 432.00/ mo.), was moved, seconded, and carried.
- * The Committee's second Recommendation, to discuss the problem(s) of expanding our mission outreach and instruct the Committee as to how to proceed, etc. (see text Proceedings, p. 37), was also carried. Pursuant to the adoption of this recommendation the assembled delegates took time to discuss the matter. Following a question asking how we might contact many independent Lutherans who need pastors, President Fatterer authorized all of the pastors to make contacts in his behalf, noting, however, that he would need to be kept informed and, where there would be any overlapping of functions with the Committee on Lutheran Union, its chairman should also be contacted.

Following a question as to how best and properly to search out those interested, it was moved and seconded that we put an announcement in our Conference periodical, requesting that other interested congregations who need a pastor contact our conference. It was suggested to include a brief summary of Christian doctrine. Because this action involved many facets and ramifications for the Mission Committee, it was moved and seconded to commit the motion to the Resolutions Committee for a proper wording and a definite statement for the editor of the Concordia Lutheran to include in the periodical, possibly every time. The motion to commit was carried. (See Resolution #2, p 56; Minutes p 51)

It was asked if it would be in order to submit articles or letters to the forum sections of certain publications as, for example, Christian News, and thus put forth our position. It was cautioned that we be careful that thereby we do not give implied approval to Christian News. It was suggested we rather take note of the ads and letters placed therein by others and send to their writers copies of our Concordia Lutheran as well as other information.

The Report of the Committee on Theological Education followed and was presented by Pastor Bloedel. (See Proceedings, p. 33) Together with this report Professor/President C.V. Schaefer gave his Report of the Seminary President (also p. 33). Their reports highlighted the activities of the Seminary over the past year, rejoicing especially in the graduation of Mr. David T. Mensing and his becoming a Candidate of the Reverend Ministry among us. Also highlighted were prospects for possible new students for our Seminary. The motion to receive this report was carried.

The Editorial Committee then reported through its chairman, Pastor Schaefer. It referred to past articles in the Concordia Lutheran relating to the anniversary of our conference and contained a recommendation concerning the Memorial of St. John's to the 1979 Convention (See 1979 Proceedings, p. 39). It was moved and seconded to receive this report. The motion was carried. (This report with its recommendation may be found on page 30 of these Proceedings.)

- * Regarding the recommendation concerning the Memorial (This Memorial proposed guidelines for the Concordia Lutheran.), it was moved and seconded to accept the adjustments of the St. John's Memorial as recommended by the Editorial
- * Committee. The motion was carried. It was then moved and seconded that we adopt the resolve of the Memorial presented by St. John's Lutheran Church in 1979 (though not its whereases), as amended by this Convention, as an amplification of our express statement of purpose for the Concordia Lutheran. The motion was carried.

The noon lunch break was observed at 12:00 noon.

At 1:30 p.m., the afternoon session convened with a devotion by Pastor Styx in which Hymn 266 was sung, followed by the reading of II Tim. 1: 8-13 and a prayer.

Pastor Bloedel then presented his report on behalf of the Publishing House Board of Control (Proceedings, p. 31). It contained two recommendations; the first concerning the operational subsidy and the second concerning the funds held available for a conference book house. It was moved and seconded to receive this report. The motion was carried.

- * It was moved and seconded to adopt Recommendation #1 of the Board of Control; namely, that the operational subsidy be increased by \$ 200.00 from \$ 1,000.00 to \$ 1,200.00. The motion was carried.

- * It was moved and seconded to adopt Recommendation #2 of the Publishing House Board of Control; namely, that the \$1,000.00 reserve for a conference book house be discontinued until such time as it is needed. Carried.

The financial report of the publishing house for the last fiscal year (Proceedings, p. 32) was presented by Mr. Victor K. Bloedel in connection with the previous report. This report was accepted by motion.

- * It was moved and seconded that we authorize the publishing house, Scriptural Publications, to reprint the Concordia Lutheran article on Church and Ministry as a pamphlet, at least 500 copies at an approximate cost of \$ 50.00, this cost to be defrayed by the Conference General Fund. The motion was carried.

The report of the Committee to review the President's report, given by Pastor Mensing, approved Pastor Natterer's report. (See Proceedings, p. 20) The motion to receive this report was carried and the Presidential Report was thereby fully approved.

The report of the Auditing Committee (See Proceedings, p. 32) was given by John Dirksen. This committee, which this year reviewed only the books of Scriptural Publications, found them to be accurate and in good order. It was moved, seconded, and carried to accept this report.

The report of the special congregational Auditing Committee (authorized 1979 Proceedings, p. 43) was given by Mr. David T. Mensing (CRM) (see these Proceedings, p. 42). This report concerned the books of the Conference Treasurer. These books, too, were found to be in good order. The motion to receive this report was carried.

There followed discussion of auditing matters. It was suggested that St. Luke's Lutheran Church, Seattle, Washington, also perform an audit of the books of Scriptural Publications prior to the convention and bring their report to the convention, even as Peace Lutheran Church, Tinley Park, Illinois, had done this year with the Treasurer's books. Others suggested that the Conference retain its appointed auditing committee at each convention that the Conference retain opportunity to review any books and financial records in addition to any congregational audit.

After discussing the above and related points, it was moved and seconded to dispense with further discussion of auditing procedures at this time and follow from here on the same procedure followed this year in auditing the various Conference records. The motion was defeated.

- * After further discussion it was moved and seconded to add the following words to the end of the resolution of the 1979 Proceedings (p. 43): "through its regularly appointed Auditing Committee." The motion was carried. The complete procedural resolve of the Conference at this time thus reads:
"That 2 or 3 members of the congregation in which the Treasurer is located carefully and thoroughly audit the records of the Treasurer before convention takes place while there would be plenty of time to do their job and be able to confer with the Treasurer throughout the audit, bringing their report to the convention when it convenes, through its regularly appointed Auditing Committee."

- * The initial report of the Resolutions Committee was given by Pastor Mensing. Their first (chronologically) resolution concerned the various aspects of our mission outreach, including the matter of an announcement in the Concordia Lutheran. (This whole matter was committed to them in connection with the Mission Committee report -- see above, page 50) It was moved and seconded to

adopt this resolution. The motion was carried. (This resolution was later designated "Resolution #2". It may be found on page 56 of these Proceedings.)

A recess followed at 3:00 p.m..

Sessions resumed at 3:25 p.m., with the Report of the Finance Committee for the Coming Fiscal Year (see Proceedings, p 43) to consider the budget. It was presented by Treasurer, Jeffery W. Styx. In his presentation he referred to page 4 of the Prospectus to aid in explaining each budget item. The motion to receive this report was carried.

- * It was moved and seconded to adopt the budget proposed by the Finance Committee. The motion was carried without a dissenting vote.

The Report of the Committee on Lutheran Union (See Proceedings, p. 38) was given by its chairman, Pastor Schaefer. It included two recommendations. The motion to receive this report was carried.

- * It was moved and seconded to accept Recommendation #1 (See text, p. 39), to resume study of developments in the ICR (Lutheran Churches of the Reformation), with the addition, "as well as with the Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations (FLC)." The motion was carried and the entire recommendation thus reads:
 "That the Committee on Lutheran Union resume its study of developments in the ICR and determine the feasibility of further negotiations with this church body as well as with the Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations (FLC)."

It was moved and seconded to adopt the second recommendation (see text, p.39) that the committee look into the doctrinal position of Lutherans Alert National. This motion was defeated. (secretary's note: The summary of the discussion leading up to this defeat was not transferred to me among the notes of the former secretary. If my memory serves me correctly, however, the general consensus was that such investigation would be unnecessary, since some of our pastors already had some of their printed material which already showed their doctrinal positions.)

After various announcements the Saturday sessions adjourned at 4:45 p.m..

Sunday, June 22, 1980

The Sunday activities began with a Divine Service at 10:00 a.m.. The sermon was delivered by the Rev. O.W. Schaefer of Tinley Park, Illinois. It was based on 2 Cor. 4: 13 and had as its theme, "The Timely Call from Holy Scriptures and our Confessions: Hold Fast to the Truth and Confess It!" The local pastor, the Rev. P.R. Bloedel, served as liturgist. Pastors Schaefer and Bloedel administered the Lord's Sacrament to the congregation and its guests from the sister congregations. The offerings were given to the local congregation to help defray convention expenses.

Following the noon meal the Rev. O.W. Schaefer opened the afternoon sessions with a devotion in which the assembly sang Hymns 382 and 283 and heard the reading of Scripture from Romans 3: 19-28. A prayer was also offered.

After this devotion the Rev. H.L. Patterer, re-elected as President, resumed the chair. The President acknowledged the fact that the newly-elected secretary, the Rev. Randall D. Styx, was now assuming his position and asked that the Lord bestow His blessings upon the Secretary's labors. He also expressed

ERRATA

1980 Proceedings

Page 53; third full paragraph; end of line 6

Please insert word omitted in typing, after "doctrine of Scripture," the word "not", thereby correcting the following phrase to read, "not merely 'in so far as'".

his appreciation for the fine co-operation on the part of our previous Secretary, the Rev. James W. Luedtke. Referring to his own re-election as President, President Patterer stated that while he was one with his brethren in doctrine and practice, he was "not in agreement with them in their estimation of his gifts and talents. But he was willing to acquiesce to their decision and besought their prayers in his behalf that he might perform his duties as President faithfully."

The minutes of the Saturday sessions were then read and approved.

The President asked if it would be possible to know the amounts received in the collection for the two convention services. The Treasurer informed the Convention that \$ 91.95 had been received in the Friday service and \$ 661.43 had been received in the Sunday service. President Patterer noted with praise to the Lord that this was the highest the figures had ever been.

The Rev. H. David Mensing then presented his doctrinal essay, "The Doctrine of Justification According to our Lutheran Confessions." The essay briefly but clearly showed that our Confessions correctly set forth the scripture doctrine of Justification. In the discussion the fine distinction between accepting the Confessions quia; not quatenus was again emphasized; namely, that we accept and bind ourselves to the Confessions because they are the doctrine of Scripture, merely "in so far as" they are the doctrine of Scripture. Also discussed were: the importance of objective justification -- how without the total forgiveness of all on God's part, there would be no sure forgiveness to be received subjectively; how the pronouns in Is. 53: 5 plainly teach the Vicarious Atonement of Christ for our sins; and how the Roman Catholics continually obscure the Scripture teaching of Justification by incorrectly defining the meanings of grace and faith. It was noted that the Roman Catholic Church still stands by its sinful curse of all who believe the true Scripture doctrine of Justification (Decrees and Canons of the Council of Trent, Session 6, Canon 12). (See essay p. 22)

- * Following a brief recess, during which the precious doctrine of Justification was discussed informally, it was moved and seconded to accept the essay with thanks to the essayist. The motion was unanimously carried.

With a brief discussion of the alternative methods of printing the Proceedings, it was moved and seconded that the Secretary include the duplicating of the 1980 Proceedings as a part of his secretarial duties. The motion was carried.

- Under discussion of the time and place of the 1981 Convention, an invitation was received from Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Tinley Park, Illinois, "in case there were no other". It was asked if it would be proper to discuss bi-ennial conventions at this time. It was mutually agreed first to hear the invitations, decide the place, and then discuss the year for the next convention. The Pastoral Delegate from St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, Wilmot, South Dakota, conveyed his congregation's invitation to host the next convention, be it next year or the year after. It was moved and seconded to accept the invitation of St. Stephen's Lutheran Church to host the next convention of the Conference. This motion was carried unanimously.

Regarding the question whether to hold the next convention one or two years hence, it was suggested that, since the Conference had recently decided the question of annual vs bi-ennial conventions, we wait to discuss the matter until such time as a formal Memorial comes, before the Conference in convention assembled. There being no objection, the President noted that the next convention would be held the following year; namely, 1981.

The Committee on Registration and Excuses gave its final report (Proceedings, p. 29). The motion to receive their report was carried.

Regarding the approval of the minutes of the Sunday session, the President mentioned the usual practice of submitting them to the praesidium for their review and approval. Since there was no objection, this procedure was ordered and followed.

President Mattereder noted with praise and thanks to the Lord the brotherly co-operation he had had over the past year with his fellow officers in the Conference.

The Resolution Committee presented its final report and with it the following Resolutions:

Resolution #1 (Proceedings p. 55) regarding the special purpose of this Convention to observe the anniversaries of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession and the Book of Concord. This resolution was carried unanimously and the assembled delegates and visitors joined in singing Hymn 292. (The text of this hymn is printed in its entirety, as it was sung, on page 55, and at the head of these Proceedings.)

Resolution #3 (Proceedings, p. 57) thanking Peace Ev. Lutheran Church for providing its facilities to house our Seminary and for their brotherly co-operation and sacrifice. Carried.

The Rev. H. David Lensing, Pastor of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church extended his congregation's invitation to the Conference again for the coming year to make the same use of its facilities as in the past. The motion to accept this invitation was carried.

Resolution #4 (Proceedings, p. 57) thanking the presenting pastors for their sermons, devotions, and essays. Carried.

Resolution #5 (Proceedings, p. 58) thanking St. Luke's congregation for the use of their classroom space and office equipment for convention committees. Carried.

Resolution #6 (Proceedings, p. 58) thanking Peace congregation for its committee to audit the Treasurer's books prior to this convention. Carried.

Resolution #7 (Proceedings, p. 58) expressing gratitude to the officers who served the Conference the past year and a prayer to the Holy Spirit to help those currently elected. Carried.

Resolution #8 (Proceedings, p. 58) thanking St. Luke's congregation for all they had provided for the Convention. Carried.

The President asked if there were any further business to come before this Convention. There was none. The President gave the floor to Pastor Bloedel for any announcements, who also gave a word of thanks to the convention delegates and guests for being so kind and for coming to the Convention and honoring them (St. Luke's) with their presence. He said, "It is a very special joy in the Lord."

It was moved and seconded to adjourn this convention. The motion was carried and the President led the assembly in the singing of Hymn 412, a prayer, and the Lord's Prayer said in unison. He declared the Convention closed at 5:02 p.m., and gave the Apostolic Blessing.

Respectfully submitted,
the Rev. Randall D. Styx,
Secretary

RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE 29th ANNUAL CONVENTION

Resolution #1:

WHEREAS at this convention we are commemorating the 450th Anniversary of the Augsburg Confession and the 400th Anniversary of the entire book of Concord, our beloved Lutheran Confessions; and

WHEREAS these Confessions, drawn up by our faithful Lutheran fathers, correctly set forth the very doctrines of Holy Scripture in those matters which they treat, including antitheses or the rejection of contrary teachings; and

WHEREAS these Confessions are by God's grace still today not only held by us as our own Confessions, but are also still of practical use in our work of the Lord within the perverted religious world of our day, in which there are also many so-called "Lutherans", who pay mere lip-service to the Confessions as their historical heritage but flagrantly disregard, and teach and practice contrary to the same; and

WHEREAS in the essays presented at this convention, as well as in the sermons, we have been shown in particular that the Book of Concord emphasizes the Holy Scriptures as the inerrant Word of God and as the only source and norm of Christian faith and doctrine, and the doctrine of justification alone by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith alone, as the only saving doctrine for poor sinners, the most fundamental of all doctrines and the central doctrine of Christianity, on which the Church stands or falls;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that at this anniversary convention we laud and magnify the Lord of the Church for leading our fathers to draw up these faithful Confessions and for preserving them among us to this very day by His Holy Spirit through the Word; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we earnestly beseech our gracious Lord in Christ Jesus to keep us true to these Confessions and ever more zealous in the faithful study and use of the same throughout our generations, until, being kept by the power of God unto salvation, faithful to our Savior and His Word, we, our children, and our children's children shall receive by His grace the crown of glory in heaven, where we will be enabled to laud and magnify His glorious Name in perfectness, world without end; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that even now at this time in our convention we unanimously arise and by our organ music and singing, making a joyful noise unto Him, praise the most glorious Lord, Savior, and Head of His Church, as we together raise our voices in Hymn 292,

Lord Jesus Christ with us abide
For round us falls the eventide;
Nor let Thy Word, that heavenly light,
For us be ever veiled in night.

In these last days of sore distress
Grant us, dear Lord, true steadfastness
That pure we keep, till life is spent,
Thy holy Word and and Sacrament.

Lord Jesus, help, Thy Church uphold
 For we are sluggish, thoughtless, cold.
 Oh, prosper well Thy Word of grace
 And spread its truth in every place!

Oh, keep us in Thy Word, we pray;
 The guile and rage of Satan stay!
 Oh, may Thy mercy never cease!
 Give concord, patience, courage, peace.

O God, how sin's dread works abound!
 Throughout the earth no rest is found,
 And falsehood's spirit wide has spread,
 And error boldly rears its head.

The haughty spirits, Lord, restrain
 Who o'er Thy Church with might would reign
 And always set forth something new,
 Devised to change Thy doctrine true.

And since the cause and glory, Lord,
 Are thine, not ours, to us afford
 Thy help and strength and constancy.
 With all our heart we trust in Thee.

A trusty weapon is Thy Word,
 Thy Church's buckler, shield, and sword.
 Oh, let us in its power confide
 That we may seek no other guide!

Oh, grant that in Thy holy Word
 We here may live and die, dear Lord;
 And when our journey endeth here,
 Receive us into glory there. Amen

Resolution #2:

WHEREAS the Committee on Missions has requested of this convention direction as to how to proceed in practical outreach to others with the pure Word and doctrine which by grace we possess; and

WHEREAS this request entails two major branches of action, namely, a proper method of making contact with those who desire guidance in sharing our Scriptural position, and the necessary finances in our Mission Fund to make possible the implementation of such outreach;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Committee on Missions, in consultation with the praesidium, formulate and publish in our Concordia Lutheran an invitation to orthodox groups or congregations who desire further information on our doctrinal position and perhaps also personal consultation and ministrations to this end to make their desires known to the chairman of the Committee on Missions. In connection with this, the Committee should also request their sending a resume of their current situation; and, if such a group or congregation has a pastor, its contact with us should Scripturally be made through him; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the chairman of the Committee on Missions himself

should make at least the initial contact with such groups as are described above when information of their existence is made available to him, and that he oversee any subsequent contact made at his request by other pastors in our Conference; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that any outlay of money needed for this project be taken from the Mission Fund of our Conference, since this kind of project is one of its chief purposes; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, in the meantime, the members of our Conference in its various congregations heed our Savior's injunction fervently to pray the Lord of the harvest in accordance with Matthew 9:38 that He would bless our efforts in these endeavors, and, at the same time, that they show the sincerity of their prayers and desires in this regard by giving cheerfully and liberally to build up our very necessary Mission Fund, so that our efforts in the Lord may not be hindered by the human impediment of insufficient funds with which to work.

Resolution #3:

WHEREAS our Concordia Theological Seminary has continued to enjoy the use of the physical facilities of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Tinley Park, Illinois, 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 \$100.00 per year, thus aiding our Conference in keeping to a bare 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 #4:

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 Vice-president, 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 essays presented during this convention on the authority of Holy Scripture and the doctrine of justification as these are also found and epitomized in our Lutheran Confessions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the convention thank Pastors Natterer and Schaeffer for their edifying messages, and Pastors Styx and Mensing for their thorough, informative and edifying 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 # 5:

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

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we express special thanks to St. Luke's Lutheran Church and particularly to its pastor for making classroom space available to our delegates for their work and for providing appropriate office equipment for their use throughout this convention.

Resolution #6:

WHEREAS the 1979 convention delegated to the congregation of which the Conference Treasurer is a member the responsibility for auditing the official Conference financial records and providing a special report to the convention assembled at this present meeting;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that we heartily thank Peace Lv. Lutheran Church of Tinley Park, Illinois, for its careful and exacting work in auditing the books of the Conference Treasurer, source records, financial statements and fiscal procedures and for its subsequent report to this convention.

Resolution #7:

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 #8:

WHEREAS St. Luke's Lutheran Church of Seattle, Washington, has shown itself to be a most gracious host to the 29th Annual Convention of our beloved Conference 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 special commemorative convention were beautified by special organ and choral music to the praise of our Lord and Savior, the Head of His Church; and

WHEREAS we were privileged to enjoy not only nourishment for our bodies through the dedicated service of both the ladies and the men of the congregation, but received also in rich abundance nourishment for our souls in the

Bread of Life, God's precious Word, and in the Sacrament of Christ's body and blood as guests of this Christian congregation;

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 thank Mr. Stephen Bloedel for serving as the organist for this convention and using his special talents for the glory of the Savior and Head of the Church, and that we express our gratitude also to the men's choir of St. Luke's congregation for the special choral offerings at both convention services, to Mrs. Paul Luedtke for the special floral arrangements which beautified the sanctuary, and to Miss Jeanne Bloedel for her capable and loving care of the children present on the grounds during sessions, as well as to those who provided wholesome recreation for delegates and guests during evening hours; 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 He has preserved us in true unity of faith and confession through His Word and has kept us loyal to our precious heritage in the Lutheran Confessions, which by His grace He not only caused to be written and preserved throughout the past four centuries, but by which we can also in the future all "speak the same thing and be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment," (1 Corinthians 1:10) and that as we believe, we will continue also to speak, always in accordance with His Holy Word. (2 Corinthians 4:13)

(Secretary's note: The asterisks in the left margin of the Minutes mark passed motions, actions, or decisions of the Convention other than routine reception of reports, etc..)