

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>OPENING SERMON PREACHED AT THE SERVICE OF CONVOCATION .....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>SERMON PREACHED AT THE SUNDAY COMMUNION SERVICE .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>HISTORICAL ESSAY DELIVERED AT THE 51<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>DOCTRINAL ESSAY DELIVERED AT THE 51<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION .....</b>	<b>34</b>
<b>MINUTES OF THE 51<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION .....</b>	<b>48</b>
<b>ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE PRESIDENT .....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT .....</b>	<b>63</b>
<b>REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION AND EXCUSES.....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE CONCERNING 2001-2002.....</b>	<b>66</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE AUDITING COMMITTEE .....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE .....</b>	<b>67</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE PUBLISHING HOUSE BOARD OF CONTROL .....</b>	<b>69</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE BUSINESS MANAGER OF <i>SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS</i> .....</b>	<b>71</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS .....</b>	<b>72</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION .....</b>	<b>73</b>
<b>INTEREST REPORT OF THE SEMINARY INSTRUCTOR.....</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>INTEREST REPORT OF THE SEMINARY STUDENT.....</b>	<b>77</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LUTHERAN UNION .....</b>	<b>78</b>
<b>REPORT ON THE SEMINARY BOOKSTORE .....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>REPORT OF THE ARCHIVES COMMITTEE .....</b>	<b>81</b>
<b>FISCAL BUDGET ADOPTED FOR 2002-2003 .....</b>	<b>83</b>
<b>RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE 51<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL CONVENTION .....</b>	<b>84</b>
<b>STATISTICAL REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2001-2002 .....</b>	<b>88</b>

**THE OPENING SERMON**

for the  
**Fifty-first Annual Convention**  
of the  
**CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE**

Delivered by the Rev. M. L. Natterer, Conference President

Text: **Matthew 9:1-8**

In Christ Jesus, our only Savior, my dear fellow -believers!

It is customary that we confess the Apostles' Creed every Sunday after the Gospel Lesson has been read. This is a very praiseworthy custom, for in these words we express the conviction of our hearts in the very fundamental doctrines of Holy Writ. We know that the Apostles' Creed is very old. A tradition has been handed down that it was written by the twelve apostles. But whether this is true cannot be definitely established. However we do know from the writings of the early church fathers that candidates for Baptism were required to make a confession of their faith. And this confession of faith, which was in use during the time of the apostles, agrees with the contents and many of the statements in the Apostles' Creed, which, according to one historian, dates back to the year 150 after Christ. In view of the uncertainty of its exact origin, however, true Lutherans do not regard the Apostles' Creed as inspired, much less as superior even to the Holy Scriptures, but receive it because its doctrine is taken from the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments. The same procedure must always be followed with every creed. "Is it in harmony with the Scriptures?" That is the question we must always ask. In a very concise and faithful manner the Apostles' Creed states the truths of God's Holy Word. For in the Apostles' Creed we not only confess our faith in the Triune God, the Father who created all things, the Son who has redeemed us from sin, death, and hell, and the Holy Ghost who through the Gospel has worked the true saving faith in our hearts; but we also confess: "I believe in the forgiveness of sins." We believe in the forgiveness of sins because it is the teaching of God's Word, the teaching which fills our hearts with comfort and peace. Let us then at this opening service of our convention direct our attention to the words of Jesus:

***"Be of Good Cheer; Thy Sins Be Forgiven Thee!"***

**I.** These are words of the greatest comfort.

**II.** These are words which we can trust.

**I.**

The Evangelist Matthew writes, "*And He [Jesus] entered into a ship, and passed over, and came into His own city.*" The Lord Jesus had been in the country of the Gergesenes where He had performed a miracle. He had cured two men who were possessed with a devil. These men had their homes in the tombs which were hollowed out places on the hillsides. They were so fierce that no man might pass by that way. Yet they were no match for the almighty Son of God, who drove the devils into a herd of swine which ran down a steep hill into the sea and perished in the waters. The result of this miracle was the opposite of what we would expect. Instead of receiving Jesus as their Lord and Savior, they besought Him that He would depart out of their coasts. And Jesus did not stay where He was not wanted, but, "*entering into a ship, ... [He] came into His own city,*" the city of Capernaum. This was the city which served as the headquarters from which He carried on His ministry of preaching, teaching, and healing.

No sooner had Jesus come into the city of Capernaum, “*and behold, they brought to Him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed; and Jesus, seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.*” From the Gospels of Mark and Luke where this story is also recorded, we find that Jesus was in a house instructing and teaching the people concerning the Kingdom of God. The crowd was so great that there was no room even at the door. When these men brought the man sick of the palsy to Jesus, they could not get to Him because of the crowd. They then uncovered a section of the flat roof where Jesus was speaking and let down the bed on which the palsied man lay. Thus they spared no labor in bringing this man to Jesus. After all, palsy was a dreaded disease. It either took possession of the entire body by robbing the individual of the feeling of his nerves and muscles, thus making it impossible for him to move, or else it attacked merely a portion of the body, paralyzing it.

The question: “Which is of greater importance, the forgiveness of sins or the removal of bodily ailments?” is thus answered for all time! The Lord Jesus knew that to be a sinner, to be weighed down with sin, was the saddest and most tragic thing of all. And the palsied man in the text was troubled by the memory of sin more than by his bodily affliction, otherwise the quieting assurance from the Savior would never have been necessary: “*Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.*”

Our conscience often accuses and upbraids us. We know the Ten Commandments, having memorized them already when we were little children and having had them explained to us in Sunday School and instruction classes where we obtained a fuller understanding of them. Thus we know what is right and wrong from the Law of God. Yet, even though we are believers who seek to walk the way of God’s Commandments, nonetheless we must confess with the apostle: “*The good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do*” (Romans 7:19).

Our conscience often accuses and upbraids us. We cry out with the hymnwriter, “Alas, my God, my sins are great, my conscience doth upbraid me; and now I find that in my strait no man hath pow’r to aid me. And fled I hence in my despair, in some lone spot to hide me, my griefs would still be with me there; and peace still be denied me” (TLH 317). Our conscience, smitten by God’s holy Law, burns within us and tells us, “You are a sinner.” Look at the example of David. His conscience plagued him because of the sins of adultery and murder of which he had been guilty. Here he had taken another man’s wife away from him and then planned the destruction of her husband to cover up his sin (II Samuel 11). We hear him bemoaning his sins in his penitential Psalms and crying out: “*My soul is sore vexed; but Thou, O Lord, how long? Return, O Lord, deliver my soul; oh save me for Thy mercies’ sake*” (6:3,4); “*wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions; and my sin is ever before me*” (51:2-3).

As sin is the greatest evil on earth, so forgiveness of sins is the greatest good that God can give to us! To realize the great importance of the forgiveness of sin, we must recognize the terribleness of sin. Sin is no trifling matter, even though we observe people often making a big joke of it. But the Lord warns us that “*fools make a mock at sin*” (Proverbs 14:9). All of the illness, sickness, heartache, sorrows, woes and death, are the consequences of sin which is at the bottom of all ills of life. Sin is the worst calamity ever to befall mankind. “*Sin is the transgression of the Law*” (I John 3:4), and “*the wages of sin is death*” (Romans 6:23). But what glorious comfort the Lord gives us. He forgives sins. He does not excuse it, as some parents and grandparents excuse the sins of their children and grandchildren.

Just think! God does not mark iniquities; He does not impute trespasses; but He pronounces us

righteous and just — all this by grace and not by our works. The man in our text this morning had no merit or worthiness of which to boast. But the Lord Jesus forgives his sin. And when Jesus tells the man: “*Thy sins be forgiven thee,*” there is no limitation or restriction. He does not tell the man, as does the Roman Catholic priest, “This forgiveness is contingent upon your carrying out the satisfaction which I shall impose upon you.” The Lord Jesus forgives *original* sin, as well as all *actual* sin, no matter how great or small: “*Thy sins be forgiven thee.*” And Jesus has every right to grant such absolution, for He says: “*The Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins.*” Note the expression, “*Son of Man.*” St. Paul writes: “*God was manifest in the flesh*” (I Timothy 3:16). God assumed a true human form for the very purpose of working out His plan of salvation for all men, “*for the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost*” (Matthew 18:11). And this forgiveness is accepted by the receiving hand of faith. Our hearts need no longer be filled with thoughts of gloom and despair, but rather with “*good cheer.*” Now we are the beloved of our dear heavenly Father through faith in Christ His Son. As sin closed the gate of heaven, the forgiveness of sins is the key which has opened it again.

And yet, when Christ absolved the man in our text, here was a reaction to it that hardly bespeaks the joy that should result from heaven being opened to a penitent sinner: “*When the multitudes saw it, they marveled, and glorified God, which had given such power unto men.*” Instead of deriving great comfort from this glorious message, there are many still today who are like the scribes of old and revile it. When they hear absolution pronounced by the Pastor after the confession of sins, “Upon this your confession, I by virtue of my office, as a called and ordained servant of the Word, announce the grace of God unto all of you; and, in the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost” (page 16 in *The Lutheran Hymnal*), they say: “*This man blasphemeth... Who can forgive sins but God only?*” (Mark 2:7). True, to forgive sins is a prerogative of God; but He can surely commission and authorize others to forgive sins in His Name. The Apostle Paul tells us, “*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*” (II Corinthians 5:20). And in the Gospel of John, chapter 20, the Savior tells His ambassadors: “*Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained*” (v. 23). Therefore, the absolution pronounced over us, Luther says, “is as valid and certain in heaven also, as if Christ our dear Lord dealt with us Himself” (*Small Catechism*, Office of the Keys and Confession). Of all the benefits won for us by Christ and imparted to us by the Gospel, forgiveness is the most necessary, the greatest, and the grandest. Without forgiveness, there is nothing but an accusing conscience, an angry Judge, utter despair, and eternal damnation. O, how we should rejoice to hear these words from the lips of the Savior, who loved us unto death: “*Be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.*”

## II.

These words of the Lord Jesus, “*Thy sins be forgiven thee,*” are also trustworthy words! They are the words of the almighty Son of God Himself. We read: “*And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This man blasphemeth. And Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? For whether is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise and walk?*” Christ, “*in whom dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily*” (Colossians 2:9) forgives sin; for He is “*God manifest in the flesh*” (I Timothy 3:16). That Christ is God is clearly evident from our text. For only God is omniscient and knows all things, even the secret intents and thoughts of the human heart. Thus the Lord Jesus knew just exactly what the scribes were thinking, even though they had not put into words the thoughts of their hearts.

Moreover, the Lord Jesus proves His authority by performing a miracle right before the eyes of all the people. “*But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith He to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. And he arose, and departed to his house.*” Here again, we know on the basis of Holy Writ that only God can perform a true miracle. Because Jesus is true God, He performs this marvelous miracle to give testimony to the truth that He possesses the authority and power to forgive sins. And all this is recorded in the Book of which the Apostle Paul, as the penman of the Holy Spirit, declares: “*All Scripture is given by inspiration of God*” (II Timothy 3:16). Do we ever doubt the words of Christ that all our sins have been forgiven and allow ourselves to be filled with thoughts of doubt and uncertainty? It is the devil, the father of all lies, who instills such thoughts within our hearts. Let us therefore dispel them by focusing our eyes upon these words of Him who cannot lie, the almighty Son of God, “*Be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.*” Amen.

*Soli Deo gloria!*

---

## THE SUNDAY SERMON

for the

### Fifty-first Annual Convention

of the

## CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE

Delivered by the Rev. David T. Mensing, Pastor  
Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Oak Forest, Illinois

Text: **Romans 6:23**

In the Name of Jesus Christ, our blessed Redeemer from sin, death, and Satan, dearly beloved hearers of His precious Word:

The basic rule of **salesmanship**, essential not only for *attracting attention* to one’s product or service, but for “*closing*” a prospective client, that is, convincing him actually to **purchase** what is being offered, is often phrased in this manner: The salesman must “create **the need**” for his product or service in the mind of a potential buyer. He doesn’t really have to convince the person to **buy**; he doesn’t even have to convince him to buy **now**. The perception of a pressing **need** for the item will almost invariably result in the *desire* to have it, the *motivation* to acquire it, the *incentive* to get it, and the *determination* to buy it...TODAY. Even the price has little to do with the eventual sale — if the person **NEEDS** the item **badly** enough.

The trend in most churches today —across denominational lines— is to fulfill the *humanistic* goal of making people **feel good** about themselves. Therefore their pastors adopt a “non-threatening” approach in their preaching and teaching. They “sanitize” their language, straining out any words or expressions that may be regarded as “harsh,” “demanding,” or “judgmental,” expressions that create feelings of guilt or shame, that destroy a person’s positive “self image.” Hence, the words “sin,” “depravity,” “wretchedness,” “helplessness,” and “guilt,” as well as words that describe the dire consequences of sin —eternal death, damnation, torment, and

contempt in hell— are deemed either “politically incorrect” or they are stricken from one’s theological vocabulary as counter-productive and even “dangerous.”

And then so many wonder why churches cannot *give away* the Gospel of Jesus Christ! The reason is really very SIMPLE: Antinomistic spiritual “snake oil salesmen” deprive their hearers of God’s holy Law, which, as a mirror, shows men their sins, their depravity, their wretchedness, their helplessness, and their lost condition; and therefore they feel no NEED for salvation. They NEED no ransom, no redemption, no rescue from jeopardy that does not exist.

But, as we learn from the text before us this morning, this straight “up and down” Law and Gospel declaration of Holy Writ,

**The Knowledge of Sin and Its Wages Is Indispensable  
for the True Appreciation of the Gospel.**

**I.**

“*In the [very] words which the Holy Ghost teacheth*” (I Corinthians 2:13), St. Paul sets to paper a statement that is so **clear**, so **unequivocal**, that it neither requires nor permits any interpretation: “*The wages of sin is death.*” In this stark and staggering *sedes doctrinae* (or proof-text of doctrine), the Apostle presents THREE concepts which, taken together in this narrow context, pronounce **everlasting punishment** upon those who even once violate the holy Law of God!

“**SIN**” is not a word coined by self-righteous theologians to make themselves feel good at the expense of others, neither is it a concept whose meaning is so elusive that no one can know for sure what it is, or so subjective that every individual is permitted to define it to suit himself. The Bible tells us in terms so simple that a child can understand them: “*Sin is the transgression of the Law*” (I John 3:4). Sin is “stepping over the line” that separates right from wrong—not the wavy, weaving, broken line that the proverbial “drunken sailor” walks, but the infinitely razor-thin line that separates **perfection** from **imperfection**. GOD says in His Law: “*Ye shall be HOLY, for I, the Lord your God, am HOLY*” (Leviticus 19:2). God is not satisfied if we “do our best,” as many delude themselves into thinking; God expects much more than the “good ol’ college try”; God demands **PERFECTION**, not only in thoughts, desires, words, and deeds, but in our very nature! For He made man in His perfect image in the beginning, and He expected of man “the possible” in the *state of integrity* (before man fell into sin): He expected man to remain holy. Moreover, even ONE infraction of God’s Law violates the perfection that He demands; and, like a chip out of a priceless crystal bowl, a crack in a picture window, or an inclusion in an otherwise flawless diamond, it ruins the whole piece! “*Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point,*” writes the Apostle James (2:10), “*he is guilty of ALL!*” And it’s not only the ACT in violation of God’s Law that constitutes sin, but even the FAILURE to act in compliance with God’s Law; for the Bible says concerning *sins of omission*: “*To him that knoweth to do good and doeth it NOT, to him it is SIN*” (James 4:17).

Secondly, the Apostle says here in our text that those who “**SIN**” earn a well-deserved “**wage**” as the result of what they have done. They “*receive the due reward of [their] deeds,*” as the crucified thief freely confessed of the punishment **he** was suffering. Now there are, of course, those who blaspheme God by accusing Him of injustice and cruelty when He metes out punishment upon sinners; but they are the “moral deadbeats” who shirk the responsibility of their own actions, blame others for the consequences of their own sins, and slander God by making Him out to be unjust when He visits upon them exactly what they **deserve**.

And what does the sinner **deserve** because of his transgression of God's Law? What are the "wages" he has **earned** by his sins of thought, desire, word, and deed, yea, even by his lack of perfection? Paul says in our text: "*The wages of sin is DEATH!*" The blaspheming unbeliever laughs God in the face when he hears this threat; for he sins with impunity: God never struck him with lightning in the midst of his cursing, never visited upon him a fatal coronary during his wanton fornication, never caused the earth to swallow him up because of his lawlessness! The devil himself played that card, so to speak, when he lulled Eve into a false sense of security, saying: "*Ye shall not surely die.*" He lied! "*Your iniquities have separated between you and your God,*" writes Isaiah (59:2), "*and your sins have hid His face from you that He will not hear.*" DEATH IS SEPARATION: SPIRITUAL DEATH being the separation in this life already of the soul from God because of sin and unbelief; TEMPORAL DEATH being the separation of the soul from the body at the end of this earthly life; and ETERNAL DEATH being the permanent separation of both soul and body from God in the everlasting, fiery punishment of hell! "*The wages of sin*" is ALL of these! "*By one man sin entered into the world, and DEATH by sin*" (Romans 5:12). As we confess in our Convention Theme: "**Man's sin merits death**" — it's as plain and simple as that!

Now what does the knowledge of these three concepts, taken together, mean for **you** and **me**; and how does it "**create the need**" for forgiveness, life, and salvation —for the message of the Gospel? The "natural" unconverted sinner, in his enmity against God, is in a constant state of "denial" regarding his sins, his depravity, and his lost condition before God. And, as long as he rejects the indictment of God's Law, he will also despise and reject the Gospel. —But **you and I**, according to our lesh, deny **our** sins too, until the indicting Law of God rings in **our** ears with passages we know only too well, to convince us of **our** lost estate by nature: "*If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*" (I John 1:8). "**ALL** have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). "**We** are **ALL** as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags" (Isaiah 64:6). "*Therefore by the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified in His sight, for by the Law is the knowledge of sin!*" (Romans 3:20). "*The WAGES of sin [your sin and mine] is DEATH,*" says Paul in our text. "*Except ye repent, ye shall ALL likewise perish!*" (Luke 13:3). Again St. Paul in Romans 7: "*The good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do. ... O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death??*" Or, as the jailer at Philippi cried out to Paul and Silas: "*What must I do to be saved??*" —The Law of God, proclaimed in all its fierceness, creates the **NEED**; for it declares, with no room for maneuvering out of it, that **man's sin merits death**, and without salvation, without rescue, without interference by a Savior outside of our sinful selves, we too would surely die forever! —NOW do we feel the **NEED** for salvation? NOW do we really appreciate the Gospel? Has our proud refusal to accept "charity" finally been overcome by our desperate **NEED** for a Savior?? Oh, then, stricken sinner, hear **these words**:

## II.

"**God's grace gives life,**" says the motto of our 51st Annual Convention, OR, as St. Paul writes in our precious Law-and-Gospel text: "*The gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ, our Lord.*" What a wonderful contrast to the **previous** statement!! Indeed, what a SERIES of contrasts the "good cheer" of this Gospel assurance provides! Instead of "wages" we here find a "gift" of all things! We can't **EARN** life; we must acknowledge it to be a "gift," the "*gift of GOD!*" Another word for an undeserved gift is "grace," as we know from Ephesians 2:8-9, where Paul says: "*By GRACE are ye saved, through faith, and that, not of yourselves [not earned as are "wages"]; it is the GIFT OF GOD, not of works, lest any man should boast.*" We can't **EARN** salvation; for "*if [it be] by grace, then is it no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then is it no more grace, otherwise work is no more work*" (Romans 11:6).

And yet this “*gift of God*” did not come without a price! When gifts are given that were not bought and paid for, we call that “shoplifting;” and the ones who get the gift are “receiving stolen property”! The “*gift of God*” was “*bought with a price,*” St. Paul tells us (I Corinthians 6:20); and the Apostle Peter elaborates on that statement, saying: “*Ye know that ye were not **redeemed** with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers*” —bought off with mere money from that empty, vain, sinful and corrupt way of life passed down to you from your earthly parents in original sin as their heritage of death to you! ... “*but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot*” (I Peter 1:18-19) —the sinless Son of God laying down His perfect righteousness at the bar of divine justice in your place and mine, and then paying the penalty of our guilt, “*the wages of sin,*” with His own death upon the cross! “*Christ hath **redeemed** us from the curse of the Law,*” from “*the wages of sin,*” “*being made a curse for us; for it is written: Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree*” (Galatians 3:13).

**THAT’S** what it took to secure “*the gift of God,*” to satisfy God’s justice that **STILL** demands perfect obedience to His Law and threatens swift and unrelenting punishment for the transgressor! **THAT’S** how “*God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them*” (II Corinthians 5:19). “*For He hath made Him who knew no sin to be sin **for us,** that we might be **made** the righteousness of God in Him*” (v. 21). Thus, “*the **gift of God** is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord,*” God’s **gift** of eternal life in heaven instead of eternal death in hell, **bought and paid for** by our dear Lord Jesus!

Surely, the knowledge of sin and its wages, declared to us by the **LAW** of God in all its fierceness, is indispensable for the true appreciation of the Gospel; for it creates in us the **NEED** for salvation by grace, for Christ’s sake, through faith. There’s simply no other way to obtain it! And now that we have been so wonderfully “*made wise unto salvation*” by the precious **GOSPEL**, by the good news of God’s unilateral forgiveness of the whole world of ungodly and profane sinners “*by grace*” [as His free **gift**], “*for Christ’s sake*” [because **He** paid for that gift, “not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood, and with His innocent suffering and death” (Luther, *Second Article*), **REACH OUT**, my dear fellow sinner, with that undeserving beggar’s hand of faith, to grasp in confidence of God’s promise the “*gift [of] eternal life*” which He has already given to **every sinner**, which He has given to **YOU**, for Jesus’ sake. For it is only *by faith* in what God has **already done** for you in Christ that His perfect righteousness is your “*wedding garment*” that admits you spotless and holy to the feast of **everlasting life** in the mansions of heaven. Thus, we gratefully pray with the hymnwriter:

My guilt, O Father, Thou hast laid  
on Christ, Thy Son, my Savior.  
Lord Jesus, Thou my debt hast paid  
and gained for me God’s favor.  
O Holy Ghost, Thou Fount of Grace,  
the good in me to Thee I trace;  
in faith do Thou preserve me!

Amen.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*

**HISTORICAL ESSAY**  
delivered to the  
**Fifty-first Annual Convention**  
of the  
**CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE**

by

The Rev. David T. Mensing, Pastor • Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Oak Forest, Illinois

***“Schism in the Orthodox Lutheran Conference  
and its Reorganization as the Concordia Lutheran Conference, 1956”***

The *Orthodox Lutheran Conference* adjourned its first convention on the afternoon of **September 26, 1951**. A new church body had made its unexpected appearance on the horizon of outward Lutheranism in America. Some few were pleasantly surprised; many more saw the move as an unwise and unnecessary splintering of the “conservative base” in the Missouri Synod; and those in the Synod, particularly in its hierarchy, in whose side the men who formed our fledgling church body had been a nagging thorn, were relieved to see them go. By the manifold grace of God, men of one mind had found one another and had pledged themselves to faithful adherence to the truth of His precious Word. They had long yearned for a fellowship with no divisions among them, and for a relationship in which all would speak the same thing, being perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment (I Corinthians 1:10). By God’s grace they would now be able to experience “*how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity*” (Psalm 133:1), based on the Holy Scriptures as the only source and standard of their doctrine and of their life. Eagerly they looked forward, for the first time in many a year, to the privilege of engaging in joint church work and worship to the praise of God’s grace in Christ Jesus and to the glory of His holy Name *in peace* — without the pompous posturing of the Missouri Synod’s theological “luminaries,” without the vicious divisiveness that characterized many of their partisans, and without the tyrannical efforts at control mounted by an increasingly “top heavy” administration bent on exercising lordship over their fellow pastors. Hopefully now, having mercifully been delivered from virtual bondage in a spiritual Egypt, our men would be free to teach and to preach the truth of God’s Word without having to fear threats and recriminations by synodical officials! It was a happy day indeed; and though storm clouds were even then gathering on the horizon for many of these stalwart confessors of their Savior’s Name and Truth, the prospect of suffering wrongfully for Jesus’ sake did not mar their joy, nor daunt their spirit, nor bend their backs. They were committed.

### **I. What Made the Orthodox Lutheran Conference Unique**

The *Orthodox Lutheran Conference*, in spite of its small size and limited finances, and despite the efforts of Satan, the world, and the sinful flesh of its own members to destroy it, was not the “flash-in-the-pan” that many had predicted it to be. Fifty-one years ago, those of us who were there remember with praise to God the unity, the commitment, the zeal, the joy, and the peace that characterized our infant church body, freed from the tyranny of synodical lords and masters and dedicated to the objects that still today comprise the agenda of our Conference.

The Lord of Hosts had graciously and, yes, mightily led us in a glorious exodus out of spiritual bondage into the freedom of His precious Truth. And it was now incumbent upon us, pastors and laymen together, to demonstrate, particularly by our attitudes, by our speech, and by our conduct toward one another and toward those outside our fellowship, that we had not received the grace of God in vain (II Corinthians 6:1) but that we had learned important lessons from the example of the Children of Israel after *their* exodus from Egypt (I Corinthians 10:11). The road ahead would be a barren and lonely trek, fraught with dangers and deprivations, trials and temptations; and we knew this from the outset. But our compass was the inerrant Word of God; our Captain was the Savior and Head of His Church; and the end of our faith was (and is) the salvation of our souls. With God as our Refuge and Strength, manifested to us in and through

the visible means of His Word and Sacraments as the Justifier of the ungodly by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith, our mission on the pilgrimage before us was simple: **To stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made us free and not to be entangled again in the yoke of bondage** (Galatians 5:1). As those who had been called out of darkness into His marvelous light, it was then and still is our duty and great privilege to “*walk as children of light*” (Ephesians 5:8), not in “dead orthodoxy” or lip service to the truth of His Word, but in living faith as doers of the Word and not hearers only (James 1:22ff.), walking in the paths of righteousness for His Name's sake, to the glory of His grace.

❖ In the weeks and months that followed that first convention, the ***Orthodox Lutheran Conference***, though small, became a truly viable church body; and the mechanics were devised and set in motion to accomplish the Godpleasing objects and goals of the Conference. Things moved so quickly that an interim special convention had to be held at about the halfway point in the year. At Chesterfield, Missouri, in January of 1952, the first president of the Conference, Pastor Wallace H. McLaughlin, set the keynote for the meeting as he highlighted the mission before us in his sermon on Galatians 5:1. Among the items taken up by this special convention were the following:

—The pastors and lay delegates had come together chiefly to read and discuss a proposed **constitution**, set forth in a rough draft by Dr. P. E. Kretzmann. Having been “burned” by the tyrannical “*lordship*” (Mark 10:42-43) of Missouri Synod officials, the pastors and delegates carefully examined and debated the provisions of the new constitution in order to preclude as far as possible any future exercise of hierarchical tyranny on the part of our own officers. Some wording was re-committed to Dr. Kretzmann for study and revision; other portions of the draft were revised on the floor of the convention. As it turned out, lack of time prevented the presentation of a polished final draft of the document, and it had to be postponed to the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Convention the following August.

—The Conference did adopt an important confessional resolution concerning the doctrines of **the Church and the Ministry**, the content of which gave official notice to the Wisconsin and Norwegian Synods of our Scriptural position as they grappled with these doctrines under considerable internal pressure to adopt the theology of John Phillip Koehler and August Pieper regarding them. By the grace of God, *our* position on these doctrines has not changed over the past fifty years; but sadly, by the early sixties, the same could not be said for those other church bodies.

—Another significant matter of business was the official signing of the ***Confession of Faith*** by representative delegates of congregations wishing to join as **members** of the Conference. At the first convention the previous September, the founding members were all *individual* pastors and laymen who, convinced of the Missouri Synod's heterodoxy, took a bold stand and, in obedience to God's Word in Romans 16:17 and other passages, separated themselves from it. Now that they had had opportunity to bring the new church body to the attention of their respective flocks, the following *congregations* “signed on” as well: St. Paul's (Coos Bay, Oregon); Peace (Tinley Park, Illinois); Holy Trinity (Minneapolis, Minnesota); Immanuel (Winter Haven, Florida); and Trinity (Chesterfield, Missouri).

—Proposed at this convention were drafts of a model constitution for congregations and a standard *Diploma of Vocation* for the calling of pastors. These, however, were not officially adopted until their final wording was presented to the regular convention the following August.

—Finally, there was considerable discussion concerning the training of theological students, including (at that time) the perceived possibility of “making arrangements with acceptable Synodical Conference schools.” A committee was appointed to study this matter and was given the authority “to co-opt help;” but no decision was made at the special convention, neither was the committee specifically empowered to act. As it turned out, the committee, together with the Board of Directors, soon came to the conclusion that theological training at schools of the Missouri Synod and other Synodical Conference bodies would no longer be reliable and would no doubt prove to be sources of offense to our students by luring them into unionistic practices. The question was then considered as to whether the Conference could afford to wait until the regular convention in August to inaugurate an orthodox theological training program. Although the new constitution and by-laws had not yet been finalized and adopted, the latter giving authority to the Board of Directors to supervise a Conference seminary and to call and induct instructors, the Board on April 16, 1952, sent to all member congregations a **referendum** asking for the authority to establish a seminary right away. When this referendum passed by majority vote of the congregations, the Board decided to call Dr. P. E. Kretzmann of Cuba, Missouri, to the presidency of the seminary and to one of two professorships, and the Rev. Wallace H. McLaughlin, until recently of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, to the second professorship. This decision was also sent out to the member congregations for their vote, and these calls were unanimously approved. Thus, before the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Convention had even met, the ***Orthodox Lutheran Theological Seminary*** had been established, its staff had been chosen, and students were being recruited. [The seminary officially opened on September 22<sup>nd</sup> in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and, by the end of its first year of operation, had nine students — seven theological students and two in the normal (teacher training) department.]

❖ By the time of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Convention, held August 23-25, 1952 in Minneapolis, Minnesota, the basic organizational structure of a functioning Conference was complete; and vital new business was taken up by the convention:

—The final draft of the Conference ***CONSTITUTION*** was approved, as were a model constitution for Conference congregations and a standard ***Diploma of Vocation*** or form for the calling of a pastor.

—A **theological journal**, to be edited by the seminary faculty, was proposed for the professional growth of the pastors in particular; and the publication of the ***Orthodox Lutheran Theologian*** began soon thereafter.

—Two doctrinal essays were presented at the Pastoral Conference, three at the convention, and a practical essay was delivered by Pastor M. L. Natterer on the topic of young people’s work. The subject matter of the doctrinal essays in particular exemplified the confessional character of the fledgling conference and its determination under God to “lay it on the line” concerning its forthright adherence to sound doctrine and practice. Essays at this second annual convention included the following: “*Inspiration, Inerrancy, and Inviolability of Holy Scripture*;” “*Distinguendum Est*,” a paper regarding the need for proper distinctions in terminology in the matter of the Church and its Ministry; “*Baptismal Grace*;” and “*An Exegetical Study of Galatians 5*” by way of warning against dead orthodoxy and of exhortation to confirm our Christian liberty by walking in the Spirit.

—At this 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Convention, three more congregations signed the ***Confession of Faith*** and became corporate members of the Conference: St. John’s (Lebanon, Oregon); Mount Calvary (Ponsford, Minnesota); and St. John’s (Height of Land, Minnesota). The Rev. L. N. Wilenius

of Detroit was admitted as a personal and clerical member.

—President McLaughlin reported, following his attendance at the recent meeting of the Synodical Conference, that the chasm between its orthodox and heterodox factions had deepened and that Missouri’s liberal position would soon destroy that federation. (Due to the inaction of protesting synods, however, it would be nine years before the break-up of the Synodical Conference would actually take place.)

The *Orthodox Lutheran Conference*, on the other hand, was moving forward; and the Lord’s gracious blessing was upon it as all its members spoke the same thing and were perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment (I Corinthians 1:10). The Word of God was its guide and the norm of its doctrine and practice; the autonomy of its congregations was respected as inviolate; its officials were quite properly the servants of the organization instead of its lords; and its pastors were able to testify boldly to the truth without fear of threats and recriminations. How good and how pleasant it was for brethren to dwell together in such unity! (Psalm 133:1).

❖ The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention was held in Minneapolis August 21-24, 1953. Conspicuous by their absence from this convention were many who had stood with us initially and had even owned us as brethren. Since Dr. J. W. Behnken, President of the Missouri Synod, had condemned our Conference as separatistic and had warned Missouri pastors not to fellowship with us, and since the officials of the synod in various places throughout the country had continued to make “*havoc of the church*” (Acts 8:3) by invading sovereign congregations and ousting their pastors, many soon lost interest in our little church body and decided to play it safe. Their growing attitude of “stay in and fight” under the self-protective guise of being “in a state of confession” [*in statu confessionis*] or protest overagainst the Missouri Synod and its heterodoxy, resulted in many of them pulling back from their once bold acknowledgment of us as their brethren. To some, the end admittedly justified the means; and they plainly expressed their Jesuitical logic by stating, for example, that they were staying in Missouri (LCMS) in hopes of gaining Wisconsin (WELS). Some regarded this as a real *sacrifice* on their part, but they were willing to make it rather than to obey the injunction of the Lord through St. Paul in Romans 16:17, “*Avoid them.*” Quite evidently lost on them was the warning of Samuel to King Saul: “*To obey is better than sacrifice*” (I Samuel 15:22). Moreover, they were acting like *hirelings* (John 10:12-13) who, out of concern for their own safety, placed their flocks in jeopardy of the ravening wolves who ultimately devoured many of the sheep, stripping from them their ability anymore even to discern the heterodoxy of the Missouri Synod well hidden under its “*sheep’s clothing*” (Matthew 7:15). Only one pastor from another church body attended our convention that year: Pastor G. W. Fischer of Mankato, Minnesota, a Wisconsin Synod pastor, who at the time was friendly toward our cause and said that he was “in a state of protest” overagainst his own synod and its refusal to separate from Missouri.

Moreover, the only congregation to join the Conference that year was a newly-formed church as yet without a pastor: Holy Trinity Orthodox Lutheran Church (Oskaloosa, Iowa). Several individuals, who for reason of distance were not able to join Conference congregations, were admitted to the Conference as “personal members,” and Pastor J. Ernest Shufelt, who was serving a little congregation in Pittsburgh, was admitted as a clerical member.

Significant business transacted by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention included the following:

—An amendment to the By-Laws was adopted, vesting supervision of the seminary and the right

to call and induct professors, as well as the power to suspend them if necessary, in a standing committee of the Conference, henceforth to be known as the “Committee on Theological Education.”

—A resolution was adopted, rejecting the new *Revised Standard Version* of the Bible as being based on conjectural criticism and changes in the original text, as beclouding the doctrine of the deity of Christ, as jeopardizing or denying other clear doctrines of Holy Writ, and as containing hundreds of other aberrations, both philological and theological, which, all taken together, constitute spiritual “poison,” making this translation unacceptable for all doctrinal and devotional purposes.

—A committee was appointed to meet with a corresponding committee of the Norwegian Synod (now the E. L. S.) in order to determine whether our Conference could continue to extend to that church body the right hand of fellowship, as it initially had done because of the Norwegians’ vigorous protest against the Missouri Synod. [As we would soon discover, our extension of the “hand of fellowship” would not be reciprocated by others; and their refusal to acknowledge us would prove to be the undoing of any relationship between our respective groups based on the principle of *status confessionis*. A “state of confession” over against persistent errorists or over against a heterodox church body is an empty “war of words” if, at the same time, the “confessor” stands aside from true brethren and refuses to own them and to make common cause with them.]

—The convention also resolved to have both professors attend upcoming meetings of the Wisconsin Synod to keep abreast of *its* protesting relationship with the Missouri Synod.

—Again at this 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Convention, sermons and essays would again set our Conference apart as unique on the scene of Lutheranism in the latter half of the century; for our “fathers” did not shun to tackle and take a Scriptural stand on topics that others were loath to discuss. Notable among these were: “*Congregational Autonomy and Fellowship*,” “*Scriptural Teaching on the Financial Support of Church Work VERSUS Merchandising in the Churches*,” and “*The Biblical and Confessional Doctrine of the Antichrist*.” The convention also resolved to have papers presented to the January, 1954, Pastoral Conference on the Scouting movement, veterans organizations, and the chaplaincy.

❖ The 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference, August 20-23, 1954, in Minneapolis saw for the first time some definite *reversals* in the results of our efforts heretofore:

—Toward the end of 1953, the little congregation in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Gethsemane Orthodox Lutheran Church, which, though not a member-congregation of the Conference, was being served by Pastor Shufelt, suddenly *ceased its activities* and *disbanded*. The Lord, however, immediately worked this sad turn of events for good to the vacant mission congregation in Oskaloosa, Iowa, which immediately called Pastor Shufelt to be its shepherd.

—Another sad reversal came as the Rev. Herbert F. Koehlinger, one of our founding members in 1951, severed fellowship with our Conference as of February 24, 1954. At that time the pastor of St. Paul’s congregation in Coos Bay, Oregon, Koehlinger had for quite some months already been publishing under the “Orthodox Lutheran” name materials that he claimed to have received through his membership in a strange, fanatic, and cultist group known as “The American Mutual Assurance Society” headed up by a certain Walter H. Windler. Whether this Windler really existed and had been manipulating Koehlinger, or whether Koehlinger was suffering from delusions and derangement and had taken the name as a pseudonym, was not able to be

established to a certainty. Notwithstanding this mystery, it was clear that Pastor Koehlinger was peddling the heretical (and often incoherent) babblings of “Windler,” who held, among other things, that his organization was “the spiritual nucleus of the kingdom of God in the Atomic Age,” that all church confessions (including the Lutheran Confessions to which we hold) are defective, and that all church doctrine is ineffective. When months of admonition, including a special meeting with our men in Minneapolis, proved to be of no avail in dissuading him from his strange discipleship, Pastor Koehlinger broke fellowship with the Conference; and shortly thereafter his congregation, to whom he had preached Windler in his sermons and had taught Windler in his Bible Classes, was compelled to depose him from the pastoral office in their midst. Not long afterward it was reported that Koehlinger had suddenly died as the result of a burst thoracic aneurism. His had been a truly tragic case, and your essayist remembers the hope expressed by quite a few in the Conference that Koehlinger had not been sane and was therefore neither cognizant of nor responsible for his actions. Only the Lord in His omniscience, infinite wisdom, and unfathomable mercy knows the eternal lot of this once faithful laborer in the Savior’s vineyard (II Timothy 2:19).

—Also coming as a complete surprise to the Conference was the sudden *withdrawal from membership* of Trinity Lutheran Church, Chesterfield, Missouri, on May 10, 1954. The official Proceedings of the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention provide little if any concrete evidence concerning the reason for this withdrawal. They merely state that the congregation had exercised its sovereign right to terminate its membership in a human organization, that this right was sustained by the Conference, and that the Conference rejoiced over the fact that the congregation intended to remain in fellowship with and in support of the Conference. Nevertheless, a hint at the cause of this withdrawal is provided by a veiled reference to certain “charges” made by Mr. H. A. Strumpler, a member of that congregation and the member-at-large of the Conference Board of Directors. A resolution of the convention states that “instead of the Board of Directors sending a special answer to Mr. Strumpler’s charges, the Proceedings of our Conference, which he may purchase, shall constitute our answer.” However, the “charges” were not stated in the Proceedings, neither was any evident “answer” provided, either in the Proceedings or in the Report of the Conference President, which covered retrospectively every *other* aspect of the preceding fiscal year but never once mentioned the Chesterfield matter. In fact, we would candidly state that both the Proceedings and the report of the President seem to be strangely “sanitized” of any mention of Mr. Strumpler other than that above. When the Proceedings state, for example, “cf. President’s Report” [concerning the matter], a thorough search reveals not even a veiled reference anywhere in that report. Moreover, after the report had been presented, “it was resolved that this report be referred to the new Board of Directors for study as to what portions should be printed in the Proceedings, and that the Board of Directors bring recommendations concerning it before the Convention tomorrow (Sunday).” The record of the Sunday sessions do not indicate that any recommendations were presented. Circumstantial evidence only reveals that the withdrawal of Trinity, Chesterfield, was connected in some way with the resignation or removal of Mr. Strumpler from the Board: a) Quite inexplicably, the opening devotion at the May 15 Board of Directors meeting (which hinted at some dissension in the ranks) was printed in the June issue of the *Orthodox Lutheran*; and b) a by-law was added to the Constitution empowering the President to fill vacancies in the Board of Directors or in any standing committee until the immediately following convention. [Your essayist will continue his attempt to locate any extant correspondence or board minutes that might shed light on this matter.]

—Finally, the Lord Himself, in His infinite wisdom, saw fit to thin our ranks by one faithful shepherd when Pastor Francis Q. Schupmann, a young man of only twenty-nine years, died

while swimming at a church-sponsored retreat. During his ministry of just five years, he had served several congregations in Minnesota, and was at the time of his death also the Secretary of our Conference. He, like the rest of our founding pastors, had been shamefully treated by the officials of the Missouri Synod, who collaborated with dissident elements in his congregations and succeeded in deposing him from his pastorates in Height of Land and Ponsford, Minnesota. Remnants of those congregations, however, re-grouped and established in Ponsford and in Detroit Lakes “surviving” flocks which still recognized Pastor Schupmann as their God-given shepherd. Upon Pastor Schupmann’s death, his brother, Arthur W. Schupmann, a January, 1954 graduate of our own seminary, was called to succeed him.

The year 1953-1954 was not, however, to live in infamy as a year of sorrows and reverses; for the Lord also blessed our fledgling Conference with *additions* to our membership and fellowship as other pastors renounced their affiliations with once-orthodox bodies, avoided them in accordance with the Word of God because of their heterodoxy, and joined our ranks:

—Pastor E. C. Hallstein of Raymond, South Dakota, whose son, Luther, had been attending our seminary in Minneapolis, was deposed by his Wisconsin Synod congregations (Bethlehem in Raymond and Peace in Clark) in November, 1953, for warning them that their church body had become a unionistic fellowship and that they should separate themselves from it. Nevertheless, by God’s grace, a remnant reorganized itself as Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church and, recognizing Pastor Hallstein’s call still to be valid, asked him to stay on as their shepherd. Although the congregation remained “independent,” Pastor Hallstein himself joined our Conference at its 1954 convention.

—Pastor Elmer L. Mehlberg, for some years a pastor in the Wisconsin Synod but at the time without a call, addressed a letter on January 1, 1954, to its president, announcing his severance from that body not only because of its continued fellowship with the heterodox Missouri Synod, but because it completely ignored the hand of fellowship extended to it in good faith by our Conference in 1951 and by such separatistic action disavowed us as true brethren. Mehlberg declared fellowship with us immediately thereafter (See *Orthodox Lutheran*, February, 1954) and became a communicant and voting member of our sister congregation in Minneapolis, where he was living at the time with his family. He joined our Conference officially as a personal member at its 1954 convention and was declared to be eligible for a call.

—Pastor Erick E. Erickson of Moose Lake, Minnesota, had been until the end of January, 1954, a pastoral member of the National Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, a synodical body composed of individuals and congregations of Finnish extraction. Pastor Erickson had come to recognize that church body as persistently unionistic and thus heterodox because of its fellowship not only with the Missouri Synod but with the Suomi Synod, the liberal Finnish synod which permitted any and all doctrinal positions to stand side-by-side, stood with the corrupt State Church of Finland, and cooperated as well with the United Lutheran Church in America. Erickson realized that to stay in the National Lutheran Church, which had been infected with the evil spirit of indifferentism, would be a betrayal of Christ and His Word. True to the practice of the Missouri Synod, officials of the N. E. L. C. invaded Pastor Erickson’s congregation in Moose Lake and had him ousted by majority decision of the voters’ assembly. A small remnant of that congregation, together with several other little independent congregations, asked him to continue serving them. His fellowship with us was announced in the March, 1954, *Orthodox Lutheran*, and he officially joined our Conference at the 1954 convention.

Other important business conducted by the delegates to our 4<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention included the following:

—The convention heard first-person observation reports by two pastors and one of our seminarians who had attended the 1954 meeting of the Synodical Conference in Detroit. It was clear from what they had witnessed that neither the Wisconsin Synod (W.E.L.S.) nor the Norwegian Synod (E.L.S.) was about to take any decisive action regarding the Missouri Synod, and that the Synodical Conference as a body was not ready to act against Missouri because of the *Common Confession* and other issues in controversy. Those things would simply be “studied,” possibly by the faculties of the seminaries; and any remaining differences would be “arbitrated.” Our convention resolved to write to the E.L.S. committee with which we had been meeting to ask whether the Norwegian Synod stands behind its representatives at the Synodical Conference meeting in Detroit in failing to take action against the Missouri Synod, or whether it intends to carry out the resolution it had presented there, holding the Missouri Synod to account for its unionistic action in adopting the *Common Confession*. Any further negotiations between us and the E.L.S. would hang upon its answer.

—The Conference resolved upon statements which interpreted and clarified the concept of *personal membership* according to Article IV of the Constitution. *Personal membership* was not a “preferred” membership compared to membership through one of the congregations; but it was intended only for those who by reason of distance or other valid cause were not able to join a Conference congregation or one in our fellowship. Neither was *personal membership* intended to be used as a “fall-back position” should congregational membership fail. [Note that the Concordia Lutheran Conference today has NO provision for “personal membership.”]

—Due to the ever-increasing number of newly-formed, extremely small, and yet apparently zealous flocks whom we, as a Conference, would like to have been able to serve, at least by providing missionaries, candidates, and even students to help them, a standing “Committee on Mission Opportunities” was created. This committee was not only charged with the task of studying the mission field in the various localities and of advising small groups as to the availability of candidates and as how to call them; but it was empowered, in the name of the constituent congregations, to call qualified men to serve in such mission stations where the local situation made it impossible for a group of “concerned” Lutherans to establish a bonafide Christian congregation.

In the fourth year of its operation, the *Orthodox Lutheran Conference* had gradually and yet definitively taken on the structural and functional characteristics of a viable and stable, consistent and responsible organization. And, while for its size it had a lot of “irons in the fire,” with its flourishing seminary program, with the regular publication of two periodicals, with its zealous outreach to individuals and to small groups as potential local congregations, and with its hopeful attitude yet toward other church bodies who seemed to be “sitting on the fence” in a sort of catatonic state, the pastors and laymen together shared the responsibilities incumbent upon them in a spirit of true brotherliness and cooperation. No factionalism was evident, no regional cliques, no fanatical enclaves, and no lordship over one another; and, though the congregations were all autonomous and “ate their own bread,” so to speak (II Thessalonians 3:12), yet in many respects, like the members of the early church at Jerusalem, they “had all things common” (Acts 2:44) and were genuinely desirous of helping one another. What was the underlying **reason** for this blessed camaraderie? Why was the Conference practically **unique** in this focused one mindedness? Why, it was because the *Orthodox Lutheran Conference* was, unlike so many others, a genuine **fellowship FIRST**, a fellowship predicated on perfect unity on the basis of

God's holy, inerrant, and verbally-inspired Word, a fellowship in which that perfect unity was not regarded as a theoretical "pipedream of the Holy Spirit" but by His grace and with His abiding help a **reality**, in which all spoke the same thing, in which there were no divisions among them, and in which they were perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment (I Corinthians 1:10). Doctrinal discipline was maintained—in the spirit of meekness—so that no aberrations would be permitted to taint and eventually to destroy the "*unity of the Spirit*" which the brethren enjoyed "*in the bond of peace*" (Ephesians 4:3). And, with the exception of those who "*went out from us... [because] they were not all of us*" (I John 2:19), not doctrinal creativity, not doctrinal liberty, not doctrinal diversity (which so many other church bodies regarded as essential to success), but doctrinal **unity** was the factor of **highest priority** among both the pastors and the laymen. For the **Orthodox Lutheran Conference**, this was a matter of black and white. **Orthodoxy** was more than a word, or a claim, or a goal; it was a way of life in both doctrine and practice; it was the "chemistry" that kept our Conference focused, functioning, and flourishing under the Lord's gracious blessing! "*Behold, how GOOD and how PLEASANT it is for brethren to dwell together in UNITY!*" (Psalm 133:1).

## II. How Its Precious Fellowship Was Jeopardized

Contrary to the view expressed by some, especially in recent years, that the **Orthodox Lutheran Conference** was a disaster ready to happen—a view in which Missouri Synod President J. W. Behnken would no doubt have taken great pleasure—is simply **not true**. The baseless and purely subjective allegation that our Conference was "ready to explode at any moment...because of the harsh, abrasive, intolerant, judgmental, arrogant and quarrelsome personalities of its members" is unworthy of any objective historian who, in the interest of the truth, should care enough to "get to know" the men who were our brethren before characterizing them according to "*evil surmisings*" (I Timothy 6:4; cf. also Zechariah 8:17). Some of us knew them well. They were *men* with the Old Adam of sin working within them (as it did in the Apostle Paul, Romans 7:15ff.) but men in whom the *Spirit of Christ* dwelt by faith (Romans 8:9; Ephesians 3:17), and who by His grace and with His help "*crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts*" (Galatians 5:24). They were "*earthen vessels*" (II Corinthians 4:7) with all the usual chips, cracks, and fissures; they bore deep scars resulting from the tribulations out of which they came; and they **were** "intolerant" of false doctrine and practice, in their own midst or anywhere else, for **good reason**. Did that make them sober and vigilant? Indeed. Did it make them specially cautious? No doubt. Did it make them particularly sensitive to compromising language, to doctrinal accommodation, to lax practice when doctrine was solid, and to the odor of creeping leaven? Definitely! And we make no apology for them on that score. The spirit of indifferentism did not suddenly die when we left the Missouri Synod in 1951; and it was up to our Conference "fathers" to be alert to it, no matter from which quarter it sprang.

As a prelude to the disruption of our fellowship in 1955, several situations and circumstances contributed to a strange "soft spot" in the otherwise rock-solid doctrinal, confessional, and practical position of our Conference. These were not properly-speaking "inconsistencies" in doctrine and practice (for, by God's grace, those would have been quickly spotted and corrected on the basis of Scripture). No, these were what could best be described as "paradoxes" or *seeming* contradictions in our **expectations** of how and when certain injunctions of Holy Scripture should be obeyed. A concrete example will illustrate this:

❖ In the January, 1954 issue of the *Orthodox Lutheran* there appeared an unsigned article (possibly an editorial) entitled "That Chicago Study Club," expressing dismay at the inaction of those who had been our brethren-in-the-fight against the creeping heterodoxy of the Missouri Synod

leading up to our separation in 1951 but who, after three years, had themselves taken no action to follow suit in obedience to Romans 16:17 and other injunctions. The articles reads in part:

There was a time when we enjoyed attending the Chicago Study Club with brethren to discuss vital issues of the Lord's kingdom, and once we vainly hoped that this aggressive group would finish its talking and begin some direct action against error in doctrine and practice, particularly with reference to the church body to which the members belonged.

Of course the time came when we realized that the Word of almighty God demanded action, and by obvious necessity on an individual basis. And so, since God's Word demanded obedience and action, we personally took issue and took the dire consequences at the hands of church hierarchy and tyrannical officials through misguided congregations. And when the fire had developed to a great conflagration, a God-pleasing separation took place, which to this very day has filled our hearts with peace and blessings beyond measure.

... We feel that we must make mention of the Chicago Study Club as a perfect example of a group of pastors who know what is right and wrong according to Scripture, but for fleshly reasons or due to a refusal to take their reason captive to clear Scripture still refuse to obey the Word of God and demonstrate a Christian confidence in the grace of God more than in the fellowship of men. Or have their mouths and actions been suppressed and muzzled beyond help? To them we also preach: "One is our Master, Jesus Christ, the Lord."

The very same year, Dr. P. E. Kretzmann presented to the convention in Minneapolis a brief paper consisting of five theses treating "The 'Time Element' in the Application of Romans 16:17f." The first four theses set forth in Kretzmann's typically clear fashion the Lord's charge in this passage; its support in many other passages of Holy Writ; and cautions against lovelessness, legalism and arbitrary procedures, as well as the Scriptures' detailed directions as to how the lines are to be drawn and how to proceed. Then in the fifth thesis, Kretzmann first introduces the term "time element" —and uncharacteristically without even one reference to Romans 16:17 itself and without even one reference to *another* passage in which such a "time element" is established. He writes:

#### V.

Here is the point on which our whole procedure hinges: It is here where the time element enters. Behind the Lord's admonitions we have, as it were, His earnest suggestion: Unless an errorist becomes stubborn, acknowledging the truth of Holy Writ, indeed, by persistently refusing to abide by this teaching, we must exercise the greatest patience. This does not in any way imply the condoning of error, nor does it suggest an indefinite period of time for adjustment. Everything depends upon the circumstances in the individual case. In other words: With regard to the time element, which clear Scripture is difficult to apply to an individual case, we are dealing with a case of casuistry. It is here, therefore, that James 1:5 must find its application.

Although Kretzmann specifically warns against "condoning of error" and of stretching fruitless admonition to "an indefinite period of time," the reader is directed, not to the injunctions of Scripture for direction but to "circumstances in the individual case" and to the consideration of the whole procedure as "a case of casuistry." We wonder aloud whether the good doctor would have suggested the same open-ended "time element" and the consideration of "the circumstances" with respect to *other* injunctions of Holy Writ, e.g., "*Repent ye, and believe the Gospel*" (Mark 1:15); "*Flee fornication*" (I Corinthians 6:18); and "*Come out from among them and be ye separate*" (II Corinthians 6:17)). And we ask retrospectively: Did not this introduction of a "time element" at least inadvertently take the "teeth" out of the injunction and open the door to procrastination?

This very point may well have “muddied the waters” in the controversy that arose in 1955, a controversy that should never have occurred, given the fact that our separation from the Missouri Synod four years earlier was occasioned by our Scriptural stand on the principles of **fellowship**, and our careful procedure in establishing (or even in pursuing) fraternal relations with other Lutherans was founded upon the very same clear-cut teachings of Holy Scripture.

Let it be said, first of all, that, as of December, 1953, the *Orthodox Lutheran Conference* was **on record** in its official organ, the *Orthodox Lutheran*, as having withdrawn its overtures of fellowship from the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States. Following that synod’s special convention in Milwaukee the previous October, our Conference conducted a referendum of its constituent congregations to consider the following resolution:

WHEREAS the Orthodox Lutheran Conference extended the hand of fellowship to the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States, and

WHEREAS the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States has not acknowledged this hand of fellowship or made overtures for its consideration, and

WHEREAS the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States in a special convention held October 8-9, 1953, at Milwaukee, Wisconsin, refused to accept or abide by clear words of Scripture to “mark and avoid” the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, a heterodox church body, as commanded in Romans 16:17,

BE IT RESOLVED, THEREFORE that...the Board of Directors of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference...conduct a referendum among its constituency to immediately withdraw the hand of fellowship or overtures of fellowship until such time as the Evangelical Lutheran Joint Synod of Wisconsin and Other States can adhere to clear precept of Scripture.

The above resolution was studied and unanimously endorsed and subscribed by the constituent congregations of the *Orthodox Lutheran Conference*, and this fact was announced over the signature of the then president of the Conference, W. H. McLaughlin, in the December *O. L.*

In the same issue, a detailed analysis of the Wisconsin Synod’s stand set forth the following conclusions:

- A. THE CONVENTION ADOPTED AN UNCLEAR AND AN AMBIGUOUS RESOLUTION WHICH IS TANTAMOUNT TO A COMPROMISE BETWEEN TWO DIVERGENT FACTIONS IN ITS OWN MIDST.
- B. SUCH A COMPROMISE, BY THE ACTION OF THE SPECIAL CONVENTION, HAS NOW BECOME THE OFFICIAL STAND OF THE WISCONSIN SYNOD.
- C. THIS OFFICIAL STAND OF THE WISCONSIN SYNOD IS CONTRARY TO SCRIPTURE ...I COR. 1:10, AMOS 3:3; LUKE 11:23. THE BIBLE LEAVES NO ROOM FOR COMPROMISE.
- D. BECAUSE OF THE OFFICIAL ADOPTION OF SUCH A COMPROMISE, THE WISCONSIN SYNOD HAS BECOME A UNIONISTIC FELLOWSHIP, A PARTAKER OF THE SINS OF MISSOURI, A HETERODOX CHURCH BODY.

The Wisconsin Synod, by its perennial “fence-sitting,” had been swept away into the heterodoxy of the Missouri Synod by making itself “*partaker of other men’s sins*” (I Timothy 5:22). Still “talking the talk” without, however, “walking the walk,” the Wisconsin Synod in January, 1954, sent its officials to a meeting with their Missouri Synod counterparts to discuss matters of doctrine and practice which “threatened” to separate them from fellowship in the Synodical

Conference. In an article entitled “Missouri and Wisconsin,” the *Orthodox Lutheran Conference* commented in the January, 1954, *Orthodox Lutheran*:

The Wisconsin Synod is sitting down with officials who have openly declared that they will not retreat from the position they have taken. ...[Missouri] has already dragged the latter into manifest transgressions of God’s inviolate Word. The means to do this are purely human and sinful. Again and again Wisconsin has been told that Missouri has set its course toward a unionistic and ungodly fellowship with erring church bodies as she herself has become, and yet Wisconsin dares vainly to hope to “negotiate” with her unfaithful brother of the past in confessing truth, and will be ensnared to walk with Missouri the path of least resistance.”

In the following issue (February, 1954), in an article entitled “Wisconsin Follows Missouri’s Footsteps,” the Rev. E. C. Hallstein, who had been deposed from his pastorate of two congregations at the instigation of Wisconsin Synod officials, states:

This meeting [of the voters’ assembly on November 8, 1953] had been called by the pastor for the express purpose of urging the congregations to separate itself from the Wisconsin Synod because WISCONSIN HAD BECOME A UNIONISTIC CHURCH BODY in the resolutions it adopted at its Milwaukee Convention [October 8-10, 1953]. [The stress was the author’s.]

Then in the July-August issue of the *Orthodox Lutheran*, in an unsigned statement entitled, “Our Position over against the Wisconsin Synod,” President McLaughlin stated unequivocally:

Our position is that the Wisconsin Synod as a corporate body has become heterodox through its unionistic association with the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod and through its tyrannical action in the case of Pastor Hallstein. For these two reasons we withhold the hand of fellowship formerly extended to the Wisconsin Synod. We hold that the Wisconsin Synod as a corporate body is not in a true state of confession because of its continued fellowship with the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod.

Thus the *Orthodox Lutheran Conference* was COMPLETELY UNANIMOUS in this opinion as far back as 1953; and, in the God-given, good and pleasant spirit that made it unique among church bodies, there were “*NO DIVISIONS among [them],*” but all of its members continued to “*speak THE SAME THING, ... PERFECTLY JOINED TOGETHER in the SAME MIND and in the SAME JUDGMENT*” (I Corinthians 1:10).

But then suddenly, what all of us considered at first to be an ill-considered and carelessly-worded remark, ignited a fire (James 3:5) in our precious Conference and caused a conflagration which, in the course of less than a year, destroyed the once cohesive fellowship we enjoyed together. The Conference was literally “*rent in twain*” when half of its members severed fellowship with the rest rather than meet peaceably in a brotherly and orderly manner to resolve what could easily have been corrected, had “*the spirit of meekness*” (Galatians 6:1) and “*brotherly love*” (Hebrews 13:1) prevailed.

**During the first part of January, 1955, Dr. P. E. Kretzmann told his seminary class that “under the circumstances” he could preach for Pastor Gervasius W. Fischer of Mankato, Minnesota, a pastor of the Wisconsin Synod.** Had Dr. Kretzmann made such a remark in a private conversation with one student, or even in a semi-private context witnessed by one or two more, he should have legitimately expected that any remonstrance would have been directed to him in a corresponding context. Since, however, the statement had been made *openly* in a *seminary class*, it was not properly speaking a “private” but a “public” matter; and, had the statement been persistently defended both by Dr. Kretzmann and by the *Orthodox Lutheran Conference*, the orthodox character of our seminary and church body would most assuredly and

justly have been called into question. [Compare *Brief Statement*, ¶29].

Mr. Luther Hallstein, then a student at the seminary in his last year of study and ready for graduation the following June, took respectful exception to that statement and, having gone home to South Dakota on a winter break to attend the January Pastoral Conference in Wilmot, discussed the statement with his father, Pastor E. C. Hallstein of Clark, South Dakota, who was also Secretary of the Conference that year. On the second day of the Pastoral Conference, Luther and his father spoke *privately* with Dr. Kretzmann about his remark, noting that it was completely out of character with our Scriptural position on Fellowship. When Dr. Kretzmann gave them no Scriptural satisfaction for his statement to the seminary class, Pastor Hallstein decided to set the *principles* involved before the Pastoral Conference as a case of *casuistry* without mentioning the specific incident and without involving the name of Dr. Kretzmann. The case of casuistry, discussed in closed session with only the pastors present, was stated simply in the form of this question: “Can we or can we not fellowship with Pastor Fischer?”

In the discussion of this question, it was pointed out that, when the Wisconsin Synod at its Milwaukee convention rejected the fellowship overture of the O. L. C., Pastor Fischer did not publicly declare himself in confessional fellowship with the *Orthodox Lutheran Conference*, nor did he openly own us as his brethren. As far as we knew at the time, Pastor Fischer had rejected our Conference’s position published in our official periodical, namely, that the Wisconsin Synod, since that Milwaukee convention, was a heterodox church body. Moreover, to the best of our knowledge, Fischer was continuing to practice church fellowship with various pastors of that heterodox body. It was also shown that in the October issue of the *Northwestern Lutheran* his congregation was credited with a large contribution to the Wisconsin Synod, and Fischer himself continued to write as a contributor for the *Northwestern Lutheran*. —On the basis of all these facts, the pastors unanimously concurred in the conclusion that they were NOT *in* fellowship with Pastor Fischer and therefore could not in good conscience *practice* church fellowship with him. Dr. Kretzmann was present during the entire discussion but said nothing; and his silence was regarded by all the pastors as consent to their unanimous judgment. He neither praised Fischer nor criticized him, giving the clear impression that he found nothing wrong with the pastors’ conclusions nor with the evidence upon which their conclusions were based.

However, within a week of the Pastoral Conference, Pastor Hallstein received a letter from Dr. Kretzmann, dated January 20, 1955, the pertinent passages of which we quote as follows:

1. Your position over against any man who is not in complete fellowship with us seems to be that you would condemn any kind of fellowshiping, no matter under what conditions. Now it is self-evident that we cannot possibly identify ourselves in doctrine with any one who is not in confessional agreement with us. But that we must not be too hasty in judging a brother under such conditions certainly is apparent from Matt. 16:1-2 compared with Matt. 23:1ff. We certainly cannot speak of a contradiction in the behavior of our Savior. The words will bear careful study.
2. In the second place you rejected the idea that there might be “weak” pastors. Well, I could give you a list of such men, as long as your arm, to show that there are such men, who must also be included in those spoken of in Rom. 14, in Gal. 6:1ff, and elsewhere. Think of Dr. Sasse, of Pastor Wittenberg, and scores of others who profess sound Lutheranism, but have their weak spots.
3. In the third place, I was much chagrined by your apoditic condemnation of Pastor GWF. Are you sure that you really have all the pertinent information? If you condemn him for publishing articles in the *Northwestern Lutheran*, you would certainly have to apply the same measure to me, for I have frequently submitted articles and poems to magazines of bodies with whom we, of the OLC, do not have 100% fellowship. I have even written for other publications. If it is a matter of confessing the

truth, why should we object? You cannot operate with precarious deductions in such cases, but must leave it to the consciences of the men concerned.

Trusting that you will take these words as they meant [sic.], in all humility and love, and

EVER FOR THE FULL TRUTH OF THE WORD,

(Signed) P. E. Kretzmann

This was just the beginning of rounds of correspondence between Kretzmann and Hallstein, all (or at least *some*) of which could have been spared if a) Dr. Kretzmann had immediately retracted his statement, particularly after the unanimous opinion of the pastors to which he did not publicly object; and b) if Dr. Kretzmann had agreed to meet with brother pastors and with the Committee on Theological Education to discuss and settle the matter rather than “hunker down” for a long siege.

Before we continue with the correspondence (which seems to be rather lengthy but which is essential to have at hand for a clear understanding of the controversy), we should point out that Dr. Kretzmann’s statement to his seminary class was properly-speaking an error in *practice*, that is, an error in the **consistent application** of pure Scripture doctrine to persons and situations. The questions concerning which there appeared to be *underlying* disagreement (even though disagreement in *doctrine* or *principle* was never really expressed) are these: a) What constitutes a true state of confession in the light of Scripture? and b) Is there a real time limit taught in Scripture which gives us “wiggle-room” as to **WHEN** we choose to obey the Lord’s injunctions?

In November, 1953, Dr. Kretzmann himself wrote a fine piece in the *Orthodox Lutheran* entitled, “What Does Being ‘In Statu Confessionis’ Mean?” His words bear repeating as we consider whether Pastor Fischer was in fact in a **true** state of confession over against the Wisconsin Synod. Kretzmann wrote:

The expression is clearly intended to convey the declaration that the party using the term no longer occupies the same doctrinal platform as the other, [and] that the differences are of a nature strong enough to impugn the orthodoxy of the party of the second part. Used in its proper sense, therefore, the expression means that, the confessions no longer being in agreement, the accusing party suspends fellowship. And, if this is not mere shadow-boxing, this includes the discontinuance of not only altar and pulpit fellowship, but also of prayer fellowship. This attitude is plainly required by such passages as Rom. 16:16; Titus 3:10; Gal. 5:9; I Tim. 6:3-5. ...According to Scripture, the state of confession, under such conditions, demands action, definite and quick action.

Professor Wallace H. McLaughlin very properly *adds* to the concept of *Status Confessionis* the qualification that one who is in a true *state of confession* is expected to acknowledge, support, and make common cause with those who are true brethren, while protesting against the errors of those who *were* true brethren but who forfeited that fellowship by reason of their continuance in error in spite of admonition, that is, because of their *heterodoxy*. McLaughlin wrote in the July, 1952, *Orthodox Lutheran*:

From the time that a protesting member of a heterodox body tells us of his agreement with us, however, we expect that he will publicly acknowledge us in the face of our adversaries, make common cause with us, support our work to the extent of his ability, and show evidence that he is either making progress in bringing his associates to the acceptance of the truth or ready to sever his connection with them.

As we now examine the correspondence, Fischer’s true relationship with our Conference

becomes abundantly clear, as does the question of whether he is or is not in a true state of confession over against the Wisconsin Synod. The correspondence also reveals whether the parties to this controversy are minded to deal with one another, and to be dealt with by others, *as brethren*.

Now follows Pastor Hallstein's reply to Dr. Kretzmann, dated February 8, 1955:

Dear Dr. Kretzmann:

The matter of which you wrote in your letter of January 20, concerning our fellowship with Pastor Fischer of Mankato, was discussed openly and in detail during the last session of our January Pastoral Conference. Everyone had free and equal opportunity to ask for the floor and to state his position. All who spoke plainly confessed that we are not, and cannot be, in fellowship with Pastor Fischer because he himself is not in a true state of confession with the heterodox Wisconsin Synod, of which he is still a member.

You were also present during the entire discussion and gave your silent approval by voicing no objections during the discussion. It is strangely inconsistent for you now to give voice to a spirit of chagrin and dissatisfaction over the decision of the conference. If you actually had proof that he is occupying a position of true *Statu Confessionis*, you owed it to Pastor Fischer, to the conference, and also to me, to produce such evidence when the matter was under discussion.

It is plain that the point in controversy is no longer a private one between you and me alone. It was instigated by your own declaration in one of the classes with students at the Seminary, at which my son, Luther, was present, when you stated that you, with a good conscience, could preach for Pastor Fischer. You upheld that position in the conversation Luther and I held with you shortly before the Thursday afternoon session of our conference. Then, when the matter was brought to the floor, not only I but OTHERS also showed that Pastor Fischer is not in a true state of confession over against his own synod.

There remains but one thing for you to do — bow humbly before the Word of God (Titus 3:10; I Tim. 5:22) and confess that your statement to the Seminary class, that you could fellowship with Pastor Fischer, is contrary to Scripture. Unless there is an unequivocal retraction of this false position which you again support in your letter to me of January 30, I shall have no choice but to bring your aberration to the attention of the pastors of our fellowship. I find it difficult to believe that you, who have been so faithful to the Word of God in all other doctrines are determined to disregard its teaching on fellowship. I shall be awaiting a favorable reply at your earliest convenience.

Ever for the FULL TRUTH of the Word,

CC: Luther Hallstein

(Signed) E. C. Hallstein

Dr. Kretzmann responded immediately, setting forth the “circumstances” under which he had said he could preach for Pastor Fischer, circumstances which to Kretzmann indicated that Fischer was *in statu confessionis*. However, we note in Kretzmann's list of Fischer's “confessions” no mention of owning us publicly in the face of our adversaries or of making of common cause with us. On the contrary, Fischer states, “I had to stand aside since the open break of OLC with Wisconsin.” And Kretzmann comments on this: “Of course Pastor Fischer could not at present have me preach for him, and who can fault him for that?” There was no real cessation of fellowship with Wisconsin, and no notice to Wisconsin of his intention to leave the body if it did not heed his admonitions (only his “determination” to do so).

We quote the pertinent parts of Dr. Kretzmann's letter, dated February 9, 1955, as follows:

Dear OLC Brother:

If you feel that the difference between you and me is now to be aired in public, it is your privilege to go ahead.

...Now I want to take my inning. I know very well what is written in I Cor. 2:15 about the judging that should be done by him who is spiritual. But that judgment, as Holy Writ clearly shows, must be done on the basis of clear passages of God's Word. All false judging is ruled out... My silence was mainly due to [the] fact that I know, at least in part, what the *altera pars* [the other party, viz., Fischer] had been doing. For that reason I promptly did what you and others might have done, and should have done, that is, I wrote to the man concerned. I have his words before me:

1. Immanuel [Fischer's congregation] discontinued our membership in the New Ulm radio committee last July.
2. This January we organized our own Mission Board, thereby withdrawing our wholehearted support from the Wisconsin Synod. In January, 1954, the congregation by a unanimous resolution officially informed the Conference of Presidents that we would not support the new Building Program until Wisconsin had fully established a clear orthodox position against Missouri's heterodoxy.
3. We are determined (in spite of opposition of surrounding pastors and from not a small number of members within the congregation) to take definite action, if our Synod does not sever with Missouri next August... [P.E.K. stops quoting Fischer here for some reason and then says: "He continues in part: ...] ...My sympathy is still with your cause, but for the sake of avoiding confusion, I had to stand aside since the open break of OLC with Wisconsin... [and P.E.K. again stops quoting Fischer].

This, to my mind, is certainly being *in statu confessionis*. Of course Pastor Fischer could not at present have me preach for him [Why, we ask!], and who can fault him for that?

As for me, the time element is still a very important factor, and on that opinions may differ. I stand on the clear words of the apostle: "So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." Rom. 4:12. And again: "Why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?" I Cor. 10:29b. I have refrained from openly fraternizing with more than one man in other Synods and elsewhere, but I believe that you are following an erring conscience, and with regard to that we have Rom. 14:14-23.

Think these facts over, brother, and DO NOTHING IN HASTE.

Yours, EVER FOR THE FULL TRUTH OF THE WORD,

cc to L.H. W.H.M. A.M.S.

(Signed) P. E. Kretzmann

Note that, for the first time in this chain of correspondence carbon copies are sent to others than those immediately involved, namely, to Wallace H. McLaughlin and Albert M. Schupmann. In subsequent letters we note that Pastor Hallstein was accused of starting this circularization, when it was really Kretzmann who initiated it. He seemed to sense that this was going to end up a public matter. Interesting.

After a month and a half of trying to deal with Dr. Kretzmann, first in person, then, not revealing his name, in the Pastoral Conference, then by correspondence, but all to no avail judging by Dr. Kretzmann's responses, Pastor Hallstein decided to bring the matter to the attention of the Board of Directors, inasmuch as this was a public statement in a seminary class and Dr. Kretzmann was not about to settle the matter quietly. The potential for offense to members of the Conference as well as to outsiders was significant. In the following letter, Hallstein puts Dr. Kretzmann on

notice to expect a discussion before the Board *if* he doesn't settle the matter before the meeting. The letter is dated March 2, 1955.

Dear Dr. Kretzmann:

...Concerning the matter on which we have been corresponding, it is apparent that very little can be accomplished by way of correspondence, and that explains why you have not received an answer to your February 9 letter. I do hope to have a chat with you concerning it, however, when, God willing, I come to Minneapolis for the Board of Directors meeting, April 12. However, I submit the following items for your prayerful consideration:

1) During the recent conference [in Wilmot, SD, mid-January 1955] when Luther and I first spoke with you and when I later presented the question of fellowshiping [*sic.*] with Fischer to the brethren, I based my remarks on GWF's own statements in correspondence with me and on items that had appeared in print in the publications of his own church body. In the last letter I received from him, he took a position for which I admonished him sharply, for he wrote, "It is quite likely that my congregation will decide not to support the Wisconsin Synod until it has lifted the suspicion of having become heterodox. I believe that Bloedel\* went too far. If Wisconsin is now heterodox, then Mo. was that in 1938 and he would have had to leave it then." \*Reference is to Bloedel's Critique of Wisconsin in the December 1953 ORTHODOX LUTHERAN, which you yourself so highly commended.

I would call your attention to his words 'suspicion of being heterodox' and 'if Wisconsin is now heterodox'. Moreover, already in 1953 Fischer wrote me that his congregation should not support the Wisconsin Synod. He did not follow through, for according to the NORTHWESTERN LUTHERAN of October 31, 1954, page 350, Immanuel of Mankato is credited with budgetary contributions of \$1,781.56 and special (building fund?) Contributions of \$510.00 to the Wisconsin Synod.

2) At our Special Pastoral Conference last summer, we stated our position over against pastors in heterodox church bodies such as GWF, Dierks, Lillegard, members of the Chicago Study Club, etc., in the following resolution: "Discussion of Point 2 crystallized in the following statement of position which was adopted by the Conference: Our Scriptural position in regard to pastors and members of a heterodox church body is that after the first and second admonition addressed to the church body by the pastor (Titus 3:10) together with instruction of the congregation on the reasons why such admonition is given and withdrawal from the body is required according to Romans 16:17, such a pastor is bound by Scripture to take such action and urge his congregation to follow this Word of God with him. This should be done without long and dangerous delays, Acts 20:28."

That is the Scriptural teaching of true Status Confessionis. GWF has addressed the first and second admonition to his heterodox church body. They were not heeded. He still continues his membership. On the basis of our resolution governing such cases, which resolution is based on clear Bible passages, how any of us can declare himself to be in fellowship with him is beyond my comprehension.

3) What he has written to you since our January conference makes me very happy. I hope and pray that he and many others in the Wisconsin Synod will still follow through, but until the promised separation actually takes place, I would violate all the clear Scriptures on true fellowship were I to declare that he is still my brother under present conditions.

4) You intimated in both your letters, of January 30 and February 9, that I was judging the man when I brought up the question of fellowship with him during the conference. I cannot accept that criticism. I judge only his public confession. The Lord requires this of me (I John 4:1).

In the light of this information, which I submit in all brotherliness, I am sure you can see that under present conditions it is contrary to Scripture for you or me to declare that we can fellowship with GWF. Trusting that we will be able to confer on this matter before, or during, the meeting of the Board in April, I remain,

Fraternally,

(Signed) E. C. Hallstein

CC – Luther E. Hallstein, Prof. W. H. McLaughlin,  
A. M. Schupmann, H. D. Mensing, Pres. and Vice Pres.  
Carl Bloedel, Chm. Committee on Theol. Ed.

Note that Pastor Hallstein in this letter added to the list of those heretofore carbon-copied by Dr. Kretzmann the names of the Conference Vice President, H. D. Mensing, and the chairman of the Committee on Theological Education, Carl Bloedel. It was apparently evident to him by that time that the matter would not be solved by his efforts alone but would soon have to come to the attention of others within the Conference, particularly those who were constitutionally charged with guarding its confessional position and those who were to supervise the seminary faculty as to their official teaching and conduct [Compare *Brief Statement*, ¶29].

Upon receiving Hallstein's letter, Dr. Kretzmann answered immediately as follows:

3423 Upton Ave., N. Mpls. 12, Minn.  
March 4, 1955

The Rev. E. C. Hallstein,  
Clark, S. Dak.

Dear OLC Brother:

Since I was about to send you the enclosed material concerning the Strumpler attacks, I may answer your letter of March 2 at the same time.

You will please pardon me if I say, at the very outset, that I do not like your way of sending carbon copies of your letter to what amounts to about one-third of our clerical members. Holy Writ states: "He that repeateth a matter separateth very friends." Prov. 17:9b. Luther's translation is very clear: *Wer eine Sache äußert, macht Freunde uneins*; that is, he who makes a public issue of a matter will cause trouble between friends. Cp. Prov. 10:12. I fear that your attitude has already resulted in damage in our fellowship.

Now as for your most recent argumentation, it is not convincing, chiefly because it is not complete. If I compare your position with the theses on LEGALISM presented by Pastor Bloedel at our recent conference, I find some very serious objections to your unequivocal stand. What you say might be understood correctly, if you would add the proper safeguards to your statements. And chief among these is the TIME ELEMENT. As in cases connected with Matt. 18, we cannot lay down hard and fast rules as to the length of time that we allow before taking the final step. In a case which is as favorable as that of Pastor Fischer, I hold that we cannot make his apparent procrastination an absolute issue, demanding: You must bring this matter to a head AT ONCE. I am fully satisfied with his position, as stated in his letter to me, and I shall not lay down the law to him.

In this my position I am sure that I have sound Scriptural ground under my feet.

Dr. Kretzmann now finally takes issue with Hallstein's copying others on his correspondence, even though, as noted earlier, Kretzmann himself began the circularization with his letter of February 9, a fact which apparently escaped him completely. He also now refers pointedly to the so-called "TIME ELEMENT in a difficult case, since that phase of the difficulty is in the field of *adiaphora*," and he uses that "time element" in much the same way that so-called "conservatives" in the Missouri Synod used it to justify—for years on end—their cry: "Stay in and fight!" He also sees, as it were, the "handwriting on the wall" concerning the ultimate result of this controversy if it becomes any more protracted and publicized.

Over six weeks passed without an exchange of letters. Sensing apparently that Dr. Kretzmann had “hunkered down” after his last letter, thinking that for the present at least, that his accuser had wearied of the fight, Hallstein approached him in person at the time of the April meeting of the Board of Directors and informed him of his decision to lay the matter before the Board—as at the January Pastoral Conference in an objective manner, charitably shielding Kretzmann’s identity— asking simply: “Are we in fellowship with Pastor Fischer?” As the following letter shows, however, the anonymity would soon have to be withdrawn if Hallstein did not receive from Kretzmann “without undue delay” a retraction of his statement to the seminary class; and Hallstein would find himself compelled to bring the entire matter to the attention of the Conference brethren. The gauntlet had been thrown down. What would Kretzmann do now? Hallstein’s letter follows:

313 Iowa Street North  
Clark, South Dakota  
April 20, 1955

Dr. P. E. Kretzmann  
3423 Upton Avenue North  
Minneapolis, Minnesota

Dear Brother Kretzmann:

I am writing this letter in order to make one final appeal to you to retract your false position on the Scriptural doctrine of church fellowship, as you stated it to the Seminary class early this year, when you told the students that you “could preach for Pastor G. W. Fischer of Mankato.”

Pastor Fischer is still a clerical member of the Wisconsin Synod, a heterodox church body. He has never made an open confession of fellowship with our Orthodox Lutheran Conference. Therefore neither you nor I nor any member of our Orthodox Lutheran Conference can declare that we are in fellowship with him. II Timothy 1:8. Sufficient other reasons to show that we cannot regard him as a brother in the faith have been pointed out in our letters to you, letters which you yourself made it necessary for me to write when you attacked me for what you declared to be an uncharitable judging of him at the Wilmot Pastoral Conference,

In the conversation we had together Tuesday morning, April 12, during which Prof. McLaughlin was also present, I informed you that, since you still upheld your false position, I had no other choice than to bring the matter to the attention of the Board of Directors, which met that same day. This was done, in all charity, objectively. Your name was not mentioned, only the same question that I had asked the January Pastoral Conference: “Are we in fellowship with Pastor Fischer?”

Dear Dr. Kretzmann, have you forgotten that one of the chief reasons why our O. L. C. came into being, under God, was because its members were determined, under Christ and His Word, to uphold the Scriptural doctrine of church fellowship? Therefore, I for my part, cannot stand silently and idly by when a professor at our Seminary openly states and then, when reproved, upholds a false position regarding it.

I have tried my utmost to exercise the patience the Lord requires of me by personal conversation and correspondence with you. Since that has been fruitless, I must now declare that unless I receive from you, without undue delay, a retraction of your statement made to the Seminary class, which statement, sad to say, Prof. McLaughlin now also apparently supports, I shall have no other choice but to bring the entire matter, including the exchange of all correspondence, to the attention of the brethren in our fellowship.

Fraternally, prayerfully and hopefully yours,

(Signed) E. C. Hallstein

CC: L.E.H., W.H.M

Within two days, Dr. Kretzmann replied as follows, escalating the heat of his rhetoric in general and the use of *ad hominem* attacks upon Pastor Hallstein, calling him a “heresy-hunter” and a “pathological case,” well on the way to becoming a “rabid fanatic” and “wrecking the OLC” by his tactics:

423 Upton Ave., N., Mpls. 12, Minn.  
4-22-55.

The Rev. E. C. Hallstein  
Clark, S. Dak.

My dear Pastor Hallstein:

Your letter of April 20 was duly received, with the notation that copies were sent to Prof. McLaughlin and your son Luther. (Just for the record: I have the proof in my hand that you were the first one to broadcast your attack on me, in your letter of March 2, on the strength of which I sent carbons of my reply to the same men, namely Prof. McL., HDM, AMS, Carl B., and your son.)

You ask for a prompt reply, and I am willing to give it, since I regard it as a mitigating factor in the entire situation that you are not aware of the full import and significance of your statements, a fact which may serve as an excuse for your action.

The chief points of your letter may be stated as follows:

1) In two places in your letter you accuse me of holding a “false position” in the altercation as inaugurated by you.

2) You declare that the “fellowship question” was the chief point at the Okabena meeting. However, the “Articles of Agreement” as they were presented at that time, lists a number of other reasons for our withdrawal from the Missouri Synod. And I do not find your name among the signatories to the “Articles of Agreement,” as they were then adopted. And I do know that the “Confession of Faith” adopted at Okabena was essentially the same as had been drawn up by me for the meetings at Manchester, Mo. and submitted at Okabena.

3) You demand from me an unconditional retraction of my alleged unionistic statement. With regard to that, I hereby declare that, unless you furnish a clear and unmistakable proof from Holy Writ condemning my position outright, I shall not and will not recant, neither for you nor for any other person or group. I resent your attitude with the greatest vehemence, and I reject your charges in toto. My position in the premises was presented to the OLC Convention in the paper entitled “The Time Element in the Application of Rom. 16:17f.” which was accepted by the convention. (Proceedings of the Fourth Convention, pp. 47, 48.)

May I interject, at this point, that this is not the first crisis in my life, and it may not be the last. I have met with misunderstandings and hatred before, and I have till now kept a good conscience, one guided alone by the Word of God.

And now I think I can, and will turn the tables on you. I hereby charge you before the all-knowing God:

1) That you transgressed against me in disregarding Prov. 11:13; 18:8; 26:20 in making a matter public which in part you did not understand, but for which you tried to fasten the blame on me.

2) That you did not follow the course prescribed in the Word of God, Gal. 6:1; Prov. 17:9 (see Luther’s fine translation here); 2 Thess. 3:14f.

3) That you transgressed against the Eighth Commandment in the matter of Pastor Fischer, for you brought public accusations against him without having consulted with the man, and your charges were later found to be unsupported; you did not defend him, speak well of him, and put the best construction on everything;

- 4) You did not make use of meekness, patience, forbearance, as required by 2 Tim. 2:25; Eph. 4:2.
- 5) You became guilty, in effect, of a form of heresy hunting, with accusations against a brother who was for years a consistent fighter for the full truth of the Word, marching in the first line all the way.

Accordingly, you are by way of becoming a pathological case, nurturing an obsession which may well culminate in a rabid fanaticism and a personal bitterness against brethren who are known through the Synodical Conference for their bearing the brunt of the battle against unionism. As for me, I definitely claim that “we have the mind of Christ”, 1 Cor. 2:16, and again: “I also have the Spirit of God.” 1 Cor. 7:40.

In conclusion, let me warn you: tactics such as employed by you will certainly result in wrecking the OLC. Even now some congregations are hesitating about joining, because they fear just such difficulties.

Yours,

(Signed) P. E. Kretzmann

This was followed on April 23 with a letter from Professor McLaughlin to Pastor Hallstein supporting Dr. Kretzmann. In it, McLaughlin states that Hallstein expresses “a misunderstanding of [the term] ‘status confessionis’...as though one could not be confessing the truth in protest against aberrations in the body to which he belongs without thus establishing some sort of affiliation with another body.” He also proposed the interesting assumption that “Dr. Kretzmann’s statement...that he could preach for Pastor G. W. Fischer of Mankato, implies an invitation from Pastor Fischer and his congregation which would constitute [an] open confession of fellowship with our Orthodox Lutheran Conference.” McLaughlin also stated that, on the basis of Romans 14:4, “Pastor Fischer is a servant of Christ, called by Him to the congregation in Mankato, and responsible only to Him for the conduct of his office there;” that, on the basis of I Peter 4:15, “any attempt on your part to lay down the requirements for his conduct of office there is unwarranted intrusion, *sine officio*;” and that, since Hallstein’s ministry is a full time job, he ought to take care of his own local business and not be diverted from it in a controversy that has nothing to do with his pastoral office. He also stated that he would *discourage* Dr. Kretzmann from retracting his disputed statement.

A duplicated letter from Pastor O. G. Schupmann dated June 7, supporting Dr. Kretzmann, and two releases from Dr. Kretzmann himself which appeared before the end of June, simply reiterated his settled position. Having received no reaction to them from Pastor Hallstein, Kretzmann wrote the following brief letter to him, as follows:

3423 Upton Ave., N., Mpls. 12, Minn.,  
June 25, 1955.

My dear Pastor Hallstein:

It is now some time since a letter written by Pastor O. G. Schupmann (without any instigation on my part) and several releases prepared by me went to your address. But till now we have had no reply. This fact is somewhat mystifying, since the entire difficulty was presented in the light of the Word of God and historical facts.

Perhaps you were fully satisfied and therefore did not think it necessary to signify your full agreement. However, if this is not the case, we should like to have you express your dissent, with full proof from the Word of God, not a mere subjective judgment, by July 4. Your acting upon this suggestion at once will be much appreciated. If we do not have an answer by July 4, the controversy will have to enter into another stage.

So here is my question: Will you, or will you not, withdraw your charge of unionism against me?

Sincerely yours, and  
EVER FOR THE FULL TRUTH OF THE WORD,

(Signed) P. E. Kretzmann

cc's to WHM, OGS, AMS, E.E., E.L.M., H.D.M., C.B., PRB

...and Pastor Hallstein's very brief and unequivocal reply:

313 North Iowa Street  
Clark, South Dakota  
July 5, 1955

Dear Dr. Kretzmann:

Just a brief reply to your note of June 25th. I regret very much that I failed to find in it anywhere a retraction of your unqualified erroneous statement that you could preach for Pastor G. W. Fischer of Mankato, made in January to the Seminary Class.

Until I receive from you such an unequivocal retraction, the charge of public error I was required to make, by God's Word, will have to stand.

Ever for the Full Truth of the Word,

(Signed) E. C. Hallstein

cc – LEH, WHM, AMS,  
HDM, PRB, EE,  
ELM, CB, OGS, JES

Apparently the above note and the following letter from Dr. Kretzmann **severing fellowship** with Hallstein crossed in the mail, a fact which obviously changed nothing in the stalemate that seemed now to be "set in stone":

July 4, 1955

To Pastors E.C. Hallstein, Members of the OLC, and to Whomever This May Concern.

My dear Pastor Hallstein:

Having hopefully and prayerfully waited until today's mail came in and having received no acknowledgment of my various communications, I find that it is necessary to put an end to this impossible situation which has arisen. For it appears that you are not going to withdraw your vicious and blasphemous charges against me, much less apologize for the unwarranted insult.

I am sorry that I am compelled to write to one whom I have always regarded with respect as I am now writing to you, but the truth of the Word of God and the impelling force of the Eighth Commandment leave me no alternative, since I fear that, if you should be called away while you are in this state of obduracy, you will not be able to stand before Him who is the God of truth and love. Ignorance may be condoned, but if to ignorance is added a stubborn resistance to the Word of Truth, not to speak of facts taken from history and the actual situation before us at this time, the person guilty of such opposition to the truth is well on the road toward obduration and will prove himself a reprobate and a renegade.

Please keep the following facts in mind:

YOU started the whole rumpus NEEDLESSLY, by throwing it into the meeting of the Wilmot conference as a question of casuistry, whereas it was, from the beginning, an attack on me personally.

YOU have made propaganda for your views, your arguments showing either ignorance or malice, or both.

YOU attacked the name of a good man, bringing discredit upon his name, although he [was], as a matter of fact, and STILL IS in statu confessionis, over against his own church body and hopes to bring the matter to a successful conclusion as soon as possible.

YOU have not even found it worthwhile to acknowledge my very serious attempts to show you the error of your ways, although my proofs were taken from Holy Writ, from the history of the Church, from the example of Luther, and from the case itself. This is evidently not only contempt of my position, but an attack upon my person.

YOUR conduct makes one apprehensive for the future. There is danger, according to present indications, of my being further subjected to attacks on my personal orthodoxy and my competence as a theological instructor.

SO THEREFORE, since it is not possible to carry Matthew 18 beyond the second stage, these two having been observed, there is only recourse for me, namely, that I ACCEPT THE SITUATION as created by you, just as Luther did with a number of men who turned against him. Since you have thrown down the gauntlet with that end in view, I SHALL NOT CONSIDER YOU AS IN CHURCH FELLOWSHIP WITH ME UNTIL YOU HAVE REMOVED THE OFFENSE GIVEN BY YOUR ATTITUDE AND ACTIONS. This declaration goes into effect as of today. As soon as you withdraw your malicious charges and apologize to all and sundry for your trespass, I shall be glad to take up the question again.

As for me, I can frankly declare, with the Apostle Paul: "Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day." Acts 23:1. May the God of truth and love cause you to see the evil of your ways and actions, so that we can again walk together in true unity.

Yours,

EVER FOR THE FULL TRUTH OF THE WORD,

P. E. Kretzmann

Shortly after having received this letter, which had been addressed not only to the members of the Conference but also "to Whomever This May Concern," the pastors, lay officers, and seminary students received a general release entitled: "Where Pastor E. C. Hallstein Is Wrong," in which Kretzmann accused Hallstein of

...trespassing against the Eighth Commandment 1) in making public a matter between him and me which had not yet been brought to a conclusion... 2) in raising vicious charges against a man who has been, and is consistently, in a state of confession over against the aberrations in his own church body and has made appreciable headway in contending for the faith [namely, Pastor Fischer]... 3) in making propaganda against me by presenting a distorted explanation of the situation and stressing the supposition of a false selective fellowship.... In conclusion: The matter is not open for discussion, since the Word of God is absolutely clear on the matter... If a half century of teaching the full truth and defending it against error is not of sufficient value to defend the name of the undersigned against slander, then also that cross will have to be endured, BUT NOT IN FELLOWSHIP WITH THE ACCUSER.

P. E. Kretzmann

On July 18, Pastor H. David Mensing, then Vice President of the Conference, addressed a four-

page refutation to Dr. Kretzmann, which he also sent Conference-wide in mimeographed form for the information of the brethren. The opening paragraph set forth his statement of purpose:

Tinley Park, Illinois  
July 18, 1955

Dear Dr. Kretzmann:

In the current matter between you and Rev. Hallstein, many copies of letters and releases have been received by me and also by other pastors and laymen in the O. L. C. In this widespread correspondence two opposite positions are set forth, both claiming to be based on Scripture and on facts. Since July 5 you have also openly declared a break in fellowship between you and Rev. Hallstein, thus making it necessary for everyone who claims membership in and fellowship with those in the O. L. C. to declare where he stands, according to the Lord's requirement in 1 Peter 3,15: "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." It is for these reasons and in this attitude, with meekness as your fellow-sinner redeemed and saved alone by grace, for Christ's sake through faith; and in the fear of God, trembling at His Word, that I write you, dear Doctor, this letter. To make my position clear also to others concerned, I am sending copies to those to whom previous copies have been indicated. ...

Among the admonitions rendered were the following in summary:

In reference to your correspondence on the matter, I find that in many instances it is not truly factual; and, though you quote Scripture copiously, I find that there are texts quoted which refer to situations different from the one before us.

You have repeatedly challenged Rev. Hallstein to refute your position on the basis of Scripture, namely that you could preach for Rev. Fischer of the Wisconsin Synod. I truly cannot see why you keep insisting on this, since we have all often and clearly renounced all unionism, including pulpit, altar, and prayer fellowship with those who are not in true, Scriptural fellowship with us, on the basis of Romans 16,17; Titus 3,10; and related passages. You, however are not making the proper application of these clear texts to the facts at hand.

Rev. O. G. Schupmann's letter of June 7 ...states an undeniable fact that is basic to the situation, namely: "The matter was definitely clarified in an acceptable manner at the recent pastoral conference [in January], and nothing more needs to be said, added, subtracted, or retracted." ...Your letter of January 30 to Rev. Hallstein shows that you, not Rev. Hallstein, then revived the question of fellowship with Pastor G. W. Fischer after our unanimous agreement on this question at the conference.

His own words quoted in your letter state that to avoid confusion he has to stand aside from us. He further states that he is only in sympathy with our cause. There are at least dozens of people in the Missouri Synod who tell us the same thing. This, however, is no basis for fellowship. For this, we must speak the same thing! (1 Cor. 1,10).

Professor McLaughlin remarked in his letter of April 23, and this is reiterated in Mr. Carl Bloedel's letter of June 1, that "...an invitation from Pastor Fischer and his congregation...would constitute the very open confession of fellowship with our Orthodox Lutheran Conference." ...I have already been asked to preach for a Baptist minister and even in a Jewish synagogue. According to the above reasoning, that would mean that those who invited me had made a very open confession of fellowship with me, which anyone can see is not so.

You are confused in your expressions regarding what are matters of *casuistry* (the application of clear Scripture to difficult cases) and what are *adiaphora* (things neither commanded nor forbidden in Scripture). ...You have spoken much about your Christian liberty in reference to this matter of church fellowship. This is indeed not a matter of Christian liberty, for it is determined by the clear command of God regarding false teachers and their adherents: "Avoid them!"

In our O. L. C. Confession, point 3 of Part II, we of the O. L. C. have renounced selective

fellowship on the basis of Scripture as that which, “even if not intentionally unionistic, is bound to involve those who practice it in a relation that is contrary to the law of love, which requires primary allegiance to those with whom honest confessors of the full truth are united in doctrinal fellowship.” If each of us in the O. L. C. would insist on the personal privilege of having fellowship relations with various individuals of other church bodies, each according to his own personal estimation of their position, the ties among us ourselves could easily be strained and broken.

I must yet remark about the following statement...: “If a half century of teaching the full truth and defending it against error is not sufficient value to defend the name of the undersigned against slander, then also that cross will have to be endured, **BUT NOT IN FELLOWSHIP WITH THE ACCUSER.**” Dear Dr. Kretzmann, you don’t really think that such an argument has any validity, do you? ...Your words also do not express the Christian humility which should even now characterize one of your theological learning and faithful teaching for many years. “Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,” the Holy Word of God teaches us.

He concluded with the following exhortation:

Now, therefore, let me plead with you, dear Doctor, to reconsider your position and all you have written on this matter in the light of God’s Word and the true facts at hand, humbly to repent, finding comfort in the Savior’s forgiveness, and being ready quickly to remove the offenses which you have caused.

Respectfully yours,

H. David Mensing

Shortly thereafter Dr. Kretzmann replied in an undated release entitled “WEAK SPOTS in Pastor H. D. Mensing’s Letter of Accusation of July 18 against Me.” The one-page release challenged every one of the admonitions, not however speaking *to* them but talking *around* them. In his last paragraph, he extends his severance of fellowship *beyond* Pastor Hallstein, stating:

All the talk about Christian love has no value. Pastor Hallstein has no business making any corrections in the premises. It is he who brought the charge of unionism against me, and love would first of all require that he withdraw that insult. Whatever doctrinal implications may be in the situation may be discussed afterwards. I shall simply not regard a man as being in doctrinal fellowship as long as he maintains such charges against me. ...Ceterum censeo: Without reference to any doctrinal matter I once more declare that any one who brings the charge of unionism against me and will not withdraw it after sufficient instruction from Holy Writ thereby severs the bond of Christian fellowship with me. **AND MAY GOD HAVE MERCY ON HIS SOUL!**

Although the Proceedings of the Fifth Annual Convention of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference, August 20-22, 1955 at Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, indicate that **not one word** concerning this raging controversy was uttered **on the record**, nor was any **official action** taken against Dr. Kretzmann by the Conference—even though he had, in effect, already severed fellowship with a good many of his erstwhile brethren and longtime associates in the fight for orthodoxy in outward Lutheranism—the matter was far from being settled. Nevertheless efforts were underway in less public forums to facilitate a peaceful and yet proper resolution. In the minutes of the **Plenary Pastoral Conference** the preceding day, **August 19, 1955**, a meeting at which Dr. Kretzmann was not present apparently due to illness, we read the following summary of “the problem”:

The Pastoral Conference from this point forward [after the adoption of the minutes of the Pastoral Conference in Wilmot, SD, January, 1955] was spent in an effort to adjudicate a controversy between Dr. P. E. Kretzmann, who was not present at this conference, and Pastor E. C. Hallstein. ...**The problem at hand: Dr. P. E. Kretzmann’s unqualified statement that he could preach for Pastor**

**Fischer of Mankato.** [Our stress]. After prolonged discussion, Pastor E. Hallstein made the offer to send a telegram to Dr. Kretzmann toward the settlement of the controversy...[asking him]: “When you told the class you could preach for Fischer, did you mean that he was a brother in confessional fellowship with us; or did you mean that you could preach for him to testify against error in Wisconsin to encourage him and his congregation to correct Scriptural action?”. Hereupon the Pastoral Conference resolved to place in its records that we accept E. Hallstein’s telegram as a God-pleasing settlement of this matter, **provided Dr. Kretzmann sends a favorable reply.** [Our stress].

NOTE that Dr. Kretzmann’s terse reply was **NOT** deemed to be “favorable” since, to Pastor Hallstein and the other pastors who were troubled by Dr. Kretzmann’s public statement to his seminary class, it was **not truly responsive** to Pastor Hallstein’s question. Kretzmann sent two replies: No. 1 — “The question of fellowship was never raised.” No. 2 — “Two statements: We are not in church fellowship with Pastor Fischer. To preach is to testify.” Yet the controversy was **assumed** to have been settled by the time of the Convention (which immediately followed the Pastoral Conference) since not one mention of it was made in the record of the Convention. Nevertheless the fracture in the fellowship had not been healed and had not been dealt with to the complete satisfaction of all concerned, as subsequent events clearly revealed.

---

**NOTE: Due to lack of time, the convention resolved to hear the remainder of the essay the following year at the 2003 (52nd Annual) Convention.**

---

## DOCTRINAL ESSAY

delivered to the

**Fifty-first Annual Convention**

of the

**CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE**

by

The Rev. E. R Stallings, Pastor ● Holy Scripture Ev. Lutheran Church, Windcrest, Texas

**“The Doctrine Of Sin and Its Significant Relation to Salvation by Grace in Christ”**

### Introduction

The last evil days, the days which the Apostle Paul foretold as that time when *“they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears, and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables”*

(II Timothy 4:3), have arrived. For example, when people today hear the word “sin,” what do they think? Many see it as an archaic, obsolete, ecclesiastical term carried over from medieval times. Many, upon hearing the word “sin,” raise their eyebrows and wear a thin smile of amusement as if sin were nothing but the notion of naive, silly people who ought to know by now that there is no such thing as “sin.” Others see “sin” as a legalistic, Puritanical term which belongs only in Hawthorn’s *Scarlet Letter*. In short, they will not “endure” [that is, *tolerate*] it. Given this disdain for the fact of “sin,” and given the fact that it is a fundamental doctrine of the Christian faith, there is hardly at this time a doctrine more pertinent and warranted for special attention. Thus, we commend our President for assigning for our convention essay this year the **Doctrine of Sin**.

However, as **sin** is a very broad subject, it was the decision of your essayist to narrow the focus of this topic by showing the *significance* of the **Doctrine of Sin** as it pertains to the **Doctrine of Salvation by Grace in Christ**. In other words, the teaching of the doctrine of sin finds its ultimate purpose in the preparing of the hearts of the impenitent to see the need for salvation in Christ alone without any merit or worthiness on the part of the sinner himself. In addition, even for Christians, the doctrine of sin stands as a constant, indelible reminder of why we continue to stand in need of the grace of God in Jesus Christ.

The greater portion of this essay will be devoted to **The Many Facets or Components of the Doctrine of Sin** itself and will constitute **Part I**. In this section we will take up such things as the Scriptural definition of sin, the Biblical distinction between Original Sin and Actual Sin, the role of the Law, the effects and consequences of sin, sin as being both positive and negative, etc. Then in **Part II** we will show how the Doctrine of Sin relates to salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. While the latter section is somewhat shorter, it is not lesser in importance, but redounds to the true glory of the Gospel. Throughout the essay, every effort is made to illustrate and drive home how the doctrine of sin is never a “dead issue” but an ever-present matter requiring our daily, diligent attention.

## **Part I: The Many Facets or Components of the Doctrine of Sin**

### **A. The *Definition* of Sin**

With respect to the doctrine of sin, there is no need to compile and sift through Biblical material to formulate a definition. Scripture, in dictionary-like fashion, provides us with a straightforward definition of sin. I John 3:4, saying: “*Sin is the transgression of the Law.*” Whatever thoughts, words, or deeds transgress or violate the Law of God is sin. This Biblical definition eliminates any other notions as to what sin is or is not. Not current or popular opinion, not the Pope or church councils of Rome, not synods, conferences, or pastoral conferences determine what is sin; only what God’s Law calls sin is sin. Romans 7:7 says: “*I had not known sin, but by the Law; for I had not known lust, except the Law had said, Thou shalt not covet.*”

Right at the very beginning in Eden, Satan tempted Eve to determine what sin is on the basis of sight and reason. Human reason, now polluted and corrupted by sin, asks, “What could be so bad about plucking a fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil? What harm is there in eating something that is desirable for food, especially if it is alleged to hold the prospect of also making one as wise as God!” As Eve and Adam learned to their great regret and shame, their simple act of disobedience, no matter how harmless the act appears now to sin-warped reason, was **sin**. It violated God’s Law: “*Thou shalt not eat of it.*” Thus again, “*Sin is the transgression of the Law.*”

But oh, how fallen man, including carnal “Christians” who only masquerade as true believers, and also true Christians when they in weakness succumb to their Old Adam, love to embrace their opinions and biases in determining what is sin. For example, a favorite justification of people who wish to live together in fornication is that they “love each other.” Hence, this alleged good motive would supposedly justify their fornication. Yet with or without their really being “in love” with each other, fornication is sin because it is against the Sixth Commandment: “*Thou shalt not commit adultery.*” [By the way, is it really “love” if two people mutually consent to commit fornication? Does mutual consent *to sin* make the deed a “loving” act? If being partner with a thief means one hates his own soul (Proverbs 29:24), shall not being a partner in any other sin not also mean that one hates his own soul?]

Consider another scenario. A young boy breaks into a corner grocery store and steals some groceries. He is caught, but seeks to justify the theft by saying, “My Mom lost her job, and we needed food.” Does the need justify the *sin*? The Jesuits notwithstanding, the end does not justify the means. The command, “*Thou shalt not steal,*” has been broken. On the other hand, when the Roman Church requires celibacy of its priests and nuns, it is requiring what God’s Word does not require, but which Scripture freely permits and enjoins: “*Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled. But whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*” (Hebrews 13:4). Rome has chosen to ignore the fact that Scripture condemns the prohibition of marriage as a “*doctrine of devils.*” Hence Rome is continually guilty of sin and causing sin by making something that is honorable and God-pleasing a sin. Rome causes most of its priests who quite apparently are not gifted with continence to burn in their lusts (I Corinthians 7:2).

What is more, in keeping with the definition of sin, we must also beware of another papistic error, namely, that sin is only those evil acts which are done consciously and deliberately. If deliberation and premeditation were necessary, then the unborn babe in the womb would not be guilty of sin. Yet by virtue of original sin, which we shall take up later, we all were guilty of sin even before we drew our first breath, as King David declared: “*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me*” (Psalm 51:5).

It should also be pointed out that sin is not only an act against one of the *specific* commandments of the *Decalogue*, but any violation of God’s Word. For example, none of the Ten Commandments specifically addresses God’s exclusion of women from the pastoral office, yet there **is** a specific command of God: “*I suffer not a woman to teach nor to usurp authority over the man*” (I Timothy 2:12); and again: “*Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law*” (I Corinthians 14:34). Thus, churches **sin** by calling women into the pastoral office. Of course, in the final analysis, *any* violation of an expressed will of God ultimately falls under one or more of the Ten Commandments. Having a woman as a pastor most certainly breaks the Second Commandment, “*Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain,*” in that she would be teaching God’s Word (His Name) contrary to His will. Moreover, *any* sin is finally against the First Commandment, “*Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.*”

Now since “*sin is the transgression of the Law,*” it is necessary to explain that this definition does not now any longer apply to the Old Testament *ceremonial* laws, all of which were abolished by God Himself, since they found their fulfillment in Christ, as Paul writes: “*Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days, which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ*” (Colossians 2:16-17). Likewise, the civil or “political” laws given to Moses, which, for example, demanded the stoning of an adulterer, no longer apply since the Mosaic civil laws pertained only to the theocratic nation

of Israel. Many religions such as Judaism and also some Protestant bodies like the Seventh-day Adventists overlook this important distinction between the *moral* Law which is for *all times*, and those laws which pertained only to Old Testament Israel. Also, there was no transferal of any of the *ceremonial* laws into the New Testament. Not only is the Sabbath or day-of-rest on Saturday no longer binding, but in addition there is no New Testament “Sabbath.” Sunday is not the Sabbath, as this is typically taught by the Reformed. You may mow the lawn and wash your car not only Monday through Saturday, but also on Sunday!

Furthermore, because of the fact that there is such a thing as an erring conscience, a person can be guilty of sin even when he is not explicitly transgressing a specific law of God. In Romans 14 the Apostle Paul addresses the matter of a *weaker brother*, a brother not yet sufficiently instructed. He cites the example of one who has a conscience against eating meat which had been offered to idols, even though such meat is not in itself evil. The more fully instructed Christian could eat it with a *good* conscience, but he must not force the man with the *erring* conscience to eat against his conscience. Paul says, “*For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself toward God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin*” (Romans 14:20-23). To act against one’s conscience, even though the conscience be mis-informed, is sin because the person believes that he truly is sinning. [Of course, a weaker brother who has been properly instructed on the matter should not continue to have an accusing conscience, nor should he be permitted to continue to condemn those who properly exercise their liberty.]

## B. The *Origin* and *Cause* of Sin

As we all once learned from Scripture and in our catechetical studies, the origin of sin is Satan and also man who permitted himself to be deceived by Satan. From Scripture we know that Satan rebelled against God and is therefore the first creature to sin. Thus sin *originated* with Satan. Christ says in John 8:44, “*He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*” Yet Scripture also attributes the origin of sin to man himself in that the sin of **Adam** was imputed to **ALL men**. In Adam, we all sinned. “*Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin, and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned*” (Romans 5:12). How Satan, being a good angel, could fall is not the issue; rather the issue is that he did rebel against God. Likewise, Adam and Eve, although created perfect and righteous and being in the very image of God, nevertheless fell. As our old Lutheran theologians have said, man, in the *state of integrity*, was able to sin and able not to sin. At the behest of Satan, man, of his own free will, sinned.

Now some let the devil becloud their thinking by reasoning this way: “God knows everything; God has all power to stop anything; and no creature can subsist or move or do anything without God. Therefore perhaps God Himself must take some of the blame for sin!” God forbid! The fact that God upholds all creatures and concurs in the actions of all creatures does not make God *culpable* or *guilty of sin*. First of all, God is holy, sinless and hating sin. “*Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts*” (Isaiah 6:3). Also, James says: “*Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God; for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth He any man; but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin; and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.*” (1:13-15).

Indeed, man is held responsible for his sins. In the end, it is not sin that is sentenced to damnation; but man, the culpable, guilty, accountable sinner, is punished in hell. Also, even though Satan was the first to rebel, and even though the fire of hell was originally prepared for the devil and his angels (Matthew 25:41), impenitent sinners, those who die in their sins and, in unbelief, are “*without Christ*” (Ephesians 2:12) go to hell. (Matthew 25:41). To the goats on His left hand, Christ shall say: “*Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels*” (Matthew 25:41). Let this lead us to the next subsection.

### C. The *Consequences* of Sin

Because God is a holy, just, and righteous God who cannot stand sin, yea, even hates sin, He must therefore punish sin. “*I the Lord your God am holy*” (Leviticus 19:2). “*I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me*” (Exodus 20:5). Therefore the consequence of sin is the temporal and eternal wrath and punishment of our just, holy, and righteous God. Chiefly, the consequence of sin is death. Romans 6:23 says: “*For the wages of sin is death.*” As we have been taught from Scripture, this wage of sin is not just temporal death. The death which results from sin is also spiritual death and eternal death. Hence, when Adam fell, he immediately died *spiritually*, that is, his soul was darkened with sin and unbelief and was left without true fear, love and trust in God. He was left “*dead in trespasses and sins*” (Ephesians 2:1). Yet at that moment he also became subject not only to temporal death, but also to eternal death, which is damnation in hell. The Bible calls this eternal death the “*second death*” (Revelation 20:6). He who suffers *temporal* death while in the state of *spiritual* death (unbelief) will then suffer *eternal* death in hell. This eternal death is not annihilation or extinction, but an eternity of continuous living and existing in hell where one is totally cut off from God and without any relief from the tortures of hell, “*where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched*” (Mark 9:44). In hell there shall be uninterrupted “*weeping and gnashing of teeth*” (Matthew 8:12).

Yet even before man is called out of this life, he must also suffer the temporal consequences of sin. We are all familiar with what God told Eve and Adam respectively. Yet let us hear God again. To Eve God said: “*I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee*” (Genesis 3:16). To Adam God said: “*Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it, cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken; for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return*” (Gen. 3:17-19). Thus, even though we as Christians are forgiven our sins, and our guilt has been removed in Christ, we are not altogether exempt from the temporal consequences of sin. By His grace in Christ, God tempers these consequences for us, and may, as He sees fit, spare us this or that consequence. Otherwise, we, too, must work by the sweat of our face. Bearing and having children, although a great blessing, has its hardships and sorrows. However, when we as believers suffer the temporal consequences of sin, they are not to be regarded as a real punishment for sins, but the loving chastening of the Lord upon His beloved in Christ, “*for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?*” (Hebrews 12:6-7). King David was forgiven his transgressions yet suffered their temporal consequences, such as the death of the child born of Bathsheba; and these consequences were most troublesome, yet they were transformed from punishments in the strict sense of the term to that of the loving chastisement of the Lord.

#### D. The Doctrine of *Original Sin*.

Just as it is important to define what sin **is**, so it is important to define and properly understand what is meant by **Original Sin**. While saying that the very first transgression of man was the “original” or first sin, the term “**Original Sin**” refers to the total depravity and corruption of man’s nature stemming from Adam’s fall. Our theologians in accord with Scripture speak of **Original Sin** as **a) hereditary guilt**; and **b) hereditary corruption**. Take first the inherited guilt. “*By the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation*” (Romans 5:19). Though none of us were physical participants in the first sin, as were Adam and Eve, nevertheless Adam’s guilt was imputed by God to all mankind. This is why all men die. “*Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all mankind, for that all have sinned*” (Romans 5:12). The same text continues, “*For until the Law sin was in the world; but sin is not imputed when there is no law. Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam’s transgression*” (Romans 5:13-14). Here we are clearly told that even before there was the written Law, sin was still in the world in that death, sin’s wage, was in the world. Death, sin’s wage, was in the world because Adam’s transgression was imputed to all men. Though sin was not formally imputed by Law until the *written* Law arrived, the sin and guilt of Adam were nevertheless imputed even from Adam to Moses.

Yet not only the guilt of Adam was imputed to all, but also the total depravity and corruption of Adam was inherited by all. King David rightly confessed: “*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me*” (Psalm 51:5). “*But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*” (Isaiah 64:6). “*That which is born of the flesh is flesh*” (John 3:6). “*That ye put off concerning the former conversation, old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts*” (Ephesians 4:22). “*For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, blasphemies*” (Matthew 15:19). “*Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one*” (Job 14:4). “*The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?*” (Jeremiah 17:9). “*Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God*” (Romans 8:7-8).

Here three additional citations are in order, one from Hollaz, one from the *Formula of Concord*, and another from Quenstedt. Hollaz said: “Original sin is the thorough corruption of human nature, which by the fall of our first parents is deprived of original righteousness and is prone to every evil.” The *Formula of Concord*: “Original sin is not a slight, but so deep a corruption of human nature that nothing healthy or uncorrupt has remained in man’s body or soul, in his inner or outward powers.” Quenstedt: “Original sin is a want of original righteousness, derived from the sin of Adam and transmitted to all men who are begotten in the ordinary mode of generation, including the dreadful corruption and depravity of human nature and all its powers, excluding all from the grace of God and eternal life and subjecting them to temporal and eternal punishments, unless they be born again of water and the Spirit or obtain the remission of sins through Christ.”

At this juncture, it is important to note the error of an otherwise great champion of the truth during the post-Reformation period, the error of Matthias Flacius (1520-1575). In his debate with Strigel, Flacius, in his earnest efforts to uphold the truth of the sinful corruption of man’s nature, went too far. When Strigel said that original sin was an *accidens* (Latin), that is, not the substance of man’s nature but merely something that happened *to it*, Flacius countered that original sin is *substantia*, the very substance of man’s nature; that is, human nature as an entity,

in and of itself as an essence, is evil. Thus, merely *to be* a human being would be equal to sin. Yet we are not sinners by *being* human, but by the fact that our human nature has been *totally corrupted* by sin, as Mueller states: “Hence we must distinguish between human nature, which also after the fall is the work of God, and the corruption of human nature, or original sin, which is the work of the devil” (Mueller, J. T., *Christian Dogmatics*, page 221). The seriousness of the error of Flacius would also transmit to the doctrine of Christ, who, upon becoming **true man**, would have to be a sinner **if being** human, in and of itself, equals sin.

However, while we must not adopt Flacius’ error, neither dare we deny how profoundly our nature has been corrupted. The *Smalcald Articles* state: “This hereditary sin is so deep and horrible a corruption of nature that no reason can understand it, but it must be learned and believed from the revelation of Scripture” (Part III, Art. I, 3). Hence the confession of sins in our hymnal is not Flacian, but Scriptural when it says, “Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess unto Thee that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against Thee by thought, word, and deed.” We are by nature sinful and unclean by reason of the total corruption of our nature by sin. Therefore we must condemn the errors of those religions, particularly of the Reformed bodies, which deny or minimize original sin and its guilt and corruption. Mueller rightly points out that among them are such errors as that of: **a)** denying altogether the inherited corruption, saying that children are corrupted not by propagation, but by the bad example of others; **b)** admitting the corruption of human nature, but denying that it is sin; and **c)** minimizing the original corruption (Semi-Pelagians, synergists). As we shall see later, such a minimizing of original sin perverts and denies the doctrine of salvation by grace alone without any merit or works.

Now you will recall from the quote from Quenstedt that he held, on the basis of Scripture, that **original sin** was “transmitted to all men who are begotten in the normal mode of generation.” Indeed, there was one exception to the transmission of Original Sin to all men. There was one person who was born **apart from** the ordinary mode of generation. Our Lord Jesus Christ, being conceived by the Holy Ghost and born of the Virgin Mary, was born **without** the corruption and guilt of sin, as Gabriel said to Mary, “*The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*” (Luke 1:35). This enabled our Lord Jesus, although true man as well as true God, to be our Savior from sin.

Because of Original Sin, the mind and will of all men were left without spiritual light or understanding. For this reason, natural man deems spiritual things as foolishness. In the passage all of us have memorized, the Scripture says: “*But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned*” (I Corinthians 2:14). This is why man has no ability to bring himself to understand the things of God. The **Holy Ghost** must teach it **through the Word**, and the Holy Ghost must first work conversion from unbelief to faith in Christ. “*No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost*” (I Corinthians 12:3). Thus, conversion and spiritual enlightenment occur simultaneously. Paul says: “*Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away*” (II Corinthians 3:16). Thus, Paul also says: “*But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost, in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them*” (II Corinthians 4:3-4). Hence, all Pelagianism (salvation by works), Semi-Pelagianism (salvation by works plus faith), or synergism (conversion by the cooperation of man with God), are ruled out since man is by nature “*dead in trespasses and sins*” (Ephesians 2:1). Natural man can only sin. Let this lead us into what we call *Actual Sin*.

### E. *Actual Sin*

The term **Actual Sin** refers to all those sins which *result from* and *flow out of* Original Sin. The term **Actual Sin** is not to be understood as what sin really IS versus what is really not sin, but *actual* in the sense of **acts** (*act*-ual) or **deeds** of sin, the various individual **ACTS** of sin or transgressions against the Law which are spawned or produced by Original Sin. Original Sin is an *inherited* condition and not something committed, whereas **actual sins** are individual **acts**, sinful thoughts, desires, words, and deeds which result from this condition. To put it another way, **actual sins** are all the individual sinful **acts** which flow out of Original Sin. The Apostle Paul says, “*The good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not that I do; ...it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me*” (Romans 7:19-20). Such actual sins may be either **sins of commission** or of **omission**. Sins of *commission* occur by doing what the Law of God forbids, and sins of *omission* occur by not doing what the Law of God requires. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, we see both kinds. The thieves were guilty of sins of *commission* by beating and robbing the traveler. The priest and the Levite were guilty of sins of *omission* by failing to do what the Law requires that a person should do for his neighbor, that is, “help and befriend him in every bodily need” (Luther - Fifth Commandment). O how often we sin by not doing what we ought to do, as the Bible says, “*Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin*” (James 4:17).

While your essayist sought to determine where he might best mention sin as being either negative or positive, perhaps this is as good a place as any. Our theologians do speak of sin as being either negative or positive. Here the terms negative and positive are used etymologically, that is, with respect to words in their origin. The Greek word for law is *nomia* [no-MEE-ah]. Therefore, sin in the *negative* sense is *anomia* [AH-no-MEE-ah], that is, a lack of conformity with God’s Law. Compare this with our use of the word “amoral,” meaning not moral. Thus *anomia* is *not* law, *not* in agreement, or *lacking in* agreement with the Law. In contrast to sin as a negative concept is sin as a *positive* concept, that is, it is a concrete, actual opposition to the law.

Furthermore, *actual* sins may be still further classified. Because of the limits of time, we will simply name the classifications and give a very brief explanation of each. —First there are *voluntary* and *involuntary* sins. The former refers to sins knowingly and willfully committed, while the latter refers to sins committed in ignorance or without deliberate purpose. In the latter we also include what are called *sins of weakness*, something which can only be said of the Christian in that unbelievers remain dead in trespasses and sins and captive to Satan’s power.

—There are *grievous* and *less grievous* sins. While all sin is rebellion against God and deserving of damnation, Scripture does speak of *grievous* and *less grievous* sins. Jesus speaks of the servant who knew his master’s will and refused to do it as being worthy to be beaten with many stripes, while the servant who did not know his master’s will was to be beaten with but few stripes. [In this regard, there are not only degrees of *gravity*, as when, for example, Jesus told Pilate: “*He that delivered Me unto thee hath the **greater** sin*” (John 19:11), but also degrees of *punishment*, as when He said to the Pharisees: “*Ye shall receive the **greater** damnation*” (Matthew 23:14). It is interesting to note, however, from these and other passages that the terms “grievous” and “less grievous” are not truly Biblical terms, while “grievous” and “MORE grievous” would better fit what Jesus Himself describes and would be the wiser choice of words.]

—Closely aligned to this is the classification of *mortal* and *venial* sins. Mortal sins are all sins

which result in a fall from grace, and sins which destroy faith. Venial sins are the involuntary sins of believers, which although they also are deserving of damnation, they are sins of which the believer, because he is a believer, nevertheless repents and are forgiven to the believer for Christ's sake. The Roman church errs in this by making *specific sins* to be either mortal or venial.

—Crying sins are those sins which by their heinousness and maliciousness invoke a special and specific punishment of God. Examples include the following: The sin of Cain, who slew his brother, Abel, whose blood “*cried*” unto God from the ground (Genesis 4:10); the oppression of the Egyptians upon the Israelites (Exodus 2:23-25; 3:7); the sins of Sodom and Gomorrah (Genesis 18:20); the oppression of widows and orphans (Exodus 22: 22-23); withholding due wages from a laborer (James 5:4); and the persecution of Christians (Revelation 6:9-10).

—We also speak of *pardonable* and *unpardonable* sins. Simply put, a pardonable sin is one of which a person is able to repent, while an unpardonable sin is that of which a person is unable to repent. In this regard, there is but one sin, the commission of which renders a person unable to repent; and that is *The Sin Against the Holy Ghost*. This occurs when a person has known, believed, tasted and appreciated the grace of God, but then knowingly, intentionally, maliciously, blasphemously, and spitefully turns against and attacks the Gospel of God's grace and sins against the work of the Holy Ghost. This sin is described in Hebrews 6:4-6 this way: “*For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance, seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh and put him to an open shame.*” However, it must also be stated that if a person, such as King Saul in the Old Testament, hardens his heart, God Himself may harden his heart even further as His judicial punishment and render him unable to repent. Likewise, the Pharaoh of Egypt, although never a believer, stubbornly and persistently refused to be humbled before the obvious mighty deeds of God and thereby hardened his heart. Subsequently God Himself sealed this hardening as His just punishment (Ex. 8:15, 19; 11:10). Thus, while *The Sin Against the Holy Ghost* and a judicially hardened heart are not identical, the result may be the same condition whereby one can no longer repent. Regarding *The Sin Against the Holy Ghost*, however, Dr. Walther, in his *Proper Distinction Between Law and Gospel*, has rightly stated that he who is worried that he may have committed *The Sin Against the Holy Ghost* has not committed it since no such concern and fear would exist in the heart of the person who did commit it.

## **Part II: How the Doctrine of Sin Relates Directly to Salvation by Grace in Christ**

When Scripture presents the **Doctrine of Sin**, it does not present it in isolation, or as something unto itself. The doctrine of sin rather lays the foundation for the doctrine of God's grace in Christ. The doctrine of sin has the following direct connections with salvation by grace through faith in Christ: **1)** The doctrine of sin shows man's lost and condemned condition and the absolute necessity of salvation by grace alone; **2)** The doctrine of sin, therefore, shows the necessity for the substitutionary work of Christ for all sinners; **3)** The sin remaining in Christians shows why believers must continue to trust in Christ. **4)** God's grace in Christ is magnified by its ever abounding over sin in our lives.

**A.** The Doctrine of Sin shows us man's condition of being a lost and condemned creature and therefore the absolute necessity of salvation by grace.

The true doctrine of sin, which was set forth in the first part of this essay, makes it crystal clear

that fallen man was left not only in a corrupt condition, but also therefore guilty under God's Law and under the curse of the Law, both temporal and eternal death. *"The wages of sin is death"* (Romans 6:23). Being in such a corrupt condition, man is absolutely incapable of delivering himself from his corruption and guilt, and from the just temporal and eternal punishment of God upon sin. Any attempt on the part of the sinner to obey the Law with the intent of saving himself by the works of the Law is absolutely futile. Paul says: *"For as many as are of the works of the Law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the Law to do them"* (Galatians 3:10). Again: *"For by the works of the Law shall no flesh be justified"* (Galatians 2:16). And yet again: *"But that no man is justified by the Law in the sight of God, it is evident"* (Galatians 3:11). Moreover, not only can no sinner save himself, neither can another sinner save a fellow sinner by some ransom payment or some great sacrifice since even such payment or sacrifice would also be corrupt and wholly insufficient. Psalm 49:7-8 says, *"None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him: (for the redemption of their soul is precious..."* and again: *"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one."* (Job 14:4).

Tragically, fallen man, driven by his conscience which testifies to the natural knowledge of the Law in the heart, seeks to placate God by works. All the various false religions in the world, in the final analysis, in some way or another seek to satisfy God (whom they know only according to their *natural knowledge* of Him) by means of works. Having their *"understanding darkened"* (Ephesians 4:18) and alienated from the life of God, they know "deep down" that they stand accused; and this moves them to seek to appease God by works which, of course, are of no avail. Even if they feel "excused" by such dead works, they are not in fact "excused." *"For when the Gentiles, which have not the Law, do by nature the things contained in the Law, these, having not the Law, are a law unto themselves; which shew the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another"* (Romans 2:14-15).

Since man cannot save himself from his sin and guilt and from the due judgment of God upon his sins, he must *be* saved by someone else. He who is helpless to help himself must *be rescued* by someone who has not only the authority but also the power to do so. **Only God** can save the sinner. Yet in order for God to save the sinner, God must remain true to His own **holiness** and **justice**. God cannot simply excuse sin or "write it off" as a divinely-magnanimous gesture. By excusing sin or "letting it go," God would be denying Himself, denying His very essence, denying His holiness, denying His divine justice. Instead, God saved us in such a way that His Law would be fulfilled, and the penalty of His Law would be exacted. This leads us to the next relation of sin to salvation by grace, namely, that

**B.** The sin of man made absolutely necessary the substitutionary work of Christ.

In order for God to have saved us lost and condemned sinners justly and righteously, He *"sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law"* (Galatians 4:4-5). Yes, Christ became one of us, flesh of our flesh, but without sin, in order to take our place under the Law, to be our Substitute under the Law. The fact that man had violated and transgressed God's Law did not mean the Law had lost its validity and force. It still had to be fulfilled. Thus, only our Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, could both be under the Law and also keep it perfectly. This was our Savior, the Scripture says, *"who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth"* (1 Peter 2:22). This was He *"who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners..."* (Hebrews 7:26). Thus, neither in thoughts, words, deeds, attitudes, or feelings, did Christ, *"the Holy One of Israel"* (Isaiah 43:3), sin, as He once asked rhetorically:

*“Which of you convinceth [convicteth] me of sin” (John 8:46).*

This will ever amaze us, even us Christians, since we as sinner-saints, who still have the Old Adam of sin within us, are prone to sin and commit sin every day. Even though we are forgiven sinners and ever want, according to our New Man, only to do good and to keep God’s commandments, we fail in our best attempts to be perfect; indeed, we are still very much imperfect because of our flesh. Paul says, *“I count not myself to have apprehended”* (Philippians 3:13a). Thus, the very thought of our Savior, as true man, never once sinning boggles our minds! We know no such thing of ourselves! Yet, in Christ, man did keep the Law perfectly. From His conception, birth and infancy onward, our Savior never sinned. Yet, try as we may, though we strive according to our New Man not to sin, “we daily sin much and indeed deserve nothing but punishment” (Luther - 5th Petition). *“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us”* (I John 1:8). *“For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good, I find not. For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do”* (Romans 7:18-19). Yet Christ, our Substitute under the Law, kept the whole Law entirely and perfectly; and amazingly, by His grace, God imputes Christ’s righteousness to us. *“Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth”* (Romans 10:4). Here the word “end” means “fulfillment” — perfect, complete fulfillment. Hence our synodical Catechism, in answer to the question, “Why was it necessary for our Savior to be true God?” answers: “That His fulfilling of the Law might be sufficient for all men.” Then the following passage is cited: *“By the obedience of one shall many be made righteous”* (Romans 5:19). Thus, an integral and essential part of Christ’s *vicarious atonement*, His perfect, all-sufficient *substitutionary satisfaction* of the legislative requirement of Divine Justice [*“Ye shall be holy!”*] in the place of sinners, was His **active obedience**, the fact that **He kept the Law perfectly for ALL mankind**.

Yet the Law of God also requires that sin and the guilty sinner be **punished**. Thus, Christ, as our Substitute, also took upon Himself our sin and guilt. God literally, not figuratively, but literally, imputed and charged our sin and guilt to His Son. *“And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all”* (Isaiah 53:6). *“For he hath made **Him who knew no sin\*** to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him”* (II Corinthians 5:21). [\*NOTE the better juxtaposition of this relative clause according to the Greek text.] Since our sin and guilt were charged or imputed to Christ, also the punishment due us was meted out to Christ. Where the sin and guilt are, there the punishment must be according to Divine Justice (Ezekiel 18:4b). Our sin and guilt were laid on Christ; hence, the punishment came upon Christ as well. The punishment was **death**, *“for the wages of sin is death”* (Romans 6:23). Christ suffered not only the *temporal* death of crucifixion, but also while on he cross He suffered *eternal* death, the very tortures of the damned in hell, crying, *“My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken Me”* (Matthew 27:46). Thus again, if we were to be redeemed from the **curse** of the Law, Christ also had to take our place and suffer **that curse** in our stead. Out of love for His Father (John 14:31) and for us (John 13:1), Christ bore the curse for us on the accursed tree of the cross. St. Paul writes: *“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree”* (Galatians 3:13); and the Apostle Peter states that Christ *“His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed”* (I Peter 2:24).

That Christ’s **Active** and **Passive Obedience** did in fact fulfill God’s Law in our stead and satisfied divine justice was expressed well beforehand by Isaiah, saying, *“He shall see the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied”* (Isaiah 53:11). And, since the Father was satisfied, He raised His Son from the dead. Paul says that it was Christ *“who was delivered for our*

offences, and was raised again for our justification” (Romans 4:25). Thus, Christ’s **active and passive obedience together** won God’s **OBJECTIVE justification** of the world, “to wit, that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them” (II Corinthians 5:19). And again: “Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life” (Romans 5:18).

Yet all this blessed **work** of Christ in bearing the sin and guilt of all mankind and in suffering the punishment deserved by every transgressor, and its blessed **result** in the justification of the world by God for Christ’s sake, becomes our own possession only by faith. This is personal or **SUBJECTIVE justification**. The Lord’s prophet writes: “The just shall live by his faith” (Habakkuk 2:4). God’s blessed gift of salvation from sin is given us as a pure gift. It can therefore only be received by faith, and not by works. “For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast” (Ephesians 2:8-9). And St. Paul makes it abundantly clear that one does not lay hold on God’s justification (and ultimately of salvation) by a combination of faith and works, saying: “And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise, grace is no more grace” (Romans 11:6). Moreover, the blessed fruit of God’s reconciliation, which is ours by faith in His unilateral forensic act, is that we are now at peace with Him; for Paul writes: “Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” (Romans 5:1). Indeed, we continue to treasure and value this grace of God in Christ and the peace it brings to troubled hearts as we consider the next section, namely, that

**C.** The sin remaining in us as sinner-saints is why we must continue to trust only in the grace of God for our salvation.

As we continue in the grace of God from our Baptism to our last dying breath in this life, we are to “grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ” (II Peter 3:18). St. Paul says: “I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 3:14). Also, Peter says: “And beside all this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge...,” etc. And how does such progress in sanctification come about? It cannot come about apart from the faithful use of the *Means of Grace*, the Gospel and the Sacrament; for Peter exhorts us: “As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of **the Word**, that ye may **grow** thereby” (I Peter 2:2).

However, no matter how earnestly we strive to live a sanctified life, we fall *far short* of perfection. Daily we sin much. Would any one doubt that the Apostle Paul was sanctified? Yet, what did he say of himself? Because of the sinful flesh within him, he freely confesses: “The good that I would, I do not; and the evil which I would not, that I do” (Romans 7:19). Then Paul declares: “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” (v. 24). Thus, our assurance of salvation is not based on how well we may have, or think we may have, performed in good works of sanctification, but in the merits of Christ alone. Throughout our lives, we must daily place our trust in Christ’s merits for the forgiveness of sins. Each time we confess our sins, to what do we then turn for comfort and absolution? Do we comfort our souls with our “track record” of good works performed in sanctification? No!! Our only comfort and assurance that we are forgiven is the knowledge we have in the Word of Reconciliation that God for Jesus’ sake has already forgiven us our sins.

In fact, only **that** assurance, which we lay hold on and have for our very own **by confidence in Christ**, can fuel and empower us to strive rightly, that is, to strive with the proper motivation,

to lead a Godly life. Jesus says: “*Without Me ye can do nothing*” (John 15:5). And St. Paul writes: “*Not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God*” (II Corinthians 3:4). Why? “*For it God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure*” (Philippians 2:13). Thus, that we remain sinners even as Christians means we never reach a plateau where we can say, “I no longer need the grace of God in Jesus Christ. I can carry on from here.” Indeed, this is why we need frequently to partake of the Lord’s Supper as a *strengthening* Means of Grace. Recall Luther’s answer to Question #16 of his *Christian Questions and Their Answers*. It asks, “Why ought we to remember and proclaim His death?” Answer: “That we may learn to believe that no creature could make satisfaction for our sins but Christ, true God and man; and that we may learn to look with terror at our sins, and to regard them as great indeed, and to find joy and comfort in Him alone, and thus be saved through such faith” [*Luther’s Small Catechism*, p. 34]. And this takes us to the last section of this second part of our essay, namely, that

**D.** God’s grace in Christ is magnified by how it ever abounds over sin in our lives.

Remember that blessed passage of Scripture in which St. Paul says: “*Moreover the Law entered, that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound*” (Romans 5: 20)? Yes, God’s grace in Christ is far greater than our sin. The same passage continues: “*That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord*” (Romans 5:21). As great as this passage is, and because of how great it is, we should apply it to our own lives as sinner-saints. Thus, in this closing section of our essay, let us spell out how the grace of Christ abounds over sin in our lives.

Obviously grace first came to abound in our own lives the moment we were regenerated or brought to faith in Christ, which, for many of us, was when we, as infants already, were baptized into the name of our gracious Triune God. In Baptism our sins were washed away, and we renounced the devil and all his works and all his ways. In Baptism we “*put on Christ*” (Galatians 3:27). We put on His white robe of righteousness, the “*wedding garment*” which covers all our sin and guilt. This is when grace conquered sin for us personally. We entered into the *state of grace*. Then and there we became heirs of everlasting life.

Yet, after our Baptism, we were not immediately taken to heaven but were left behind to be the servants of Christ and soldiers of His cross. This means we must still continue to battle against the devil, the world, and our flesh, resisting those enemies of our souls “*steadfast in the faith*” (I Peter 5:9) but never for a minute assuming that they will never, even temporarily, gain the upper hand and jeopardize our salvation! The Apostle Paul warns us: “*Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall*” (I Corinthians 10:12). It could happen, not that we would ever want it to, but it could happen that we fall into grievous sin, as did King David, yea, as Peter did, who denied his Savior and fell from faith itself. When such a fall occurs, it is indeed a sad day. Yet by the grace of God, a fallen sinner may be restored by means of the precious Word of God — by the **Law** of God, which apprises him of his sins and brings him to his knees in humble contrition, and by the **Gospel**, which comforts the brokenhearted, binds up the wounded, creates saving faith again in his heart, and restores joy to the believer. King David repented, and was forgiven and restored to faith again (II Samuel 12:13). Peter, too, “*wept bitterly*” (Matthew 26:75) over his sins, was “*converted*” (Luke 22:32) again to confidence in His Savior, and became a willing cross-bearer after his Lord Jesus (John 21:18-19). These are clearly cases in which, where sin abounded, grace did much more abound (Romans 5:20). Indeed, if **we also** should fall, which may God graciously forbid, by God’s grace we too can repent and be forgiven

and restored. This is not to make us relax against sin with the idea that, “O well, I can always repent.” No, this is speaking to the fact that if one does fall, he is not automatically, irreversibly, forever shut off from God’s grace, unable to repent, and prevented by the Lord Himself from being restored to the saving faith. How do we know this? The Bible says so. *“Come now, and let us reason together saith the Lord, Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool”* (Isaiah 1:18). Consider again Simon Peter! He gave that great confession of Christ, *“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God,”* but not long afterward he actually denied this very Savior whom he had mightily confessed. He denied Him not once, not twice, but three times! Nevertheless, by the chiding look of Christ, Peter was brought to true contrition for his sin, and he wept bitterly. Moreover, by the grace of Christ who prayed for him that his faith fail not, Peter was converted and, shortly before Jesus’ ascension into heaven, was restored to his apostleship. Christ had brought abounding grace to Peter where Peter’s sin had before abounded. Thus, no matter what sin it may be into which we have fallen, it is not so great and so egregious that Christ’s precious blood could not possibly have atoned for it. The following verse is not only to be memorized, but also to be personally applied to our own trembling hearts, namely, *“The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanseth us from all sin”* (I John 1:7). For this reason, the Bible also says, *“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness”* (I John 1:9).

But let us suppose there is someone among us here today who never before heard the Gospel of salvation, has never believed in Jesus as his Savior, or has even been highly critical of the Christian faith. Or let us suppose you know someone in that lost and condemned state of affairs. Is such a person forever destined to be lost?? As we know, God never predestinated anyone to damnation. He graciously *“will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth”* (I Timothy 2:4). And again, He *“is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance”* (II Peter 3:9). Is there a Biblical example of this? What was the great Apostle Paul before he became an Apostle? He was that zealous, proud, self-righteous Pharisee named Saul of Tarsus. He literally persecuted the Lord Jesus Himself (Acts 9:4), was an enabling accomplice in the stoning of Stephen, the first Christian martyr (Acts 7:58), and made general *“havoc”* of the Church by pursuing, terrorizing and arresting faithful Christians after the Pentecost *“harvest”* in Jerusalem (Acts 8:3). Yet our ascended Lord Jesus, also according to His human nature, appeared to Saul, *“as of one born out of due time”* (I Corinthians 15:8) to bring him to repentance and faith. Yes, Christ first preached the Law to Saul to show him and convict him of his sins. He humbled Saul, who then asked, *“Who art Thou, Lord?”* The Lord answered, *“I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest”* (Acts 9:5). Thus, Jesus presented Himself to Saul as his risen and ascended Savior; and when Saul asked Jesus, *“Lord, what wilt Thou have me to do?”* (v. 6). Jesus had Saul taken into Damascus to meet a disciple named Ananias to be baptized. And what did Ananias say? *“Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.”* (Acts 22:16). As has often been said, if Saul, the plotting terrorist, was able to be converted, anyone can! *“For where sin abounded, grace did much more abound”* (Romans 5:20). O, how this magnifies and glorifies the grace of Christ.

It is this abounding grace, manifested in the Gospel, which will preserve us unto the end, *“being confident of this very thing, that He which hath begun a good work in [us] will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ”* (Philippians 1:6). *“Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it,”* Paul writes in I Thessalonians 5:24. Therefore, even as we diligently strive against sin and seek to please God with a God-pleasing life of good works, we know that underlying all of this is abounding grace, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Even in those moments and occasions when our faith is weak, God’s grace remains active on our behalf; for Scripture assures us that

He does not cast us off or abandon us. *“A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax shall He not quench”* (Isaiah 42:3).

### Conclusion

We opened this essay by stating that the **Doctrine of Sin** is most definitely included in the prophecy of Scripture that *“the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables”* (II Timothy 4:3-4). May we who, by God’s grace, know the truth hold fast the faithful Word which we have been taught, so that we are not deceived and seduced by the devil, the world, or our own flesh into accepting anything but the **Scriptural doctrine of sin**, and so that we may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers (Titus 1:9). Let us ever humbly and diligently examine our hearts on the basis of both the Law and the Gospel — on the basis of the **Law** so as to know, acknowledge and confess our sins and sincerely to repent of them; on the basis of the **Gospel** to know, to accept, and confide in the blessed assurance that in Christ there is the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. Thus we close with the prayer of the Psalmist: *“Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting”* (Psalm 139:23-24). Amen.

### MINUTES OF THE 51st ANNUAL CONVENTION

of the

### CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE

June 28, 29 and 30, 2002

+++

FRIDAY, JUNE 28

THE MORNING SESSION

#### THE OPENING SERVICE:

The 51st Annual Convention, held at St. John’s Lutheran Church, Lebanon, Oregon, officially began at 9:30 a.m. with a Divine Worship Service of Convocation in which the local pastor, the Rev. M. L. Natterer, served as liturgist, and, as President of the Conference, also delivered the keynote sermon. He chose as his text Matthew 9:1-8, taking as his theme the Savior’s words from the text: *“Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee.”* He divided his message into two parts, namely, **I. These are words of the greatest comfort**, and **II. These are words which we can trust**.

Immediately following the service, the first session of the convention was called to order by the President at 11:25 a.m. according to the customary usages. Hymn 540 was sung, followed by a prayer and the usual opening exhortation.

#### APPOINTED CONVENTION COMMITTEES:

According to the convention **PROSPECTUS**, the following committees were appointed by the President for the carrying out of convention business:

**A. Auditing Committee:** Pastor David G. Redlin, Chairman  
Mr. John Steinke (Holy Scripture)

Mr. Nathan Mahan (Faith)

**B. Committee on Registration and Excuses:** Pastor Mark W. Dierking, Chairman  
Mr. Ron Lake (St. John's)  
Mr. Aaron Dierking (St. Stephen's)

**C. Committee on Nominations and Elections:** Pastor E. R. Stallings, Chairman  
Mr. Phillip Martin (Peace)  
Mr. Paul Natterer (St. John's)

**D. Resolutions Committee:** Pastor David T. Mensing, Chairman  
Mr. Raymond Kusumi (St. Luke's)  
Mr. Michael Malley (Good Shepherd)

### **INITIAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION AND EXCUSES:**

The committee reported the following delegates present and seated for this convention:

From **FAITH, Jackson:** Rev. Ross A. Mahan, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. JC Perry and Mr. Nathan Mahan, Lay Delegates; Mr. James Ewers and Mr. Damon Bundy, Alternates — 3 votes.

From **GOOD SHEPHERD, Tucson:** Rev. David G. Redlin, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Michael Malley and Mr. Joshua Redlin, Lay Delegates; Mr. Martin Hermann, Alternate — 3 votes.

From **HOLY SCRIPTURE, Windcrest:** Rev. E. R. Stallings, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. John Steinke and Mr. Brett Swinney, Lay Delegates; Mr. Daniel Steinke, Alternate — 3 votes.

From **PEACE, Oak Forest:** Rev. David T. Mensing, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Phillip R. Martin and Mr. Michael L. Mensing, Lay Delegates; Mr. Michael J. Danyluk, Alternate — 3 votes.

From **ST. JOHN'S, Lebanon:** Rev. M. L. Natterer, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Ted Fitzwater and Mr. Mark Natterer, Lay Delegates; Mr. Ron Lake and Mr. Paul Natterer, Alternates — 3 votes.

From **ST. LUKE'S, Seattle:** Rev. Edward J. Worley, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Raymond S. Kusumi and Mr. Robert G. Bloedel, Lay Delegates; Mr. John Okamoto and Mr. Lee Roller, Alternates — 3 votes.

From **ST. STEPHEN'S, Wilmot:** Rev. Mark W. Dierking, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Aaron J. Dierking, Lay Delegate; no Alternates — 3 votes

Total number of votes to be cast: **21**. Total attendance at the opening service: **180**. The offering received to benefit the General Conference Treasury was **\$ 1,597.43**. It was moved and seconded that the Committee's initial report be adopted and that all delegations be seated as indicated in the report. This motion was unanimously carried.

### **ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT:**

In view of the recent death of Pastor Bloedel, our sitting Vice President, the President appointed the Secretary to assume the chair during the presentation of his annual report. In reviewing the Conference fiscal year 2001-2002, President Natterer began with a brief

exposition and application of I John 5:19 concerning these last evil days of the world and both our duty and privilege to be watchful and also grateful to the Lord of the Church for His promised protection and blessing. President Natterer also expressed his appreciation to other officers and chairman of committees for their diligence, which contributed to his own efficiency as President. He called special attention to several chastisements given and relieved by our loving heavenly Father, including the deliverance of Pastor Paul Bloedel, only recently diagnosed with terminal cancer, from this vale of tears to Himself in heaven. He reported on the Fiftieth Anniversary occasions of Peace Congregation in Oak Forest and St. John's in Lebanon, and finally made grateful note of the declarations of fellowship with our Conference on the part of Mighty Fortress Congregation in Anaheim, California, and the constituent congregations of the *Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations*. —It was moved and seconded to accept this report subject to the usual review. The motion was unanimously carried, and the chairman *pro tem* appointed as the **Committee to Review the President's Report**: Pastor Edward J. Worley and Mr. Michael L. Mensing.

### **THE CONVENTION AGENDA:**

The President then laid before the Convention for its consideration the official AGENDA. It was moved and seconded to hear the report of the **Committee on Theological Education** on Sunday afternoon at 3:45 p.m. and the report concerning the **Conference Archives** at 4:00 p.m. This was carried. It was then moved and seconded to adopt the Agenda as amended. This motion was carried, and the Agenda was officially adopted.

### **REPORT OF THE PRESS COMMITTEE:**

This committee, composed of the local pastor and the Conference Secretary, reported that a brief article appeared in the local paper calling attention to Pastor Natterer's 50th anniversary as the shepherd of St. John's congregation, but that no special advance announcement of the convention had been given to the press. It was moved and seconded to receive the report, and the motion was carried.

The Agenda for the Friday morning session having been completed, the President declared the convention in recess at 11:58 a. m. for the noon meal.

+ + +

### **THE AFTERNOON SESSION**

The afternoon session was opened at 1:20 p.m. with a brief devotion conducted by Pastor Mark W. Dierking. Hymn 483 was sung, followed by the reading of Hebrews 13:7, and a prayer. The devotion concluded with the singing of Hymn 485 and the Apostolic Benediction.

### **THE HISTORICAL ESSAY: "Schism in the Orthodox Lutheran Conference, 1955, and Its Reorganization as the Concordia Lutheran Conference, 1956"**

The *HISTORICAL ESSAY*, delivered by the Rev. David T. Mensing, Pastor of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church of Oak Forest, Illinois, was the fourth in a series of historical retrospectives

commemorating the Fiftieth Anniversary of our Conference. This essay chronicled with documentation the first four years of its existence as the *Orthodox Lutheran Conference* and the circumstances leading up to a tragic split in its fellowship at the end of 1955. The first part of the essay treated the characteristics that made the Orthodox Lutheran Conference unique in its focused one-mindedness. Unlike so many other church bodies, all were perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment (I Corinthians 1:10). Doctrinal discipline was maintained, and orthodoxy was more than a word. It was, by God's grace, the "chemistry" that kept our Conference focused, functioning, and flourishing under the Lord's gracious blessing. The second part of the essay took up the question of how the precious fellowship of our Conference was jeopardized by the appearance of a strange "soft spot" in the otherwise rock-solid doctrinal, confessional, and practical position of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference. This was not properly-speaking an "inconsistency" in doctrine and practice (for that would have been quickly spotted and corrected on the basis of Scripture). Instead, it was a kind of *paradox* or seeming contradiction in our expectations of how and when certain injunctions of Holy Scripture should be obeyed. And that "soft spot" cut some "slack" to those in other church bodies who regarded themselves as "conservatives" and even "orthodox" but who were sitting on the fence concerning their readiness to obey God's Word in Romans 16:17 and other passages. It gave them, as it were, an "out" for their slowness to act, for their reticence to "*avoid them*" who by persistence in false doctrine and practice had made their church bodies *heterodox*. Pastor Mensing continued through his "NOTE" following the citation from the minutes of the August 19, 1955 Pastoral Conference and its summary of "the problem." The essay was interspersed with and followed by lively and edifying discussion on the floor, particularly on the part of those for whom this period in our history was completely new.

The essay could not be presented in its entirety due to the wealth of information and documentation contained in it. Therefore, it was moved and seconded to adopt the portions presented thus far with thanks to the essayist for his painstaking research and presentation, and have the balance of the essay presented, with its documentation, at the 52<sup>nd</sup> Annual Convention next June. This motion was carried unanimously.

At 3:15 p.m., a brief recess was observed.

Inasmuch as there were no recommendations to the Convention from the Board of Directors, the agenda continued with the

#### **INITIAL REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE:**

The initial report concerned, first of all, the past fiscal year, as Mr. Robert G. Bloedel, the designated reporter for our Treasurer, Victor K. Bloedel, presented the *Financial Report* for fiscal year 2001-2002. The report showed a beginning cash balance of \$25,548.97 in the General Fund plus total receipts of \$25,390.37, yielding total cash available of \$50,939.34. Expenditures totaled \$20,107.36, leaving an ending cash balance as of May 31, 2002 of \$30,831.98. The report also showed a decrease in the Student Aid Fund from \$28,835.37 at the beginning of the fiscal year to an ending balance of \$26,832.88 on its closing date, May 31, 2002. It was then moved and seconded to receive, subject to audit, the *Financial Report* of the Treasurer concerning the past fiscal year, and this motion was carried.

The Treasurer's reporter then distributed the Finance Committee's *Budget Worksheet* for the new fiscal year, June 1, 2002 through May 31, 2003, with the committee's **initial budget proposal**. The worksheet showed a beginning cash balance of \$30,831.98 and anticipated receipts

(including the pledges of our congregations) of \$ 23,370.00, for total cash available of \$ 54,201.98 in the General Fund. Proposed were the following expenditures: *Scriptural Publications* – \$ 3,500.00; St. Stephen’s Subsidy – \$ 7,200.00; Yekaterinburg Subsidy – \$6,000.00; Archives Subsidy – \$500.00; Convention Expense – \$ 1,000.00; Telephone Expense – \$ 2,000.00; Travel Expense – \$ 5,000.00; and Miscellaneous Expenses – \$ 2,000.00. Total: \$ 27,200.00. It was moved and seconded to accept the preliminary budget proposal, subject to any subsequent amendment by the delegates in Convention assembled and pending final approval later in the Convention. This motion was unanimously adopted.

#### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LUTHERAN UNION:**

In reporting for the committee, Pastor Mensing, the second pastoral member of the committee, first took note of the fact that its chairman, Pastor Bloedel, now enjoying the bliss of heaven with his Savior, had only begun a draft of the report when he succumbed to cancer on June 15th. Pastor Mensing, therefore, completed the report, presented it orally from his notes, and will submit it in final written form for the record, subject to polish by the *praesidium*. Included in the report was a summary of the controversy with Pastor Ivaldi resulting from his insistence that we revise the *Sketch of our Doctrinal Position* to include the heretical idea that the soul of the believer sleeps with the body in temporal death and does not consciously enjoy the pleasures of heaven. Also included in the report was Pastor Schurganoff’s summary of his activities in Russia and his congregation’s humble request for an increase in its subsidy to cover rental of space for worship services and also to augment the pastor’s salary which is stretched thin due to the health problems of his wife and of his little son. The committee referred this subsidy request to the Finance Committee for its consideration in the preparation of its final budget proposal. Finally, the report took cognizance with praise to God of the declarations of fellowship made by Mighty Fortress (Anaheim) and the constituent congregations of the *Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations*. It was moved and seconded to receive this report, and the motion was carried.

Following this and several brief announcements, the session adjourned at 5:44 p.m. with the Lord’s Prayer said in unison.

+ + +

**NOTE:** On Friday evening, following the supper hour, the delegates and visitors, together with the members of **St. John’s Lutheran Church**, gathered in the church’s sanctuary for a special commemorative service recognizing both *the congregation’s fiftieth anniversary* and *Pastor Natterer’s fiftieth consecutive year as the shepherd of that flock*. It had been a carefully guarded secret as a surprise for their pastor. All the pastors of the fellowship participated in the service; and Pastor Mensing, at the request of the congregation, preached a homily based on Pastor Natterer’s confirmation text, Matthew 10:32. Pastor Mensing’s theme: **“Confession of Christ and His Word before men, as the fruit of saving faith, is the duty and privilege of every Christian; but it is particularly so for every faithful pastor.”** The service was followed by a festive reception for Pastor and Mrs. Natterer in the church’s fellowship hall.

+ + +

**S A T U R D A Y, J U N E 29**

**THE MORNING SESSION**

The session was opened at 9:05 a.m. with a devotion led by Pastor David G. Redlin. Hymn 1 was sung, followed by the reading of Scripture in Psalm 91, and a prayer. The devotion concluded with the singing of Hymn 6 and the Apostolic Benediction.

**THE ESSAY: “The Doctrine of Sin and Its Significant Relation to Salvation by Grace in Christ”—Part I: The Many Facets or Components of the Doctrine of Sin ..... Pastor E. R. Stallings**

In a brief introduction, the essayist pointed out that the teaching of the Doctrine of Sin finds its ultimate purpose in preparing the hearts of the impenitent to see the need for salvation in Christ alone without any merit or worthiness on the part of the sinner and in reminding also us Christians why we continue to stand in need of the grace of God in Christ Jesus. —In the first part of the essay, the essayist briefly but thoroughly reviewed the many facets or components of the Doctrine of Sin, including the definition of sin, the origin and cause of sin, the consequences of sin, and the doctrines of original sin and actual sin. This part of the essay was enthusiastically received as very informative and edifying, and it was accompanied with lively discussion and wide participation on the part of the delegates and visitors. The first part was unanimously adopted with thanks to the essayist. The second part of the essay, which was scheduled to be delivered on Sunday afternoon, would then take up the application of this first section in how the doctrine of sin relates directly to salvation by grace in Christ.

A recess was observed at 11:00 a.m.

Following the break, discussion continued briefly on several points in Part I of the essay. It was then moved and seconded to accept this first part of the essay with thanks to the essayist, and the motion was carried.

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS:**

Pastor Mahan, its chairman, summarized the mission endeavors carried out by our Conference during the past fiscal year. He specifically mentioned among them the personal testimony of our members, the subsidy which we have provided to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Yekaterinburg, Russia, the outreach of our Conference through its web site, the voice of the printed Word in our Sunday School Bible Lessons and other materials generated by *Scriptural Publications*, and the witness of our official organ, the *Concordia Lutheran*. The single specific recommendation of the Committee was to continue the Conference subsidy to St. Stephen’s Ev. Lutheran Church of Wilmot, South Dakota, at the rate of \$ 7,200.00 per year. It was moved and seconded to adopt the report, together with its recommendation. This was carried.

**INTEREST REPORT OF THE SEMINARY INSTRUCTOR:**

Pastor M. L. Natterer then summarized his activities as the fourth-year instructor in the rotation of our peripatetic system of theological training. The report briefly summarized the course work and activities carried out during the fourth full year of the program. Professor Natterer specially cited the practical church work to which the student was exposed and which he also carried out in his *practicum* in the local congregation. Professor Natterer stated that, by God’s grace and with His neverfailing help, the fourth year curriculum was satisfied in full, including **Dogmatics IV** (through the Sacraments), **Symbolics II** (Formula of Concord), **Church History III** (17<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries) of which, however, only the 18<sup>th</sup> Century had been completed, and **Homiletics II** (including preaching in the local congregation once each month). In addition there was the *practicum* or on-going internship in the local congregation; and the student made excellent

progress with high marks and a consistently diligent and exemplary attitude. It was moved and seconded to receive the report with thanks to the instructor for his faithful labors this past year. This motion was carried.

#### **THE SEMINARY STUDENT'S INTEREST REPORT:**

Concluding the matter of our theological training program, Seminarian Paul E. Bloedel gave an interesting and informative report regarding his courses and activities during the past academic year in Lebanon, Oregon, including the happy personal note that he had fallen in love with and had become engaged to one of the young ladies in the congregation there, Miss Laura Fitzwater. He also characterized as a "joyful event" the recent entrance of his father, Pastor Paul Bloedel, into the fullness of heavenly bliss, and of the longing that we all have, by God's grace, to go where he has gone to be with our dear Savior. Seminarian Bloedel also expressed his eagerness to begin his final year of seminary training. It was moved and seconded to receive the report with thanks to the student for his diligent labors to the Lord's glory, and the motion was carried.

#### **REPORT OF THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:**

The chairman, Pastor E. R. Stallings, began his report with a historical retrospective concerning the publishing work of the late Pastor Paul Bloedel as the printer and sometimes editor of the *Concordia Lutheran* and of its "predecessor," the *Orthodox Lutheran*. He dedicated his report to the glory of God in grateful memory of Pastor Bloedel's monumental contributions to our official organ. He also highlighted several issues of the past year's *Concordia Lutheran* for their specially edifying content and thanked his assistants, John Steinke and Ray Kusumi, who functioned as the technical staff for the formatting and printing of the *C. L.* Finally, he briefly also cited the fine work of the Book and Tract Editor, Pastor Natterer, and he expressed appreciation particularly for the latter's "President's Column" and "Around the World" feature. It was moved and seconded to receive the report with thanks to the committee, and the motion was carried.

#### **REPORT OF THE PUBLISHING HOUSE BOARD OF CONTROL:**

The convention next heard the *Report of the Publishing House Board of Control*, which regulates *Scriptural Publications*, the publishing arm of our Conference. Pastor Mensing, the chairman, presented an overview of the successes achieved under God by our publishing house in providing orthodox and edifying material in print for the consumption of our people. Besides the regular printing of the *Concordia Lutheran* and of our *Sunday School Bible Lessons*, a special accomplishment this year was the second reprinting of Alfred Doerffler's book of meditations for those suffering personal crosses, *The Burden Made Light*, and pre-publication work being done on several other major works including a book of family devotions and Graebner's *Outlines of Doctrinal Theology*. *Scriptural Publications* continues to manage the Conference web site, the Conference archives, and, on behalf of the *C.T.E.*, the Seminary bookstore. The chairman noted in particular the able and invaluable assistance of Pastor M. L. Natterer, the Book and Tract Editor, for his willingness to give editorial review of such projects a high priority on his busy schedule. Depending upon available funding, *Scriptural Publications* hopes to be able to acquire book binding and trimming equipment during the coming year to enable it to produce more books "in house" rather than outsourcing their production. The report concluded with special thanks for the selflessness of those whose help, both in terms of time and money, contributed under the Lord's blessing to the success of our publishing efforts. The motion was carried to receive the report.

**REPORT OF THE BUSINESS MANAGER OF *SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS*:**

The Business Manager of our publishing house, Mr. Phillip R. Martin reported that *Scriptural Publications* began the fiscal year on June 1, 2001 with a cash balance of \$ 5,092.06 and that cash receipts were added for a total cash available of \$16,352.40. Disbursements totaled \$9,594.45, leaving a cash balance of \$ 6,757.95 at the end of the fiscal year. It was moved and seconded to receive the report, and the motion was carried.

After a few brief announcements by the *pastor loci*, the convention recessed at 12:25 p.m. for lunch.

+ + +

**THE AFTERNOON SESSION**

Following the noon meal, the afternoon session began at 1:25 p.m. with a devotion conducted by Pastor David T. Mensing. Hymn 477, verses 1-3, was sung, followed by the reading of Scripture in Ephesians 4:1-15, and a prayer. The devotion concluded with the last stanza of the hymn and the Apostolic Benediction.

It was moved and seconded that we hear the report of the Committee to Review the President's Report later on in the convention. This motion was carried.

Inasmuch as the Conference statistician was not ready at this time to present his report, it was moved and seconded to hear the **Statistical Report for 2001-2002** on Sunday afternoon. Carried.

**FURTHER REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE BUDGET:**

The appointed chairman *pro tem* of the Finance Committee, Mr. Robert G. Bloedel, reported that there was one change in projected receipts: \$ 1597.43 as the Convention Collection for a Total Estimated Income of \$ 23,967.43. There were several changes in the projected expenditures, namely, an addition to the Yekaterinburg subsidy of \$ 600. for Pastor Schurganoff's salary and of \$ 1800.00 to be earmarked for the rental of worship facilities for a total of \$8,400 in that item. The following items were reduced: Telephone Expense – \$ 600.00; Travel Expense – \$ 3000.00; for a Total Anticipated Expenditures of \$ 26,200.00. It was moved and seconded to receive this interim report, and the motion was carried.

**REPORT OF THE AUDITING COMMITTEE:**

The Auditing Committee found the books of both the Conference Treasurer and the Business Manager of *Scriptural Publications* to be accurate and complete; and it expressed the Committee's sincere appreciation to both officers for their diligent and painstaking efforts. It also took cognizance of Victor Bloedel's request that he not be considered for re-election, and it noted with praise to the Lord his faithful service of seventeen consecutive years. It was moved and seconded to receive the report, and the motion was carried.

**INITIAL REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE:**

Since there had been no special resolutions referred to this committee for drafting, there was nothing to bring to the floor initially. It was moved and seconded to accept this report, and the motion was carried.

The scheduled recess was not observed at this time.

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEES:**

### **OFFICERS—**

**PRESIDENT:** Nominated—Pastors Redlin, Mahan, Dierking, Mensing, and Stallings.  
**Elected—Pastor E. R. Stallings**

**VICE PRESIDENT:** Nominated—Pastors Natterer, Dierking, Mensing, and Mahan.  
**Elected—Pastor M. L. Natterer**

**SECRETARY:** Nominated—Pastors Mensing, Mahan, Dierking, and Worley.  
**Elected—Pastor David T. Mensing**

**TREASURER:** Nominated—Messrs. John Steinke, Robert Bloedel, Martin Hermann, Brett Swinney, and Michael Malley.  
**Elected—Mr. Robert G. Bloedel**

**BOARD MEMBER-AT-LARGE from the Far West:** Nominated—Messrs. John Okamoto, Stephen Bloedel, Joshua Redlin, Raymond Kusumi, and Martin Hermann.  
**Elected—Mr. John Okamoto**

**BOARD MEMBER-AT-LARGE from the Middle West:** Nominated—Messrs. JC Perry, Nathan Mahan, Michael Mensing, Brett Swinney, and Phillip Martin.  
**Elected—Mr. JC Perry**

### **STANDING COMMITTEES—**

#### **EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:**

SLATE A—Pastor Stallings, Pastor Natterer, Mr. John Steinke

SLATE B—Pastor Natterer, Pastor Mensing, Mr. Paul Natterer

SLATE C—Pastor Mensing, Pastor Natterer, Mr. Paul Natterer

SLATE D—Pastor Natterer, Pastor Stallings, Mr. Paul Natterer

**Elected—SLATE C**

#### **COMMITTEE ON LUTHERAN UNION:**

SLATE A—Pastor Natterer, Pastor Mensing, Pastor Stallings, Mr. Robert Bloedel

SLATE B—Pastor Natterer, Pastor Mensing, Pastor Dierking, Mr. Phillip Martin

**Elected—SLATE B**

#### **COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION:**

SLATE A—Pastor Dierking, Pastor Mensing, Mr. Stephen Bloedel, Mr. Phillip Martin

SLATE B—Pastor Mensing, Pastor Mahan, Mr. Stephen Bloedel, Mr. Paul Natterer  
 SLATE C—Pastor Natterer, Pastor Dierking, Mr. Mark Natterer, Mr. Daniel Bloedel  
 SLATE D—Pastor Mahan, Pastor Dierking, Mr. Mark Natterer, Mr. Daniel Bloedel  
 SLATE E—Pastor Dierking, Pastor Mahan, Mr. Mark Natterer, Mr. Daniel Bloedel

**Elected—SLATE E**

**COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS:**

SLATE A—Pastor Mahan, Pastor Redlin, Mr. Gary Ruzic, Mr. Dan Bloedel, Mr. Paul Natterer.

SLATE B—Pastor Mensing, Pastor Mahan, Mr. Ron Lake, Mr. Aaron Dierking, Mr. Brett Swinney.

SLATE C—Pastor Mahan, Pastor Redlin, Mr. Ron Lake, Mr. John Steinke, Mr. Ray Kusumi

SLATE D—Pastor Redlin, Pastor Mahan, Mr. Ron Lake, Mr. John Steinke, Mr. Ray Kusumi

SLATE E—Pastor Natterer, Pastor Mahan, Mr. John Steinke, Mr. Stephen Bloedel, Mr. Ray Kusumi

SLATE F—Pastor Mahan, Pastor Mensing, Mr. Ron Lake, Mr. Aaron Dierking, Mr. Brett Swinney

**Elected—SLATE F**

**FINANCE COMMITTEE:**

SLATE A—Mr. Robert Bloedel, Mr. Mark Mensing, Mr. John Steinke, Mr. JC Perry

SLATE B—Mr. Robert Bloedel, Mr. Michael Malley, Mr. Nathan Mahan, Mr. John Steinke

SLATE C—Mr. Robert Bloedel, Mr. John Steinke, Mr. Phil Martin, Mr. Michael Schrader

**Elected—SLATE C**

**PUBLISHING HOUSE BOARD OF CONTROL:**

SLATE A—Pastor Mensing, Mr. Phillip Martin, Mr. Raymond Kusumi.

SLATE B—Pastor Mensing, Mr. Raymond Kusumi, Mr. Phillip Martin

SLATE C—Pastor Mahan, Mr. Phillip Martin, Mr. Raymond Kusumi

**Elected—SLATE A**

The balloting having been completed, it was moved and seconded to make all elections unanimous. This motion was unanimously carried.

The Secretary was then asked to read the minutes of the Friday and Saturday sessions. It was moved and seconded to adopt them as read, subject to polish. The motion was unanimously carried.

After several brief announcements, the Convention stood in recess until Sunday afternoon at 1:30 p.m. The session closed at 4:55 p.m. with the Lord's Prayer in unison and the Apostolic Benediction pronounced by the President.

+

**SUNDAY, JUNE 30**

**SUNDAY MORNING — The Divine Worship Service with Holy Communion:**

The *pastor loci*, the Rev. M. L. Natterer, again served as liturgist; and the Rev. David T. Mensing of Oak Forest, Illinois, preached the sermon based on **Romans 6:23**. His theme was:

***The Knowledge of Sin and Its Wages Is Indispensable for the True Appreciation of the Gospel.*** In the exposition of the text, Pastor Mensing showed how the Law of God as a mirror is indispensable for creating in the hearts of poor sinners the **need** for salvation by grace for Christ's sake through faith and for real appreciation of the Gospel. The text clearly divided itself into two parts, the wording of which Pastor Mensing took from the motto of our present convention, namely: **I.** Man's sin merits death, but that **II.** God's grace gives life. Delegates and visitors from the congregations of our fellowship then partook of the Lord's Supper together as guests of St. John's Congregation—for the remission of their sins, for the strengthening of their faith and of their walk in sanctification, and in testimony of their blessed unity in the Word of their Savior. Immediately following the service, delegates, visitors, and the local members assembled in the congregation's fellowship hall for the noon meal which was served by the ladies of the local congregation.

+ + +

### THE AFTERNOON SESSION

The afternoon session began at 1:20 p.m. with a devotion conducted by Pastor Ross A. Mahan. Hymn 293, verses 1 and 2, was sung, followed by the reading of Scripture in Philippians 3:1-14, and a prayer. The devotion concluded with the third stanza of the hymn and the Apostolic Benediction.

**THE ESSAY: "The Doctrine of Sin and Its Significant Relation to Salvation by Grace in Christ"—Part II: How the Doctrine of Sin Relates Directly to Salvation by Grace in Christ**  
 ..... Pastor E. R. Stallings

The final portion of the *DOCTRINAL ESSAY* was then presented by Pastor Stallings. In this portion, the essayist pointed out how the Doctrine of Sin relates directly to salvation by grace in Christ. Specifically noted were the following truths: —The Doctrine of Sin shows us man's condition of being a lost and condemned creature and therefore the absolute necessity of salvation by grace. —The sin of man made absolutely necessary the substitutionary work of Christ. —The sin remaining in us as sinner-saints is why we must continue to trust only in the grace of God for our salvation. And finally, —God's grace in Christ is magnified by how it ever abounds over sin in our lives. He concluded his essay with the prayer of the Psalmist: "*Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts, and see if there be any wicked way in me; and lead me in the way everlasting.*" (Psalm 139:23-24). —Following spirited and fruitful discussion of this section, it was moved and seconded to adopt this edifying essay with thanks to the essayist, subject to polish and the usual subsequent review of the essay by the *praesidium* before publication. This motion was carried unanimously.

A fifteen minute recess was observed before continuing with the final reports and business of the convention.

### REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE PRESIDENT'S REPORT:

The committee's review, read by Mr. Michael Mensing, took special note of certain comments in the annual report of our outgoing President, called particular attention to the declarations of fellowship by Mighty Fortress (Anaheim) and of the constituent congregations of the *Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations*, and recognized God's gracious will in the "transfer" of Pastor Paul Bloedel from the Church Militant to the Church Triumphant. Finally, the committee thanked

God for His grace in enabling our President to perform his many duties as a faithful steward on our behalf to the glory of our Redeemer. It was moved and seconded to receive this report, and the motion was carried.

#### **REPORT CONCERNING THE CONFERENCE ARCHIVES:**

This brief *Report on the Conference Archives* was presented by Mr. Phillip Martin, in which the pastors in particular were urged to submit either original documents or at least clear copies of documents of significance to our Conference and its history for safe storage on behalf of the generations to come. These may one day be digitized and made readily available for general study. It was moved and seconded to receive this report, and the motion was carried.

#### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION:**

Pastor Mark W. Dierking, chairman of the Committee, briefly summarized the activities of the Committee on Theological Education during the past year, but then focused upon the urgent need to select a replacement instructor for the fifth seminary year due to the unexpected death of Pastor Paul R. Bloedel. Under normal conditions, such a vacancy would be filled after a rather time-consuming nominating process. Since, however, only about two months remained until the start of the fall term, and the designated instructor(s) would need every bit of that time to ready themselves for the task at hand. Moreover, the lengthier process would have the undesirable effect of delaying the start of instruction, of shortening the academic term, and perhaps of compromising the student's readiness to be colloquized by the summer Plenary Pastoral Conference in June, 2003. With two congregations presently vacant and urgently in need of pastors, it was deemed prudent by the Committee to make an *interim* appointment for the 2002-2003 academic year based upon the only nominations that had been suggested, either by congregations, by the Pastoral Conference, or by the Board of Directors, and to proceed with a *permanent* appointment after the conclusion of the 2002-2003 term. The committee met with the nominees, Pastors Worley, Lietz, and Mensing, and explored both their willingness to serve and their ability under their present circumstances reasonably to fulfill the fifth-year teaching assignment of five courses plus the *practicum*. Considering first of all the personal expressions of the pastors themselves but then also the circumstantial factors involved, it was the *unanimous decision* of the committee to call Pastors Mensing and Lietz to *share* the fifth-year professorship as an interim appointment for the 2002-2003 academic year, and that thereafter a regular fifth-year professor would be called through the normal procedures. All three pastors involved concurred in this decision wholeheartedly. It was moved and seconded to receive the report; and, after some discussion, the motion was unanimously carried.

The convention observed a fifteen minute recess.

#### **FINAL REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE CONCERNING THE BUDGET:**

The Treasurer referred the delegates back to his committee's *interim report* on Saturday afternoon and noted that there were no changes made in its budget proposal since that time. It was therefore moved and seconded to accept the committee's last figures as its **Final Budget Proposal** for Fiscal Year 2002-2003. This was carried unanimously. (The final budget can be found in its entirety elsewhere in these PROCEEDINGS. Please see the **Table of Contents**.)

#### **FINAL REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE:**

The Resolutions Committee submitted drafts of the following resolutions to the Convention for its consideration and moved their adoption. (Please see the **Table of Contents** for their location in these PROCEEDINGS and for their entire text.)

- #1: Praise to the God of all grace for having taken to Himself our dear brother, Pastor Paul R. Bloedel;
- #2: Thanks to Victor K. Bloedel for his faithful service for seventeen years;
- #3: Thanks to Pastor Stallings and to Mr. John Steinke for their labor of love to the brethren in the editing of the *Concordia Lutheran*;
- #4: Thanks to the outgoing officers and standing committees;
- #5: Thanks for the essays delivered by Pastors Mensing and Stallings;
- #6: Thanks for the sermons by Pastors Natterer and Mensing;
- #7: Thanks for the opening devotions conducted by the pastors;
- #8: Thanks to Mr. Stephen Bloedel, the organist of St. Luke's Lutheran Church, for the special organ music which enhanced the services and devotions, and praise to the Triune God for keeping us in the true faith and in fervent love toward one another;
- #9: Thanks to Pastor and Mrs. M. L. Natterer and to the host congregation for their loving and generous hospitality .

All of the above resolutions were unanimously adopted.

#### **REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE STATISTICIAN:**

Mr. Raymond S. Kusumi delivered his statistical report for fiscal year 2001-2002. [The printed report is found in the PROCEEDINGS. Please see the **Table of Contents** for its location.] —It was moved and seconded to receive this report. Carried. —It was also moved and seconded that Mr. Kusumi be reappointed to the position of **Conference Statistician** for the coming fiscal year with thanks for his continued faithful service. This motion was unanimously carried.

#### **FINAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION AND EXCUSES:**

The Committee's final report showed that seven congregations had been represented at the convention by seven pastoral delegates, thirteen lay delegates, and nine alternate delegates. Total attendance at the Friday service was 180 and at the Sunday service 222. Total offerings for the Friday service: \$ 1,597.43; for the Sunday service, \$3,722.90. Total number communed in the Sunday service was 121. It was moved and seconded to receive the report, and this motion was carried.

#### **TIME AND PLACE OF THE 52nd ANNUAL CONVENTION:**

Peace Ev. Lutheran Church of Oak Forest, Illinois, through its lay delegate, Mr. Michael

L. Mensing, extended to the Conference its invitation to host the **52nd Annual Convention**. (Dates— **Pastoral Conference**: Tuesday and Wednesday, June 24 and 25; **Board of Directors Meeting**: Thursday, June 26; **The Convention**: Friday, Saturday and Sunday, June 27, 28 and 29, 2003.) It was moved and seconded to accept this kind invitation with thanks, and the motion was carried.

#### **UPDATE ON THE FELLOWSHIP OF LUTHERAN CONGREGATIONS:**

Before adjournment, Pastor Robert J. Lietz was granted the floor to give a special interest report on the *Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations* and its current situation. He first briefly described the three constituent congregations of the *F. L. C.* as to their location, history and current membership, and expressed joy in the Lord at the fact that all three have, as of May, 2002, declared themselves in fellowship with our Conference. He also noted that two congregations in Minnesota had separatistically left the *F. L. C.* in December, 2000, rather than share the Scriptural position on Matthew 18:15-17 which the body had adopted in June of that same year. Eight months later, the same two congregations *sued* the *F. L. C.* in court, claiming that *their unilateral action* signaled the “dissolution” of the body, thus making them eligible to claim their “proportionate share” of the body’s financial assets. In point of fact, the *F. L. C.* did NOT dissolve. It continues to function as a religious corporation and church body to this day. The Minnesota congregations are not constituent members of it by *their own* action and therefore have no legitimate claim upon its assets (any more than a person who quits a church can claim a “refund” of all the contributions he had made while he was a member). God willing, the lawsuit will be disposed of within the next month or so, and the justice of our brethren’s cause will be vindicated. It was moved and seconded to receive Pastor Lietz’s informative report with thanks. This motion was carried.

The minutes of the Sunday session were then read by the Secretary. It was moved and seconded that the minutes be adopted subject to polish. This motion was carried.

After several brief announcements, the chairman entertained a motion to adjourn the convention. This motion was made, seconded, and unanimously carried; and adjournment followed at 5:16 p.m. with a closing devotion conducted by our new President, Pastor Stallings. Hymn 476, verses 1-3, was sung, followed by the reading of I Thessalonians 4:13-18, a prayer, and the Lord’s Prayer in unison. The devotion closed with the customary formula and the Apostolic Benediction pronounced by the President of the Conference, followed by the singing of the last stanza of Hymn 476.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David T. Mensing, Secretary

+++

---

**THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE PRESIDENT**

“The world is very evil, the times are waxing late; be sober and keep vigil, the Judge is at the gate!” (TLH 605). He who does not recognize these truths must surely be spiritually asleep! The signs which are given to us in Holy Writ have been, and are being fulfilled. The abominable sins which characterized the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah are openly flaunted, while those who, like the prophets, boldly speak out against them are persecuted and maligned. The false prophets have been growing like weeds in a garden which seek to smother the tender plants. There is universal opposition to that precious teaching which is the foundation on which the Christian Church stands - salvation only by grace through faith in the merit of Christ. As we look about us and behold that “*the whole world lieth in wickedness*” (I John 5:19), our conviction is that we are in “*the little season*” which will usher in that glorious Day when the Lord Jesus will burst forth in the clouds of heaven, accompanied by all of His holy angels, to lead His militant Church into the everlasting joys of heaven as the Church triumphant.

As we consider these sobering thoughts, is it not a miracle that in the midst of these evil days, which, if they were not shortened for the elects’ sake, not even the very elect would be saved, God’s Word is still preached in all of its truth and purity and the Sacraments are administered according to Christ’s institution? We have the promise of the almighty God Himself that “*the Word of the Lord endureth forever*” (I Peter 1:25). And “*God is not a man that He should lie!*” (Numbers 23:19). What a singular privilege the Lord has bestowed upon us in these last days that we, miserable and unworthy sinners, should be the messengers who proclaim His Word in all its truth and purity! Yes, the Lord did not choose us because of any merit or worthiness on our part, for we daily sin much and indeed deserve nothing but punishment. But He set His love upon us who are so few in numbers so that His grace might be magnified and His Name exalted. Surely such unmerited favor should fill our hearts with such gratitude that out of the abundance of the heart our mouths should speak and our deeds should show forth the wonders of His love!

During this past year of grace our feeble efforts have been directed to show forth the praise of Him who hath called us out of darkness into the marvelous light of His Kingdom. In December, I authorized Mr. Victor Bloedel, our Conference Treasurer, to send Pastor Ivaldi of Buenos Aires, Argentina, \$500.00 in view of the financial difficulties he was experiencing because of the turmoil going on in Argentina. This was not done arbitrarily but only after the members of the Board of Directors had been polled and given their unanimous approval. In this connection the delegates are asked to take note of the fact that Mr. Victor Bloedel, who has served the Conference so ably and for so many years as our Treasurer, requests that his name not be added to the list of nominees at this convention.

I must express my appreciation to the chairmen of the various committees who kept me informed during the past year of their work which had been delegated to them by the Conference. In particular I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our very efficient secretary, Pastor Mensing, whose help has enabled me this past year to carry out the duties of my office in a more efficient manner. It was also helpful to receive from the pastors some of the significant events taking place with themselves and their congregations. This last April Pastor Dierking underwent a two-hour knee replacement operation. By God’s grace, the surgery went well and his recovery has been progressing well. Our prayers had also been requested for Jared, the son of Pastor and Mrs. Worley, who has been plagued with constant seizures. It is good that we are apprized of these needs so that our requests can be brought before Him who has commanded us to call upon Him in the day of trouble

and who will answer us according to His good and gracious will. Mrs. Worley very aptly reminded me that “the Lord will not lead you where His grace can’t keep you.”

Our prayers had also been ascending to the Throne of Grace on behalf of our dear brother, Paul Bloedel, whom the doctors had diagnosed in May with terminal cancer. We prayed that the Lord might spare his life and grant him sufficient strength to use his gifts and talents in serving Him yet here in this present world. But the Lord in His infinite wisdom chose to deliver him out of this vale of tears to Himself in the everlasting joys of heaven. We submit ourselves to His good and gracious will, knowing that He doeth all things well. Such loving chastisements from the Hand of the Lord are not to discourage us but to teach us to follow the exhortation of the Psalmist, “*Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord*” (Psalm 27:14).

Last November Peace Evangelical Church of Oak Forest, was privileged to observe its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. Pastor Mensing informed me that the congregation held a special service this past November to express its thankfulness to the Lord who led them through many trials over the years and, at the same time, mercifully bestowed abundant unmerited blessings upon them. This month St. John’s Lutheran Church here in Lebanon is also observing its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. What a rarity in these last days to have a truly orthodox Lutheran congregation observe its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! We pray that the pure Word of God may continue to sound forth from these pulpits and always be received with humble and joyful hearts!

In the May-June issue of our *Concordia Lutheran* you probably noticed the *Official Notice* stating that the Mighty Fortress Orthodox Evangelical Lutheran Church, Anaheim, California, the Rev. Edward J. Worley, Pastor, declared fellowship with us, and also the three constituent churches of the *Fellowship Lutheran Congregation*, which, however, will continue to exist as a corporate entity for the present and to function as an autonomous church body. Pastor Lietz requested a response from me, as president of our Conference, to their declaration of fellowship with us after a very thorough examination of our teachings on the basis of God’s pure Word. I provided him with a letter to be read at their convention on June 5<sup>th</sup>. It is with a joyful heart and with all praise to our dear heavenly Father that we have been granted such a blessing. May our joint work always redound to the glory of Him who loved us and gave Himself for us!

“*Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen*” (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor M. L. Natterer, President

---

## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE TO REVIEW THE PRESIDENT’S REPORT

Dear Brethren:

This committee has reviewed the President's Report presented to this 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention of the Concordia Lutheran Conference. Our President, Pastor M. L. Natterer, has, by God's grace, given us the Scriptural exposition of I John 5:19 with the application to our latter day. He has reminded us of sin and grace, of orthodoxy and mission, of our own unworthiness, and of God's unmerited favor in Christ, our Savior. He has exhorted us to show forth our God-wrought, Gospel-engendered thankfulness to the glory of the Triune God.

In his review of the past year, our President has reported on our efforts both at home and abroad to support those who are earnestly contending for the true faith.

Our President thanked the Lord for His grace in the work of the various Conference committees who kept him informed of their efforts. He has also mentioned the special needs of those under various crosses and afflictions.

In particular we note that our fellowship has been enlarged by God's grace as both Mighty Fortress, Anaheim, and the churches of the Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations declared fellowship on the basis of doctrinal unity with our Conference. One transfer from the Church Militant to the Church Triumphant recently occurred by God's gracious will: Our dear brother, Pastor Paul R. Bloedel, was privileged "*to depart and to be with Christ, which is far better*" (Philippians 1:23).

We thank God for His grace in enabling our President to perform his many duties as a faithful steward on our behalf to the glory of our Redeemer.

Respectfully submitted,  
Pastor E. J. Worley  
Mr. Michael L. Mensing

---

## INITIAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION AND EXCUSES

Dear Brethren:

The following delegates have been seated for this 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention of our Conference:

**Faith Ev. Lutheran Church**, Jackson, Michigan:

Pastoral Delegate: Pastor Ross Mahan; Lay Delegates: Messrs. JC Perry and Nathan Mahan;  
Alternates: Messrs. James Ewers and Damon Bundy —3 Votes

**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church**, Tucson Arizona

Pastoral Delegate: Pastor David Redlin; Lay Delegates: Messrs. Michael Malley and Joshua Redlin; Alternate: Mr. Martin Hermann —3 Votes

**Holy Scripture Ev. Lutheran Church**, Windcrest (San Antonio), Texas

Pastoral Delegate: Pastor E.R. Stallings; Lay Delegates: Messrs. John Steinke and Brett Swinney; Alternate: Mr. Daniel Steinke —3 Votes

**Peace Ev. Lutheran Church**, Oak Forest, Illinois

Pastoral Delegate: Pastor David, T. Mensing; Lay Delegates: Messrs. Phillip R. Martin and Michael L. Mensing; Alternate: Mr. Michael J. Danyluk —3 Votes

**St. John's Lutheran Church**, Lebanon, Oregon

Pastoral Delegate: Pastor M. L. Natterer; Lay Delegates: Messrs. Ted Fitzwater and Mark Natterer; Alternates: Messrs. Ron Lake and Paul Natterer —3 Votes

**St. Luke's Lutheran Church**, Seattle, Washington

Pastoral Delegate: Pastor Edward J. Worley; Lay Delegates: Messrs. Robert G. Bloedel and Raymond Kusumi; Alternates: Messrs. John Okomoto and Lee Roller —3 Votes

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

Pastoral Delegate: Pastor Mark W. Dierking; Lay Delegate: Mr. Aaron J. Dierking; —3 Votes

**FINAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATIONS AND EXCUSES**

A total of six congregations were represented at our convention this year with six pastoral delegates, 13 lay delegates and 9 alternates. Total attendance at the Friday service was approximately 180 with offerings set aside for the Conference totaling \$1597.43. There were 222 souls at the Sunday morning service, 121 souls communing at the Lord's Table. Offerings for the Sunday morning service, to help defray the congregation's costs for the convention, totaled \$3722.90.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Mark W. Dierking, Chairman  
Mr. Ron Lake  
Mr. Aaron J. Dierking

**Concordia Lutheran Conference**  
**FINANCIAL REPORT for 2001-2002**

	---General Fund---		Student Aid Fund
	Balances	Budgeted	Balances
Beginning Cash Balance, June 1, 2001	\$ 25548.97		\$ 28835.37
Add Cash Receipts:			
Faith, Jackson	500.00	1200.00	0.00
Good Shepherd, Tucson	445.00	450.00	155.00
Holy Scripture, San Antonio	2240.00	900.00	0.00
Peace, Oak Forest	10000.00	7200.00	0.00
St. John's, Lebanon	5520.00	3800.00	0.00
St. Luke's, Seattle	4400.00	2400.00	3720.00
St. Stephen's, Wilmot	0.00	0.00	0.00
Interest Income	583.36	500.00	628.99
2001 Convention Collection	1302.01	1302.01	0.00
Miscellaneous	0.00	0.00	0.00
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b>\$ 25390.37</b>		<b>\$ 4503.99</b>
<b>Total Cash Available</b>	<b>\$ 50939.34</b>		<b>\$ 33339.36</b>
Less Disbursements:			
<i>Scriptural Publications</i> Subsidy	3500.00	3500.00	
St. Stephen's Subsidy	7200.00	7200.00	
Yekaterinburg Subsidy	5500.00	6000.00	
Telephone Expense	490.93	2000.00	
Convention Expense	0.00	1000.00	
Travel Expense	1664.00	5000.00	
Conference Archives Subsidy	500.00	500.00	
Miscellaneous Expense	1252.43	1500.00	
Russo-English Courses			2400.00
Student's Moving Expense			661.48
Student's Maintenance Allowance			3300.00
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 20107.36</b>		<b>\$ 6506.48</b>
Ending Cash Balance, May 31, 2002	\$ 30831.98		\$ 26832.88

Respectfully submitted,

V. K. Bloedel, Treasurer

**REPORT OF THE AUDITING COMMITTEE**

Dear Brethren:

We have reviewed the financial records of our Conference Treasurer, Mr. Victor K. Bloedel, and of the Business Manager of Scriptural Publications, Mr. Phillip R. Martin. Deposit tickets and check stubs were carefully compared against the general ledgers, and all records were found to be accurate and in proper order. We extend our gratitude and sincere thanks to these men for their diligent labors over this past year in the service of our Conference and of our Lord. Especially do we wish to give special recognition to our Conference Treasurer, Mr. Victor Bloedel, who has served us so faithfully over so many years in this position, who has requested this year not to be considered as a nominee for this office in the coming fiscal year. Thank you, Brother Victor, for your devoted service!

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David G. Redlin  
Mr. Nathan A. Mahan  
Mr. John M. Steinke

---

**REPORT OF THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE**

Dear Brethren:

*“Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them”* (Revelation 14:13).

In light of the fact that, just two weeks ago, the Lord in His wisdom took from this vale of tears to the bliss of heaven our brother, Pastor Paul R. Bloedel; and, given the fact that Pastor Bloedel was the pioneer and trailblazer of the production of our *Concordia Lutheran*, it seemed very appropriate that the Editorial Committee’s report for this year include, *in memoriam*, a brief historical overview of our *C.L.*, of which Pastor Bloedel was an integral part. For this information, your editor is indebted to Stephen Bloedel, who served as a primary resource.

As most of the “old timers” of our Conference know, our *C.L.* is a continuation of the old *Orthodox Lutheran*, which, from 1951 to 1956, was the official organ of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference, our parent body. Because of a split in that group, occasioned by an unresolved controversy in 1955, the faithful remnant of that body reorganized itself in 1956 as the *Concordia Lutheran Conference* and changed the name of its official periodical to *The Concordia Lutheran*, commonly and affectionately known among us as the *C. L.* In its early years, the mid to late 1950's, the *C. L.* was printed by Pastor Bloedel in Empire, Oregon, on a small letter press owned by August Luft. Upon accepting a call to St. Luke’s in Seattle, Pastor Bloedel continued to serve as the printer on machinery which he himself had purchased. Around 1962, he established the Bloedel Printshop in his garage on Graham Street and acquired used linotype equipment which he rebuilt and used to “type-set” text documents with much greater efficiency. Eventually, he got into offset printing, which significantly enhanced and streamlined both the flexibility and the efficiency of the whole operation. In the 1970's the print shop was

moved to another building owned by Mr. Paul Luedtke, a member of the congregation, a facility that subsequently became known as the “P. F. Luedtke Building.” Your editor still recalls his one and only tour of these facilities, marveling that Pastor Bloedel possessed such knowledge and ability in printing, and being equally amazed that he could find time single-handedly to oversee this entire operation. Indeed, for many years, the *C. L.* and Pastor Bloedel were practically synonymous. Thus, we dedicate this report to the Glory of God in grateful remembrance of Pastor Bloedel’s monumental contribution to the establishment of our *C. L.* and the continuing influence his labors still have on our periodical to this day.

In reporting the work of your committee for this past year, we take note of some of the particularly interesting and noteworthy articles. The March-April 2002 issue was once again a Lenten-oriented issue. It contained the very last article written by Brother Paul. His article was an excellent Law-Gospel treatment of Judas Iscariot. While it was one of the shorter of Brother Bloedel’s articles, it was such a practical application of the lessons to be gleaned from the sad, tragic account of Judas.

The other significant issue was our May-June issue which focused on the pastoral office. We were pleased to have articles from two of our newest pastors, Pastor Lietz and Pastor Worley. Pastor Lietz wrote a fine article on the qualifications of the ministry as set forth in I Timothy 3:1-7. Based on Hebrews 13:7 and 17, Pastor Worley wrote a fine article on the God-required obedience to the pastor. You will profit from both articles from our newest pastors. Indeed, the entire May-June issue deserves thorough reading.

In summarizing the production of our *C. L.* over the past year, we properly recognize two major assistants, John Steinke and Ray Kusumi. John is the lay person on our committee. He assists your editor in editing for punctuation, spelling, grammar, etc. In addition, of course, he has the yeoman task of formatting each issue to make it ready to send to our Print Shop Manager to be printed. The current May-June issue was a very full issue which required much more work in formatting. Moreover, none of our labors would find fruition without the competent labors of Ray Kusumi, our Print Shop Manager. Ray is our printer who must also recruit help in folding, stapling and mailing of our periodical. Your editor is deeply indebted to both men who work together as a team.

Finally, but certainly not least, your Editorial Committee wishes to thank Pastor Natterer, our Book and Tract Editor, who also serves as the Assistant Editor of our *C. L.*, for his labors over the past year. As you all know, Pastor Natterer is the author of the “Around the World” entry found in each issue of our *C. L.* If you wish to be kept informed on current events in the light of God’s Word, reading the “Around the World” column is a must. Since Pastor Natterer has been our Conference President, he has also faithfully submitted over the past three terms fine articles in his “President’s Column.” Please read his column in the current May-June issue.

May the Lord continue to bless the dissemination and reading of our *Concordia Lutheran* for the saving and preserving of souls to His glory and honor.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. E. R. Stallings, Editor  
Rev. M. L. Natterer, Book and Tract Editor  
Mr. John M. Steinke, Lay Member

## REPORT OF *SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS* BOARD OF CONTROL

Dear Brethren:

The Board of Control of *Scriptural Publications* is humbly grateful to the God of all grace for His abundant blessings upon the publishing arm of our beloved Conference to His glory! In this annual report, we can only briefly summarize the ongoing success that the Lord has continued to bestow upon our efforts, and we stand ready immediately following the report to answer specific questions regarding any facet of our operation.

Though a small operation by business standards, *SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS* is truly a “full-service” publishing house in every sense of the word. Our main office in Oak Forest, Illinois, occupies secure facilities provided by Peace Congregation, including both office and storage space. These headquarters house our entire publishing operation, and we are grateful for this quiet, comfortable, and climate-controlled space.

Printing at the main office is limited to regularly stocked tracts, booklets, certificates, forms, and our Sunday School materials, as well as such occasional jobs as the convention *Prospectus*, agenda, and *Proceedings* and any custom printing requested by our congregations or their pastors. Our remote location in Seattle laser-prints, assembles, and mails out the *Concordia Lutheran* under the supervision of our Print Shop Manager, Mr. Ray Kusumi, with invaluable volunteer help from members of St. Luke’s Congregation.

By God’s grace and with His neverfailing help, the combined brotherly efforts of the Editorial Committee and of *Scriptural Publications* have resulted in the production of an extremely sharp-looking *CONCORDIA LUTHERAN* again this year. Most of the “flukes” have been eliminated as far as formatting problems are concerned, and the operation has been running smoothly. We of course deeply appreciate the cooperation of St. Luke’s congregation in supplying loving and willing hands to help with the collating, folding, stapling, trimming, and labeling of the *C. L.s* after Ray is done with the printing! The whole undertaking has been a labor of love, motivated by the Savior’s love for us and fruited by the Holy Spirit, who worked in us poor wretched mortals both to will and to do of His good pleasure to the glory of His grace!

Concerning the publication of the *CONCORDIA LUTHERAN*, we continue to recommend that a ***suggested production schedule*** should relieve a lot of pressure from virtually everyone involved in the effort, from the editorial staff to the production staff, and will have the added benefit of getting the *C. L.* into the hands of its readers much earlier, namely, by the first week of the first month for which the issue is targeted. Our mandate from a previous convention to develop and follow such a schedule will continued to be honored.

Our new and improved catalog has been updated and is available upon request. Simply write to the business manager in Oak Forest and request one. It will be sent free of charge by return mail. We continue to encourage, yea, to URGE the members of our Conference to purchase from *Scriptural Publications* instead of from Concordia and Northwestern publishing houses. They have a clear advantage to do so when they receive a flat 20% discount on almost all merchandise.

As to the printing of books—particularly those “old reliables” of by-gone days, now out of print and found only occasionally in used book stores—we are grateful to Pastor M. L. Natterer, the Editorial Committee’s *Book-and-Tract-Editor*, for standing ready to review books for their

soundness before granting authorization to proceed with reprinting. Since our reprint of Doerffler's *The Burden Made Light* had been completely sold out by the middle of the year, a second printing was undertaken; and this fine book is now again available.

*Scriptural Publications* continues to manage and maintain the Conference web site utilizing the capable expertise of Brother Phil Martin, our Business Manager. Those of you who regularly "hit" on the site know that we have continued to expand the site to include more of our published materials; and we hope to add still more resources to the site as time and space permit. Suggestions are always welcome (as well as corrections when mistakes are noted); and these can be left on the site itself in a message to the Webmaster OR they may be e-mailed to Brother Martin at [scrippub@orbitel.com](mailto:scrippub@orbitel.com), the address of *Scriptural Publications* in Oak Forest.

*Scriptural Publications* has continued this year to manage also the Seminary Bookstore on behalf of the CTE, but a new inventory and ordering system has not yet been devised to permit the CTE itself to manage both the Seminary Bookstore and the Seminary Library Collection. *Scriptural Publications* will continue to buy up used books, otherwise known among us as "treasures," but it will then give the CTE priority on selecting titles for seminary use. Ultimately the CTE will determine which titles should go where, and the cost of such books will be passed on to the Conference Treasurer on a voucher slip to be debited from the "miscellaneous" account on the General Fund Budget. It has been deemed wise by the CTE to maintain the Seminary Library Collection intact and to circulate books if necessary.

*Scriptural Publications* at the behest of the Archives Committee continues to produce a compact disk containing the complete set of *Orthodox Lutheran* and *Concordia Lutheran* issues both viewable and printable on a personal computer, as well as a two-CD set which includes a search engine and complete index of words so that articles can easily be located on the basis of their subject matter. We encourage our people to purchase either of these sets for ready access to the wealth of edifying articles published in our official organ over the past fifty years of God's grace.

We also intend to explore in the near future the acquisition of a binding machine to enable us to produce and bind books in our own location and thus to save the hundreds and thousands of dollars required to out-source the binding operation. This will also reduce significantly the cost of books to our own people in a large discount not available to the general public. *Scriptural Publications* is hoping to defray the cost of such equipment out of its own operating budget or out of funds specifically contributed for this purpose.

The Board of Control of *Scriptural Publications* consists (and must necessarily consist) of men who are able to devote at least ten hours of their time each and every week to every facet of the publishing work—to everything from business administration to the production line. Since we have no production staff, *all* of us are involved to some extent or other with scanning, editing, proofing, printing, collating, stapling, trimming, mailing, bookkeeping, inventory management, correspondence, and so on, as the need arises, helping one another to get the job done. The lights burn late in our offices; we've even had some "all-nighters" both in Oak Forest and in Seattle; and, to the best of my knowledge, no request for our services has been denied. Make no mistake, however. We do not consider this work to be a burdensome task. This service to the brethren of our beloved Conference is a *pleasure in the Lord* for all of us, and the Lord has graciously "*established the work of our hands upon us*" (Psalm 90:17). But it would be practically impossible from a purely human standpoint, were it not for the ongoing support of you brethren

with your prayers, with your gifts, with your encouragement, and with your constant solicitude; and we thank you all from the bottom of our heart! May the Lord of the Church continue graciously to bless abundantly your faithful labors and co-labors, as well as your gifts and your prayers to the glory of His Name!

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David T. Mensing, Chairman  
Phillip R. Martin, Business Manager  
Raymond S. Kusumi, Print Shop Manager

# SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS

(Concordia Lutheran Conference)

**Financial Report**

6/1/01 - 5/31/02

**Cash Balance, June 1, 2001** **\$ 5092.06**

**RECEIPTS—**

*Concordia Lutheran:*

Subscription Renewals	\$ 25.00
New Subscriptions	34.00
Conference Subsidy	1000.00

**Publishing House & Bookstore:**

Sunday School Materials	1374.63
New Book Sales	3343.60
Used Book Sales	0.00
Booklet and Tract Sales	232.61
Special Donation — Faith, Jackson	1000.00
Special Donations — Miscellaneous	1080.00
Conference Subsidy	2500.00
<i>Concordia Lutheran</i> CD Sales	170.00
Fund Transfer from Archives	500.00

**Total Receipts** **\$ 11260.34**

**Total Cash Available** **\$ 16352.40**

**EXPENSES—**

*Concordia Lutheran:*

Postage	307.83
Printing and Supplies	140.84
Printing Hardware	725.61
Miscellaneous	0.00

**Publishing House & Bookstore:**

Postage and Shipping	591.58
Printing Supplies	1145.28

New Book Inventory (Acquisitions)	3035.82
Out-of-Print Books (Acquisitions)	282.51
Printing Hardware and Capital Expenditures	2117.23
Outsourced Printing	110.75
Miscellaneous	265.56
Telephone	136.00
Web Page Fees and Expenses	523.80
“Endangered Books” Purchases	211.64
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b>\$ 9594.45</b>

**Cash Balance, May 31, 2002**

**\$ 6757.95\***

\*Note: Included in this cash balance is \$1664.86 set aside for “endangered book” purchases by resolution of the 1999 Convention.

Respectfully submitted,

Phillip R. Martin, Business Manager

## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS

Dear Brethren:

*“But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts; and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear”* (I Peter 3:15). In this verse St. Peter reminds us of our duty and privilege in proclaiming the saving Word of the Gospel to others as opportunities become available to us. The Christian is to allow the light of the Gospel implanted in his heart by the New Birth of the Spirit to shine before men, *“that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven”* (Matthew 5:16). The Holy Spirit bears witness of the Lord Jesus Christ to the world in and through the believer by his works of faith and confession of the Gospel, and one of the evidences of the saving grace of God in the Christian’s life is his public confession of the Lord Jesus Christ before others when God opens the door for him to do so (Romans 10:9; Matthew 10:32,33).

A church body must not be discouraged if, by remaining faithful to the pure doctrines of the Word of God, it finds itself few in number (John 6:66-68; Luke 12:32). In light of the promise of Jesus Christ, we should continue praying to the Lord of the harvest that He would bless the Word of the Gospel as it is preached. We also pray for God to send forth laborers into His harvest and, according to His promise, to bless those who are sent to preach the Gospel (John 4:35-38; Matthew 9:37-38; Romans 10:15). Our task as individual Christians and as Christian congregations is faithfully to proclaim the Law and the Gospel to the world and, by God’s grace, to demonstrate the fruit of saving faith in the relationships God has given us at work, in our neighborhoods, and in our families. As we are faithful in witnessing to others, God promises to give the increase as He wills.

Our Conference has been busy this past year in helping spread the Word of the Gospel and information concerning our Conference. We have helped provide full support for Pastor Schurganoff’s congregation in Ekaterinberg, Russia, as they continue to proclaim the pure Gospel in one of the largest cities in Russia. We have been blessed with orthodox Sunday

School materials for our children, for which we are thankful. Our bookstore and publishing house, *Scriptural Publications*, continues to provide us with tremendous tools for instructing our children and congregations. Our bi-monthly official organ, the *Concordia Lutheran*, has gone out around the country, allowing many people an opportunity to read the faithful exposition of the Word of God from the pastors of our various congregations. Our Conference Web site is also a valuable tool to answer the questions of those inquiring of our doctrine and practice. Our Web site allows people from around the world to read the sketch of our doctrinal position, our Conference's history, and to be in contact with any of our churches. Along with all of the official mission outreach is the ongoing evangelism of our people, as they speak the Gospel to those with whom they work and to those who live nearby. Such concern for souls is evidence of the Gospel in the hearts of our people and is the delight of every pastor.

In recent years, the primary activity of your Committee on Missions according to our *Constitution* has been the administration of subsidy support for congregations in special need. The Conference has, therefore, for several years now lent assistance to St. Stephen's congregation of Wilmot, South Dakota, whose congregation was torn apart in 1996 by a schism occasioned by an open rebellion and court litigation brought against its pastor by former members of that church, and was thereby rendered unable fully to support its pastor. Our assistance has been principally in the form of an annual financial subsidy, specifically intended to aid the congregation in its support of Pastor Mark Dierking and his family. Pastor Dierking and his congregation have once again applied for a Conference subsidy in the amount of \$7,200.00 per year or \$600.00 per month. Your committee recommends that the request be approved and budgeted by this convention.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Ross Mahan, Chairman  
Rev. David G. Redlin  
Mr. Gary Ruzic  
Mr. Dan Bloedel  
Mr. Paul Natterer

---

## REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

The Apostle Paul writes to his son in the faith, Timothy: "*The things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also*" (II Timothy 2:2). One of the most important functions of our Conference is the training of men to be candidates for the holy ministry. As you all know, we have a peripatetic seminary system where our students travel from one congregation to the next for their training, each pastor/professor assigned specific areas of responsibility in teaching a student. At the present we have only one student, Paul E. Bloedel; and, as you heard in the interest report of Pastor Natterer, Paul has successfully completed his fourth year of a five year program.

Paul's next stop in the peripatetic system was to have been St. Luke's congregation in Seattle under the tutelage of Pastor Bloedel. The fact that Pastor Bloedel suddenly became seriously ill first caused your CTE to consider possibilities if brother Paul should be unable to complete Paul E.'s training. That the Lord suddenly called Pastor Bloedel to his heavenly home made it

imperative that the CTE act. Under the *Constitution*, the CTE has the right to call a seminary professor. However, there is a specific process that it is required to follow under normal circumstances, including getting nominations and input on the nominations from our constituent congregations. The suddenness of this set of circumstances made the normal procedures impractical if we had hoped to finish our seminary student by next spring in time for his colloquy before the Pastoral Conference. Therefore, Pastor Mensing, the other pastoral member of the Committee, and I discussed the situation on the phone and suggested that the most plausible course of action would appear to be that we send Paul back to Chicago where both Pastors Mensing and Lietz could share the heavy fifth year load. When we arrived in Lebanon, the matter was set before the Pastoral Conference and discussed there and also the next day in the Board of Directors meeting. However, we had not met as a committee officially to extend a call.

Between the Pastoral Conference and the Board of Directors meeting, it became evident that the members of St. Luke's had hoped that Paul would be able to finish his fifth year term in Seattle as planned, but under their *new* overseer, Pastor Worley. Your chairman discussed this with Pastor Worley before the Board meeting on Thursday, and Pastor Worley indicated his willingness to try to do the job, if that was the will of the Conference. With three excellent candidates before us now, it became evident that the CTE would have to meet as a committee, along with Pastors Lietz and Worley, to determine where would be the best place for Paul to finish his training.

It was for this reason that this report was delayed until today. We were unable to meet as a committee until yesterday evening. In meeting with both Pastors Worley and Lietz, and asking them both as to their willingness to serve, both expressed their willingness with reservations, considering the heavy class load involved, the fact that Pastor Lietz serves not only his own congregation but also serves as vacancy pastor of St. Mark's, Sauk Village, Illinois, and the fact that Pastor Worley was beginning his new pastorate in Seattle, had not yet relocated there from Anaheim, and did not yet even know when he would be able to move to Seattle.

Considering all these factors, including especially that in Chicago both Pastors Mensing and Lietz could *share* the teaching load, and that our student, being in his final year, could help immensely relieve some of the strain on Pastor Lietz at Sauk Village as well as Trinity, Oak Park, Pastor Lietz's home congregation, and also help Pastor Mensing with his congregation in Oak Forest and its extension in Midland, Michigan, your chairman asked that the four members of the committee vote by ballot for their choice for the interim fifth year professorship. It was unanimously decided that Pastors Mensing and Lietz be called by the CTE to fill the fifth year vacancy until a regular professor can be called through normal procedures. Both Pastors Worley and Lietz, as well as Pastor Mensing, concurred in this decision wholeheartedly.

Our crisis having been taken care of, there is something which now needs to be said. Right now in our fellowship we have two pastoral vacancies, the one at St. Mark's in Sauk Village and the other at Mighty Fortress in Anaheim, California. In addition, none of your pastors is getting any younger, and the Lord could call any one of us out of this vale of tears at any time. The youngest pastor in our Conference is fast approaching fifty years of age. Brethren, we want to lay it on the hearts of all of you to pray that young men in our Conference will be moved to enter into our seminary to prepare for the high calling of Christ's pastoral ministry on earth. And we want to lay it especially on the hearts of our young men — and perhaps not so young men, seriously to consider preparing for the most rewarding work on earth, the Holy Ministry. You cannot always expect "someone else to do it." There could be no greater tragedy than for our seminary to have trained only one student while other souls are suffering for want of a pastor. Imagine if your

pastor were taken from you. It is not without reason that the writer to the Hebrews exhorts us, chapter ten, verse 25: “*Not forsaking the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another; and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.*” Without a pastor you could find yourself meeting without purpose or not meeting at all; and either course could lead to your soul withering and dying on the vine. Therefore, brethren all, pray earnestly that God move young men among us to enter into our seminary; and you, young men, seriously consider entering our seminary for the highest calling on earth, preaching the Gospel of peace to a world dying in sin.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Mark W. Dierking, Chairman

Rev. David T. Mensing

Mr. Philip R. Martin

Mr. Stephen P. Bloedel

### INTEREST REPORT OF THE SEMINARY INSTRUCTOR

Dear Brethren:

The following are my brief remarks concerning the completion of the *fourth year* of seminary instruction with Student Paul E. Bloedel:

**Dogmatics IV** — This course covered Sanctification and Good Works, Final Perseverance, The Means of Grace, Law and Gospel, Holy Baptism, and the Lord’s Supper (pp. 1 through 393 of Pieper’s *Christian Dogmatics*, Volume III). Each section was read very carefully, the passages listed were looked up, and additional references were consulted, for example: “The Theology of the Cross” by Karl Wengenroth (*Concordia Theological Quarterly*, Vol. 46, Number 4, October 1982); “The Concept of *Anfechtung* in Luther’s Thought,” David P. Scaer, (*Concordia Theological Quarterly*, Vol. 47, Number 1, January 1983); *The Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel*, Dr. C. F. W. Walther; “The Lord’s Supper, a Comparison of the Lutheran and Reformed Doctrine on the Lord’s Supper,” Dr. Raymond Surburg; and Eckhardt’s *Reralexikon*, “Kreuz,” pp. 851-856. A series of four tests were given during the two semesters. The student’s answers showed that he had digested the material well!

**Symbolics II** — Our study of the *Formula of Concord* was divided into six sections: First, original sin, free will, the righteousness of faith before God, good works, the Law and the Gospel, the third use of the Law, the Lord’s Supper, the person of Christ, the descent of Christ to hell, and church rites (*Triglot*, pp. 779-831); the second, God’s eternal foreknowledge (predestination) and election (*Triglot*, pp. 831-843); the third (Thorough Declaration), original sin, free will or human powers (*Triglot*, pp. 859-971); the fourth, the Holy Supper (*Triglot*, pp. 971-1015); the fifth, the person of Christ and the descent of Christ to hell (*Triglot*, pp. 1015-1053); and the sixth, church rites, God’s eternal foreknowledge (predestination) and election (*Triglot*, pp. 1053-1095). A test was given at the completion of each section. Not only did the student score superbly, but his answers also showed that he had a wonderful grasp of the material that had been covered. Once again, other source material was included, such as *The Conservative Reformation and Its Theology* by Charles Porterfield Krauth.

**Church History II** — I had been assigned *Enlightenment and Pietism – the 17<sup>th</sup> through the 19<sup>th</sup> Century*. We found that the source material for this particular subject was rather sparse. Naturally, we were able to make use of Qualben's *History of the Christian Church*, Schaff's *History of the Christian Church*, and Hageman's *Sketches from the History of the Church*, which actually is a free reproduction in English of *Lebensbilder*, written by Dr. Krauss, who was senior professor of Church History at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. We also consulted *The Concordia Cyclopaedia*. We also were able to get some material from the Internet. One article which we studied was "The Church in the Age of Enlightenment and Revolution." The "enlightenment" was nothing else than the exaltation of human reason above the Word of God. Writer-philosophers such as Voltaire and Diderot, who had been raised by Jesuits, wanted to judge everything in the light of reason. We also spent class time discussing such men as Philip Spener (1635-1705 A. D.) and Count Nicolas-Ludwig von Zinzendorf (1700-1760 A. D.) and their role in the development of pietism. [Unfortunately, the study of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century was not even begun in Church History II. It will have to be added to and covered in Church History III in Student Bloedel's fifth year. –Ed.]

**Homiletics II** — We very carefully went through the material which Pastor [Paul R.] Bloedel and I had used in our homiletics classes at the Springfield seminary back in the 40's and which had been written by our professor, Dr. Richard Neitzel. We also studied an essay entitled, "Textual Sermons," found in the *Magazin für Ev. Luth. Homiletik und Pastoraltheologie* of 1915, written by O. C. A. B.

Having completed the *assigned* courses, we devoted several profitable weeks to a careful study of the Epistle to the Romans, using Professor Wenger's notes, largely taken from Dr. Stoeckhardt and also Dr. Lenski's commentary on Romans. We managed to complete Chapter 8 by the time Student Bloedel left.

**Practicum** — Student Bloedel prepared the Sunday School teachers to be more efficient in their teaching. He preached the first Sunday of every month. He assisted by conducting some of the Wednesday evening Lenten services. I took him with me on a few of the sick calls where he was also able to observe the administration of private communion. He even made a few calls on the shut-ins himself. I had him write several articles for our Sunday morning bulletin. He also wrote a letter to *Christian News* entitled, "How Conservative are the Conservatives?", in response to an article which appeared in the January 14, 2002, issue of *Christian News*, entitled, "That They May Be One." Unfortunately they did not print the article.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. M. L. Natterer  
Fourth Year Seminary Instructor

---

## INTEREST REPORT OF THE SEMINARY STUDENT

Dear Brethren:

Last year toward the end of August, my parents dropped off me and my belongings here in the

little town of Lebanon, Oregon. Upon arrival, my parents and I were given a guided tour of the recently remodeled Sunday School house and seminarian living quarters. Thanks to the hard work and expertise of Bill Schrader and Carl Bender, almost everything on the inside of this house had been newly installed — new sheet-rock, new fixtures, new carpet, new windows, and a huge set of book shelves. It did not take long for me to get settled in; and the following week Pastor Natterer and I began our work on the fourth year seminary courses.

The assigned course work for fourth year in our Conference seminary looks very similar to the third. Dogmatics, Symbolics, Church History, and Homiletics were all continuations forward from the point where these same classes had ended the previous year. The one obvious difference between this year and the last is that there was no Hebrew this year. In fact, this was the very first year of seminary in which no foreign languages were in the curriculum. This fact alone made my fourth year quite a bit easier than the previous years.

However, the practicum was a bit more intense. I was assigned to preach once a month, and twice in November (because of Thanksgiving). Of course, one sermon a month sounds like nothing for the pastors of our Conference who all preach at least once a week (sometimes more frequently depending on the season and special occasions which can arise very suddenly). But for me, even preaching once a month seemed quite challenging. In addition to this, I was assigned to teach the weekly Sunday School Teachers Meeting as well as the Junior Catechism Instruction Class. During Lent, the practicum also included teaching three of the evening Bible Classes.

Even with all of this seminary work going on, I still had time to get out and see the beautiful Oregon scenery. And somewhere along the line, I ended up falling in love with my main tour guide, Miss Laura E. Fitzwater. I'm sure that most of you know my lovely fiancée, so you know how very blessed I am to have such a virtuous woman as my wife.

Another joyful event this year was the recent entrance into heaven of my dear father, Pastor Paul R. Bloedel. Earlier this month, the Lord graciously delivered him from this earthly life of sorrows and pain and brought him into the fullness of joy in life eternal. While we rejoice in his current, blessed state of happiness, we cannot help also feeling deep sorrow in his absence. We all long to go where he has gone and to be with our Savior, through whose work of redemption we too have the sure hope of heaven.

Looking back over this year last seminary year, I have much for which to be thankful. The brethren here in Lebanon have been so kind and supportive of my work among them. Through his teaching and example, Pastor Natterer has given me invaluable knowledge and guidance. Looking forward to next year, I am eager to begin my final year of seminary training in Seattle under the capable instruction of Pastor Worley.

May God move the hearts of more young men to study in our seminary, so that the pure Gospel of salvation may be preached among us for many years to come. Amen.

Respectfully submitted,

Paul E. Bloedel

#### **REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LUTHERAN UNION**

Dear Brethren:

“Thanks be to God that I was able to hold up, at least to some extent, this aspect of our

Conference work in the area of Lutheran Union.” Thus your chairman began the draft report which he intended to present before you this year in convention assembled. But his presence here was not to be according to the all-wise providence of our gracious God. For our heavenly Father in love laid upon him this spring a grievous cross which sorely debilitated him and eventually truncated his work in the Lord’s vineyard here on earth shortly before this convention. He had been diagnosed with cancer early in May, cancer which had already metastasized and had reached an inoperable stage, so that, in spite of aggressive and yet reasonable efforts at arresting it with chemotherapy, it progressed even more rapidly than anticipated and became for our dear brother the “*way to escape*” (I Corinthians 10:13) this vale of tears and, already on June 15th, to depart this present life in peace, confiding only in the merits of His precious Savior. His funeral and Christian burial were held in Seattle this past Tuesday; and we, by God’s grace alone, look forward even now with joyous anticipation to a happy reunion with him and all true believers in heaven.

This present report will include what Pastor Bloedel had drafted, as well as information gleaned from his files concerning the Lutheran union matters in which we as a Conference are presently engaged, namely, in particular, our preliminary discussions with Pastor Enrique Ivaldi of Argentina, to determine to what extent he is agreed with us in doctrine and practice on the basis of God’s Word; our ongoing effort with our brother, Pastor Roman G. Schurganoff, in Yekaterinburg, Russia, from whom we have a recent e-mail summarizing his work there as pastor of a small and struggling congregation; and the news that declarations of fellowship with us have been received from the constituent congregations of the *Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations* and from Mighty Fortress Orthodox Evangelical Lutheran Church in Anaheim, California. A further report on the *F.L.C.*, its current status, constituency, and progress in fending off hostile litigation on the part of two former member congregations, will be heard later on in this convention from Pastor Robert J. Lietz, President of the *F. L. C.*

“Since our pastoral conference in October of last year,” writes Pastor Bloedel, “our work with Ivaldi in Argentina has simply stumbled along by the wayside.” He points out in his notes that this has been at least “partially due” to a paper by Pastor Ivaldi on *Eschatology*, examined by our pastors at that Fall Pastoral Conference, a paper in which he supports the heretical claim that the soul of the believer sleeps with the body in temporal death and does not consciously enjoy the pleasures of heaven immediately upon its departure from this life. Pastor Ivaldi also proposes that our Conference revise its article on “Temporal Death and Life Thereafter” in the *Sketch* of our doctrinal position to *include his* position. Pastor Bloedel also refers to “rather uncordial expressions in his correspondence with us,” namely, according to the e-mails, complaints about the lack of immediacy with which our pastors respond to his messages and react to the voluminous material he sends them for review, his refusal to travel here at Conference expense for a face-to-face meeting with us if his wife, Nora, is not permitted to accompany him also at our cost, and the umbrage he takes at being questioned carefully about his position, as if his theology, training and experience were being challenged. Notwithstanding these “bumps in the road,” our Conference sent Pastor Ivaldi “a gift in the amount of \$ 500.00 to help him and his family over rough times in Argentina’s recent financial disaster,” writes Pastor Bloedel. How continued relations with Pastor Ivaldi progress will be determined chiefly by his willingness to discuss doctrine and practice dispassionately on the basis of Scripture alone and to understand, especially concerning the time our pastors can devote to the examination of his documents and the degree of promptness they can afford him, that the duties of their call must and ought ever to supercede other matters and projects, even important Conference matters which we certainly do not minimize as to their value for the church-at-large.

Pastor Bloedel writes: “The work of our Conference with Pastor Schurganoff in Yekaterinburg, Russia, has continued according to schedule. As soon as Pastor Schurganoff and his faithful coworker in the Lord, Sergey, had received the funds from our Conference, they at once enrolled in a school for the study of the English language and now, by God’s grace, have completed one year of very difficult work. Also, as soon as our subsidy was made available to the congregation in Yekaterinburg, Pastor Schurganoff immediately quit his job and began endeavoring to make full proof of his ministry without the infringement of secular employment. Pastor Schurganoff brings us his progress report as follows: ...” And now follows, somewhat edited for clarity, Pastor Schurganoff’s e-mailed report. We have left it in his own words for your interest:

From: “Roman G. Schurganoff”  
To: “Rev. Paul R. Bloedel”  
Subject: The report for CLC convention  
Date: Sat, 25 May 2002 22:51:13 +0600

The report for CLC annual convention prepared by Roman Schurganoff, pastor of Evangelical Lutheran Church of Yekaterinburg.

About church ministering. Within last year church ministering considerably has extended due to my full busy time in church. I and group of active church members have made some evangelical ministerings in one of city libraries. The people, which came on these ministerings, had an opportunity to hear Good News of Christ, history of Lutheran church, and also they received the free Christian literature. Then some people began to attend church worship services, and now four from them already prepare for confirmation.

Each week I meet with prisoners in one of city prisons to speak them about Christ and to teach Bible study lessons for them. Already 15 prisoners baptized for this time. Unfortunately, the conditions of life in our prisons leave to wish much best. The people in this prison needs in most necessary things, namely in clothes, footwear, written accessories, medicines. Our church helps these people, as we can, but our help is very much limited because of our small number.

Each week on Sundays there is a worship service in my apartment, where is present about 10 men. Now in our church there are 25 members, therefore all of them cannot be going and together at once, and I should invite a part of the people on one Sunday, and other part to invite next Sunday, so that one man could visit worship service even once per two weeks.

Some time ago was offered a rent place for our worship services. It is small office of one of charitable funds of our city. At this office a hall for 30 men, small room for Biblical study and some subsidiary rooms are available. The price of rent of his office very small is \$ 150 per one month. We shall be glad if the Conference can help us to rent this place, that the members of our church could be going all together freely.

Our church sends lessons of Bible study by mail, as you know. Some time ago due to these lessons a small group of the believers of 5 men was formed. They live in one of regional cities of Ural, namely Nizhniy Tagil. Travel to this city takes one hour by a suburban train. Two times per one month I visit this group, that there was a worship service for them, and for study of the Bible and Lutheran Confessions. Further, that in this city one more Lutheran congregation in commonwealth [fellowship?] with our church can be formed, we hope.

About study of the English language. Since September, 2001, I and Sergey Solovyov, one of

active church members, we are trained at the English school. During this period we have studied a lot of new, especially colloquial English and specific grammar. The one problem that does not suffice us is a practical dialog. Now we successfully have finished two examinations for the first year of training. The next year of training at the English school begins in September, but till June 1, when the summer vacations will begin, we should pay the next year of training. We hope the Conference will continue to help us for study of the English language, that we could continue training in Conference Seminary further, about what we agreed earlier. For the next year of training at the English school it is required to pay \$1600 for two men.

About our family. Our son Nickolai develops normally for his illness, as the doctors speak. There are some problems with his impellent [gross motor?] functions, development of speech, and also often allergic diseases. We continue recommended treatment for him by the doctors. There are very expensive medicines, which we should buy for Nickolai, the prices for various medical procedures for him also are very high. My wife Elena is sick too. She had illness of heart, which has become aggravated after birth of the child. Money that you send for us not always suffices us now, as the prices very much have grown lately; cost [value?]of dollar grows not so quickly as the prices in roubles grow. Therefore we ask the Conference about continuation of the financial help for our family within the limit of \$ 650 per one month.

In Christ,  
Pastor Roman G. Schurganoff

We, of course, will continue to monitor the progress of Pastor Schurganoff and his flock, remember them in our prayers to the Throne of Grace, and, in conjunction with the Committee on Missions, do whatever is possible, under God and to the best of our collective ability, to be of help and service to these dear brethren for Jesus' sake.

Although your **Committee on Lutheran Union** usually concerns itself with *church bodies* instead of congregations (*Constitution*, Article IX, 4), it nevertheless also facilitates meaningful dialog regarding doctrine and practice between us and individual pastors and congregations, as in the case of Pastors Ivaldi and Schurganoff. We therefore rejoice to announce that an independent congregation in Anaheim, California, Mighty Fortress Orthodox Evangelical Lutheran Church, has declared itself to be in fellowship with our Conference on the basis of its complete unity with us in the doctrines of God's Word (Ephesians 4:3; I Corinthians 1:10). Its long-time but now former pastor, the Rev. Edward J. Worley, recently accepted the call to St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Seattle, succeeding our late brother, Pastor Bloedel.

Later on in this convention we shall also hear an interest report from Pastor Robert J. Lietz, President of the *Fellowship of Lutheran Congregations*. All of its constituent congregations have now also declared themselves in fellowship with our Conference, for which fact we are indeed grateful to the Lord of the Church. In that report, President Lietz will also bring us up to date concerning a malicious lawsuit brought against the *F. L. C.* by two former member-congregations, seeking dissolution of the *F. L. C.* and the division of its financial assets not only among its *present* constituent member congregations but also among those who *left* that organization. That report should prove to be very interesting to all of us, as we also remember these dear brethren in our prayers that the Lord would keep them steadfast even in the face of this current persecution.

Respectfully submitted,

Pastor Paul R. Bloedel,<sup>†</sup> Chairman  
Pastor David T. Mensing  
Pastor E. R. Stallings  
Mr. Robert G. Bloedel

---

### REPORT ON THE SEMINARY BOOKSTORE

Dear Brethren:

This report will be very brief since the purpose and function of the “Seminary Bookstore” is well known to our Conference already and continues to exist and to function for that purpose. We established this “bookstore,” which is really just a repository in a locked cabinet of primarily *used* and *out-of-print* theological books which every pastor might want to have in his professional library. *Scriptural Publications* seeks out and occasionally gets a good buy on such “treasures;” and they are kept aside primarily for the purchase of our seminary students, secondarily for their professors, and then for other pastors of our Conference who do not have and cannot get a certain book. The latter two “accesses” into the bookstore are of course of the least priority. If the C. T. E. or any of the pastors have books to recommend for our search and acquisition, we would appreciate hearing from them.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Phillip R. Martin

---

### REPORT CONCERNING THE CONFERENCE ARCHIVES

Dear Brethren:

While according to the Conference *Constitution* (Article VIII, 3, b), the Secretary is officially the custodian of all the documents of the Conference, there has been now for several years a kind of *de facto* committee, headed up by the Secretary but including also me [Mr. Phillip R. Martin, reporting for the committee] as a functioning member. to try to gather together and to catalog as far as possible “original” documents of historical significance to our Conference, and to preserve them for the future. At present we do not have a special storage facility for such documents (like a fireproof safe or filing cabinet) — although that has been considered a possible acquisition in the future; but we have been archiving primary documentation electronically by scanning documents and preserving them as image files which can be printed out at any desirable time.

This year, we are simply urging especially the pastors of the Conference, since they tend to keep such materials in their personal files over the long haul, to share these with the Secretary

and our “committee” and to submit either original documents or at least clear copies of documents of significance to our Conference and its history for safe storage on behalf of the generations to come. These will then be digitized as time permits and made readily available for general reference and study. Some files have already come into our hands, and we would encourage the pastors to look through their files for materials that they do not need to have immediately at hand and to entrust these to the keeping of the Conference for the future.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David T. Mensing, Conference Secretary  
Mr. Phillip R. Martin

---

**FISCAL BUDGET ADOPTED FOR 2002-2003**

Cash Balance, June 1, 2002	\$ 30,831.98
----------------------------	--------------

**2002-2003 Pledges and Other Estimated Income:**

Faith, Jackson	\$ 1,200.00
Good Shepherd, Tucson	450.00
Holy Scripture, San Antonio	2,200.00
Peace, Oak Forest	9,600.00
St. John's, Lebanon	4,800.00
St. Luke's, Seattle	3,600.00
St. Stephen's, Wilmot	0.00
Interest Income	500.00
2002 Convention Collection	1,597.43

<b>Total Pledges and Other Estimated Income</b>	<b>\$ 23,967.43</b>
---	---------------------

<b>Total Cash Available for Budgetary Purposes</b>	<b>\$ 54,799.41</b>
--	---------------------

**On-Going Expenses:**

	<b>2001-2002 Expenses</b>	<b>2002-2003 Budget</b>
<i>Scriptural Publications</i>	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,500.00
St. Stephen's Subsidy	7,200.00	7,200.00
Yekaterinburg Subsidy (Salary)	5,500.00	6,600.00
Yekaterinburg Subsidy (Rent)	0.00	1,800.00
Conference Archives Subsidy	500.00	500.00
Telephone Expense	490.93	600.00
Convention Expense	0.00	1,000.00
Travel Expense	1,664.00	3,000.00
Miscellaneous Expense	1,252.43	2,000.00

<b>Total General Fund Budget Adopted by the Convention:</b>	<b>\$ 26,200.00</b>
---	---------------------

**RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE FIFTY-FIRST ANNUAL CONVENTION****Resolution #1:**

**WHEREAS** it hath pleased almighty God in His all-wise providence to summon out of this vale of tears on June 15, 2002, just prior to our Convention, the soul of our dear brother, the Rev. Paul R. Bloedel; and

**WHEREAS** at the time of his death he was the pastor of St. Luke's Lutheran Church in Seattle, Washington, dearly-beloved of his flock and, by God's grace, a faithful shepherd of the sheep and lambs that had been committed to his care by the Holy Spirit of God; and

**WHEREAS** Pastor Bloedel, in obedience to the command of God's Word (Romans 16:17) to avoid the persistently heterodox Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod, was in 1951 one of the founding members of the Orthodox Lutheran Conference, the parent-body of our own beloved Conference, having by the grace and with the help of God stood fast on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with his Savior as the Chief Cornerstone; and

**WHEREAS** Pastor Bloedel, since those early days, faithfully served our beloved Conference in many capacities of leadership and brotherly counsel to the glory of God and to the welfare of His kingdom at large among us;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we magnify the God of all grace for having preserved our cherished brother steadfast in His Word and faith unto his earthly end, and for having received another poor sinner, redeemed by his Savior and forgiven by God for His sake, according to the good pleasure of His grace, into the mansions of joy and peace and rest in heaven, where he is now experiencing "*fulness of joy and pleasures at [God's] right hand forevermore*" (Psalm 16:11). *SOLI DEO GLORIA!*

**Resolution #2:**

**WHEREAS** Mr. Victor K. Bloedel has for the past seventeen years faithfully and diligently served as our Conference Treasurer;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we thank Mr. Victor K. Bloedel, our former and beloved Conference Treasurer, for his lengthy, humble and gracious service which he rendered to the glory of God and for the fiscal health of our Conference, that the Word of God might continue unhindered among us in its truth and purity.

**Resolution #3:**

**WHEREAS** Pastor Stallings has served for several years on the Editorial Committee, assigning instructive and edifying topics and overseeing the editing and layout of the *Concordia Lutheran*; and

**WHEREAS** Mr. John Steinke of Holy Scripture Ev. Lutheran Church has also served for these past several years as the lay member on the Editorial Committee, assisting in the editing and formatting of the *Concordia Lutheran*;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we extend our heartfelt thanks to Pastor Stallings and Mr. John Steinke for their labor of love to the brethren.

**Resolution #4:**

**WHEREAS** this convention has elected officers and standing committees to serve during the coming fiscal year; and

**WHEREAS** the labor of those who faithfully served our Conference this past year has been greatly appreciated by their brethren as having been done to the Lord's glory and for the welfare of His Kingdom;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we express our sincere gratitude for all that the previous officers and members of committees accomplished in the Lord during the past year for our mutual benefit and to the praise of His Grace; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that we call upon the Holy Spirit to endow those brethren who have been elected for this coming year with a rich measure of His grace to perform their duties faithfully in accordance with the *Constitution* and *Bylaws* of our Conference and guided in all things by God's Holy Word.

**Resolution #5:**

**WHEREAS** our convention delegates and visitors were blessed to hear a most interesting and instructive historical essay by Rev. David T. Mensing entitled "The Split in the Orthodox Lutheran Conference in 1955 and Its Reorganization as the Concordia Lutheran Conference in 1956;" and

**WHEREAS** the preparation of this essay required tireless and detailed research, as well as the pursuit and collection of primary source materials (e.g. letters, articles, proceedings and the like) from the early years of our history to the intent that these may be preserved among us in the future; and

**WHEREAS** we have learned from this history to appreciate the efforts of our brethren before us who, against any and all adversity, by the grace and with the help of God, stood fast for the purity of God's Word in teaching and practice, persevered in the faith, and through much personal tribulation established our Conference, that we might enjoy the fruits of their labors in the blessed heritage they committed to us and endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace; and

**WHEREAS** we heard a thoroughly Scriptural, instructive and edifying doctrinal essay on "The Doctrine of Sin and Its Significant Relation to Salvation by Grace in Christ" delivered by Rev. E. R. Stallings; and

**WHEREAS** Pastor Stallings showed through his examination of this topic that there is always the need for continuous, diligent, and zealous study and meditation on God's Word;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we convey our sincerest thanks to Pastors Mensing and Stallings for their essays for the spiritual nourishment of our souls.

**Resolution #6:**

**WHEREAS** we were privileged to hear edifying and instructive sermons from our Conference President, Pastor M. L. Natterer, in the opening service on Friday morning, and from Pastor David T. Mensing, who preached the sermon in the Divine Worship Service on Sunday morning;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we express our sincere gratitude to these brethren for having thus fed and nourished our souls with the Bread of Life.

**Resolution #7:**

**WHEREAS** each session of our convention was opened with an edifying devotion by Pastors Natterer, Redlin, Mensing, Dierking, Mahan and Stallings respectively;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we thank each of these men for his opening devotion.

**Resolution #8:**

**WHEREAS** the divine services and devotions conducted during our convention were enhanced by special organ music to the glory of God;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we thank Mr. Stephen Bloedel, the organist of St. Luke's Lutheran Church, for the wonderful accompaniment of our hymns of praise to the Lord during this Convention; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that we give all praise, honor, and glory to our Triune God for His continued blessings upon our Conference as He feeds us with His precious Word and strengthens us through both Word and Sacrament in faith toward Him and fervent love toward one another, that He might keep us His own unto His everlasting Kingdom of Glory, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Resolution #9:**

**WHEREAS** St. John's Lutheran Church of Lebanon, Oregon, has shown itself to be a gracious host of our 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Convention; and

**WHEREAS** the host congregation graciously provided the delicious meals served to all those in attendance at the Pastoral Conference, the Board Meeting, and at this convention; and

**WHEREAS** most generous and sacrificial Christian hospitality was demonstrated by the members of this congregation, making the stay of the pastors, delegates and visitors a particularly pleasant and enjoyable experience;

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that we express our gratitude to Pastor and Mrs. M. L. Natterer and the members of St. John's Lutheran Church for all they did by the grace of God and to His glory to make our convention a success and to contribute to our spiritual edification, our pleasant sociability, and our physical comfort.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that, in keeping with the motto of our convention, we lift up our hearts to the Lord of the Church in grateful thanksgiving that through the Scriptures He continues to impress upon us the fundamental truths that man's sin merits death and that God's grace alone, merited by Christ, gives life.

---

### STATISTICAL REPORT for Fiscal Year 2001-2002

<b>MEMBERSHIP</b>	Faith Ev. Lutheran Church	Good Shepherd	Holy Scripture	Peace	St. John's	St. Luke's Lutheran Church	St. Stephen's Ev. Lutheran Church	<b>Totals</b>
Baptized Members	42	39	40	72	89	93	13	388
Communicant Members	33	32	25	48	45	59	11	253
Voting Members	15	11	13	18	29	22	6	114
Children in Sunday School	8	5	12	17	20	22	0	84
Adults in Bible Class	17	12	22	45	30	52	7	185
Received by Transfer	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Received by Confirmation or Profession	2	0	2	0	1	0	0	5
Lost by Transfer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lost by Other Circumstance	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	5

#### OFFICIAL ACTS

Infant Baptisms	0	1	2	3	1	1	0	8
Adult Baptisms	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Confirmations of Children	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Confirmations of Adults	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	4
Marriages Solemnized	0	0	2	0	2	2	0	6
Funerals or Burials	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	4

#### AUXILIARY STAFF

Sunday School Teachers	2	4	4	5	3	8	0	26
Elected Auxiliary Officers	1	5	6	12	9	18	3	54
Organists	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	8
Choir Members	0	0	0	8	6	13	0	27

#### PROPERTY

Church Facilities <b>OWNED?</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	
Church Facilities <b>RENTED?</b>	No	No	No	Yes*	No	Yes**	No	<b>Totals</b>
Acreage (with or without buildings)	.75	3.5	.43	3.2	1.47	.67	2.25	12.27
Value (in thousands of \$\$)	\$ 80	\$425	\$160	\$900	\$180	\$908	\$230	\$2,883

Number of Congregations: 7      Number of Pastors: 7      Available Candidates: 0

\*Remote chapel, Midland, MI

\*\*Remote chapel, Victoria, BC

Respectfully submitted,  
Raymond S. Kusumi, Statistician