

TABLE OF CONTENTS

OPENING SERMON PREACHED AT THE SERVICE OF CONVOCATION	1
SERMON PREACHED AT THE SUNDAY COMMUNION SERVICE	5
DOCTRINAL ESSAY DELIVERED AT THE 56 th ANNUAL CONVENTION	9
MINUTES OF THE 56 th ANNUAL CONVENTION	26
ANNUAL REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE PRESIDENT	39
REPORTS OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION AND EXCUSES	45
REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE CONCERNING 2006-2007	47
REPORT OF THE AUDITING COMMITTEE	48
REPORT OF THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE	48
REPORT OF THE PUBLISHING HOUSE BOARD OF CONTROL	50
REPORT OF THE BUSINESS MANAGER OF <i>SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS</i>	52
FINANCIAL SUMMARY OF <i>SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS</i>	54
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS	55
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION	56
INTEREST REPORT OF THE SEMINARY INSTRUCTOR	57
INTEREST REPORT OF THE SEMINARY STUDENT	59
REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LUTHERAN UNION	61
REPORT ON THE SEMINARY BOOKSTORE	62
REPORT CONCERNING THE CONFERENCE ARCHIVES	63
FISCAL BUDGET ADOPTED FOR 2007-2008	63
RESOLUTIONS ADOPTED BY THE 56 th ANNUAL CONVENTION	64
STATISTICAL REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006-2007	67

OPENING SERMON

for the

Fifty-sixth Annual Convention

of the

CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE

delivered by

The Rev. Edward J. Worley, Conference President

Text: **Jeremiah 23:5-6**

Dear fellow-redeemed, who have obtained like precious faith with all the saints through the righteousness of God and our Savior Jesus Christ:

In order to be saved, we know, on the basis of God's Word alone, that all of us need a foreign righteousness, an alien righteousness, a righteousness not ours by nature and life, a righteousness outside ourselves; for Holy Writ emphatically declares: "*But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags...*" (Isaiah 64:6a) "...for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified" (Psalm 143:2b) "...for there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Ecclesiastes 7:20).

The righteousness that saves us is proclaimed in our text for this morning under the theme: "*THE LORD, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*" Therein we shall hear (I) that Jesus Christ is the gift of the Father, and (II) that Jesus Christ is THE LORD, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS for salvation.

Let us pray: Dear Heavenly Father, renew us in saving Christian faith that we ever put all our trust in Thy Son as our saving Righteousness before Thee unto life everlasting. To this end, bless both the preaching and hearing of Thy Word this morning; for Jesus' sake, *THE LORD, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.* Amen.

Our text begins with Jeremiah 23:5: "*Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will raise unto David a righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth.*" "*Behold,*" the Lord says – take notice with all due spiritual attention! "*The days come.*" – What days are these? This is the regular phrase used in prophetic utterances to designate the time of Christ in history. This is "*the fulness of the time,*" as the Apostle Paul says in Galatians 4, when the Messiah is bestowed in God's grace, according to His eternal plan, to save all sinful mankind.

Specially, the LORD, Jehovah, the only true God, "*will raise unto David a righteous Branch.*" The Seed of the Woman, the Virgin's Son (Genesis 3:15), the Seed of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Judah (Genesis 22:18, etc.) was to be also the seed of David (II Samuel 7:3-4, 11-16; cf. I Chronicles 17:1-15). He was to be a true human being, body and soul, to take our place under the Law, as our Substitute (Isaiah 53; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:6-8; Hebrews 2:9-18, 5:7-9, etc.). The Father would send forth His Son, His Only-Begotten, to become incarnate in the womb of the Virgin Mary! The Word would be made flesh to dwell among us (John 1:14).

In our prophecy, Christ is called "*a righteous Branch.*" The Hebrew term here refers, not to a

mere ordinary branch on a tree but rather to a growth that springs up from the root to form something new. This means that the Christ will not be a simple branch like all the others on the family tree of David but something far greater and new: A fresh growth that appears out of the house of David as a gift of God, bringing all the Messianic promises to complete fulfillment in history. The Branch is one of the proper names for the Christ and is used also by Isaiah (4:2) and Zechariah (3:8; 6:12).

Take careful note of the descriptive adjective “*righteous*” to describe the Branch. With David all his descendants must also confess: “*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.*” (Psalm 51:5). Indeed all human beings, conceived and born in a natural manner, are, by fallen nature, sinful and unclean, born of sinful flesh and thus in the same hereditary guilt and corruption. But the Branch is righteous! Mark well: This is not an acquired or imputed righteousness, but Jehovah raised Him up as a *Righteous Branch*. From His very conception He is righteous. This descriptive adjective refers to His nature, being and essence: He is the Sinless One! He will be born, as the angel said to His virgin mother, as “*that holy thing*” (Luke 1:35). The Messiah is the “*Righteous Servant*” of Jehovah (Isaiah 53:11). Scripture designates Him as “*holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners*” (Hebrews 7:26), “*who did no sin*” (I Peter 2:22) but rather went about, His entire life, doing nothing but good, always pleasing His Father (Acts 10:38; John 8:29). He lived a sinless life according to His sinless nature as the Righteous One. For, by the miraculous purifying power of the Holy Ghost, the supernatural intervention of God, He was conceived sinless. Being free from original sin and having committed no kind of actual sin whatsoever, He could be the sinless Substitute for sinful mankind, to take the place of everyone under the Law, both to fulfill it for us and to pay for all our sins. He was not only able not to sin, but was *impeccable*: Not able to sin! How so? Because the human nature of Christ never existed as a separate person, but from the beginning constitutes one Person with the Son of God; and God *cannot* sin! Truly tempted in all ways like as we are, He never sinned, nor could He sin! As one dogmatician (Philippi) puts it: “Able not to sin applies to the First Adam; not able to sin to the Second Adam, since this Second Adam is ‘*The Lord from Heaven,*’ I Corinthians 15:47” (Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol.II, p.76, footnote #41).

The Messiah is also called a King who “*shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth*” (v. 5). He is the true Melchisedek, the “*King of Righteousness,*” whose kingdom shall never end. As the angel Gabriel told Mary, Luke 1:32-33: “*He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest; and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David; and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end.*” His everlasting reign shall also be one in which He shall “*prosper.*” As one commentator (Dr. Theo. Laetsch) explains:

The Hebrew term denotes...the necessary prerequisites for a successful activity, to have insight, act with intelligent understanding. The King knows fully the will of the Lord, since He Himself is Jehovah (v. 6); cp. John 1:18; 3:12-13. He is not only willing (Psalm 40:6-8), but able (Isaiah 9:6-7; 52:13-15; 53:10-12) to carry out God’s plan of salvation to successful completion. He knows also the plans of His enemies and how to foil and utterly defeat their schemes (Matthew 4:1-11; 26:1-5, 45; 27:62-66; John 2:24-25; 12:7; 14:30). (Theo. Laetsch, *Jeremiah*, p.191).

The King shall have certain success — He shall accomplish all His Father sent Him to do! He shall “*execute judgment and justice in the earth.*” This phrase refers to the work of our “*King of Righteousness,*” His vicarious satisfaction for us under the Law, the all-sufficient

righteousness He procures for us before God as He fulfills all the demands of God for justice. Indeed the Messiah, Jesus Christ, is *“THE LORD, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS”* for salvation, as our final verse declares (Jeremiah 23:6): *“In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”* He shall save His people from their sins, living up to His sacred, God-given Name, Jesus. For *“in His days,”* the entire lifetime of the Savior from conception onward, He shall do all that is required as our Substitute under God’s Holy Law, thereby earning the divine right to be called *“THE LORD, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.”* Mark well that little word *“our.”* Here is that righteousness outside of us, that foreign, alien, righteousness of another, that holy fulfillment of God’s Law that alone avails in God’s sight for salvation. But more — this name is *“His name whereby He shall be called,”* for sinners are to be brought to the knowledge of this truth, to believe in their heart this Gospel, and confess with their mouth this saving righteousness! Saving faith is that God-wrought gift through the Gospel that acknowledges that the holy life of Jesus is our sole, saving righteousness before God, even as the holy, precious, innocent shed blood of Jesus is the sole payment for our sins before God. Remember that divine justice required that our Substitute not only bear the full, damning punishment for our sins against God’s Holy Law, but also that He fulfill the Law by a perfectly holy life. He had to render the total obedience to the Law of God that we are obligated to render but utterly fail to do. He was made under the Law (Galatians 4:4) to fulfill it in our place, as Paul declares in Romans 10:4, *“For Christ is the end of the Law for righteousness to every one that believeth.”* The active obedience of Christ is a vital part of His substitutional satisfaction. The *Formula of Concord* rightly states:

Since Christ is not man alone, but God and man in one undivided person, He was as little subject to the Law [that is, obliged to keep the Law...], because He is the Lord of the Law, as He had to suffer and die, as far as His Person is concerned. For this reason, then, His obedience, not only in suffering and dying, but also in this, that He in our stead was voluntarily made under the Law and fulfilled it by His obedience, is imputed to us for righteousness, so that on account of this complete obedience, which He rendered His heavenly Father for us, by [His] *doing* and suffering, in [His] *living* and dying, God forgives our sins, regards us as godly and righteous, and eternally saves us. (Formula of Concord, Solid Declaration, III, 15, *Triglotta*, p. 919.)

The Apostle Paul declares in Romans 3:21-26: *“But now the righteousness of God without the Law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God, being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.”*

God remains just and also is able to be the Justifier because He Himself has met the obligations of His Holy Law for righteousness and redemption in His Own Son, who kept the Law and shed His blood! *“Christ Jesus”* is the One, *“who of God is made unto us...righteousness...and redemption”* (I Corinthians 1:30). Romans 5:18-21: *“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. For as by one man’s disobedience [the] many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall [the] many be made righteous. Moreover the Law entered, that the offense might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more*

abound, that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” By faith alone, the gift of God through this very Gospel of righteousness and redemption, we are enabled to call Jesus “*THE LORD, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS.*” The Apostle Paul confesses that a true Christian is found in Christ “*not having (his) own righteousness which is of the Law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith*” (Philippians 3:9). Only this Gospel gives a sinner a clear conscience and assures our hearts before God. Dr. Pieper notes:

This teaching of Scripture is of great practical importance. In his life of faith the Christian continually resorts to Christ’s vicarious fulfillment of the Law. Luther: “He satisfied the Law; He fulfilled the Law perfectly, for He loved God with all His heart, and with all His soul, and with all His strength, and with all His mind, and He loved His neighbor as Himself. Therefore, when the Law comes and accuses you of not having kept it, bid it go to Christ. Say: There is the Man who has kept it; to Him I cling; He fulfilled it for me and gave His fulfillment to me. Thus the Law is silenced.” (Francis Pieper, *Christian Dogmatics*, Vol. II, p. 375).

We need not fear death nor the judgment to come with the righteousness of Christ put on our account and His blood blotting out all our sins from God’s record! As we sing in the beloved hymn #371:

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
my beauty are, my glorious dress.
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
with joy shall I lift up my head.

Bold shall I stand in that great Day,
for who aught to my charge shall lay?
Fully through these absolved I am
from sin and fear, from guilt and shame.

(TLH 371,1-2)

He is both our Righteousness and our Propitiation, Jesus Christ the *Righteous Branch*, the *Everlasting King*, the Savior of the whole world.

God grant us to ever put our full trust in “*THE LORD, OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS*” for our eternal salvation. In His saving name, Amen!

Soli Deo gloria!

SERMON DELIVERED AT THE SUNDAY COMMUNION SERVICE

by

-4-

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

Text: **II Corinthians 5:21**

In the Name of Jesus Christ, the only Savior of poor sinners, dearly beloved hearers of His precious Word:

Why is it, do you think, that the doctrine of justification is such a “hard sell” here in this world? Why is it that the vast majority of people reject it out of hand and even despise it? Why is it, indeed, that the Gospel of justification by grace for Christ’s sake through faith—though precious to US by the power of the Holy Ghost—is so “dirt-cheap” in the estimation of natural man that we can’t GIVE it away?? Why is it, I ask you, that people are not literally banging down the doors of our churches to get it, to get even a piece of it (like a scrap of succulent food fallen from a rich man’s table) when it is harder to find than a “pearl of great price” in a bag of common oysters?? —The answer is very simple really: The Gospel of justification by grace for Christ’s sake through faith is an INSULT to man’s self-image! It is based upon the assumption that man NEEDS saving, that his natural reliance upon his own righteousness is USELESS, and that the *opinio legis*—the “opinion of the law” that man not only must but actually CAN justify himself in the sight of God—is a spiritual PIPEDREAM! “Why, a ‘self-respecting’ person would be ‘plain nuts’ to accept and believe **the Gospel!** It’s too demeaning! It’s too humiliating! Why, it’s just plain foolishness!!” —Sound familiar?

You see, the children of this world are “in denial” about who and what they ARE in the sight of the just and holy God of heaven and earth! That God tells us ALL in no uncertain terms: “*Ye shall be **holy**, for I, the Lord your God, am holy!*” (Leviticus 19:2). “*Whosoever shall keep the whole Law and yet offend in **one point**, he is guilty of **all!***” (James 2:10). And yet, “*There is not a just man upon earth that doeth good and sinneth **not***” (Ecclesiastes 7:20); “*All have sinned and come short of the glory of God*” (Romans 3:23); and even we Christians, according to the standard of God’s justice, clad in **our own** righteousness, “*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*” (Romans 3:20). —Those are the **hard facts!** And only when those facts, manifested by the Law of God in all its condemning fierceness, convict the sinner of his UNWORTHINESS, of his UNRIGHTEOUSNESS, of his INABILITY to please God by the works of the Law and to gain His favor, only THEN does the Gospel become truly **attractive**, truly “**good news**” worth hearing, the good news of

What God Accomplished FOR US in His Son.

The simple and yet profound **Gospel** set before us in our text tells us the awesome news, the unexpected news, yea, the comforting and reassuring news of **(I) what God did** to His only-begotten Son, and **(II) why He did it** specifically to Him. “*For there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved*” (Acts 4:12). Humbly, gratefully, confidently, and sincerely hear and heed **this precious Gospel**, my dear fellow sinner, and you will find rest for your souls!

I.

What did God **DO** to His only begotten Son that enabled Him mercifully to **justify us** in His sight (that is, to forgive us and make us right with Him) while maintaining inviolate His perfect

justice? **JUSTICE** and **MERCY**, you know, are essentially contradictory attributes by definition. Justice is that quality according to which God demands **perfection** of every man (having created man perfect in the beginning and having no responsibility for man's fall from perfection) and according to which He requires the ultimate **penalty** for *lack* of perfection: "*The wages of sin is death*" (Romans 6:23). Mercy, on the other hand, is that attribute according to which God grants His gracious favor and forgiveness to the undeserving and justifies the "*ungodly*" (Romans 4:5). offering salvation as His free unmerited gift to all mankind. How can these contradictory attributes co-exist with one another in a God without contradictions, and how can they operate as contradictions without either being at all diminished??

We read in our text that "[God] made Him who knew no sin to **be sin** for us." The word order that I just cited, though different from the King James translation, is a *better rendering* according to the original Greek text because the expression "*who knew no sin*" properly describes "*Him*," that is, **Christ**, rather than "*us*" who all are sinners since conception. The Son of God is not able to sin. Sin is contrary to God's very essence; and the person of **Christ**, who is one with the Father and the Holy Ghost, is therefore incapable of sin. And, when He took into His divine person a truly **human** nature, that human nature too was free from sin — free from *original* sin since His conception in the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Ghost, **and** free from *actual* sin as well. "*That Holy Thing*" born of Mary (Luke 1:35) "*did no sin*" Peter tells us (I, 2:22).

Now what did God **DO** to that "*holy, harmless, undefiled*," impeccable Son, in whom "*dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily*" (Colossians 2:9)? What did He **DO** to Him **FOR US**?? The Apostle John tells us (I John 4:9) that He "*sent His only begotten Son into the world*." Why would He do such a thing — have Him leave the glory of heaven to take on a human nature, that of His own creature, and to humble Himself so as to be "*a little lower than the angels*" (Hebrews 2:7)?? In Galatians 4:4-5, St. Paul tells us why: He "*made*" Him, as a true human being, to be "*under the Law*," subject to His own Law, required (like us) to obey the Law. Why? "*To redeem them that were under the Law*" — to buy back every wretched sinful human being from the curse of the Law.

That redemption required a two-fold payment on Christ's part "*for us*," our text tells us, in order to satisfy God's justice "*for us*," on our behalf. The **first** part of the payment required Christ to **DO** what we acknowledged before no human being is capable of: He had to *obey* the Law in its ultimate requirement of all those who are under the Law: "*Ye shall be holy, for I the Lord your God am holy!*" (Leviticus 19:2). Was Christ capable of it? Indeed He was as the holy Son of God, "*Jesus Christ, the Righteous*" (I John 2:1). He **actively**, that is, by His own **actions**, rendered **perfect obedience** to God's Law and thus **perfectly fulfilled**, "*as a man*," "*under the Law*," the LEGISLATIVE requirements of Divine Justice.

But He also had to render **obedience** to the PUNITIVE requirements of Divine Justice. God had said to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden regarding His express prohibition regarding the forbidden fruit: "*In the day [ye] eat thereof, [ye] shall surely die*" (Genesis 2:17). The God-man, our Savior, had to suffer **death**; He had to be "*put to death in the flesh*" (I Pet. 3:18); He had to endure passively — that is, He had to take what was inflicted upon Him — namely, "*the wages of sin*" (Romans 6:23), **eternal** death, the God-forsakenness of the **damned** in hell!

Why would He have to render THAT obedience, that "passive" obedience, when He had never sinned? The answer to that question lies in our text: God "*made Him to be sin*," He imputed or charged to His holy Son sins which He Himself had never committed; He caused Him to be

charged, convicted, sentenced and executed under His divine “criminal code.” Isaiah says of Jesus, the Messiah, the Sacrificial Lamb of God: *“He was numbered with the transgressors”* (Isaiah 53:12). In fact, **man himself**, the **real** sinner, regarded Jesus Christ as a “criminal”: The Jews prosecuted Him; the Romans condemned Him; together they executed Him of CAPITAL crimes!! Isaiah wrote from the perspective of the Jews, and actually from the perspective of all sinners whose condemnation Christ bore: *“We esteemed Him [we regarded Him as] stricken, smitten of God and afflicted”* (53:4). “Jesus **deserved** what He was suffering; **God** was laying it on Him!” Indeed, God had *“made Him to be sin,”* imputed **guilt** to Him when *“He had done nothing amiss”* (Luke 23:41) and visited upon Him *“the wages of sin”* (Romans 6:23), the tortures, the indescribable torment of the damned in hell! No wonder the holy, sinless, impeccable, righteous *“Christ, the Son of the living God”* (Matthew 16:16), cried out as if in frustrated amazement (though He knew full well from eternity already the answer to His question): *“My God, My God, WHY?? Why hast Thou forsaken ME??”* (Matthew 27:46) — the one *“who is holy, harmless, undefiled and separate from sinners”*?? (Hebrews 7:26).

II.

Why indeed? Why did God do this specifically to JESUS, His holy Son? That is our second consideration as we explore what God accomplished for us in His Son, as we seek to learn why He did all of this specifically to HIM. St. Paul writes: *“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). Christ’s obedience was *VICARIOUS*, that is, substitutionary, *“for US,”* Paul says.

You see, my dearly-beloved fellow sinners, our Savior did not have to keep the Law of God perfectly to **prove** that He was the **Son of God**, just to validate His own existence, nor merely as an example for us to follow. As we confess in our Catechism, this **perfect ACTIVE obedience** to the Law had to be rendered by the holy, sinless, impeccably righteous **Son of God** “that His fulfilling of the Law might be sufficient for ALL MEN” — not on behalf of just one, not on behalf only of the elect, certainly not on behalf of Himself. No mere human being, the Psalmist writes, *“can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; for the redemption of their soul is precious!”* (49:7-8). It was only because the holy sinless **Son of God** rendered perfect “active obedience” to the Law and fulfilled it perfectly *“for US”* that by HIS obedience, *“by the obedience of ONE shall [the] many be made righteous”* (Romans 5:19). He came not to **destroy** the Law, to “give us a pass,” as it were, and to take the teeth out of God’s justice [for THEN God would no longer be just]; no, He came to **fulfill** the Law (Matthew 5:17) — *“for US,”* on **our** behalf, in **our** stead and in **our** place, ... why?? *That we might be made the righteousness of God in Him,* that **His** perfect righteousness, which alone can avail before God as fulfilling the demands of His justice, could be **imputed** to **US**, laid to our credit on God’s balance sheet.

According to **our own** works of righteousness, we “come up short,” FAR short of the Kingdom of God (cf. Romans 3:23). But when **Christ’s** impeccable righteousness is **imputed** to us **by faith**, then we are *“made the righteousness of God in HIM,”* we are **accounted** worthy to stand in the judgement, **declared** to be righteous, forensically **adjudged** —on the basis of Christ’s righteousness which covers our **UN**righteousness, clothed in the “wedding garment” provided to us freely by His grace (cf. Matthew 22:11-12; Isaiah 61:10), the righteousness that **HE** won **for** all mankind— we are seen as **righteous** before God. In the last judgment, the *wicked*, those who rejected the grace and mercy of God in Christ and refused to put on the wedding garment

of **HIS** righteousness, “*shall go away into everlasting punishment,*” Jesus says, because of their **UN**righteousness, “*but the righteous,*” those clad in the earned righteousness of **Christ** imputed to them by faith, “*into life eternal*” (Matthew 25:46). There, as clear as crystal, is the **active obedience** of Christ for **our justification**, with Christ, “*the end of the Law for righteousness to everyone that believeth*” (Romans 10:4), “*the righteousness which is of God by faith*” (Philippians 3:9).

And our Savior’s **passive obedience**, too, will be imputed to our account with God. For Peter says that “*Christ also suffered for US*” (I Peter 2:21). “[*We*] were redeemed” — the **price** was **paid** for our iniquities and transgressions and sins— “*not with corruptible things as silver and gold..., but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a Lamb without blemish and without spot*” (I Peter 1:18-19). “*And He is the Propitiation for our sins,*” —the compensatory payment of such **overriding value** as not only to retire the debt but to change the way in which a creditor views a deadbeat debtor — “*and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world!*” (I John 2:2). Christ’s vicarious **passive obedience** bore our griefs and carried our sorrows, and “*the Lord laid on Him the iniquity of us all*” (Isaiah 53:6). “*And their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more,*” says our merciful God for Jesus’ sake (Hebrews 8:12). No wonder we confidently sing with the hymnwriter:

Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness
my beauty are, my glorious dress,
wherein before my God I’ll stand
when I shall reach the heavenly land.

Bold shall I stand in that Great Day,
for who aught to my charge shall lay?
Fully through these absolved I am
from sin and fear, from guilt and shame!

(*TLH 371, 1-2*)

God grant us all such confidence in the merits of our precious Savior and in the objective justification which He won for us by His perfect active and passive obedience unto life everlasting.

Amen.

Soli Deo gloria!

DOCTRINAL ESSAY DELIVERED AT THE 56th ANNUAL CONVENTION

by

The Rev. Paul E. Bloedel, Pastor • St. Mark’s Ev. Lutheran Church • Sauk Village, Illinois

The Active Obedience of Christ — His Righteousness for Our Justification

“By the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.”

—Romans 5:18b

When thinking about what Christ did to save us from our sins, the thought that most commonly first comes to mind is the great pain and agony that He endured for us, beginning with His suffering in the Garden of Gethsemane and ending with His death on the cross. It is not difficult to understand why this crucial part of His redemptive work (which we refer to as the *passive obedience* of Christ) is most commonly emphasized. After all, it evokes deep feelings of sympathetic grief and sorrow on account of our sins, which drove Him to that suffering, as well as feelings of reciprocative love, gratitude, and joy; for by His *passive obedience*, Jesus took the wages of our sins (Romans 6:23) upon Himself—suffering the unimaginable pains of hell on the cross in our place, and thus saving us from eternal damnation. Christ’s suffering and death were absolutely necessary for the appeasing of God’s wrath against us and the securing of forgiveness for lost mankind, for the Bible says: *“Without shedding of blood is no remission”* (Hebrews 9:22). But this *passive obedience*—if considered all by itself—would still have left us in a state in which we would be lacking true righteousness before God (even though the penalty for our disobedience would have been removed). Being truly *righteous* in the eyes of the Lord includes more than just preventing one’s heart, mind, mouth, and hand from doing what God forbids (despite what the monks imagine who isolate themselves from the world in silent seclusion). Rather, true righteousness also includes the constant performance of all that God’s Law requires of us concerning our duties toward Him and our neighbor in all of our thoughts, desires, words, and deeds. J. H. Thayer defines the Greek word for *“righteous”* [δικαιος] as “upright, righteous, virtuous, keeping the commands of God.” Therefore, being counted truly *righteous* before the Lord requires more than having the punishment that we deserve by our sins transferred to another.

Indeed, in addition to the *passive obedience* of Christ, the Gospel tells us about another important aspect of His work of redemption, which was necessary in order for us to be *“justified”* (regarded as and declared to be righteous), and to be received into the eternal mansions of heaven by His grace (Matthew 25:46). And this other crucial part, which is sadly often minimized or overlooked completely in outward Christendom, is His perfect keeping of God’s Law in behalf of all mankind. This is what we refer to as His *active obedience*. The very fact that Christ’s *active obedience* is so often eclipsed by His *passive obedience* in the minds of Christians supplies us with a very good reason to focus special attention upon this glorious doctrine of the Gospel. In the present essay we will be examining this important part of our Savior’s work under the following five parts: **Part I:** *The “Active Obedience” of Christ Defined*; **Part II:** *The Necessity of Christ’s Active Obedience*; **Part III:** *References to the Active Obedience of Christ in the Old and New Testaments*; **Part IV:** *The Comfort that Christ’s Active Obedience Gives Us*; and **Part V:** *The Active Obedience of Christ Applied in Our Lives of Sanctification*. Now may God the Holy Ghost richly bless us in and through this study of His Word!

Part I: The “Active Obedience” of Christ DEFINED

The term *“active obedience,”* like the term *“passive obedience,”* is not found anywhere in the Bible—though the single word *“obedience”* is used in Romans 5:19 with reference to Christ’s *active obedience*; and the word *“obedient”* is used in Philippians 2:8 with reference to His

passive obedience. Such terms as *active* and *passive obedience* are ecclesiastical terms (that is, “church terms”)—much like the words “*Trinity*” and “*Sacrament*,” which also are not found in the Bible but are used to great profit in the Christian Church for the purpose of labeling and describing important doctrines that *are* clearly set forth in the Scriptures. Simply defined, the *active obedience* of Jesus Christ refers to that part of His redemptive work by which He perfectly fulfilled all of God’s Commandments for us—living a life of complete holiness in all of His thoughts and desires, words and deeds. As was mentioned in the introduction to this essay, the other important part of Christ’s work of atonement is what we call His *passive obedience*, in which He suffered under the weight of the world’s sins that punishment which we all deserve, namely, the curse of the Law (Galatians 3:13), being completely forsaken by God (Matthew 27:46) in the torments of hell (Matthew 25:41, 46).

Even though it seems to be quite common for people to claim to be confused by these two terms—neither knowing nor understanding the definitions of “*active obedience*” and “*passive obedience*” — they really should not be difficult to keep straight as long as it is remembered what it means for a person to be *active* in doing something (in grammar, the verb being performed *by* the subject), as opposed to the person being *passive* while things are done to him (in grammar, the verb being performed *upon* the subject). So in Christ’s *active obedience* He was *actively* engaged in the continuous and flawless keeping of God’s holy Law, while in His *passive obedience* He was *passively* suffering the sorrows and agony inflicted upon Him by the mockery of His enemies, the scourge, the cross, and especially the righteous wrath of the Lord God provoked and justly deserved by sinful mankind because of their transgressions.

Under the Second Article in our *Catechism* (C. P. H., 1943), we find the following passage (number 318) quoted from Romans 5:19: “By the *obedience* of One shall many be made righteous.” But how can we know exactly to what this individual word, “*obedience*,” is referring (since it is not modified by either of the adjectives, “*active*” or “*passive*”)? Now our *Catechism* correctly cites this passage in connection with Christ’s *active obedience* and *NOT* His *passive obedience*. But how do we know that the *Catechism* is right in doing so? (After all, the passage just says “*obedience*.”) Of course, the proper thing to do whenever such questions arise is to look up the verse in the Bible and to read it in context. If this is done with the verse in question, it becomes readily apparent that the word “*obedience*” in Romans 5:19 refers specifically to the *active obedience* of Christ and *NOT* His *passive obedience*, since the entire verse reads: “For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous.” Notice that the word “*obedience*” is directly contrasted with the word “*disobedience*.” The clause “by one man’s *disobedience* many were made sinners” is a clear reference to Adam’s violation of God’s prohibition concerning man’s eating the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil. This one act of disobedience brought sin and its consequences upon the whole multitude of all mankind. In contrast to this *disobedience*, or violation of God’s Law, another Man’s *obedience*, or perfect fulfilling of His Law, is here presented as that which brings the declaration of righteousness upon all people. Additionally, the word “*obedience*” in this verse is a direct parallel to the word “*righteousness*” in the verse that comes just before it. So then taking verses 18 and 19 together, we are told: “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. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous.” Without a doubt, these verses are clearly and directly speaking about the *active obedience* of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

A brief note about the word “*many*” in Romans 5:19: The word combination that is here translated in our King James Version as “*many*” with reference to “*be[ing] made righteous*” can be somewhat misleading. Those who are Calvinistic Reformed would prefer this translation since it seems to support their false teaching of a limited atonement, namely, that Christ’s work of redemption purchased forgiveness only for the elect. However, in the original Greek, it does not simply say “*πολλοί...*,” which would mean “*many*,” but it says “*οἱ πολλοί...*,”—literally “*the many*”—that is, the entire corrupt mass of all mankind. This is one of the rare instances where the NIV gives a more correct rendering of the original, stating “*the many*” instead of just “*many*.” But it should also be noted that even using the King James Version, and even without any knowledge of the original Greek, the all-inclusive connotation of the word “*many*,” as it appears in this passage, can still be deduced from two important contextual clues. In the first place, the same “*many*” is used in the first part of the verse with reference to those who were made sinners through Adam’s disobedience; and we know from numerous other passages that the sin of Adam was passed on to *all* of his descendants (Romans 5:12,18; Ephesians 2:3), not just *many* or *most* of them (the only exception being Christ). Secondly, we see that in the verse that comes just before it (verse 18), the same basic doctrines of Adam’s sin leading to universal guilt and Jesus’ righteousness leading to universal (or objective) justification are also set forth, but this time using the word “*all*” instead of “*many*.”

In the *active obedience* of Christ, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity placed Himself under His own Law and perfectly fulfilled it as our Substitute. But, in order for this to be accomplished, it was necessary for the Son of God to become a true human being. St. Paul writes to the Galatians: “*When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons*” (4:4–5). Accordingly, the *active obedience* of Christ began from the very point of His conception in the womb of the virgin Mary. It could not have started prior to His conception, since He did not have a human nature before that time and, therefore, could not have been taking the place of man under the Law. But when did His *active obedience* come to an *end*? It continued without interruption all the way through His suffering and death on the cross. In other words, Jesus was still perfectly fulfilling the Law for us in His *active obedience* while He was suffering our punishment in His *passive obedience* (I Peter 2:21–23). But the *active obedience* of Christ could not have continued beyond His death since He declared from the cross shortly before He gave up the ghost that His work of redemption, wrought by both His *active and passive obedience*, was fully “*accomplished*” (the Greek of “*finished*” in John 19:30).

The entire life of Jesus in His *state of humiliation* was lived as our perfect Substitute under God’s Law to redeem us from our sins. Though *we* are *sinful* from our mother’s womb, as David wrote by inspiration of God: “*Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me*” (Psalm 51:5), yet *Christ* was conceived and born in *sinless perfection*. The original sin that infects us all did not infect the Lord Jesus. Now the Bible *does* say that He was sent “*in the likeness of sinful flesh*” (Romans 8:3), which means that Jesus’ body (unlike Adam’s prior to the fall) was subject to such consequences of sin as pains and weaknesses. But it must be understood that Jesus Himself had no sinful flesh; His human nature was not under the corrupting influence of sin, as the angel Gabriel testified in his words to Mary, saying: “*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).

The fact that the Son of Mary is also the *Son of God* is a crucial point to keep in mind when considering why the *active obedience* of Christ had **atonement value**. It has already been

mentioned why it was necessary for His *active obedience* that our Savior be a true *man*, namely, so that He could take our place under the Law of God. But why was it necessary for our Savior also to be true *God* in connection with His *active obedience*? The answer that might first come to mind is this: He needed to be *God* in order to be able to *fulfill the Law perfectly*. Man is sinful, but God is not. And while His divine holiness *does* have a direct bearing on His perfect keeping of the Law, if this were the *only* consideration, then God could have (hypothetically speaking) used His omnipotence to create in the Virgin Mary a perfect, purely human offspring who had been miraculously kept from any taint of original sin and completely immune to actual sins. But even if this purely hypothetical, sinless man had been brought forth by the almighty power of God, and even if he had been able to live his entire life in perfect accord with the moral Law of God, yet this man, if he were only a man and not also God, still would not be able to redeem fallen mankind. If he were sinless, then he himself would not be condemned; but that would not help the rest of us who would still be under the Lord's wrath on account of *our* innumerable trespasses and sins. No, for the *active obedience* of Christ to benefit *us*, our Savior needed to be more than just a perfect *man* —He also needed to be *true God* so that His substitutionary life under the Law would have the *infinite* value required to redeem the whole world. The Psalmist writes: "*None of them* [mere human beings] *can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him; for the redemption of their soul is precious*" (Psalm 49:7–8).

Since Jesus is *God*, and one of God's attributes (all of which are unchangeable) is that He is *holy*, it was really impossible for Jesus to fail in His *active obedience*. In other words, there is no way that He could have sinned, since He is God; and it is impossible for God to sin. This fact, however, should not make us think that the temptations brought against Him by the devil were not real or serious temptations. For example, when Jesus was talking about His upcoming suffering and death, and the disciple Peter tried to convince Him to abandon His plans, Jesus turned to Peter and said: "*Get thee behind me, Satan; thou art an offense unto Me; for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men*" (Matthew 16:21–23). Peter's words were a serious temptation from the devil, because Christ as a *true man* desired to avoid the intense pain and agony that He knew lay ahead of Him. Remember how He prayed so intensely in the Garden of Gethsemane that if it were possible, the cup of suffering might be taken away (Matthew 26:39, 42; Mark 14:35–36; Luke 22:42). But also remember that He did not for a second set His will against the will of His heavenly Father (which was *also His own will* to redeem fallen mankind). The natural human desire to avoid pain is not sinful in and of itself; it is, however, sinful if in seeking to avoid suffering we transgress the will of the Lord. (Peter's three-fold denial of the Lord in the courtyard of the high-priest is a clear example of how this can happen). Because Jesus was a true human being, the temptation to oppose the will of His heavenly Father and avoid suffering was a real temptation; but because Jesus was at the same time also the true and *holy* God, He did not even for a second entertain the thought of thwarting the divine will; and it was really *impossible* for Him to succumb to the temptation and fall into sin. The writer to the Hebrews testifies concerning Christ: "*We have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin*" (4:15).

Part II: The Necessity of Christ's Active Obedience

What God did in His Law demand
and none to Him could render
caused wrath and woe on ev'ry hand

for man, the vile offender.
Our flesh has not those pure desires
the spirit of the Law requires,
and lost is our condition.

From sin our flesh could not abstain;
sin held its sway unceasing.
The task was useless and in vain;
our guilt was e'er increasing.
None can remove sin's poisoned dart
or purify our guileful heart—
so deep is our corruption.

(*T.L.H.* 377, v. 2, 4)

Let us now consider why it was necessary for our forgiveness and eternal salvation that Christ carry out this crucial part of our redemption known as His *active obedience*. The Lord our God has set forth strict, unbending demands and prohibitions in His holy Law—requiring *absolute perfection* of us in *everything* that we *do, say, think, or even feel* deep down in our heart. Now the fact that God demands that we be completely, one hundred percent, *perfect* without even a single sinful thought or emotion is denied by modern rationalists who follow such popular thinking as: “God knows that no one is perfect. He, therefore, wouldn’t require us to do what He knows is impossible. God only requires that we *try our best*”; and so on. But as “reasonable” as such statements might sound, they stand in blatant opposition to the clear declarations of the Lord in His Law. Because *He Himself is holy*, God also demands that *we be holy*. Clearly set forth in the pages of Scripture, His requirement for all people of all times is: “*Ye shall be holy: for I the Lord your God am holy*” (Leviticus 19:2); and again: “*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect*” (Matthew 5:48). If He made any exceptions, allowances, or excuses for sin—if He were tolerant or dismissive of even one of our sins—God would be neither perfectly holy nor perfectly just. And the fact that even only *one sin*, indeed, renders us *completely guilty* before God according to His Law is stated in the divinely inspired words recorded by the Apostle James as follows: “*Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all*” (2:10).

So then in order *not* to fall under the verdict of “guilty,” a person would have to keep all of God’s Commandments *perfectly*—not just outwardly but also in the very thoughts and feelings of his heart and mind. And who among us is capable of doing *that* (Psalm 130:3-4)? Is there any human being in the entire history of humanity, with the exception of Christ Himself (Hebrews 7:26; I Peter 2:22), who has ever lived his entire life in sinless perfection? No, not one. In the third chapter of his epistle to the Romans, the Apostle Paul declares: “*We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; as it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way; they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. ...what things soever the Law saith, it saith to them who are under the Law that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God. ...for there is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God*” (vv. 9–12, 19, 22–23). And there is certainly an abundance of other Bible passages (such as are listed in our *Catechism* under Question 88 in the *Close of the Commandments*) that could also be cited to prove the universality of sin; but let these suffice.

The reason why every human being is completely incapable of living a life free from sin is what resulted from the disobedience of Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden and has been passed on through all generations, namely, the total corruption of our human nature known as *original sin*. Now it should be clearly understood that original sin is not a mere spiritual impairment that can be overcome by a person's self-decision, willpower, or hard work, but is instead a condition of *spiritual blindness* (I Corinthians 2:14), *spiritual death* (Ephesians 2:1, 5), and *spiritual enmity against God* (Romans 8:7). Accordingly, man by nature is both *unable* and *unwilling* to turn away from sin and serve the Lord (Ephesians 2:1; Romans 3:11). This universal corruption affects every human being (Romans 3:12), with the one obvious exception of Christ. Yes, even Mary, the mother of Jesus, contrary to Romanist dogma, was indeed a sinner who also confessed her own unworthiness and need for a Savior, as the Evangelist Luke records in the first chapter of his Gospel (vv. 47–48). The product of this *original sin* is all manner of *actual sins*—violations of God's holy Law in our thoughts, desires, words, and deeds (Matthew 15:18–20). All of us are by nature totally corrupt and depraved before God. Therefore, since we are unable to fulfill the legislative demands of God's Law and live in righteousness and true holiness, Christ's *active obedience* was necessary for our redemption, to fill the void of unrighteousness caused by our *original sin*, as well as by our *actual sins* of commission and omission, and to render our account with God satisfactory to Him.

Now the holiness bodies (groups such as the Methodists, the Church of the Nazarene, certain Pentecostal groups, and others) argue on the basis of their false interpretation of I John 3:9 that, although all men *by nature* are sinful, yet once a person becomes a Christian, he no longer sins. Those who believe that they are capable of keeping God's Commandments for themselves see no importance in the active obedience of Jesus Christ and, therefore, despise this precious doctrine of the Gospel. But lest anyone think that, when the Bible describes the universality of sin in such clear terms as: "*There is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good and sinneth not*" (Ecclesiastes 7:20), this is only a description of *unbelievers*, the Apostle John declares in his first epistle: "*If we [we who say that we are Christians] say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*" (1:8). Though it is true that, when we were brought to faith, the Holy Ghost created a new man in us that does not sin at all but, as the partial renewal of God's image, is "*created in righteousness and true holiness*" (Ephesians 4:24), yet we still have the sinful flesh as well, which continuously corrupts all our works, so that even "*all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags*" (Isaiah 64:6) when judged according to God's justice. It should certainly not be difficult for us Christians to see our sins if we honestly evaluate our lives in the clear mirror of God's holy Law (Romans 7:10ff). But sadly the holiness bodies, like the Pharisees of Jesus' day, take only a very superficial view of the Law. It is, therefore, crucial that we always remember the fact that God requires perfection *even in all of our thoughts*; and, remembering this, we must all confess that we have broken every one of the Lord's Commandments. In His "Sermon on the Mount," Jesus emphasized the breaking of the Fifth and Sixth Commandments, saying: "*Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment. But I say unto you that whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment; and whosoever shall say to his brother, 'Raca,' shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, 'Thou fool,' shall be in danger of hell fire. ... Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not commit adultery. But I say unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart*" (Matthew 5:21–22, 27–28).

Thus, recognizing from Jesus' own exposition of the Commandments that not only the coarsest outbursts of sin are violations of God's Law, we may also say that, concerning the *First*

Commandment, though we may never have physically bowed down to an idol of stone, yet we daily let worldly concerns and fleshly desires supplant the fear, love, and trust in the Lord that should always hold the highest place in our heart (Genesis 39:9; Matthew 22:37; Proverbs 3:5). Concerning the *Second Commandment*: Though we may be able to control our tongues to the extent that we do not exclaim the Lord God's name in vain when we see something shocking or amazing, yet we are so often guilty of taking His name in vain when we pray or sing praises to Him without even thinking about the words that we are addressing to the Lord; nor do we always use His name properly as we should—calling upon Him for help in every need, thanking Him for all the blessings that He so graciously and abundantly showers upon us, and speaking of Him to others (Psalm 50:15; 118:1; Acts 4:20). Concerning the *Third Commandment*: Though we may be consistent church-goers, yet how many of us have regular family devotions in our homes and set aside additional time for personal Bible study? And we must all plead guilty of not always gladly meditating upon the Word of God as thoroughly as we should; nor do we always share what we have learned from the Scriptures with others who could benefit from having the Law and Gospel properly applied to them (Luke 2:19; Matthew 6:33). Concerning the *Fourth Commandment*: Though we may never have cursed our parents or spit in their faces, yet resentment and rebellion against our parents and other authorities whom God has placed over us, such as our school teachers, employers, government officials, and pastors, are violations of God's *Fourth Commandment* (Ephesians 6:1-3; Colossians 3:20; Romans 13:1-2; Luke 10:16). Concerning the *Fifth Commandment*: Though we may not have killed anyone or inflicted bodily injury upon another person, yet all unjustified anger and hurtful words directed against our neighbor tend to shorten and embitter his life and thus are sins against this Commandment (Matthew 5:22; Ephesians 4:31; James 3:10). Concerning the *Sixth Commandment*: Though we may have never committed adultery or engaged in extra-marital sexual relations, yet we must confess that all unchaste, unclean, lustful thoughts, desires, words and deeds are sin (Matthew 5:28; II Timothy 2:22); and husbands who have not loved their wives perfectly as Christ loved His Church, and wives who have not always submitted themselves to their husbands in honor and love as the Church is subject unto Christ, sin against the *Sixth Commandment* by omission (Ephesians 5:24-25). Concerning the *Seventh Commandment*: Though we may not have committed armed robbery, yet when we set our affections on money and worldly things so that we act in the service of mammon instead of in the service of the Lord, we violate not only His *Seventh Commandment* but also the *First Commandment* (Matthew 6:24). Concerning the *Eighth Commandment*: Though we may never have been guilty of perjury, that is, of lying under oath, yet the telling of untruths in order to deceive or harm our neighbor, the twisting of the truth in order to cover our sins, the damaging of our neighbor's reputation with slander, and the giving of our ear to gossip are violations of this Commandment (Proverbs 19:5; Psalm 50:16-22), as well as not defending our neighbor when he is maligned (Proverbs 31:8-9). Concerning the *Ninth and Tenth Commandments*: Though we may not have allowed covetous feelings to show themselves in outwardly pursuing illegitimate acquisition of that which belongs to our neighbor, yet, when any of us falls prey to a sinful desire for that which is his, that desire itself is sin (Romans 7:7; Hebrews 13:5). And certainly many more sins could have been added to this list—sins that we Christians commit daily due to the weakness of our flesh. Not a single one of us can honestly claim to have kept God's Commandments perfectly as He requires (Romans 3:19; I John 1:8, 10).

Now there are those that would say: "So what? What's the big deal? I sin; you sin; *everybody* sins. Why be so concerned about pointing out the fact that a person has broken God's Commandments?" The reason why this really *is* a very important matter (even for those who do not acknowledge it to be so) is because "*the wages of sin is death*" (Romans 6:23)—both

temporal death and *eternal death*. The original sin in which we were conceived and born, even considered apart from the actual sins that it produces, still makes us worthy of God's wrath and punishment, as we read in Ephesians chapter two: "[We Christians] were **by nature** the children of **wrath**, even as others" (v. 3). Even that which man would regard as the smallest and least significant violation of God's Commandments makes the sinner worthy of the ultimate punishment of everlasting damnation in the fires of hell. We read in St. Paul's letter to the Galatians, chapter three, verse ten: "*As many as are of the works of the Law* [that is, as many as try to save themselves through the keeping of the Law] *are under the curse* [damnation]; *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.*" Because it is completely impossible for sinful mankind to fulfill the Law of the Lord perfectly as He requires, the Scriptures state: "*No man is justified* [or, counted righteous] *by the Law in the sight of God*" (Galatians 3:11); and the Psalmist prays to the Lord, saying: "*Enter not into judgment with Thy servant; for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified*" (143:2). And since, as the Scriptures clearly testify (Psalm 7:11; II Timothy 4:8), the Lord our God is a "*righteous Judge*," He cannot simply overlook or excuse violations of His Law. To do so would be to deny His *holiness* and His *justice*; and that would be completely impossible since God is also *faithful* and *unchangeable*. The Scriptures assure us that the Lord "*abideth faithful: He cannot deny Himself*" (II Timothy 2:13). Therefore, the Lord God must abide by what He has declared in His Law—*demanding perfection of us*. This is what may be referred to as God's *legislative justice*; and this justice must be satisfied if we are to be received favorably before the just Judge of all mankind.

Since we are completely incapable of satisfying His legislative justice (the righteousness that His Law demands), the Lord, in His great mercy and grace, decreed in eternity, even before the world was made, to send His only-begotten Son into the world as a true man to take our place under His Law and as our Substitute to fulfill it perfectly (Galatians 4:4–5). And this is precisely what He accomplished for us in His *active obedience*.

Part III: References to the Active Obedience of Christ in the Old and New Testaments

Yet as the Law must be fulfilled
or we must die despairing,
Christ came and hath God's anger stilled,
our human nature sharing.
He hath for us the Law obeyed
and thus the Father's vengeance stayed
which over us impended.

(T.L.H. 377, v. 5)

Long before the holy Son of God received His true human body and soul in the womb of the virgin Mary, the Lord had already taught His people in the Old Testament about the *active obedience* of Christ—both by symbols as well as by clear statements of prophecy. Though the various animal sacrifices commanded in the ceremonial laws more clearly foreshadowed the *passive obedience* of Christ, as bloody offerings for sin (Hebrews 9:22), there was also an important detail in these sacrifices that foreshadowed His *active obedience*. The animals used for the offerings (sheep, goats, or oxen) were to be *without blemish and spot*. "*Ye shall offer at your own will a male without blemish, of the beeves [oxen], of the sheep, or of the goats. But*

whatsoever hath a blemish, **that** shall ye **not** offer; for it shall **not** be acceptable for you. And whosoever offereth a sacrifice of peace offerings unto the Lord to accomplish his vow, or a freewill offering in beeves or sheep, it shall be **perfect** to be accepted; there shall be **no blemish** therein. Blind, or broken, or maimed, or having a wen [a running sore], or scurvy, or scabbed, ye shall **not** offer **these** unto the Lord, nor make an offering by fire of them upon the altar unto the Lord. Either a bullock or a lamb that hath any thing superfluous or lacking in his parts, that mayest thou offer for a freewill offering; but for a vow it shall **not** be accepted. Ye shall **not** offer unto the Lord that which is bruised, or crushed, or broken, or cut; neither shall ye make any offering thereof in your land” (Leviticus 22:19–24). It is clear from these verses that there was only one offering in which God permitted deformed animals to be offered, and that was for the kind of “*peace offering*” that was known as the “*freewill offering*.” Aside from that one exception, all animal offerings were to be without any blemish or disease; they were to be “*perfect*.” And not only were the animal sacrifices themselves to be free from blemish, but also the one performing the sacrifices (the priest) could not have any physical deformities (Leviticus 21:17–23). In addition to being *physically* free of blemishes and diseases, the priests also needed to be *spiritually* purified from their sins. For this reason the high-priest, on the Great Day of Atonement, needed to offer up a *separate* sacrifice first for his own sins (Leviticus 16:17, 24)—in order to be declared righteous for Christ’s sake—before the sacrifice for the people would be accepted. So also the requirement of physical perfection was clearly set forth in the case of the lambs that were used by the Jews in the Passover feast. The blood that was painted on the side and upper door posts for a token of safety against the tenth plague in Egypt (the death of the first-born) needed to be the blood of a lamb that was “*without blemish*” (Exodus 12:5).

All of these things were foreshadows of Christ’s *active obedience*. Now in the case of our Lord Jesus Christ, He was both the *holy High Priest* and the *holy offering* for the sins of the world. The writer to the Hebrews refers to this fact in chapter seven, verses 26–27, where we read: “*Such an High Priest became us [was ‘fitting’ or ‘necessary’ for us], who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins and then for the people’s; for this He did once, when He offered up Himself.*” So we see that, in the New Testament, Jesus is clearly set forth as the direct fulfillment of this Old Testament symbolism. When John the Baptist pointed Jesus out to his disciples, he identified Him as “*the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world*” (John 1:29). Remembering that the Old Testament required that the sacrificial and Passover lambs be *spotless*, we cannot limit this appellation as applying to Christ only on account of His *passive obedience* (His suffering and death); it clearly encompasses also His *active obedience* (His life of holiness). The Apostle Peter stresses this when he writes in his first epistle: “*Ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold from your vain conversation [way of life] received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot*” (1:18–19).

Additional Old Testament references to the fact that the Messiah would live a life of sinless perfection can be found in prophecies that give Him such titles as “*righteous Servant*” (Isaiah 53:11) and “*righteous Branch*” (Jeremiah 23:5). Of course, *TRUE righteousness* according to God’s Law is far different from the “*civic righteousness*” that even unbelievers are able to produce, which is merely an outward show of following the Law in external matters only. Therefore, in order for Jesus to be truly “*righteous*” before the Law of the Lord, His *heart* also needed to be completely holy—filled solely with perfect love for God and truly delighting to do all of His Commandments. And this is exactly the kind of righteousness that characterized our Savior Jesus Christ, as He says in prophecy in Psalm 40: “*Then said I, Lo, I come; in the*

volume of the Book it is written of Me, I delight to do Thy will, O My God; yea, Thy Law is within My heart” (vv. 7–8). The fact that this was the pre-incarnate Christ speaking through the Psalmist is clearly revealed by the Holy Ghost in the book of Hebrews, chapter ten, verses five through nine.

Jesus emphasized the fact that His *active obedience* was the work of fulfilling all the will and Law of God in our stead, as our Substitute, the work which His Father had given Him to do, as He told His disciples “*Think not that I am come to destroy the Law, or the Prophets; I am not come to destroy but to fulfill*” (Matthew 5:17); and again: “*As the Father gave Me commandment, even so I do*” (John 14:31). And though the Jews from that time down to the present day falsely accuse Him of all manner of wickedness, when Jesus challenged His enemies, saying: “*Which of you convinceth [Gk. convicteth] Me of sin?*” (John 8:46), not a single sin could be attributed to Him. At Jesus’ trial before the Sanhedrin, His enemies had to seek out men who were willing to perjure themselves in order to make it look as if Jesus had committed some sin (Mark 14:55); but God clearly exposed their lies for what they were (Mark 14:56, 59). In further refutation of that false testimony, the Holy Ghost has given us the real truth of the matter through the inspired testimony of various apostles. St. Paul writes in his second letter to the Corinthians that Christ “*knew no sin*” (5:21). The writer to the Hebrews states that Jesus “*was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin*” (4:15). In his first epistle, Peter testifies that Jesus “*did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth*” (2:22). And the Apostle John writes in his first epistle that “*in Him [Christ] is no sin*” (I John 3:5). It is also worthwhile noting that His perfect keeping of the Law can be observed in all of Christ’s words and deeds, from childhood up, as these have been recorded for our learning and edification in the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

Part IV: The Comfort that Christ’s Active Obedience Gives Us

Let me not doubt, but trust in Thee;
 Thy Word cannot be broken.
 Thy call rings out, “Come unto Me!”
 No falsehood hast Thou spoken.
 Baptized into Thy precious name,
 my faith cannot be put to shame;
 and I shall never perish.

(T.L.H. 377, v. 7)

But how exactly does the fact that Christ kept the Law of God perfectly benefit *us* who have violated His Law countless times and are, therefore, worthy of the full extent of His wrath? As was mentioned briefly in the first part of this essay, the *active obedience* of Christ benefits *us* because of the *vicarious* (or *substitutionary*) nature of His entire work of redemption. Just as His suffering and death (His *passive obedience*) was carried out in our behalf *as our Substitute* (Isaiah 53:4–5), so also His perfect fulfilling of the Law was done *as our Substitute* (Romans 5:18–19). Just as for the sake of Christ’s *vicarious passive obedience* God graciously declares *us* to be free from the punishment of our sins (since His Son suffered it in our place), so also for the sake of Christ’s *vicarious active obedience* God graciously declares *us* not only to be *free from* all of our sinful imperfections but to be truly *righteous*—counted as if *we* had actually kept the Law of the Lord perfectly in all of our thoughts, desires, words, and deeds (since this is what

Christ did in our place). How fitting, then, that in the Old Testament the pre-incarnate Christ is given the “name” of “*the Lord* [Heb. *Jehovah*] **our righteousness**” (Jeremiah 23:6). The blessed result of Christ’s *active obedience* includes both the fact that all of our transgressions have been removed from our charge—having been placed on Christ (Isaiah 53:6)—and the fact that the righteousness of Christ’s perfect life has been imputed to us. This work of God’s grace—our sinfulness being charged to the righteous Christ, and His righteousness being credited to us sinners—is described by the Apostle Paul as follows: “*He* [God the Father] *hath made Him* [Christ] *to be sin for us, who* [Christ] *knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him*” (II Corinthians 5:21).

The Scriptures use the term “*justification*” to describe the way that the Lord regards and declares sinners to be righteous for Jesus’ sake—forgiving them all their sins. Justification is a “*forensic*” imputation of righteous (as a judge in a court of law would pronounce a verdict of innocence upon a guilty person); justification is *not* what is sometimes described as a “*medical*” infusion of righteousness (which would enable the ungodly to *earn* righteousness by righteousness of living). Even though we have been completely justified by faith, we still commit sins in our lives; but the glorious result of Christ’s work of redemption is that we sinful human beings are declared by the divine Judge to be righteous and holy (saints) for the Savior’s sake (Colossians 1:22). Now while it is certainly right and proper to say that Christ purchased our justification through His suffering and death—His *passive obedience* (Isaiah 53:4–5; Romans 5:10; Hebrews 10:14,18; I John 1:7)—we must not minimize the importance of His *active obedience* in securing our justification. Romans 5:18–19 refers specifically to Jesus’ perfect obedience to God’s Law as bringing about justification (forgiveness, imputed righteousness) for all mankind. “*By the offence of one* [namely, Adam’s violation of God’s prohibition] *judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of One* [Christ’s sinlessness] *the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man’s disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of One shall many be made righteous.*” This passage clearly connects, as cause and effect, the active obedience of Christ with the forgiveness of all mankind (*objective justification*).

It is for the sake of Jesus’ perfect fulfilling of God’s Law as our Substitute that we are declared righteous—regarded by the Lord as if *we* have perfectly kept His Law. And while this gracious non-imputation of guilt and imputation of righteousness is for all sinners in the whole world (II Corinthians 5:19), its full benefit is enjoyed only by those who *receive* the forgiveness of sins *by faith* in the Gospel promises. This, of course, was true also in the Old Testament, when the believers’ faith was directed ahead to the fulfillment of the Messianic prophecies. St. Paul emphasizes this very thing in chapters three and four of his epistle to the Romans, where we find such verses as: “*But now the righteousness of God without the Law is manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe. ...Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. ...If Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness. ...To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin*” (3:21–22, 24; 4:2–3, 5–8). What Paul here calls “*the righteousness of God*” is the righteousness that God imputes to us sinful creatures; it is the righteousness that was earned for us by Christ’s substitutionary life of righteousness in satisfaction of God’s

legislative justice in our behalf.

Though we have so often, to our great shame, transgressed the holy Law of the Lord, yet the Gospel assures us that all of our sins and iniquities have been forgiven for Jesus' sake, who kept the Law perfectly for us. So then, if you are troubled in your mind because you know that you have broken the *First Commandment* countless times by not always putting the Lord first in your heart and life, and you truly repent of that sin of idolatry, take comfort in the knowledge that Christ kept that Commandment perfectly in your stead and, also in your stead, suffered the penalty for your violations. If your conscience bothers you because you know that you have broken the *Second Commandment* time and time again by not always praying, praising, and giving thanks to the Lord as you should, and in true contrition your broken heart cries out for God's mercy, then take comfort knowing that Christ did all these things as your Substitute and suffered the punishment that you deserve according to God's justice. If you are grieved because you know that you have broken the *Third Commandment* by not always listening attentively with the greatest respect when the Word of God is preached and taught to you, or because you have been negligent in reading and studying the Scriptures, and you are truly penitent in your heart, then be comforted by the fact that your Lord Jesus kept the Third Commandment perfectly for you and fully atoned for your transgressions. If you truly repent for having violated the *Fourth Commandment* by not always honoring and gladly serving and obeying your parents and other superiors in love, then be of good cheer because Jesus did this perfectly on your behalf and propitiated the anger of God which you deserve. If you are terrified at the thought of God punishing you for your sins against the *Fifth Commandment* and truly repent of not always having genuine love for those who have hurt you and in not doing all that you can to help your neighbor, even your enemy, in every bodily need, then let the fact that Christ vicariously maintained perfect love for all people, even His most bitter enemies, and loved both you and them unto death, even the death of the cross, remove all fear from your heart. If you are deeply ashamed because you have not always kept your heart pure from sinful sexual desires and have not always avoided opportunities for unchasteness in violation of the *Sixth Commandment*, and if you are truly penitent for doing such great wickedness and sinning against God, then let your conscience be relieved in the knowledge that Jesus led a chaste and decent life in all of His thoughts, desires, words, and deeds in your place and bore in His own sinless soul and body the wages of your sins. If you sincerely repent of having sinned against the *Seventh Commandment* by succumbing to envy and not always rejoicing when you have seen your neighbor prosper, then be gladdened by the fact that Jesus, as your Substitute, kept the Seventh Commandment perfectly and gave His life a ransom for your sins. If you are humbly penitent for not always having put the best construction on your neighbor's actions, nor defended your neighbor against slanderous gossip, then be relieved by the fact that Christ's perfect fulfilling of the *Eighth Commandment* earned you perfect righteousness before God and that His perfect suffering and death canceled all your guilt in this area. If you are sorrowfully penitent for your countless trespasses against God's *Ninth* and *Tenth Commandments*, then let the Gospel comfort you, knowing that your Lord and Savior Jesus Christ kept His heart completely pure from all covetousness, that His perfect holiness is imputed to you, and that His suffering and death has cleared your guilt before your just and holy God.

Part V: The Active Obedience of Christ Applied in Our Lives of Sanctification

Faith clings to Jesus' cross alone
and rests in Him unceasing;
and by its fruits true faith is known,
with love and hope increasing.

Yet faith alone doth justify;
works serve thy neighbor and supply
the proof that faith is living.

(*T.L.H.* 377, v. 9)

It would, however, be a terrible abuse of God's grace in Christ Jesus to take the blessed comfort offered in the Gospel as a license to sin—as if Christ's perfect fulfilling of the Law makes it possible for us to transgress His Commandments willfully and with impunity. A true Christian, according to his new man of faith, does not want to break any of God's Commandments. The Apostle Paul makes it very clear that even though he does not keep the Law of God perfectly in his life (on account of the constant influence of his sinful flesh), it is still his on-going desire as a Christian to serve the Lord perfectly according to His Commandments. He declares: "*What I would [that is, 'what I want to do'], that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. ...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. ...For I delight in the Law of God after the inward man; but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members*" (Romans 7:15, 18–19, 22–23). If a person claims to be a Christian, but also admits that he *does not want* to follow what he knows to be a command of the Lord, then that individual is certainly *not* a Christian. The Apostle John writes in his first epistle: "*He that saith, I know Him, and keepeth not His Commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him*" (2:4). A true believing child of God is moved by God's love for him in Christ Jesus to love the Lord in return, and to show this love by cheerfully following His Commandments. Again, in John's first epistle we read: "*We love Him because He first loved us. ...For this is the love of God, that we keep His Commandments; and His Commandments are not grievous*" (4:19, 5:3).

The Bible uses the term "*sanctification*" (in its narrower sense) to describe the Christian's life of good works according to God's Commandments (I Thessalonians 4:1–3). In true Christians, God continuously works the sincere desire to follow His Law and please Him in all of their thoughts, words, and actions out of loving gratitude for all that Christ has done to save them from their sins (Philippians 2:13). The *active obedience* of Christ, which indispensably belongs to His redemptive work) is, therefore, a motivating factor that urges and impels the Christian daily to "*put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts*" and to "*put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness*" (Ephesians 4:22, 24). But how are we to know whether a particular work is good and well-pleasing before God (proceeding from our new man), or if it is an abominable sin in His sight (proceeding from our sinful flesh)? Since we are not able to annihilate the old man or nullify its power to deceive and corrupt our heart, we must not look to our own thoughts and feelings in order to determine what is morally right or wrong. The Prophet Jeremiah writes: "*The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; who can know it?*" (17:9; see also Romans 8:7). We should be very thankful, therefore, that the Lord has recorded His Law for us on the pages of Holy Scripture; and in this Law, serving as a *rule* for our lives, we are clearly guided and taught precisely what is truly good and what is truly evil.

Not only does Holy Scripture instruct us in God's Law through the clear declarations of what He forbids and what He requires of us, but it also supplements this instruction with numerous historical accounts that show either sinful behavior as examples that should not be followed, or

the Godly behavior of those whose examples we should strive to follow in our own lives. In our Catechism's thorough treatment of the Ten Commandments, in addition to the numbered proof passages, we are also given many "Bible Narratives," which should not be overlooked. Concerning various *negative* examples taken from the behavior of the Children of Israel in the wilderness, St. Paul writes to the Corinthians: "*With many of them [the Israelites] God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand. Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents. Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer. Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples; and they are written for our admonition*" (I Corinthians 10:5–11).

A collection of *positive* examples worth emulating, taken from the lives of various Old Testament believers, can be found in Hebrews chapter 11. But the one Man who left us the perfect example of Godliness is Jesus Christ Himself. Accordingly, we see that the *active obedience* of Christ, His perfect keeping of the Law, in addition to being a Gospel motivation for us to conform our lives in love to His Commandments, also provides us with a perfect *model* after which we should pattern *our* obedience. In this regard, the life of Jesus is in a special category all by itself. When considering the Biblical accounts of the lives of the saints, we must not forget that they, like all people since the fall of Adam, were sinners. For this reason, we must not think that just because it is recorded in the Scriptures that one of the heroes of the faith did a certain thing, that it must have been a good and righteous thing that he or she did, simply based on the fact that he was such a strong believer. On the contrary, if a certain thought, word, or deed can be shown to be a clear violation of God's Law, then it is, in fact, a sin, no matter which of the saints did it, because "*sin is the transgression of the Law*" (I John 3:4). Conversely, if the Scriptures record that God was well-pleased by what the person did, then *that* definitely was not a sin. But when considering the example that *Christ* left us, we do not need to evaluate His words and actions in the light of God's Law in order to determine whether they were morally good or not (even though such a comparison would always validate His righteousness), because we know *a priori* (without the need of such examination), based on the sure testimony of God's Word, that everything Jesus did was completely holy and sinless.

Consider this example: God tells us in His Law that we are to obey the government (Romans 13:1–5); but He also makes it clear that there are times when we should *not* obey the government, namely, when it requires us to do that which is sinful or forbids us to do that which is good (Acts 5:29). Now in His instruction concerning frivolous oaths, Jesus, our God and Lord, makes the statement: "*Swear not at all*" (Matthew 5:34). This is a command of God's Law. So when considering how the judicial branch of the government requires witnesses to *swear* to tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, how do we know if this is a time to obey the government, or a time to disobey the government? Would it be frivolous swearing and therefore a sin to allow the government to place us under oath? No, it would not be a sin; and we can demonstrate this by the very fact that *Jesus allowed the Jewish court of the Sanhedrin to place Him under oath* (Matthew 26:63–64). Since the Bible clearly states that Jesus never sinned, it must be accepted that His testimony under oath at the behest of the high-priest was not a sinful oath. Therefore, it is not a sin for *us* to take an oath in court; but it would be a sin if we refused to comply with the government's demands that we swear to tell the truth (I Peter 2:13–14).

From the Gospels of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, which record many historical details relating to Jesus' active obedience, we can find a great deal of examples of His flawless adherence to the Law that should also be followed by us in our lives out of love for Him. Jesus' humble submission to His parents (Luke 2:51) is a model for all Christian children to remember and emulate. His example of fervent prayer coupled with His desire for the will of His heavenly Father to be done in all things (Matthew 26:39, 42) shows us how we also should bring our petitions before the Lord in the hour of need. The way that Jesus prayed on behalf of those who crucified Him (Luke 23:34)—desiring that they would be brought to repentance and be saved from their sins—reminds us not to neglect praying for those who spitefully use us and persecute us (Matthew 5:44). Throughout His public ministry, Christ, who, because He is God, was truly worthy of being humbly served by sinful mankind, had nevertheless so humbled Himself that He chose instead to serve *us* both in His active and passive obedience; and He taught His disciples to follow this example that He gave them, saying: *“Whosoever will be great among you shall be your minister [servant], and whosoever of you will be the chiefest shall be servant of all. For even the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto [served], but to minister [serve], and to give His life a ransom for many”* (Mark 10:43–45). Jesus furthermore stressed the fact that He wants us to learn from and follow His consistent example of humble and loving service, when He told the disciples after He had washed their feet: *“Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. **For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.** ...A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; **as I have loved you, that ye also love one another”*** (John 13:13–15, 34). Not that the divine command to love our neighbor as ourselves was newly introduced by Christ (since it can be found also in Leviticus 19:18); but the “newness” of this commandment was that we should follow the perfect example of our Savior in doing so.

Accordingly, the apostles were able to use the *active obedience* of Christ as a tool in teaching the people about true sanctification. In addition to setting forth the specific commands and prohibitions of the Lord, they could also direct their readers to remember the absolutely perfect example left by Christ. Concerning patience in suffering injustice without retaliation, Peter writes: *“Christ also suffered for us, **leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps; who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth; who, when He was reviled, reviled not again; when He suffered, He threatened not but committed Himself to Him that judgeth righteously”*** (I Peter 2:21–23). Concerning our extension of forgiveness to those who have sinned against us, St. Paul writes to the Colossians: *“Forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; **even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye”*** (3:13; some examples: Mark 2:5; Luke 7:48). Concerning true humility and the service of our neighbor in preference to the service of our own wants, Paul writes to the Philippians: *“Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory, but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others. **Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross”*** (2:3–8). Concerning the unselfish love that husbands are to show to their wives, St. Paul writes to the Ephesians: *“Husbands, love your wives, **even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it”***(5:25). And concerning the self-sacrificing love that God requires *all of us* to have toward our fellow human beings, we read: *“Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, **as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savor”***

(Ephesians 5:1–2).

A further point to consider in applying the *active obedience* of Christ to our lives of sanctification is the fact that without Christ's substitutionary keeping of God's Law none of our works could possibly be pleasing to the Lord. Without the righteousness of Christ having been imputed to us, all of our own best works are nothing but "*filthy rags*" in His holy sight (Isaiah 64:6). But the Bible tells us that in and through the saving work of Jesus Christ, God declares us to be free from every taint of sin, and accepts our works of loving obedience as "*righteousness*" (Philippians 1:11). This is the only way that our imperfect following of His Commandments can be acceptable before the Lord, since by faith in Christ our imperfections are completely covered under the robe of His righteousness. Describing us Christians as being living stones in the spiritual temple of the Lord, St. Peter tells us in his first epistle: "*Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ*" (I Peter 2:5). So then with reference to our life of good works, the *active obedience* of Christ supplies us with the *motivation* and *power* to do good, the perfect *example* of what is morally good, as well as the *purifying righteousness* by which our works are accepted by God as being truly good (Ephesians 2:10) through the substitutionary satisfaction of His legislative justice.

If we keep these things in mind, we will certainly not minimize the importance of Christ's vicarious *active obedience* as this relates to our eternal salvation and to our Christian life here on earth. Without His perfect righteousness having been imputed to us as our very own, we would still be obligated to keep the Law of God perfectly in all of our thoughts, desires, words, and deeds in order to be saved (which obligation we sinful creatures would never be able to fulfill). So may God the Holy Ghost stir our heart and soul through the study of this glorious doctrine of His grace, causing us through it to grow all the more appreciative of Christ's work of fulfilling the divine Law flawlessly in our stead, whereby we are able to stand before the Lord clothed in His perfect righteousness, and receive His boundless grace, mercy, and peace here in time and hereafter in eternity.

Soli Deo gloria!

MINUTES OF THE 56th ANNUAL CONVENTION
of the
CONCORDIA LUTHERAN CONFERENCE

June 22, 23, and 24, 2007

+ + +

F R I D A Y, J U N E 2 2

THE MORNING SESSION

THE OPENING SERVICE:

The 56th Annual Convention, held at Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, Oak Forest, Illinois officially began at 9:30 a.m. with a Divine Worship Service of Convocation in which the local pastor, the Rev. David T. Mensing, served as liturgist, and the Conference President, the Rev. Edward J. Worley, delivered the keynote sermon. He chose as his text **Jeremiah 23:5-6**, taking as his theme: ***The Lord, Our Righteousness***, and dividing it into two parts, namely, **I.** Jesus Christ is the Gift of the Father, and **II.** Jesus Christ is the Lord, our Righteousness for salvation.

Following the service, the first session of the convention was called to order by the President at 11:10 a.m. according to the customary usages with an exhortation and a prayer.

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. Tom Fedor (Trinity)
Mr. Dan Cooper (St. Mark's) |
| B. Committee on Registration and Excuses: | Pastor Paul E. Bloedel, Chairman
Mr. Lee Roller (St. Luke's)
Mr. Martin Hermann (Good Shepherd) |
| C. Committee on Nominations and Elections: | Pastor Robert J. Lietz, Chairman
Mr. Karl P. Mensing (Peace)
Mr. Matt Ellis (St. John's) |
| D. Resolutions Committee: | Pastor David T. Mensing, Chairman
Mr. Raymond Kusumi (St. Luke's)
Mr. John Breinig* (Trinity) |

*assisted by John Swanson

INITIAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION AND EXCUSES:

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

From **FAITH, Jackson**: No delegates were present. — 0 votes.

From **GOOD SHEPHERD, Tucson:** Rev. David G. Redlin, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Martin Hermann, Lay Delegate; no Alternates — 3 votes.

From **PEACE, Oak Forest:** Rev. David T. Mensing, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Jason A. Mabe and Mr. Karl P. Mensing, Lay Delegates; Mr. Phillip R. Martin and Mr. David J. Mensing, Alternates — 3 votes.

From **ST. JOHN'S, Lebanon:** No Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Bill Schrader and Mr. Matthew Ellis, Lay Delegates; Mr. Paul Natterer and Mr. Ted Fitzwater, Alternates — 2 votes.

From **ST. LUKE'S, Seattle:** Rev. Edward J. Worley, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Raymond Kusumi and Mr. Lee Roller, Lay Delegates; Mr. Stephen Richter and Mr. Dale Ellis, Alternates — 3 votes.

From **ST. MARK'S, Sauk Village:** Rev. Paul E. Bloedel, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Dan Cooper and Mr. Erik Roe, Lay Delegates; no alternates — 3 votes.

From **TRINITY, Oak Park:** Rev. Robert J. Lietz, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. John Breinig and Mr. Tom Fedor, Lay Delegates; Mr. John Swanson, Alternate — 3 votes

Total number of votes to be cast: **17**. Total attendance at the opening service: **117**. The offering received to benefit the General Conference Treasury was **\$ 1,282.00**. The committee also read a letter of excuse for reasons of ill health and old age infirmity from Pastor M. L. Natterer of Lebanon, Oregon. No excuses had been received for other absent delegates. —It was moved and seconded that the Committee's initial report be adopted, that Pastor Natterer be recognized as excused, and that all delegations be seated as indicated in the report. This motion was unanimously carried.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT:

In reviewing the Conference fiscal year 2006-2007, President Worley first noted that, according to Scripture, our Conference is not a church and not ordained of God but is, according to our *Constitution*, Article III, a human organization that exists for the carrying out of certain Godpleasing objects, which President Worley briefly enumerated. He also briefly reviewed the purposes of his office as Conference President. The bulk of his report then focused on two acts of sinful separatism and defection from our fellowship on the part of "gainsayers that have arisen in our very midst, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves" (See Acts 20:30). The first was the sudden and completely unexpected resignation from our Conference of Pastor Mark W. Dierking in October, 2006, followed shortly thereafter by the severance also of his congregation. [This was reported on in considerable detail in the November-December issue of *The Concordia Lutheran*.] At the Fall Pastoral Conference in October everything possible was done to make sure of unanimity among all our pastors in our Scriptural position concerning the sinful character of modern worldly social dancing. The pastors went to the extraordinary length of a rising vote with a solemn vow of reaffirmation, including the phrase "with no mental reservation" to obviate any "escape-clause thinking," as President Worley put it in his report. Nevertheless, a mere two weeks later, Pastor Mahan and the voters of Faith, Jackson, sent to all the pastors and congregations of the Conference a virtual litany of false charges and slanderous statements containing no Scriptural support and no factual evidence cited from our published position. Thus began a battle for the truth that occupied more than seven

months leading up to the present convention. President Worley summarized the diligent efforts he and others had made in the repeated admonition of Pastor Mahan and his congregation, all of which were rejected out-of-hand and most of which received virtually no response. Instead the President and the other officers, including the entire Board of Directors, “received only a repetition of baseless and groundless charges and an expansion of factual distortion and outright lies and slanders. It is too sad for words,” Pastor Worley stated. Referring the delegates to the forthcoming recommendation of the Board of Directors, he closed his report with the prayer “that God would graciously convert the hearts of those who have recently showed themselves to be of a different spirit in their carnal approach to the Scriptures — that He would bring them to a clear knowledge of their errors, humble repentance of their sins, and confession of the same, to the end that they might be restored as beloved brethren in our midst.” —It was moved and seconded to accept this report subject to the usual review. The motion was unanimously carried, and the Vice President appointed as the **Committee to Review the President’s Report:** Pastor Paul E. Bloedel and Mr. Jason Mabe.

THE CONVENTION AGENDA:

The President then laid before the Convention for its consideration the official AGENDA. It was moved and seconded to adopt the Agenda as printed. 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 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 12:03 p. m. for the noon meal.

+ + +

THE AFTERNOON SESSION

The afternoon session was opened at 1:18 p.m. with a brief devotion conducted by Pastor Paul E. Bloedel. Hymn 378 was sung, followed by the reading of Philippians 3:7-9, and a prayer. The devotion concluded with the singing of Hymn 380 and the Apostolic Benediction.

RECOMMENDATION FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

This year there was only one recommendation laid before the Convention by the Board of Directors, to wit:

WHEREAS the Rev. Ross A. Mahan, at our Fall Pastoral Conference, October, 2006, expressed by his rising vote complete agreement with our Conference in the matter of modern worldly social dancing and swore a solemn oath before God that he had done so without any mental reservation; but

WHEREAS Faith Ev. Lutheran Church, Jackson, Michigan, and its pastor, the Rev.

Ross A. Mahan, in a letter dated November 9, 2006, only two weeks later, expressed their variance from our Scriptural position on the principles of the Sixth Commandment and rejected our Scriptural application of those principles to lustful, modern, worldly social dancing common in our day; and

WHEREAS in this letter they bore open slander against our Conference, accusing it, without proof from Scripture or from fact, of legalism, fanaticism, works righteousness, the tyrannical binding of consciences apart from the Word of God, the perversion of Biblical sanctification, distraction from the Church's true mission in the world, misguided zeal, and divisiveness, not one of which has been retracted by them to this day; and

WHEREAS, contrary to the *Constitution* of our Conference, they preferred these charges and objections not through the Conference President (Article VI, 3) but by means of direct circularization of the Conference congregations; and

WHEREAS they also expressed their variance, objections, and charges *outside* the Conference, sending them to persons not of our fellowship and publishing them by means of the Internet on the website of the Wisconsin Ev. Lutheran Synod; and

WHEREAS Pastor Mahan himself invaded at least one sovereign flock of our Conference, sending his material to and courting the support of a layman of another congregation without his pastor's knowledge and consent; and

WHEREAS this controversy continued for over seven months in spite of urgent admonition on the part of the Conference President, the Vice President, the Secretary, and the entire Board of Directors; and

WHEREAS at the Summer Pastoral Conference, held in Oak Forest, Illinois, June 19-20, 2007, Pastor Mahan was repeatedly shown from Scripture the correct exegesis and application of the passages involved—all to no avail— thus manifesting his persistence in error and his refusal to be corrected even by the clear words of Holy Scripture; and

WHEREAS, at that meeting, Pastor Mahan also bore open false witness against the pastors of the Conference in spite of frequent correction from the undisputed written record and from properly witnessed testimony; and

WHEREAS, in the course of our discussions with him at our Pastoral Conference, Pastor Mahan manifested before many witnesses that his variance from our Scriptural position was not limited to our application of Proverbs 5:20 to modern social dancing, as he repeatedly claimed, but that he also disagreed with us on the doctrine of fellowship, on the need to apply all the Ten Commandments to the lives of his people, on the proper distinction between Law and Gospel, on what constitutes a heretic according to Scripture, on the difference between objective truth and his own personal opinion, on the basic principles of Biblical hermeneutics, and on the nature of orthodox practice as inseparably connected to orthodoxy in doctrine; and

WHEREAS he ultimately cut off all further efforts to gain him from his persistent error and refused to hear and to heed the Word of God by leaving the Pastoral

Conference, thus further demonstrating the breach of fellowship which he had created and in which he entrenched himself contrary to Holy Scripture; and

WHEREAS Pastor Mahan and his congregation have made it abundantly clear, both by their words and by their actions, that they have no intention of continuing with us (I John 2:19) in the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:3) according to the Scriptural standard of fellowship (I Corinthians 1:10), and therefore that they have in fact already severed fellowship with us and terminated their own membership, thus obviating any necessity for the Conference to expel them.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Concordia Lutheran Conference in convention assembled regretfully recognize the breach of fellowship created and persisted in contrary to Scripture by Faith Ev. Lutheran Church, Jackson, Michigan, and by its pastor, the Rev. Ross A. Mahan, and that we recognize their unilateral termination of their own membership in our Conference under Article VII of our *Constitution*, inasmuch as they have rejected the conditions of membership and fellowship in our church body (Article IV, 1).

(The above wording was unanimously adopted by the Board of Directors on June 21, 2007, as its recommendation to the 56th Annual Convention.)

The motion was made and seconded to adopt the recommendation as read, and the recommendation was adopted unanimously by a rising vote.

INITIAL REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE:

The initial report concerned, first of all, the past fiscal year, as Mr. Robert G. Bloedel, the Conference Treasurer, presented the *Financial Report* for fiscal year 2006-2007. The report showed a beginning cash balance of \$60,095.40 in the General Fund plus total receipts of \$34,848.94, yielding total cash available of \$94,944.34. Expenditures totaled \$28,926.94, leaving an ending cash balance as of May 31, 2007 of \$66,017.40. The report also showed an increase in the Student Aid Fund from \$33,101.03 at the beginning of the fiscal year to an ending balance of \$37,986.89 on its closing date, May 31, 2007. It was then moved and seconded to receive, subject to audit, the *Financial Report* of the Treasurer concerning the past fiscal year, and to thank him for his faithful work on behalf of our Conference. This motion was carried.

The Treasurer then distributed the Finance Committee's *Budget Worksheet* for the new fiscal year, June 1, 2007 through May 31, 2008. It showed a beginning cash balance of \$66,017.40 and anticipated receipts (including the pledges of our congregations) of \$25,282.00, for total cash available of \$91,299.40 in the General Fund. Projected budgetary expenditures totaled \$43,225.00 divided among the following items: *Scriptural Publications* — \$3,500.00; Ekaterinburg Subsidy — \$ 9,600.00; Ekaterinburg Facilities Rental Subsidy — \$2,400.00; Archival Subsidy — \$500.00; Convention Expense — \$1,000.00; Telephone Expense — \$500.00; General Travel Expense — \$5,000.00; Nigeria Travel Expense — \$6,000.00; Seminary Instructor's Salary — \$4,725.00; Emergency Grant for Medical Needs of Pastor Fyneface — \$5,000.00; Nigerian Communications Package — \$3,000.00; and Miscellaneous Expense — \$2,000.00. 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 EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:

Pastor Mensing, chairman of the **Editorial Committee** and Editor of the *C. L.*, briefly reviewed the content of our official organ, the *Concordia Lutheran*. As the editor of the *CL* this year, he had deliberately endeavored to maintain from issue to issue a consistent balance between articles of a doctrinal and of a practical nature, occasionally treated topics of historical importance, and even included newsworthy items from our congregations stateside and from our brethren abroad. He also tried to represent in the subject matter and doctrinal content the various festivals and themes of the church year. Adherence to publication dates and concern for timely appearance were occasionally thwarted by unusual local conditions, either on the part of the writers or on the part of the editor and *Scriptural Publications*; but these instances were rare. Pastor Mensing expressed his thanks to the readers for their forbearance with lapses in timeliness, to the pastors for their contributions, to Pastor Lietz, the Book-and-Tract Editor and his “second pair of eyes,” as well as to Jason Mabe, the lay member of the Editorial Committee, and to Phillip Martin, Print Shop Manager of *Scriptural Publications* for their combined efforts toward making and keeping our *Concordia Lutheran*, under the Lord’s gracious blessing, the witnessing vehicle of our beloved Conference to the light of His precious Word (Psalm 43:3) and to the doctrine which is according to Godliness (I Timothy 6:3). —It was moved and seconded to adopt the report, and the motion was unanimously carried.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS:

Pastor Edward J. Worley, the acting chairman of the **Committee on Missions** following the necessary suspension of Pastor Mahan from that office in January, briefly reviewed in particular the mission endeavors of the Conference abroad. Pastor Schurganoff in Russia has been sending in regular monthly reports to the Committee concerning his daily activities and especially the regular and consistent use of the Means of Grace within his congregation as he carries out his Divine Call as its shepherd. The Committee is also encouraging Pastor Schurganoff to begin systematic stewardship training of his people to the end that they assume, to whatever extent is possible, a greater share of his support. In the meantime the Committee recommended to the convention a cost of living increase in his salary subsidy, which has not been adjusted since 2003. Concerning the brethren in Nigeria, the situation there was still too unsettled to permit our planned visit there this past January; but we will monitor conditions as best we can and seek out the most reasonable opportunity to carry out that mission. In the meantime, we have become aware of a serious medical condition with Pastor Fyneface, and the Committee recommended to the convention that we fly him here for diagnosis and possible treatment. It also recommended that we fund the purchase of a reliable satellite phone system for the brethren in Nigeria to enable them to communicate better both with one another and with their brethren stateside, including the exchange of documents by e-mail or FAX.

A brief recess was observed at 4:00 p.m. for refreshment, with the understanding that we would take up the recommendations of the Committee on Missions upon reconvening.

At 4:25 we reconvened to hear again and to act upon the recommendations of the Committee on Missions.

- It was moved and seconded that we budget up to \$ 5,000.00 for the purpose of bringing Pastor Fyneface here for the evaluation and possible treatment of the medical condition affecting his throat. Carried unanimously.

- It was moved and seconded that we authorize a grant of \$ 3,000.00 for the purchase of a satellite phone system and a low-end laptop computer as proposed to facilitate increased and more reliable communication between us and our Nigerian brethren. The motion was unanimously carried.
- It was then moved and seconded that we increase our subsidy of Pastor Schurganoff by \$ 200.00 per month to reflect the 40% increase of the cost of living in Russia as ascertained by us via the Internet. This motion was carried.

It was moved and seconded to receive the report of the Committee on Missions; and the motion was carried.

REPORT OF THE PUBLISHING HOUSE BOARD OF CONTROL:

Pastor Lietz, the chairman, summarized the activities of the publishing arm of our Conference. His report touched on the success achieved by God's grace in providing orthodox and edifying material in print for the consumption of our people—from the *C. L.*, to our Conference Website, to tracts and other materials, to the publication of several book-length works, both hardbound and paperback editions, to the anticipated re-printing of the *Advanced Bible History*, of three devotional books to encourage the good practice of family devotions in our Christian homes, and possibly also a public domain edition of the *Lutheran Book of Prayer*. The chairman then acknowledged with special thanks the work of the Business Manager, David J. Mensing, and of the Print Shop Manager, Phillip R. Martin, as well as the ongoing subsidy of the publishing house by the churches of our fellowship and the hosting of its physical facilities by Peace Congregation at no cost to the Conference. Pastor Lietz also encouraged our people to consider *Scriptural Publications* in their estate planning as a demonstration of their gratitude for the Lord's grace to them. —It was moved and seconded to adopt this report, and the motion was carried.

REPORT OF THE BUSINESS MANAGER OF *SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS*:

Mr. David J. Mensing, the Business Manager, then presented his annual balance sheet outlining the financial aspects of the publishing work including monies currently on hand, receipts expected from the annual subsidy and from sales, and expenses anticipated to complete the various projects now already underway and those planned to be completed during the coming fiscal year. (The detailed balance sheet is found elsewhere in the *Proceedings*.) —It was moved and seconded to adopt the report, and the motion was carried.

REPORT CONCERNING THE CONFERENCE ARCHIVES:

Pastor Mensing, the Conference Secretary, who is constitutionally the custodian of the Conference records (*Constitution*, Art. VIII, 3, b), yielded to Mr. Phillip Martin of Peace Congregation, who is particularly active in managing Conference archives on his behalf. Mr. Martin reported that the process of digitizing the PROCEEDINGS of past Conference conventions is continuing but that several years of PROCEEDINGS have not yet been published due to the lack of certain documents that never found their way back into the hands of the Secretary. It is hoped that they will be completed, God-willing, during the coming fiscal year. He also reported that extant files of Conference pastors, especially as they pertain to our Conference's history, are being scanned for the sake of the historical record, and that the pertinent documents will then be available for inspection and study. —It was moved and

seconded to receive the report, and the motion was carried.

REPORT CONCERNING THE SEMINARY BOOKSTORE:

Mr. Phillip Martin briefly updated the convention on the purpose and function of the Seminary Bookstore in acquiring used books of theological value to keep on hand for eventual purchase by future seminary students and “new” pastors for their professional libraries. *Scriptural Publications* maintains the collection in a secure facility on behalf of the Committee on Theological Education, and only such books are purchased by the Conference for “safe keeping” that have been screened by the C. T. E. as being of potential value in a theological library. Some of the Conference pastors have contributed books to the collection — extras they had on hand or copies that they personally were able to pick up; and the “Bookstore” is, of course, grateful to those brethren for their generosity. —It was moved and seconded to receive the report, and the motion was carried.

The reading of the minutes of the Friday session then followed. It was moved and seconded to adopt the minutes pending polish and final review by the *praesidium*.

The agenda for the day having been completed, the Friday sessions adjourned at 5:30 p.m.

+ + +

S A T U R D A Y, J U N E 2 3

THE MORNING SESSION

The session was opened at 9:00 a.m. with a devotion led by Pastor David G. Redlin. Hymn 387, verses 1-6, was sung, followed by the reading of Scripture in Romans 3:20-31, and a prayer. The devotion concluded with the last four stanzas of the hymn and the Apostolic Benediction.

THE ESSAY: “*The Active Obedience of Christ — His Righteousness for Our Justification*” —Part I: *The Active Obedience of Christ Defined* Pastor Paul E. Bloedel

The introduction of the essay began with a citation of God’s Word which the essayist used as the text of his treatise: Romans 5:18b – “*By the righteousness of One the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life.*” Both the introduction and Part I were presented as a unit before the mid-morning break. [The entire text of the essay is included in these PROCEEDINGS.] The presentation of the essay was accompanied by a great deal of lively discussion from the floor on the part of delegates and visitors alike.

At the conclusion of Part I, a brief recess was observed at 10:00 a.m., somewhat earlier than anticipated in the printed agenda, in order that Part II might be presented without interruption.

At 10:25 a.m., Pastor Bloedel continued with **Part II: *The Necessity of Christ’s Active Obedience.*** This portion of the essay as well was accompanied by a great deal of lively discussion from the floor.

The remainder of the essay was deferred to Sunday afternoon, when it will be completed.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LUTHERAN UNION:

Pastor Lietz, the chairman, first pointed to the function of our *Concordia Lutheran* in “rightly judging” heterodox church bodies like the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, and he specifically referred to the on-going series of articles under the same title in which we are (and will continue) reporting on the false doctrine and practice endemic in the larger church bodies on the Lutheran scene. He also briefly summarized some of the written reactions to our first article. The chairman also reported on certain specific contacts with individuals who, although finding themselves at present in heterodox bodies, are truly interested in our Conference, its doctrinal position, and its programs. With certain of these individuals, members of the C. L. U. are in on-going extensive discussions; and we beseech the Lord of the Church to bless our efforts in testifying to the Word of truth. —It was moved and seconded to receive the report, and the motion was carried.

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

The committee briefly capsulized the President’s Annual Report and offered, for the sake of accuracy, a suggested minor revision in the minutes of the *Pastoral Conference* (cited by the President in his report). The suggestion was taken under advisement. The committee then thanked the President for his diligent labors under God’s gracious blessings “in guarding [the Conference’s] confessional position and stemming public offense” (*Constitution*, Art. VIII, 1, b) and approved his annual report. —It was moved and seconded to accept this report and to receive the President’s Report thus approved into record. This motion was carried.

REPORT OF THE AUDITING COMMITTEE:

The committee reported that, in an audit of the Treasurer’s books and the financial records of *Scriptural Publications*, it found both sets of books in good order. The committee thanked both Robert G. Bloedel, the Treasurer, and David J. Mensing, the publishing house Business Manager, for their diligent service to the Conference. —It was moved and seconded to receive this report, and the motion was carried.

Since the noon hour was approaching, the convention stood in recess at 11:55 a.m. for lunch.

+ + +

THE AFTERNOON SESSION

Following the noon meal, the afternoon session began at 1:20 p.m. with a devotion conducted by Pastor David T. Mensing. Hymn 485, verses 1-5, was sung, followed by the reading of Scripture in II Timothy 3:14 - 4:5, and a prayer. The devotion concluded with the last two stanzas of the hymn and the Apostolic Benediction.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION:

Pastor Edward J. Worley, chairman of the C. T. E., highlighted the first-year courses taught by Professor Mensing and the success of our seminarian, Mr. Jason Mabe of Park Forest, Illinois, in completing them to the glory of God in workmanlike fashion with excellent grades. The chairman also briefly reported on the colloquy covering those courses held on Wednesday, June 20th, as part of the agenda of the Pastoral Conference and successfully passed by Mr. Mabe. One of the lay members of the C. T. E., Mr. Erik Roe, had been able to audit the Dogmatics class for about a month for a firsthand look at both the quality of instruction and the preparation and

performance of the students (at that time two); and his positive assessment was included in the committee's report, together with the exhortation that all our people keep both the instructor and the student, as well as their respective families, in their prayers for the Lord's continued blessing. —It was moved and seconded to receive the report; and, after spirited discussion, this motion was unanimously carried.

INTEREST REPORT OF THE THEOLOGICAL PROFESSOR:

Pastor David T. Mensing then reported on his activities and those of the seminary program during 2006-2007. He focused particularly upon the courses taught and the schedule of classes and noted that several "auditors" attended classes in addition to Mr. Mabe (and initially also Mr. John Breinig of Oak Park, Illinois, who elected not to continue his studies past the first semester). He also informed the convention of a cross suffered by the Mabe family midway through the second semester: In a scalding accident in their home, their year-old son, Aaron, suffered second and third degree burns over 15% of his body. Mercifully the Lord protected little Aaron from life-threatening complications and set him quickly upon a remarkable road to recovery, sparing him even the permanent scarring that had been anticipated by his doctor. True to His Word, our gracious God visited upon Jason, Gina his wife, and little Aaron no more than they were able to bear, gave them through Christ the strength to endure their crosses, and worked all things to their good and blessing for Jesus' sake! Planned for this coming summer is a sixteen-week course in Basic German compressed into eight accelerated weeks. This intensive session will take the place of an entire semester's work in German. The second installment of that course will be offered, God-willing, next summer. Finally, Professor Mensing noted that we should share with Jason his gratitude for Gina, his wife, as an exemplary Christian spouse and potential pastor's wife, who, to the glory of God, serves the Lord Christ (Colossians 3:24) holding up her husband's hands, lending a sympathetic ear to his frustrations, insulating him from as many distractions as possible, and supporting him in his desire for the pastoral office, the most blessed work on earth and the most satisfying under heaven. —It was moved and seconded to receive the report; and, after discussion, this motion was unanimously carried.

INTEREST REPORT OF THE SEMINARY STUDENT:

Mr. Jason A. Mabe, our current matriculated student, reported briefly concerning his experiences as a theological student this year. He touched upon his personal background, his decision to study for the ministry, and his seminary experience to date; and he highlighted the course work which he is taking on a part-time basis while working full-time to support his family. Finally, he besought the Conference brethren to remember him in their prayers and to pray earnestly for a future ministry and for able men whom God would move to desire to serve Him in the pastoral office. —It was moved and seconded to receive the report; and, after spirited discussion, this motion was unanimously carried.

FURTHER REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE:

There were no amendments to the Committee's *Proposed Budget* for the new fiscal year, June 1, 2007 through May 31, 2008, but changes are still possible before final ratification. It was moved and seconded to accept this interim report, and the motion was carried.

There was no **INITIAL REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE.**

ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND STANDING COMMITTEES:

OFFICERS—

PRESIDENT: Nominated—Pastors Worley, Mensing, and Lietz.
Elected—Pastor Edward J. Worley

VICE PRESIDENT: Nominated—Pastors Bloedel, Mensing, Redlin, and Lietz.
Elected—Pastor Robert J. Lietz

SECRETARY: Nominated—Pastors Mensing and Bloedel.
Elected—Pastor David T. Mensing

TREASURER: Nominated—Messrs. Lloyd E. Martin, Robert Bloedel and Mark Natterer.
Elected—Mr. Robert G. Bloedel

BOARD MEMBER-AT-LARGE from the Far West: Nominated—Messrs. Ron Lake, Ray Kusumi, Martin Hermann and Daniel Bloedel.
Elected—Mr. Raymond Kusumi

BOARD MEMBER-AT-LARGE from the Middle West: Nominated—Messrs. Erik Roe, Jason Mabe, John Breinig, Michael Mensing, Karl Mensing, John Swanson, Lloyd E. Martin and Phillip Martin.
Elected—Mr. Erik Roe

STANDING COMMITTEES—**EDITORIAL COMMITTEE:**

SLATE A—Pastor Mensing, Pastor Lietz, Mr. Jason Mabe

SLATE B—Pastor Mensing, Pastor Bloedel, Mr. Jason Mabe

Elected—SLATE B

COMMITTEE ON LUTHERAN UNION:

SLATE A—Pastor Lietz, Pastor Mensing, Pastor Natterer, Mr. Phillip Martin

SLATE B—Pastor Lietz, Pastor Mensing, Pastor Bloedel, Mr. Phillip Martin

Elected—SLATE B

A brief recess was observed at 3:00 p.m. for refreshment.

COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION:

SLATE A—Pastor Worley, Pastor Natterer, Mr. Erik Roe, Mr. Stephen Bloedel

SLATE B—Pastor Worley, Pastor Natterer, Mr. Erik Roe, Mr. Daniel Bloedel

SLATE C—Pastor Worley, Pastor Natterer, Mr. Daniel Bloedel, Mr. Stephen Bloedel

Elected—SLATE C

COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS:

SLATE A—Pastor Worley, Pastor Mensing, Mr. Mark Natterer, Mr. Dale Ellis, Mr. Dan Cooper

SLATE B—Pastor Worley, Pastor Lietz, Mr. Stephen Richter, Mr. John Breinig, Mr. Ron Lake

SLATE C—Pastor Worley, Pastor Lietz, Mr. Raymond Kusumi, Mr. John Breinig, Mr. Paul Natterer

Elected—SLATE A**FINANCE COMMITTEE:**

SLATE A—Mr. Robert Bloedel, Mr. Paul Natterer, John Swanson, Joseph Martin

SLATE B—Mr. Robert Bloedel, Mr. Paul Natterer, John Swanson, Lloyd Martin

Elected—SLATE A**PUBLISHING HOUSE BOARD OF CONTROL:**

SLATE A—Pastor Lietz, Mr. David J. Mensing, Mr. Phillip R. Martin

SLATE B—Pastor Bloedel, Mr. David J. Mensing, Mr. Phillip R. Martin

SLATE C—Pastor Lietz, Mr. Raymond Kusumi, Mr. Phillip R. Martin

Elected—SLATE A

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

The Saturday minutes were read by the Secretary in their entirety. Thereafter, it was moved and seconded to adopt the minutes as read subject to polish; and the motion was unanimously carried.

After several announcements on the part of the chairman and of the *pastor loci*, the convention stood in recess at 4:45 p.m. for the supper hour.

+ + +

SUNDAY, JUNE 24**SUNDAY MORNING — The Divine Worship Service with Holy Communion**

The *pastor loci*, the Rev. David T. Mensing, again served as liturgist and also preached the sermon based on **II Corinthians 5:21**. His theme, in keeping with the convention's motto, was: ***What God Accomplished for Us in His Son***. He divided the sermon into two parts: **I. What God did** to His Only-begotten Son, and **II. Why He did it specifically to Him**. Delegates and visitors from the congregations of our fellowship then partook of the Lord's Supper together as guests of Peace 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 walked two blocks down the street to the Arbor Park Middle School, where the congregation had arranged to serve a family-style noon meal.

+ + +

THE AFTERNOON SESSION

The afternoon session began at 2:20 p.m. with a devotion conducted by Pastor Robert J. Lietz. Hymn 289, verses 1-3, was sung, followed by the reading of Scripture in Matthew 5:17, and a prayer. The devotion concluded with the fourth stanza of the hymn.

THE ESSAY: “The Active Obedience of Christ — His Righteousness for Our Justification”

—Part III: References to the Active Obedience of Christ in the Old and New Testaments;

—Part IV: The Comfort that Christ's Active Obedience Gives Us; and —Part V: The Active Obedience of Christ Applied in Our Lives of Sanctification Pastor Paul E. Bloedel

Following the presentation and spirited and fruitful discussion of each of these sections, it was moved and seconded that we adopt, subject to polish and the usual subsequent review of the *praesidium*, this informative and edifying essay with thanks to the essayist not only for his presentation of the doctrine involved but also for the Scriptural applications cited. This motion was carried unanimously.

Following the essay, a brief recess was observed at 3:55 p. m.

FINAL REPORT OF THE FINANCE COMMITTEE:

There were no amendments to the committee's *Proposed Budget* for the new fiscal year, June 1, 2007 through May 31, 2008. It was moved and seconded to accept the *proposed* budget as the **Final Fiscal Budget**; and this motion was unanimously adopted. (The final budget can be found in its entirety elsewhere in these PROCEEDINGS. Please see the **Table of Contents**.)

REPORT OF THE CONFERENCE STATISTICIAN:

Mr. Raymond S. Kusumi delivered the statistical report for fiscal year 2006-2007. —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 RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE:

The 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.)

- #1: Thanks to the outgoing officers and standing committees;
- #2: Thanks for the sermons by Pastors Worley and Mensing, for the doctrinal essay presented by Pastor Bloedel, and for the opening devotions conducted by the pastors;
- #3: Thanks to Peace Ev. Lutheran Church for hosting the convention, to Mr. Lloyd E. Martin, the organist of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church, and to the congregation's choir for the special music which beautified the services and devotions held at this convention. Thanks also to Pastor and Mrs. David T. Mensing and to the host congregation for their loving and generous hospitality.

All of the above resolutions were unanimously adopted.

FINAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION AND EXCUSES

As noted in detail in the Committee's initial report, six congregations had been represented at this convention by five pastoral delegates, eleven lay delegates, and seven alternate delegates who were actually present. Total number of votes to be cast on any measure was 17. Total attendance at the Sunday service was 150. Total offerings at the Sunday service: \$ 2,807.00. Communed were 86. The report was adopted.

TIME AND PLACE OF THE 57th ANNUAL CONVENTION:

St. Luke's Lutheran Church of Seattle, Washington, through its alternate lay delegate, Mr. Stephen Richter, extended to the Conference its invitation to host the 57th 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, 2008.) It was moved and seconded to accept this kind invitation with thanks, and the motion was carried.

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

ADJOURNMENT AND CLOSING DEVOTION:

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 5:00 p.m. with a closing devotion conducted by President Worley including the reading of Psalm 133, a prayer, the usual closing formula, and the Apostolic Benediction.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David T. Mensing, Secretary

THE ANNUAL REPORT OF THE PRESIDENT

Dear Brethren:

Why are *we* here, my dearly beloved brothers and sisters, bought in God's blood and clothed in His saving righteousness? Why are we here? A conference of congregations is not a divinely ordained institution, unlike local congregations themselves. What are the objects or purposes of this human organization? In Article III of our *Constitution* the first two reasons are stated: **1.** The conservation of the unity of the true faith (Ephesians 4:3-6; I Corinthians 1:10, John 8:31-32); and **2.** Joint testimony against all public errors in doctrine and practice (II Thessalonians 3:14-15; I Timothy 5:20; Galatians 6:1; Matthew 7:15; Titus 3:10; Romans 16:17-18). Our Conference has these two objectives or purposes listed first as important goals for all of us, pastors and lay persons, as we work together, under God's grace, in humble submission to God's Holy Word, in all our Conference work.

Why am *I* here, not as an individual but as your Conference President? Why am I in this elected office of service to the Conference? Again our *Constitution*, Article VIII [Officers], informs us that one of the chief duties of the Conference president, a purely human office, is "in particular, personally to lead the Conference in guarding its confessional position and in stemming public offense." What would lead us to believe such work would be needed? Sad to say, we cannot expect that our pleasant unity of brotherhood will remain undisturbed. As we read what the Apostle Paul said to the pastors at Ephesus, Acts 20:25-31, we stand forewarned and forearmed: "*And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day that I am pure from the blood*

of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which He hath purchased with His own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears.”

The history of our Conference bears ample testimony to the truth of Paul’s warning from the Holy Ghost. Over the past year God has blessed us in His grace to hold “*fast the faithful Word*” (Titus 1:9) over against gainsayers that have arisen in our very midst speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after themselves (See Acts 20:30.).

I will now give you a brief summary of these sad events which eventually resulted in defections, defections which bear out the truth of I John 2:19: “*They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us.*” And again I Corinthians 11:19: “*For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be made manifest among you.*”

At our Fall Pastoral Conference in October, 2006, we were made aware that Pastor Mark W. Dierking had again fallen into the errors he had espoused when he sided with Pastor E. R. Stallings against the Conference regarding the dance issue in Seattle in 2004. Despite great efforts to get him to talk to us, he remained apart from us— not attending the meetings nor even speaking to the men by conference call. He and his congregation, St. Stephen’s, Wilmot, South Dakota, eventually resigned by letter in November, 2006, despite all our efforts. The official announcement in *The Concordia Lutheran* explains:

It is my sad duty to announce that St. Stephen’s Ev. Lutheran Church of Wilmot, South Dakota, has decided to follow its pastor in his sinful separatism from our fellowship (See *Concordia Lutheran*, Vol. LI, Nos. 11-12, November-December, 2006, pp. 202-203) by severing its fifty-five year relationship with our Conference. In a letter dated November 27, 2006, received by your president two months later because it had been mislaid in Wilmot and was not sent until late in January, St. Stephen’s stated that it had “decided to remove itself from fellowship with the Concordia Lutheran Conference” because, in its view, “there is not and has not been unanimity in the Conference congregations on this matter,” that is, on the matter of modern worldly social dancing. What the congregation failed to state is that the alleged lack of unanimity was in large part caused by its own pastor who, according to his own admission, had hypocritically professed his *agreement* with us on the basis of God’s Word but had for twelve years personally believed (and practiced) the very opposite while pretending to be our brother.

The congregation also stated: “When a casual intrusion of error becomes doctrine, then ‘in vain do they worship Me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men’ (Matt. 15:9).” Yet they fail to cite so much as one word from our published position (held consistently by orthodox Lutherans for well over 100 years, see *C. L.* cited above, pp. 204-207), fail to point out and establish from Holy Scripture any error in it, and fail to show that they have ever admonished us for it. There has been no “intrusion of error,” *casual* or otherwise; and no error has ever “become doctrine” among us. Moreover, our consistent application of Sixth Commandment principles to lustful forms of entertainment is completely Scriptural. There has never been, nor is there at present, a so-called “doctrine of the dance” in our midst; but we continue by God’s grace to hold that “whatever Scripture condemns, men dare not ignore, excuse or validate. Neither subjective judgment, common custom, social venue, or a claimed pious motive makes pure what God has forbidden” (*Reaffirmation of our Scriptural Position...*, 2004).

Finally, St. Stephen's stated: "Indeed, some of the congregations have not even been informed of the reason for Pastor Stallings' leaving the Conference [June, 2004] two years after the fact. Is it that there is something to hide perhaps?" St. Stephen's and our readers are directed to the July-August 2004 issue of the *Concordia Lutheran* in which Pastor Stallings' defection was reported on in *detail* in an "Official Notice" and in the "Convention Digest," and in which the reaffirmation of our Scriptural position was printed in full. St. Stephen's lack of information is certainly not of our making.

At the 2006 Fall Pastoral Conference, we did all we could to make sure there was unanimity of doctrine, once again, among all our pastors to the extraordinary length of a rising vote with a solemn vow. This reaffirmation included the phrase "no mental reservation"—so carefully did we word it to exclude any escape-clause thinking! Nevertheless, a mere two weeks later all the pastors and congregations received in the mail a letter from Pastor Ross A. Mahan and the voters of Faith Ev. Lutheran, Jackson, MI, that made all our efforts seem utterly in vain! For here was a virtual litany of charges and slanders against the very doctrinal application of the 6th Commandment that all of us, including Pastor Mahan in his own sanctuary, vowed to believe, teach and confess without any reservation! So began a battle for the truth in our midst that has occupied more than seven months. The initial letter, dated November 9, 2006, contained no Scriptural support or factual evidence cited from our position whatsoever. Every letter we received over this period was also completely devoid of these necessary things. As president I sent a detailed reply to every false charge and slander, gave admonition from Holy Writ, and included ample historical documentation to disprove everything they alleged. That letter was sent December 1, 2006. We received another letter from Pastor Mahan dated January 9, 2007, that only added further false charges and lies against us. Pastor Mahan and his congregation had not heeded anything contained in our admonishing letter of correction. Because of their persistent false doctrine and standing public offense, Pastor Ross A. Mahan and JC Perry were suspended by me as Conference President, with the Board of Directors consent, on February 6, 2007, from their Conference offices. A letter informing them and the rest of the Conference was sent, together with another letter of admonition, on February 27, 2007. We had also received an email from Pastor Mahan on February 21, 2007, which prompted this repeated admonition. I trust that every pastor has shown due diligence in his particular congregation to keep his members informed of all these letters and e-mails.

Over the course of these seven months, Pastor Mahan has received letters from the President of the Conference, the Board of Directors, the Secretary, the Vice-President, and from others. These have been completely rejected out of hand, so much so that virtually all we have said was never even replied to. Instead we received only a repetition of baseless and groundless charges and an expansion of factual distortion and outright lies and slanders. It is too sad for words.

After being convinced by three letters to attend the Summer Pastoral Conference this week (when he earlier had asked to be excused without any Scriptural reason), Pastor Mahan attended the first morning and part of the afternoon session. I would now like to read from the minutes of the Pastoral Conference which give an accurate description of what happened with some important details:

Pastor Lietz then introduced our review and study of Biblical *hermeneutics*, that is, of the principles according to which we discover what the text of Scripture says and therefore what any particular passage means and conveys. We used as our guide for the discussion the little tract, "*Principles of Bible Interpretation*," a short summary loosely based on Fuerbringer's *Theological Hermeneutics*, which also was distributed for ready reference. Pastor Lietz read each of the fifteen summary statements from the tract, and each in turn was thoroughly discussed....

After completing our discussion of the basic principles, specific reference was made to the controversy occasioned by the variance of Pastor Mahan and his congregation from the longstanding position of our Conference that Proverbs 5:20 is in fact a *sedes doctrinae* that forbids *specifically* “the romantic embrace between those not married to one another,” that its very words in their usual and customary meaning show such an embrace to be inappropriate and therefore sinful contact, and that such contact in *any* venue outside of holy marriage is to be condemned as lascivious — improper touching, the taking of indecent liberties, the violation of chastity, engaging in intimacy and familiarity with the opposite sex which is countenanced only between those whom God had joined together....

We then continued with the examination of the exegesis of Proverbs 5:20, as this was published in our *Concordia Lutheran*, November-December 2006. Pastor Mahan stated that he “felt” that the embrace spoken of in the passage was a “sexual” embrace in connection with illicit intercourse and not merely a “romantic” embrace such as a young couple in a “dating relationship” might share together. When asked what specifically in the text led him to that conclusion and to the validation of a “romantic” embrace between those not married to one another, he had no answer, neither was he able to adduce even one passage that upheld his distinction between a “sexual” (and therefore forbidden) embrace and a “romantic” (and, in his mind, completely legitimate) embrace; and he frankly admitted: “There probably isn’t such a passage. I just don’t know.”

His entire procedure in judging the meaning of Proverbs 5:20 was subjective and violated or ignored virtually every hermeneutical principle we had so carefully explored and discussed. Moreover, he kept stating his false and slanderous allegation, in spite of having been repeatedly corrected over the course of the past eight months as well as during the present discussions, that we [and specifically Pastor Mensing] had “created a *sedes*” on modern social dancing, namely, Proverbs 5:20, and had “made” modern social dancing into “a doctrine” that now “defined the Conference,” had “grown in importance” over the years, and had been “established” by us as an artificial, man-made, and therefore legalistic standard for fellowship.

As he had stated repeatedly in his protracted correspondence, he repeated his claim that our position on modern social dancing and our application of Proverbs 5:20 is an “innovation,” a “silly issue,” a “new doctrine,” our “opinion,” “legalism,” “fanaticism,” and “tyranny.” Yet, out of the same mouth in his latest letter, he had stated that “it is not wrong for [us] to think Proverbs 5:20 is applicable to dancing.” It was pointed out to him that his expressed view allows, contrary to sound hermeneutics, for a passage to have more than one Spirit-intended meaning; and he finally conceded that, if the exegesis of a passage is “not wrong,” then it must be correct.

As to his oft-repeated charge that Pastor Mensing *invented* this entire issue and that Proverbs 5:20 was never used in application to condemn the romantic embrace in modern social dancing, Pastor Mahan was again pointed to the *Concordia Cyclopaedia* (1927 — through 1954 at least in its later editions) and the consistent testimony of orthodox theologians like Fuerbringer, Engelder, and Kretzmann, as well as Theodore Graebner and Walter A. Maier when they were still faithful to God’s Word, that “the embracing of the bosom of a stranger, one with whom a man is not united in an estate sanctioned by God Himself, is an act impure in itself, Proverbs 5, 20.” Nevertheless Pastor Mahan repeated his assertion that in our Conference at any rate nothing was ever said about dancing at his colloquy by the Pastoral Conference in 1999. It was pointed out to him that the repetition of a falsehood, contrary to better knowledge and in spite of correction, is a *deliberate lie* and that this is but one example of a consistent pattern of lying on his part. One of the CHIEF tasks of the 1999 Pastoral Conference was to settle a controversy occasioned by Pastor Dierking when he permitted his own son to involve a member of Peace Congregation in attendance at a prom and brazenly defended his actions contrary to our published Scriptural position. Did Pastor Mahan not remember that?? Did he not remember that the Pastoral Conference in 1999 had unanimously adopted (including his own vote) a resolution seriously warning against and condemning attendance at social events where modern worldly

dancing was the prominent activity?? How dare he represent to his people and to the rest of our congregations through his correspondence that such a thing never happened and that our position on modern social dancing was “never mentioned” at the time of his colloquy??

He also accused us repeatedly in front of the thirty or so visitors at this conference of “forcing” Pastors Stallings and Dierking out of the Conference by holding them to our “doctrine of modern social dancing” contrary to their conscience. It was pointed out to him that this too was a blatant lie intended to deceive the unwary into regarding us as legalistic and tyrannical. Both of those men were literally begged NOT to leave our fellowship but to hear the Word of God and to repent of their variance from and opposition to clear Scripture. *“If they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us”* (I John 2:19). They were no more “forced out” of our Conference than many of the disciples in Capernaum *“went back, and walked no more with Him”* because they were “forced” by Jesus’ *“hard saying”* to desert Him (John 6:60ff.) or that Jesus’ disciples were “forced” to forsake Him and to flee (Matthew 26:56) by the “intransigent stand” He took with the scribes and Pharisees, calling them a bunch of *“hypocrites.”*

When he was asked why he would not make forthright application of the Sixth Commandment to the lives of his people, Pastor Mahan replied: “If we made similar application of all the commandments, it would never end!” It was precisely this kind of statement that characterized Pastor Mahan’s antinomistic stand in this entire matter. It was pointed out that the “Statementarians” in the 40’s took the very same tack, “deploring” the fact that, for example, Romans 16:17 had been applied to prayer fellowship between individual professing Christians. Although Pastor Mahan had in his correspondence repeatedly stated that no one had ever been disciplined in the Missouri Synod for contrary practice with regard to the dance, Pastor Mensing reminded him that Jerry Kieschnick, the professed liberal president of the Missouri Synod, in his official report to the synod in 2004, stated that “Lutherans were not allowed to dance and were often chastised and even excommunicated for doing so,” and that other practices from the past, “staunchly defended on the basis of Holy Scripture at the time” were no longer issues in the Synod. Among those he had listed were membership in the Scouting organizations and playing the organ in non-Lutheran weddings. In this connection, Pastor Mahan expressed surprise at the idea that singing religious music in a civic glee club of mixed profession is *unionistic*, and that one who persistently holds to a heterodox position is considered a *heretic*. He took exception to our characterization of Pastor Stallings as a heretic, since he regarded a heretic as one who *denied the Gospel*; and therefore he would not even regard John Calvin as a heretic. It was obvious that Pastor Mahan lacked a clear understanding of many fundamental doctrines which a truly orthodox pastor should have and be able to articulate with consistency. On the one hand, he expressed the view that we were “very close” on the issues, and yet he acknowledged, after having been reminded of what he had said in his correspondence, that he had accused our Conference of “legalism, fanaticism, and works righteousness.” When confronted with this obvious contradiction, he was either unresponsive or deliberately evasive in his answers.

Pastor Worley, as President, asked Pastor Mahan whether he had shared all the official correspondence, including our response to his false and undocumented accusations, with his congregation, inasmuch as he had made the congregation a party to his charges against us and was speaking as their representative in his letters to us. Although he initially claimed to have shared all the correspondence with his people, he stood corrected in the face of reliable testimony that this was not the case, but that he had been willing to make the letters available to those who “requested them.” One of his own former members, Roger Fischer, testified that Pastor Mahan had not even mentioned some of the correspondence in his official reports to the congregation and that therefore the members were not even aware that such correspondence existed, nor could they therefore have requested copies of it. When admonished that this was being a lord over God’s heritage and an ethical violation of his call, his only response was that he thought it would have taken “too much time” to go through all of that material.

At this point, Pastor Mahan stated that he “should probably leave” the meeting, inasmuch as it had become obvious to him that more separates us than just the dance issue. Pastor Worley then asked him what he should do according to God’s Word if he found himself in what he considered to be a legalistic fellowship. Pastor Mahan agreed that Romans 16:17 required him to sever fellowship in such a case, but that he was not minded to do so because he did not want the Conference to be able to say that he left us over the dance issue. The Conference would have to put him out. “You’re going to do what you’re going to do,” he said. He also mentioned that he did not know what his congregation wanted to do and would have to check with them as to their intentions. When it was pointed out that it was incumbent upon him as its pastor to lead his congregation, not the other way around, he offered no response; and in spite of the brotherly and urgent admonition also on the part of laymen present, Pastor Mahan simply walked out of the meeting, refusing to take responsibility for the divisions and offenses he had persistently caused by his variance from Scripture doctrine and practice and by his blatant false witness against his brethren. Thus he made amply manifest that he was not of us, I John 2:19.

It must be said for the record that, despite repeated brotherly admonition and urgent pleas to answer our questions in the spirit of meekness and humility before the Word of God (I Peter 3:15; Isaiah 66:2), Pastor Mahan repeatedly resorted to sarcasm, defiance, open hostility, and ridicule of our sincere efforts to gain him from the error of his ways (James 5:19-20).

It was clearly manifest to all present that Pastor Mahan was not in doctrinal agreement with us on many things (I Corinthians 1:10). I urge all of you to listen carefully when the resolution of the Board of Directors is put on the floor regarding Pastor Mahan and his congregation. This resolution is completely factual and Scripturally sound and merits our whole-hearted support, especially as a public testimony in our midst and to those outside our fellowship. Beloved, this is profoundly sad that we have witnessed these losses in spite of all we have done to prevent them in tearful prayer and admonition from God’s Holy Word. We pray that God would graciously convert the hearts of those who have recently showed themselves to be of a different spirit in their carnal approach to the Scriptures — that He would bring them to a clear knowledge of their errors, humble repentance of their sins, and confession of the same, to the end that they might be restored as beloved brethren in our midst. *“He which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins”* (James 5:20). May the Gospel renew each of us in heart and mind to hold fast to the doctrine delivered unto the saints, in particular, that our congregations support our pastors as God empowers them by His all-sufficient grace to heed the admonition and solemn charge of Holy Writ, II Timothy 4:1-5: *“I charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom: Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For 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. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.”*

God grant these things unto us for the sake of the sin-cleansing blood of our Savior and His justifying righteousness imputed to us.

In Jesus’ saving Name, respectfully submitted,

President Edward J. Worley

INITIAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION AND EXCUSES

Dear Brethren:

The following delegates have presented credentials for the 56th Annual Convention and have been seated:

From GOOD SHEPHERD, Tucson — Rev. David G. Redlin, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Martin Hermann, Lay Delegate; no Alternates — 3 votes.

From PEACE, Oak Forest — Rev. David T. Mensing, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Jason A. Mabe and Mr. Karl P. Mensing, Lay Delegates; Mr. Phillip R. Martin and Mr. David J. Mensing, Alternates — 3 votes.

From ST. JOHN'S, Lebanon — Mr. Matthew Ellis and Mr. William Schrader, Jr., Lay Delegates; Mr. Ted Fitzwater and Mr. Paul Natterer, Alternates — 2 votes

From ST. LUKE'S, Seattle — Rev. Edward J. Worley, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Raymond Kusumi and Mr. Lee Roller, Lay Delegates; Mr. Stephen Richter and Mr. Dale Ellis, Alternates — 3 votes

From ST. MARK'S, Sauk Village — Rev. Paul E. Bloedel, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. Daniel Cooper and Mr. Erik Roe, Lay Delegates; no Alternates — 3 votes

From TRINITY, Oak Park — Rev. Robert J. Lietz, Pastoral Delegate; Mr. John Breinig and Mr. Tom Fedor, Lay Delegates; Mr. John Swanson, Alternate — 3 votes

Pastor Natterer has asked to be excused from attending the Convention this year and has requested that the following letter be read and admitted into the records:

Dear Brethren in Christ,

Just a few lines to let all of you know that regretfully I shall not be able to attend the Convention this year. Old age and the accompanying infirmities are rapidly becoming a reality. Far be it from me to complain; instead, *“It is of the Lord’s mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is Thy faithfulness”* (Lamentations 3:22-23). The Lord has been very good to me during my 80 years (in September I shall be 81), and I must confess with Jacob that *“I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which Thou hast showed unto Thy servant”* (Genesis 32:10). By God's grace, I am still able to preach every Sunday, conduct classes for the children and adults, visit the sick, etc. Every morning I pray that the Lord would continue to grant me the necessary strength to do the work which He has laid upon me until He mercifully grants a faithful pastor to take my place. I also ask for your prayers that this request may be granted! May the Lord grant you a blessed convention which will redound to His glory for Jesus’ sake!

Your brother in Christ,

Pastor M. L. Natterer

The maximum number of votes that can be cast at any time during this Convention of the

Concordia Lutheran Conference is **17**. The total attendance at the opening service was **117**, and the offering received at the Friday Worship Service to benefit the General Conference Treasury was **\$1282.00**.

Respectfully submitted,

The Committee on Registration and Excuses

FINAL REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON REGISTRATION AND EXCUSES

Dear Brethren:

As was noted in greater detail in this committee's initial report, there was a total of 5 pastoral delegates, 11 lay delegates, and 7 alternate lay delegates registered at this convention. The maximum number of votes that could be cast at any time was **17**.

The attendance at the Friday service was **117**; and at the Sunday service there were **150** in attendance. **86** souls communed either as members or as guests of Peace Ev. Lutheran Church.

The offering received at the Sunday Worship Service to benefit the local congregation was **\$2,807.00**.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Paul E. Bloedel, Chairman
Mr. Lee Roller
Mr. Martin Hermann

FINANCIAL REPORT for 2006-2007

	----General Fund----		----Student Aid Fund----
	Balances	Pledged	Balances
Cash Balance, June 1, 2006:	\$ 60,095.40		\$ 33,101.03
Add Cash Receipts:			
Faith, Jackson, MI	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 0.00
Good Shepherd, Tucson, AZ	776.50	650.00	135.00
Peace, Oak Forest, IL	8,400.00	7,200.00	0.00
St. John's, Lebanon, OR	7,120.00	4,800.00	0.00
St. Luke's, Seattle, WA	7,850.00	3,600.00	4,050.00
St. Mark's, Sauk Village	0.00	0.00	0.00
St. Stephen's, Wilmot, SD	0.00	0.00	0.00
Trinity, Oak Park, IL	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00
Seminary Tuition Payments	1,200.00	1,200.00	
Interest Income	1,462.99	500.00	700.86
2006 Convention Collection	1,531.45	1,531.45	
Schurganoff Gift	8.00		
Miscellaneous Receipts	0.00		0.00
Total Receipts	\$ 34,848.94		\$ 4,885.89
Total Cash Available	\$ 94,944.34		\$ 37,986.89
Less Disbursements:			
	Expended	Budgeted	
<i>Scriptural Publications</i> Subsidy	\$ 3,500.00	\$ 3,500.00	
Special <i>Scriptural Pubs.</i> Subsidy	3,500.00	3,500.00	
St. Stephen's Subsidy	3,500.00	8,400.00	
Ekaterinburg Salary Subsidy	7,200.00	7,200.00	
Ekaterinburg Rental Subsidy	2,400.00	2,400.00	
Conference Archives Subsidy	1,500.00	1,500.00	
Convention Expense	0.00	1,000.00	
Telephone Expense	0.00	1,000.00	
Travel Expense	1,787.95	5,000.00	
Nigeria Travel Expense	0.00	6,000.00	
Seminary Instructor's Salary	4,050.00	4,050.00	
Miscellaneous Expense	1,480.99	2,000.00	
Schurganoff Gift Disbursement	8.00	0.00	
Total Expenditures	\$ 28,926.94		\$ 0.00
Cash Balance, May 31, 2007	\$ 66,017.40		\$ 37,986.89
Total Cash, All Funds:	\$ 104,004.29		

Respectfully submitted,

Robert G. Bloedel, Treasurer

REPORT OF THE AUDITING COMMITTEE

Dear Brethren:

We, the select Auditing Committee, after review, found the Treasurer's books for the Concordia Lutheran Conference and of the Business Manager of *Scriptural Publications* for the year ending May 31, 2007, to be in good order.

We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Mr. Robert G. Bloedel, Treasurer of the Concordia Lutheran Conference, and to Mr. David J. Mensing, Business Manager of *Scriptural Publications*, for their dedicated work over the past year.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David G. Redlin, Chairman
Mr. Tom Fedor
Mr. Dan Cooper

REPORT OF THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Dear Brethren:

By the grace of God, our *Concordia Lutheran* continues to be a witnessing vehicle to the light of our Lord's precious Word (Psalm 43:3) and to the doctrine that is according to Godliness (I Timothy 6:3) as the pastors of our fellowship study, prepare and write timely and thoroughly Scriptural articles for the edification of our readership. This year we deliberately endeavored to maintain from issue to issue a consistent balance between articles of a doctrinal and of a practical nature, occasionally treated topics of historical importance, and even included newsworthy items from our congregations stateside and from our brethren abroad. We also tried to represent in the subject matter and doctrinal content of our articles the various festivals and themes of the church year, particular in the "festival half." With special thanks to Pastor Worley, we ran two very practical articles for the admonition and exhortation of the youth of our Conference; and we intend, God-willing, to offer still other topics as an on-going series for our younger readers.

Though this is not evident from the number of subscribers we have from outside our Conference, our *Concordia Lutheran* is known in "conservative" Lutheran circles and gets "rave reviews" from those who read it regularly, as well as from those who, almost by accident, come into possession of an issue. Such comments as "a breath of fresh air," "consistently solid," "reliably Scriptural," and "predictably orthodox in its content" have come across our desk in e-mails and in letters. And we still hear, on occasion, of searching souls having been brought into contact with congregations of our Conference specifically through the *Concordia Lutheran*. And for such fruit we praise our gracious God, whose Word does not return unto Him void but accomplishes what He pleases and prospers in the thing whereto He sends it (Isaiah 55:10-11).

This year was a particularly gratifying one for your editor, in that our pastors happily consented to write on the topics assigned to them, submitted their articles in timely fashion with very few exceptions, held to the length suggested, and, for the most part, kindly adhered to the formatting protocols which were established several years ago in order to standardize “the look” of the articles and to keep the mechanics of spelling, capitalization and punctuation just as uniform as possible. This not only reduces time needed for proofreading, but it makes the articles generally more “readable.” Moreover, by suggesting a maximum length in numbers of words, we have endeavored to keep the articles pointed and concise, easily to be read in one sitting, and yet not so “cropped” that necessary material is left out and thoroughness is sacrificed.

Both in the assignment of articles and in the expectation of timely submission, we always tried to consider first and foremost the workload and local conditions of our brother pastors, whose first responsibility is to their call from the Holy Ghost and to the diligent feeding and oversight of their local sheep (Acts 20:28; I Peter 5:2). Occasionally we deliberately gave a brother a “pass” and assigned him nothing; and sometimes we asked only a short devotional or historical article. Moreover, we also had to wait for articles to be submitted; and this we tried to do cheerfully, knowing from our own experience how frustrating it is to have everything unforeseen happen at once. Our own adherence to publication dates and concern for timely appearance was occasionally thwarted by unusual local conditions on our end — as with the May-June issue just making it “under the wire” during the month of June. We appreciate the brethren’s forbearance when extenuating circumstances arise, and we want you to know that we have not given up on our determination, with the Lord’s help and blessing, to be diligent in our work and responsible in setting our time priorities, but, at the same time, always yielding to our primary calling and that of our brethren.

Your editor herewith expresses heartfelt thanks to Pastor Lietz, the *Book and Tract Editor*, who, besides doing an excellent job at that time-consuming task, has been of invaluable assistance as a second pair of eyes in editing the *C. L.*, as well as to our lay member, Mr. Jason Mabe, who also scrutinized each article before publication and offered helpful suggestions and positive observations along the way.

Finally, a word of special appreciation is due to our brother, Phil Martin, the Print Shop Manager of *Scriptural Publications*, whose facility in desktop publishing has been chiefly responsible for the clean, attractive and professional “look” of our *Concordia Lutheran*. When all the articles have been submitted, proofread, and edited, Phil “imports” them all into a publishing program in rough form, and we then spend an evening together at the computer giving each article a final read-through, correcting formatting errors, and selecting display fonts for the titles and suitable clip-art and illustrations to complete the presentation. Phil himself has become quite the expert in many of these tasks and often has suggested material already in place when we begin. The opportunity for me as the editor to work closely and collaboratively with our publishing house staff in the physical production of the *Concordia Lutheran* is an advantage that should not be underestimated. It’s quite a project, and we trust that our readers are satisfied, yea, even enthusiastic, about our *Concordia Lutheran* —from its truly Scriptural, edifying content to its attractive presentation. They should know that a lot of love and diligent hard work goes into every issue, motivated, enabled, and blessed by the Lord of the Church, who is “*able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think*” (Ephesians 3:20) and to whom all the praise is due for His neverfailing grace to all of us.

May He continue graciously to bless our humble efforts to His glory!

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David T. Mensing, Chairman and
Concordia Lutheran Editor
Rev. Robert J. Lietz, Book and Tract Editor
Mr. Jason A. Mabe, Lay Member

REPORT OF *SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS'* BOARD OF CONTROL

Dear friends of the truths of Scripture and the publication of such:

The on-going work of *Scriptural Publications* is, “*by the grace of God*” (I Corinthians 15:10), nothing more than continuing in the Word of Christ (John 8:31-32), that is, continuing in what we have learned and been taught from the Holy Scriptures (II Timothy 3:14-16). We thank our Triune God for the great gift of His Word of truth, which provides us with exactly what we need for publications which are truly Scriptural.

One of the truly Scriptural publications which is printed and distributed by *Scriptural Publications* is the ***Concordia Lutheran***. Our Print Shop Manager, Mr. Phil Martin, in consultation with the Editor, does an exceptional job in laying out each issue, choosing appropriate colors, pictures, etc., and then, with his acquired expertise, using the available machinery to print and collate the hundreds of copies of each issue, which Pastor Mensing then staples, folds and trims before sending them out to our congregations and to individual subscribers. We cannot thank God enough for Phil’s faithful work in the printing of the *CL*. Also, we thank God for the Gospel-produced harmony, good will, and excellent cooperation between Phil and Pastor Mensing, the editor of the *CL*, as they go about the huge effort of getting out each issue of this invaluable periodical.

The Board of Control has met nine times during the past year to discuss, review, plan, and carry forward the important “*business*” (Luke 2:49) of *Scriptural Publications*. It is a great advantage to have all the members of the Board of Control within easy driving distance to make possible these regular meetings. The value of such face-to-face discussions is priceless, serving both for looking carefully at short-term projects, but, at the same time, giving consideration to long-term needs. And, in addition, we give many, many thanks to God for the excellent cooperation of Mr. Phil Martin and Mr. Dave Mensing, our business manager, their cheerful willingness to serve, their genuine interest in this important work, and their fervent desire to share what our gracious God, in His great goodness in Christ Jesus, has shared with us. The words of Psalm 133 are certainly borne out in our work together: “*How good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity*” (Psalm 133:1). We have also invited Pastor Mensing to sit in (if he desires and when it is convenient for him) on these regular meetings because of his long association with *Scriptural Publications* and his valued counsel.

It is very much in order for us, as a Conference, to thank Peace Congregation, Oak Forest, for not only housing all the machinery, inventory, desks, etc. for *Scriptural Publication* in the lower

level of the educational addition, but for also paying the heat, electricity, and air-conditioning costs for this vital Conference operation. Furthermore, in recent weeks, the congregation has made some additional improvements to the work area of *Scriptural Publications*, erecting at no cost to the Conference a wall around the production area and securing our supplies and equipment with a lockable door. These contributions by Peace call for much gratitude from our Conference. (A copy of this report will be given to the secretary of Peace so that he can share this paragraph with the voters of Peace at their next monthly meeting.)

In regard to our Conference's Web site at www.concordialutheranconf.com, it remains one of our key avenues for sharing the truths of God's Word. Furthermore, it provides others with the night-and-day opportunity to check out our doctrine and practice, our history, our joint endeavors, our congregations, etc. Mr. Lee Roller of Seattle graciously continued during this last year as our technical advisor and our Web site developer, always with the intent of improving our site in every possible way. We thank him very much for all of his work on our behalf.

We again thank the Conference for its financial subsidy of the important work of *Scriptural Publications* during the past year. We desire to be faithful stewards and managers of this subsidy in gratitude for the faithfulness of our Savior in perfectly carrying out the will of God for us to satisfy God's justice in His Holy Law and thereby to bring about the gift of God's justification of all and His declaration of righteousness for all (Romans 5:18-19; Galatians 4:4-5; Romans 3:24; etc.), so that now we, as believers in the only Savior for sinners, can adore and praise Him as "*the Lord our righteousness*" (Jeremiah 23:6).

Some of our bigger projects which are still "under construction" are the reprinting of the *Advanced Bible History*, the careful proofing and ultimate re-printing of *Daily Bread*, *The Family Altar*, and *Crumbs* (devotional books), and the reproduction of and possible re-casting of *The Lutheran Book of Prayer*. By making these devotional books available "down-the-road," the Lord-willing, our hope is that the good practice of regular family or home devotions will be restored and continued for on-going spiritual growth through the pure "*milk*" (I Peter 2:2) of God's precious Word of grace and truth.

We once again urge you to give consideration (if you have not already done so) to making *Scriptural Publications* one of the heirs of your estate to demonstrate and give evidence of your great gratitude for all that you have been freely given by your merciful God, especially such gifts as **1**) the perfect righteousness of Christ which covers up and cancels out all of our own total unrighteousness, our complete inherited corruption, and our deserved condemnation (Jeremiah 23:6; Galatians 3:13; John 3:17-18; Romans 8:1), **2**) the "*inheritance*" of heaven, which is "*incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away*" (I Peter 1:4), and **3**) the Scripturally-sound materials which we have received and benefitted from in the past through the work of *Scriptural Publications*, such as the printing and publication of the *Concordia Lutheran* year-after-year, the publication of such books as Graebner's *Doctrinal Theology*, Luther's *Large Catechism*, the *Lenten-tide Family Altar*, the three devotional books by Alfred Doerffler, as well as, in tract form, *A Sketch of The Doctrinal Position of the Concordia Lutheran Conference*, and various materials on the Church and its Ministry, the Scriptural principles concerning Christian giving, gambling, the modern, worldly dance, to mention only a few. May the unmerited love of our Savior move and constrain us to keep looking for ways to show our love for Him who "*first loved us*" (I John 4:19), ever remembering "*the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich*" (II Corinthians 8:9).

Gratefully and respectfully submitted,

Rev. Robert J. Lietz, Chairman
Mr. David J. Mensing, Business Manager
Mr. Phillip R. Martin, Print Shop Manager

REPORT OF THE BUSINESS MANAGER OF *SCRIPTURAL PUBLICATIONS*

Dear Brethren:

The main purpose of *Scriptural Publications* is to ensure that doctrinally sound, orthodox materials remain in print and are available to those who desire to learn and grow in the Word, particularly those in our Conference and of our fellowship. This is no small task, especially considering the rate at which many doctrinally sound books are disappearing from large retailers' inventories. With the Lord's help and continuous blessing, however, the *Scriptural Publications* staff has been able to reproduce a number of spiritually edifying books and will continue to reproduce more in the near future.

Staff and Duties —

Phil Martin performs most of the work of publishing and printing our materials, including the *Concordia Lutheran*. The amount of time involved in the various processes is sometimes staggering, and his dedication to the work and the quality of the finished product is very exemplary. Since Phil has been performing this function for some time, he has built business relationships with a number of suppliers and merchants such as Books 2 Bytes and the Lincoln Bookbindery. Utilizing the services of these vendors, *Scriptural Publications* has been able to become more efficient in terms of reproducing previously out-of-print materials. Also, *Scriptural Publications* has been able to produce its first hard cover book, *Outlines of Doctrinal Theology*, by A. L. Graebner.

Pastor Lietz, as chairman, oversees the work and production of *Scriptural Publications*. During the last year, there have been regular meetings regarding the progress of *Scriptural Publications* in general, as well as the various projects that are in the works. Planning is a general theme of these meetings in order to ensure that we are all on the same page with respect to priorities and future projects. These meetings have been very helpful in keeping the lines of communication open and ensuring that things continue to run smoothly.

Dave Mensing, as business manager, handles the various administrative duties of *Scriptural Publications*, including filling orders, paying bills, responding to inquiries, and marketing. During this last fiscal year, Dave began a new career and had a new baby, both of which have taken up most of his regular time. Consequently, communication has been lacking. That lack of communication does not speak well of *Scriptural Publications*, especially since there has been more of an effort to market materials outside of the Conference. Dave is still learning the most efficient ways of operating and is confident that, with the Lord's help, he is able to perform his duties efficiently, making sure to exercise good stewardship, and remembering that it is a

privilege to do the work of the Lord's kingdom.

Looking ahead to 2007-2008 —

During the last fiscal year, a "light scribe" CD burner was purchased specifically for producing CD's to accompany *Outlines of Doctrinal Theology*. As more and more people utilize computers on a daily basis, *Scriptural Publications* plans on including electronic versions of additional books, so that the materials may be enjoyed by those who are not always able to carry around the books they would like to study.

In addition, during the next fiscal year, *Scriptural Publications* will begin offering a limited number of publications for sale on E-Bay. Only those materials produced by *Scriptural Publications* will be offered. If financially feasible, selling on E-Bay will enable *Scriptural Publications* to reach a potentially worldwide audience and, by God's grace, will give more exposure to the *Concordia Lutheran Conference*.

A very hearty thank-you is in order to Kelly Martin, Donna Lietz, and Melissa Mensing for all the patience and understanding that they have shown to their husbands. The importance of spousal support cannot be underestimated. By God's grace, they all understand the importance of the work and time involved, and all are ready and willing to lend their assistance when needed.

Working in *Scriptural Publications* is a wonderful opportunity to grow in grace through exposure to materials that would not otherwise be studied. Thanks be to God for granting us all the health and ability to perform our various tasks, and we all pray that He will continue to bless our work during this next fiscal year to His glory.

Respectfully submitted,

David J. Mensing, Business Manager
Scriptural Publications

FINANCIAL SUMMARY PUBLICATIONS

Financial Summary for 2006-2007

Cash Balance, June 1, 2006



REPORT OF SCRIPTURAL

\$ 3,385.74

RECEIPTS (Year to Date):

Concordia Lutheran—

Subscription Renewals	\$ 10.00
New Subscriptions	12.00
Conference Subsidy	0.00

Book Store/Publishing House—

Sunday School Materials	123.50
New Book Sales	980.76
Used Book Sales	0.00
Booklet and Tract Sales	0.00
Miscellaneous Donations	0.00
Proceedings Sales	600.00
Conference Subsidy	7,000.00
Miscellaneous	0.00

Total Receipts **\$ 8,726.26**

Total Cash Available

\$ 12,112.00

EXPENSES (Year to Date):

Concordia Lutheran—

Postage	\$ 250.10
Printing Supplies	1,302.55
Printing Hardware	0.00
Miscellaneous	2.72

Bookstore/Publishing House—

Postage and Shipping	194.42
Printing Supplies	1,168.80
New Book Inventory for <i>SP</i> Catalog	456.97
Out-of-Print Purchases	0.00
Telephone Expense	0.00
Printing Hardware and <i>SP</i> Capital Outlay	1,032.60
Outsourced Printing Expense	1,623.53
Miscellaneous	806.45
Web Page Fees	544.46
Lease Contract on <i>Ricoh</i> Printer	1,186.80

Total Expenditures **\$ 8,569.40**

Cash Balance, May 31, 2007

\$ 3,542.60*

Respectfully submitted,

David J. Mensing, Business Manager

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON MISSIONS

Dear Brethren:

Due to the necessary suspension of the Mission Committee Chairman, Pastor Ross A. Mahan, as well as committee member, JC Perry, I temporarily assumed the position of Acting Chairman, with the approval of the Board of Directors, in February 2007.

In December we asked Pastor Roman G. Schurganoff to submit monthly reports to us detailing his work. We had encouraged him on the basis of Scriptural principles regarding the vital importance of the regular and consistent use of the Means of Grace within his congregation after receiving some information that a few regular Sunday services were canceled. He cheerfully and faithfully provided these monthly reports from January, 2007, through the current month. These reports tell us of his daily work as he carries out his Divine Call as pastor.

The Board of Directors, upon review of the support given to the Russian congregation, agreed that, due to a 40% cost of living increase since 2003, we should increase our support by \$200.00 per month. The Board also directed the Committee on Missions to encourage Pastor Schurganoff to begin systematic stewardship training of his people and to counsel him how to carry out this important task on the basis of Holy Scripture.

Over the past few months the Conference has been informed of the dangerous situation in Nigeria and of the afflictions of our brethren in the F. L. C. N. Although the situation there is still somewhat unsettled, conditions have improved enough to allow a return to what is considered "normal" in their midst. Recently we have been informed of a serious medical problem with Pastor Nimi Fyeface. This appears to be a thyroid problem, resulting in a goiter; and this growth has affected his voice. In consideration of the need for a reliable medical diagnosis, the Committee on Missions, upon recommendation of the Board of Directors, is asking the Conference to provide funds to permit Pastor Fyeface to come to the United States for diagnosis and perhaps also for treatment of this condition. The Board also encouraged the Committee to recommend funding the purchase of a reliable satellite phone system for Nigeria in order to enable the brethren there not only to communicate more efficiently with one another but for them also to communicate better with us stateside and to be able to exchange documents as attachments by e-mail or by FAX. The Committee concurs in this and recommends the same to the convention for adoption.

Your chairman understands that this report is somewhat lacking in detail, and therefore I am willing to answer any questions I can regarding both the Russian and Nigerian situations.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Edward J. Worley, Acting Chairman
Rev. David G. Redlin
Mr. Raymond S. Kusumi
Mr. Paul Natterer

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON THEOLOGICAL EDUCATION

Dear Brethren:

The Committee on Theological Education is set up to facilitate the work of both the faculty and student body of our *Concordia Theological Seminary*. This past year the Committee has engaged a qualified instructor, the Reverend David T. Mensing, as our first year theological professor. The Committee also has the responsibility to exercise reasonable oversight in assessing both the quality of instruction and student proficiency. At the beginning of the academic year there were two 1st year seminary students enrolled: Mr. John Breinig of Trinity, Oak Park, Illinois, and Mr. Jason Mabe of Peace, Oak Forest, Illinois. John declined to continue beyond the 1st semester due to an inability to perform at the necessary academic level. Jason completed both semesters with excellent work in all three courses: Dogmatics I, New Testament Greek and the Practicum (or practical internship).

A colloquy of Mr. Mabe covering **Dogmatics I** in the following areas was conducted during the Summer Pastoral Conference:

- Prologomena
- The Nature and Character of Theology
- The Doctrine of Holy Scripture
- The Doctrine of God
- The Creation of the World and Man
- Divine Providence and Government of the World
- The Divine Decrees
- Angelology

This colloquy was led by the C. T. E. Chairman and afforded all the pastors an opportunity to review and test our seminarian over these doctrinal subjects. Mr. Mabe performed very well, giving Scriptural answers with proper textual support. We did not find any areas of deficiency in his doctrinal understanding. A review of Mr. Mabe's course work through written tests confirms the proficiency both of his aptitude and of his performance, as well as the thoroughness of the instruction by Professor Mensing. Jason has set an excellent example of faithfulness and due diligence in his theological studies his first year.

Mr. Erik Roe, a lay member of our committee, reports as follows: "After talking with Student Mabe after his colloquy, he indicated that he had spent a major amount of time preparing for a review of Greek — a review did not occur during the recent colloquy. In the future he indicated that he would be able to spend more time on studying for the Dogmatics questions if he knew he would not be tested on Greek. I would also like to commend Student Mabe for his performance as a student. I audited the Dogmatics Class for the first month and witnessed first-hand how well prepared he was for every class. He set the pace of the class. He has been able, by the grace of God, to balance his work life and family life, his God-given obligations, to the glory of God. I encourage all of us to keep Student Mabe, his family, and Professor Mensing and his family, in our earnest prayers for God's continued blessing."

We pray that God continue to work in Student Mabe both to will and to do of His good pleasure in this regard, supplying him with the grace required through the Gospel, as he continues his theological training in our Concordia Theological Seminary.

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Edward J. Worley, Chairman
Rev. M. L. Natterer
Mr. Erik Roe
Mr. Stephen Bloedel

INTEREST REPORT OF THE SEMINARY INSTRUCTOR

Dear Brethren:

“Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory, for Thy mercy and for Thy truth’s sake!” (Psalm 115:1). With all praise to God for His rich, enabling grace, *“who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think”* (Ephesians 3:20), we have much for which we should be grateful as we conclude this first year of instruction under our new, restructured and revitalized seminary program. In September of 2006 two part-time students enrolled for theological study, both of them able to take only eight credit hours per semester of first-year courses, or approximately a half-time course load. Both Mr. Jason Mabe of Park Forest, Illinois, and Mr. John Breinig of Oak Park, elected to take **New Testament Greek** (a three-hour course), **Dogmatics I** (also a three-hour course), and the *Practicum* or internship (a two-hour course). Because of their necessary secular work, the men chose to meet two days per week (instead of the usual three) for classes an hour-and-a-half each. Every Sunday, we met from four in the afternoon until 7:30 in the evening and on Thursdays from 6:00 p.m. until 9:30 p.m.. The *practicum* was unscheduled time, and your professor elected not to be compensated for that course. In addition to the two matriculated students, Mr. Phillip Martin of Peace Congregation and Pastor Lietz of Oak Park audited the two regular courses, doing all the work required, including the taking of exams, but declining credit. Thus they were not charged regular tuition. Nevertheless, their presence and participation greatly enhanced the dynamics of classroom discussions and contributed in no small measure to their enjoyment.

Sadly, by the end of the first semester, it had become evident to Mr. Breinig that his academic performance in both Dogmatics and Greek was not up to the standards that both he and we rightfully expect of theological students; and, after much soul-searching regarding both his ability and his determination to do the work and to put in the necessary time and effort to be successful, he withdrew from the seminary and did not enroll for the second semester. We were all extremely sorry to see him make that choice, but the choice was his and his alone to make; and we can only hope that he profited personally from the time he spent with us in searching the Scriptures and in studying the doctrine that is according to Godliness.

During the second semester, Jason Mabe continued as our only matriculated seminarian and, by God’s grace, showed himself to be a hard worker, a diligent scholar, and an excellent student, earning, as he had during the first semester, top grades in all three subjects. This was no small feat, considering the fact that Jason is employed full-time as a mechanical engineer in a Chicago company that designs and manufactures specialized parts for engines and other machinery. This is very demanding work, particularly the quality control aspect of the machining process; and it leaves him precious little time for the contemplation of his theological studies as he proceeds through his day. Moreover, Jason and his faithful wife, Gina, have a little son, Aaron, just a year

old last week, who recently was hospitalized with second and third degree burns over fifteen percent of his body due to a scalding accident in their home. Mercifully the Lord spared Aaron life-threatening and other serious injuries and set him quickly on the road to full recovery. It may even be that he will not have permanent scarring. Nevertheless, this sudden chastisement and potential calamity added to Jason's burden just prior to the end of the semester when exams were scheduled and his colloquy was in the offing. True to His Word, however, the Lord visited upon Jason and his family no more than they were able to bear, gave them through Christ the strength to endure their crosses, and worked all things for their good and blessing for Jesus' sake. For this all of us are truly thankful to the Lord for His mercy which is new to us every morning,

This coming summer, on a schedule yet to be announced, both Jason and our two auditors, as well as additional members from the local congregation, intend to take **German I** (speaking and reading) on an accelerated basis, thus acquainting themselves with the language of Luther and of most of our Lutheran fathers according to the flesh. German I is a 2-hour course normally requiring two hours of classroom work per week over the course of a 16-week semester. In the summer, however, with no other courses scheduled, it may be possible to meet four hours per week for eight weeks on a schedule mutually agreeable to all concerned and thus complete a full semester in one summer. In addition to pronunciation, vocabulary, grammar and syntax, students will commit to memory portions of the *Small Catechism* and Luther's Morning and Evening Prayers. The intensive session should be very rewarding and ready the students for the subsequent two semesters.

While it would be *ideal* for theological students to be able to study *full-time*, that is, to take a course-load of sixteen hours per semester, necessary secular employment to support one's family concurrent with pursuing one's studies is going to be a typical scenario for many students in the future who are married and have the God-given responsibility to provide for their own (I Timothy 5:8). This, of course, slows the whole process down considerably; but we are grateful to the Lord for blessing us with such men as Jason Mabe and hopefully also others who, with their wives and children, are willing to make real sacrifices of time and togetherness for the sake of the Savior's kingdom and ultimately for the welfare of many souls.

It is worthy of special note, especially regarding a married student, that an understanding, dedicated, and committed wife is truly essential to his success, an helpmeet who will cheerfully hold up her husband's hands, lend a sympathetic ear to his frustrations, insulate him from as many distractions as possible, and support him in his desire for the pastoral office — the most blessed work on earth and the most satisfying under heaven. Such a potential pastor's wife is Gina Mabe by the grace of God, and we share with Jason his gratitude for her as an exemplary Christian spouse — faithful, patient, loving and steadfast — to the glory of God; for she too serves the Lord Christ (Col. 3:24).

We of course pray that, if it be His will, the Lord may in His own good time provide at least some students — unmarried men whom we can fully support with subsistence stipends — who will then be able to study full-time and thus take advantage of the nominal five-year curriculum as it is currently designed

Please remember your Seminary in your prayers to the Throne of Grace, that the Lord bless abundantly all the faithful labors of both professors and students, endue them with energy and zeal, with diligence and with patience, with tenacity and endurance, that, at the conclusion of their training, our students will be properly equipped and able to teach others also (II Timothy

2:2) and to undertake the ministry of the precious Word of God and the Holy Sacraments, “*that the generation to come might know them, even the children which should be born; who should arise and declare them to their children, that they might set their hope in God*” (Psalm 78:6-7).

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. David T. Mensing, Professor

INTEREST REPORT OF THE SEMINARY STUDENT

Dear Brethren:

In December of 2002 in Denver, Colorado I had requested my former pastor of a Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod congregation to provide me with the Scriptural support for the LCMS teaching and practice on joint prayer. That pastor’s initial answer of “I’m not really sure,” quickly followed by the words “so my thought is to check the *Confessional Lutheran Dogmatics Series*,” and “or we can email a St. Louis seminary professor,” and finally ending with “but I could just take a stab in the dark,” prompted my first real investigation into the doctrinal position of the LCMS. Until that time, I had loosely considered studying for the ministry at the LCMS seminary in Fort Wayne. Not even a year later, my wife and I, by God’s grace, recognized on the basis of clear Holy Scripture the long-standing doctrinal errors in the LCMS and, with the Lord’s help, resigned our membership from that local LCMS congregation (Romans 16:17; II Corinthians 6:14-18). O, how dreadful for our souls that seminary experience would have been! Now almost three years since moving to Chicago, Illinois and becoming communicant members of Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church in Oak Forest, the Lord has graciously seen fit both to bless my wife, Gina, and me with a little boy, Aaron, now a year old, and to guide me through three courses during my first year as a part-time student in the Concordia Theological Seminary of the Concordia Lutheran Conference.

I started the seminary program here in September of 2006 with some reservations and even some trepidation particularly in attempting to balance my God-given responsibilities first as a husband and then as a father with my God-given desire to prepare for the Holy Ministry. Only the promises of God Himself in His never-changing Word would carry me, my wife, and my young family through these past nine months of commitments in my full-time engineering work coupled with my part-time theological training. It has been humbling to realize repeatedly that the sufficiency of God and of His grace more than compensates for my numerous deficiencies as a husband, father, and student. How could we ever adequately render to our Triune God the many thanks due Him, first for our dear Savior, Jesus, for His righteousness for our justification (Romans 5:18b), and then for His strength in upholding us with the right hand of His righteousness (Isaiah 41:10)?

In one of my seminary courses, *Dogmatics I*, I had the vitally important opportunity to study the nature and character of theology during the first semester in which the teaching of Scripture was constantly reinforced that Holy Scripture itself is the only real authority and absolute standard of Christian doctrine and practice (II Timothy 3:15-17; John 8:31-32). Only then, and on the basis of God’s Word alone, did I take up during the second semester the study of the specific

doctrines of Holy Scripture, God, the Divine Decrees, Creation, Divine Providence, and the Angels. During the academic year, and in stark contrast to what certainly would not have been the case with the LCMS training, Pastor David T. Mensing spoke Scripture (I Peter 4:11) and mightily, by the grace and with the help of God, refrained from all human speculations and rationalizations (II Corinthians 10:4-5), not only as my pastor in his regular preaching and teaching of Christ crucified and the full truth of His Word (I Corinthians 1:23; Acts 20:27), but also as my seminary professor in his diligent preparation and thorough instruction of Christian Dogmatics. My heartfelt appreciation to Pastor Mensing for his consistent God-given answers of “*It is written*” just as the Savior did (Matthew 4:4,6,10).

In another of my seminary courses, *New Testament Greek*, I had the wonderful privilege to begin learning the mechanics of the Greek language in which the New Testament was originally written. How marvelous it was to be shown the clarity and precision of the very words that God the Holy Ghost used in His Word of Truth (I Corinthians 2:13; I Thessalonians 2:13). During my classes, written exercises and oral readings from Greek-to-English and from English-to-Greek abounded as the quantities of personalized flashcards and study sheets of verb forms, noun declensions, adjectives and adverbs, prepositions, and participles steadily increased throughout the year. Professor Mensing’s teaching style and testing technique made my first real exposure to Greek both memorable and enjoyable to the glory of God. I thank my Pastor for his patience with me in my Greek pronunciation, and I look forward not only to the continuation of this course but also to that of *Dogmatics I* in my third semester set for this upcoming Fall, the Lord willing.

I would very much like to extend my gratitude to all of you who kept me and my family in your prayers this past year. I specially want to thank my dear wife, Gina, for her continued love and support and her continued understanding of my time spent in class and in preparation; special thanks also to the brethren at Peace, Oak Forest, for their expressed interest in my studies and for their imploring of the Lord’s blessings upon my work; to the dear sisters of the Women’s Guild at Trinity, Oak Park, for their gracious underwriting of all my textbooks; to Pastor Lietz, not only for his time in traveling to Oak Forest and in auditing both seminary courses, but also for all the pleasurable dinner conversations had with him and his wife, Donna, between our classes; to Brother Phil Martin for his dedication in auditing *Dogmatics I* and in working through the written examinations right along with me; and to my brethren, John Breinig from Trinity, Oak Park, and Erik Roe from St. Mark’s, Sauk Village, for their encouragement from the Word of God. Finally, let us all remember to pray to the One Bishop of our souls, that He move the hearts of other men to train for the Pastoral Office, so that a faithful public ministry is graciously and continuously provided for us and for our children.

Respectfully submitted,

Jason A. Mabe, Seminarian

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON LUTHERAN UNION

Dear Brethren:

“He that hath My Word, let him speak My Word faithfully” (Jeremiah 23:28b).

One of our on-going ways of faithfully testifying to the truths of God’s Word and of opposing persistence in false doctrine and practice in other Lutheran church bodies is the periodic “Rightly Judging” series in *The Concordia Lutheran*. During the past year, the September–October issue (pages 145-153) carried the article: “Rightly Judging the Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod.” This issue was sent, with a brief cover letter, to a good number of synodical leaders, pastors and lay-people. We got a few responses back, but none which gave any evidence of taking seriously the “Rightly Judging” article on the LCMS. An example of a polite, yet non-committal response came on November 28, 2006, from Dr. Samuel H. Nafzger, the executive director of the LCMS’s Commission on Theology and Church Relations: “Thank you for sending me a copy of *The Concordia Lutheran* and for your ‘genuine concern’ for The Lutheran Church–Missouri Synod.” On the other hand, an LCMS pastor called the article a “diatribe of LCMS.” [A diatribe is a “bitter, abusive denunciation or criticism” –Random House *Webster’s College Dictionary*.] But, the pastor provided no documentation to disprove of or refute anything in the *CL* article. Rather, he explained his reasons for remaining in the LCMS (despite the clear instruction in Romans 16:17-18 to “avoid them”).

In the state of Texas, among a group of “confessionals” in the LCMS, there is a very disturbed “confessional.” He has been communicating with us, is most appreciative of the CLC position in doctrine and practice, and has spread “the word” about the CLC to many; but at present he is still in this heterodox body. We continue to set before him the will of God in the Holy Scriptures concerning fellowship.

Two members of our CLU, Pastor Mensing and yours truly, drove to Hudson, Michigan, last January (the 3rd) and met with Pastor Nathan Diers, who, with his congregation, Emmaus Lutheran Church, had properly applied the instruction of Romans 16:17 to the Lutheran Churches of the Reformation (LCR). We stayed overnight and visited with him most of the next day also, going back home that evening. It was a very profitable use of our time! Pastor Diers declared that he found nothing contrary to God’s Word in the doctrine and practice of the CLC, including the proper application of 6th Commandment principles to the modern, worldly, social dance. We offered to meet with the members of his congregation at their invitation, to answer any questions which they may have, and to do whatever we can possibly do to help them. It was a joy to have Pastor Diers present last Tuesday for the first day of our Pastoral Conference.

It is more and more obvious that our Conference Web site on the Internet is an invaluable tool night-and-day for people to get accurate information about our Conference. Furthermore, it is an invaluable tool for us to gain information about other Lutheran bodies, especially those coming up for consideration in our “Rightly Judging” series in the *CL*. We thank our gracious and merciful God for the gift of this technology to assist us so much in our work and “business” (Luke 2:49) in His kingdom of grace.

May the unchanging “love of Christ” (II Corinthians 5:14) continue to constrain and motivate us **1)** to “hold fast” (Revelation 3:11) to the precious truths which our God has given to us in His infallible Word, **2)** to abhor, hate, and withdraw from every false teaching and idea contrary to the Scriptures (Romans 12:9b; Psalm 119:104-105; I Timothy 6:3-5), and, when we have the opportunity, **3)** to “speak as the oracles of God” (I Peter 4:11) to those who are caught in and deceived by error (II Timothy 3:13), ever confessing: “*We can do nothing*

against the truth, but for the truth” (II Corinthians 13:8).

Respectfully submitted,

Rev. Robert J. Lietz, Chairman

Rev. David T. Mensing

Rev. M. L. Natterer

Mr. Phillip R. Martin

REPORT ON THE SEMINARY BOOKSTORE

Dear Brethren:

The Seminary Bookstore, which is maintained by *Scriptural Publications* on behalf of the Committee on Theological Education, continues to acquire primarily “used” books for review by the C. T. E. chairman to see whether they are of potential value either to the Seminary Library collection or to prospective students and pastors in the establishment of their professional libraries. Books “of value” are then kept in the inventory of the Seminary Bookstore for eventual purchase, either by future students or by instructors who do not have those titles and may profit from them in their teaching. Books so chosen by the C. T. E. are purchased from *Scriptural Publications*’ inventory with Conference funds to benefit the Seminary, and books purchased but not selected are then sold off by *Scriptural Publications* “at cost” to other interested parties.

We again, as in the past, are requesting the pastors of the Conference to contribute titles to a “wish list” of books that *they* would deem appropriate for a new pastor’s library, and these lists can then be combined into a “watch list” for *Scriptural Publications*, so that the desired books can be sought out and purchased over the next year. Some of the pastors have also contributed *actual books* to the Seminary Bookstore, extra copies that they had in their collections or copies that they were able to acquire personally; and we are grateful for their continued diligence in this area (and so will also future students and “new” pastors who will benefit from this combined effort).

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Phillip R. Martin for

Scriptural Publications

REPORT CONCERNING THE CONFERENCE ARCHIVES

Dear Brethren:

Pastor Mensing, the Conference Secretary, who is constitutionally the custodian of the Conference records (*Constitution*, Art. VIII, 3, b), has asked me to update the delegates concerning the on-going work in which I am particularly active on his behalf. Very briefly, the

process of digitizing the PROCEEDINGS of past Conference conventions is continuing as time permits so that we will eventually have a continuous record of our history preserved in electronic files. We are, of course, grateful to the Conference for its special grant to make this project a reality. As the brethren are aware, however, several years of PROCEEDINGS have not yet even been *published* due to the absence of certain documents that never found their way back into the hands of the Secretary following adjournment of those conventions or after their having been sent for review to the then President. We are endeavoring to locate those documents to the best of our ability —some being in the hands of individuals no longer associated with our Conference. Nevertheless it is hoped that the records will be found and that the proceedings of 1998, 1999, 2002 and 2003 will be completed, God-willing, during the coming fiscal year. We also wish to report that extant files of Conference pastors, especially as they pertain to our Conference's history, are being sought for their archival value, and some are even now being scanned for the sake of the historical record. The "originals" will be returned to the pastors if they so desire. The pertinent documents will then be available eventually for inspection and study.

Respectfully submitted,

Mr. Phillip R. Martin (on behalf of
the Conference Secretary)

FISCAL BUDGET ADOPTED FOR 2007-2008

Cash available, June 1, 2007 \$ 66,017.40

ANTICIPATED INCOME:

Source	Amount
Good Shepherd , Tucson (Pledged)	650.00
Peace , Oak Forest (Pledged)	7,200.00
St. John's , Lebanon (Pledged)	4,800.00
St. Luke's , Seattle (Pledged)	4,200.00
St. Mark's , Sauk Village (Pledged)	0.00
Trinity , Oak Park (Pledged)	5,000.00
Seminary Tuition Payments (Anticipated)	950.00
Interest Income (Estimated)	1,200.00
Convention Collection (Friday Service)	1,282.00
TOTAL Pledges and Other Estimated Income:	\$ 25,282.00

TOTAL Cash and Pledges Available for the Purpose of Budgeting \$ 91,299.40

ANTICIPATED EXPENSES:

Budget Item	Budgeted
<i>Scriptural Publications</i> Subsidy	\$ 3,500.00
Ekaterinburg Salary Subsidy	9,600.00
Ekaterinburg Rental Subsidy	2,400.00
Conference Archives Subsidy	500.00
Telephone Expense	500.00
Convention Expense	1,000.00
Travel Expense	5,000.00
Nigeria Travel Expense	6,000.00
Seminary Instructor's Salary	4,725.00
Fyneface Emergency Grant	5,000.00
Nigeria Communications Package	3,000.00
Miscellaneous Expense	2,000.00
TOTAL BUDGET for 2007-2008	\$ 43,225.00

RESOLUTIONS PASSED BY THE FIFTY-SIXTH ANNUAL CONVENTION**Resolution #1:**

WHEREAS the officers and standing committees have served our beloved Conference faithfully during the past fiscal year under the Lord's continued blessings, with the sad exception of the elected chairman of the Committee on Missions, whose unfaithfulness had to be dealt with during the past year;

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

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that our Conference especially thank Pastor Edward Worley for serving as chairman pro tempore for the Committee on Missions during the rest of the fiscal year; and

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

Resolution #2:

WHEREAS the sermon delivered in the opening service of this convention by our President, Pastor Edward Worley, which centered on the theme “*The Lord our Righteousness,*” and the sermon delivered in the Sunday divine service by Pastor David T. Mensing, which focused on “*What God Accomplished for Us in His Son,*” particularly reflected the motto of this year’s convention and were specially enlightening and edifying to the delegates, guests and visitors present; and

WHEREAS we also greatly benefitted by the doctrinal essay presented at this convention by Pastor Paul Bloedel, entitled “*The Active Obedience of Christ — His Righteousness for our Justification,*” and the discussions that it occasioned; and

WHEREAS the delegates and visitors at this convention also received encouragement and strength from the Word of God relative to the theme of our convention in various devotions conducted by our pastors during the sessions;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the convention express its heartfelt gratitude to Pastors Worley and Mensing for their instructive sermons, to Pastor Bloedel for his thorough doctrinal essay, and to all the Conference pastors for the devotions they conducted during this convention.

Resolution #3:

WHEREAS Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church of Oak Forest, Illinois, has shown itself to be a most gracious host to the 56th Annual Convention of our beloved Conference by extending to delegates and guests loving Christian hospitality in its church building and in the homes of its members; and

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

WHEREAS we were privileged to enjoy nourishment for our bodies through the dedicated service of the ladies of the congregation, but also received rich nourishment for our souls in the Bread of Life, God’s precious Word, proclaimed to us, and in the Sacrament of Christ’s body and blood as guests of this Christian congregation;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Concordia Lutheran Conference express its heartfelt thanks to the pastor and members of Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church for their liberal hospitality and their Christian fellowship and love which contributed to the general success of this convention, to our spiritual edification, and to our physical comfort; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conference specially thank Mr. Lloyd E. Martin for serving as organist for this convention, and all those who under his leadership participated in providing the special choral music in the divine services during this convention; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we glorify our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for His

perfect fulfillment of the Law in our stead, which not only earned for us the true righteousness that avails before God but also motivates us to do that which is good in His sight as the evidence of our love for His perfect *active obedience*, and that we give abundant thanks to Him also for having preserved us from the perils of false brethren in our midst; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we beseech God the Holy Ghost, through the means of the Gospel and the Holy Sacraments, to endow us with a greater appreciation of and personal confidence in the righteousness of Christ with which we are clothed by faith in our Redeemer, and ask Him to strengthen us by the same means in the year ahead, and to continue to grant the members of our beloved Concordia Lutheran Conference abundant joy in the true Christian unity which, by His grace, we share together (Ephesians 4:3; I Corinthians 1:10).



STATISTICAL REPORT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2006-2007

Membership	Good Shepherd Ev. Lutheran	Peace Ev. Lutheran	St. John's Lutheran	St. Luke's Lutheran	St. Mark's Ev. Lutheran	Trinity Ev. Lutheran	TOTALS
Baptized Members	42	65	79	114	40	38	378
Communicant Members	34	41	40	72	17	29	233
Voting Members	10	17	14	26	3	6	76
Children in Sunday School	8	20	7	29	0	7	71
Adults in Bible Class	15	33	30	60	23	18	179
Received by Transfer	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Received by Confirmation/Profession	0	2	1	0	0	0	3
Lost by Transfer	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Lost by Other Circumstance	0	0	6	0	0	3	9

Official Acts

Infant Baptisms	1	5	1	1	0	0	8
Adult Baptisms	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Confirmations of Children	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Confirmations of Adults	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
Marriages Solemnized	0	0	1	3	0	0	4
Funerals or Burials	0	0	0	0	0	1	1

Auxiliary Staff

Sunday School Teachers	4	4	2	7	2	3	22
Elected Auxiliary Officers	5	12	9	7	2	2	37
Organists	1	1	1	1	0	1	5
Choir Members	0	12	0	12	0	0	24

Property

Church Facilities Owned	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	6
Church Facilities Rented	No	No	No	Yes ¹	No	No	1
Acreage (with or without bldgs.)	4.0	3.2	1.47	.67	5.0	.75	15.09
Value (in thousands of \$\$)	\$600	\$975	\$200	\$970	N/A	\$1750	\$4495

¹ Remote chapel facilities in Victoria, BC, Canada

Congregations: 6 Pastors: 6 Congregations/Pastors in Fellowship: 7 Available Candidates: 0

Respectfully submitted,
Raymond S. Kusumi, Statistician