

# The **LUTHERAN** **CLARION**



Lutheran Concerns Association  
1320 Hartford Avenue, St. Paul, MN 55116

March 2012  
Volume 4, Issue 4

## The Importance of Campus Ministry at Secular Colleges and Universities

Jesus commands us Christians to "Go ... and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them 'Gods Word' which makes us 'wise unto salvation which is by faith in Jesus Christ.'" One response to Christ's command is to establish Word/Sacrament campus ministries that are either on or very close to the actual campus of secular colleges/universities where students/faculty of diverse nationalities gather for higher education.

Campus ministries enable us to interact daily with the campus community as we share with them "Three important R's" of our Christian faith.

- 1) The "ruination" of our human race by "the fall into sin" that closes heaven and damns to hell.
- 2) The "redemption" of sinners by God's grace through faith in Jesus Christ that rescues from hell and opens heaven again.
- 3) The "regeneration" of sinners by the Holy Spirit, Who calls them to faith in Jesus by God's Word, brings them from spiritual death to spiritual life, enlightens them to the truth and keeps them in the Christian faith.

**"Without the ministry on campus, I'd spiritually fall apart."**

Quote from a student receiving spiritual care from a Lutheran campus ministry.

This kind of "Campus Ministry" is very evident when you see the following occur as we have seen at Lutheran Chapel of Hope [Editor's note: *This is a free standing chapel within walking distance of Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, Missouri--abutting historic Perry County. The enrollment is just over 11,500.*]:

- 1) Huili, a Buddhist from China who embraced our Biblical teachings, came to faith in Jesus, returned home at Christmas and told her parents, brother and husband this was her best Christmas ever because she now knew the true meaning of Christmas, the birth of Jesus "her" Savior and the Savior of all sinners, and she learned this at our Campus Ministry;

- 2) a ministry where students are encouraged to study for full time church work. J.S., who is now in his first year at Concordia Seminary; B.T., who will be entering his first year at Saint Louis Seminary this coming September, S. VanG., who worked for a time at our Synod's Campus Ministry Department and T.B., who is serving in full time church work;
- 3) T.W., who was a devout Christian when she became involved in our ministry, became bitter toward God at the death of her grandmother and wanted nothing more to do with this kind of God or our ministry but came back through the encouragement of our campus ministry and now testifies that she is still a Christian because of our campus ministry;
- 4) offers a needed place for worship for students who have no transportation.

The importance of Campus Ministry is also evident from the comments of these two students who were involved in our Campus Ministry:

- 1) "As the week progresses, the strength gained on Sunday is ground down and spread too thin. ... Wednesday Bible study re-enforces the strength gained on Sunday. ... Fellow students provide a support group for facing the challenges of being a Lutheran student."
- 2) "Without the ministry on campus, I'd spiritually fall apart."

Make no mistake about it! Campus Ministry keeps students in the Christian faith. It enables students who have no transportation to attend worship, Bible Study etc.

Pray that God will continue to bless and preserve our vital Word/Sacrament campus ministries through which God brings unbelievers to faith in Jesus and preserves their faith; regains some who had become bitter toward God and walked away from Him, God's people are absolved of their sins, fortified in their faith, equipped to

...continued...

In this Issue of	
<b>The Lutheran Clarion</b>	
<b>Campus Ministry at Secular Colleges &amp; Universities....</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Office of the Ministry: Current Concerns.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>You Missed a Good One!!.....</b>	<b>7</b>

live, witness to and defend their Christian beliefs, enabled to give God's answers to hot button religious issues; comforted when they struggle with the issues of illness or the death of loved ones, encouraged to serve the Lord in full time Church work and live with the certainty of eternal life in heaven.

**Rev. David V. Dissen**, Cape Girardeau, Missouri  
Served as a full-time parish pastor 39 years and as Campus Pastor part-time for 11 years at Southeast Missouri State University in Cape Girardeau, Missouri.



### Please Support Lutheran Concerns

There is much remaining work to be done to return our Synod to the Church of our Grandfathers and Reformation fathers! The Lutheran Concerns Association is dedicated to the effort to reclaim our full Lutheran heritage for The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, but we cannot achieve this long-range goal alone.

We need your continued help so that a truly Lutheran church body will be there for our grandchildren and great-grandchildren. In some small way we at the Lutheran Concerns Association desire to be helpful in preserving our faith, under the Lord's blessing, so that the treasure of pure doctrine and right practice will be known for generations yet to come.

Would you prayerfully consider assisting us in this on-going effort with your tax deductible donations? Please send checks to:

**Lutheran Concerns Association**  
1320 Hartford Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55116-1623

## Office of the Ministry: Current Concerns

*Rev. Dr. John C. Wohlrabe, Jr., gave the following presentation at the January 2012 Lutheran Concerns Conference in Fort Wayne, Indiana.*

Fellow Redeemed in Christ: Thank you for the invitation to speak at the Lutheran Concerns Association Annual Conference. You have asked me to address the topic of the Office of the Ministry, which is a pretty broad subject to cover, especially within the confines of thirty minutes. I wrote a 484 page doctoral dissertation on the history of the doctrine of the ministry in the Missouri Synod until 1962. A 100 page condensed version of this was published by Lutheran Concerns Association in 1992. But, for today, I would simply like to address current concerns regarding the Office of the Ministry based on our historic understanding. That may be something that can be accomplished within our allotted time, but I have my doubts. Before I address the topic, however, let me first talk about Lutheran theology in general. In his book, *Spirituality of*

*the Cross*, Gene Veith noted:

The distinctive characteristic of Lutheran theology is its affirmation of paradox. ... Law and Gospel; Christ as both true God and true Man; the Christian as simultaneously saint and sinner; justification by faith and baptismal regeneration; Holy Communion as the real presence of Christ in material bread and wine.<sup>1</sup>

Holding to theological paradox involves ongoing tension and balance. If one side is emphasized over against or to the exclusion of the other, the result is false teaching. Furthermore, putting theology into practice involves even greater tension and balance. This was noted by the Departments of Systematic Theology from both of our LC-MS seminaries:

We recognize that embodying a doctrine or principle in our lives is much more difficult than merely stating it or agreeing with it. This is the way with the distinction of Law and Gospel.... This is the way with the relationship of justification and sanctification.... This is also the way with the office of the ministry and the life of the church....<sup>2</sup>

The challenge of maintaining the proper tension and balance in church and ministry is seen throughout the history of Lutheranism, particularly that of our own church body. Three differing views on the public ministry can be identified.<sup>3</sup>

On the one extreme are those who hold to a functional view of the office of the ministry. According to this view, Christ did not institute a specific office of the ministry, only the functions of preaching the Word and administering the Sacraments. The Office of the Keys is given only to the Church, the priesthood of all believers, and the church delegates the functions and creates offices as it sees fit. In the early 19th Century Germany, Richard Rothe and J.W.F. Hoefling of the Erlangen School, influenced by Frederick Schleiermacher and what has become known as historical-criticism, maintained that the church emerged gradually and that the ministry grew out of the needs of the church. The functional view places the church over ministry. The public office of the ministry as a distinct office instituted by Christ is rejected and discarded. There is a great concern that some of what is taught and practiced in the Missouri Synod today is influenced by this functional view, including such talk of "everyone a minister or missionary," "lay ministers," the regular appearance of non-ordained persons in pulpits, and non-ordained people consecrating or administering Sacraments.

On the other extreme are those who emphasize the institution and character of the public office of the ministry, elevating it over the church and the priesthood of all believers. In 19th Century Germany, promoters of this view included Julius Stahl and A.F.C. Vilmar. According to this understanding, the public office of the ministry is self-perpetuated by way of ordination and is completely autonomous from the priesthood of all believers. Some who held to this view maintained that it is the duty of pastors

to direct all church affairs, and lay people are merely to hear and obey. With respect to the history of the Missouri Synod, various aspects of this view were held by Wilhelm Loehe, Martin Stephan, together with many of the Saxon immigrants who followed him, and J.A.A. Grabau who formed the Buffalo Synod. This view places the ministry over the church. There is concern that some within the Missouri Synod today espouse this elevated view of the office.

By adopting Walther's *"Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt"* as its official position in 1851—the Missouri Synod took a mediating stand that is both Scriptural and Confessional, which allows church and ministry, office and function, to stand in balance and tension. Furthermore, it does not involve polity with the doctrines of church and ministry.<sup>4</sup>

Walther and the Synod maintained that, properly speaking, the church is the totality of all those who have been called by the Holy Spirit through the Gospel, who truly believe in Christ. No unregenerate person, hypocrite, or heretic belongs to this true church. This church, properly speaking, is invisible. The members of the church are visible, but their faith, and therefore, their true church membership, is not. Only God knows who truly belongs to this church. As mentioned in the creeds, the church is an object of faith. It is believed, but not seen (Hebrews 11:1). It follows that the church is not identified with any outward organization or polity.

This true church possesses and bears the heavenly goods, rights, powers, and offices which Christ established in his church. Although this church is invisible, its presence can be recognized by its marks, which are the pure preaching of God's Word and the administration of his sacraments according to Christ's institution. Yet, Walther recognized absolute purity in these matters was not absolutely necessary so that the church also exists where enough of the Gospel is proclaimed and Baptism is administered in the name of the Triune God, even where the Sacrament of the Altar is not administered rightly. Believers are, however, obligated by God's Word to flee false teachers, to avoid heterodox congregations or sects, and to acknowledge and adhere to orthodox congregations and their orthodox pastors.<sup>5</sup>

Concerning the doctrine of the ministry, the pastoral office is an office distinct from the priestly office which all believers have. This pastoral office is not a human ordinance, but it is an office established by God himself. It is not an arbitrary office, but an office that the church is to establish and maintain until the end of time. This preaching or pastoral office is not a special order like the Levitical priesthood of the Old Testament. It is an office of service involving the preaching of God's Word and the administering of the sacraments, as well as participation in judging doctrine and other spiritual matters. This preaching or pastoral office is conferred by God through the congregation by its call, since the church as a whole is the holder of all church power or churchly and heavenly goods.<sup>6</sup> Ordination of those called is not a divine institution, but an ap-

ostolic practice and involves the public confirmation of the call.<sup>7</sup>

The office of the holy ministry is the authority conferred by God through the congregation to administer in public the common rights of the spiritual priesthood on behalf of all. If there is a proper call, there is proper ministry. This public office of the holy ministry is the highest office in the church, and any other offices the church may establish (branch or auxiliary offices), derive or stem from this office. Reverence and unconditional obedience are due to the office of the ministry when the preacher is proclaiming the Word of God. However, the pastor may not dominate over the church and

has no right to make new laws, to make final decisions on matters of indifference or on matters of ceremonies, as well as to impose and execute excommunication alone without previously consulting the congregation.

Also, according to divine right, the function of passing judgment on doctrine and other church matters belongs to the office of the ministry. However, lay people have this right as well.<sup>8</sup>

For Walther, the pastor was not a creature of the congregation.

He was neither lord

nor slave of the church. He was called by God through the congregation to be faithful in that call to the ministry of the Word. His tenure was unlimited so that he would not have to be concerned about pleasing men to keep his position. The congregation had the power to depose its pastor only because of false doctrine, immorality, or malfeasance of duty.

It should be specifically noted that Walther and the Missouri Synod did not place the church, the priesthood of all believers, or the congregation above the office of the ministry. Nor is the office of the ministry placed above the church. Christ is over all. Both church and ministry stand side-by-side in tension and in balance.<sup>9</sup>

Let's now consider how this tension and balance was maintained over the course of the Synod's history. Already in 1847 the newly organized Missouri Synod confronted a challenge with respect to missions and growth. Various methods were attempted to reach out to the scattered German Lutherans, including missionaries at port cities and mother congregations starting preaching sta-

***"There is a great concern that some of what is taught and practiced in the Missouri Synod today is influenced by this functional view, including such talk of 'everyone a minister or missionary,' 'lay ministers,' the regular appearance of non-ordained persons in pulpits, and non-ordained people consecrating or administering Sacraments."***

tions across the frontier. These methods were considered acceptable because pastors who were already called to congregations also served as missionaries.

Other methods proved more controversial. Experiments were made with the offices of *Besucher* (Visitor or Explorer) and *Reiseprediger* (Riding Preacher). At the 1863 synodical convention a lively discussion arose.<sup>10</sup> One side believed that an itinerant minister could perform most if not all acts of the pastoral office, including the administration of both sacraments, provided he did not usurp someone else's office. The basis for this position was "the call of love." The opponents to this view rejected any broadening of the traveling preacher's job description except in the case of the most extreme emergencies.<sup>11</sup>

At the 1865 Western District convention, of which Walther was a member, "Twenty-eight Theses Concerning the Call and Position of a *Reiseprediger*" were discussed. Here it was asserted that love is the queen of all laws, and in cases of necessity it knows no other regulations. There are cases of necessity in which the normal order of the public office of the ministry cannot and should not be observed. A case of necessity occurs when, by legalistically observing the regulation of only conferring a call through a congregation, souls would be lost instead of saved and love would thereby be violated.<sup>12</sup> In the case of missions, the call is extended through a collection of congregations in a district or synod so that the Word can be proclaimed to the unchurched.<sup>13</sup>

Education of clergy has been an ongoing issue for the Missouri Synod. While the Saxons of Missouri were familiar with only a thorough classical university and seminary education, the *Sendlinge* of Loehe were trained as *Nothhelfer* (emergency helpers). They received a rudimentary education in Germany and were then sent to America to alleviate the dire spiritual needs of German immigrants.<sup>14</sup> When in 1846, Loehe helped start the seminary in Fort Wayne, it was intended to train pastors as quickly and practically as possible. It was known as the "practical seminary."<sup>15</sup> During the Civil War, the Missouri Synod moved the "practical seminary" to St. Louis because Indiana had a draft for the military that included theological students. Both seminaries remained in St. Louis under Walther's supervision for fourteen years. When the "practical seminary" was moved to Springfield, IL, it was with the hope that this was temporary and eventually only the classical, theoretical education would be the preferred route into the ministry. Walther believed that the "practical" preachers in the Synod were a weak link.<sup>16</sup> Yet, this hope never fully materialized, for even when the "practical seminary" was moved to Fort Wayne in the 1970s and provided an overall theoretical education, alternate tracks were soon established at both seminaries.

Even before the Missouri Synod was formed, both the Loehe *Sendlinge* and the Saxon colonists had professional educators. In its first constitution, the Synod classified teachers as advisory ministerial members of the Synod.<sup>17</sup>

In *Kirche und Amt*, Walther maintained that the office of teacher was an auxiliary of the one public office of the ministry. Between 1865 and 1871, Walther published a series of articles in *Lehre und Wehre* which were then published as *Amerikanisch-Lutherische Pastoraltheologie* in 1875. Here Walther stressed that a pastor should never forget that a teacher also has a divine office (*Schulamt*) in the church, which is an auxiliary office branched off of the pastoral office.<sup>18</sup> Nevertheless, a differing view began to emerge through J.C.W. Lindemann, the director of the Synod's teachers seminary in Addison, Illinois. Lindemann introduced the idea of a two-fold calling which split the call and service of the teacher into partially divine and partially secular aspects.<sup>19</sup> Others began putting forward differing views regarding a parochial school teacher's call.<sup>20</sup>

### Thank You...

...to *Balance-Concord, Inc.*

*Balance-Concord, Inc., has been a most faithful contributor to The Lutheran Clarion in honor of the sainted Rev. Raymond Mueller and the sainted Rev. Edgar Rehwaldt, both of whom faithfully served the Synod and Balance-Concord, Inc., for many years.*

*The Clarion is most appreciative of such continued support from Balance-Concord, Inc., as well as the wonderful support of our readers. These contributions make it possible to bring you substantive articles by respected and qualified authors on issues affecting YOUR Synod. Please continue your support. It is both appreciated and needed.*

The question of the teacher's office and call was an issue also raised within the Wisconsin Synod, a member of the Synodical Conference and then in altar and pulpit fellowship with the Missouri Synod. Beginning in 1911, August Pieper, a professor at the Wisconsin Synod's seminary, put forward a series of articles in which he questioned Walther's *Kirche und Amt*. August Pieper maintained that the pastoral office was not THE true and only form of the public office of the ministry. For him, there was no one form. Rather, it was up to the discretion of the church to decide what form and function it would take in a given time and situation.<sup>21</sup> In time this became the established position of the Wisconsin Synod. Discussions were held between officials and theologians of both synods over this issue for many years. Yet, church fellowship was not broken until 1961, and that was done by the Wisconsin Synod over what they considered to be issues regarding their doctrine of church fellowship.

Increased confusion came into the Missouri Synod when Arnold C. Mueller, the Editor of Religious Literature (1933-1966) and August C. Stellhorn, Secretary of Schools for the Missouri Synod (1921-1960), advocated the Wisconsin Synod's position on the doctrine of the ministry within the Missouri Synod – what is characterized as the functional view of the ministry. Furthermore, in a civil case involving a Missouri Synod parochial school teacher and the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, Mueller and Stellhorn set forth

this functional view as representative of the Missouri Synod's position before the U.S. Government and published it throughout the Synod as the only proper and correct understanding.<sup>22</sup>

While some held to the functional view of the ministry, others began putting forward a high view of the office the ministry similar to that of Wilhelm Loehe and J.A.A. Grabau. The rise of the Liturgical Movement within the Missouri Synod was also linked to several leading pastors and theologians involved in further movements for change through the American Lutheran Publicity Bureau, its publication *The American Lutheran*, the issuing of "A Statement of the 44" in 1945, and various liturgical societies. Leaders included Berthold von Schenk, Fred Lindemann, Paul Lindemann, Theodore Graebner, O.P. Kretzmann, and Arthur Carl Piepkorn.<sup>23</sup>

Meanwhile, between 1952 and 1962, the Synod's Council of Presidents (COP) worked on changing the Synod's definition of ordination. Prior to 1962, ordination in the Missouri Synod could occur only when a man was called to serve as a pastor in a congregation. The 1962 synodical convention passed a resolution put forward by the COP in which any man certified by one of the Synod's seminaries could be ordained to a call to any churchly office, including chaplain, missionary, college or seminary professor, synodical or district offices, as well as other full-time para-congregational positions. One of the main reasons was the growing bureaucracy and the increasing number of district and synodical positions. Secondly, the government held a different understanding of ordination for the commissioning of military chaplains. Thirdly, ordination was considered by many as an adiaphoron. However, it seems that this new definition of ordination separated the office of the public ministry from the function of proclaiming the Word and administering the Sacraments and separated the office of the ministry from a congregation.<sup>24</sup>

The denigration of the office of the holy ministry continued through the Mission Affirmations of 1965 where the distinction between the pastoral office and the priesthood of all believers was blurred.<sup>25</sup> Then, in 1974, Oscar Feucht published a book entitled *Everyone a Minister: A Guide to Churchmanship for Laity and Clergy*.<sup>26</sup> Feucht stressed that the pastor's main job is equipping the saints for the work of the ministry according to his faulty exegesis of Ephesians 4:11-12. Everyone is to be taught that they are ministers and have a ministry in the places where they live and work in the world. In order to have an active, living, growing church, the pastor must be a "change-agent" and "dispatcher."<sup>27</sup>

The position of *Everyone a Minister* would have a profound impact on the Missouri Synod after the 1974 Seminex Walk-out through the Synod's evangelism programs and support of the Church Growth Movement during the 1980s and following years. Prolific proponents of this view include Dr. Kent Hunter and Rev. David Lueke who have written several books on the Church Growth Movement for use in Lutheran churches.<sup>28</sup> There is continued concern about the proliferation of this view to the present.

Meanwhile, a resurgence of a high view of the ministry can be found among some today in the Missouri Synod, placing the office of the ministry as a special estate above the priesthood of all believers, with ordination as more than a public confirmation of the call, and with the efficacy of the Sacraments dependent on one being properly called and ordained. This too is an ongoing concern.<sup>29</sup>

The category of "lay ministers" was authorized at the 1989 synodical convention in Wichita, Kansas, as a way to meet emergency needs of small congregations in isolated rural areas. Some maintain this to be a heterodox practice in view of Scripture and Article XIV of the Augsburg Confession, specifically that some of these "lay ministers" are authorized to serve in Word and Sacrament ministry to congregations of the Synod without a regular call. To work toward certification leading to a proper call and ordination, the Distance Education Leading to Ordination (DELTO) program was established. This allows some laymen to provide Word and Sacrament Ministry while preparing for ordination. This is also a matter

**"The category of 'lay ministers' was authorized at the 1989 synodical convention in Wichita, Kansas, as a way to meet emergency needs of small congregations in isolated rural areas."**

of concern for some for the same Scriptural and Confessional reasons.<sup>30</sup> Furthermore, the establishment of the Specific Ministry Pastor (SMP) program at the Synod's 2007 convention is seen by some as providing an inadequate preparation for the office of the ministry.<sup>31</sup> Of further concern is the authorization of some vicars to administer the Lord's Supper in certain cases, violating Augsburg Confession Article XIV and the consciences of some vicars.<sup>32</sup>

In the response of the Saxon immigrants of Missouri to the *Hirtenbrief* of J.A.A. Grabau, it was noted that the efficacy of the Sacraments does not depend on ordination, or even the office of the ministry, but on the all-efficient Word of God. This was maintained repeatedly in the course of Synod's history, particularly in objection to those who insisted on ordination and the office as being absolutely necessary. Yet, the office of the public ministry is the proper, Christ-established order, not to be discarded. Over the course of the Synod's history, it has been acknowledged that there are times of emergency in which strictly following the established order would violate the Law of Love and neglect the salvation and nurturing of souls. Yet, those emergencies are rare, should be strictly regulated, and should include pastoral oversight. Additionally, throughout its history, the amount of education necessary for the public office of the ministry has been an issue of concern. In all of these instances, there has been a tension and attempted balance between the office of the public ministry and the priesthood of all believers, as well as between legalism and antinomianism.

...continued...

To my way of thinking, the main problem is not with the granting of exceptions in emergency situations, but in the attempt by some within the Synod to make the exception the rule and to push the envelope with respect to the granting of exceptions. An example of this can be seen in a "Request for a Theological Opinion from the South Wisconsin District President Regarding Augsburg Confession Article XIV" and the response of the Commission on Theology

**"It also seems odd that there is a rather large difference between the number of SMP students at the St. Louis seminary over against the number at the Fort Wayne campus. Why the disparity?"**

and Church Relations (CTCR) dated December 18, 2010. Apparently one or more congregations in Wisconsin were regularly using laymen to publicly preach the Word and administer the Sacraments and lay men and women to proclaim the Word and administer the Sacraments in house church, small group, or cell group settings. With-

out going into detail, the CTCR responded that this is inappropriate.<sup>33</sup>

Concerning vicars being authorized to administer the Lord's Supper, it is my understanding that both seminaries allow this on a case by case basis as an exception for emergency situations. The supervising pastor must request the exception in writing and both the seminary and the district president must give permission. This too is to be only an exception in emergency situations. It may well be that there have been abuses here as well.

Personally, I believe that while the initiation of "lay ministers" for emergency, frontier situations like Alaska may have been well intended, it is fraught with abuse and leads to grave confusion. Licensing "lay ministers" or "deacons" sends a mixed message. If a congregation or a group of congregations ask a man to publicly preach, teach, and administer the Sacraments, then he should be called and ordained to do so. The amount of education is secondary, but certainly important and open for discussion. The call and affirmation of that call through ordination makes it clear to the man and the people that the man is in the office of the public ministry and that he is supposed to preach the Word and administer the Sacraments among God's people.

Another concern regarding the SMP program is that it is not being used as intended. Instead of being a means of preparing designated "lay ministers" in exceptional rural settings for ordination, some of our larger congregations are using the program to increase their staff with hand-picked individuals that they are using for their satellite ministries or other "growing" needs. It also seems odd that there is a rather large difference between the number of SMP students at the St. Louis seminary over against the number at the Fort Wayne campus. Why the disparity? Is there a difference between the two programs? Which seminary is the preference of those seeking admittance from large urban congregations, and why?

There also seems to be an ongoing confusion between doctrine and polity in the Synod on the part of some. Holy Scripture mandates no specific government for the church. And yet, there are some who insist on the supremacy of voters' assemblies, while others maintain that an episcopacy is the only valid model, or the model that would best alleviate tensions that exist...

The tug-of-war involving tension and balance in the doctrine of the ministry continues as it has throughout our history. But, as with many aspects of Lutheran theology, this is not an either/or but a both/and. The tension and balance are to be maintained.

As we confront the various concerns facing our Synod with respect to the doctrine of the ministry, I want to stress the importance of the proposed Koinonia Project, which will establish Synod-wide studies of Scripture and the Confessions covering specific topics, including church and ministry, encouraging and involving repentance, confession and absolution, seeking to identify clear statements of the controversies, clear statements of what we affirm together, clear statements of what we reject, and agreements of what we will therefore do together. I hope and pray that all of you will embrace this effort in order to maintain the balance and tension involved in the doctrine of the ministry and its practice.

*Soli Deo Gloria*

**Rev. Dr. John C. Wohlrabe, Jr., Th.D.**

Pastor, Concordia Lutheran Church, Geneseo, Illinois  
2nd Vice President, LCMS; Retired Navy Chaplain (Captain)

- 1 Gene Edward Veith, *The Spirituality of the Cross* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, revised edition 2010), pp. 147-148.
- 2 Departments of Systematic Theology, "The Office of the Holy Ministry," *Concordia Journal* 33 (July 2007): 242-243.
- 3 Identified by E. W. Janetzi, "The Doctrine of the Office of The Holy Ministry in The Lutheran Church of Australia Today," *Lutheran Theological Quarterly* (November, 1979) pp. 68-81; Karl L. Barth, "The Doctrine of the Ministry: Some Practical Dimensions," *Concordia Journal* 14 (July 1988) pp. 204-214; John C. Wohlrabe, Jr., "An Historical Analysis of the Doctrine of the Ministry in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod until 1962," Unpublished Th.D. dissertation presented to the faculty of Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, May 1987; *Ministry in Missouri until 1962* (Private Printing, 1992); "Walther's Doctrine of the Ministry: A Distinctly Mediating Position," *Soli Deo Gloria: Essays on C.F.W. Walther in Memory of August R. Suelflow* (Private Printing: Thomas Manteufel and Robert Kolb, 2000), pp. 203-221.
- 4 *Vierter Synodal-Bericht der deutschen Ev. Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio, u.a. staaten vom Jarhe 1850. Zweite Auflage.* (St. Louis: Druckerei der Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, 1876), pp. 144-145. *Fuenfter Synodal-Bericht der deutschen Ev. Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio, u.a. staaten vom Jarhe 1851. Zweite Auflage.* (St. Louis: Druckerei der Synode von Missouri, Ohio und andern Staaten, 1876), pp. 169-173. The book was published as *Die Stimme unserer Kirche in der Frage von Kirche und Amt* (Erlangen: Verlag von Andreas Deichert, 1852). Translations may be found in *Selected Writings of C.F.W. Walther*, 6 vols., August Suelflow, Series Editor (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1981), Walther on the Church, translated by John M. Drickamer; and *Walther and the Church*, translated by Wm. Dallman, W.H.T. Dau, and Th. Engelder, eds. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1938). For another analysis, consider Norman Nagel, "The Doctrine of the Office of the Holy Ministry in the Confessions and in Walther's *Kirche und Amt*," *Concordia Journal* 15 (October 1989), pp. 423-446.
- 5 The true visible church for Walther was the Lutheran Church. But, by this, he did not mean any synodical or churchly organization. He defined it this way: "The Evangelical Lutheran Church is the totality of all those who confess without reservation that they believe as the doctrine of the divine Word the doctrine which was again brought to light through the Reformation of Luther, was delivered summarily in writing to the Emperor and the Empire in the year 1530 at Augsburg, and was repeated and explained in the other so-called Lutheran symbols." *The True Visible Church, in Walther on the Church* translated by John M. Drickamer (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1981), p. 50-51.
- 6 Walther opposed all clerical domination as a form of popish Romanism. Christ has given the keys, representing all spiritual authority, to the church itself. The

- church, the local congregation, then commits the office of the keys to the pastor for their public exercise. But the church is "the proper and only possessor and bearer of the spiritual, divine and heavenly goods, rights, powers, offices, etc. which Christ has won and which are given to the church." *Church and Ministry, in Walther on the Church* translated by John M. Drickamer (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1981), p. 29.
- 7 Walther explained his position on ordination more fully in an essay he gave at the 1863 synodical convention: "If ordination is a prerequisite to valid administration of the office of the public ministry, then I can never know if my pastor is a true pastor. For if I want to know that, I must know if he is properly ordained; if I want to know if he is properly ordained, I must know if his ordinator was properly ordained, and so on, back to the apostles. And so I could never be certain if I was [properly] baptized, [properly] absolved, [and] properly communed, unless an unbroken chain of proper ordinations from my pastor all the way back to the apostles could be established. If this chain were once broken, then I would have no proper Baptism, no proper preaching, and no proper Communion." C.F.W. Walther, "The Proper Form of Calling a Pastor" 11th Synodical Convention, October 14, 1863, in *Essays for the Church: C.F.W. Walther*, vol. I (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House), pp. 83-84.
  - 8 Walther also made it very clear that the priesthood of all believers was not to interfere with the divinely instituted ministry, but in cases of necessity any Christian could validly perform pastoral functions such as Baptism or Absolution. At the same time Walther was very strict about the divine institution of the office of the holy ministry. Laymen were not to go against God's order by preaching or leading the congregation in prayer. Although the pastor was a member of the priesthood of all believers, he had a distinct office. He was called by God mediately through the congregation to perform the office of the keys and all other priestly rights and responsibilities publicly on behalf of the whole congregation.
  - 9 Walther stated: "We do not tolerate the slightest encroachment on the office of the ministry by the congregation. Among us the pastor does not lord it over the congregation, nor the congregation over the pastor, but both are ruled by the Word of God." Erich H. Heintzen, *Love Leaves Home: Wilhelm Loehe and the Missouri Synod* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1973), p.64.
  - 10 LCMS, *Elfter Synodal-Bericht der Allgemeinen Deutsche Evang. Luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio, u.a. Staaten vom Jahre 1863* (St. Louis: Synodaldruckerei von Aug. Wiebusch u. Sohn, 1863), 56-58.
  - 11 Karl Wyneken, "Missouri Molds a Ministry for Mission," *Concordia Historical Institute Quarterly* 45 (1972), pp. 82-83.
  - 12 LCMS, Western District, *Verhandlungen der Elften Jahresversammlung des Westlichen Districts der deutschen ev.-luth. Synode von Missouri, Ohio, u.a. Staaten im Jahre 1865* (St. Louis: Druck von Aug. Wiebusch u. Sohn, 1865) pp. 57-72. Karl Wyneken, "The Development of the Itinerant Ministries in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, 1847-1865," unpublished S.T.M. Thesis, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, 1963, pp. 158-168.
  - 13 It was during this period that Walther was called on to mediate a dispute within the Norwegian Synod regarding the ministry and lay preachers. In theses presented at a special convention of the Norwegian Synod, Walther suggested that the ministry was to be seen from three vantage-points: 1) as belonging to the universal priesthood, 2) as being the special office of the ministry established by God in the congregation, and 3) as conditioned by necessity which knows no law, that is, as in an emergency ministry. E. Clifford Nelson and Eugene L. Fevold, *The Lutheran Church Among Norwegian-Americans* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing House, 1960), p. 165. Basically, Walther's solution was a combination of the position set forth in *Kirche und Amt* and the resolution which was then reached within the Western District of the Missouri Synod over itinerant ministries. This then brings in a new factor into maintaining the tension and balance in the doctrine of the ministry: the tension between legalism and antinomianism.
  - 14 Carl S. Meyer, ed., *Moving Frontiers* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1964), p. 97.
  - 15 *Ibid.*, pp. 97-98, 213-214.
  - 16 Carl S. Meyer, *Log Cabin to Luther Tower* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1965), p. 43, including foot note 1.
  - 17 Meyer, pp. 149-161.
  - 18 C.F.W. Walther, *Amerikanisch-Lutherische Pastoralthologie* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 4th edition, 1897), p. 391.
  - 19 "Pastor and Schullehrer," Part 3 [This series of articles was unsigned, but is apparently by J.C.W. Lindemann] *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Schulblatt* 2 (January 1867), pp. 133-138.
  - 20 At a pastoral conference of the Synodical Conference in the 1880s, Reinhold Pieper, older brother of Francis and August, gave a paper in which he stated that the pastoral office is the one and only office of the ministry in the church. The office of the teacher stems entirely from the parents on whom God has enjoined the training of their children. John Philipp Koehler, *The History of the Wisconsin Synod, translated and edited by Leigh D. Jordahl* (St. Cloud, MN: Sentinel Publishing Company, 1970), p. 231. Herman Speckhard put forward a similar view. H. Speckhard, "Thesen, den Beruf der Gemeindegemeindeführer unserer Synode die Anstellung von Lehrerinnen innerhalb derselben betreffend," *Evangelisch-Lutherisches Schulblatt* 32 November 1897; pp. 330-332. Yet, the majority of articles on the office of the school teacher in the Missouri Synod corresponded to the position put forward by Walther.
  - 21 August Pieper, "Zur Verstaendigung in der gegenwaertigen Diskussion ueber Kirche und Amt," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 9 (Juli 1912), pp. 182-208; "Die Lehre on der Kirche und ihren Keuntzeichen in Anwendung auf die Synod," *Theologische Quartalschrift* 9 (April 1912), pp. 83-106.
  - 22 For documentation, see John Wohlrabe "An Historical Analysis of the Doctrine of the Ministry in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod until 1962," Concordia Seminar, St. Louis, MO, unpublished Th.D. Dissertation, 1987, pp. 222-283; John Wohlrabe, *Ministry in Missouri*, Lutheran Concerns Association Private Printing, 1992, pp. 39-47.
  - 23 For documentation, see Wohlrabe "An Historical Analysis of the Doctrine of the Ministry in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod until 1962;" Wohlrabe, *Ministry in Missouri*, pp. 34-39.
  - 24 Wohlrabe "An Historical Analysis of the Doctrine of the Ministry in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod until 1962," pp. 339-390; *Ministry in Missouri*, pp. 56-79.
  - 25 VI. THE WHOLE CHURCH IS CHRIST'S MISSION: WHEREAS, Every Christian is commissioned a missionary through baptism, for through the selfsame water and Word the Holy Spirit makes us both God's children and His witness to the world when He says: "Go ye and teach a nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you".... LCMS, *Proceedings of the 46th Regular Convention of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod*, Detroit, Michigan, June 16-26, 1965, p. 81.
  - 26 Oscar E. Feucht, *Everyone a Minister: A Guide to Churchmanship for Laity and Clergy* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1974).
  - 27 Brent Kuhlman noted: "The parallels between *Everyone a Minister* and pietism are unmistakable. Both Spener and Feucht offer proposals for reforming the church. Both of their proposals reflect a shift in theology from God's objective external gifts [Word and Sacrament] to the subjectivity and activism of the believer." Brent Kuhlman, "Oscar Feucht's *Everyone a Minister: Pietism Redivivus*," *Logia* 8 (Reformation 1999), p. 35.
  - 28 See Klemet Preus, "The Theology of the Church Growth Movement: An Evaluation of Kent Hunter's *Confessions*," *Logia* 10 (Epiphany 2001).
  - 29 Consider David Saer, "Ordination: Human Rite or Divine Ordinance," (Fort Wayne, IN: Concordia Theological Seminary Press, no date); Roger D. Pittelko, "The Office of the Ministry in the Life of the Church: A View from the Parish," *Logia* 2 (Epiphany 1993), pp. 33-40; or the extreme views of Douglas D. Fusselman, "Only Playing Church? The Lay Minister and the Lord's Supper," *Logia* 3 (Epiphany 1994), pp. 43-49; "It's Jesus!" The Minister as the Embodiment of Christ," *Logia* 6 (Epiphany 1997), pp. 28-32. Also consider the responses of Paul McCain and Martin Noland in "Colloquium Fratum," *Logia* 6 (Trinity 1997), pp. 47-50.
  - 30 Association of Confessing Evangelical Lutheran Congregations, "Evidence of Errors in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod: VI. Office of the Holy Ministry," dated November 8, 2010, p. 4.
  - 31 *Ibid.*, p. 13.
  - 32 *Ibid.*, p. 4.
  - 33 Commission on Theology and Church Relations, "Response to Request for a Theological Opinion from the South Wisconsin District President Regarding Augsburg Confession Article XIV," dated December 18, 2010.

## You Missed A Good One!!

If you were not at the LCA Conference on January 16, the presentation by Rev. Dr. Wohlrabe in this issue is just one example of what you missed. All the presentations were top-notch, timely and well presented.

The day began with an inspiring Bible study by Rev. Charles Froh; Rev. Dr. William Weinrich led devotions. Rev. Kevin Vogts gave background information on the Concordia University system; CTS President Rev. Dr. Larry Rast gave his thoughts on seminary education in today's world; Rev. Bryan Wolfmueller gave us ideas on how we can minister to the youth of today; Rev. Michael Kumm explained how the new structure, mandated during the 2010 Synodical Convention, has been implemented.

Mr. Walter Dissen and Mr. Scott Meyer gave a historical and eye witness perspective of the real issue (theology) during the Preus era, as they reviewed and commented on Professor James C. Burkee's book, *Power, Politics, and the Missouri Synod*. Finally, we ended with a panel discussion of all the presenters with questions from the audience.

Thanks to all the presenters, the moderator (Rev. Joseph Fisher), the videographers and everyone who worked in the background to make the conference a success. We look forward to the video. And, we hope to see more participants in 2013!

**Ginny Valleau**  
Independence, MO

**The Lutheran Clarion**

(The official publication of the Lutheran Concerns Association, a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization.)



Published regularly to support issues and causes within The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod which build faithfulness to true Confessional Lutheranism and to be a clear voice of Christian concern against actions and causes which conflict with faithfulness to the One True Faith.

The address for all matters pertaining to the LCA is:  
1320 Hartford Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55116-1623

Editorial Board: Mr. Walter Dissen (Chairman)  
Mr. Scott Meyer  
Rev. Jerome Panzigrau

Faithful Lutheran individuals who are members of LCMS congregations are invited to submit articles of approximately 500 words for consideration. Inquiries are welcome. Manuscripts will be edited. Please send to: Mr. Walter Dissen  
509 Las Gaviotas Blvd, Chesapeake, VA 23322  
(757-436-2049; wdissen@aol.com)

The Board of Directors for the LCA:  
Mr. Walter Dissen (President)  
Rev. Thomas Queck (Vice-President)  
Rev. Dr. Daniel Jastram (Secretary-Treasurer)

Mr. Scott L. Diekmann      Mr. Leon L. Rausch  
Rev. Joseph Fisher        Mr. Robert Rodefeld  
Mr. Scott Meyer            Mr. Donald Zehnder  
Rev. Jerome Panzigrau

<http://www.lutheranclarion.org>

Lutheran Concerns Association  
March 2012



Lutheran Concerns Association  
1320 Hartford Avenue  
Saint Paul, MN 55116-1623