

The **LUTHERAN** **CLARION**



Lutheran Concerns Association
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Our Immigrant Communities and Seminary Training

I recently received a memorial sent to the 2022 Minnesota South District convention titled, "To Encourage and Support Existing Learning-In-Ministry, Non-Residential, Distance Programs Leading to Ordination." I don't know its author, but its intended audience is the national convention of the LCMS in 2023. So, I suspect that this, or similar resolutions, will be making the rounds between now and then.

Some background is in order. The 2016 convention of the LCMS adopted Resolution 13-03¹, which appointed a task force to review pastoral training in the synod. The result was the excellent "Report and Recommendations: 13-03 Task Force, December 2018."² This report informed two resolutions at the 2019 convention.³ Resolution 6-02 affirmed that "residential seminary education is the preferred option" and urged the synod and its many entities "to continue to financially support both seminaries." Resolution 6-03A provided much-needed upgrades to the SMP (Specific Ministry Pastor) training program, including the directives to "enhance the curriculum and structure of the SMP program," to "enhance the mentoring and supervision of specific ministry pastors," and for "districts to provide funding for SMP as needed." I think it would be beneficial for Concordia Seminary – Saint Louis to continue to ensure that the EIIT, CMC, and CHS programs are continually evaluated, well-structured, well-mentored, and funded as appropriate.⁴

I have two major concerns about the Minnesota South District memorial that I received. First, it claims that "non-residential, immigrant students receive, proportionally, a lower percentage of tuition aid from the seminary . . . than do residential seminary students." That is just a claim. No evidence is given. If the claim is true, it is probably because residential seminary study is deemed by financial aid officers to be full-time work, supplemented by part-time employment where needed, while non-residential seminary programs are considered part-time work for persons who are fully employed. The federal FAFSA system (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) tells financial aid officers how to distribute available funds fairly based on financial need. I don't see any inequity here.

My bigger concern with the Minnesota South District memorial is that it assumes that all "immigrant, non-Anglo" (a phrase in the memorial) persons will be taking the non-residential option. I thought we had put aside that sort of thinking with the 1954 *Brown vs. Board of*

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Finnish District Court Unanimously Acquits Bishop Pohjola and Dr. Räsänen

On March 30, 2022, the Helsinki District Court panel of three judges unanimously dismissed all charges of incitement against Bishop Juhana Pohjola, Member of Parliament Dr. Päivi Räsänen, and the Luther Foundation Finland which published Dr. Räsänen's pamphlet *Male and Female He Made them—Homosexual Relationship Challenge the Christian Concept of Humanity* (2004). For a more detailed explanation behind this historic court case, see the article "The Pamphlet: The Persecution of Bishop Juhana Pohjola, Dr. Päivi Räsänen and Orthodox Lutherans in Finland" *The Lutheran Clarion* (January 2022, Volume 14, Issue 3).

The 28-page court ruling stated that "it is not for the district court to interpret biblical concepts." It put further muscle behind the decision by ordering the state to pay the legal cost of the defense of more than \$66,000.

The church-state "progressive alliance" proponents of a post-modern "secular religion" who are actively attempting to deny the freedom of speech to a respected bishop and member of parliament will undoubtedly consider this a jarring speed bump in their activist agenda but not, I fear, a stop sign. Their goal is to overturn the traditional view of marriage and gender which is supported by both natural law and Holy Scriptures. Thank God for a district court which still respects the principles of the freedom of speech and action, and responded with a clear and fair-minded decision to acquit on all charges. Thank God for Bishop Pohjola and Dr. Räsänen who have given bold and graceful witness to God's law and to the saving proclamation of the Gospel of forgiveness in Christ. They are faithful and courageous examples for Christians the world over.

March 30 was a day on which to rejoice and give thanks to our Lord Jesus who loves, protects, cares and prays for his bride, the Church. What now? On April 1 the prosecution declared on YLE (The Finnish Broad-

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Christ for Us: Catechesis and Synodical Unity
ACELC Conference July 12-14, 2022
Grace Lutheran Church, Grand Island, NE

The **Association of Confessing Evangelical Lutheran Congregations** invites you to attend their 2022 conference in Grand Island, NE.

They have an impressive list of speakers lined up that you won't want to miss:

- + Rev. Peter Bender
- + Rev. Dr. Daniel Gard
- + Rev. Stephen Kieser
- + Rev. Brent Kuhlman (Banquet Speaker)
- + Rev. Dr. Martin Noland
- + Rev. Christian Preus
- + Rev. Mark Surburg

... with another speaker yet to be confirmed.

Watch the ACELC web site (<https://www.ancelc.net/>) for online registration and the schedule; hotel accommodations are already listed. Call **816-651-8047** with questions or email information@ancelc.net

Hope to see you there!



Our Immigrant Communities & Seminary Training
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Education Supreme Court ruling.⁵ The intent of the 13-03 Task Force and Resolutions 6-02 and 6-03A was that residential seminary education is the “preferred option” for *everyone*, not just for native-born “Anglos.” I hope we can offer the very best training to all “non-Anglos” and all immigrants who wish to become LCMS pastors and to fund their tuition and other expenses on a financial need-basis like all the rest.

Where are the immigrants in the United States today? The U.S. metro areas with the top percentages of foreign-born people today⁶ are the San Francisco Bay Area (33%), Miami (31%), Los Angeles (29%), New York City (25%), and Chicago (16%). After that comes D.C. (16%), Houston (15%), Dallas-Fort Worth (13%), and Atlanta (12%). These metro areas are where most of our immigrants arrive and settle initially, and where we should be focusing our immigrant ministry efforts. Anyone who has lived in these metro areas for any length of time knows that “fields are white and the harvests waiting” (LSB 827, stanza 1).

I commend our synod and its districts for all the outreach work they have done over the years to non-Germans (before 1920), native Americans, African Americans, Hispanics, other non-Anglos, and immigrants. The best way to do that outreach work is to have highly qualified pastors in charge who understand the language and culture of the people being served.

The best and preferred way to acquire those sorts of pastors is residential seminary training.

Rev. Dr. Martin R. Noland
 Pastor, Grace Lutheran Church, San Mateo, CA

- 1 2016 *Convention Proceedings. 66th Regular Convention, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Milwaukee, Wis., July 9-14, 2016* (Saint Louis: LCMS, 2016), 238-239.
- 2 2019 *Convention Workbook: Reports and Overtures 2019. 67th Regular Convention, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Tampa, FL, July 20-25, 2019* (Saint Louis: LCMS, 2019), 375-384. Members of this task force represented a broad spectrum of synod interests and viewpoints. Those members were: Justin Benson, Rev. Lee Hagan, Rev. Jamison Hardy, Atty. David Hawk, Rev. Shawn Kumm, Dr. Leo Mackay Jr., Rev. Scott Murray, Rev. Robert Newton, Rev. Todd Peperkorn, Atty. Christian Preus, Rev. Larry Rast Jr., Rev. Scott Sailer, Rev. Anthony Steinbronn, Atty. Mark Stern, and Dr. Bradd Stucky.
- 3 2019 *Convention Proceedings. 67th Regular Convention, The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, Tampa, FL, July 20-25, 2019* (Saint Louis: LCMS, 2019), 158-160.
- 4 These abbreviations refer to the existing programs: EIIT (Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology), CMC (Cross-Cultural Ministry Center), and CHS (Center for Hispanic Studies).
- 5 For those unfamiliar with this reference, please see https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brown_v._Board_of_Education accessed 14 March 2022.
- 6 The data for these percentage figures came by dividing the foreign-born population of each listed Metropolitan Statistical Area (or Combined Statistical Area in some cases) by the total population of those areas. The data for the foreign-born population can be found here: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Foreign_born#Metropolitan_and_Urban_regions_with_largest_foreign_born_populations accessed 14 March 2022. The data for the total population of each of those areas can be found by going to the Wikipedia entry for each metropolitan or urban region listed.

Finnish District Court Unanimously Acquits
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casting Corporation) that the court has made the wrong decision and has since appealed the decision. On the same day, Räsänen issued an official press release stating, “For my part, I am prepared to defend freedom of speech and religion at all levels of the courts, even to the European Court of Human Rights if necessary . . . At the same time, I encourage others to exercise these fundamental rights.”

The YLE along with two evening papers are backing Pohjola and Räsänen. To quote a report from the Evangelical Lutheran Mission Diocese of Finland (ELMDF), “The prosecution is losing their corner of the public square.”

Now is the time to give thanks for the March 30 court decision and a time to pray without ceasing. Lord, have mercy.

The Rev. Doctor Timothy C. J. Quill, Fort Wayne, IN
 General Secretary of the International Lutheran Council

Lutheran Schools: Do we want Lutheran Teachers and Lutheran Culture or non-Lutheran Teachers and the Prevailing Culture?

In December 2001, I graduated from Concordia University Wisconsin with a B.A. in Secondary Education (Broad Field Social Studies), a minor in Political Science, and my Lutheran Teacher Diploma (LTD). The LTD (also known as “rostered”) allows for a teacher to be eligible for a call. Between December 2001 and August 2002, I patiently waited for my phone to ring with interview opportunities. That phone only rang once, and the congregation did not extend me a call. Although disheartened, I served as a substitute teacher in the West Allis – West Milwaukee School District and patiently waited....and waited...and waited. By July, I had given up hope. I enrolled for a graduate degree in Political Science at Marquette University, certain that the Lord did not need me in one of His schools. As it would happen, two weeks before the school year, a vacancy opened at a local Lutheran elementary school, and I was available. The rest, so they say, is history.

In 2014-2015, 199 LTD teachers graduated from our Concordia University System. Unfortunately, this was the high-water mark over the last decade. At its most basic level, our Lutheran school system has a supply and demand problem. In 2001, the Concordia University System was graduating more LTD candidates and had fewer requests for candidates. Twenty years later, the demand for Lutheran Teacher Diploma graduates far exceeds the supply of available graduates. **In 2021-2022, the Concordia University System will graduate 88 LTD teachers.** Of these 88 graduates, 26 will be certified to teach in elementary education and 31 will be certified to teach in secondary education.

While the supply of LTD graduates is at its lowest level in a decade, the demand for synodically trained teachers remains strong. Between 2015-2021, the Concordia University System has fielded an average of 464 requests for LTD graduates. If we assume that the requests will be around that same amount this year (indications are that the requests will be higher), we are looking at a **net deficit of nearly 400 teachers.**

The *Lutheran Clarion*—We Need Your Help!

The *Lutheran Clarion* is in year 14. We have NO paid staff or writers. We unabashedly strive to present and uphold God's inerrant word. Inflation has now taken hold. **Your continued and enhanced help is needed.** We urge you to help with the costs of preserving Confessional Lutheranism. Use the enclosed envelope. Mail your tax-deductible gift to Lutheran Concerns Association, 149 Glenview Drive, New Kensington, PA 15068-4921. Do it now. **Thank you!!**



Without strong Lutheran trained teachers, our schools are susceptible to the prevailing cultural winds. They are the ones who help to define and maintain a strong Lutheran culture in the classrooms of our Synod. The founders of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod so strongly believed in providing parochial schools that there was a provision in the original constitution that no congregation or parish could join Synod unless they provided a school for the congregation's children.ⁱ In 1873, C.F.W. Walther wrote that “the continued utmost care of our parochial schools is and remains, next to the public office of preaching, the chief means of our preservation and progress.”ⁱⁱ

In 2016, the LCMS passed Resolution 8-01A, *To Encourage and Strengthen the Lutheran Ethos of Our LCMS Early Childhood Centers, Elementary Schools, and High Schools.*ⁱⁱⁱ Among other things, this resolution highlighted eleven characteristics of a school that has a strong Lutheran ethos, including: “LCMS-trained Lutheran teachers or Christian teachers in the LCMS colloquy program who know and are committed to the truths of the Scriptures as confessed in our Lutheran Confessions.” **If our schools are to maintain a strong Lutheran ethos, it is essential to have strong Lutheran trained teachers in our schools.** At present, only 26% of teachers in our Lutheran schools are on the active roster of the LCMS.^{iv}

It should be noted that we have very strong Lutheran teachers in our schools who are not on the roster of Synod. They are active members of LCMS congregations and are well versed in the Lutheran Confessions. In my role, I see these teachers diligently teaching our students and am by no means belittling the work they are doing. The fact is we need solid Lutheran teachers, rostered or non-rostered.

When I was asked to write on this topic, I hesitated for a moment. Surely any essay that shines a light on a problem should have a solution. And yet, this problem has no easy solution. Synodical and District conventions have highlighted this issue for years. Overtures to these conventions have focused on recruitment of teachers, financial aid for professional church workers, and an exhortation to pray for future teachers. Many of the Concordia University system schools offer substantial financial aid and scholarships to remove cost as a barrier to entering the teaching ministry. Despite these efforts, the shortage continues. When talking with teachers about this problem, I usually suggest the cheapest option to recruit future teachers. Tell a student that he would make a great teacher someday...and do it with a smile on your face. Ask him to consider if God might be calling him or her into this important field in the LCMS. Finally, we go to the Lord in fervent prayer, asking Him to “send out workers into his harvest field” (Matthew 9:38).

Dr Christopher Cody
Milwaukee, WI

- i. August C. Stelthorn, *Schools of the Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod* (St Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1963), 67.
- ii. *Der Lutheraner*, XXIX (February 15, 1873), 76.
- iii. <https://www.lcms.org/convention/national/publications>
- iv. http://luthed.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/2020_2021_National_Stats_Report_FINAL.pdf

Mission v Confession: A False Dichotomy in the LCMS (Part 2)

The first part of District President John Wille's presentation at the LCA Conference on January 17, 2022, was published in the March 2022 edition of the Lutheran Clarion (<http://www.lutheranclarion.org/newsletter.html>).

Justification by Grace through Faith: the Gospel's role in Mission and Outreach:

The question is, how do we turn those lagging church plant numbers around which were cited earlier? President Barry helps us to understand as he writes:

This is not a matter of giving ourselves a pep talk. For, in the end, it will not be pep talks that cause the outreach that has been going on for centuries in the history of the Christian church. This kind of effort cannot be sustained for so long a period of time on pep talks. There is something about the gospel message itself that simply will not stay contained. It reaches out to all people, no matter who they may be, and draws them in.

Justification by Grace, for Christ's Sake, through Faith Besides mission to the Gentiles, there is another big point in common between the two stories that are repeated so often in Acts, the conversion of Paul and that of Peter and Cornelius. It is really the "other side of the coin" of mission to the Gentiles: justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith.

We have now moved onto some very familiar "Lutheran" ground. Moreover, we have moved onto unabashedly doctrinal ground. To mix the metaphor a bit, if we have been digging about on these grounds to unearth the relationship between doctrine and evangelism in Acts, we have just hit a gusher!

Sometimes the wonderful doctrine of justification by grace lies SO squarely beneath our noses that we do not see it. We become surprised when we find it welling up from the Scriptures in yet another place. But here it is, in Acts.

Justification by grace forms the basis for mission to the Gentiles. It is the only reason and the only means by which Gentiles could come into the kingdom with no strings attached. Only it can explain why a Saul of Tarsus would be welcome in the church of Jesus Christ. It is the driving force in our Lord's gospel call to all people.⁸

We cannot get the message out unless we first have the message straight. Those words should sound famil-

iar. It all begins with sound doctrine as the foundation. Justification by grace through faith is pure doctrine. It is the foundation of our faith, the article on which the church stands or falls, the foundation for all that we are and do. Article IV of the Augsburg Confession clearly states:

1] Also they teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for **2]** Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake, who, by His death, has made satisfaction for our sins. **3]** This faith God imputes for righteousness in His sight. Rom. 3 and 4.⁹

What catches my eye in President Barry's words are two sentences that take us to the power of the Gospel:

There is something about the gospel message itself that simply will not stay contained. It reaches out to all people, no matter who they may be, and draws them in.

Those are amazing words to ponder. Barry's words take my thoughts to Romans 1:16 where St. Paul says, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, The righteous shall live by faith."

Again, "There is something about the gospel message itself that simply will not stay contained. It reaches out to all people, no matter who they may be, and draws them in."

Evangelism and Mission Outreach are a Consequence of the Gospel.

It is true that in recent years our mission fervor in the LCMS has lagged, as had church membership and attendance. Again reasons and causes could be cited. However, as much as outreach and mission are part of the Church, mission and outreach dare never become the new gospel. The Gospel is the good news of a Savior, the Son of God, who left His heavenly throne to be born of a Virgin, to redeem those under the Law.

Evangelism and mission are not Gospel, rather they fall under the umbrella of the third use of the law. We share the good news because we have been blessed with saving grace. We share forgiveness because we have been forgiven; we washed clean by the blood of Christ. We share the good news of the Gospel because we see so many languishing unwittingly under the thumb of the evil one, living in the darkness of unbelief that can only end in an eternity of condemnation.

St. Peter describes it with these words:

But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his own possession, that you may proclaim the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. (1 Peter 2:8-9)

Luther has some marvelous incites to all this:

We have no other reason for living on earth than to be of help to others. If this were not the case, it would be best for God to kill us and let us die as soon as we are bap-

tized and have begun to believe. But He permits us to live here in order that we may bring others to faith, just as He brought us. But as long as we are on earth, we must live in hope.¹⁰

This is how you should explain all the passages of Scripture which talk about works. God wants us to let the righteousness that we have received in faith break forth, demonstrate itself, and benefit others, so that false faith becomes known and rooted out. God gives no one His grace so that it may lie down and be of no benefit, but so that it would give a good return, and through knowledge and outward public demonstration entice everyone to God. Christ says, "Let your light shine before people, so that they see your good works and praise your Father in heaven" (Matthew 5 [:16]). Otherwise it would be like a hidden treasure and concealed wisdom, and what benefit are either of them?¹¹

The Father sent Me into the world out of love, so that I might serve it, so that the world might enter into joy and consolation, and I have given up My body and life. Do likewise. For whatever remains of your life, live as those sent by Christ." It is the office of everyone to instruct his neighbor, etc. And this power is given not to the clergy alone (though [here it is] spoken to the apostles) but to all believers. When you have performed this highest work, seek to become Christ's apostle, to serve all people, so that they may come unto God as you have. Do not do this that you may merit anything thereby; rather, you already possess [everything] through Christ.¹²

Conclusion:

Our vocation as Christians is clear. The Gospel is not to be hoarded. The Gospel is to be shared. The Lord Jesus wants His Church and its people not only to recognize the harvest, but also to be actively engaged in reaping the harvest. Walther puts it quite plainly when he writes:

That is the duty of every synod, including our own...is to join the ranks of that great army of laborers in the harvest field of Christ. For the harvest has long been "dead ripe"; it is only a matter of reaping that harvest. In other words, it should cooperate with every organization of both home and foreign missions for the spreading of the Holy Scriptures. That also applies to the establishment and preservation of institutions for the preparation of pastors. In short, a synod is to be a living member of the Body of Christ, and together with every other living member of that most sacred Body in the whole world, it must do whatever it possibly can to spread Christ's kingdom and, wherever possible, to win for Christ and to lead into His sheepfold all those whom Christ has bought with His precious blood, and ultimately to lead them into the salvation of everlasting life... It is worth noting that Luther was so deeply moved when he considered how disappointing it is when God produces a congregation through the divine seed of His Word, and then this congregation insists on being barren, refusing to become a spiritual mother so that others can be added [to the Church].¹³

Being a confessional church is a church focused on mission. It is not an "either/or," one at the expense of

Student Aid Endowment Fund Concordia Theological Foundation, Inc.

In early 2018, in honor of Mrs. Ginny Valleau's contributions to the publication of the *Lutheran Clarion*, a Concordia Theological Seminary Student Aid Endowment Fund was established at Concordia Theological Foundation, Inc., a 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions are tax deductible. As of March 31, 2022, the fund assets were \$24,820.



The Board of Directors of the Lutheran Concerns Association invites *Lutheran Clarion* readers to contribute to the Fund which can be done by sending your check marked Valleau Endowment Fund to:

Concordia Theological Foundation, Inc., Box 15810, Fort Wayne, IN 46885

or to: **Lutheran Concerns Association**, 149 Glenview Drive, New Kensington, PA 15068-4921. Donors will receive receipts for their gifts.

the other, but rather it is a "both/and." Herman Sasse makes that point powerfully when he writes:

Let us not be ashamed to be a confessional Lutheran Church. Let us not forfeit the great heritage of our fathers for this mess of pottage, the views that modern man may happen to have about Confession, concerning which he himself does not know how it will look a year or even a week from now. For us fidelity to the Confession means nothing else than to be true to the Word of God. To adhere to the Confession means nothing else with us than to adhere to the Word of God. And in this sense the poor, forlorn, despised, and derided Lutheran Church may apply this word to itself: "Stand by the Word, then you will stand where the Word stands."¹⁴

The central doctrine of the Word of God is justification by faith in Christ Jesus, and that message is the focus of a Confessional Lutheran mission. It is why we train pastors. It is why we build churches. It is the vocation of the priesthood of all believers. President Barry has these words:

Finally, the doctrine of justification by God's grace becomes a norm for evangelism within the larger setting of the normative Scriptures. I find it interesting that in the Acts 15 council, mission to the Gentiles was evaluated in two ways. Peter pointed out that it went hand-in-glove with justification by grace for Christ's sake through faith, and James showed that it was in accord with the Scriptures. So in our day, we can ask: in our various outreach efforts, are we remaining faithful to the great truth of justification by grace? It is too good to be true, but it is true! And are we standing on the Scriptures? There is no way we can consider the audience—not the message—to be sovereign.

Justification becomes the beating heart of all our doctrinal faithfulness to God, for it lies at the center of all our church's teaching. Luther, who knew a thing or two about this topic, said that justification by faith "is the chief point and cornerstone, which alone begets, nourishes, builds,

preserves and defends the church of God; and without it, the church of God is not able to subsist for a single hour." Or, putting the same thing another way, he said, "Where this single article remains pure, Christendom will remain pure, in beautiful harmony, and without any schisms. But where it does not remain pure, it is impossible to repel any error or heretical spirit."¹⁵

If the above is true, and it is my conviction that it is: Where do we begin our renewed focus to plant new congregations and schools? Herman Sasse has this advice:

We are so accustomed to seeing church politics hold primacy in the church that we erroneously expect that a change in church politics must bring forth a new day in history. But if we have such expectations, then we should learn from church history that up to now every new day in the Church of Christ has begun with a movement of repentance. Christianity itself once entered world history as a mighty movement of repentance. It was as a movement of repentance that in antiquity it conquered the ancient world and then in modern times (the so-called "Great Contrition") the people of our day. And when at Constantine's [ca. 280–337] time the masses began to stream into the church for more or less external reasons, the cloisters became the centers of repentance. Every new epoch in the Middle Ages began with a movement of repentance, and the Reformation, with Luther's first thesis and the saving message of the justification of the sinner through faith alone, is the greatest example in the history of the church for this truth.¹⁶

Having seen tears of joy well up in the eyes of a newly baptized adult, having them thanking me for teaching them about Jesus and His forgiveness, having been at the chartering service for a new congregation and then for the dedication of their first church building with a new altar and new pulpit dedicated to the proclamation of the Word of God and the proper administration of the Sacraments, I can tell you that it is time for us to understand our God-given legacy of planting new congregations. We ought not be the man in the parable of the talents in Matthew 25 who comes to his master saying, "He also who had received the one talent came forward, saying, 'Master, I knew you to be a hard man, reaping where you did not sow, and gathering where you scattered no seed, so I was afraid, and I went and hid your talent in the ground. Here, you have what is yours.'" (Matthew 25:24-25)

With the Holy Spirit working in us through the Word of God repentance is more than word;¹⁷ it is a sacred act of our gracious God calling us away from our sin, it is our baptismal lifestyle. Living in that repentance it is time for us to turn away from our inward focus and recognized the white harvest fields that surround us. It is time for us to burst forth out of the walls of our Lutheran enclaves. Time for us to confess Christ in this generation for the next generation. Time, as Walther states (quoted above), to "take an enthusiastic and, as much as possible, active part in all God-pleasing organizations dedicated to the spread of Christ's Kingdom in the world." It is time to plant new congregations and new schools. Time to send out a cadre of new mission developers into this land which we call home, as the generations before us have done. If we fail, it will be to our great shame. If we fail, God in His mercy will

raise up others. Remember our Lord's words to the Pharisees in Luke's Gospel: "And some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to him, Teacher, rebuke your disciples. He answered, I tell you, if these were silent, the very stones would cry out."

Our Lord's words to his disciples in Matthew 10:26-27 are words for us today: "So have no fear of them, for nothing is covered that will not be revealed, or hidden that will not be known. What I tell you in the dark, say in the light, and what you hear whispered, proclaim on the housetops." Those words are true not just for distant lands, but those words also apply to us here in our own homeland.

C. F. W. Walther:

The history of the church reveals clearly, as Luther often says, that the flowering of the blessing of a church seldom lasts any longer than a man's life span. Yet history also shows that there were churches which, though they repeatedly had cycles of backsliding, also repeatedly turned back to their first love, always returning again to blossom for generations thereafter. Yes, for centuries they were God's water towers and remained sources of water for the great garden of God both near and far. We want to and shall also retain this hope today in God's presence for our precious church in St. Louis. Nothing will take that hope from us.

Get up, then, arise, all you brothers and sisters, husbands and wives, young and old, aged and children, misters and mistresses, boys and girls, teachers and students, preachers and hearers! Arise and let us now as one man approach the LORD with broken spirit and believing souls, not only bending the knees of our bodies but also the bowing [of] our hearts before him and, as one man, cry out to him today as a church that is turning back in the name of Jesus out of the depths of our sinful desperation for grace and help, so the LORD will hear us and raise us up again. We do this in the appointed, ancient prayer of the church which has already been heard a thousandfold

LCA Membership Fee

While planning the 2022 LCA conference, the Board of Directors found that the LCA membership fee does not begin to cover the expenses; therefore, we have increased the fee to \$60 per year.



We recently had new return envelopes printed with the updated price; however, we still had about 2,000 old envelopes and we did not want to waste them, so if you are receiving an old envelope and you want to renew your membership, please note the annual fee is now \$60.

This is still a bargain! The annual conferences feature top-notch speakers from many areas of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod. The membership fees also help fund bi-monthly issues of the *Clarion*, which features faithful confessional articles that support the issues and causes of the LCMS.

times for all of her needs and the needs [of] the whole world: “Kyrie! Eleison! – Our Father, etc. Amen.”¹⁸

Lord grant us wisdom and courage as we strive to be our Lord’s Church and to fulfill our purpose according to His will in this present world!

Rev. John C. Wille

South Wisconsin District LCMS, President

- 8 Concordia Theological Quarterly, Volume 65:1, January 2001, page 3, “Doctrine and Evangelism” by Rev. Dr. Al Barry, pages 7-8.
- 9 Concordia Triglotta—English: The Symbolical Books of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. (1996). (electronic ed., p. 45). Milwaukee, WI: Northwestern Publishing House.
- 10 Luther, M. (1999). Luther’s works, vol. 30: The Catholic Epistles. (J. J. Pelikan, H. C. Oswald, & H. T. Lehmann, Eds.) (Vol. 30, p. 11). Saint Louis: Concordia Publishing House.
- 11 Luther, Martin. Luther’s Works, Volume 78 (Church Postil IV) page 323 Concordia Publishing House.
- 12 LW 69:336f.
- 13 Walther, C.F.W.. Walther’s Works: Church Fellowship. Page 334-335 Concordia Publishing House.
- 14 Sasse, Hermann. Letters to Lutheran Pastors: Volume 1, page 33. Concordia Publishing House.
- 15 Concordia Theological Quarterly, Volume 65:1, January 2001, “Doctrine and Evangelism” by Rev. Dr. Al Barry. page 11. Barry quotes Luther’s Weimar Edition, Vol. 30, and then also the Formula of Concord SD III, 6.
- 16 Sasse, Hermann. Letters to Lutheran Pastors: Volume 1 . Concordia Publishing House. Pages 83-84.
- 17 Sasse: Repentance also, according to the Gospel, is not just a single act but goes on our whole life long. So also our Baptism is not an isolated act, but something that goes on in all our life. Being a Christian does not just mean that we were once baptized but that we live in the strength of our Baptism and again and again return to it. To the question, “What does such baptizing with water signify?” the Small Catechism gives the familiar answer: “It signifies that the Old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all sins and evil lusts and, again, a new man daily come forth and arise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever” (SC IV). Sasse, Hermann. Letters to Lutheran Pastors: Volume 1 . Concordia Publishing House. Pages 64-65.
- 18 Sermon for a Day of Repentance on Galatians 5.7 (1870) CPR 172.

Faith Misused: Why Christianity is Not Just Another Religion

Book Review: Alvin J. Schmidt, Concordia Publishing House, <https://www.cph.org>, 2022. \$15.99.

In his new book *Faith Misused*, Dr. Alvin J. Schmidt has focused on the common word “faith” and demonstrated how, again and again, it is misused by not only non-Christians but even by the most pious and learned of the faithful.

“Epistemology” is a discipline in philosophy that attempts to explain how we know what we know. In the field of religion and theology, it attempts to explain how we know what we believe. It would seem to many people that “what we know” and “what we believe” are either independent of each other and/or are hostile to each other. Schmidt makes the case that knowledge and faith are closely related and have been understood to be so

from the beginning of Christianity. It is only in the modern world, in modern culture, that knowledge and faith have been divorced. This originally happened among anti-Christian thinkers but is now also found among Christians of all types and denominations in the form of “fideism.”

Schmidt demonstrates that the notion of “faith” (Greek *pistis*; Latin *fides*) in the ancient Greek and Roman cultures was the lowest grade of cognition. Jesus and the apostles changed all that. Faith in Jesus and His words became the key to eternal salvation, so that “He who believes and is baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16). The basis for such faith in Jesus’ words in the apostolic church was the unique divinity and authority of Jesus (John 3:13). Among the evidence for Jesus’ divinity and authority were Jesus’ miracles, and his resurrection and ascension, all attested by hundreds of witnesses (1 Corinthians 15:4-8; Acts 26:26; Acts 1:3). Schmidt commends to his readers the orthodox Lutheran view of “faith,” defined by Philip Melancthon as consisting of knowledge, assent, and trust.

This view of faith changed with the so-called “Enlightenment,” which criticized and debunked the historical content of the Bible. As examples of how the notion of “faith” changed, Schmidt looks at these Bible critics and Liberal Protestants: Richard Simon, Gotthold Lessing, David Strauss, Martin Kähler, Paul Tillich, Rudolf Bultmann, Karl Barth, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer. Then he demonstrates that the real change to the notion of “faith” was the work of Friedrich Schleiermacher, who synonymized the terms “faith” and “religion” and made “faith” a matter of feelings or emotions.

Since Schleiermacher’s ideas became popular in the nineteenth century, the term “faith” has been used to describe non-Christian religions, even though those religions have either no concept of “faith” at all or a quite different one. For example, the Islamic concept of “faith” is “complete submission to the will of God.”

The remainder of the book deals with other misuses of the term and concept of “faith.” Schmidt analyzes the problems of “fideism” and questions the use of the phrase “the Christian faith,” since it implies that other religions have “faith.” He also criticizes the synonymizing of the terms “belief” and “faith.” I think all these points are well-taken and should be considered by our pastors and people. The book includes useful questions for discussion at the end of each chapter, which suggest that this book would be useful for an adult Bible class devoted to the topic. Thanks to Dr. Schmidt for his work on this little gem and to Concordia Publishing House for releasing it!

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