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LUTHERAN MISSION MATTERS TEL: (314) 505-7116
14100 Sunland Dr. FAX: (314) 505-7124
Florissant, MO 63034, USA
BOOKS FOR REVIEW SHOULD BE SENT TO THE BOOK EDITOR:
Joel Okamoto TEL: (314) 505-7152
14100 Sunland Dr. E-mail:
bookreviews@lsfm.globalFlorissant, MO 63034, USA
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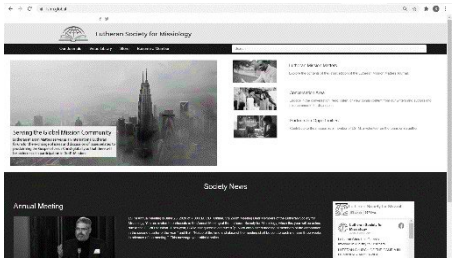

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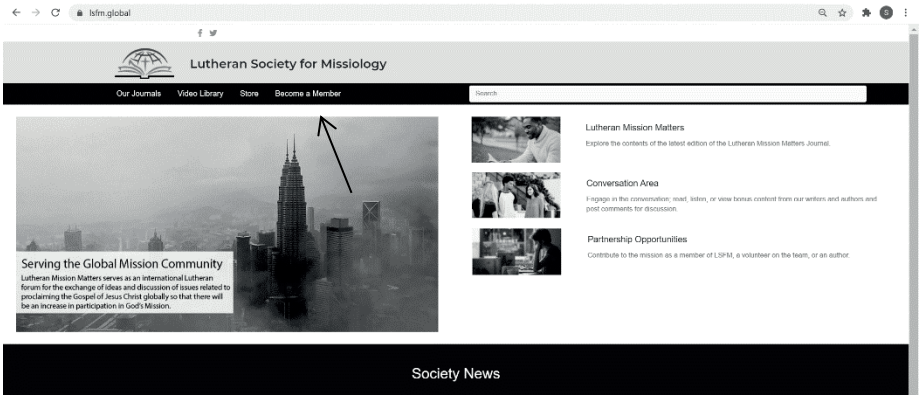

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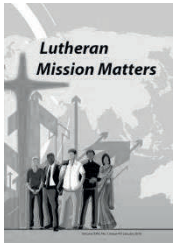

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Inside this Issue: Monday's coming . . .

The buzzing of the alarm brings you to consciousness. Your day begins with a rush of emotions—your return to consciousness wrought with an array of feelings, desires, dreads. With those emotions come activities—the task list for today is long, consuming. There is the anticipation of the known and the unknown. The known—the whining of your children as even mundane activities like getting dressed or brushing teeth are accompanied by bickering. The known—the reality of the numbers on the scale, defining you in ways that mean beyond the signifier. The known—the memory of the disagreement with your boss as you ended your workweek, framing the tension that you'll encounter in a few hours. The known—the secret you've been hiding from your spouse, cultivating your creativity for all the wrong reasons and perpetually getting worse, not better. Then there is the unknown—someone today will be diagnosed with cancer, someone will be killed in a car accident, someone will betray you, you will betray someone. Not to mention the unfathomable—someone will go hungry today, someone will be cold, mistreated, abused, oppressed.

Yesterday, you heard the very Word that brought you forth into creation. Yesterday, you feasted on the Bread of Life as a foretaste of the feast to come. Yesterday, you were promised forgiveness, life, salvation. Yesterday, you gathered with people who, even though you are just fooling yourself, you want to think are better, wiser, more complete. The melody of the closing hymn echoes in your ear. What was that refrain that the praise band kept repeating? The memorable elegance of the voice offering the prayers soothes you. The smell of the sanctuary reminds you of your sanctuary, your respite. But that was yesterday. Today, it's Monday. Sunday was filled with hope, rest, peace, and even some joy and love. Monday is filled with . . . Monday.

In this issue of *Lutheran Mission Matters*, we will talk quite a bit about Sunday. In fact, my guess is you engage these articles with Sunday in mind. But I'll be honest—I am less focused on Sunday than I used to be. What consumes my mind, my heart, is that most people who we will see in church on Sunday have no idea what to do on Monday. Or Tuesday–Saturday. Our liturgical orthodoxy, our "getting it right" on Sunday, is not worth anything if we are not oriented towards Monday. Sunday cannot be the exception, the escape. Sunday needs to be the practice room, the rehearsal stage, the laboratory, where we figure out how to make Monday right. Or at least better. Because as much as Sunday comes each week, Monday does too.

The articles in this issue have this Sunday-to-Monday relationship in mind, engaging the relationship between worship and mission. The lead article by Joel Okamoto frames many of the questions the church faces in our current time and places. Kent Burreson and

Rhoda Schuler posit the adult catechumenate as a place where worship and mission meet. Other articles take a deeper, more substantive dive into specific elements of the Divine Service. And included in this issue are "reports from the field," where present-day missionaries share their experiences in navigating the relationship between worship and mission.

So as you read this issue of *Lutheran Mission Matters*, I encourage you to not become too absorbed with Sunday. Focus on Monday. Let Monday's uncertainties inform Sunday's assumptions. Let Monday's behaviors inform Sunday's rituals. Let us not just be Christians on Sunday. Let us teach and lead people to be Christians on Monday, too…because Monday is coming.

Rev. James F. Marriott, Ph.D.
Kreft Chair for Music Arts
Director of Music Arts
Concordia Seminary, St. Louis

Articles

How Lutherans Can Think about Worship and Mission:
Some Proposals from the Post-Constantinian United States of America

Joel P. Okamoto

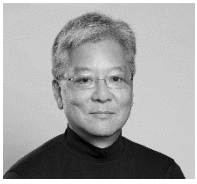
Introduction

It says something that *Lutheran Mission Matters* invites thinking and talking about the relationship between worship and mission. The New Testament certainly helps us to faithfully frame our questions, concepts, distinctions, aims, and responses on all matters of faith and life, including both worship and mission. But it does not explicitly reflect on this relationship. The Gospels do not show us Jesus addressing this relationship. The book of Acts does not record a debate over this relationship. The Apostle Paul does not teach about this relationship or exhort churches to do something about it.

Some of us connected with *Lutheran Mission Matters* find that we have both important questions and noticeable disagreements about how public worship and the mission of the church relate to each other. And we know we are not alone.

The "Call for Papers" for this issue on worship and mission outlined some of these questions and hinted at some of these disagreements. But the questions noted there were not only for prospective authors. They were for all readers, and for anyone who is interested or should be interested in worship and mission. And the questions themselves invite other questions and hint at other disagreements.

I look forward to reading some thoughtful, helpful, and faithful answers to specific questions in this issue of *Lutheran Mission Matters*. But I am just as interested in the bigger picture and the larger questions about worship and mission, especially questions like "Why does 'worship and mission' matter?" and "What holds them together theologically?" This article offers a few reflections for Lutherans on thinking about worship and mission.



Joel Okamoto is the Waldemar and Mary Griesbach Professor of Systematic Theology and Chair of the Department of Systematic Theology at Concordia Seminary, where he has taught since 1998.

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It begins by considering how we might understand "mission" in this conversation. I settle on the notion of "evangelism." This notion is still rather nebulous, but I run with a particular understanding of evangelism suited to the so-called "post-Constantinian" situation here in the United States. The post-Constantinian situation explains that both a lot of evangelism and a lot of worship play down *transformation*. Christians have long disagreed about the nature and place of transformation, but Lutherans have a specific stance on it: Sanctification, that is, transformation, always follows justification. At this point, things open up. Justification and the transformation it works take place with the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the Sacraments. This makes clear a particular connection between evangelism and worship: worship, where the Church regularly and publicly preaches the gospel and gives the Sacraments, is an essential and obvious location in which the justifying and transforming work of God that evangelism aims for takes place.

The post-Constantinian diagnosis is pivotal for this article, and so a few words about this choice are in order. Why this diagnosis? Apart from the fact that it fits, there is no reason I chose it over "God is dead" (Nietzsche) or the "triumph of the therapeutic" (Rieff), and there is no argument to prefer a post-Constantinian analysis over a political or an economic analysis. I ran all of these through in a back-of-the-envelope thought exercise, and I could tell that each would yield quite different essays. This is not at all surprising, of course. Thinking about God, justification, the Church, or the Word all look different from these different perspectives, too.

What is "mission"?

The first question to consider is, "What are we talking about? What is meant by 'worship and mission'?" The "Call for Papers" is clear that "worship" in this conversation means "public worship services." Whatever you call it—"church," "Divine Service," "liturgy," "Mass"—worship happens when Christians "assemble to hear and discuss God's Word and then to offer praise, song, and prayer to God" (LC I, 84).[1]

But "mission" is less clear. This is nothing new, because "mission" does not refer to a kind of event or occasion like a public worship service. Finding adequate definitions for mission has been unsatisfying for many. Consider, for example, David Bosch's attempts. In his 1980 book *Witness to the World* he wrote: "The most adequate formulation subsumes the total *mission* of the Church under the biblical concept *martyria* (witness), which can be subdivided into *kerygma* (proclamation), *koinonia* (fellowship) and *diakonia* (service)." He cited the Willingen Conference (1952) for this definition, and then he added a fifth term, "*leitourgia,* liturgy, that is the encounter of the Church with her Lord. This is, in the last analysis, the fountain of the entire mission of the Church and the guarantee for her distinctiveness."[2] Later, in his book *Transforming Mission*, Bosch conceded that this formula "has severe limitations." He agreed with Ludwig Rütti that, while this formula expands the idea of mission beyond "proclamation and church planting… in the final analysis it only helps to illuminate traditional ideas and activities." He called for "a more radical and comprehensive hermeneutic of mission," one that included activities as diverse

as witness, service, healing, reconciliation, contextualization, church planting, and more, but without constraining mission to simply a list.[3]

Bosch has an important point. But this conversation on worship and mission does not need a comprehensive yet open-ended concept of "mission," even though it doesn't rule it out. It only needs concepts that do not constrict a wide idea of mission.

We could relate several concepts of "mission" to worship, but the one I will pursue is mission as "evangelism." Of course, "evangelism" needs to be made more precise, too. Here are two instances. The first is from Robert Webber, who contended that evangelism "not only converts people, but also brings them into the full life of the church and keeps them there."[4] The second is a slightly longer version from Rodney Clapp:

> [E]vangelism [must] be understood not simply as declaring a message to someone but as initiation into the world-changing kingdom of God. It is not enough to think of evangelism as proclamation. We must understand it once again as the earliest Christians did, as 'the persuading of people to become Christians and take their place as responsible members of the body of Christ.'[5]

Why choose these definitions of "evangelism"? The answer, in a word, is "context." Webber and Clapp are among the growing number Christians in the United States who recognize that they should not take for granted that their stories, practices, beliefs, values, and institutions are widely known and appreciated. They saw that the future of evangelism, to say nothing of worship, preaching, and spiritual care, would be different than it had been. For Webber, this situation means adopting an "ancient-future" approach to ministry and theology. This approach argues that "you can best think about the future of the faith after you have gone back to the classical tradition."[6] The idea of evangelism Webber promotes exemplifies this approach. He said it was from the third century.

For Clapp, the emerging situation called for a so-called "post-Constantinian" approach to ministry and theology. The "Constantinian" or "Christendom" situation is one where society and the Christian Church largely support one another. The Church of England is a Constantinian artifact. The state of Missouri, where I live, still prohibits car dealerships from doing business on Sundays, and only very recently were all Sunday restrictions on the sale of alcohol lifted in my area. These are examples of a Constantinian situation.

In the case of the United States, churches until recently could assume that everybody had some knowledge and respect for Christian beliefs, practices, institutions, and values. They could assume that people mostly knew what it meant to be Christian. Not everybody, of course, was always active, but that is what evangelism was for: reviving their faith and their engagement as Christians. Revivals were a common means of evangelism.[7]

But much of the United States and Canada, like much of Europe and parts of Latin America, are "post-Constantinian." Society and the Church have gone separate ways. And now evangelism needs to be a larger task, not only "converting" people from one set of beliefs and values to another, but giving them a new identity and bringing them into a new community and way of life. Post-Constantinian writers like Clapp understood that this concept of evangelism was anything but new. In fact, he like Webber intentionally reached to the early church: "For the earliest church, then, evangelism was not a matter of inviting individuals to recall what they somehow already knew. It was rather a matter of inviting them to become part of nothing less than a new humanity, reborn of the last Adam who was Jesus the Nazarene."[8]

And now evangelism needs to be a larger task, not only "converting" people from one set of beliefs and values to another, but giving them a new identity and bringing them into a new community and way of life.

My situation here in the United States is why I am attracted to the "ancient-future" or "post-Constantinian" or "post-liberal" or "after-modern" understandings of evangelism. I share it so you have some context to understand me. But I also share it because I suspect it is relevant for those in some of the many non-Constantinian situations, that is, places where the Church has never been a major force or feature of society, where Christians are "others" or "outsiders" or "on the margins."

Worship and Mission in a Post-Constantinian Situation

It is increasingly clear that churches in the United States know they are no longer in the center of social and cultural life. One sign of this growing awareness is literally a sign seen at many church exits: "You are now entering the mission field." This sign also shows that these churches recognize that somehow worship and mission are related.

But *how* are worship and mission related? There are several ways to answer this, but I will continue to follow the post-Constantinian line of analysis.

As we have already noted, a post-Constantinian approach to mission understands that evangelism aims at making various people in the world into the one holy people of God. At one level, there is nothing exceptional about this. Evangelism in this sense is "making disciples," as the Lord put it (Mt 28:19). Evangelism means that "once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God" (1 Pt 2:9). But the reason for stressing this understanding is that it had been obscured. If being Christian is normal for being a member

of a Constantinian society, then becoming a new person and leading a new life would normally be irrelevant.

Evangelism understood from a post-Constantinian position is a matter of *transformation*. Evangelism, you might say, does not only make a difference to a person; it makes a person *different*.

Transformation, moreover, is an obvious way to relate mission and worship, because worship, too, should aim for transformation. Put more specifically, public worship is the essential and obvious venue for transformation and therefore essential and obvious for evangelism.

Perhaps it is obvious to you and your situation that worship and evangelism both aim for transformation, but it is not in mine. There are both a general cultural reason and a specific theological reason that obscure this aim. The general cultural reason is a residue of the Constantinian influence. Stanley Hauerwas, probably the most well-known post-Constantinian theologian in the United States, once explained it in political terms:

> Most preaching in the Christian church today is done before strangers. For the church finds itself in a time when people have accepted the odd idea that Christianity is largely what they do with their own subjectivities. Politically we live in social orders that assume the primary task is how to achieve cooperation between strangers. Indeed we believe our freedom depends on remaining fundamentally strangers to one another. We bring those habits to church, and as a result we do not share fundamentally the story of being God's creatures, but rather, if we share any story at all, it is that we are our own creators. Christians once understood that they were pilgrims. Now we are just tourists who happen to find ourselves on the same bus.[9]

The preaching to which Hauerwas refers is preaching in public worship services, and when he mentions "church," he means the public worship service itself. The politics here are American politics, and the "odd idea that Christianity is largely what they do with their own subjectivities" is symbolized by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution, which prohibits the Congress from establishing any religion, including the Christian religion.

As a post-Constantinian theologian, Hauerwas is concerned that preaching in particular and worship in general tends to uphold the status quo—this is a Constantinian reflex. In the United States at least, it is not only civil politics that encourages Americans to believe they are their own creators. So do economics and communications. We see this in how talk about worship in the United States resembles marketing to consumers.[10]

Hauerwas rightly is concerned that preaching allows, even encourages hearers to stay like they are. He is calling for preaching and worship to aim for turning sinners into saints, turning aliens into citizens, turning unbelievers into believers, making alive what was once dead—in a word, for "transformation."

Transformation itself, however, is the specific theological reason why Lutherans might object to calling this the aim of worship and mission. One objection would be that this suggests something more Roman Catholic or Wesleyan than Lutheran. A Lutheran conception of worship and mission should have justification, not sanctification, in its sights.

My response is itself Lutheran: "Sanctification always follows justification." The Augsburg Confession brings this out when it confesses, first, the justifying faith comes through the gospel and the Sacraments (AC V)[11], and then that the faith of the justified "should yield good fruit and good works and that a person must do such good works as God has commanded for God's sake" (AC VI, 1)[12]. The same point about justification, sanctification, and the gospel comes out when Article XX teaches: "Faith alone always takes hold of grace and forgiveness of sin. Because the Holy Spirit is given through faith, the heart is also moved to do good works" (AC XX, 28–29)[13]. Sanctification *logically* follows justification. Oswald Bayer's summary of Luther's own understanding applies also to the Lutheran Confessions: "Justification and sanctification are not for him two separate acts that we can distinguish, as though sanctification follows after justification, and has to do so. In talking about sanctification Luther stresses the institutional side of the event of justification."[14] If there is no transformation, then there has been no justification. So, I am not denying or implying that justification is not central. I am getting there by another route.

Another objection would be that I should have started with justification in the first place. I could have, and in different circumstances, I would have. But in my experience, too many Lutherans mistakenly assume that, if nothing else, they are right about justification. They either do not grasp or cannot put into practice what the Apology confesses: "For these are the two chief works of God in human beings, to terrify and to justify the terrified or make them alive" (Ap XII, 53)[15]. A common sign of this mistake is understanding justification as "just as if I'd never sinned." This is a half-truth. Justification is not a fiction. Justification does not only pronounce sinners righteous; it makes them righteous. It makes them alive. Justification happens when God's good news is announced and when God's promises are made. An angel announced God's good news when he told the shepherds in the field, "I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Lk 2:10–11). The shepherds believed the message, went to Bethlehem, and saw Christ the Lord for themselves. And they returned, "glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them" (Lk 2:20). The good news made things right for them, and they were transformed. An angel had earlier come to Mary, promising:

> And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David, and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there will be no end (Lk 1:31–33).

Mary believed the promises, and she sang:

> My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for he has looked on the humble estate of his servant. For behold, from now on all generations will call me blesses; for he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name (Lk 1:46-49).

The promises made things right for Mary, and she was transformed.

We could extend this discussion of justification, sanctification, and the preaching of the gospel for a long time, but I have said enough to make my point. This point, once again, is that an important way to view the relationship between worship and evangelism is that both aim for *transformation*, and that evangelism regularly accomplishes this transformation through public worship. An important challenge to seeing this relationship comes in Constantinian situations, because they obscure the need for transformation. Another challenge specific to Lutherans comes when they deny in effect that justification is transformative.

Worship and mission are more than justification, and this, too, must not be overlooked. But worship and mission would be badly misguided if they did not aim always for justification. And one is not aiming for justification if one does not expect transformation. To be sure, transformation is never fully realized in this present evil age. Sanctification accompanies justification, but sanctification is an ongoing and sometimes uneven process.

Reflecting on worship and mission

The ideas of worship and mission that I've pursued so far bear on how I would think about some of the questions in the "Call for Papers." I run through them to illustrate how these ideas might work out on specific matters.

1. Questions of *focus*
   Who makes up the worshiping community?
   Who defines the "worshiping community"?

   If we understand that evangelism "not only converts people, but also brings them into the full life of the church and keeps them there,"[16] then it naturally follows that the worshiping community might be made up of not only Christians but also those who may become Christians. There remains a clear difference among them: between those who are baptized and those who are not yet baptized; between those who have heard and heeded the call to follow Jesus Christ, and those who do not yet follow; those who confess with their lips that Jesus is Lord and those who do not yet make this confession.

   Notice that the difference is not "Christians and non-Christians" as much as "now Christians and not-yet Christians." If the difference were "Christians and non-Christians," and both were considered part of the worshiping community, then a significant portion of worship would be apologetical. Some time and effort would have to aim to deal with those who have doubts, objections, or no interest in following Christ. The entire notion of a public worship service as hearing and dealing with God's Word and as returning praise, thanks, and prayers would be hard, if not impossible, to maintain in this situation.

But when the difference is between "now Christians and not-yet Christians," then the idea of public worship can be preserved, because the situation is different. With a community that includes "not-yet Christians," you are assuming that they have some interest in being Christian, and that what they need is to learn the stories and language and customs and values of Christians.

2. Questions of *content* and questions of *form*
   How do we decide what and how our worship services will proclaim, teach, and pray for, especially when we know and want others to listen?
   How do we assess and adapt our worship forms in both theological and contextual terms?

Matters of content and form are sometimes treated as if they were separable. We can distinguish, and sometimes we should. But it is unhelpful when the two are treated as separate entities. This has been true in conversations about worship in the United States, where a common impression is that form matters more than content. This is as true for those who insist on using hymnals and wearing vestments as those who do away with both. No one actually thinks that form matters more, but content is often taken for granted.

Questions and confusions like this happen in other aspects of life. Because of this, we can learn something from those who pay attention to "style." One example comes from Alan Jacobs, an American professor of English who writes regularly about matters of Christian faith *and* has written about football ("soccer" for those in the United States). About ten years ago he wrote about the style of FC Barcelona:

> There's so much talk about Barcelona's style of play in large part because it's just that: a style. And styles are not easy to come by in soccer. The term can mislead, because it suggests mere aesthetics, how a team looks. But a genuine style is more than that. Just as a poet's style is not just a few habits of sound-making but a whole way of organizing experience and language, a coherent strategy for marshaling forces of thought and feeling and then deploying them, a soccer style is a complete approach to the game. This is why some sports journalists like to call it a "philosophy," but "style" is better: it suggests thought embodied, thought enacted on the pitch. And it nods to the aesthetic element, which is real, though not everything.[17]

Jacobs is right: the term "style" can mislead, but the idea that "style" refers to "a whole way of organizing experience and language" makes at least as much sense for thinking about public worship services as it does for a sport. Style for worship includes literary forms (e.g., sermons and prayers), music, clothing, and architecture of worship, but also the content.

With this, I have three brief points about content and form.

First, public worship, at least in post-Constantinian and non-Constantinian situations, should have *everything* as its content. In these situations, Christians should

assume their non-Christian friends and neighbors know very little, so nothing should be taken for granted. Or everything should be available to them. By "everything," I mean the one true God and His dealing with creation. Worship should not focus only on the individual worshipers and their relationship to God (although it should never neglect them, either). Worship should set forth the universe as the creation of our God; human beings as creatures whom this God made to live by faith; sinners as human creatures who will not live by trusting God the creator; Jesus Christ as the Son of God sent to make all things new and to offer forgiveness of sin and eternal life in the world to come.

The second point is one of form: This content may be conveyed in different forms, but its most basic form is as a story. This story has long been told in various forms, including the creeds, the church year, lectionaries, and art. Worship, especially when it is linked to evangelism, will do well to take advantage of these forms, and to try out new ones.

The third point is about music. There are many forms of music, but to think of music as a "form" is at best misleading. I am unqualified to offer thoughts along these lines, but I do find the following set of questions by John Witvliet to be helpful in thinking about worship and mission:[18]

> Question 1, a theological question: Do we have the imagination and resolve to speak and make music in a way that both celebrates and limits the role of music as a conduit for experiencing God?
>
> Question 2, a liturgical question: Do we have the imagination and persistence to develop and play music that enables and enacts the primary actions of Christian worship?
>
> Question 3, an ecclesial question: Do we have the imagination and persistence to make music that truly serves the gathered congregation, rather than the musician, composer, or marketing company that promotes it?
>
> Question 4, a question about aesthetic attitudes: Do we have the persistence and imagination to develop and then practice a rich understanding of "aesthetic virtue"?
>
> Question 5, a cultural question: Do we have a sufficiently complex understanding of the relationship between worship, music, and culture to account for how worship is at once transcultural, contextual, countercultural, and cross-cultural?
>
> Question 6, an economic question: Do we have the imagination and persistence to overcome deep divisions in the Christian church along the lines of socioeconomic class?

3. Questions of *community*

> How should a congregation explain and administer Baptism and Holy Communion?

The given question here, like the next one, is just an example of a question of community. But it is instructive, especially for evangelism understood as making a person a member of the Church, that is, part of the Christian community, because evangelism thought in this way requires asking *how* this happens and *how* this is upheld and maintained.

The answers to these questions are "Baptism" and "Holy Communion." Baptism is how God makes someone His own child, just as He called Jesus His Son and gave Him the Holy Spirit when He was baptized in the Jordan. Baptism is how someone is made a disciple of Christ. Baptism is a kind of adoption. Holy Communion is just that: a holy communion with God and Christ by eating Christ's body and blood, but also with all gathered around the table, eating the one body and drinking the one cup. Holy Communion is a kind of family meal.

Lutherans should acknowledge that they have often played down these aspects to the sacraments. The Catechisms teach what each sacrament is, what its benefits are, and how one is to receive it. But they do not teach what each sacrament *does* (although the very label "Holy Communion" conveys what happens).

4. Questions of *biblical interpretation*

> How do we deal with the fact that the Old Testament prescribes much for Israel's worship, but the New Testament hardly anything for the Church?

This question is also just an example of the kinds of questions that arise. The answer to this question begins by remembering that "Christ is the end of the law" (Rom 10:4). The prescriptions, regulations, and imperative in the Law of Moses served their purpose (Gal 3:10–29) and now of themselves have no binding force for Christians. They live by keeping all Christ has commanded (Mt 28:20).

Of course, the problem is that the New Testament hardly prescribes anything for the Church. Put another way, the problem for biblical interpretation seems to be that there is very little to interpret. This is true if one thinks of the New Testament as a *source* concerning worship. But the New Testament is canonical not primarily because it is a source but because it is a canon, that is, a standard, a rule, a norm. So, the key question of biblical interpretation is, "What does it mean to read the Scriptures as a norm?"

5. Questions of *Christian unity*

> How can the practices and concerns of other churches provide faithful insights into a broader spectrum of worship and its role within the wider community?

Here I must take up a question that I haven't dealt with yet: What is a "Lutheran"? My answer, given in the interest of Christian identity and unity, is "The word *Lutheran* refers to a right way of being Christian." The word *Orthodox* would work well for this.

Lutherans are Christians, meaning they believe in "one God, the Father… and one Lord, Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 8:6). They believe in "the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian

church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting" (SC II, 5).[19] They recognize the authority of the Old and New Testaments and confess the ancient creeds. They recognize a kinship with others who do the same.

For this reason, they are interested in what other Christians think and do, they are ready to acknowledge that they can learn from those who are not Lutheran. But how? One basic way is to be willing to consider anything relevant that is consistent with the Lutheran Confessions. "Consistent with the Lutheran Confessions" is, I grant, a rather loose expression, but it is no looser than the Confessions themselves. The Confessions are primarily *regulative*. They govern how we should think, speak, and act. They do little to dictate precisely what is to be said or done. When it comes to worship, they do not prescribe specific orders, lectionaries, hymns, or collects, to say nothing of music, vestments, or architecture. When it comes to evangelism, they do not dictate how and when it should be done.

If I press the "how" question further, then it would be to pay attention to the concerns first, not the practices. This is because it is usually easier to decide whether someone else's concerns, questions, or problems are relevant and appropriate than to figure out what to make of someone else's practices or requirements. Hauerwas—not a Lutheran—is concerned that much preaching assumes that the hearers are strangers to one another—and plan to remain that way. That's a real problem. Witvliet—also not a Lutheran—is concerned Christians *fight* too much over music in worship. That's a real problem. When someone has identified an important concern, a valuable question, or a real problem, all of us can benefit from faithful responses, answers, and suggestions.

A related question about unity is how to manifest appropriately our Christian unity. Here is the place where orders, lectionaries, hymns, collects, music, vestments, and architecture are worth considering.

6. Questions of *outreach*

   How does God's "divine service" extend beyond the public worship service in those empowered by Word and Sacrament to be the Body of Christ into the world?

Lesslie Newbigin gives a wonderful way to answer this question in his chapter on "The Logic of Mission" in *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*.[20] Newbigin wanted "to explore the question of how the mission of the Church is rooted in the gospel itself."[21] His reason for doing this is because a lot of mission thinking understands mission as obeying a command, not something that arises from hope and joy from hearing and believing the gospel. The New Testament portrays mission as "a kind of explosion of joy. The news that the rejected and crucified Jesus is alive is something that cannot possibly be suppressed. It must be told. Who could be silent about such a fact?"[22]

In dogmatic terms, Newbigin is pointing out that mission in the New Testament arose because people were transformed. Faith came by hearing, and what was heard

was the message of Christ (Rom 10:17), and the faithful could not keep the news to themselves.

It is always like that with good news. You find a really good restaurant and you share it with anyone who asks for a recommendation—and some people who don't. You get engaged to be married and you can't stop talking about it. Good news for you makes a difference to you. It changes you.

What is true about good news of mundane kinds is true about the divine good news of Jesus Christ.

So, the remaining question for worship is whether truly good news is proclaimed regularly.

Endnotes

[1] Robert Kolb, Timothy J. Wengert, and Charles P. Arand, *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), 397.
[2] David J. Bosch, *Witness to the World: The Christian Mission in Ttheological Perspective* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1980), 227.
[3] David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 512. He cited Ludwig Rütti, *Zur Theologie der Mission: Kritsche Analysen und neue Orientierungen* (Munich: Chr. Kaiser Verlag, 1972), 244.
[4] Robert E. Webber*, Celebrating Our Faith: Evangelism through Worship* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, Inc., 1986), vii.
[5] Rodney Clapp, *Peculiar People: The Church as Culture in a Post-Christian Society* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 167. He quoted William J. Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1989), 81.
[6] Robert Webber, *Ancient-Future Faith: Rethinking Evangelicalism for a Postmodern World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999), 7.
[7] Rodney Clapp: "Yet renewed attempts at evangelism are widely and deeply hindered because most of them still rest on Constantinian assumptions. It is as if the churches have realized they must evangelize, but only know how to evangelize Constantinians. Thus they reach out with purposes and methods that were developed to draw in a tribe once spread the world over—yet this tribe is now on the verge of extinction. And the church's methods are accordingly about as successful as missionaries trained and immersed in the culture of Australian aborigines, then sent to do their work in the suburbs of London….

Thus the most prominent American evangelistic paradigm from the eighteenth century right into our day—revivalism—is a profoundly Constantinian approach to Christian mission. The very designation implies a Constantinian context. Revivalism aims to revive or revitalize the preexisting but now latent faith of birthright Christians. It presupposes a knowledge of the languages and practices of faith. 'It is an evangelistic strategy that depended on the American population being Protestant.'" *A Peculiar People*, 159, 163. The closing sentence quotes Frank E. Sugeno in "Evangelism: Avoiding the Errors of the Past," *Anglican and Episcopalian History* 60 (1991): 283.
[8] Clapp, *A Peculiar People*, 165.
[9] Stanley Hauerwas, "Introduction" in William H. Willimon and Stanley Hauerwas, *Preaching to Strangers: Evangelism in Today's World* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992), 6.

[10] I should add at this point that not all talk about marketing and the church is unfaithful or unhelpful.
[11] Kolb/Wengert, 40.
[12] Kolb/Wengert, 40.
[13] Kolb/Wengert, 56.
[14] Oswald Bayer, *Living by Faith: Justification and Sanctification*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2003), 59.
[15] Kolb/Wengert, 195.
[16] Webber, vii.
[17] Alan Jacobs, "Styles Make Fights," 8 April 2010. http://www.runofplay.com/2010/04/08/styles-make-fights/.
[18] John D. Witvliet, "Beyond Style: Rethinking the Role of Music in Worship," in *The Conviction of Things Not Seen: Worship and Ministry in the 21st Century*, ed. Todd E. Johnson (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2002), 70–80.
[19] Kolb/Wengert, 355.
[20] Lesslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1989), 116–127.
[21] Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 116.
[22] Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, 116.

How the Redeemed World Is Done: Charting the Relationship between Liturgy, Discipleship, and Mission

James Marriott

What is the purpose of Christian Worship?

In my recent experiences, which include the research and writing of a dissertation on worship, my teaching of various worship courses at a seminary, my participation in worship leadership nearly every day of the week, and my own discipleship as a church member, husband, and father, I constantly encounter this question. I hear others asking it, both in voice and in action, as they fit their priorities and loves into the endless demands for time and capacity. I ask it myself. What is the point of all of this? What is the purpose of Christian worship?

The uncertainty surrounding this question is shown in the ways our societies and communities engage Christian worship. Simply listing some of the recurring issues demonstrates this uncertainty. Attendance in Christian worship in many church bodies is significantly diminished. Worshiping communities continue to be one of the most segregated spaces of our week. Transactional and consumeristic expectations surround the engagement of Christian worship, both "what's in it for us" and "what we do for God." Various influences of Cartesian modernity continue to drive a text-based, cognitive, individualized practice of the Christian faith that permeates worship patterns. Christian

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Rev. Dr. James F. Marriott serves as Assistant Professor of Music and Department Coordinator at Concordia University Texas. He previously occupied the Kreft Chair for Music Arts at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, where he served as the Director of Music Arts and professor of worship courses. Holding undergraduate and graduate degrees in Parish Music from Concordia Nebraska and Concordia Wisconsin, respectively, he earned a Ph.D. in Liturgical Studies from Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary in Evanston, IL, with an emphasis in liturgical inculturation. He was ordained into the pastoral ministry through Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. He remains active as a pastor, church musician, lecturer, composer and performer across the United States. Jim and his wife, Kristi, have been married for nineteen years and are blessed with two children, Joel and Kirstin.

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worship leaders continue to modify, recreate, argue about, and invest countless dollars and hours in revitalizing Christian worship practices. Our worship is also one of the most bifurcated moments in the Christian life! How does what we do on Sunday morning relate to the rest of our lives? And yet, we face the same frustratingly simple question that has faced Christian communities throughout history. We keep asking: What is the purpose of Christian worship?

This short essay is intended to frame a more extensive pursuit of that very question. And while we may not find definitive "answers" to this question, we can become equipped with better tools for the journey, better questions to ask, and a better sense of our *koinonia.* While the larger pursuit will journey through the Scriptures, theology, history, the arts, the social sciences, and other pertinent influences, these next few pages are intended to illuminate the path for the journey. Here we will work to establish a defensible thesis and answer to the question: What is the purpose of Christian worship?

Discipleship. The purpose of Christian worship is discipleship. This is certainly not novel, as this has been the orthodox understanding of Christian worship throughout the history and practice of the Christian Church. If that thesis is simple enough, perhaps a negative extension of it will be more compelling: Issues in Christian discipleship stem directly from issues in the practice of Christian worship. The Church is less effective as Church when our worship is oriented toward something other than Christian discipleship—whether the colonialist power of the Roman empire, the decision-oriented practices of late revivalism, the attraction-oriented practices of so-called "seeker-services," or the narrow purview of traditionalism, to name a few. So how do we as servants of the Church and ritual stewards of Christian communities, guard against these pitfalls that distract us from this simple thesis? What follows is an attempt to articulate a case for Christian worship as discipleship, in the hopes that you, through your calling, might journey this careful path yourself, and may shepherd those in your spiritual care to the same.

On Whose Terms?

Present-day liturgical theology draws upon authors from a great variety of fields and perspectives: philosophy, liturgical theology, ritual studies, cultural anthropology, and the like. Each employs a distinct set of terms as well as an overlapping understanding of the same terms. For our thesis, then, it is crucial to establish a foundational understanding of *liturgy* and *discipleship*. Not only are these words both foundational and prominent in the field of liturgical theology, but they also are loaded with hermeneutical "baggage" from our own experiences. I offer below my operative meaning of these terms as a common foundation for our consideration.

Discipleship

Discipleship occurs on two axes for the Christian. The Christian is made to be a disciple (vertical axis); the Christian lives as a disciple (horizontal axis). This is quite simply depicted by Robert Kolb and Charles Arand who describe two kinds of righteousness for the Christian.[1] First, the Christian is made righteous before God by grace through faith, not of one's own merit, through the creative and recreative Word of God. This passive righteousness is received as the promises of God are heard, and the Spirit

creates faith and trust in the hearer through these promises. As will be demonstrated below in greater detail, the Church liturgically stewards the enactment of this passive righteousness in the Christian, not in a manner that "puts God in a box," but rather in a way that trusts the places and manner God has promised to act. The passivity is what is important here. Christian worship is often seen and enacted as that which the Christian does to earn some sort of favor with God. We must distinguish our Lutheran liturgical enactments from the patterns and practices which lead to this kind of misguided endeavor. We revel in the grace of God enacted upon us as "Thy strong Word bespeaks us righteous."[2]

The second axis enacts a different kind of righteousness, a righteousness established and enacted by God's human creatures throughout His creation. As Christian disciples, saved by grace through faith (passive righteousness), we live as Christ's redeemed and restored people in the world (active righteousness): "that I may belong to him, live under him in his kingdom, and serve him in eternal righteousness, innocence, and blessedness, just as he is risen from the dead and lives and rules eternally."[3] We serve Christ by serving our neighbor. As we live as God's renewed and forgiven people, we model "how the redeemed world is done."[4]

Central to our understanding of righteousness is the notion of being in a right relationship. We are put into a right relationship with God through faith. We are then able to be in a right relationship with our neighbor through love and service. In the final section of the essay, I will outline how the liturgy of the Christian Church habituates God's people into specific behaviors, living in a right relationship with their neighbors through love and service. Here I am simply distinguishing these two kinds of righteousness for the Christian disciple and suggesting that both kinds of righteousness are enacted in our liturgical practice. Through the liturgy, Christ makes disciples and Christ teaches and empowers His disciples to live in His world through His Word and His Spirit.

Liturgy

With this understanding of discipleship, I also hope to broaden and sharpen our understanding of *liturgy*. Liturgy is the performance of faith. The two critical words in this definition are "performance" and "faith." The notion of "performance" brings together Roy Rappaport's fundamental definition of ritual ("the performance of more or less invariant sequences of formal acts and utterances not entirely encoded by the performers"[5]), James K.A. Smith's emphasis in *Desiring the Kingdom* on behavioral practices as the source of knowledge,[6] and Aidan Kavanagh's suggestion that "A liturgy of Christians is thus nothing less than the way a redeemed world is, so to speak, done."[7] Here Kavanagh most succinctly articulates my definition of liturgy as performance of faith. For Kavanagh, "the Church is the central workshop of the human

The Church's orientation is towards the world, bearing witness to a story that is the story of humanity's salvation. God is making the world new *through* Jesus Christ *by* the power of the Spirit *in* the Church which *is* the body of Christ. This is God's story.

City, a City which under grace has already begun to mutate by fits and starts into the City-of-God-in-the-making, the focal point of a World made new in Christ Jesus."[8] The Church's orientation is towards the world, bearing witness to a story that is the story of humanity's salvation. God is making the world new *through* Jesus Christ *by* the power of the Spirit *in* the Church which *is* the body of Christ. This is God's story. By faith in this story, the Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens, and sanctifies us[9] to share in this story and invite others to participate, as well. Liturgy, then, is not merely a pattern of rites and ceremonies that we enact as community on a consistent basis though—as we will see below—these rites and ceremonies are certainly important. Here liturgy has a cosmic scope. It is performing our redemption, living out God's story, "doing" the world rightly. It is the performance of our faith—not by "our own understanding or strength,"[10] but by the Spirit's work in and through us as the Church in the world.

This understanding of liturgy, as the performance of faith, provides an important framework for bridging the gap between "11:00 on Sunday morning" and the daily life. Many articulations of "liturgy" seem to be Sunday-specific, more concerned about what we do *at* church than what we do *as* church. Among these Sunday-specific liturgies, some seem to suggest that Sunday morning is an escape from the daily life, an oasis in the desert of this world, a culture all its own, a way of being humanity removed from the burdens and responsibilities of being human in relation to other humans. We enter the sanctuary to find sanctuary—no wonder we are so disappointed when we find the same broken people from the same broken world filling our "sanctuary!" (Or, more frighteningly, we find that this so-called sanctuary cannot really provide the escape that we need from ourselves and our own sinful brokenness.) This vision of the liturgy proclaims a redeemed Church, yet describes that church in terms of a juxtaposition to the world, rather than the Church as "the focal point of a World made new in Christ Jesus."[11] Other Sunday-specific liturgies seem to operate as if they are *the* access point to Christianity, with an expectation that the world will *come* to church rather than the Church *going* to the world. In their many iterations throughout Christianity, these various Sunday-specific liturgies too often fail to hold together the relationship between our Sunday gathering and our daily lives. The hinge is the two kinds of righteousness that link liturgy and discipleship.

Liturgy as discipleship is not only a cognitive, audible process, but it fosters practices that rehearse how the redeemed world is done. Sunday morning becomes a microcosm of daily life—a true "little world" that is neither removed from the real world nor positioned as the destination for the world. Instead, Sunday morning is aimed *at* the real world. The Church, through its practices (liturgy), is how the world is done. This bridge between 11:00 on Sunday and the daily life offers significance for how the Church speaks of "mission," "evangelism," "witness," "service," and other critical aspects of discipleship. Sadly, these

Sunday morning becomes a microcosm of daily life—a true "little world" that is neither removed from the real world nor positioned as the destination for the world. Instead, Sunday morning is aimed *at* the real world.

aspects have become more programmatic than generative in many churches.

Getting It Right

As the performance of faith, liturgy involves the interdependent interaction of three tiers of practice: the Story, Word and Sacrament, and rites and ceremonies. Even naming them as distinct "tiers" is problematic since they are so interdependent. However, the tiers immediately indicate a common misperception of "liturgy" that is prevalent in our congregations today. For many of us, we consider what is in the hymnal, or bulletin, or screens, as *the liturgy*. And this is not completely incorrect. However, in the truest understanding of the term, the iconic "p. 5 and 15" for Lutherans is not the liturgy. They are rites with particular ceremonies. It is through rites and ceremonies that the Church participates in Word and Sacrament, the means of grace. It is through those means that the Church is enabled to rehearse the story. And it is through that rehearsal that we perform our faith; a microcosm of how the redeemed world is done. So what, then, does it mean to speak of a Lutheran liturgy?

Lutheran worship practice is primarily concerned with the formation of disciples in the community of the Church. The Lutheran Confessions provide a clear foundation for this orientation to the formation of disciples. The writers of the Confessions consistently connect the Gospel with worship and discipleship, suggesting that "the chief worship of the Gospel is to desire to receive the forgiveness of sins, grace, and righteousness" (Ap V, 310). [12] This forgiveness, grace, and righteousness is the crux of the story of salvation by God's grace through the merits of Jesus Christ, delivered to the believer by the work of the Holy Spirit, who creates and sustains faith. These promises are communicated through divinely instituted means: the proclamation of the Word and the faithful reception of the Sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper (AC, V, 1-2).[13] These means of grace are the enactment of the promises of God. The Spirit works through these means of grace to produce the fruits of faith (AC, V, 3).[14] The Church, then, exists as "an association of faith and the Holy Spirit in the hearts of persons" (Ap VII and VIII, 5).[15] The proclamation of the Word and the faithful performance of the Sacraments serve as the external markers of the Church, to the end that the Gospel promises of forgiveness, life, and salvation offered by God in Christ through the Spirit might be evident through the Church to the world (Ap VII and VIII, 5).[16] Liturgy is the Church's performance of the Gospel faithfully evidenced and produced through these external markers: the proclamation of the Word, Christian baptism, and the Lord's Supper.

There are several implications and considerations here. First, these means of grace are not the grace in themselves; rather, they are means. They impart grace because of divine promise and institution, in that the Spirit uses these means to create and sustain faith. Second, as means, these become foundational to the way Lutherans understand how the Christian faith is to be performed by the Church in the world. All performances of the Christian faith—or, all worship rites and practices—stem from these means. Thus, the liturgy is centered on these means. There is no Christian worship without these means, chiefly because these are the divinely instituted means by which the promises of God in Christ are delivered to the believer by the work of the Spirit. For Lutherans, there is no Christianity without the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of Christian baptism

and the Lord's Supper.[17] These means were divinely instituted and thus are normative for Christian life and practice. These means of grace become the foundation for all Christian rites and practices. Thus, there is a kind of tiered distinction in the Confessions: primarily, there is the Gospel. This Gospel is communicated in the Church to the world through the means of grace, by which the Holy Spirit creates and sustains the faith of individuals in community. These means of grace are enacted through various rites and ceremonies.

It is on this liturgical foundation that Lutherans can work to establish a notion of confessional *orthodoxia* as central to Christian discipleship. *Orthodoxia*, or right praise, consists of the Spirit's work in the believer by the means of grace which animates the faith in God's Gospel promises of forgiveness, life, and salvation through the merits of Christ. Early Lutheran liturgical revisions directly reflect an ecclesial orientation to *orthodoxia*. Rites and ceremonies which obscured the central tenets of the Gospel communicated through the means of grace for the formation of Christian disciples were either revised or replaced. The Reformation was at its theological root a concern over proper pastoral care. This pastoral care included the effort to restore *orthodoxia* as the foundation for Christian discipleship, and the heritage of Lutheran worship to the present day is measured by its fidelity to these theological tenets.

To this end, the Confessors take great efforts to distinguish between the means of grace (which as external markers of God's story of salvation are not adiaphora) and the rites and ceremonies that express and enact these means of grace in community. The means are not adiaphora, the rites and ceremonies are adiaphora. This again was a chief sticking point of the Reformation, as the Lutherans generally took the liturgical "middle ground"—Roman ecclesial officials insisting that the rites and ceremonies must be retained completely in order to maintain not only *orthodoxia* but also the salvific integrity of the Mass, and other reformers calling for more aggressive and comprehensive liturgical reform in order to reestablish the *orthodoxia* lost in liturgical development from the early church through the medieval era (Ap XV, 50).[18] The Lutheran Confessors worked to clearly establish their position on liturgical rites and ceremonies as adiaphora. The Church, as noted above, is identified by the external markers of the proclamation of the Word and the celebration of the Sacraments. The liturgical rites and ceremonies that offer those means of grace in the gathered assembly, while associated with the means of grace, are subservient to the means themselves. Thus, the rites and ceremonies are not normatively an external marker of the Church, and the Church's unity is not dependent on the uniformity of rites and ceremonies (AC VII, 1–4).[19] At the same time, the Confessors insist that they maintain the integrity of the Mass, including "almost all the customary ceremonies" (AC XXIV, 1–2).[20] This is, indeed, the Confessors' understanding of the default position of the Church. The purpose of rites and ceremonies "should serve the purpose of teaching the people what they need to know about Christ" (AC XXIV, 3).[21] The Confessors also acknowledge that, while not essential for a unified understanding of Gospel *orthodoxia*, consistent rites and ceremonies do foster a certain sense of unity and tranquility (Ap XV, 49–52).[22]

Rites and ceremonies, then, are useful for communicating and animating the truth of the promises delivered in the means of grace, even as they are distinguished and distinguishable from the means themselves. This distinguishability, though, requires

special care and attention, for there is a hermeneutical spectrum on the relationship between rites and ceremonies and the means themselves. For example, through the course of liturgical history, the practice of the Lord's Supper led to the development of various rites and ceremonies. At the same time, the performance of these rites and ceremonies conditioned the meaning of the Lord's Supper itself, leading to the very abuses of the Mass addressed by the Confessors.

Thus, rites and ceremonies are not neutral entities that merely "deliver the goods." Rather, there is an inherent and symbiotic relationship formed over time between structure and meaning of rites and the Sacrament. It is not a simple exercise to distinguish rituals and liturgical rites from the meaning and purpose to which they point; while there is a tiered distinction between Gospel, means, and rites, the borders around those categories are often difficult to pinpoint and specify. This hermeneutical tension is between sacramental efficacy, or that which works the means of grace in the Sacrament, and ritual efficacy, or the manner in which the ritual enactment of the means of grace can and does contribute to the understanding of those means. To this end, changes to rites and ceremonies can and do impact the hermeneutical effect of the Gospel story and its work as means of grace even if the rites and ceremonies themselves are in some manner distinguishable and subservient to the story and its external markers. At the same time, these rites and ceremonies can, through their liturgical performance over time, become elevated above their proper function, seen not as the rite which enacts the means, but rather as equal to the means itself. This leads to idolatry and to the obscuring of the Gospel.[23] Rites and ceremonies, then, are by no means arbitrary or meaningless. Rather, they are distinguished, as much as is hermeneutically possible, from the means of grace; even as the means of grace themselves are hermeneutically distinguished as *means* by which the Spirit works faith in God's work of salvation through Jesus Christ, rather than the operative grace itself. Thus, in the liturgical performance of faith by the community, *orthodoxia* is consistently centered in the divine work of salvation as narrated in Word and the Sacraments for the sake of a sinful yet redeemed Church who proclaim, serve, and live as witness to the world. This *orthodoxia* is contextually and dynamically conditioned by communal rites and ceremonies.

Liturgical Discipleship

New obedience, then, is the fruit of the Christian life.[24] Here we see the axes of active and passive righteousness coming together in our liturgical enactments. It is in the liturgical enactments of the Church that disciples are initiated into God's story of everything, made righteous in faith. It is in the liturgical enactments of the Church that disciples are sustained in faith. And it is in the liturgical enactments of the Church that disciples learn "how the redeemed world is done."

In what follows, I offer some connections between the elements of the general Divine Service pattern and behaviors of liturgical discipleship. The behaviors that God has done to us and for us are the behaviors that we enact as His disciples for the sake of the world. The behaviors that we rehearse together on Sunday are the behaviors of our daily life. I will outline them first in a kind of chart form:

Invocation	Hospitality

Confession and Absolution	Reconciliation
Kyrie	Advocacy
Reading of Scripture	Submission[25]
Sermon	Proclamation
Prayers of the Church	Intercession
Offering/Offertory	Generosity
Preface, Sanctus, Prayer of Thanksgiving	Sacrifice (praise and thanksgiving)
Distribution	Communion/community
Benediction	Blessing/sending

I hope to develop all of these in my future work. However, as one brief example, and perhaps a less intuitive one, let me take up the Kyrie as Advocacy. Throughout the Scriptures, the invoking of God's mercy is most closely associated with God's action on behalf of His people.[26] It is a cry for advocacy. In the Gospels, the cry "Lord, have mercy" aimed at Jesus is almost always associated with Jesus' act of healing. Thus, when we pray the Kyrie in our Divine Services, we are calling upon our God in faith to act on our behalf. This is why the petitions of the Kyrie are cries for peace. We conclude the Kyrie by boldly praying "help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord." This is a weighty prayer! As disciples of Jesus Christ, we are the body of Christ. We are the hands, feet, and other members through whom the Spirit is working the fruit of faith for the sake of the world and our neighbor. We are the ones who are advocating for the world. In the same way that we call upon our God to advocate for us and for the world in this prayer, we also commit ourselves to the work of advocacy in this world. We commit ourselves to acts of mercy for those who need healing, for those who need help, for those who need physical bodily care and those who need Christ's grace and mercy, for those who need comfort, and for the defenseless. As we pray the Kyrie each week, we would do well to commit ourselves, as Spirit-filled, fruit-bearing disciples, to the weight of this weighty prayer!

In the liturgical behavior of advocacy, we are formed to be a people who "do the world rightly." We receive God's defense, help, and salvation (vertical; passive). We then engage the world as advocates, those who serve and protect our neighbor as directed by God's truth and by the power of the Spirit (horizontal; active). These liturgical behaviors demonstrate that liturgical formation lies at the heart of Christian discipleship. The liturgy is where we enact and receive the means of grace, God's forgiveness, His mercy, His pardon. But it also where we are formed to live as witnesses for Christ during the rest of the week. Through these liturgical behaviors, we learn the actions God has done for us (the story of everything) and what God desires His human creatures to embody for the right ordering and proper stewardship of God's creation.

And in the nexus of liturgical formation through passive and active righteousness, we discover one final connection (or even major thesis) that is the subtle undercurrent to this whole article. Liturgy, viewed as the world done right, *is mission*. As this entire issue of

Lutheran Mission Matters has depicted for us, our evangelism hinges on our *orthodoxia*, our right worship. This *orthodoxia* is the performance of faith in the story of everything through the rites and ceremonies that enact God's means of grace. The *orthodoxia* of these liturgical behaviors is the connection of Sunday services to daily life. This behavioral framework, this emphasis on liturgical formation, helps us to be better equipped, to ask better questions, to embrace *koinonia* in a way that goes beyond much of our misplaced liturgical banter. As we continue to live as disciples, we will continue to discover how "the redeemed world is done," to the glory and praise of our triune God.

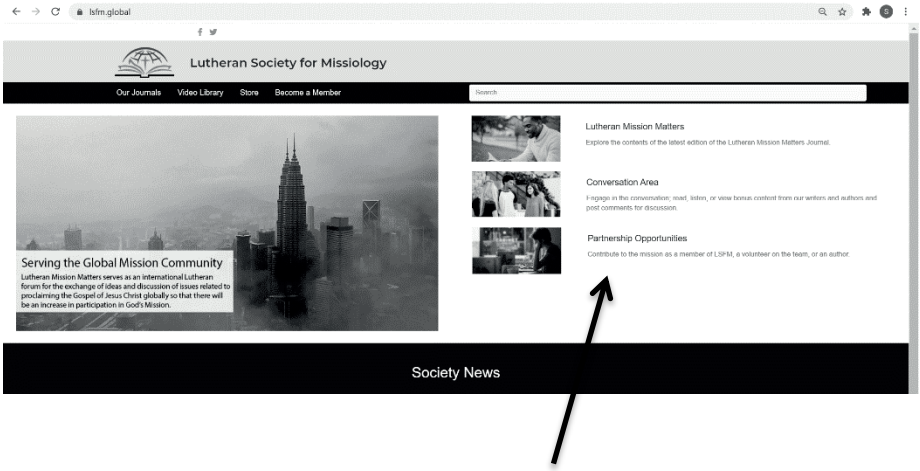
Endnotes

[1] Robert Kolb and Charles Arand, *The Genius of Luther's Theology: A Wittenberg Way of Thinking for the Contemporary Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 21-128.
[2]Martin Franzmann, "Thy Strong Word," (1969) in *Lutheran Service Book* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2007), hymn 578.
[3] Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, ed., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 355. [SC, Creed, 4]
[4]Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology* (New York: Pueblo, 1984), 100.
[5]Roy Rappaport, *Ritual and Religion in the Making of Humanity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 24.
[6]James K.A. Smith, *Desiring the Kingdom: Worship, Worldview, and Cultural Formation* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 2009).
[7]Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology,* 100.
[8]Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, 42.
[9]Kolb/ Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 355.
[10] Kolb/ Wengert, *Book of Concord*, 355.

[11]Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology*, 42.
[12]Paul McCain, ed. *Concordia: The Lutheran Confessions* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2006), 130.
[13]Kolb/ Wengert, *The Book of Concord*, 40.
[14]Kolb/ Wengert, *The Book of Concord*, 40.
[15]Kolb/ Wengert, *The Book of Concord*, 174.
[16]Kolb/ Wengert, *The Book of Concord*, 174.
[17]Or perhaps better said that there is no externally evident expression of Christianity without these means. This is affirmed in AC V.
[18]Kolb/ Wengert, *The Book of Concord*, 230. See also the arguments made by the Roman Catholic Church in "The Confutation of the Augsburg Confession," trans. Mark D. Tranvik, in Robert Kolb and James A. Nestingen, ed., *Sources and Contexts of the Book of Concord* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 111, 115.
[19]Kolb/ Wengert, *The Book of Concord,* 42.
[20]Kolb/ Wengert, *The Book of Concord,* 69.
[21]Kolb/ Wengert, *The Book of Concord*, 68.
[22]Kolb/ Wengert, *The Book of Concord,* 230.
[23]James Brauer, *Worship, Gottesdienst, Cultus Dei* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2005), 256.

[24]This is the confessional trajectory of AC IV, V, and VI.
[25]Submission to the authority of the Word of God.
[26]Psalm 90:13–16 is one of many examples.

Enter the conversation:
“Why Lutheran Mission Matters.”



Be sure to check out the upcoming issue’s Call for Papers (including the theme) and Submission Guidelines near the end of this edition or online (https://lsfm.global) under Partnership Opportunities.

Lutheran Worship for the Not-Yet Christian: Can We Reclaim the *Missa Catechumenorum?*

Steve Zank

Abstract:

In the face of post-Christendom[1], many North American churches have chosen to either integrate with culture or isolate from it. Both choices often blur the connection between evangelism and faithful liturgical form. As a synod which values the historical practices of the Christian Church, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) is in a unique position to revive Missa Catechumenorum*, or service of the learners. Unfortunately, a common practice of general confession and absolution at the outset of a liturgical gathering can be seen as a problem for using* Missa Catechumenorum*. A deep understanding of Lutheran liturgical heritage, however, reassures that reshaping liturgy around the* Missa Catechumenorum *is not only a faithful Lutheran option but it reflects the practice of the very first LCMS liturgy.*

Of all the challenges the North American Church faced in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, perhaps none has proven to be as formidable as its move from cultural insider to cultural outsider. Many once-bustling churches closed their doors, church attendance steadily declined[2] and each successive generation became less and less likely to identify themselves as Christian. For many the growing gap between church and culture made it difficult to address the corresponding decline in church membership, as culture was less and less receptive to church as an institution. In his book *The Next Christians*, Gabe Lyons echoed the long-standing assessment that worship forms played a part in this departure:

> If we fail to offer a different way forward, we risk losing entire generations to apathy and cynicism. Our friends will continue to drift away, meeting their need for spiritual transcendence through other forms of worship and communities of faith that may be less true but more authentic and appealing.[3]

One can read about the variety of ways in which the Christian church has attempted to bridge this cultural gap by reshaping worship forms in the second part of Lester Ruth and

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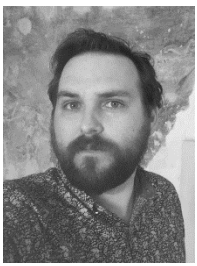

Rev. Steve Zank serves as the Director of Theology for the Center for Worship Leadership at Concordia University Irvine, where he hosts the worship-focused podcast Theology in Motion. Steve also enjoys his work as a musician, music producer, and PhD student of Concordia Seminary Saint Louis.

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Lim Swee Hong's book, *A History of Contemporary Praise & Worship: Understanding the Ideas that Reshaped the Protestant Church.*[4] There is certainly a lot there to evaluate and ponder. What is striking for our purposes, however, is that even in the midst of the church growth movement, through which Christian liturgies were being reshaped around evangelistic concerns, liturgical scholars noted an alarming need for "a more secure connection between liturgy and evangelism."[5] The lack of coordination between liturgical scholarship and missionary zeal enabled the church to pose a destructive false alternative: "Is worship for the Christian *or* the non-Christian?"

In many instances the church has accepted this either/or approach, splitting into rival factions. You know the caricature: one side shakes neon signs that read "reach the lost at any cost" while the other responds in full liturgical dress, chanting responsively: "holy things for holy people!" Schattauer defines these extremes as those for whom the "liturgy is understood and practiced as the quintessential activity for those inside the church community" and those for whom the liturgy is "a stage from which to present the gospel and reach out to the unchurched and irreligious."[6]

Neither of these alternatives, however, is able to provide the stable connection between evangelism and worship that we are seeking. On the one side, reaching the lost at any cost naturally comes at a great cost, namely, the loss of the church's ability to initiate disciples into the Christian faith.[7] Already in 1965, J-J. von Allmen warned that "[i]f living in the Christian period has made us largely forget the duty of evangelization … the end of the Christian period must not lead us into the opposite error of forgetting the necessity of the cult for its own sake."[8] Moreover, reaching the lost at any cost works against the ideal of authenticity that Lyons argued is essential for our time.

On the other side, narrowing the liturgical gathering so exclusively as to shape it only for Christians rejects the witness of, among others, the Israelite temple, the early Church, and the Lutheran Reformation. There is ample evidence to show that the responsible liturgical adaptations enacted by Lutheran Reformers in the sixteenth century were motivated by the need to communicate the gospel in a way that the people would understand it. In his introduction to the 1526 *Deutsche Messe,* Martin Luther wrote the following in regard to the relationship between liturgical form and evangelism:

> The … German Mass and Order of Service … should be arranged for the sake of the unlearned lay folk and with which we are now concerned. These two orders of service [Latin and German Mass] must be used publicly, in the churches, for all the people, among whom are many who do not believe and are not yet Christians. Most of them stand around and gape, hoping to see something new, just as if we were holding a service among the Turks or the heathen in a public square or out in a field. That is not yet a well-ordered and organized congregation, in which Christians could be ruled according to the gospel; on the contrary, the gospel must be publicly preached [to such people] to move them to believe and become Christians. [9]

Lutherans following in Luther's liturgical tradition, therefore, are in a remarkable position to offer another way forward through the false dichotomy. We are free to *conservatively* attend to the challenges associated with the rise of nominal Christianity and the establishment of post-Christendom because our tradition has always enjoyed a rich connection between worship and evangelism. We can answer the question "Is worship for the Christian or the not-yet Christian?" with a resounding "yes." Furthermore, rather than relying solely on the invention of new worship forms, we are also free to bring our heritage to bear on today's challenges, all the while meeting the contemporary felt need for authenticity and inclusion in worship. This is the approach for which Hermann Sasse advocated when he wrote: "Why has our divine service lost the power over men's spirits? . . . One answer . . . is the fact that we pastors no longer know and understand the liturgical treasures of our church and therefore are not in a position to introduce our congregations to them."[10]

It is worth noting that while there are examples of strict historical repristination and "anything goes" attitudes toward worship in the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), its members walk a responsible and confessional middle ground through official publications and actions. It can even be said that the LCMS champions the importance of evangelism in liturgical choices. For example, in 2001 the LCMS in convention resolved to remind its pastors that their local liturgical choices have broader implications, and that there was a need to "continue to find ways to foster discussion among groups with diverse viewpoints for the purpose of building greater understanding of our theology of worship and fostering further discussion of worship practices that are consistent with this theology." They did so, however, with the following evangelistic caveat: "[t]hat all action taken in this resolution shall be used to help carry out 'The Great Commission' and shall not in any way detract or distract from the primary mission of God's kingdom here on earth."[11] Furthermore, in 2010 the synod in convention commended the "Council of Presidents for its leadership in striving to bring greater unity to the Synod in regard to worship practices *for the sake of common witness* [emphasis mine]" through its "Theses on Worship."[12] In the Theses, article IV confesses: "Imposing a certain form, rite, or ceremony on the Church burdens men's consciousness, *thereby militating against the gospel* [emphasis mine]."[13] This tensive, responsible and confessional middle ground[14] is home for the ecclesiology of the LCMS.

Rather than meeting the challenges of post-Christendom by removing the exclusive aspects of worship (such as the Lord's Supper or sharing of the peace), we are free to draw resources from another time in which the church lived as a cultural outsider. One such resource can be found in the liturgy of the church of the fourth and fifth centuries. In this era Christians did not omit aspects of their sacred gatherings for the sake of evangelism, they carefully initiated the unlearned, especially in regard to the sacraments. These ancestors of ours divided worship into two parts: the "*Missa Catechumenorum* (the Worship of the Learners)," and the "*Missa Fidelium* (The Worship of the Believers)."[15] For them this meant that the uninitiated would be blessed and excused before the worship of the faithful continued with the service of the Lord's Supper. Philip Schaff wrote that "the first motive [for this] must be sought ... in an opposition to heathenism; to wit, in the

feeling of the necessity of guarding the sacred transactions of Christianity, the embodiment of its deepest truths, against profanation in the midst of a hostile world …"[16] He continued that

> [t]he secret discipline was therefore a temporary, educational and liturgical expedient of the ante-Nicene age. The catechumenate and the division of the acts of worship grew together and declined to, together. With the disappearance of adult catechumens, or with the general use of infant baptism and the union of church and state, disappeared also the secret discipline in the sixth century: '*cessante causa cessat effectus*.' [17]

As it grew the Early Church needed a way to welcome catechumens into worship while restricting them from Lord's Supper until they had been initiated.[18] Hence, worship began with an inclusive portion of the service around the preaching of the Word and concluded with an exclusive portion of the service around the celebration of the Sacrament. While acknowledging that there will be significant differences in the ways we might apply this division in our own time, for example, we may not advocate for removing visitors before communion and barring the doors, there is no denying that idea of the *Missa Catechumenorum* is a potential tool to promote authenticity in missional contexts in which the church is a cultural outsider.

Crucially, for the church of the fourth and fifth centuries the *Missa Catechumenorum* was not only the appointed time for Christians to gather around the Word, as it appears in the English Hymnal heritage adopted by the LCMS for a century, (This claim will be further substantiated in the following section.) it was a service designed for a truly evangelical proclamation of the Word including those who were not-yet Christian. In this context Herman Sasse called the Service of the Word (*Wortgottesdienst*) "the great mission opportunity of the ancient church"[19] and J-J von Allmen wrote that "the worship of the Church is not without a deep and vital link with evangelism … Church worship has an evangelistic aspect … which appears in the first part of the service called the Mass of the catechumens."[20]

Consider the following service, "reconstructed on the basis of references in the *Mystagogical Catecheses* of Cyril of Jerusalem and the *Diary of Egeria*"[21] (351 CE):

> The congregation assembles, men on one side, women on the other, clergy in the apse. Lessons read by readers interspersed with psalms sung by a cantor with the assembly responding to a refrain (antiphon). The series of readings ends with the Gospel read by a deacon or a presbyter. Homilies given by the presbyters and finally by the bishop. Blessing and dismissal of the catechumens. Blessing and dismissal of the candidates for baptism (*energumens* or *competentes*). Blessing and dismissal of the penitents. Prayers of the faithful in litany form led by the deacon, the people responding: Kyrie eleison; the bishop offers the concluding prayer. The kiss of peace exchanged by the clergy with each other and the people with each other. Loaves of bread and cups of wine brought to

> the altar. Apostolic greeting from the bishop and Sursum corda. Eucharistic prayer, including the Sanctus and institution narrative and concluding with intercessions and a doxology. The Lord's Prayer accompanied by another diaconal litany: "Holy things for the holy people" with the response "One alone is holy …" Breaking of bread and communion administered by the bishop (bread) and a deacon (cup). Psalm 33 sung during communion. Episcopal blessing and diaconal dismissal.[22]

The *Missa Catechumenorum* of the service above includes lessons, Psalm singing by a cantor, a Gospel reading and a sermon, after which the uninitiated are blessed and excused. These rites could be participated in by peripheral attendees of all types. The rites and rituals reserved for the faithful were of a more committed nature, including prayers, responses, a kiss of peace, the Lord's Prayer, and Communion. Note that the liturgical phrase "holy things for holy people," which we used to caricaturize those who claim the liturgy should be understood exclusively for Christians, is spoken in the context of the *Missa Fidelium* and not the service as a whole. Finally, while it was the church's aim to evangelize, teach, and encourage catechumens into the full fellowship of the *Missa Fidelium*, it maintained an intentional place for the uninitiated within the worship of the church. Rather than trying to make the service completely transparent to culture, the church portioned the liturgy in order to welcome the not-yet Christian while maintaining its authenticity. In other words, while the service would not necessarily attract not-yet Christians *per se*, there is a way in which the service would welcome every participant into deeper layers of commitment, understanding, and communion. This approach takes seriously Rodney Clapp's observations about evangelism:

Finally, while it was the church's aim to evangelize, teach, and encourage catechumens into the full fellowship of the *Missa Fidelium*, it maintained an intentional place for the uninitiated within the worship of the church.

> [E]vangelism [must] be understood not simply as declaring a message to someone but as initiation into the world-changing kingdom of God. It is not enough to think of evangelism as proclamation. We must understand it once again as the earliest Christians did, as 'the persuading of people to become Christians and take their place as responsible members of the body of Christ.'[23]

While *Lutheran Service Book (LSB)*, the most recent hymnal adopted by the LCMS, gives us a head start in reclaiming the division of worship into the *Missa Catechumenorum* and the *Missa Fidelium* through its division of the service into the "Service of the Word" and the "Service of the Sacrament,"[24] it also presents us with a startling impediment.

Presumably through the influence of the 1888 *Common Service*, received through the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book (ELHB)*, the LCMS began to espouse the belief that an individual cannot properly enter the Divine Service without first ritually practicing confession/absolution. This essentially conceived of the Service of the Word as part of the *Missa Fidelium*, flattening the division between the service of the catechumens and the service of the faithful. This teaching is surprising because from 1847 until the addition of *ELHB* in 1912 general confession/absolution was *only* officially practiced *after* the sermon in the LCMS. Already in 1935, however, LCMS scholars and educators were teaching otherwise; in "Our Liturgical Chaos" (1935) Theodore Graebner, originally from the Norwegian Synod, wrote: "[t]he service opens most appropriately with the confession of sins. Having been given the first assurance of the forgiveness of God in absolution, the believer enters into the Lord's presence."[25] Since then similar statements have been made by many influential LCMS scholars. In *Heaven and Earth: The Gifts of Christ in the Divine Service* Arthur Just made a similar claim. While he helpfully introduced general confession and absolution with the assertion that "[p]ublic confession and absolution are not part of the Divine Service but preparation to enter Christ's bodily presence and receive the gifts from that presence,"[26] he connected "entering Christ's bodily presence" with the *invocation* at the top of the services, and not exclusively the Lord's Supper: "Our services begin with the Invocation of the name of the triune God…Wherever the name of Jesus is, there is Jesus — present bodily with the gifts of salvation."[27] The implication is that in order to properly begin the worship service a ritual confession of sin must be made and an absolution must be given. At the same time, he relied on a teaching on holiness in relationship to the Old Testament temple, which had "boundaries that kept those who were not worthy or prepared from entering God's holiness; we today also enter God's presence confessing our sins in repentance and faith and hearing God's absolution."[28]

This approach to worship, while new to the LCMS at the first half of the twentieth century, was clearly taught through the *Common Service*, a liturgy created in the latter half of the nineteenth century by the combined efforts of the General Council, the General Synod, and the General Synod of the South. *An Explanation of the Common Service*, the official guide to the liturgy published by the General Council in 1908, claims that "[w]ithout the sincere confession of sin God does not bestow His grace upon us; nor does He accept our sacrifices of prayer, praise, or thanksgiving."[29] This claim is not made about confession/absolution generally, but is attached to the rite of confession as it appears in the *Common Service*. The adoption of this opinion makes it very difficult for the Service of the Word to function as a *Missa Catechumenorum* in the LCMS, and its reversal is needed if our synod is to consider meeting the challenges of post-Christendom with the category of *Missa Catechumenorum*. By making heartfelt ritual confession of sin a prerequisite to liturgical gathering we begin our services with the declaration that there is no place for the active participation of the not-yet Christian in our midst.

Fortunately, the testimony of our Lutheran history and doctrine speaks against the idea that the service *must* begin, or *most appropriately* begins, with general confession/absolution. Certainly, a Lutheran church *can* faithfully begin worship with ritual confession/absolution, and such a rite is certainly very common today, but that is

simply a faithful and useful *choice* in particular contexts and should not hinder our ability to leverage the spirit of the *Missa Catechumenorum* as a resource to meet the unique challenges of post-Christendom.

While many sixteenth century Lutheran services would have begun with a general confession it was not considered the only or best option for all contexts. Specifically, Luther and the Wittenberg Reformers did not believe that a ritual confession/absolution was a prerequisite for the Service of the Word. In fact, the closer we get to the original sixteenth century liturgies of Lutheranism the more likely we are to find general confession and absolution celebrated after the sermon and not as a theological necessity for entrance into the Divine Service. Ronald Rittgers writes: "General confession typically took place after the sermon and before the celebration of the Eucharist, providing laypeople with a *final opportunity to prepare themselves for reception of the consecrated host* [emphasis mine]."[30] This is confirmed by Arthur Carl Piepkorn, who wrote that "[t]he majority of the orders in [the sixteenth century] that prescribe a confession at all put it after the sermon instead of the beginning of the Mass."[31]

Furthermore, we have also alluded to the fact that at the beginning of the LCMS and for its entire German-speaking era, ritual confession and absolution was practiced after the sermon and immediately preceding the service of the Sacrament. We find that in the *Kirchengesangbuch für die Evangelisch-Lutherische Gemeinden ungeänderter Augsburger Confession* (1847), the following rubric: "Having heard the Word of God, let us now humble ourselves before the supreme Majesty of God, and make confession of our sin, saying… ."[32]

Until relatively recently Lutherans have not believed, taught, or confessed that ritual confession/absolution is an essential entrance rite into the worship gathering. They practiced it as a prerequisite to receiving the sacrament and, as such, it just needed to take place sometime before the distribution.[33] Note that, in the paradigm of *Missa Catechumenorum* and *Missa Fidelium,* confession/absolution is associated with the *Missa Fidelium*. Furthermore, many early Lutheran churches retained private confession and absolution and the worship service contained no public confession and absolution whatsoever. In these cases, congregants that wished to commune were to stop by the church the night before for Vespers, or, in the case of sixteenth century Nürnberg, earlier Sunday morning to register and participate in private confession/absolution. Critically, this practice was not considered an entrance rite for worship as a whole but for the Lord's Supper in particular.

Now we must return to the original goal: to develop a more secure connection between liturgy and evangelism as we consider what the responsible adaptation of liturgical form looks like in post-Christendom. To this point it is noteworthy that while we tend to describe people as either "Christian" or "non-Christian," in his preface to the *Deutsche Messe* Luther used the terms "Christian" and "not-yet Christian [*noch nicht Christen*]."[34] In fact, it could be argued that Luther thought we all had a little bit of not-yet Christian in us:

> we prepare such orders not for those who already are Christians; for they need none of them. And we do not live [and work] for them; but *they live*

> *for us who are not yet Christians* [emphasis mine] so that they may make Christians out of us. Their worship is in the spirit. But such orders are needed for those who are still becoming Christians or need to be strengthened…[35]

More recently, Robert Webber suggested that evangelism "not only converts people, but also brings them into the full life of the church and keeps them there."[36] In this context it naturally follows that the worshiping community will be made up of Christians and not-yet Christians alike.

The early church, rooted in a pre-Christian context, would have also seen the path of faith formation as non-binary initiation, again, making the division of the mass into *Missa Catechumenorum* and *Missa Fidelium* an appealing approach for the continual making of Christians out of all who gather in worship. This is resonant with what is arguably the defining aspect of the modern Liturgical Theology movement:

> I know that liturgy is the public ceremony of the church, but it does not exist for its own sake any more than does the gospel. They both have a mission orientation, because they are both charged with the power of transfiguration. Thus it was that my teacher, Aiden Kavanagh, used to regularly say in class that 'liturgy is doing the world the way the world was meant to be done'[37]

In other words, evangelistic considerations in worship are not only for the sake of not-yet Christian, they are for the not-yet Christian in each of us. We have moved substantially beyond the cultural context that J-J. von Allmen was addressing in 1965 and into a truly pre-church context and a severe decline in biblical literacy, nevertheless, his insights still have merit as we consider what it means to worship in post-Christendom:

> Besides the central participants, that is, the baptized, there is also a place in Christian worship for what might be described as peripheral participants. We have notably forgotten this in the course of Christian civilization because — the whole population being, in fact if not in essence, composed of the baptized — the public nature of the cult came to the forefront instead of its exclusive nature. This public nature of worship has helped transform it (I am speaking very theoretically) into a spectacle, following the Catholic trend, or into a lecture following the Protestant trend, instead of allowing it to remain an encounter, in which the Lord and His church are committed to each other in mutual self-dedication. Hence, if there are peripheral worshipers among us, they are no longer the same as they were in the ancient Church; they are those baptized who have grown lukewarm through the cares and cupidities of the world. [38]

If evangelism is narrowly defined as churching the unchurched, then shaping worship around evangelistic considerations might mean gearing the service towards getting people

to "make a decision for Jesus Christ." If, however, evangelism is defined in terms of making Christians out of the not-yet Christian in all of us — liturgical adaptation around evangelistic concerns takes on the form of intentional initiation and invitation *into* the life of the church, and we have resources for such an approach! Insofar as we are Christians we are enlivened by the Holy Spirit and enter the door of the church ready to freely confess and receive forgiveness. Insofar as we are not-yet Christians, however, we are entrenched in self-promotion and need the law to convict us of our sin. In view of this, Frank Senn wrote:

> In what sequence should things happen? We may think that we need to go through the confessional rite of purification at the beginning of worship. But Isaiah didn't confess his unworthiness until *after* he was granted a vision of the Lord high and lifted up in the temple. Modern worshipers may be able to experience true contrition only after their defenses have been pierced by the word.[39]

Reincorporating this distinction back into the liturgy could be an ideal way for the church of the twenty-first century to allow evangelistic concerns to shape liturgical form. Our societal shift to post-Christendom has exposed the ways in which our current worship forms have been shaped by predominantly Christian cultural contexts. Those who meet this challenge by gratuitously accommodating worship to culture do so at the expense of authenticity, which, ironically, is a primary value for the generations such adaptations are designed to reach. Those who, on principle, refuse to consider evangelistic concerns in the shaping of worship do so at the expense of relatability, which of course, is of primary concern for Lutherans as they gather in worship.

It is safe to say that the cultural landscape in which we gather for worship has a significant impact on our rites and rituals; already in 1938 Richard Caemmerer warned us that the liturgical challenges of the future would not be the same as challenges of the past.[40] Lutherans, however, are supremely positioned to meet the shifting cultural landscape in worship because rather than jettisoning the heritage aspects of our worship for the sake of evangelism, Lutherans can work together to arrange, utilize, and responsibly amend our liturgical heritage in order to best serve the Church and world in our own time and place. Returning the confession of sins to its original placement for the LCMS and taking on the spirit of the *Missa Catechumenorum* for our own time is not a silver bullet to meet the challenges of post-Christendom, however, it might be one of the tools that helps. Of course, in the process "all frivolity and offense must be avoided, and special consideration must be given particularly to those who are weak in faith,"[41] educating our people as to the meaning and usefulness of this proposal.

In the long run, congregations still need to make a witness of their faith to the world and entrust God to send out workers for the harvest and build His church. We are free, however, to responsibly adapt our services to the context in which we live, and the subtle shift of the Service of the Word to the *Missa Catechumenorum* and the Service of the Sacrament to the *Missa Fidelium* provides one such strategy to responsibly do so.

Endnotes

[1] The influence of the institutional church has been profoundly diminished throughout the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, but not across all contexts. For example, Leo Sanchez has observed that Christendom is alive and well in regions like Latin America and wherever the Roman Church remains a cultural insider. Here we refer to the rise of Post-Christendom that is experienced in the United States.
[2] In 2017 the official newspaper of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS), the *Reporter*, warned of a "45-plus-years membership decline in the Synod." Paula Schlueter Ross, "Reversing the LCMS Membership Decline," *Reporter*, February 28, 2017. (https://reporter.lcms.org/2017/reversing-lcms-membership-decline/) (last accessed 1/24/2022).
[3] Gabe Lyons, *The Next Christians* (Colorado Springs, CO: Multnomah Books, 2016), 11.
[4] Lester Ruth and Lim Swee Hong, *A History of Contemporary Praise & Worship: Understanding the Ideas that Reshaped the Protestant Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2021).
[5] Frank C. Senn, *The Witness of the Worshiping Community* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1993), 4.
[6] Thomas H. Schattauer, *Inside Out: Worship in an Age of Mission* (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 1999), 2.
[7] Frank Senn warned that "missionary success can result in a loss of the real mission of the church. It has happened many times, and it usually happens right under our noses." Senn, *Witness,* 14.
[8] Jean-Jacques von Allmen, *Worship: Its Theology and Practice* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1965), 79.
[9] Martin Luther, in *Luther's Works, Vol. 53: Liturgy and Hymns*, ed. Ulrich S. Leupold, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), 53:63.
[10] Hermann Sasse, "*Ecclesia Orans*: Letters Addressed to Lutheran Pastors" (*Logia*, Eastertide/April 1993, Volume II, Number 2, *The Divine Service*), 33.
[11] Proceedings of the 2001 LCMS Convention, Resolution 2-05 "To Continue to Foster Discussion in Worship," 129. Available on the LCMS website. (https://www.lcms.org/search?q=2010%20convention%20resolution#gsc.tab=0&gsc.q=2010%20convention%20resolution&gsc.page=1).
[12] Proceedings of the 2010 LCMS Convention, Resolution 2-05, "To Commend 'Theses on Worship' and Model Theological Conference on the Theology of Worship," 110. Available on the LCMS website. (https://www.lcms.org/search?q=2010%20convention%20resolution#gsc.tab=0&gsc.q=2010%20convention%20resolution&gsc.page=1).
[13] LCMS Council of Presidents, "Theses on Worship," 2010. https://michigandistrict.org/resources/theses-on-worship/ (last accessed 2/25/22).
[14] The Lutheran Confessions guides the church into this tension: "We believe, teach, and confess that the community of God in every place and at every time has the authority to alter such ceremonies according to its own situation, as may be most useful and edifying for the community of God." This is not a blanket permission for change: "Of course, all frivolity and offense must be avoided, and special consideration must be given particularly to those who are weak in faith." (Robert Kolb, Timothy J. Wengert, and Charles P. Arand, *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), 515. (FC Ep X, 4–5).
[15] Edward T. Horn, "Outlines of Liturgics - On the Basis of Harnack*"* in *Zöckler's Handbuch der theologischen Wissenschaften. Englished with additions from other sources* (Philadelphia: Lutheran Publication Society, 1890), 11.

[16] Philip Schaff, *History of the Christian Church, Volume II: Ante-Nicene Christianity. A.D. 100-325* (Grand Rapids, MI: Christian Classics Ethereal Library, 1885), 225.
[17] Schaff, 225.
[18] Hospitality is only one of the reasons the early church divided its liturgy into *Missa Catechumenorum* and *Missa Fidelium*. Another would be to curb the propagation of heresies or misunderstandings concerning the Sacrament of the Altar (The *Disciplina Arcani*).
[19] Sasse, 30.
[20] von Allmen, 78.
[21] Frank C. Senn, *Introduction to Christian Liturgy* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012), 44.
[22] Senn, *Introduction,* 44–45.
[23] Rodney Clapp, *Peculiar People: The Church as Culture in a Post-Christian Society* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1996), 167. He quoted William J. Abraham, *The Logic of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publ. Co., 1989), 81.
[24] *Lutheran Service Book: Pew Edition,* Prepared by The Commission on Worship of The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2006).
[25] Theodore Graebner. *The Problem of Lutheran Union and Other Essays* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1935), 141.
[26] Arthur Just, *Heaven on Earth: The Gifts of Christ in the Divine Service* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2008) 184.
[27] Just, 184.
[28] Just, 184.
[29] *An Explanation of the Common Service, 2nd Ed* (Philadelphia: General Council Publishing House, 1908), 21.
[30] Ronald Rittgers, *The Reformation of the Keys: Confession, Conscience, and Authority in Sixteenth-Century Germany* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2004) 84–85.
[31] Arthur Carl Piepkorn, "Lutheran Rubrics of the Sixteenth Century," Pro Ecclesia Lutherana Vol. 1, 1933, 72.
[32] Trans. Matthew Carver, *Walther's Hymnal: Church Hymnbook for Evangelical Lutheran Congregations of the Unaltered Augsburg Confession* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2012), 391.
[33] This posture is most likely related to the deference sixteenth-century Lutherans paid the early church; in view are the 4th Lateran Council's requirement of annual confession of sins and reception of the Supper, and the stance of the Didache: "Assemble on the Lord's Day, and break bread and offer the Eucharist; but first make confession of your faults, so that your sacrifice may be a pure one. Anyone who has a difference with his fellow is not to take part with you until they have been reconciled, so as to avoid any profanation of your sacrifice. For this is the offering of which the Lord has said, 'Everywhere and always bring me a sacrifice that is undefiled, for I am a great king, says the Lord, and my name is the wonder of nations.'" (https://www.ewtn.com/catholicism/library/didache-12503, last accessed 4/13/2022).
[34] Martin Luther, *Dr. Martin Luthers Saemmtliche Schriften* (*The Complete Works of Dr. Martin Luther*) *Vol. 10*, Dr. Johannes Georg Walch, ed. (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 1892), 226.
[35] Martin Luther, *Vol. 53:* 62.
[36] Robert E. Webber, *Celebrating Our Faith: Evangelism through Worship* (San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1986), vii.

[37] David Fagerburg, *Consecrating the World* (Kettering, OH: Angelico Press, 2016) 4. Compare Kavanagh quote to its appearance in print: "A liturgy of Christians is thus nothing less than the way a redeemed world is, so to speak, done." in Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology* (New York: Pueblo, 1984), 100.
[38] von Allmen, 200–201.
[39] Senn, *Witness*, 24.
[40] "In one respect our twentieth-century problem is similar to Luther's. We are confronted, as our problem of evangelization of the world comes close home to us, with a vast number of people, a small minority of whom we imagine, for sure, to be Christians. But there is a great difference, which is of importance in the approach to the liturgical problem: the great mass is not liturgically habituated. Our problem is not one of retention of liturgical forms but of introducing them to the individual. Each new worshiper in our church is a liturgical problem. He has been, we trust, grounded in the elemental considerations of the faith. Shall he be launched into a complete worship technique? a traditionally complicated service? There is sense to that, Luther would say, if the newcomer had always known the technique and the service. Then it would be a track for his wayward devotion. What would Luther say of a man without liturgical experience? That problem was not one of his." (Richard Caemmerer, "On Liturgical Uniformity" *Concordia Theological Monthly*, Volume: 9, Nr. 6, 1938, 439.)
[41] Robert Kolb, Timothy J. Wengert, and Charles P. Arand, *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), 515. FC Ep X, 4–5.

Mission and Worship in a Secular Age: Reflections on Brazilian Lutheran Worship Movements

Mário Rafael Yudi Fukue

Introduction

Over the past forty years, worship has become a point of difference and disagreement in the *Igreja Evangélica Luterana do Brasil* (IELB, Evangelical Lutheran Church of Brazil). In this development, the IELB is like churches in other parts of the world. For example, I know that in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod in the United States that worship practices, forms, and ideas often break down into two streams: traditional and contemporary; liturgical and non-liturgical; transcultural and contextual. It has become this way in the IELB too. I also know that in the Missouri Synod some speak about "worship wars." I fear a "worship war" could start in the IELB too.

Talk and concerns about "war," "conflict," and "antagonism" over worship are bad signs. There is, however, at least one good thing: Everybody still understands that worship is central to Christian identity, life, and witness. Worship wouldn't matter so much if it weren't so important to being and living as a Christian and for showing others what it means to be Christian.

So, we should not avoid talking about differences, disagreements, and conflicts about worship. We should try to understand worship better. This issue of *Lutheran Mission Matters* gives me an opportunity to try to do this. In keeping with this issue's theme of "mission and worship," the article begins with a short discussion of mission and worship, and then an outline of how the IELB has seen divergence and antagonism develop over worship. After that, the article will introduce philosopher Charles Taylor and his work on the "secular age" to analyze what the developments in worship imply for how the churches in Brazil stand with respect to the wider society. Put very briefly, this article will argue that the divergences and conflicts found today in the IELB reflect different and inadequate ways

Mário Rafael Yudi Fukue is married to Kamila, whom he met on Vicarage in São Leopoldo, Brazil. They are blessed with two girls, ages 2 and 7, and they live in São Paulo city, Brazil. Mario was ordained in 2004. He has master's degrees in Linguistics, and works full-time at Lutheran Hour Ministry in Brazil. He is enrolled in the Ph.D. program of Concordia Seminary in Saint Louis. He has also published academic papers in both linguistics and theology journals.

of coping with what philosopher Charles Taylor calls "a secular age."[1] For Taylor, a secular age is one in which Christians can no longer assume privilege and influence in a society. Rather, their religion and way of life are called into question by a fully secular outlook; that is, one in which gods or the transcendent are unimportant for leading a healthy productive life. Today, the very idea of "religion" is contested. It is now expected that Christian beliefs and values require apologetics, that Christian worship needs validation, that Christian outreach needs justification. But Taylor does more than offer a historical explanation for the situation. The article will show how he also gives a helpful framework for thinking about our outlook, lives, and practices, including mission and worship.

Mission and Worship

Lutherans think about mission and worship in different ways, as this issue of *Lutheran Mission Matters* shows. Such differences are not necessarily problems, but they do mean that it will be good if I am clear about how I understand the relationship of mission and worship.

First, mission and worship always go together because God carries out His mission (*missio Dei*) through His Word, and corporate worship services are the regular events in which one expects to hear the Word of the Gospel proclaimed and to receive the Sacraments as a "visible word" (Ap XIII 5). [2] God's mission has been "reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor 5:19). God did this in Christ, and He continued this through Paul and Timothy and through their co-workers and successors. God continued this work by giving them "the ministry of reconciliation" and "the message of reconciliation" (2 Cor 5:18–19). From the first days of the Church, this ministry has been conducted and this message has been proclaimed when believers come together for the Word and the Sacraments. In this way, mission and worship always go together.

Second, because worship involves God's Word, we also can understand that mission and worship always go together by working the faith and faithfulness that leads to witness in the world. Faithful worship will "awaken and strengthen our faith" (AC XIII 1); [3] faith will always "yield good fruit and good works" (AC VI 1); [4] and good works will be occasions by which Christians will testify to their faith. The mission of God occurs in worship, but worship leads to the mission of God taking place through the lives of believers in the world.

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Third, mission and worship go together in the sense that corporate worship itself is a testimony and witness to the world. This is an anthropological observation, not a strictly Christian one. Stonehenge and the Sphinx are remains that still testify to religious beliefs and practices of people dead for thousands of years. But the connection is true for Christians too. Church buildings old and new testify to beliefs and practices even when

services are not being held. And the Divine Service itself tells anyone who approaches that something is happening. Corporate worship itself is witness to the world.

This understanding of mission and worship focuses on the Word of God. But the preached Gospel is not a mantra, and the Sacraments are not magic. They do not work *ex opere operato*. So, it is always important *how* things are said and done. The kind of language and the order of service always matter. The music, postures, gestures, and settings involved in worship also always matter. I believe that most Lutherans would agree with this much. But it is clear that they do not always agree with how language, order, music, postures, etc. matter. The situation in the IELB illustrates this.

Worship Movements in IELB

God's mission takes place through His Word, and it is accomplished when the Word is received by faith. Corporate worship is the center of this exchange. Therefore, we can affirm that worship is mission, because in worship God addresses people through Word and sacraments. In the IELB, there is no dispute about this. The IELB affirms this and also that God wants the Gospel to be proclaimed to every people.

But there are clear divergences in the IELB concerning the order and form of worship, the emphasis on Holy Communion, adiaphora, and the role of music in worship. I believe that those differences should not be ignored. However, the current problem in the IELB's worship landscape is radicalization and especially the lack of dialogue. In this way, divergence tends to absolutize and crystallize division. I believe that, just as the *missio Dei* as an act of speaking of God through the church is an inherent part of the church, it is imperative that everyone dialogues about the tensions and divergences regarding worship.

Some historical background is needed to properly understand the current situation on worship in the IELB. The IELB developed out of Missouri Synod missionary work. This was not an "external" mission, but an "internal" mission, because it was about serving Germans in Brazil. As heirs of the culture and liturgy of German Lutheranism, Lutheran churches on Brazilian soil did not face great difficulties in inheriting or transplanting the culture and liturgy of the Missouri Synod.[5] The German language predominated well into the 20th century, and attention to liturgical questions only became significant after the Second Vatican Council.[6] As a result, significant liturgical changes were introduced in the 1980s. There were some discordant voices, as with many changes. But there is no record of major turbulence.[7]

In parallel with the progress of liturgical changes, the IELB also registered a gradual growth in the diversity of musical instruments in worship. Despite the prejudice of some pastors, the use of the guitar became widespread. Due to the practicality of use and transport, the instrument is still widely used by pastors serving mission stations. From the 1980s to the mid-2000s, the Evangelical Lutheran Youth Organization of Brazil (JELB) composed songs, produced new songbooks and released new CDs at biennial National

Youth Gatherings. These new songs would not be restricted to youth meetings but would also appear in the divine services of the IELB, alongside the hymns of the hymnal.

Thus, liturgical awareness in the IELB was and continues to be a gradual process belonging to the last four decades. In these forty years, without fanfare or rupture, liturgical improvements were organically promoted in many ways, including studies and lectures at national conventions and gatherings; reformulation of the hymnal; introduction of different liturgical vestments; publication of manuals and literature on worship and liturgy; and publication of articles in theological magazines and in the official magazine of the Synod, the *Mensageiro Luterano* (*Lutheran Messenger*).

But recently this progress led by the church body has slowed. Liturgical innovations did not keep pace with changes and developments in the 2010s. Attention to the youth, which had been strong at the end of the 20th century, waned in the 21st century. As a result, disagreements and diverging practices over worship and liturgy have developed in the IELB.

As in places such as the United States, the divergences fall into contemporary and traditional streams. I will refer to the contemporary stream as a "Contemporary Worship Movement" (CWM), and to the traditional stream as a "Liturgical Movement" (LM). I am not affirming that there are organized parties or groups in those streams. CWM and LM stands for tendencies and distinct movements which diverge in the IELB.

The CWM has an outlook similar to that of Brazilian Pentecostal churches such as *Igreja Batista da Lagoinha* (Little Lake Baptist Church), the rock band *Diante do Trono* (Before the Throne), and to foreign megachurches like Hillsong. Its basic assumption is that the style of worship should be congenial to the tastes and habits of a society, not alien to them. The CWM also contends that, since people are different, with different needs and visions, it is unlikely for the same type of worship style to be suitable for everyone, and it will be counterproductive to worship to insist on a uniform style. The CWM in the IELB proposes a type of "worship style" suited to certain Brazilian contexts, just as traditional worship and, eventually, a worship with high liturgy, would be suitable for other contexts. For example, several congregations of the IELB use this argument to offer contemporary worship, be it exclusively or along with a traditional Divine Service. CWM proponents advocate adopting contemporary Christian music and dropping the use of traditional artifacts, such as liturgical vestments.

The Liturgical Movement, by contrast, promotes *continuity in worship*. Its outlook is similar to Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, and Anglican churches. This excerpt on liturgy from the Anglican Communion also represents the outlook of the LM:

> Liturgy is not just a matter of taste, or churchmanship. Liturgy is central to Christianity and is an integral part of the Christian family's relationship with God. The signs, symbols and sacred actions which form

> public prayer and worship spring from the language and events of God's own self-revelation.[8]

Therefore, instead of seeing worship forms as needing to be responsive and adapted to context, the LM tends to see liturgy as beyond any single culture because it derives from God. This argument can be found in online blogs, Facebook pages, and other social media which affirm to be "confessional Lutheran." Missouri Synod theologian Arthur Just called the liturgy "transcultural," and his description and analysis reflect the LM outlook. Just challenges the "common assumption today that the liturgy must reflect the language and ethos of the current culture." [9] This assumption, however, yields liturgies that "are not transcultural. At most, they will give only immediate satisfaction."[10] But the so-called "historic liturgy," an order of service developed since ancient times for the rite of Word and Sacrament, is "transcendent and transcultural because of its biblical foundation. It is clean, elegant, and simple… ."[11] Just emphasizes the word *rite*, because rituals are basic and symbolically important in every culture. He uses the example of sporting events:

> People are bound together by the ritual events of the game as they participate with enthusiasm in the same patterns time after time. Whether they realize it or not, the ritual of the game is a significant reason why they come, and the satisfaction they experience is as much from participating in the ritual as it is in the outcome of the game.[12]

Accordingly, the LM is inclined to call for exclusive use of older liturgical orders, and to promote gestures like the sign of the cross, the use of a crucifix, and the adoption of rubrics such as raising of the Host in the Eucharist.

One thing that both movements share is *innovation*. Both movements propose something new to the situation. A common problem with their innovations is the fast pace at which they are introduced. The IELB took fifteen years to consolidate the use of different liturgical garments and the use of the Lectionary Triennale. Compared to this, the CWM and the LM want to make changes almost overnight. This sometimes generates unnecessary crises among congregation members. For example, as a university chaplain, I have had to counsel a woman who doubted the validity of Holy Communion in her congregation because she read on Facebook that every Lutheran altar should have a crucifix, something her congregation chose not to have.

It is important to recognize that these two movements in the IELB agree in principle with the Lutheran Confessions about justification by faith and about the preaching of the gospel and the giving of the sacraments as God's means for obtaining this faith. In a congregation that only offers contemporary services, for example, all services include the Sacrament of the Altar. Put another way, both the CWM and the LM in the IELB agree that corporate worship is the prime center of the divine speech acts of the *missio Dei*. Moreover, they agree because this is in keeping with the Scriptures, creeds, confessions. In other words, the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions remain the *loci orthodoxiae* which provide the structuring criteria of worship.

In a congregation that only offers contemporary services, for example, all services include the Sacrament of the Altar. Put another way, both the CWM and the LM in the IELB agree that corporate worship is the prime center of the divine speech acts of the *missio Dei.*

Nevertheless, there are disagreement and antagonism. The biggest disagreement is over the freedom to change the liturgy. The CWM claims that to be relevant and intentional in outreach, the Divine Service has to be made simpler. Its proponents believe that the changes in the forms and the exclusion of the movable (ordinary) parts of worship do not compromise the *loci orthodoxiae*, which would be guaranteed by the maintenance of the fixed parts of the *ordo*: Baptism, Word, Holy Supper, and Prayers. The diversity and/or suppression of traditional rites are based in the freedom given by article VII of the Augsburg Confession: "It is not necessary for the true unity of the Church that uniform ceremonies, instituted by human beings, be observed everywhere" (AC VII 3).[13] But the LM thinks that the historic liturgy stands above culture and should not be altered simply for cultural relevance. Some go as far as to claim that the traditional order of service (*ordo*) is basic to Lutheran identity. Open antagonism over this difference does not reach official channels in the IELB. However, several pastors and some presidents of IELB's Circuits have shared their worries about conflicts regarding worship. There is no "worship war" yet, but the initial conflicts have already damaged congregations and the faith of some members.

Mission and Worship in "a Secular Age"

Both the CWM and the LM are committed to the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions, and both agree about the main elements of Lutheran confessional worship. This means that their differences are about how to understand and live in the wider culture. The CWM believes that worship should try to align with the wider convictions and values of Brazilian society, but the LM is suspicious about such attempts.

Since both seem to agree theologically, some might conclude that their differences and difficulties are about how to interpret the cultural situation theologically, and about

theological priorities for Christian life and witness in the cultural situation. Questions like these would be relevant:

> To what extent or in what ways is being "countercultural" necessary or desirable for Christians in evangelism and worship?
>
> To what extent or in what ways is being "culturally relevant" necessary or desirable for Christians?
>
> To what extent or in what ways should the Church be active in engaging non-Christians through evangelism, civil activities, and worship?

I agree that questions such as these matter, but I would argue that both the CWM and the LM usually ignore a more basic problem, one that affects both mission and worship. I believe that they ignore this problem because it comes from a new development for Christians in Brazil, as well as in most of both South America and North America and also Europe. This new development is a radical change in the social situation for Christians.

In an influential book, Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor calls this situation "a secular age." For Taylor, the term "secular" describes a society that had gone from one

> in which it was virtually impossible not to believe in God, to one in which faith, even for the staunchest believer, is one human possibility among others. I may find it inconceivable that I would abandon my faith, but there are others, including possibly some very close to me, whose way of living I cannot in all honesty just dismiss as depraved, or blind, or unworthy, who have no faith (at least not in God, or the transcendent). Belief in God is no longer axiomatic. There are alternatives. And this will also likely mean that at least in certain milieux, it may be hard to sustain one's faith. There will be people who feel bound to give it up, even though they mourn its loss. This has been a recognizable experience in our societies, at least since the mid-nineteenth century. There will be many others to whom faith never even seems an eligible possibility. There are certainly millions today of whom this is true.[14]

"Secularity" in this sense represents a massive shift for many, but especially for Christians. It was their God in whom "it was virtually impossible not to believe."

This description of a "secular age" fits Brazil. One clear sign is declining church attendance. Brazil is a historically Catholic country, and while many Brazilians still identify as Catholic, they do not attend Mass regularly. The story of a young woman named Alana illustrates this. Alana had been a committed Catholic who even brought her sister into the Church. But later Alana stopped attending worship herself. She said: "I am still Roman Catholic, but I do not attend church. Everyone has her opinion, following whatever she wants… There is no one way to be happy. I don't think not attending church is a bad thing. It is up to the individual."[15] Another sign of the secular age in Brazil is that young Brazilians increasingly do not identify as religious at all. For example, the polling organization Datafolha recently found that the number of non-religious and atheist young people (16 to 24 years old) surpasses the numbers of both Roman Catholics and Protestants in São Paulo.[16]

"I am still Roman Catholic, but I do not attend church. Everyone has her opinion, following whatever she wants… There is no one way to be happy. I don't think not attending church is a bad thing. It is up to the individual."

"Secular" does not only describe external social conditions like religious plurality. It also describes the outlook for nearly everyone who lives in such a society. Taylor provides an analysis of this outlook. He proposes that we understand life in a secular age as taking place within an "immanent frame." This means that "immanence" alone is natural, and "transcendence," like gods and spirits, is supernatural, if it even exists. For most of human history, people took for granted that there were beings and powers that transcended the visible, material world of everyday existence. Their outlook included "transcendence." "Transcendence" was part of nature. But this is no longer the case. Today, "immanence" is a kind of "frame" that determines the everyday outlook. Immanence is generally assumed to be the way the natural world is. In an immanent frame, the transcendent realm of gods and spirits is not necessarily denied, but it is not understood as part of the natural world. Taylor explains, "[T]his frame constitutes a 'natural' order, to be contrasted to a 'supernatural' one, an 'immanent' world, over against a possible 'transcendent' one."[17] Demon possession illustrates the hold of the immanent frame. Many Christians in modern industrialized nations never think about whether anyone is under the power of the devil. Even among the Christians who do, demonic activity is almost always regarded as extraordinary, and it calls for special measures, i.e., exorcism. This outlook reflects the hold of the immanent frame. But its hold on modern Christians is illustrated even better with the idea of miracles. Today, a "miracle" is something "supernatural" by definition. Taylor explained this thinking well: A miracle is now assumed to be

> a kind of punctual hole blown in the regular order of things from the outside, that is from the transcendent. Whatever is higher must thus come about through holes pierced in the regular, natural order, within whose

> normal operation there is no mystery. This is curiously enough, a view of things shared between materialists and Christian fundamentalists.[18]

The illustration of a miracle shows that Taylor's concept of "secular" is broader than the usual ones that understand secular as excluding spiritual or divine. This means that the inhabitants of the immanent frame are not restricted to materialists, but also include many traditionally minded Christians. So, his idea of "secular" and his concept of the "immanent frame" are more helpful for Christian thinking about worship and mission than the more common frameworks. Taylor's analysis permits a more nuanced description. We can see this in his distinction between "takes" and "spins" on the immanent frame. This distinction particularly helpful to explain both the CWM and the LM, and also to suggest ways to think beyond their differences and antagonisms in a way that promotes the mission of the Church.

The terms "take" and "spin" refer to the two fundamentally different ways there are to live in the immanent frame.[19]

> A "take" is when you recognize and appreciate that your own understanding of things—your own *take*—is contestable. Taylor says that this is like standing "in that open space where you can feel the winds pulling you, now to belief, now to unbelief."[20] You have your own convictions and values, and you live according to them. They are your *take*. But you know and sense the power of very different convictions and values that lead others to a different life. They are their *takes*. What makes them "takes" is that you "can actually feel some of the force of each opposing position."[21]
>
> By contrast, a "spin" is when you hold and live according to your convictions and values without feeling the force of other positions and beliefs. Reformed philosopher James K. A. Smith described a "spin" as "an overconfident 'picture' within which we can't imagine it being otherwise, and thus smugly dismiss those who disagree."[22]

Taylor applied the ideas of takes and spins to different attitudes about the immanent frame itself, namely, whether and how one was open to transcendence or whether and how one held that the universe is closed to transcendence. For example, Taylor identified the Academy with those who held an "immanent spin" or "spin of closure."[23] He cited sociologist Max Weber as an example, because Weber

> speaks sneeringly of those who would go on believing in the face of 'disenchantment' as having to make an 'Opfer des Intellekts' (a sacrifice of the intellect). 'To the person who cannot bear the fate of the times like a man, one must say: may he rather return silently,… The arms of the Churches are open widely and compassionately for him.'[24]

This is an "immanent spin" because it openly dismisses those who will not agree about the closed universe. In a similar way, the Christian fundamentalists that Taylor alluded to

when discussing miracles often reflect a "transcendent spin" or "spin of openness." A lot of contemporary apologetics," said Smith, "bent on 'defending the faith' against the charges of new atheists, seem to offer a transcendent 'spin' as the alternative to immanent 'spin.'"[25]

An "immanent take" or "closed take," by contrast, recognizes and appreciates the transcendent, or at least those who lead their lives by something more than the visible, material world holds. Smith offered the example an HBO documentary about Dolores Hart, an actress who gave up a career in movies and television to become a Benedictine nun.

> One can imagine what sort of account of this would be generated by closed spin—just consider Christopher Hitchens's excoriating book on Mother Teresa. But interestingly, that's not what we get in the HBO documentary. Indeed, the documentary is a refreshing example of a closed take. The point of view is respectfully puzzled, admiringly incredulous. On the one hand, Hart's journey and choice seem unimaginable, almost unintelligible; on the other hand, they testify to a 'something more' that holds the attention of both the director and the viewers.[26]

An example of a "transcendent take" would be Charles Taylor himself. Taylor is a Roman Catholic, and his Christian convictions were apparent in *A Secular Age*. But the book was not a "spin" on the Christian God in particular or the transcendent in general, "bent on 'defending the faith' against" unbelievers. It is a book written by a Christian who "fe[lt] the winds pulling you, now to belief, now to unbelief." [27]

When we apply Taylor's distinction between "takes" and "spins" to the situation in the IELB, we can see that both the CWM and the LM have adopted transcendent spins. This is easier to recognize with the LM, because it promotes the ongoing use of traditional orders, forms, and practices and dismisses attempts to align with some features of the prevailing culture. The LM is a spin because it does not recognize the pull or force of others. This does not imply that traditional forms and ways are necessarily deficient, but the question about how adequate they are today in a secular age is rarely considered in a fair, objective manner. It is usually assumed that the old ways are sufficient. But the CWM is also a spin because their proponents also often see no need for a thorough self-examination. They focus on settings and styles, but frequently they give little attention to the pull or force of others.

A Better Approach: Mission and Worship as "Takes" on Transcendence in Today's Immanent Frame

The differences and disagreements between the CWM and the LM are real, and they call for attempts to converge on worship, not to continue to diverge. But both movements are usually *spins*. Addressing this fact is a more basic and pressing need. When Christians have a transcendent spin in a secular age, they are confident and unquestioning about their

own picture of the world, and they tend to be dismissive of other pictures, such as an atheist's or a pagan's or a Muslim's. Christians with a transcendent take are not doubters, but they recognize that some other pictures that should not be dismissed as ignorant, superstitious, or self-serving. Christians with a transcendent take likely will be more empathetic and also more capable of witnessing in ways non-Christians can grasp, but also more empathetic to fellow Christians who feel the pressures of life in the immanent frame. Christians in a secular age, in Brazil and elsewhere, should adopt transcendent takes on their situations and avoid transcendent spins.

Being Christian with transcendent takes is a very big topic, even when the discussion is restricted to only one society like Brazil. In concluding this article, I want to make a few recommendations for Christians to adopt takes rather than spins, based on the three points about mission and worship that the article began with.

The first point about mission and worship is that they always go together, because the mission of God takes place regularly and intentionally in corporate worship. Life in a secular age makes understanding and appreciating this fact more important. Life in a secular age means questions, challenges, and alternatives to being Christian and being religious in general are part of everyone's existence. Sometimes Christians will experience uncertainty and doubt, and occasionally these will be new experiences. As a result, corporate worship in a secular age will become increasingly like the opportunities for witness and evangelism found outside of worship, even when the services are attended only by regular members. This is because life in a secular age, with its immanent frame and its plurality of religions and philosophies, will give Christians themselves reasons to have new and challenging questions and concerns about God, Christ, creation, and salvation. Therefore, Christians themselves will come to worship more frequently rather like the crowds who went out to hear Jesus or the people who asked the apostles to speak to them.

Life in a secular age means questions, challenges, and alternatives to being Christian and being religious in general are part of everyone's existence.

This situation calls for worship that reflects a transcendent take. Worship that reflects a transcendent spin, whether like the CWM or the LM, will do little for these questions and concerns, because a spin does not take them seriously. Worship as a transcendent take will be willing to deal with them. There could be many ways to practice this. But one constant should be the willingness to discuss, adapt, supplement, and reform almost anything so that the Gospel in Word and Sacraments will indeed be good news for life in a secular age.

The second point is that mission and worship always go together by working the faith and faithfulness that leads to witness in the world. I propose that worship as a transcendent spin will be less likely to promote faithful evangelism outside of worship than will worship as a transcendent take. I acknowledge the Lutheran confession that God gives His Spirit as He pleases (AC V), and so I do not propose this as a certainty. But from our standpoint

before the world, worship as a transcendent take is more responsive to life in a secular age and, therefore, it is more likely to strengthen the faith of Christians and to promote their faithfulness in their lives. This means not only more opportunities to witness, but also more willingness to witness and a stronger, more robust message to share.

The third point is that mission and worship go together in the sense that corporate worship itself is a testimony and witness to the world. How Christians worship and how they deal with worship testifies to others. I will begin with how Brazilians deal with worship. As presented earlier, worship in the IELB has become a matter of divergence and even antagonism. Like many others, I believe that the Christian Church can and should accommodate a variety of worship practices and styles, but this must always be done with mutual respect and support. Unfortunately, the situation in the IELB seems to be one where respect and support are lessening, not growing.

However, although there are radical and polarized movements in the clash over worship, the vast majority of IELB members are moderate and open to dialogue. I believe that these moderates and irenic Christians should actively prevent worship from becoming a battleground. The IELB needs to extract the best of both movements. The time has come to re-prioritize worship, providing an organic development of liturgy, considering that the liturgical tradition is open to change. I agree with Bryan Spinks: "Organic development of liturgy, *providing that the liturgical tradition is open to change*, will probably be more successful than liturgical genetic engineering where we are always intervening to *make* the liturgy contemporary."[28] Spinks's qualification is significant, but I am hopeful. The LM recognizes that the so-called "historic liturgy" has undergone modifications over the centuries, and so it is not opposed to change in principle. I suspect that the LM's hesitance with the CWM comes from thinking it is more like "liturgical genetic engineering," as Spinks puts it, than organic development.

Again, I am hopeful. I believe we will witness a movement of convergence, where both movements will dialogue and work together, merging the old with the new. There is room for this. One reason for hope comes from the younger generations themselves. What Dan Kimball wrote about the North American situation applies in Brazil, too:

> The ironic thing is that, among emerging generations, there is a desire to seek the ancient. There is even a backlash against the church feeling like a modern business. So a revival of liturgy and other ancient disciplines, when brought back with life and meaning, are a desired approach to worship in the emerging church. I'm not suggesting we abandon all contemporary forms of worship and music. I'm simply suggesting we don't ignore 2,000 years of church history. There are beautiful expressions of worship from various time periods we can integrate into how we worship today.[29]

In Brazil, emerging churches are recovering liturgical elements. For example, Vineyard Praise Ministry includes the ecclesiastical year in its worship lessons. Moreover,

there is a noticeable growth in young people's interest in the rich liturgical tradition of the Christian Church. Many people have left Pentecostal or emerging churches to seek liturgical churches. These people hold a genuine interest in traditional forms of worship. They seek the "take" in transcendence that the liturgy rooted in the Christian tradition can offer. In this case, Lutheranism, having a "liturgical DNA," can be a strong evangelistic voice. So, conversation and convergence between the CWM and the LM could take place in this vein.

Another way to overcome polarization would be to strive for excellence. Too many current Gospel songs in Brazil import a pop musicality. The industry of Brazilian Contemporary Christian Music is far less diverse and rich than in the 1980s. In Brazil, Contemporary Christian Music is just called "*Worshippismo*" ("worshipism"), and it receives criticism even from emergent and Pentecostal churches, like "the lyrics are nonsense and sounds like a mantra with endless repetitions."[30] The youth in the *Juventude Evangélica Luterana do Brasil* (JELB) also perceive this problem. In "*95 Teses para a Igreja Hoje*" ("95 Theses for the Church Today"), they write:

> Thesis 50: We regret the transformation of public worship of God into moments of pure "gospel" entertainment, with the presence of auditorium animators and pastors who, empty of the Word, fill the people with nonsense and catchphrases that have nothing to do with the simplicity and depth of the Gospel of Christ (Rom 12:1–2).
>
> Thesis 51: There must be awareness of what is sung. May we be faithful to the Word when it says, "I will sing with my spirit, but I will also sing with my understanding." May the songs and hymns be more God-centered than the first person singular (I). We also reject songs that consist of endless repetitions, in order to take the people to induced ecstasy, weakening the mind to receive the Word and give God rational worship, according to the Scriptures (Rom 12:1–2; 1 Cor 14:15; John 3:30; 1 Cor 14:15).[31]

Brazilian Lutheran Christians need to meet the need to compose new musical expressions. But the excellence and aesthetical competence of musicians of the CWM can overcome the industrialization and homogenization of Christian music by promoting indigenous Brazilian Christian music. Lutheran musicians and artists have an opportunity to bless all of Brazilian Christianity with biblical and theological well-founded songs. Would it be beautiful to participate in a Divine Service with a *Kyrie* and *Te Deum Laudamus* in *pagode* or *chorinho* style?

The possibilities are countless. What I am proposing seeks to follow Norman Nagel, an Australian Lutheran and a long-time professor at Concordia Seminary in the Missouri Synod but known to many Brazilian Lutherans. He saw the "living heritage" of liturgy as something constantly being renewed: "Each generation receives from those who went before, and, in making that tradition of the Divine Service its own, adds what best may

serve in its own day—the living heritage and something new."[32] At the very least, we can have contemporary songs and highly liturgical services coexisting and cooperating in the same Synod and dialoguing in order to prevent misgivings and excesses. But personally, I would rather see the emergence of blended worship in which the traditional *Ordo* is blended with contemporary language and musicality. In the case of Brazil, this means songs that go beyond European anthems and Pop-Rock, but which bring typical elements of Brazilian musicality. Perhaps this would be the beginning of a true inculturation of the Lutheran worship on Brazilian soil.[33] It will be a paradoxical service, in which the gospel will be proclaimed, and, at the same time, church members will be taught through liturgical richness and not-yet-Christians will see the gospel as "takes" on transcendence that point beyond the immanent frame of a secular age.

My dream is to see my daughters singing the beautiful *Magnificat* and Renascer Praise's "I surrender" peacefully in a Divine Service. Let's delight in our living heritage and something new. Not only must we avoid war, but with an attitude of convergence and inculturation, we can proclaim the gospel of Christ to non-Christians while discipling Christians. In this convergence, worship will remain the place par excellence of performative interaction between the God of grace and human beings. Let's talk!

Endnotes

[1] Charles Taylor, *A Secular Age* (Cambridge and London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2007).
[2] Robert Kolb and Timothy J. Wengert, eds., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), 220.
[3] Kolb/Wengert, 47.
[4] Kolb/Wengert, 40. See also FC Ep IV 6: "That good works follow from true faith (when it is not a dead faith but a living faith), as certainly and without doubt as fruit from a good tree." Kolb/Wengert, 498.
[5] Paulo W. Buss, *Uma Proposta Litúrgica para a IELB, Estudo apresentado à 50a Convenção Nacional da IELB*, São Leopoldo, janeiro de 1986. Even so, Paulo Buss states that "the Germans of Brazil did not peacefully accept all the liturgical practices that were proposed to them." For example, congregations were not used to the inscription of Holy Communion, the sign of the cross, a more regular attendance at services and Holy Communion, and the modified use of private confession. Furthermore, because of their poorer financial conditions, simple churches (chapels) without bells, pews without kneelers, simple wooden crosses instead of more exquisite crucifixes, black cassocks instead of full liturgical vestments were common.
[6] Ely Prieto e Oscar Lehenbauer, *O culto Luterano In Material de Estudos da 56a Convenção Nacional da IELB*.
Prieto and Lehenbauer write that in the post-war period, "particularly from 1945 to 1960, liturgical questions were still not given much attention."
[7] In the 1970s, the IELB had to deal internally with a Pentecostal movement inspired by the Church Growth Movement. We will not address this movement because the iconoclastic character of the worship of this movement was the result of the charismatic-Pentecostal theology of the group rather than a practice arising from liturgical reflection within IELB.
[8] From "Liturgy." https://www.anglicancommunion.org/theology/liturgy.aspx

[9] Arthur A. Just, Jr., *Heaven on Earth: The Gifts of Christ in the Divine Service* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2008), 28.
[10] Just, *Heaven on Earth*, 28–29.
[11] Just, *Heaven on Earth*, 32.
[12] Just, *Heaven on Earth*, 33.
[13] Kolb/Wengert, 42.
[14] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 3.
[15] Itamar Melo, "*Avanço do secularismo é apontado como uma das causas do enfraquecimento da Igreja Católica*," Religião. Gaúcha Zero Hora, April, 24th, 2022. https://gauchazh.clicrbs.com.br/comportamento/noticia/2016/04/avanco-do-secularismo-e-apontado-como-uma-das-causas-do-enfraquecimento-da-igreja-catolica-5762633.html
[16] Taís Carrança, "*Jovens 'sem religião' superam católicos e evangélicos em SP e Rio*," *BBC News*. BBC, May 9th, 2022. (https://www.bbc.com/portuguese/brasil-61329257).
[17] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 542.
[18] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 547.
[19] James K. A. Smith, *How (Not) to Be Secular: Reading Charles Taylor* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2014), 92–97. My reading of Taylor on "takes" and "spins" has been informed by Smith's interpretation.
[20] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 549.
[21] Taylor, *A Secular Age,* 549.
[22] Smith, *How (Not) to Be Secular*, 95.
[23] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 549.
[24] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 550. The Weber quote is from "Science as a Vocation," in *From Max Weber*, trans. H. Gerth and C. W. Mills (London: Routledge, 1991), 155.
[25] Smith, *How (Not) to Be Secular*, 96.
[26] Smith, *How (Not) to Be Secular*, 97.
[27] Taylor, *A Secular Age*, 549.
[28] Bryan Spinks, *The Worship Mall: Contemporary Responses to Contemporary Culture* (New York: Church Publishing, 2010), 215, emphasis original. See also James Marriott's discussion of inculturation and worship in "Reframing the Worship Wars in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod: An Analysis of Ordo and Music through the Lens of Inculturation and Cultural Hermeneutics" (PhD dissertation, Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary, 2017). I wish to acknowledge Dr. Marriott's influence on my thinking about worship.
[29] Dan Kimball, *Emerging Worship: Creating Worship Gatherings for New Generations* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2004), 73.
[30] In one episode of a "Paxtorzão" podcast, the criticism to "worshippismo" is about the poor and simplicity of this type of music (https://www.youtube.com/results?search_query=paxtorz%C3%A3o+worship)
[31] Juventude Evangélica Luterana do Brasil. *95 Teses para a Igreja Hoje*. JELB, 2021. (https://www.ielb.org.br/noticias/visualizar/7299/institucional/politica-de-privacidade)
[32] Norman Nagel, "Introduction," *Lutheran Worship* (St. Louis: Concordia, 1982), 6.

[33] Raul Blum writes that "a Lutheran attitude towards worship is always one of prudence. Radicalizations provoke reactions and dissatisfaction. If we always want changes, ignoring our heritages, we will be in constant search of novelties and will not settle for anything. On the other hand, if we do not admit changes, we run the risk of following an order of worship simply for the sake of following it, without reflecting on its content." (Raul Blum, "*A Palavra imutável num mundo*," Mensageiro Luterano (Porto Alegre: Editora Concórdia, maio 2014 - publicado no site oficial em junho de 2020: https://www.ielb.org.br/noticias/visualizar/6994/a-palavra-imutavel-num-mundo-mutavel&r=1&r=1&r=1&r=1&r=1&r=1&r=1&r=1)

Paul's Theology of Peace and Worship: "Let the Peace of Christ Rule in Your Hearts, Be Thankful" (Colossians 3:15)

Samuel Deressa

Introduction

For the apostle Paul, there is one major challenge to the mission of Christ to the world, and that is the penetration of the normative values of the Roman Empire (e.g., self-advancement and self-promotion) into the life of the congregations. These values of the Empire produced strife, dissension, and quarrels among the early Christians.[1] Against such challenges, Paul urges Christians to follow Christ and to worship Him with gentleness, by living in peace and harmony with each other, and by looking "to the interest of others" (Phil 2:4). This article focuses on the connection between Paul's theology of peace and its implication for worship life based on Colossians 3:15, "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts . . .. And be thankful."

Paul's view of peace and its implication for our worship lives are not always discussed with the attention they deserve. Interestingly, there are a few works related to the connection between Paul's theology of peace and worship. G. Ladd, for example, in his *A Theology of the New Testament,* discusses the concept of peace as a blessing that flows from reconciliation, and he describes it as a "very rich, many-sided concept."[2] Yet he makes no connection between peace and worship. On the other hand, James Dunn, in his *Theology of Paul the Apostle*, makes a clear connection between the ministry in the church (worship) and its practical implication (how believers should live in peace and harmony).[3] M. Desjardins does the same in his discussion of peace in the New Testament. Desjardins

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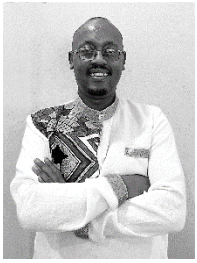

Rev. Samuel Deressa is Assistant Professor of Theology and the Global South and the Fiechtner Chair for Christian Outreach at Concordia University, St. Paul. Deressa's published works include Leadership Formation in the African Context: Missional Leadership Revisited *(Eugene, Origen: Wipf and Stock, 2022);* A Church for the World: A Church's Role in Fostering Democracy and Sustainable Development *(London: Fortress Academic Press, 2020), which he co-edited with Josh de Keijzer;* The Life, Works, and Witness of Tsehay Tolessa and Gudina Tumsa, the Ethiopian Bonhoeffer *(Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017), which he co-edited with Sarah Wilson; and is the editor of* Christian Theology in African Context: Essential Writings of Esthetu Abate *(Minneapolis: Lutheran University Press, 2015).*

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used the motif of equality to illustrate Paul's understanding of peace, and he discusses the notion of *koinonia* as pointing towards the connection between peace and worship.[4]

Why is it important to talk about the connection between peace and worship? For many people today, worship is understood *inwardly*, having no connection to how we live our faith in public (i.e., outside the church). In other words, as Darrell Guder emphasized, "Our postmodern society has come to regard worship as the private, internal, and often arcane activity of religionists who retreat from the world to practice their mystic rites."[5] For Paul, however, the churches' fellowship and worship life and their public witness or mission of sharing Christ's peace with the world are inseparably joined together.

Sharing the Peace of Christ

For many Christians, Sunday worship is understood as what happens between us and God. It is probably when we share greetings or the "sign of peace" with each other that we are made fully aware of the presence of our brothers and sisters in Christ. During our Lutheran worship, we move to shake hands with those around us, sharing the Lord's peace when the pastor says, "Let's take a moment to greet those around you."[6] What is the significance of sharing Christ's peace together? Why do we do it during our time of worship? As Richard Giles rightly points out, "The sharing of the Peace as a sign of reconciliation and mutual love within the community of faith is one of the most potent symbols of the rediscovery of worship as an interactive event rather than a lecture or spectacle."[7]

The practice of sharing the peace of Christ during our liturgy might have originated with the disciples of Jesus. In the African Christian communities, people share greetings with a kiss. Among African Christians, the so-called "holy kiss" (φιλήμα ἁγίον) has greater implications for sharing communal life. For African Christians, the practice of a "holy kiss" is a sign of affirmation of each member of the community. With the kiss on the shoulders, hands, and cheek, Africans show their love for each other. This practice might have been derived from Paul's letters where he urges Christians to "greet one another with a holy kiss" (Rom 16:16; 1 Cor 16:20; 2 Cor 13:12; 1 Thes 5:26). First Peter similarly closes with the exhortation to "greet one another with a kiss of love" (1 Pt 5:14).

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What is peace? And why is it so important to share this peace during our worship? Sometimes we think of peace as the absence of conflict and violence. So, when we share peace with our brothers and sisters in Christ, we may feel that we are trying to avoid conflict with other church members. We give a "cease-fire" kind of definition to peace, but this is only one of several meanings of peace.

According to Paul, when we speak of peace "with," "in," and/or "through" Christ, we mean something far more positive than merely the absence of conflict. The peace of Christ for Paul designates a realm established by the work of Christ, by His defeating and conquering of evil forces and establishing a relationship between Himself and the believing community—and this is the gospel. The Gospel that we preach is the Gospel of peace.

This peace of Christ is different than the peace that this world can offer: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid" (Jn 14:27). Paul reminds Christians in Colossae that, as believers in Christ, they are transferred into this state of peace with God (Col 3:15). This implies that because they reside in this peace, they must strive for it in their communities.

According to Paul, the challenge to having peace in Christ and experiencing its implications in our worship lives and ministries is the strife that happens among Christians and others. According to Paul, strife is the result of "the desires of flesh" (Gal 5:17-21), and it is practiced among those whom "God gave up" (Rom 1:24, 26, 28) to disgrace: "They were filled with all manner of unrighteousness, evil, covetousness, malice. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, maliciousness. They are gossips, slanderers, haters of God, insolent, haughty, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, foolish, faithless, heartless, ruthless" (Rom 1:29-31).

Paul also argues that the other cause for conflict or strife in the church is departing from the apostolic teaching as described in Colossians. According to Paul, what resulted in strife among Christians in Colossae is an early form of Gnosticism, in which God is described as pure spirit (πνεῦμα). Spirit is separate and distinct from matter (the flesh), which according to them is inherently evil. They further argued that redemption involves separation of the spiritual (πνευματικός) from the material (σάρξ) in order to unite with God and ultimately to gain salvation.[8] According to this teaching, one can accomplish this only though acquiring hidden knowledge (γνῶσις, from which the name "Gnosticism" was derived) by devoting oneself to studying philosophy.[9]

Paul uses the same rhetoric in his Pastoral Epistles, where he argues that,

> If anyone teaches a different doctrine and does not agree with the sound words of our Lord Jesus Christ and the teaching that accords with godliness, he is puffed up with conceit and understands nothing. He has an unhealthy craving for controversy and for quarrels about words, which produce envy, dissension, slander, evil suspicions, and constant friction among people who are depraved in mind and deprived of the truth, imagining that godliness is a means of gain. (1 Tim 6:3-5)

Peace in Colossians 3:15: "Let the *peace of Christ* rule in your hearts"

As Paul states, all Christians are invited to experience the peace of Christ (Col 3:15), which is drawn from the sovereignty (Lordship) of Christ. Christ made peace by overcoming the powers that are opposed to God's will (Col 1:13, 20; 2:15). Paul's main argument here is that believers have been taken into a new realm of Christ's peace—a realm in which His Lordship is fully manifested—and thus they experience its blessings.

In other words, as citizens of Christ's kingdom, they are invited to enjoy the blessings that Christ gives. Being brought into the realm ruled by Christ gives the believers an inner peace that comes through their relationship with God.

The phrase "peace of Christ" refers to the peace that Christ both *embodies* and *brings* (see John 14:27). This shows that Christ is the only provider of true peace. The Greek words in Colossians 3:15 "τού χριστού" ("of Christ") understood as a subjective genitive, provides us with such meaning—translated in some versions as "peace that Christ gives" (GNB). So He gives peace to believers (2 Thes 3:16). Paul elsewhere refers to God as "the God [or] Lord of peace" (Rom 15:13; 16:20; 1 Cor 14:33; 2 Cor 13:11; Phil 4:9; 1 Thes 5:23, Heb 13:20), and He Himself is that peace (Eph 2:14).

Following his Jewish traditions, Paul associates peace with God's very being and character. This probably is in relation to Judges 6:24, where Gideon built an altar that he called, "The Lord is peace." In Isaiah 9:6, the Messiah is also called the Prince of peace. Similarly, in 2 Thessalonians 3:16, Christ is characterized as the Lord of peace who gives peace "at all times in every way." In Ephesians 2:14, Christ is described as "our peace." It is God who is peace and who is also the giver of peace. He transforms humanity from its hostile, violent existence to be like God and to live in peace. "For God is not a God of disorder but of peace" (1 Cor 14:33).

Paul writes to the Colossians, "Let the *peace of Christ* rule in your heart" (Col 3:15). What is important to note here is that this statement of Paul implies that peace is more like a grace to be received than a value to be promoted. In other words, peace is not something we as Christians can accomplish by ourselves, but it is something we receive as a gift. Yet, it is still an exhortation. Peace is to "rule" (βραβεύω) in our hearts, meaning that it should be in charge of how we live our lives. As believers, we are called to appropriate the gift and allow the peace of Christ to reign fully in our hearts. As followers of Christ, we are not called to live in violence or in squabbles among each other, but in peace.

The word βραβεύω occurs only here in the New Testament, and generally it refers to the more general sense of "judge," "decide," "control," or "rule."[10] Paul emphasizes the point about Christ's peace totally "controlling" or "ruling" our heart. "Heart" in its customary Old Testament sense denotes the center of one's personality "as a source of will, emotion, thoughts, and functions."[11]As in Colossians 2:2, the heart stands for the whole person. Greek writers also use *kardia* to describe the seat of one's moral, emotional, and intellectual life. For them, it is the place where one thinks and feels, and makes important decisions.[12] Paul is implying here that the peace of Christ is meant to "control" or "rule over" the whole of the readers' lives as they relate to one another. The peace that Christ brings should be the peace that determines Christians' attitudes and directs their lives.

How is peace practiced in our communities? Peace according to Paul is practiced in our communities when we offer ourselves in fidelity for the sake of others. As Paul contends, peace is practiced in the life of a congregation when we live in harmony and mutual respect, looking "to the interest of others" (Phil 2:4). In earlier verses, Paul discussed the need for Christians to tolerate, love, and support each other. In this verse, after mentioning peace, Paul again speaks of the unity Christians have. A similar message is found in Jesus' Sermon on the Mount, where He says that peacemakers would be known as the sons of God, and that His followers ought to be compassionate like their heavenly Father (Mt 5:9; Lk 6:36). Just as in the teaching of Jesus, Paul counsels the Colossians to "clothe themselves" with (or put on) compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, which then results in peace and unity among believers.

Peace according to Paul is practiced in our communities when we offer ourselves in fidelity for the sake of others.

How is peace made? According to Paul, peace is a divine act of reconciliation accomplished through the death of Jesus Christ. From Paul's writings, we understand that peace comes from reconciliation, and it is only through Jesus' atoning death that sinful human beings can be reconciled with God, with each other, and with the whole creation (Rom 5:9–13; 2 Cor 5:14–21). God acted through a death on the cross to defeat the powers of evil and to bring reconciliation and everlasting peace to our world.

Peace that is accomplished by God through the blood of Christ is foundational for the peace in our community. "Peace with God," achieved through God's justifying act (Rom 5:1) is the basis for believers to "live peaceably with all" (Rom 12:18). In other words, peace is realized through "the blood of his Cross" (Col 1:20), which reconciles God with His creation. The cosmic effect of this is the demonstration of peace in one's community. For Paul, "peace" is not merely a subjective experience like kindness; rather, it points to the powerful saving work of God through Christ (Rom 3:24; 5:17) and the reconciliation that is already promised for the eschatological era (see Rom 5:1; Eph 2:14–18; Is 52:7; 57:2).

This peace that Paul describes is radically different from the peace that the Roman Empire promised to offer. In the Roman Empire, the term "peacemaker" was applied to Roman emperors and generals, who established peace by military act.[13] In response to peoples' opinion that the Roman Empire ensures peace and security, Paul responded in 1 Thessalonians 5:3: "While people are saying, 'Peace and safety,' destruction will come on them suddenly, as labor pains on a pregnant woman, and they will not escape."

As Joel White rightly noted,

> the political ideology of the Pax Romana played a prominent role in Roman imperial propaganda, beginning at the latest with the commissioning of the Ara Pacis Augustae in 13 BCE. As the epigraphic record of countless proclamations, inscriptions, temple dedications, etc. from the early Principate bears witness, Rome constantly made both

> implicit and explicit promises to those who willingly accepted her aegis that they would enjoy the lasting benefit of the Augustan Peace.[14]

According to Paul, Jesus' death on the cross provides a critique to the norm of the Roman Empire—death rather than military might establishes true and lasting peace. In other words, what appears to be a defeat is a victory that brings true peace to our world. This way, Paul calls believers to live in peace: "Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body *you were called to peace*" (Col 3:15 NIV). It is to the peace of Christ that we are summoned "as members of one body." In other words, the call to let the peace of Christ reign in our hearts includes an exhortation to manifest Christ's peace in our relationships with each other. Paul here also implies that as Christ's body, the church is meant to be a place of peace. Christ is the head of the body, the church, and He is the origin of peace and reconciliation. In this way, the gift and the command are inseparable.

Paul on the Relationship between Peace and Worship

After calling believers to live in and exercise the peace "of," "in," and/or "through" Christ, Paul adds, "And be thankful" (εὐχάριστος).This word only appears here in the New Testament, and it prepares the readers for Paul's discussion of worship in the following verses (Col 3:16–17). This thankfulness is an appropriate response expected of the Christians who have experienced the benefit of the peace of Christ and the divine gift of forgiveness that makes it possible (Col 2:13). This is also consistent with Paul's call to all Christians to "give thanks in all circumstances" (1 Thes 5:18), where the act of thanksgiving means acknowledging our dependence on God's grace through Christ.

According to Paul, being at peace with each other is our response of gratitude to the grace of God which is reflected in our worship, and this is how Paul's theology of peace and worship are related. Unlike the modern context where thanksgiving is often associated with the practice of interpersonal relationships or to the holiday season of Thanksgiving, thanksgiving in Paul's theology is connected to our act of worship. Believers are called to a life of worship by acknowledging the Lordship of God in everything that they do.

The life of thankfulness (worship) is an identity mark for a believer as "the new self" (Col 3:10). Worship is to be performed by the entire Christian community in response to the divine acts of grace through God's Son. This reminds us of Paul's critique of the practices in the pagan world—"although they knew God, they didn't honor him as God or give thanks to him" (Rom 1:21). For Paul, pagans are known for being ungrateful to God, and their ingratitude is defined by their failure to glorify God. Colossians, on the other hand, are called to "be thankful" by being willing to "let the peace of Christ rule in [their] hearts" (3:15).

In connection with Colossians 3:16–17, Paul's call to Christians to be thankful also reminds us of the central role of the Lordship of Jesus Christ in our worship life. Believers are called to be thankful to God and to Him alone. In Paul's letters, the call to thanksgiving often accompanies the confession of the Lordship of Christ. This way, the text in Colossians 3:15 concerning thankfulness is a link between the section that discusses the behaviors of those who claim Jesus as their Lord (Col 3:5–14) and the theme of worship both in public formal settings (Col 3:16) and in everyday living (Col 3:17). Just as the life of thanksgiving is meant to affirm the covenantal relationship between God and His people in the Old Testament, for Paul an act of thanksgiving defines our lives as people who belong to Jesus. The relationship between a sacrificial life that submits to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and a life of thanksgiving (worship) is best noted in 1 Thessalonians 5:18: "Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you."

Just as the life of thanksgiving is meant to affirm the covenantal relationship between God and His people in the Old Testament, for Paul an act of thanksgiving defines our lives as people who belong to Jesus.

Paul mentions thanksgiving multiple times in Colossians, showing the importance of gratitude in the Christian life (1:3; 2:7; 3:16–17; 4:2). Christians should adopt an attitude of thanksgiving. In Colossians 3:15, Paul does not provide us with reasons for being thankful. But in the previous text, Paul encourages Colossians to praise God for delivering them from a tyranny of darkness and for including them in His eternal kingdom, which is a kingdom of peace (Col 1:12–14). This shows that Paul's theology of peace and worship are tied together.

In the same way, the majority of Paul's references to peace (his theology of peace) are founded on his call to Christians to live a life of thanksgiving (1 Cor 1:4; 2 Cor 9:15; Rom 1:8; 2 Cor 1:11; Eph 1:16; Phil 1:3, etc.), which according to Paul should be done in relation to the context of God's grace given in Christ. As Paul stated in Romans 12:1, we worship God by offering our "bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God." As Herman Strathmann rightly notes, these words of Paul refer to an "interiorization" and "exteriorization" of Christian worship.[15] "The service which Christians are to offer consists in the fashioning of their inner lives and their outward physical conduct in a way that plainly distinguishes them from the world, and which corresponds to the will of God. This is a living sacrifice which they have to offer."[16] It is possible for Christians to offer themselves as a "living sacrifice" precisely because they are alive in Christ Jesus, who Himself "died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God" (Rom 6:10)—this is God's grace shared with humanity.

Contrary to our common modern understanding of worship that is limited to rituals or ceremonies performed by believers when assembled together, Paul's argument in Romans 12:1 ties worship to the believer's daily life, which is practiced openly in the world. According to Lutheran scholar Ernst Käsemann, for Paul, "Christian worship does not consist of what is practiced at sacred sites, at sacred times, and with sacred acts. . . . It is

the offering of bodily existence in the otherwise profane sphere. As something constantly demanded this takes place in daily life, whereby every Christian is simultaneously sacrifice and priest."[17]

Similarly, Paul calls the Colossians to adopt a lifestyle characterized by thankfulness, which is reflected in the way they lead their worship lives and interact with each other and their neighbors. To practice God's peace means to worship God recognizing His Lordship over our lives and sharing Christ's peace with each other and the world. In other words, thanksgiving (worship) and sharing the peace of Christ should be the kinds of characteristics that are reflected in our lives.

Conclusion

In Paul's theology, there is no doubt that the themes of peace in Christ and worship are intertwined and interdependent. Colossians 3:15 describes how the two are related, on the basis of which we can understand Paul's theology of peace and worship. As Paul contends, with Christ as the head, we are all parts of a spiritual "body," which is the church. Peace within the body requires peace among its parts.

At this challenging time, when conflict has become a common experience for many congregations, it is very important to remind each other about Paul's idea of peace and worship, and how the two are interrelated. Like the Christians in Colossae, every group of believers will experience internal conflict at times, but seeking peace will help us resolve issues in the context of Christian love. When we share Christ's peace with each other, we can engage in a true worship, one that adopts the life of thankfulness.

Endnotes

[1]For more discussion of this topic, see P. F. Esler, *Conflict and Identity in Romans: The Social Setting of Paul's Letter* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2003); R. A. Horsley, *Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society* (Harrisburg, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997); R. A Horsley, "Jesus-In-Movements and the Roman Imperial (Dis) Order," in A. Win, ed., *An Introduction to Empire in the New Testament* (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature Press, 2016), 47-69; Jürgen Becker, *Paul: Apostle to the Gentiles* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox, 1993).
[2]G. E. Ladd and D. A. Hagner, *A Theology of the New Testament* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1993), 497.
[3]James Dunn, *The Theology of Paul the Apostle* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 533-620, 625-711.
[4]M. Desjardins, *Peace, Violence and the New Testament* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 54-60.
[5]Darrell Guder, ed., *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 243.
[6]In *Lutheran Service Book* (LSB), this directive is indicated in Divine Service, Setting 1, after the Prayer of the Church and before the offering (p. 159). It reads: *"Following the prayers, the people may greet one another in the name of the Lord, saying, 'Peace be with you,' as a sign of reconciliation and of the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (Matt. 5:22-24; Eph. 4:1-3)."*

[7] Richard Giles, *At Heaven's Gate: Reflections on Leading Worship* (London: Canterbury Press, 2010), 141. This may be why the traditional homily began with "Grace to you and Peace from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ" and the concluding blessing of the institution of the Eucharist, "The Peace of the Lord be with you always."
[8] See Paul Deterding*, Colossians: Concordia Commentary* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia, 2003), 7-12.
[9] Deterding, 10. The origin of Gnosticism seems to be an attempt by some early Christians to interpret the Christian faith in light of Hellenistic philosophy. For more detail, see Markus Barth and Helmut Blanke*, The Anchor Bible: Colossians, A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* (London: Doubleday, 1994), 393; Kurt Rudolph, "Gnosticism," ed. David Noel Freedman, *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992), 1035.
[10] F. F. Bruce, *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1984), 156; Peter T. O'Brien, *Word Biblical Commentary: Colossians, Philemon* (Dallas: Thomas Nelson, 1982), 204; D. Wiederkehr, *Die Theologie der Berufung in den Paulusbriefen*.Studia Friburgensia, NS 36 (Freiburg, Schweiz: Universitatsverlag, 1963), 196.
[11] O'Brien, *Word Biblical Commentary: Colossians, Philemon,* 204.
[12] See Margaret MacDonald, *Colossians and Ephesians* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2000), 141.
[13] See J. D. Crossan, "Roman Imperial Theology," in *In the Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance,* R. A. Horsley, ed. (Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox, 2008), 69-71; and Harry Maier, "A Sly Civility: Colossians and Empire," in *Journal for the Study of the New Testament,* vol. 27, no. 3 (2005): 323–49.
[14] Joel White, "'Peace' and 'Security' (1 Thes 5:3): Roman Ideology and Greek Aspiration," in *New Testament Studies*, 60. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 501.
[15] Herman Strathmann, "λατρεύω, λατρεα" in *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, vol. 4 (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1964), 58-65.
[16]Strathmann, 65.
[17] Ernst Käsemann, *Commentary on Romans*, trans. Geoffrey Bromiley (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1980), 329.

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“We Believe, Teach, and Confess” Addressing the Form-Content Issue in a Context of Post-Constantinian Mission

Roberto E. Bustamante

Latin American Lutheranism and Negotiation of Religious Identity

Latin American Lutheranism has always subsisted as a minority. It was born in proscription, with the Spanish Inquisition’s sentence.[1] The Edict of Cartagena de Indias (1610), for instance, catalogues the Lutheran heretics together with the pirates and corsairs, enemies of the Spaniard Crown, as the same type of criminals.[2] It was only in the nineteenth century that the independence revolutions, promoted by Masonic associations, provided more favorable conditions for Protestantism (especially liberal Protestantism) to enter the region.[3] Despite this, far from taking a prominent place in society, Lutheranism that entered Latin America during the nineteenth century largely functioned as an instrument of protection and cultural preservation for Russian-German immigrant minorities.[4]

As “transplant (or immigrant) churches,” the main Lutheran church bodies in the region still have a hard time inserting themselves into the *mestizo* cultural context.[5] In fact, having already left behind much of its Catholic and Spaniard identity during the last century, Latin American culture has migrated into Pentecostalism, and finally into a variety of neo-pagan religious forms.[6] Therefore, the Post-Constantinian marginality of Western Christianity today, is not a great novelty for Latin American Lutheranism, which is used to being an “outsider.”

The practice of a marginal religion is never easy. In many cases, it pushes its adherents to use survival strategies, such as negotiating its religious identity. This strategy can be defined as “a transactional interaction process, in which individuals attempt to evoke, assert, define, modify, challenge, and/or support their own and others’ desired self-images.”[7] A paradigmatic example of negotiation of religious identity in Latin America was the phenomenon that historians of the time of the conquest narrated: in order not to be

Rev. Dr. Roberto E. Bustamante is an Argentine pastor who serves the Sínodo Luterano de México as assistant pastor in México City, as well as the Seminario Concordia el Reformador in the Dominical Republic as Academic Dean and Professor of Exegetical and Systematic Theology.

punished by the Holy Spanish Inquisition nor by their gods, the natives hid their idols beneath, behind, or even within the Catholic religious symbols. Thus, wrote Fray Juan of Torquemada, "giving the impression of revering the cross, they were actually worshiping nothing but the demonic images that they had hidden [within the cross]."[8]

This struggle between what is actually believed and worshiped, on the one hand, and what is shown and expressed before an antagonistic environment, on the other hand, exacerbates a type of religiosity that clearly corresponds to the model of experiential-expressive religion in George Lindbeck's typology.[9] In this form of religion, the experience of the holy (reality and content) is, by definition, independent and previous to any attempt of its symbolic expression (sign and form). This sleight of hand with polarized categories makes it possible both that traditional Christian religious symbols get loaded with new meanings, and conversely, that pagan symbols be easily adopted with the intent of filling them up with some sort of Christian meaning.

Case Study: Lutheranism in Argentina

Latin American Lutheranism has not been immune to negotiation in the strife for forging one's own identity, and for surviving as a religious minority. Let's take into consideration the case of the *Iglesia Evangélica Luterana Argentina* (Evangelical Lutheran Church in Argentina), as it is displayed in one of its official publications, Revista Teológica (*The Theological Journal*). The appearance of the hymnal, *Culto Cristiano,* during the seventies, in resonance with the LCMS's preparations of the *Lutheran Worship*, triggered the publication of a series of articles in Revista Teológica (mainly translations from the North Atlantic) focused on the church's liturgy. These articles were sympathetic to recovering liturgical forms of the church's Lutheran tradition, but at the same time questioned their validity and suitability in the mission context of Latin America. Consequently, in 1987, Argentine Pastor Pablo Wahler proposed to "take advantage of the same elements that were always part of the Christian worship… in a renewed, positive, and up-dated way, one that may be adequate to local and personal circumstances."[10] Wahler proceeded to reinterpret a few central components of the divine service (i.e., preaching, worship, prayer, confession, and the Lord's Supper), which in some cases received definitely strange contents. For example, "confessing" described as "telling God and the brother what is going on, how we feel, what we intimately think about things." [11] Wahler concluded his essay saying:

> I think that, to the extent that the church gets rid of its tradition, discarding what is not fundamental, and, above all, what is an impediment to the action of the Holy Spirit; and, to the extent that it builds on the true foundation, which cannot be changed in the church of Christ and which is He himself, the communities will be strengthened on the basis of the gospel and will also create their own forms of cultic expression.[12]

A few years later, Prof. Jorge Groh sought to retrieve the missional significance that the Sacrament of the Altar had held in the early church. Captivated by the images of "proclamation" (*kerykssein*) and "communion" (*koinonia*) that the apostle Paul expressed

in First Corinthians (11:26 and 10:16 respectively), Groh proposed to reclaim and emphasize an understanding of the Lord's Supper in terms of *verbal witness* ("over against any ritual conception") and *prompt receptivity* ("over against [any extended process of indoctrination with] ecclesiastical concepts.")[13]

These two instances exemplify the effort of a Latin American Lutheran Church to instill content and missional relevance to its inherited liturgical forms. Some years later, Prof. Sergio Fritzler depicted the resultant effect of this trajectory:

> In general terms and out of ignorance, the liturgy has been trimmed, amputated, and manipulated with whimsical criteria … But on the other extreme, there are some who think liturgy as a "tiny clock", in terms of a constant repetition, without losing a single comma, every Sunday, throughout the year, all over the years! … We could call it an "uncritical imitation," that is to say, a repetition that does not consider what it is all about.[14]

This picture still describes the current state of affairs in an *Iglesia Evangélica Luterana Argentina* that is polarized this way in attraction toward these two extremes that Fritzler labels as "liturgical abolitionism" and "liturgical legalism."[15] There is risk of losing sight of the connection between form and content in the struggle for symbols.

Addressing the Form-Content Issue

The Liturgical Movement, which had a great impact upon the historical and liturgical churches during the second half of last century, sought to reestablish the bond between form and content, under the motto *lex orandi–lex credendi* (the law of prayer–the law of faith). The motto reshapes a phrase attributed to Prosper of Aquitaine, a fifth-century monk and disciple of Saint Augustine. Lutheran liturgiologist James Waddell conjectures that it was Don Prosper Gueranger, a nineteenth century French Catholic monk—described by Pope John VI as the father of the "Liturgical Movement"—who coined the modern form of the axiom. [16] The attempt was to give back its doctrinal substance and reflection to the church's liturgical life, and at the same time to reestablish the ecclesiastical liturgy to its function as the proper matrix for doing theology.[17]

So far, so good. But, in spite of the great promise to reconnect the fundamental realities of the liturgy (*lex orandi*) and the dogma of the church (*lex credendi*), the absence of a connective verb in the motto was neither accidental, not innocuous. Each theologian and each ecclesiastical tradition that embraced this proposal came to interpret *lex orandi–lex credendi* as they wished, and in some cases in mutually exclusive ways. In his doctoral dissertation, Joseph Omolo finds three basic interpretations of the motto: (1) Whereas some participants in the discussion put liturgy above doctrine (*lex orandi* establishes *lex credendi*; Alexander Schmemann, Aidan Kavanagh, David Fagerberg, and Gordon Lathrop); (2) others reverse this order (*lex orandi* expresses *lex credendi*; Hermann Sasse and Vilmo Vajta); (3) and finally other authorities put liturgy and doctrine in mutual correlation (*lex orandi* and *lex credendi* complement each other; Regin Prenter, Pope Pius XII, and Geoffrey Wainwright).[18]

But, in spite of the great promise to reconnect the fundamental realities of the liturgy (*lex orandi*) and the dogma of the church (*lex credendi*), the absence of a connective verb in the motto was neither accidental, not innocuous.

Paul De Clerck has demonstrated that the original phrase by Prosper of Aquitaine, *ut legem credendi lex statuat supplicandi*, not only does not support the usual way the liturgical movement understands it (i.e., that doctrine has to be established on the basis of the liturgical practices), but even moves in the opposite direction. De Clerck reminds us that the fifth-century Augustinian monk was refuting the Semi-Pelagian reading of 1 Timothy 2:1–2, arguing that "if the church has the custom of praying for unbelievers and other enemies of the cross of Christ in order that they be converted and receive faith and charity, then this is clear proof that God alone is able to be the author of conversion. The command to make supplication formulated by the Bible and put into practice by the Church determines, therefore, the rule of faith." [19]

The relation between liturgical forms and dogmatic content is thrown into an ambiguity that not only severely limits the usefulness of the Liturgical Movement's claims behind the motto, but also exposes its truly "anti-dogmatic" agenda,[20] whereas the church's dogma is reduced to a fragmentary and transitory intellectual expression of the ineffable mystical experience rather lived in the liturgy.[21]

We might be better served by the conceptual schema that historian Jaroslav Pelikan used in his magnum opus, *The Christian Tradition*, to describe the historical dynamics with which the church formulated its doctrine and, from time to time, either embraced it or distanced itself from it.[22] I refer to the classic triad "we believe, teach, and confess," which Pelikan adopted from the traditional language that the church has used to formalize its dogmatic decisions.[23] The Yale historian uses this triad as a descriptive tool to indicate increase and solution of the conflicts that form part of the history of the Christian tradition.[24] In the introductory definitions, Pelikan proposes a programmatic understanding of the components of the triad:

> Without setting rigid boundaries, we shall identify what is 'believed' as the form of Christian doctrine present in the modalities of devotion, spirituality, and worship; what is 'taught' as the content of the word of God extracted by exegesis from the witness of the Bible and communicated to the people of the church through proclamation, instruction, and churchly theology; and what is 'confessed' as the testimony of the church, both against false teaching from within and against attacks from without, articulated in polemic and in apologetics, in creed and in dogma.[25]

Throughout his massive work, it is possible to see that Pelikan considers the dynamic relationship among the components of the triad (what is believed, taught, and confessed) in order to describe, for example, the process that led to the formulation of the dogmas (often moving from individual piety to public teaching, and later becoming confession),[26] to indicate the strength of a tradition, such as the Eastern Church (which historically preserved the unity of the triad),[27] the relevance of the Lutheran Reformation (which indicated the correct hierarchical relationship between the components in the triad),[28] or the root of the great doctrinal crisis of Modernity (which reversed the proper hierarchy).[29]

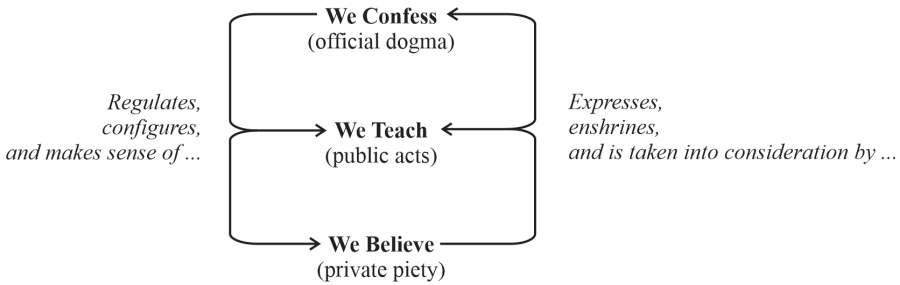
Therefore, we can join this author with the following statements:

1. The components in the triad "we believe, teach, and confess" describe ascending levels in the church's life and doctrine, moving from the basis of the believer's individual piety ("we believe"); passing through the public teaching and practices of an ecclesiastical body ("we teach"); to finally arrive at the official dogmas codified in the creeds and the confessions of the church ("we confess").[30]

2. A church body's doctrinal health and integrity are damaged when the components of the triad "we believe, teach, and confess" go separate ways, isolating the individual piety from the public teaching, or both from the confession of the church.

3. A church body's doctrinal health and integrity are damaged when the hierarchical order of the triad "we believe, teach, and confess" is subverted; for instance, making the popular piety or public practices in the church regulate the actual confession of the church.

4. A church body's doctrinal health and integrity are fostered when the components of the triad "we believe, teach, and confess" exhibit both a relation of reciprocal interaction



and a relation of normative regulation. Thus, there is a dynamic movement within the triad (see Figure 1).[31]

Figure 1. Reciprocal Interaction and Normative Regulation among the Components of the Triad.

Conclusion

What contribution does the triad "we believe, teach, and confess" make in addressing the form-content issue in a context of post-Constantinian mission? The schema just presented (and that historian Jaroslav Pelikan used as a descriptive device to appreciate the different trajectories and stages in the history of Christian tradition) may serve to assess and regulate the doctrinal health and integrity of a church body in connection with the liturgical decisions a church body makes in a context of mission.

These are its possible contributions.

This schema recognizes the normative role that belongs to the Lutheran Confessions as *norma normata* [32]

This schema acknowledges the strategic and formative function of public practices in the church (among which the liturgical practices and forms have an eminent place).

This schema helps the church to explicitly and intentionally configure its liturgical forms from their proper substance and basis for decision: the pure doctrine of the Gospel as confessed in the Book of Concord.

This schema protects the church from a vacuum of dogmatic content in the liturgical forms that the church puts into practice.

This schema promotes a recapture of its liturgical heritage, but only with consideration of its proper dogmatic content, and its contextual relevance.

This schema takes seriously conversation concerning private piety and the daily experiences of those to whom Christians reach out in mission.

This schema provides valid criteria for assessing the adequacy of content (the confessed truth), of form (public rites), and of contextual relevance (people's piety).

Without claiming finality, these seven statements changed into binary questions (yes/no questions) may help in using the triad "we believe, teach, and confess" as an evaluative and regulatory instrument that aids in the church's daily struggle to establish a liturgical identity that is both consistent with the divine doctrine and suited for its missional context.

Endnotes

[1] Enrique Dussel, Historia general de la iglesia en américa latina (Salamanca: Ediciones Sígueme, 1983), 1:661.

[2] Dussel, Historia general, 1:650, 661.

[3] Enrique Dussel, "*Historia del fenómeno religioso en América Latina*," in Religiosidad e historiografía: La irrupción del pluralismo religioso en América Latina y su elaboración metódica en la historiografía, ed. Hans-Jürg Prien (Frankfurt/Madrid: Vervuert Verlag/Iberoamericana, 1998), 75.
[4] Vítor Westhelle, "*Considerações sobre o etno-luteranismo latino-americano: Panfleto para debate*," Estudos Teológicos 18, no. 2 (1978): 84; René E. Gertz, "*Os luteranos no Brasil*," Revista de História Regional 6, no. 2 (Invierno 2001): 17–18.
[5] Waldo L. Villalpando, ed., Las iglesias de transplante: Protestantismo de inmigración en la Argentina (Buenos Aires: Centro de Estudios Cristianos, 1970).
[6] Robert A. White, "*Secularización y pluralismo religioso en América Latina: ¿Cambios ... o continúa el mismo sincretismo de religiosidad popular? Una perspectiva de análisis,*" Diálogos de Comunicación 41 (1995), accessed March 15, 2022. https://rolandoperez.files.wordpress.com/2009/02/secularizacion-y-pluralismo-religioso-en-al-por-robert-white.pdf
[7] Aneta Pavlenko and Adrian Blackledge, "Introduction: New Theoretical Approaches to the Study of Negotiation of Identities in Multilingual Contexts," in *Negotiation of Identities in Multilingual Contexts*, eds. Aneta Pavlenko and Adrian Blackledge (Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2004), 4.
[8] Fray Juan de Torquemada, Monarquía indiana (México DF: *Instituto de Investigaciones Históricas de la UNAM*), 5:102.
[9] George A. Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 1984), 31–32.
[10] Pablo Wahler, "*El culto y la presencia del Espíritu Santo*," Revista Teológica 32, no. 130 (1987): 14.
[11] Wahler procedures exhibit remarkable similarities with the demythologization of the New Testament proposed by Rudolf Bultmann, since he preserves the symbols, attempts to find out a core meaning, and translates it into a modern (and secularized) understanding of the symbol. For example, Wahler reinterprets the confession of sins that takes place in the divine service this way: "Why should we think the confession just in terms of confessing sins? It would be better for our communities to cultivate that quality of being communicative, sincere, open minded; and this especially with regard to those aspects it would be beneficial to know each other. I repeat, the confession should not be limited to recognizing our sins, for, to be honest, many times it not even has to do with sins, or at least not with sins we are aware of. Rather, [our problems] may be related to errors made in ignorance, to our limitations, to forgetfulness. Confessing is also telling God and the brother what is going on, how we feel, what we intimately think about things. We might be suffering, confused, nervous, empty, anxious, hurt, ashamed, happy, optimistic, overflowing, or full of life [!]. Why should we not share and participate others of these experiences, if this can become therapeutic for me and for others?" Wahler, "*El culto*," 17–18.
[12] Wahler, "*El culto*," 20.
[13] Jorge E. Groh, "*La santa cena y la misión de la iglesia,*" Revista Teológica 38, no. 146 (1993): 8.
[14] Sergio A. Fritzler, "*Confesionalidad y liturgia*," Revista Teológica 50, no. 168 (2011): 66.
[15] Fritzler, "*Confesionalidad*," 66.

[16] James A. Waddell, "Rethinking *lex orandi lex credendi*," https://lexcredendilexorandi.wordpress.com/ (accessed June 23, 2017). See also Damasus Winzen, "Guéranger and the Liturgical Movement—Comments on Bouyer's *Liturgical Piety*," *The American Benedictine Review* 6 (Winter 1955–1956): 424–26; A Sister of Ryde, "Dom Geranger: Prophet of Ecclesial Renewal," *Faith* 38, no. 4 (July-August 2006): 19.
[17] Alexander Schmemann, "Theology and Liturgical Tradition," in *Worship in Scripture and Tradition*, ed. Massey Shepherd (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1963), 165–78; Aidan Kavanagh, *On Liturgical Theology* (New York: Pueblo, 1984).
[18] Joseph T. Omolo, "Worshipping Meaningfully: The Complementary Dynamics of Liturgy and Theology in Worship" (Ph.D. diss., Concordia Seminary, 2014).
[19] Paul De Clerck, "'*Lex orandi, lex credendi*:' The Original Sense and Historical Avatars of an Equivocal Adage," trans. Thomas M. Winger, *Studia Liturgica* 24, no. 2 (1994): 189.
[20] Kurt E. Marquart, "Liturgy and Dogmatics," *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 67, no. 2 (2003): 186.
[21] Cyprian Vagaggini, *Theological Dimensions of the Liturgy* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1976), 530.
[22] Jaroslav Pelikan, *The Christian Tradition: A History of the Development of Doctrine*, 5 vols. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1975–89).
[23] This is the formula with which the Formula of Concord (particularly the Epitome) introduces the affirmative dogmatic definitions. See, for example, FC Ep, "Rule and Norm", 1; I, 2, 3, 8; III, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11; VII, 6, 7, 8, 9, 15, 16, 18, 19, 20; VIII, 6, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15.
[24] Pelikan, *Christian Tradition*, 1:1–5.
[25] Pelikan, *Christian Tradition*, 1:4.
[26] Pelikan, *Christian Tradition*, 1:4–5.
[27] Pelikan, *Christian Tradition*, 1:341.
[28] Pelikan, *Christian Tradition*, 4:4–5.
[29] Pelikan, *Christian Tradition*, 5:122.
[30] Here, in truth, the contents that belong to each component in the triad are redistributed. Taking into consideration the way the *Solid Declaration* ("Binding Summary," 3, 10) establishes a hierarchy of three different types of ecclesial speech acts (i.e., Scriptures, Confessions, and any other ecclesial written or oral discourse), we preserve the first order component (we confess) for the normative text of the Lutheran Confessions alone. Any other kind of public action and speech-act of a particular congregation or church body (e.g., its public proclamation, its administration of the sacraments, Christian instruction, and official theological education and publications, etc.) is placed under the second order component (we teach). Finally, the third order component, (we believe), is referred to private Christian piety in general.
[31] I have labeled this operative device in Pelikan "a model of orthodox dynamics." See, Roberto E. Bustamante, "Contemporary Confessional Commitment: A Models-Based Approach with a Particular Focus on Global South Lutheranism" (Ph.D. diss., Concordia Seminary), 62–72.
[32] FC SD, "Rule and Norm."

Mentoring in the Pews: Fostering a Missional Habitus

Kent Burreson

Pastor Tim Droegemueller describes Living Faith Lutheran Church's faith formation process/catchumenate[1] as it shapes their mission as a congregation:

> Our mission is the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18–20). Salvation to humanity entails the people of God in this place understanding their vocation. We facilitate their understanding of their vocations by breaking down, analyzing, and assessing the variegated moments in the lives of the members of Living Faith in relationship to and in submission to the Word of God. We try to create awareness for them in their daily life so that they can perceive when they stumble over the epiphanies of the gospel. We want to bear witness to and practice the freeing reality and experience of the gospel in our daily vocations and relationships.[2]

This is the vision of "mentoring in the pews"[3]—the transformation of a congregation toward a missional identity through the faith formation process oriented toward and grounded in baptism. Dr. Rhoda Schuler[4] and I became convinced five years ago that the faith formation practices of the adult catechumenate still had the potential to invigorate Lutheran congregations. We were awarded a Vital Worshiping Communities Grant from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, to study, facilitate, and foster catechumenal practices in Lutheran congregations. [5] We researched the shape of faith formation practices in three congregations in the LCMS and one in the ELCA. Our methodology included interviews with pastoral and lay catechists and with current and recent adult catechumens and in-person observation of catechetical instruction and ritual practices at these congregations. In this essay I will demonstrate how the adult catechumenate fosters a missional habitus and identity in the congregations we researched.

The Reverend Dr. Kent J. Burreson is Louis A. Fincke and Anna B. Shine Professor of Systematic Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri. A doctoral graduate in liturgical studies from the University of Notre Dame, he teaches courses in systematic theology and liturgy. His interest in natural burial developed, in conversation with his colleague Dr. Beth Hoeltke, as a response to the American way of death. Prior to his call to Concordia Seminary, he served as a pastor in Mishawaka, Indiana. He lives in Saint Peters, Missouri with his wife, Cindy, who are the proud parents of two adult daughters.

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Forming Missional Identity

The formation of a missional identity like those reflected in the congregations we researched begins with the candidates for baptism and for the renewal of baptism (confirmation, reaffirmation of faith, and transfer of membership) of others.[6] The process leading to and from baptism creates a new identity for them, including a missional identity. As one candidate said: "I truly feel a member of the church. There is a commitment I have undertaken. I have an understanding of the mission of the church, of the mission of God. I integrate it all into my life. I pray all the time. I am a Christian *all the time*."[7] The congregation's investment in the formation of these candidates for baptism, and the congregation's public awareness of the reformation of their identities, reshapes the congregation's own self-understanding, and through these candidates places God's mission at the center of the congregation's spirit and life.

The ritual practices of Redeemer Lutheran Church in The Bronx, New York, illustrate this formation of individuals and the reshaping of the congregation's missional identity, as they witness the candidates' entrance into the catechumenate, crossing the threshold, and joining the movement toward baptism or its affirmation. The rites of Acceptance into the Catechumenate, Election to Intensive Preparation for Baptism, and Baptismal Initiation at Redeemer function as rites of passage and shape the catechumenal journey. They are liminal because they allow the inquirer, catechumen, and eventual neophyte to make the transition gradually through the various stages of faith formation.

These rites and rituals of faith formation, with the worship and liturgy of the church, teach in a participatory way. As the catechumens participate in these rituals, they come to understand the triune God in whom they are professing faith and their relationship to that God. The rituals draw inquirers, catechumens, and all the baptized present in the assembly into the liturgy of life that confesses Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the heavenly Father, through whom the Spirit of God is poured out on the world. God's work of transforming the catechumens through the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ re-orients both the candidates and the congregation toward the in-breaking of the rule and reign of God in His church.

At the center of the mission of the faith formation process is the baptismal paradigm of dying and rising (Romans 6). Larry at Living Faith said of their faith formation, "We make a big deal out of remembering at the Easter Vigil that we are buried into Christ's death in Baptism, and raised into His resurrection in Holy Baptism."[8] Placing newcomers at the center of congregational life[9] embeds the dying and rising pattern as the central way of understanding the shape of a congregation's life and its missional habitus.

This process is about congregational transformation, not some program for welcoming new members. Sylvia, actively involved in the catechumenate at Redeemer, affirms, "It transforms our way of life and impacts our daily living,"[10] and Stewart, a catechumen at Redeemer said, "It changed my very life."[11] This transformation simply flows from the watershed baptismal event because the people of God in Christ are never *not* in formation until Baptism is completed in death. In the congregations we followed, through their rituals

and formation, the catechumens and the congregations are constantly dying and rising, which means that they are in the mission of God at all times.[12]

The source of this missional habitus is the justification of the sinner in Christ (baptismal identity), but the modeling of the transformation comes through the sanctified life of the congregation. Roman Catholic expert on the catechumenate, Diana Macalintal, argues that in the RCIA (Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults), "the curriculum is the parish."[13]

Within such a construct, faith formation conceives of God's mission in the congregation through the lens of an apprenticeship model rather than an information download model. It engages an apprenticeship into the *way* of faith and life in Christ. Sponsors at Redeemer and Living Faith serve as mentors toward this apprenticeship. As Pastor Droegemueller at Living Faith says of their sponsors, "They provide Christian friendship, giving the catechumens someone to talk to. It provides the catechumens with accountability and lets them know that they are not alone in this journey."[14] The entire body of Christ makes this journey through the catechumenate together, people with real lives, schedules, and experiences all trying to walk together immersed in Scripture and in life in Christ. Faith formation profoundly embeds this common life in the Christian community.

The entire body of Christ makes this journey through the catechumenate together, people with real lives, schedules and experiences all trying to walk together immersed in Scripture and in life in Christ.

Fostering a Common Missional Life

In order to assess how faith formation fostered this common missional life in the congregations we researched, I will use Alan Hirsch's foundational study of the missional church, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church.*[15] Hirsch describes the missional church as possessing at its core missional DNA (mDNA). He describes mDNA as a "simple, intrinsic, reproducible, central guiding mechanism necessary for the reproduction of genuine missional movements."[16]

It is instructive how Hirsch's definition fits the catechumenate. The catechumenate, as such a guiding mechanism, is inherently oriented toward making disciples and therefore participates in the mission of God in Jesus Christ by the Holy Spirit. Its public nature and centrality in congregational life aims to embed mDNA in a congregation's corporate life and identity and forge a missional habitus in the assembly's members.

The catechumenate shapes a community that reflects Hirsch's definition of a missional church: "A community of God's people that defines itself, and organizes its life around, its real purpose of being an agent of God's mission to the world."[17] In a missional church the intent is that mDNA flows through every believer and the entire community of faith.

Redeemer Lutheran Church highlights that experience and encodes mDNA through the ritual act of repeating several times in their services their mission statement, "Redeemer Evangelical Lutheran Church, by God's grace, is a praying community of service that

receives, teaches, celebrates and shares Christ Jesus." Everyone says it together, with enthusiasm and energy. By doing this it defines and encourages Redeemer to be the very thing that they claim they are in their mission statement. And their mission statement exactly describes their catechumenate. Embedding mDNA in this way seeks to transform the life and identity of a congregation.

Elements of mDNA

Faith Formation shapes *Communitas*

Even more instructive are how Hirsch's elements of missional DNA—the elements of apostolic genius—describe the formative power of the catechumenate. Those elements include the following, although this essay will only consider the first three:

- The formation of *Communitas*—not community (as an established institution). *Communitas* is a people living under missionally liminal situations[18]
- A *communitas* focused on disciple-making by baptizing and teaching
- Church life that is organic to faith itself (authentic)
- Missional-Incarnational Impulse: Baptizing and Teaching
- Apostolic Environment: Apostolic work of church planting and formation in doctrine[19]

These elements permeate the catechumenate to result in a mission mindset.

A primary indicator of a missional church is the formation of *Communitas* in a congregation. Hirsch distinguishes this from *community* which he identifies as an established institution seeking to sustain and maintain its life. *Communitas*, rather, is a people living under missionally-liminal situations.[20] Hirsch says, they

> form themselves around a common mission that calls them into a dangerous journey to unknown places—a mission that calls the church to shake off its collective securities and to plunge into the world of action, where its members will experience disorientation and marginalization but also where they encounter God and one another in a new way. *Communitas* is therefore always linked with the experience of liminality. It involves adventure and movement, and it describes that unique experience of *togetherness*.[21]

We will consider how *Communitas* reflects ordeal, adventure, danger, and marginality.[22] To that list I'd add imagination. All of those things are characteristic of living in a missional state.

A number of things in our research could be identified as indicative that these congregations possessed *Commmunitas*. The story of one catechumen at Redeemer Lutheran Church in the Bronx, New York—we'll call him Bertrand—bears witness to *Communitas* reflecting ordeal, adventure, danger, and marginality. From Jamaica, Bertrand was vacationing in New York City. A friend told him they were going to church at Redeemer Lutheran. Bertrand examined the congregation with a very critical eye. Did they

bear witness to what they professed? He came again, asking whether there was authenticity in their life together. He found that their life under Jesus was transparent and true. So, he decided he wanted to know more about this congregation, about the church, about Christ. Bertrand started participating in their weekly formation classes leading toward baptism. Through Skype he continued his instruction after returning to Jamaica. At last, Easter was approaching.

Bertrand decided he could not miss becoming a child of God at Redeemer. So, he flew from Jamaica in the days preceding Passion Sunday. Obstacles reared their ugly heads. Immigration and Customs Enforcement detained Bertrand for over eleven hours, refusing to believe he was returning to the United States to be baptized, even though he had a letter from the pastor. Through the intercessions of the pastor and the witness of members of the congregation, ICE released him in time for the Holy Week services. On Maundy Thursday he had his feet washed and at the Easter Vigil he was baptized and anointed, sealed as a child of God.

The obstacles and dangers notwithstanding, Bertrand called it a fabulous journey into a new family filled with love.[23] Bertrand's candidacy for baptism raised contemporary challenges to the church's life at Redeemer that required imagination to resolve. Through their formation process Bertrand's questions were answered by a hospitable assembly bearing witness to the unrelenting love of God in Jesus. Bertrand and Redeemer together were transformed through death and resurrection encountered in the catechumenate journey and in so doing experienced *Communitas*.

Another indicator of *Communitas* is the call for transformation that reverberates throughout the catechumenate. Living in the midst of a movement, living on the boundary between church and society, requires commitment.

One of the newly baptized at Redeemer reflected that commitment in the rite of election into the catechumenate when he said, "Signing the book was a form of confirmation. It made it official. I was a part of the church. I could participate in the church's life. At that point, the commitment became real."[24] His comment conveyed his commitment not to an institutional form of the church, but to the living experience of the Body of Christ, to the church in motion.

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Disciple-Making in Faith Formation

Another of the primary ways that a congregation manifests a missional identity is that disciple-making is central to the congregation's sense of *communitas*. The catechumenate forges the understanding in these congregations that making disciples is key to the mission of God and a core task of the church. Hirsch notes a number of characteristics of the disciple of the Lord Jesus[25] and many of these are in evidence in the congregations we studied.

One of these characteristics is that the disciple is formed through a transforming encounter with Christ through the Word and through initiation into the community.[26] One

of the newly baptized at Redeemer, we'll call him Mark, reflected on his baptism and his language speaks to the experience as a transforming encounter with Christ:

> The most striking part of the experience was while I was leaning over the font. I can't explain it or put it into words. In the midst of the abundant water—much more than I expected—pouring over me at the font, I felt cleansed and that a burden had been lifted.[27]

Here in his experience of the Easter Vigil baptismal liturgy he had become a new person, a personal victory which he could share with all of the baptized at Redeemer.

That reflects another feature of a disciple-making congregation, one in which contagious relationships are built and nurtured. Commenting on the congregation's welcome after his baptism, both in the service and after it,

> It was overwhelming. Before I came to the church I was fairly closed to strangers. I need to warm up. They are way too nice. I am overwhelmed. Coming from the font they are congratulating me. It is a personal victory I can share with all. I feel more connected.[28]

There is an authentic character to faith formation. It not only expects a lifelong commitment as a disciple of Christ Jesus, it also creates the conditions for a commitment that constantly seeks to incorporate others into a community of authentic relationships. As Mark said, those contagious relationships hold "as long as I'm always in the faith."[29]

Organic Life through Faith Formation

Another of the primary elements of mDNA in a missional church is that it functions as an organic system rather than as an institution. The church's life should be organic to living faith. It should flow from faith and feed the community's life together. Of this element Hirsch contends,

> The church, in its most phenomenal form (when it genuinely manifests Apostolic Genius) organizes itself as a living organism that reflects more how God has structured life itself, as opposed to a machine, which is the artificial, inorganic alternative to a living system."[30]

The church as a living organism, permeating the world in mission was manifested in all four congregations we studied. They functioned as living networks where Christ was unabashedly at the center and shared beliefs, principles, interests, and goals permeated all the strands of the network. The catechumenates mirror the dynamic networks of congregational life as a hub of activity with various groups of people and individuals as nodes in the network.

How the members of the various communities serve as nodes in this network of catechumenal life is exemplified in this story from Redeemer. The "grandmothers" [read: wise and seasoned established members] of the congregation readily took upon themselves the task of assisting parents with and then mentoring and guiding the young children into

participating in worship. Then, during the pandemic, those same children, as youth and young adults, cared for the "grandmothers" in their needs and as they became homebound.

Like the various parts of the human body, many are involved in advancing the movement of the church in society through the birthing and nurturing of new Christians by means of the catechumenate. Members of all the congregations knew they had a role to play and would readily engage the formation process at the points where they could and desired to do so. At St. John Lutheran in Wheaton, Illinois, the pastor is quoted by members as often saying, "find your spot to work in the congregation."[31] Or, be the node in the catechumenal network.

Mentoring in the pews ultimately is all about forming a missional community who is for the world in Jesus' name. As Alan Hirsch observes at the end of his book,

> We need to hit the road again. We are the people of the Way, and our path lies before us, inviting us into a new future in which we are permitted to shape and participate. In trying to rearticulate the nature of authentic Christian community, that of a *communitas* formed around a mission . . . we evoke that yearning and that willingness to undertake an adventurous journey of rediscovery of that ancient force called Apostolic Genius.[32]

In faith formation the church hits the road as a community in missional movement. As one catechumen put it, "This is a forever walk."[33]

Endnotes

[1] We use the terms "faith formation" and "catechumenate" interchangeably. Faith formation is inherently a broad title, encompassing a variety of adult formation practices. *Catechumenate* refers in the early church to the sets of rites designated in the fourth century for facilitating the conversion of adults. In the 20th century and following it refers to the Roman Catholic Church's *Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)* and all of the Protestant rites that developed as a result of the RCIA.
[2] Pastor Tim Droegemueller, interviewed in person by Kent Burreson, August 15, 2018. Living Faith Lutheran Church is in Cumming, Georgia. This is a summary of his description.
[3] Sandy [pseud.], member at Redeemer Lutheran Church, The Bronx, New York, NY, interviewed in person by Kent Burreson, October 3, 2018, used this phrase.
[4] Professor emerita at Concordia University, St. Paul, MN.
[5] See Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, "Grants Page," December 24, 2019, https://worship.calvin.edu/grants/. This program is made possible through a Vital Worship Grant from the Calvin Institute of Christian Worship, Grand Rapids, Michigan, funds provided by Lilly Endowment Inc.
[6] Renewal of Baptism would encompass traditional confirmation, reaffirmation of faith, and transfer of membership.
[7] Maura [pseud.], interviewed in person by Kent Burreson, October 3, 2018.
[8] Larry [pseud.], interviewed in person by Kent Burreson, August 15, 2018.

[9] Placing the catechumens at the center of congregational life is done in a variety of ways. First, all of the rituals of the catechumenate are conducted publicly at primary worship services. For these rites the catechumens are in front of the assembly and identified personally, along with their sponsors. In addition, the catechumens are in the Sunday prayers of the church on a weekly basis. Finally, the congregation is encouraged to interact with the catechumens and incorporate them into congregational life.
[10] Sylvia [pseud.], interviewed in person by Kent Burreson, October 3, 2018.
[11] Stewart [pseud.], interviewed in person by Kent Burreson, October 3, 2018.
[12] Often in congregations this reality is true theologically, but not practically. The catechumenate helps congregations to be aware of this disconnect by holding up publicly the catechumens as central to the congregation's identity. If there are no catechumens in front of the congregation at all times, the congregation should become readily aware that they are not engaged in the mission of God.
[13] Macalintal, Diana, *Your Parish is the Curriculum: RCIA in the Midst of the Community* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2018).
[14] Pastor Tim Droegemueller, interviewed in person by Kent Burreson, August 15, 2018.
[15] Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2006).
[16] Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 76.
[17] Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 82.
[18] Hirsch describes a missionally-liminal situation as "Liminality applies to that situation where people find themselves in an in-between, marginal state in relation to the surrounding society, a place that could involve significant danger and disorientation, but not necessarily so" (Hirsch, 220).
[19] Hirsch, 24–25. There is not space to consider Hirsch's final two elements in this essay. We plan to do so in future publications regarding our research.
[20] See fn 18 above for the description of missionally-liminal situations.
[21] Hirsch, 221.
[22] Hirsch, 221.
[23] Bertrand [pseud.], interviewed in person by Kent Burreson, April 21, 2019.
[24] Preston, [pseud.], interviewed in person by Kent Burreson, October 3, 2018.
[25] Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 105.
[26] Hirsch, 105.
[27] Mark [pseud.], interviewed in person by Kent Burreson, April 21, 2019.
[28] Mark [pseud.], interviewed in person by Kent Burreson, April 21, 2019.
[29] Mark [pseud.], interviewed in person by Kent Burreson, April 21, 2019.
[30] Hirsch, *The Forgotten* Ways, 180.
[31] Ken and Phyllis [pseud.], interviewed in person by Rhoda Schuler, August 8, 2018; Lucille and Curt [pseud.], interviewed in person by Rhoda Schuler, August 8, 2018.
[32] Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways*, 241.
[33] Denise, [pseud.], interviewed in person by Kent Burreson, October 3, 2018.

Worship and Outreach

Paul Muench

While working as a missionary in the highlands of Papua New Guinea, my friend John was asked to be the guest preacher for a special worship service at a coastal congregation. Since there were no roads from the highlands to the coastal town of Wewak, flying was the only realistic way to travel.

Upon checking the flight schedule, John was confident the trip would be possible in the time constraints he had. It was very important to him to be back at his work at Mt. Hagen, a city in the highlands, on Monday. There were no problems with getting to Wewak on the Saturday; however, John was somewhat concerned about the Sunday schedule. There would be only one flight out of Wewak on Sunday. In a country in which the national airline was less than two years old and schedules and bookings were a relatively new phenomena, realism added a new dimension to travel arrangements. After some assurances that he was properly booked for that one Sunday afternoon flight, John accepted the invitation to serve as guest preacher.

John enjoyed his time in the beautiful city of Wewak, and it was a blessing to worship with the people there. His scheduling also went well, and he was arriving at the airport a half hour ahead of the scheduled departure time.

The sight of a plane climbing away from the airport temporarily upset John's sense of well-being. But he recognized that the plane taking off was a DC-3, the plane usually used as a transport plane in Papua New Guinea. A Fokker Friendship plane was the normal passenger plane. The DC-3 had obviously been an unscheduled transport flight.

Upon arrival at the airport, John relaxed. Other people were also arriving and preparing to meet the one flight of the day. However, a radical change in atmosphere occurred when the arriving passengers observed that the terminal manager was locking the terminal building. A near riot broke out. Order returned quickly only because the terminal manager joyfully volunteered to explain his actions to the potential passengers.

His explanation was simple and logical.

> "Normally on this Sunday afternoon flight we use a Fokker Friendship plane. But, today, due to unscheduled maintenance, a Fokker Friendship plane was not available. We had to use a DC-3. As you all know, the

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Rev. Paul Muench has served as a missionary in Papua New Guinea and Russia. He also served as the Executive Director of Lutheran Bible Translators. In addition to his Master of Divinity from Concordia Seminary in St. Louis he has a Masters in Missiology and a Ph.D. in Cultural Studies.

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> DC-3 is a much slower plane. Therefore, I sent the plane to Mt. Hagen a half hour early to be sure that it would get there on time."

Obviously, the terminal manager misunderstood the proper relationship between the scheduled flight and the passengers.

The relationship between worship and mission is also often misunderstood. The resulting confusion is detrimental to present as well as potential members. This essay will 1) show the relationship between worship and mission, 2) point to the implications of this relationship for worship, and 3) picture the benefit to both worship and outreach when the proper relationship is maintained.

Worship and Mission

Normally worship is the time when Christians are the most visible to the community around them. It is difficult to imagine that this time of community visibility would not have some effect on the communications between Christians and non-Christians.

It is also very logical to assume that God would use the worship context as a time of spiritual preparation for the people of God. Via Word and sacrament God's people are equipped to do what God asks them to do out in the world. "You will be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8).

For the Lutheran worshiper the only mandatory parts of worship are Word and sacrament; however, even in these basics of worship there is an obvious dimension of outreach. "For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes." (1 Cor 11:26).

The linking of worship to mission is not limited to the New Testament. In fact, the New Testament only continues the relationship found in the Old Testament. "Israel was not missionary in the sense we normally use that name. Israel was not to leave its homeland, instead, the knowledge of God was to be conveyed by the witness of Israel's life of worship and devotion."[1]

Throughout the Old Testament, as God calls the people to worship, He calls them to mission, and as He reminds them of their mission, He calls them to worship. They are to be a witness to the nations (Zech 8:23), a kingdom of priests, a holy people (Ex 19:6).

The Apostle Paul provides us with a specific case study in which he defends the relationship between worship and outreach as he advises the Corinthians concerning the problems caused when some Christians used speaking in tongues in a public worship service. Paul relegated speaking in tongues to private worship because in public worship there should be a concern for the person who might walk in off the street (1 Cor 14:23). Witness to the potential Christian should take precedence over any worship form, even a form that is a gift of the Holy Spirit.

Even though the length of this article does not allow further explanation of the relationship between worship and outreach, the above establishes that relationship and can serve as a stimulating base from which to study the implications of this relationship for outreach.

Implications for Worship

Establishing the relationship between worship and mission adds another dimension to worship. The criteria for evaluating worship forms must also include an evaluation of the outreach contributions of those forms.

Just as the missionary going into a foreign country takes time to learn the language and culture of the people so that they will be able to understand the message of Scripture, our congregations must also consider the language and cultural needs of the people in our community.

If the missionary were to demand that people learn another language before they could hear the Gospel, we would accuse the missionary of presenting the people with a stumbling block that is not the Gospel. Therefore, missionaries are taught to learn the language and customs of the people so that the Word of God, both law and Gospel, comes to the people in a way they can understand.

Just imagine the amount of mental exertion necessary to learn to participate in a worship context that requires knowledge of King James English, medieval court etiquette, Roman clothing fashions, Gothic architecture, Greek oratory skills and classical German music. Four decades after being introduced to such worship, with the aid of eight years of Lutheran grade school, confirmation instruction, college courses, seminary courses and graduate study, I feel comfortable responding to God in that worship context. In fact, I personally prefer "page 5 and 15" of the old hymnal. However, confronting a potential Christian or a new convert with such demands is a stumbling block that is not the Gospel.

Does this imply that we must be less Lutheran in our worship? Are we to deny the wisdom of our Christian forefathers for current fads? Certainly not! A brief glance at what the Lutheran Confessions say about worship will be helpful at this point.

The confessions establish firmly that the requirements for worship are Word and sacrament. They refuse to go further than this because Scripture requires no more for public worship. The Reformers had obvious and ample evidence of the harm done to the church when human forms were passed on as God's requirements. They understood the Gospel of Matthew quite well when it says, "This people honors me with their lips, [says God] but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men" (Mt 15:8-9).

Rather than trying to assume some kind of understanding of all possible situations by devising "rules for Lutheran Worship," the Lutheran Confessions recognize that decisions about worship forms are best made by the local congregation.

The Lutheran Confessions, however, do recognize the need for human forms in worship. Language, music, ritual, and many other beautiful things God has given are appropriate and needed for worship. Rather than trying to assume some kind of understanding of all possible situations by devising "rules for Lutheran Worship," the Lutheran Confessions recognize that decisions about worship forms are best made by the local congregation. "We believe,

teach, and confess that the community of God in every place and at any time at their convenience has the authority to alter such ceremonies according to its own situation, as may be most useful and edifying for the community of God"[2] (FC, Ep X, 4).

This approach is very consistent with the position of the Lutheran Reformers. The people of God have access to the Word of God and are capable of being guided by God without the hierarchy of the church. Through the Word of God and the strength given in the sacraments, the people of God are guided by the Holy Spirit to make proper decisions about the forms of worship.

The Confessions, however, do point out two criteria for worship forms. The forms should be "useful and edifying." The forms should help the people to worship God and to learn about what God has done for them in Jesus Christ.

What does "useful and edifying" mean for the outreach dimension of worship? St. Paul felt that a language not readily understood by the newcomer to worship was not useful. That language should be banned from public worship (1 Cor 14).

The science of communication tells us that a form of communication is most effective (edifying) when it calls least attention to itself. When communication forms help us to focus on the intended message, they are most helpful. When communication forms attract attention to themselves, they will often distort the message. In worship we certainly wish to use forms that will not distort our intended message.

The forms that will attract least attention to themselves are the forms most common to the people. New forms need to be learned. Forms from the culture do not suffer from this problem. Forms from outside the culture are most often changed (distorted) as they enter a new culture.

The Duna people of Papua New Guinea were known to the peoples around them as a singing people. This reputation confused me when I first came to work among them, because they had a difficult time singing in worship services. My encouraging, special practice sessions, and better translation did not solve the problem.

The long walk necessary to visit congregations gave me time to ponder the problem. On one of these walks, I became concerned for a teenage boy who was helping me to carry supplies that I needed for the long walk. The boy, who had been happy to come with me, suddenly began singing what I interpreted to be a mournful song. The tempo was very slow. My language abilities were not yet such that I could comprehend the poetic words of the song, but the tune was certainly slow and, to me, mournful.

However, when I inquired, I found that the boy was not depressed. He did not even have a stomachache. I was told he was singing a beautiful love song.

A few days later as I was listening to the funeral song a mother was singing for her child who had died the previous evening, I realized what us missionaries had allowed to happen by importing outside music. The funeral song had a very rapid tempo. In the Duna culture, a rapid tempo meant sadness, a slow tempo communicated happiness.

By putting Duna words to Western music, we were combining happy words with what the Duna considered sad music and sad words with happy music. The music forms we used for worship attracted so much confusing attention to themselves the Duna people found it almost impossible to sing.

As students of Luther, we have a precedent that would encourage us to avoid this kind of mistake. In 1525 a friend of Luther, Nicholas Hausmann, sent Luther a few samples of German liturgies. Luther returned them. "I hate to see Latin notes set over the German words. I told the publisher what the German manner of singing is. That is what I will introduce here."[3]

Luther's great concern that the people hear the Word of God extended also to his choice of music. Foreign music forms confused his people. His people understood German music best. (I wonder how Luther might react to our Lutheran hymnals. Nearly all of these hymns were written in another culture.)

There are also some profound theological implications. Our message of salvation by grace through faith in Christ will be distorted if we insist that the new Christian or the potential Christian must learn a new communication system in order to participate in Christian worship. Instead of the Good News of Jesus Christ we may be communicating bad news about the kind of music a people understand and like. We may be asking people to stumble on something that is not the Word of God.

The Biblical and Confessional requirements for Lutheran worship are Word and sacrament. Word and sacrament must, of course, be "incarnated." They come to us in human forms. The outreach dimension of worship tells us that the human forms surrounding Word and sacrament should be forms that are understood by the people of that place. And, finally, the people of the place, the local congregation, is the group that has the responsibility for making decisions about what are appropriate worship forms.

However, the choice of appropriate worship forms is more complex. More appropriate for whom? Most congregations will have a variety of people with a variety of backgrounds.

Some people will have had a long history of using a form of worship. I find special memories in "page 5 and 15." Many of the special worship events in my life have been framed within these forms of worship. Some people have a special attachment to classical music. Any other style of music would seem to them less than worshipful. How does the local congregation deal with these needs as well as the needs of the potential Christian and the new Christian?

There is no simple answer to this problem. The Christian congregation must consider the needs of all its people as well as the needs of outreach. However, I feel there are some criteria very helpful to the congregation. Luther does a good job of using these criteria, and I am convinced that he gets them from the Apostle Paul.

> But such orders are needed for those who are still becoming Christians. … They [orders of worship] are essential especially for the immature and

> the young who must be trained and educated in Scripture and God's Word daily so that they may become familiar with the Bible, grounded, well versed, and skilled in it, ready to defend their faith and in due time to teach others and to increase the kingdom of Christ. For such, one must read, sing, preach, write and compose. And if it would help matters along, I would have all the bells pealing, and all the organs playing, and have everything ring that can make a sound.[4]

Luther knew enough about communication to know that in addressing a congregation, it is impossible to make the message specific to every group in the congregation. However, as a good communicator, he also knew that to compromise and make the message so general it would be geared to everyone would mean that it would be so bland no one would be impacted by the message. So, the good communicator chooses one group in the audience, aims his message to that group and the other groups are invited to "listen in."

Luther suggests this for public worship. He suggests that public worship be written for one or two specific groups in the audience. I believe we can learn much from his choice of a group to be the "primary target" for worship communication. Luther says public worship should be geared to the young Christians and to potential Christians.

Luther, I believe is following the example St. Paul set when discussing the problem of meat offered to idols (Rom 14). There is no prescribed worship form for Christian worship. A great variety of things are possible and appropriate in worship. However, we will have to make a choice. And our choice will have an effect on the congregation.

St. Paul and Luther made choices that considered the needs of outreach. St. Paul advocated restricting the choices to those that could be understood best by the weaker Christian. Luther suggests we choose forms for worship that will meet the needs of young Christians and potential Christians.

Benefits to Worship and Outreach

When the proper relationship between worship and outreach is maintained, both will benefit. Worship will more clearly communicate the Word, and the sacraments will be better understood. Outreach will be better able to focus on the task of bringing the potential Christian into contact with the Word of God.

I often advise congregations making decisions about worship to give 51% of their voting power to people who are not yet Christian. The criteria for making worship decisions needs to be more theological than "I like," "This is how we have always done it," or "This is what the pastor wants." If outreach is to be a priority in a congregation, then the decision-making criteria for worship will include the needs of potential and new Christians.

When the proper relationship between worship and outreach is maintained, both will benefit.

Of course, to be helpful, decision-making criteria need to be used. An excellent way for leaders to build a healthy use of proper criteria is to provide many opportunities for making choices. When worship is being planned, leaders should present several options. This will help avoid the assumption that the form presented is the "right" form. Presented with a choice, the worship committee will have the opportunity to ask, "What is the most useful and edifying in this situation? And, of course, you will regularly want to encourage the committee to tell why it chose one option rather than the other. If outreach is a part of their philosophy of ministry, you will soon see it in the decision they make.

When the outreach dimension of worship is considered, it is less likely that the worship will become outdated. If St. Paul's concern about the person coming in off the street is considered when making worship decisions, the language and forms of worship will be adjusted to communicate well to the people in our situation today.

Updating religious forms does not mean that we abandon correct doctrine. In fact, not updating worship forms is more likely to result in false doctrine than a proper concern with being relevant will. C.H. Kraft puts it this way, "Holding to religious forms that have lost their intended meanings, as the Pharisees did is superstition."[5] The proper updating of the language and ritual forms that we use for worship will strengthen the communication of correct doctrine.

Understanding the relationship between worship and outreach will, I believe, also give us a greater appreciation for the best traditions of Christian worship. My study of Christian worship leads me to believe that when the church was most active in outreach, worship was at its best. When mission lagged, worship stagnated. When you find a great proliferation of worship forms, you also find a time of much mission activity.

Outreach also benefits from the relationship. When worship forms are relevant, it is much simpler to bring potential Christians to hear the Word. Rather than a frustrated "You're all crazy," the potential Christian is more likely to say, "God is really among you" when brought into a worship context that can be readily understood.

With worship forms appropriate to the community of the congregation, there is more time for sharing and feeding on the Word, rather than hours of translating for the potential or new Christian. Rather than being forced to take the time to explain the cultural history of a form and its supposed meaning in this context, relevant forms will communicate intended meanings without the need for additional study.

Appropriate worship forms will also make the movement from worship to witness easier. When worship happens in a special or outdated language, the witness will need to take the extra effort to translate the Word he has heard before sharing. When the proper relationship between worship and outreach is kept, the transition from church to street is made easier.

As I mentioned earlier in the article, in a mission situation we make learning the language and culture of a people a priority. With all of the upheaval in the world, as well as in the United States, we are in a mission situation. With the refugees fleeing Ukraine,

and more than a million migrants streaming across the border of the United States, we are in or near a cross-cultural situation. And, in many of these situations, we will not even have the usual structures of an established building, a usual routine of worship, and a history of music choices. Recognizing the relationship between worship and mission should be easier in these situations and obviously is very necessary.

Witness is enhanced when worship communicates that God is a God of today. God is capable of understanding and using forms of our cultural world. Incarnation is still happening today. God is alive and functioning in the world of today. Just as Jesus was not ashamed to come into the world as a human being to save us (Phil 2:5-11), God still comes to us in ways that are understood by us. We are not required to learn a sacred language or perform a secret ritual. God, in His great love for us, become human.

At the heart of Lutheran theology is our understanding that we are saved by the grace of God through faith in Jesus. This theology is best expressed in both our worship and our witness when we come to people in their world, when we communicate in ways that are readily understood by the people around us.

Endnotes

[1] J.G. Davies, *Worship and Mission* (London: SCM Press, 1966), 22.
[2] Robert Kolb, Timothy J. Wengert, and Charles P. Arand, *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), 515.
[3] Martin Luther, in *Luther's Works, Vol. 53: Liturgy and Hymns*, ed. Ulrich S. Leupold, (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), 54.
[4] Luther, 53:62.
[5] C. H. Craft, *Christianity in Culture* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979), 331.

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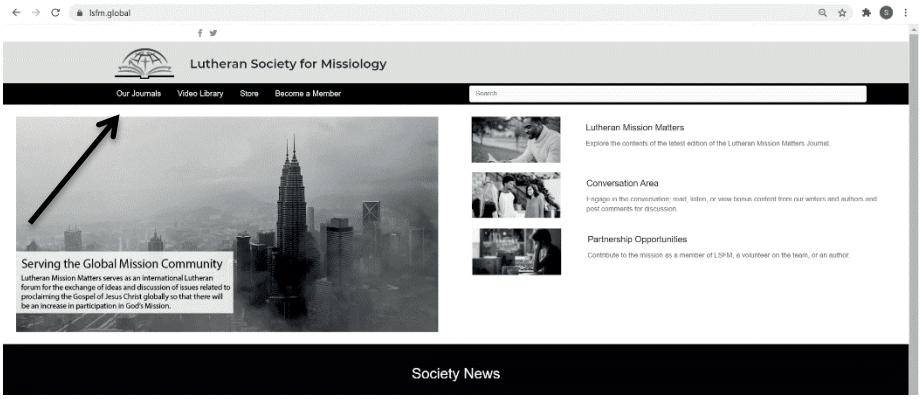

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Incarnational Worship

Liisa Tino

Abstract

How do we incarnate our Lutheran heritage in order to communicate the Gospel? When we plan and carry out worship, we need to make sure everyone can "see Jesus" (Matthew 20:32-33). This is the challenge for both the overseas missionary and the professional church worker in America: to find the best way to communicate "God with us" to the worshiping community. Just as God's Word has been translated into hundreds of heart-languages around the world, our liturgies and hymnodies also need to reach the hearts of the people with whom we work. From the Reformation and up to the present, Lutherans have been innovating so that the Word is preached and understood by the audience in their vernacular.

"O Come, O Come Emmanuel" resonates from the choir lofts during the season of Advent, followed by an exuberant "Joy to the World – the Lord Has Come" on Christmas Eve! But do the rest of our liturgical efforts reflect the same biblical truth—that God came to the earth to dwell amongst men? Do we strive to give meaning to the fact that God sent His Son from the lofty heights of a perfect heaven to take on human flesh and *become like us* through our words and music? And who is "us"? The German or European immigrant settled in America about 200 years ago? What about the Maasai in his hut in the Tanzanian bush, or the Bolivian cooking potatoes on her woodstove high in the Andes? Yes, this is the cultural challenge for the missionary, or the church musician, or even pastors today: to find the best way to communicate "God with us" to the worshiping community wherever that may be, while keeping alive our rich Lutheran heritage.

An essential component of this heritage is our liturgy. It is the framework that organizes and guides Lutheran worship services. It includes an order of spoken and sung responses that are designed to unite worshipers in confession, absolution, and the reading of scripture. At the center of Lutheran corporate worship is the preaching of the Word and the administration of the sacraments. Unlike many evangelical churches where hymn singing and Bible teaching is loosely organized around a Biblical theme, most Lutheran churches follow the calendar of the Church Year which has specific pericopes, or excerpts

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Liisa Tino is a trained Lutheran educator and musician. She has served for over 30 years - as a missionary in Venezuela, as a Lutheran School teacher and church musician in South Florida, and currently as a missionary in Chile under the auspices of Global Lutheran Outreach. She is married and has four children and five grandchildren.

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from scripture, for each Sunday or holy day. "It is also taught among us that one holy Christian church will be and remain forever. This is the assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel" (AC VII).[1]

As a Lutheran educator I am proud of our reputation as a "teaching church." Liturgy is one of those beautiful tools to educate believers. The opportunity to follow the life of Christ through the elements of our liturgy each Sunday is a rich experience (when properly understood!) Repetition through singing and reciting scripture creates a solid foundation for the regular worshiper. Who has not had the goose-bump experience of hearing a toddler sing at the top of his/her little lungs "Holy, holy, holy Lord God of Sabbaoth! Heav'n and earth are filled with Thy glory!"?

But worship is much more than education! Worship is a command from God with a higher purpose: to acknowledge the greatness of our Creator, Redeemer, Sustainer; to remind us that we are His chosen people; and to receive from Him the abundant gifts of grace. Yet without Christ's intervention, we are unable to offer anything to God in worship. The Lutheran Confessions say: "We cannot offer anything to God unless we have first been reconciled and reborn. The greatest possible comfort comes from this doctrine that the highest worship in the Gospel is the desire to receive forgiveness of sins, grace, and righteousness" (AP IV).[2] We, the created ones, long for our Creator. This longing for God is, in itself, worship. "Man's *desiring* to receive forgiveness, grace, and righteousness is worship. . . . It is not the mere participation in Holy Baptism or the Lord's Supper that is worship; but the reaching out to God by the believer during his participation or as he meditates on God's gift in the Sacrament, that is worship."[3] Thus, in the broad sense, worship is "the response of the creature to the Creator."[4]

Worship is the heartbeat of the first commandment: "You shall have no other gods before me." We are to acknowledge the Lord as our one and only source of strength. "Sing to God, sing in praise of his name, extol him who rides on the clouds; rejoice before him—his name is the LORD." (Ps 68:4, NIV). In Luke 4:8 Jesus quotes the Old Testament: "It is written: 'Worship the Lord your God and serve him only.'" (NIV)

The Triune God is present in worship. We, the created, beseech our Father and Creator, and we are forgiven and made holy by His Son, the Redeemer. God the Holy Spirit empowers the believer to respond in praise and thanksgiving.

The Word in Worship—in the language of the people

When one studies the origin of the individual parts of Lutheran liturgy and many of the "traditional" hymns, it is clear they are taken directly from scripture. King David is probably our greatest resource for worship material. His story begins in the book of 1 Samuel as a young shepherd, playing his harp while out in the fields. Later, his harp playing is employed to soothe the troubled spirits of King Saul. By the time we get to the end of the book of Psalms, primarily composed by David, we read that the Lord should be praised with "the trumpet sound…with tambourine and dance…with loud clashing cymbals" (Ps

150:3–5). Whether praising or repenting or crying for mercy, David makes a habit of naming the attributes of God and telling of His greatness.

In the church in the Middle Ages, there was a stumbling block to communicating the Gospel to the common people—language. For centuries the church conducted worship in a language that only the priests and monks could speak or understand. Luther therefore began translating scriptures into German so that the incarnate God could be seen and heard by his fellowmen in their language.

> But what is the point of needlessly adhering so scrupulously and stubbornly to words which one cannot understand anyway? Whoever would speak German must not use Hebrew style. Rather he must see to it—once he understands the Hebrew author—that he concentrates on the sense of the text, asking himself, 'Pray tell, what do the Germans say in such a situation?' Once he has the German words to serve the purpose, let him drop the Hebrew words and express the meaning freely in the best German he knows.[5]

Many resisted this change. Some stated it was heresy, or at least unholy.[6] Yet Luther did not stop at translating the Word of God into the language of the people, he also saw the necessity to create a German Mass. Starting with the Reformation until the present, Lutherans have been innovating so that the Word is preached and understood by the audience in their vernacular.

It is undeniable that language is an essential component of our Lutheran liturgy as we strive to provide the means for believers to follow the words of the apostle Paul: "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God" (Col 3:16).

The Language of Music

Martin Luther loved the language of music and believed it had an important role in the church. "…music is an endowment and a gift of God, not a gift of men. It also drives away the devil and makes people cheerful… I place music next to theology and give it the highest praise."[7]

Music is a vehicle for thankfulness and a tool to relinquish our worries and fears. When the Israelites grew weary while traipsing through the wilderness, God told Moses to have the people recount the history of what He had done to rescue them from slavery in Egypt. The prophetess Miriam, Moses' sister, accompanied the retelling with her tambourine, and all the women followed her playing tambourines and dancing. Miriam sang for them: "Sing to the LORD, for he has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider he has thrown into the sea!" (Ex 15: 21).

Luther believed it was important for all people, clergy and laity, men and women, youth and children, to participate in the music of the church. He emphasized the importance

of singing hymns and was a prolific hymn writer, setting his words to melodies that sounded familiar to the ears of his contemporaries. He wrote about thirty-six hymns and frequently accompanied German hymn singing on the lute.[8] To this day, Lutherans have the reputation of being a "singing church."

Luther wrote, "For the sake of such (the new Christians and those being evangelized), we must read, sing, preach, write, and compose; and if it could in any wise help or promote their interests, I would have all the bells pealing, and all the organs playing, and everything making a noise that could."[9] It seems that both Luther and King David would be supportive of using a variety of instruments or different styles of music or even amplification systems for reaching the lost!

What would Luther's advice to us be if he heard us today struggling to apply those same innovations which he made in Germany during the time of the Reformation to a tribe of Kenyans sitting under an acacia tree, or to a group of Kazakhs gathered by a river, or to a new group of believers in a Spanish-speaking, salsa-dancing Caribbean country, or to a small African American congregation in downtown Detroit? Just as God's Word has been translated into hundreds of heart-languages around the world, our liturgies and hymnodies also need to reach the hearts of the people with whom we work. When we plan and carry out worship, we need to make sure everyone can "see Jesus." Besides the verbal language used in worship, there is the language of culture— instrumentation, expressions, and styles of music that reflect the culture of the people worshiping. Lamin Sanneh summarizes it this way: "[C]onversion puts the Gospel through the crucible of its host culture." [10]

Just as God's Word has been translated into hundreds of heart-languages around the world, our liturgies and hymnodies also need to reach the hearts of the people with whom we work.

People "see Jesus" when they hear clearly what He has done for them. We must carefully consider the visual and audio tools used to communicate Jesus during worship. Will they be a distraction that cause people to focus on learning a new way to talk or to sing or to dress? Instead of understanding that God sent Jesus for *all* people, will they think He came to a different culture in a different time? Will they know that God comes to them in their own language and culture? Incarnational worship results in the congregation proclaiming, "God is with US!"

The Language of Worship

When the magnitude of Jesus' love, the depth of His sacrifice, and the eternal hope that He gives each believer are understood more intimately, then the believer should be able to respond in faith during worship in their own cultural language. This, Sanneh contends, is precisely what is happening on the global Christian scene. "Christianity helped Africans to become renewed Africans, not remade Europeans."[11]

In 1989, my husband and I arrived in Venezuela as missionaries. Everything was new and different—the weather, the style of clothing, the houses, the food, and of course, the language. Although we felt like "fish out of water" in such a different environment, we listened and observed to see how we could fit in to our new environment. Slowly, we began to use our education and training as pastor and teacher/church musician. I was excited to see how exuberant the youth were at their weekly Saturday evening meetings. They played games, studied the Bible, prayed, and sang with *gusto*! I felt inspired to compose a new melody based on Psalm 103 (in Spanish) which perhaps could be added to their repertoire. I came up with a contemporary tune based on my tastes at the time. When I finished, I tested it on a few youth that I had come to know and trust. What a flop! They smiled politely and nodded their heads. I tried to teach it to them, but they couldn't seem to pick it up. What had gone wrong?

Well, it was a few months later when I realized my mistake while listening to a young man from a different part of the country share an original song. First, he accompanied the song on the local instrument, the *cuatro*. Second, the words were organized and positioned to imitate a rhythm that was challenging for me, but natural to the Venezuelans. Although it was a struggle for me to sing, the Venezuelan youth sang wholeheartedly. I had not yet learned the musical heart language of the people.

How does one deal with this? The first thing I did was purchase a *cuatro* and I began to learn how to play. Then, I started listening to a great variety of Venezuelan music and tried to replicate some. The greatest blessing was when God sent a man to our mission who had many musical gifts. As he began to study the Bible with my husband, he was our window into the musical heart-language of the country.

Incarnating Lutheran Worship

The concept of "incarnation" begins with God. He sent His divine Son to "put on" human flesh in order to accomplish His plan of salvation. We now have the challenge to take the truth of the Gospel and to "put on the flesh" of the specific communities where we work. We must take care not to confuse our flesh—"our" customs, "our" music, "our" styles—for the message of the Gospel. This is the challenge in both foreign mission work and within the United States today. How do we incarnate our Lutheran heritage in order to communicate the Gospel?

The difficulty in this process is that we, as "trained" church workers, have a plethora of knowledge and experience and are geared to start teaching immediately. Before we can teach effectively, we need to learn. Observing and asking questions allows the missionary to learn about the culture, while sharing the Word and developing relationships.

The next important step is to equip the new Christian to use his or her talents. Sometimes it is difficult to let go of the cherished nostalgia connected to the liturgy and the songs that we grew up with. However, as the "local musicians" grow in their faith, liturgy and hymnody are reawakened. A traditional hymn has new texture when accompanied by common, local instruments. The lyric becomes alive when set to rhythms of the new culture. A psalm becomes poetry of the people when expressed through a new

melody that reflects their heritage. The goal should be that the Christians who gather to worship locally, hear clearly that Christ came to *them*, in their culture, to walk among them, to bear their sins and to give them new life through His resurrection.

I have seen the difficulty that this presents in many congregations throughout the United States. Frequently, older historic Lutheran churches are met with the challenge of reaching out to a changing neighborhood. The old strategies and styles do not seem to be effective in connecting with the community. In cases like this, it is time to start learning about the new neighbors. House to house visits or surveys can be implemented. Free events hosted by the church can provide opportunities to find out the needs of the people. Are there young families? Older retirees? Young professionals? Are there any prominent ethnic groups?

After the observation and learning stage, a plan should be made. Identifying leaders from the community who can help organize is a bonus. Once there is a "connection," the Gospel can be shared. Developing relationships first is important before worship is begun. If there is a different culture represented, every attempt should be made to use elements of this new culture when designing worship. The Lutheran liturgy should be a dynamic tool that reflects the culture and allows people to glorify God, to confess sins and receive forgiveness, to praise Jesus for new life and then to be fed by the sacraments and the preaching of the Word, all in their own "language" (words and culture). The liturgy and the hymnody should provide a means to say: "I know that my Redeemer lives, and at the last he will stand upon the earth" (Job 19:25).

The healthiest approach to conducting incarnational Lutheran worship begins with teaching. One way to do this is before each worship service, the pastor or leader highlights one element of the liturgy, explaining the scriptural reference and the meaning of this specific element. Week by week there is a progressive teaching until all parts of the liturgy are taught. This process should be repeated from time to time to maximize understanding among the worshipers. For the new Christian, this has proved to be very edifying.

Another useful tool is to provide alternative melodies for different elements of the liturgy. There is a wealth of options that can be substituted for the Gloria Patri, the Kyrie Eleison, the Sanctus, and so forth. These melodies should be rehearsed ahead of time and properly introduced so the parishioner can sing along. If a particular melody is difficult for the average churchgoer to sing, a different one should be used. There is little value to struggling with a "foreign" tune or singing badly when there are other options. Additionally, local musicians should be encouraged to compose original arrangements to be used in the context of liturgy.

If a particular melody is difficult for the average churchgoer to sing, a different one should be used. There is little value to struggling with a "foreign" tune or singing badly when there are other options.

For over twenty years as missionaries in Spanish-speaking cultures, it has been interesting to see how Lutheranism is received. Because of the traditionally Catholic history in Hispanic countries, liturgy is often familiar to the newcomer. We hear comments such as, "Yes, this is just like the Catholic church." Or "Your church reminds me of when I used to go to mass with my grandmother." Or "This is just another church that recites mumbo jumbo and the priest is up front scolding the commoner!" I guess we could say there have been a few hurdles along the way! How do we adapt our liturgy so that it communicates to and connects with the people?

Martin Luther also dealt with this same challenge of conducting services in a meaningful way. He wrote:

> [L]iberty must prevail in these matters and Christians must not be bound by laws and ordinances. That is why the Scriptures prescribe nothing in these matters, but allow for freedom for the Spirit to act according to his own understanding as the respective place, time, and persons may require it.[12]

While maintaining a great respect for tradition and valuing the structure of liturgy, he also says, "I would kindly and for God's sake request all those who see this order of service or desire to follow it: Do not make it a rigid law to bind or entangle anyone's conscience, but use it in Christian liberty as long, when, where, and how you find it to be practical and useful."[13]

Structuring the language of worship

The structure of our Lutheran liturgy should be the vehicle in which we see Christ coming to His people gathered in worship. It is a tool for organizing a worship service that focuses on the Word and sacraments, God's gifts to us. The essential part of our participation in worship is our response of thanksgiving and praise to God. Luther wrote,

> He urges us to give praise and thanks. Since of ourselves we are nothing but have everything from God, it is easy to see that we can give Him nothing; neither can we repay Him for His grace. He demands nothing from us. The only thing left, therefore, is for us to praise and thank Him. First we must recognize in our hearts and believe that we receive everything from Him and that He is our God. Then out with it, and freely and openly confess this before the world—preach, praise, glorify, and give thanks! This is the real and only worship of God.[14]

Towards the beginning of the Reformation Luther wrote two orders of worship. The first was a Latin service written in 1523, and the second was a German order of service,

written in 1526. Even these were not orders of service in the sense of detailed instructions, but general guidelines in paragraph form, often with general suggestions and options left open.

The *form* of a worship service is not worship in and of itself. Lutheran Confessions state that "the ceremonies or church usages which are neither commanded nor forbidden in the Word of God, but which have been introduced solely for the sake of good order and the general welfare, are in and for themselves no divine worship or even a part of it" (FC Ep X 3).[15] Simply participating in the liturgy is not worship. When the liturgical words, actions and songs are offered to our Divine God with thankful hearts, worship happens.

Too often, I have visited congregations where a very rigid use of "the correct liturgy" has reduced the participation of the worshipers to the pastor and a small group of the faithful. When a visitor comes, the words and music of the "Divine Service" are so foreign that he or she does not return. I have observed in some non-North American cultures, the members struggle to sing *a cappella* because no one knows how to play the organ, which they have been led to believe is only "correct" instrument for worship. Or, in other cases, the organist is brilliant and plays loudly and with expertise, yet the congregation barely sings because they cannot hear their own voices or those of the people around them. Sometimes a cantor or a trained group of vocalists is designated to lead in the singing of the liturgy and hymns. Too often an elitist mentality enters in, where only those who have learned the proper chants and responses participate. Unfortunately, criticisms have arisen towards those who do not conform to these rigid liturgical standards to the point where anything outside of the prescribed forms is labeled non-Lutheran.

Instead of being divided we should be united by our liturgical structure while also following Martin Luther's insight that the core of worship is praise rather than conformity. "Worship is praise for God. It is unconstrained—at table, in the bedroom, at the tavern, in the attic, in the house, in the field, in all places, with all persons, at all times. Whoever says otherwise lies as much as the pope and the devil himself." [16]

Let me see Jesus!

Just as Jesus put on human flesh when He came into this world, we should strive to make worship look and sound like the people to whom it is directed. The challenge to worship in the heart language of the people becomes a blessing to everyone.

During our years in Venezuela, many volunteer groups came to work on projects at the various missions. Without fail, one or two of the volunteers would make a comment after a typical worship service expressing how they had been blessed and encouraged by the "Venezuelan style" liturgy. The rhythms of the hymns had motivated and impressed them with the fact that these brothers and sisters truly came to worship and praise their Triune God in every service. One of those volunteers happened to visit us in a different Latin American country many years later. This time, the style of worship was a direct translation into Spanish of "page 5 and 15" from *The Lutheran Hymnal* in the United States. After the service, my friend approached me: "What happened? I remember how

worship in Spanish seemed so alive, as if it was part of the people. You seemed to have lost something here."

This brother in Christ led me to reflect on the fact that while we are definitely united by our Lutheran liturgy, uniformity is not the vehicle to accomplish that. Each culture, each language, each region has its unique components. Jesus enters into each of these situations in a unique way. The Word doesn't change. The sacraments do not change. The message does not change. But when the proper "skin" is applied—that is, the language, the sound, the style of the liturgy and songs—incarnational worship happens. And isn't that our goal? That each person meets Jesus and can offer praise and thanks for all He has done. When people worship in their heart-language and culture they will be "addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with [their] heart, giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (Eph 5:19–20).

Endnotes

[1] Theodore G. Tappert, ed., *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1959), 32.
[2] Tappert, 155.
[3] "Worship," *The Christian Cyclopedia*. https://cyclopedia.lcms.org/display.asp?t1=W&word=WORSHIP. Accessed 15 May 2022.
[4] "Worship", *The Christian Cyclopedia*.
[5] Martin Luther, *Luther's Works, American Edition*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan (St. Louis: Concordia, 1955–76); vol. 35:213–4.
[6] Numerous historical examples exist. See Andrew Gow, "Challenging the Protestant Paradigm: Bible Reading in Lay and Urban Contexts of the Later Middle Ages," in *Scripture and Pluralism: Reading the Bible in the Religiously Plural Worlds of the Middle Ages and Renaissance*, ed. Thomas J. Heffernan and Thomas E. Burman (Leiden/Boston: Brill, 2005).

[7] Ewald Plass, *What Luther Says,* 16th Edition (St. Louis, MO; Concordia, 2006), Vol 2, #3091, 980.
[8] Christopher Boyd Brown, "Singing the Gospel: Lutheran Hymns and the Success of the Reformation" (2005). Cited in Wikipedia, "Martin Luther." https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Luther. Accessed 27 March 2022.
[9] Martin Luther, "The German Mass and Order of Divine Service", cited at https://history.hanover.edu/texts/luthserv.html. Accessed 27 March 2022.
[10] Lamin Sanneh, *Whose Religion Is Christianity?: The Gospel Beyond the West* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2003), 53.
[11] Sanneh, 43.
[12] Luther, AE 53:37.
[13] Luther, AE 53:61.
[14] Luther, AE 14:32.
[15] Tappert, 493.
[16] Martin Luther, *Luther's Works, American Edition*, ed. Christopher Boyd Brown and Benjamin Mayes (St. Louis: Concordia, 2009), vol. 75:80.

Worship and Mission from the Synagogue to Today

Jim Found

Abstract: Worship has led God's people into mission since before the time of Christ. Paul came across Gentiles who had become "God-fearers" through the synagogue in their midst. By continuing the synagogue worship pattern with its systematic exposure to God's Word, the people of God continue to represent God in the community, provide nurture for believers, and become equipped to go forth in mission.

The Origin of Our Worship Pattern

Why is it that the New Testament does not give as many details for worship as the Old? For one thing, a great many of those "worship details" in the Old Testament had to do with food laws and keeping the Sabbath, but these are no longer required for Christians (Col 2:16). Many other details had to do with the animal sacrifices, but they have been fulfilled and abrogated by the sacrifice of Jesus. Instead, we now receive the benefits of Christ's one sacrifice as we partake of Holy Communion. It is noteworthy that the longest section in the New Testament about worship details are Paul's instructions about celebrating Holy Communion together in 1 Corinthians 11.

Admittedly the New Testament does not tell us how to organize a worship service. But it did not need to. The description of a church service recorded by Justin Martyr[1] in around the year 138 makes clear that the earliest believers, having grown up with the synagogue service, would have seen its activities as the exemplar for what people are to do when they gather for worship. Synagogue worship is not described in the Old Testament, since the synagogue emerged later, in the intertestamental period, but Jewish documents from the first century show that it consisted almost entirely of ingredients from the Hebrew scriptures, such as Psalm-singing, scripture-reading, and the Aaronic benediction, ingredients that we still use today.[2]

Jim Found is on the teacher roster of synod. He retired in 2006 after serving as a DCE, a missionary to Taiwan, and with the Oswald Hoffman School of Christian Outreach at Concordia St. Paul. His email is Learner9696@yahoo.com, and his website is foundbytes.com

From Synagogue to Church

The systematic exposure to the Torah, Prophets, and Psalms that characterized the synagogue service is what became and remains the backbone of the Service of the Word. Even though the Eucharist had been celebrated in Corinth in the context of a meal, by the time of Justin Martyr the norm was a Eucharist celebration joined with elements from the synagogue service.[3]

The need to explicate the Hebrew scripture readings in the local languages grew into the sermon. Jesus used this pattern of "scripture followed by explication" in Luke 4:16-21, and we still use it today. Jesus used that reading from Isaiah as the opportunity to proclaim the gospel about Himself. For us the sermon still is the place where the scriptures are applied to believers as law/gospel, for the gospel "is the power of God for salvation" not only to outsiders, but "for all who believe." (Rom 1:16). The gospel is also announced in the absolution. Evangelism and nurture both find their power in the gospel.

Paul's list of actions in 1 Timothy 4:13, Colossians 3:16, and Ephesians 5:19, (reading the scriptures, teaching one another, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs) are actions that were found in synagogue worship. We still read from the Old Testament, and Justin Martyr attests that his church had added readings from "the memoirs of the apostles." We still make use of the Psalms. The Psalms put the teachings of the Torah into expressions of worship and prayer. It was through the repetition of Psalms through one's entire life that the Israelites built up a concept of God's nature, and the Psalms still serve the same purpose for us, even though we now read them through Christian eyes.[4] Even though the plan of salvation has reached a different stage with the coming of Christ, we are still the same people of God, have the same (though renewed) covenant, the same concept of God, and can express that the same heartfelt reliance as we use the Psalms.

The songs added to the service in later centuries were also largely based on scripture. Both Eastern and Western traditions followed synagogue practice by including Isaiah 6:3, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory!" In AD 514 the Western church added the Gloria, which included the angel's song from the Christmas story, and in AD 687 added a song addressed to the Lamb of God (Agnus Dei) from John the Baptist's designation of Jesus in John 1:36, "Behold, the Lamb of God!" These songs both included the appeal for mercy of Psalm 51:1, "Have mercy on me, O God" also familiar as the cry for help addressed by the blind man to Jesus in Mark 10:47. That cry was used as a refrain in a litany, which was the form used for the general prayer when it was moved toward the beginning of the service around AD 370. In AD 595 Pope Gregory removed the petitions, keeping only the refrain, but the use of a litany was restored to Lutheran use in the Service Book and Hymnal of 1958. The Lord's Prayer is attested as being in common use in AD 251.[5]

The English word *church* translates the Greek term *ekklesia*, literally a "calling out," and was a common word for a gathering in Hellenistic times. (It is used in this way in Acts 19:39, "But if you seek anything further, it shall be settled in the regular assembly.") The Jewish scholars responsible for the Septuagint selected the word *ekklesia* to translate the gatherings of God's people in the Old Testament (an example is in Psalm 107:32, "Let them extol him in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders"). *The New Testament use of this term connects the early Christian community to that of the Old Testament, as the whole "Israel of God"* (Gal 6:16).[6]

Worship and Mission

It is clear that Gentiles in the Roman and Persian areas were positively impacted by the presence of Jews and were drawn to attend synagogue worship. Acts 13:43 refers to them as "god-fearing proselytes (NASB)." Other English translations say, "devout converts to Judaism" (NIV), "religious proselytes" (KJV), and "Gentiles who worshipped God" (CEV). Because there were synagogues in their midst, Gentiles were attracted to the idea of monotheism and to the ethical principles of the Jews. The centurion in Acts 10 seems to be an example of such a person.

A similar strategy was used by the Irish monks who brought the gospel back into Europe after the devastations wrought by the Vikings. Their strategy was to set up self-sustaining monasteries with regular worship services in pagan areas as bases from which to influence the surrounding populations. As in the synagogues, the gatherings of God's people are like beachheads for the ultimate goal promised to Abraham, that "in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed" (Gen 26:4). Paul clarifies that this verse refers to Jesus. But we are now Jesus' body, and we continue His work so that, at the end, people from every tribe and nation will be worshipping him (Rev 5:9-10).

Today again new church plants are seen as one of the best ways to bring the gospel to new areas. As a recent example, Robert Zagore writes in the February 2022 *Lutheran Witness REPORTER*: "Statistically, church planting is the most successful way to reach new believers. It re-engages believers in Christ's mission … it is the most successful way to reach out to ethnic groups, the unchurched, and those who have wandered from the faith."[7]

Worship Communities as Discipling Centers

The nurture and formation of children raised by Christians comes from Old Testament stories as well as New. Both before and after Christ, the systematic repetition in the worship gathering of the records of God's actions and of the characteristics of God found in the Psalms enriches the concept of God and thus invites trust in God.[8] After outsiders profess faith in Jesus, the church is there to provide the place for instruction for Baptism, strengthening of faith in Holy Communion, and ongoing nurture. The Lutheran Heritage

Foundation is devoted to providing Luther's Small Catechism and other nurture materials in many of the world's languages. The article by Robert Zagore cited above also states that "the LCMS has an exceptionally strong record of bringing in and retaining adult members, being among the top five church bodies (by percentage) in the US, with its emphasis on catechesis." [9] This statistic motivates us to be even more deliberate in energetically discipling those God has placed into our respective circles of care.

Discipling includes teaching what it means to be a member of God's people. The object of discipling is to transform lives though growth toward maturity (Heb 6:1) in order to bear fruit (Jn 15:8).[10] Though there is continuity from the Old Testament to the New, for we are partakers of the covenant with Abraham, the New Testament provides us with additional revelations about our identity now, after the resurrection of Jesus. Paul refers to some of these as mysteries, like the fact that the Gentiles are co-heirs (Eph 3:6), and about the mystery hidden for ages but now revealed, which is Christ in you, the hope of glory (Col 1:27). The power of the Holy Spirit that was recognized in figures like Elijah and David is now for all believers, as Joel had prophesied (Acts 2:16-18). The promises in Ezekiel 36 have come true: we have a new heart and a new spirit (verse 26) and God has put His Spirit within us, which is the cause of us walking in His statutes (verse 27). Calling God "Abba" expresses a personal relationship, and Jesus Himself taught us to address God as "our Father.

Some concrete objects from the Old Testament are now spiritualized: for example, we are now the temple of the Holy Spirit. The splitting of the temple curtain at Jesus' death is used in Hebrews 10:20 to show that we can draw near to God in full assurance of faith. Our prayers continue to use Old Testament phraseology, but we now offer prayer in the name of Jesus. Christian Baptism transformed Jewish ceremonies with water into a union with Christ and His death and resurrection (1 Cor 6). Though the animal sacrifices are no longer needed, the concept of sacrifice reappears in the New Testament as a sacrifice of praise (Heb 13:15) and as an offering of ourselves as living sacrifices (Rom 12:1). These are the truths that are passed on as the local church nurtures disciples.

Worship Communities as Training Grounds for Mission

The worshipping community is needed as the place to strengthen believers to go out to have conversations with those who would not attend church. The Book of Acts records such conversations by Philip with the Ethiopian eunuch and by Peter with the Centurion. The grounding in the faith needed to witness outside the gathering is founded on the re-affirmation and strength found in the gathering. Today many churches provide instruction in evangelism and apologetics to equip members for those outside conversations. Synod and its associated groups provide workshops and web-based materials.[11] These helps all depend on support from congregations and in turn are utilized within those congregations.

The worshipping community also is the group that sends forth individuals into mission, whether directly, as the church in Antioch sent Paul (Acts 13) or in concert with other local churches, like denominational mission boards. Lutherans go forth from their nurturing congregations with the proclamation that Jesus has already paid for all sins, knowing confidently that the gospel is the power of God for salvation to all who believe (Rom 1:16) and that the faith does come by hearing the word of God (Rom 10:17).

Conclusion

Though the New Testament does not designate a structure for what to do when gathered, it is noteworthy that churches throughout the world and throughout time have maintained the pattern of psalms, readings, sermon, and prayers that was familiar to the first believers from the synagogue service. That service nurtured God's people and resulted in non-Jews being attracted to the God of the Bible. And as we continue to use that pattern, with its systematic and lifelong repetition of God's Word, God's people are transformed and are equipped to go forth in mission.

[1] This early Christian worship service is described In *Apologia I,* part 67, by Justin Martyr, written around AD 150. It is quoted in Lucien Diess, ed., *Springtime of the Liturgy*, (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1979), 93.
[2] Sofia Cavaletti, "The Jewish Roots of Christian Worship," in *The Jewish Roots of Christian Liturgy,* Eugene J Fisher, ed., (New York/Mahweh: Paulist Press, 1990). Synagogue and Christian services are compared on page 16 of this article. An opposing view (that early Christian worship did not use the synagogue as a model) is in Ferdinand Hahn, *The Worship of the Early Church* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1973), 52; but he does state on page 72 that a "service of word and prayer" could also be held without communion.
[3] Celebrating the Eucharist after eating together (a love feast) seems to be assumed in the Didache (late first century or later) but not mentioned by Justin Martyr, according to earlychurch.com/love-feast . That web page quotes *The Encyclopedia of Early Church History,* Everett Fergeson et al, eds., (London: Routledge, 1990), 17 as saying "There is general agreement that from the mid-third century, agape and Eucharist go their separate ways."
[4] Thomas J, Winger, "Praying the Psalms with Jesus and His Body," *Concordia Theological Quarterly 84 (2020),* 132f. He encourages us to see the Psalms as prayers of Jesus, in that because they are written by an anointed one (David) they are types of the final anointed one, Jesus. He also quotes Bonhoeffer saying, "we must first ask not what the Psalms have to do with us, but what they have to do with Jesus Christ." (from Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together and Prayerbook of the Bible* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing Company, 1970), 157.
[5] The dates when changes were made to the liturgy are listed in the author's web article "Sunday Service" found at foundbytes.com/Sunday-service. I am dependent for such dates on Susan Lynn Peterson, *Timeline Charts of the Western Church* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1999) and Benedict Steuart, *The Development of Christian Worship* (London: Longmans Green and Co, 1953).
[6] Larry W. Hurtado, *At the Origins of Christian Worship* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans: 1999, 55. He notes that the early Christians, by calling themselves by the Greek word for God's people, reflect their self-understanding "as being a legitimate continuation and heirs of Old Testament Israel."
[7] This article is on page 2 of the Life Together supplement of the February 2022 *Reporter*.

[8] A reflection on the Old Testament stories as formative for Christian children is in the author's web article at foundbytes.com/tanakh
[9] Life Together, Feb. 2022 *Reporter*.
[10] A detailed look at growing towards maturity is at the author's web page foundbytes.com/your-own
[11] The LCMS program "Every One His Witness" can be found at https://www.facebook.com/LCMSE1HW/. Lutheran Hour ministries has workshops, and short videos on key topics that are valuable for evangelism can be found at https://www.lhm.org/godconnects/. This author has a teaching plan for an evangelism workshop at foundbytes.com/how-to-lead

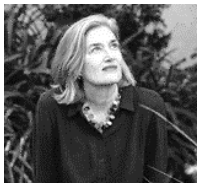
Do You Hear What I Hear?

Heather Choate Davis

My favorite holy day is Pentecost. I love that the Spirit comes into a *house* to enliven the fledgling church leaders. I love that the gift the disciples were given was not some "superpower" whereby anyone who heard them preach would instantly be converted but rather, the ability to communicate in a language that each person could understand. I love that the sharing of this gift quickly begs the question, "How is it that we hear, each of us in his own native language?" (Acts 2:8) —a question that begins a dialogue between the uninitiated and their Creator.

As someone who has written professionally for over forty years now—as a copywriter, screenwriter, scriptwriter, playwright, memoirist, novelist, liturgist, blogger, speechwriter, songwriter, and specialist in theological-communications—the "communication strategy" that God puts forth for the life of the Church is clear. When speaking about His "deeds of power" to those who do not yet know Him, God is not so much concerned with our saying it a certain way as He is with people *hearing* it in a way that they can comprehend. Media-theory pioneer and devout Catholic, Marshall McLuhan, taught that this was every bit as true for all messaging, (paraphrase) "communication is not about what the speaker says, but what the hearer hears." The LCMS's own esteemed scholar Dr. James Voelz makes a similar point in his definitive text, *What Does This Mean*? So true! What is important is the message that is heard.

As we consider the role of worship in the mission of the Church in 2022, I'd like us to lean into the communication gifts of Pentecost by giving serious thought to these questions: What is the native language of the person in our community who doesn't yet know Jesus? Of the young woman who holds a dim view of the church and its politics? Of the middle-aged man who has no intention of showing up on a Sunday morning no matter how many winsome verses we put out on the signboard? And how can we, the local church—already strapped for members and, perhaps, inspiration—create an *entry point* for the work of the Holy Spirit in their lives?



Heather Choate Davis is an L.A.-based author, speaker, theologian, liturgist, songwriter, and spiritual director. She has her MA in Theology from Concordia University, Irvine. In 2020, she released her first album—Life in the Key of God—*16 months after her first piano lesson. heatherchoatedavis.com*

This is something I have spent my entire Christian life—twenty-seven years now—working on in a hundred different ways. As it is a Lutheran distinctive to "call a thing what it is," I will start by addressing a problematic assumption we cling to about worship. Most of our churches still believe that if we build it—the service, the sermon, the reasonably well-proofed bulletin—they will come. Eventually. And if not, well, we tried.

But did we? Did we ever say, "Gee, I wonder what our services look like to the not-yet-Christian?" Did we wonder what worship might look like if we cared less about saying it the way we like to hear it and more about them hearing it at all? How Jesus might speak to their deepest needs and maybe—just maybe— how we might find new life in this wilderness season by helping to "make His path straight"?

Relax. I'm not going to suggest you change your Sunday worship service. There's no point—they're not coming anyway. What I am going to recommend is that you build something just for them. Don't call it Worship; too many ecclesiastical restraints on the use of that word. Call it a service if you like or, simply, a gathering where people might come to experience the peace that passes all human understanding.

Years ago, I created a very simple event to do just this. I called it PEACE, *a quiet time for psalmody and prayer*. We held it on Wednesday nights in the summer, beginning at 8:00 pm when the sun was still up, and ending at 9:00 in candlelight, renewed. There was no sermon. No sacraments. Just a handful of *Taizé* chant refrains, a Scripture reading or two, and deep periods of silence in between. It was intentionally informal. I led it sitting on the steps of the altar and people were invited to sit on cushions on the floor near the cross or in the front pews. There was an intimacy unlike anything that can happen in the busyness of a Sunday worship. A healing silence. In the end we always stood in a circle, held hands, and said the Lord's Prayer, gently enfolding those who were new to it.

The beauty of a service like this is that it can be led by a lay person and requires no real preparation. No bulletins, no ushers, no music rehearsals, no coffee to make and serve and clean up after. I led the chant refrains *a cappella*. I usually started off by saying something both self-effacing and true: "I'm not a singer, so I'd appreciate it if you could rescue me by joining in."

If you're not familiar with the chants of *Taizé*, they are intentionally simple, almost exclusively Psalm-based, and designed to be sung in repetition allowing the gathered to pick up the words and tunes quickly and carry them home as they journey—just like those first believers—through the week. Unlike traditional hymns, which teach doctrine about Jesus, or contemporary songs, which proclaim devotion to Jesus, these chants speak first to the longings of *the hearer*, who just isn't there yet. God is still loosening the soil of their hearts.

The following are some examples of Taizé chants. "By night we travel in darkness in search of living water, only our thirst leads us on." "In God alone my soul can find rest and peace, in God my peace and joy." "Oh, Lord hear my prayer, Oh Lord hear my prayer, when I call, answer me."

I've created many variations of these contemplative liturgies over the years and found them to be a powerful tool in the wilderness epoch in which the American Church now

finds itself. So, rather than hunker down or throw up your hands or deceive yourselves that your atrophy is a sign of being a remnant, I invite you to remember that our model is not made of brick-and-mortar but of the living Cornerstone—Jesus—who always meets people where they are. May this song lyric encourage you as you venture: "*Bring on that wilderness, we've been this way before."*

Music, Faith, and Spirituality in the Lutheran Tradition

David R. Maxwell

Music has been a part of Christian worship from the very beginning. After Christ celebrated the Last Supper with His disciples, they sang a hymn (Mt 26:30). Music figured prominently in the Old Testament, as David appointed musicians to serve in the house of God (1 Chr 25). And heavenly worship in Revelation is portrayed as being full of song (Rev 4 and 5).

At the same time the church has sometimes voiced concern that the power of music may not always be used for good. St. Augustine famously worried that he enjoyed music so much that it distracted him from the words, and so he was not sure whether music should be used in church.[1] Yet Luther had a high regard for music because it governs the emotions. He says, "Next to the Word of God, music deserves the highest praise. She is a mistress and governess of those human emotions . . . which as masters govern men or more often overwhelm them."[2]

Given music's importance and undeniable power, it is worth thinking about what we are trying to do with it in worship. We speak about "formation" in the Christian life. Does that include formation of the emotions as well? In this short essay, I will look at some hymns from the 16th century to try to discern what Luther and early Lutherans thought faith felt like and how it fit into a Lutheran spirituality.

Some might think that this is not a question worth asking. When I was a seminary student, for example, I got the impression that Lutherans were actually opposed to feelings. It seemed that Lutherans thought that the Evangelicals were obsessed with feelings, while Lutherans know that our salvation depends on the promises of God, not on our emotions. I

David Maxwell is the Louis A. Fincke and Anna B. Shine Professor of Systematic Theology at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, specializing in patristic Christology and patristic exegesis. He holds degrees from the University of Texas (B.A., 1991); Concordia Seminary, St. Louis (M.Div.,1995; S.T.M., 1997); Washington University, St. Louis (M.A., Classics, 1995); and the University of Notre Dame (Ph.D., Historical Theology, 2003). Dr. Maxwell has translated Cyril of Alexandria's Commentary on John *for InterVarsity Press as well as Cyril's* Commentaries on Romans, 1-2 Corinthians, *and* Hebrews.

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think it is unwise to ignore the emotions, however. I do believe that our salvation is based on the promises of God, not on our feelings, but those promises have content, and they elicit an emotional response. So, thinking about the emotional response is really a way of thinking about the content of the promises.

One reason I never bought into the polemic against emotions is that I am also a church organist. As such, I constantly think about things like the mood of the readings and the hymns so that I can pick a prelude and postlude that emotionally matches the theme of the service. I also choose alternate harmonizations for some hymn stanzas to better portray the mood of the text. It has always been clear to me that whatever we might imply or tell ourselves, emotions do in fact play a key role in our services.

I'm not suggesting a narrow list of approved emotions for Christians. Ironically, in terms of the breadth of different emotions, you might even say that Lutheran worship is more emotional than that of the Evangelicals. Evangelical worship is often structured around the categories of praise and worship, which are terms that refer to the emotional tenor of the music. Praise music is upbeat and energetic, while worship music is slower and more meditative.[3] The service often starts with praise music and then transitions to worship music. While the procedure used in these services is not scripted, the emotional journey is: first upbeat and then meditative. Lutheran worship provides a wider range of emotions for Christians to experience in church. To mention just one obvious example, Lutherans observe Lent. We experience sadness in church, which helps people to feel that sadness is an emotion that they can experience before God. It's not necessarily a sign that something is wrong with them spiritually.

Ironically, in terms of the breadth of different emotions, you might even say that Lutheran worship is more emotional than that of the Evangelicals.

I don't mean to suggest that we want to limit the kinds of emotions we have in church. Nevertheless, I want to ask if there is a particular ideal emotional life that we want to hold up as an example. Put another way, for Lutherans, the Christian life is a life of faith. So what does faith feel like?

My observations about this come not from academic research on the topic, but from my own experience as a church organist and a professor of Systematic theology. There are some very fine academic studies, like Susan Karant-Nunn's *The Reformation of Feeling*.[4] She traces how medieval Catholic spirituality focused on reliving the sufferings of Christ in graphic detail, while Lutheran's focused on the emotion of comfort as a consequence of the Gospel. I see my observations as a supplement to hers. While she focuses on the texts of sermons, I want comment on the mood of the music itself. This is admittedly more subjective and so impossible to "prove," but I hope that it at least gets us thinking about

the question of the formation of the emotions and what we might want to try to do with that going forward.

Before we get to the music, however, I want to look at Luther's own description of spirituality. He says that the three things that make a theologian are *oratio, meditatio*, and *tentatio*.[5] The first two, prayer and meditation on a text of Scripture, come from the tradition of medieval monasticism. The third element, *tentatio*, or struggle, represents a significant break from the monastic tradition of spirituality. In monasticism, the goal of reading Scripture is to ascend to heaven. Through prayer and meditation, the soul leaves the constraints of the earthly and comes to experience God more directly. For Luther, on the other hand, prayer and meditation lead directly to the Christian life, which is one of struggle. This effectively reverses the direction of the spiritual exercises from a spiritual ascent into heaven to an incarnational descent into the world.

The key to this spirituality is to understand what he means by struggle. He has in mind not only struggle against sin and the devil, but struggle with God. Luther brings this out with particular clarity in comments in his "Lectures on Genesis" on Jacob wrestling with God, in which he examines the struggle of temptation from the perspective of the one suffering as well as from God's perspective.

Luther states, "God in His boundless goodness dealt very familiarly with His chosen patriarch Jacob and disciplined him as though playing with him in a kindly manner. But this playing means infinite grief and the greatest anguish of heart."[6] He goes on to say that:

> God plays with him to discipline and strengthen his faith just as a godly parent takes from his son an apple with which the boy was delighted, not that he should flee from his father or turn away from him but that he should rather be incited to embrace his father all the more and beseech him, saying, "My father, give back what you have taken away!" Then the father is delighted with this test, and the son, when he recovers the apple, loves his father more ardently on seeing that such love and child's play gives pleasure to the father.[7]

Now it is important to realize that what Luther is actually referring to here are the worst kinds of temptations to despair and unbelief. From the perspective of the one enduring such an attack, it is no child's play, but means "infinite grief and the greatest anguish of heart," as Luther puts it. Faith, then, involves battling against these experiences, as Jacob wrestled with God, and coming to view the struggle from God's perspective. This has direct implications for the question of what faith feels like.

Faith is not serene. Consider the hymns "Salvation Unto Us Has Come" (*Lutheran Service Book* [8][*LSB*] 555), "Dear Christians One and All Rejoice" (*LSB* 556), and "A Mighty Fortress" (*LSB* 656), all from the 16th century. Note that "Salvation Unto Us Has Come" and "Dear Christians One and All Rejoice" are both hymns that narrate the story of

God's salvation, but neither one has a melody that one might describe as "happy." The tunes do have a certain joy to them, but it is something more like the joy of joining a battle than the joy of feeling fulfilled in all aspects of life. It is very different from the warm and peaceful joy expressed by a hymn like "My Faith Looks Up to Thee" (*LSB* 702), for example. That is because the early Lutheran hymns arise from a spirituality focusing on the battle of faith.

"A Mighty Fortress" is cut from the same cloth, but there are actually two versions, which are quite different. *LSB* 656 is the version that Luther originally wrote. Like "Salvation Unto Us Has Come" and "Dear Christians One and All Rejoice," it has quite a bit of syncopation. That is part of what makes these hymns vigorous and tumultuous. By the 17th century, however, the rhythms of many Lutheran hymns were straightened out. *LSB* 657 is a version of "A Mighty Fortress" where the rhythm is even, not syncopated. To my ear, it is more grand and stately than the original, but it loses the mood of battle.

If we understand these early Lutheran hymns to be communicating boldness, that has implications for the tempo at which they are played and sung. If they go too slowly, they can come across as dirges. Therefore, they should be sung at a tempo fast enough to embody the boldness that they are meant to convey.

Moving beyond the hymns themselves, there are also Lutheran composers who operated with the same musical vocabulary. J.S. Bach is one composer who has deeply imbibed the spirit of boldness one finds in Luther's music. Any number of Bach's fugues could be mentioned as examples of this, but perhaps the one most explicitly tied to the notion of faith is the so-called "Credo Fugue" (BWV 680). This is a piece that is based on Luther's hymn, "We All Believe in One True God" (*LSB* 954). The theme, derived from the hymn tune, exudes confidence and the pedal theme doubles down on that mood.[9]

The portrayal of faith as boldness correlates, in my view, to the perspective of the person undergoing struggle as Luther describes it in his "Lectures on Genesis." Faith is a battle against unbelief, and the vigor of these hymns communicates a kind of joy at engaging this most important battle of our lives[10] in the face of grief and anguish of heart and whatever else life throws at us, (or God allows). That is not to say the Luther makes an explicit connection between his hymns and *tentatio*. To my knowledge he does not. But when I read his description of the Christian life and I play his hymns, they seem to fit together pretty well.

There are also other Lutheran hymns that seem to correspond more to Luther's perspective of the father playing family games with his children. These hymn tunes have a playful quality about them. They are hymns like, "I Am Jesus' Little Lamb" (*LSB* 740), "What is the World to Me?" (*LSB* 730), and "I Walk in Danger All the Way" (*LSB* 716). Here there is no battle in view, but only confidence in God's love which lets us frolic in peace and security. "I Walk in Danger All the Way" is a particularly interesting example

because the tune of the hymn actually fights against the words. If you just read the words, it sounds like we are in a fight to the death:

1. I walk in danger all the way.
   The thought shall never leave me
   That Satan, who has marked his prey,
   Is plotting to deceive me.
   This foe with hidden snares
   May seize me unawares
   If I should fail to watch and pray.
   I walk in danger all the way.

But the tune is utterly playful. In a way, this hymn embodies both perspectives of the Christian life that Luther outlines. And the tune, since it embodies God's perspective, gets the final word!

So, what is the take-away from all this? I think it is fundamentally a point about Lutheran spirituality, a spirituality which is described to us verbally in treatises like Luther's "Lectures on Genesis" and musically in tunes of Lutheran hymnody. The Christian life is a battle, particularly a battle against the temptation to unbelief and despair.

Whether or not these specific hymns are appropriate for any given mission setting, they do orient us and help us grapple with the question of what we are trying to do with music in worship. As Luther shows, one thing that music might do is to help people experience, on a gut level, both the bold grappling with the struggles of the Christian life and the playful confidence that we are really wrestling with our heavenly Father.

Endnotes

[1] St. Augustine, *Confessions* 10.33. See https://www.logoslibrary.org/augustine/confessions/1033.html.
[2] Martin Luther, "Preface to Georg Rhau's *Symphoniae Iocundae,"* in *Luther's Works,* vol. 53, ed. Helmut T. Lehmann (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1965), LW 53: 323.
[3] See Ruth Collingridge, "Women's Aglow Fellowship," in *Music and the Arts in Christian Worship*, vol. 4, bk.1, ed. Robert Webber (Nashville: Star Song, 1994): 14–15.
[4] Susan C. Karant-Nunn, *The Reformation of Feeling: Shaping the Religious Emotions in Early Modern Germany* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2010).
[5] See John Kleinig, "*Oratio, meditatio*, and *tentation: What Makes a Theologian?"* in *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 66 No.3 (July 2002): 255–267.
[6] Martin Luther, Luther's Works 6, *Lectures on Genesis,* Jaroslav Pelikan, ed. (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 1970), LW 6: 130.
[7] LW 6:130.

[8] Commission on Worship, Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, *Lutheran Service Book* (St. Louis, MO: Concordia Publishing House, 2006).
[9] To see a video of the piece along with a discussion of the theology behind it, see https://concordiatheology.org/2019/10/bach-on-faith/.
[10] The battle imagery does not at all imply that we are saved by our own efforts in the battle, as the text of these hymns makes perfectly clear!

Yeshu Satsang

Dozens of graduate students from India fill the small living room, chattering in Hindi, Urdu, and English over the sound of a music rehearsal in the corner. They cover every available space on the floor, sitting on beanbag chairs and blankets. When the musicians are ready, a young man introduces the day's topic. He calls for a moment of silence; then he prays aloud.

Now the musicians begin to play. On the keyboard, a first-year master's student; on the two small *tabla* drums, a doctoral candidate. Another student plays the Peruvian *cajon*, and two women sing while playing percussion eggs and finger cymbals. The music leader holds everyone together with his acoustic guitar. They begin to sing praise to the Lord Jesus, known in the Hindi language as *Prabhu Yeshu*.

साँझ-सवेरे यह मन गाये

Let this heart sing in the evening

शाम और सुबह मेरी आत्मा गाएगी

Evening and morning my soul will sing

येशु तेरा नाम, प्रभु येशु तेरा नाम

Jesus your name, Lord Jesus your name

यीशु तेरा नाम, प्रभु यीशु तेरा नाम

Jesus your name, Lord Jesus your name

After the singing of this Hindi *bhajan* (devotional worship song), minutes of silence are followed by verbal prayer. Then the leader takes out a Bible and reads the story of the day from Matthew 22:34–40. He asks the group: What does it mean to love the Lord with all of our heart, soul, and strength? Why would *Prabhu Yeshu* command this?

The animated discussion reveals that the participants are not all committed disciples of Jesus. The group struggles to accept the universality of these commands. One person

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The author, a graduate of a school within the CUS, is studying the Hindi language and Hindustani classical music in the American Midwest. She is preparing to move to North India to mentor local songwriters as they create, record, transcribe, and share Jesus-centered contextualized worship resources within their communities.

asks: Can we even love God from free will if it has been commanded? The committed Jesus-followers in the group bring a Gospel-saturated perspective to the discussion.

This group, meeting regularly in a Midwestern college town, is an example of a *satsang*, lit. "a gathering of truth," which is the Hindu term for a gathering of devotees to a particular deity. The disciples of Jesus in the *Yeshu Bhakti* (Jesus devotion) movement of North India have translated this Hindu term to describe their Jesus-centered worship gatherings. As the discussion around the Word illustrates, this particular *satsang* is composed of many individuals on the journey of discipleship. Some have made a commitment to the Triune God through Jesus Christ but others remain further away. The one uniting factor: an interest in the teachings of *Prabhu Yeshu* and a desire to worship Him in a North Indian contextualized fashion.

As *Lutheran Mission Matters* considers how worship and missions intersect, my experience with *satsang* addresses the question of Focus: Who makes up the worshiping community? Here in the *Yeshu Bhakti* movement, the worshiping community are those people who have accepted a positive experience (*anubhav*) with Jesus and are growing in devotion towards Him. *Anubhav* is the Sanskrit word used in Hinduism to describe a verifiable religious experience or encounter with a deity or spiritual truth.[1]

Within a *satsang*, both the justified and the unjustified may be present; or, to use Dr. Joel Okamoto's terms from this issue, the "now-Christian and the not-yet-Christian"(p.9). For both groups, this *satsang* is simultaneously an opportunity to present devotion to *Prabhu Yeshu*, and is in itself another form of *anubhav* with Him.

I define these *satsang* participants in respect to their experience with *Prabhu Yeshu* because "replicable experience" is the basis of decision-making for many people in a Hindu culture.[2] This contrasts with the "truth/reason-based" decision-making that many of us in Western culture may experience. Illustrating this point Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the first Vice-President and second President of Independent India, wrote in 1927: "Religion… is a kind of life or experience. It is insight… into the experience of reality."[3] Later this philosopher and statesman wrote, "Religious experience is of a self-certifying nature. It carries its own credentials."[4]

This insight holds up in real life. Is a Hindu medical doctor likely to devote himself to Krishna on the basis of his rational belief that Krishna is the eighth avatar of Vishnu? No, such religious decisions are likely based first on *anubhav* (verifiable religious experience) with that deity within the confines of family and societal religious life. Subsequently, he may look to corroborate that experience with an intellectual account of the experience, through insights gained in the Vedas or other Hindu scriptures. Quoting Dr. Radhakrishnan again from 1927, "The truths in the Vedas can be re-experienced in compliance with ascertained conditions."[5] The average Hindu may choose to participate in received

religious practices because he or she has had positive *anubhav* with such deities through family worship and traditions and because such experience can be narrated and replicated.

How does this insight transform mission within Hindu communities of North India or their diaspora? For many Christians engaging with people of Hindu culture today, we can seek to bring *anubhav* of Jesus to our Hindu friends through our presence, our willingness to pray for our friends in Jesus' name, and the trust that the Holy Spirit moves as we invite Him. Then, after these Hindu friends have had positive *anubhav* with *Prabhu Yeshu*, the Holy Spirit may work in their heart to desire to express devotion to Him through worship in *satsang*, in forms with which they are already familiar. Such worship also provides deeper *anubhav* with Jesus Christ through God's Word present in music, story, and the gathered people of God.

As our Hindu friends grow in devotion to Christ, we may use Scripture to clarify the *anubhav* of *Prabhu Yeshu* they have experienced and enter a discipling relationship with them as the Spirit moves. Finally, as these Hindu friends begins to apply the truths of God's Word to all areas of their life, they may come to the place of *sharanam* (surrender) and choose to utterly abandon themselves to the Triune God through *Prabhu Yeshu.*[6] The miracle of faith has occurred.

As we in the Western church consider the intersection of worship/music and mission, let us be open to worshiping Christ with our interested Hindu friends so that they may encounter the living Christ and grow in deeper devotion to Him.

Endnotes

[1] Timothy Shultz, *Disciple Making among Hindus: Making Authentic Relationships Grow* (Pasdena: William Carey Library, 2016), 70–71.

[2] Shultz, 68.
[3] Shultz, 13.
[4] Shultz, 13.
[5] Shultz, 15.
[6] Shultz, 90.

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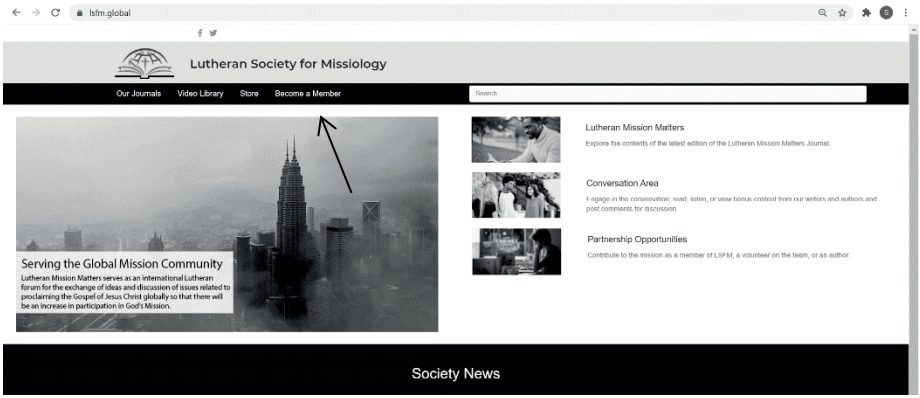

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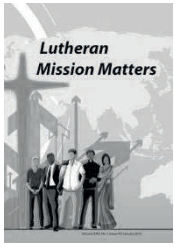

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Lutheran Worship and Witness in Russia

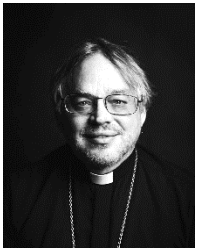
Leif Camp

Right off I must admit that I hesitate to write this article—I am not up on the latest jargon and am dated in my studies. I have served as a frontline missionary in Russia for over 20 years, first as a volunteer, then through LCMS World Mission and then directly through the LCMS partner church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia.[1] It is from this experience that I make the following observations. My approach is not scholarly, but practical; not researched in current books and debates but founded on simple biblical principles—an urgent need to reach people with the Gospel so that they, in thanksgiving for their salvation, worship and praise God and live as His children.

As different as the situation in Russia might be from the US, I think there is much in common. The goal to reach the lost is the same, the Gospel is the same, and some of the other circumstances are similar: a population that is largely not Christian, is inundated with all sorts of misinformation about the Bible, the Christian Church, what Christians believe, and so forth. In such a context the basic and clear task of getting people to truly hear the Word (since faith comes by hearing the Word of God), seems more and more difficult. As a result, it seems so to me, there is a tendency coming out of the sincere and urgent desire to reach the lost, to complicate what is simple, obscure or confuse what is obvious, separate what should be kept whole, and blend, join or mix what might be better kept separate. The Lutheran Church here in Russia has made a few simple changes that are bearing fruit—not changes in worship style, not changes in the content of the Gospel, but some minor adjustments in recognition that those around us really don't know and yet need to know. I discuss those adjustments nearer the end of this short piece.

Complicating and confusing what is simple and obvious:

Nothing is simpler and more straightforward than the Gospel in John 3:16 or any short explanation of it such as: God loves you and sent His only Son to die for you so that you don't have to fear death, do not have to die eternal death, but rather through faith in Him can live in His eternal kingdom. Nothing is more basic than the content of our message



Pastor Camp has been serving as a missionary in Russia for more than 20 years. He first served as a volunteer from 1995 to 1997. After graduating from Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, he returned to Russia in 2000. He served first under the LCMS Mission board and now serves directly with the LCMS partner church, The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria in Russia which was brought into partnership by Synodical vote at the 1998 LCMS Synodical convention.

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confessed in our Lutheran Confessions: that we are justified by grace through faith in Jesus Christ alone. Nothing is simpler and more straightforward than the Great Commission: Go and make disciples of all, teaching and baptizing. Nothing is more basic than the goal of seeking and saving the lost and nothing is more direct and freeing than the method: all things to all people that some might be saved. (Jn 3:16, Rm 3:28, Mt 28:18-20, Lk 19:10, 1 Cor. 9:22)

Separating what might be better kept whole:

In the broad sense of the terms, separating Mission from Worship may lead people to misunderstand what it means to be a Christian.[2] Talking about worship as a separate act apart from faith and life, apart from confessing and witnessing to our faith, defines worship as form and ritual rather than everything we do as Christians living out our faith in the presence of God, *Coram Deo*. Emphasizing the worship service may lead people to think of our gathering together for worship (in the narrow sense of the word) as the goal, center or identifying factor of what it means to be a Christian. In the broad sense of the word *mission*, the "mission" of the Church is the whole process of bringing people into the family of faith, growing them in that faith and equipping them to live out and confess their faith—and this includes both evangelism (mission in the narrow sense) and worship (in the narrow sense)—but it includes more. Above I referred to myself as a "frontline" missionary, but in truth, all Christians in today's world are frontline missionaries. The "mission" of the Church then not only brings people to faith, but must include equipping all believers to witness, live in the presence of God, and remain faithful on the frontlines. Worship in the narrow sense of the word in whatever style is just one tool given to strengthen and equip Christians to thus live and remain faithful.

What should be kept separate:

Multi-tasking sometimes works, but often when we multi-task, we really don't do all the tasks as well as we could have if we focused on just one task at a time. Or one might say, when trying to kill two birds with one stone, we simply scare all the birds away. In my experience, as admittedly limited as it is, I see this in the attempt often made to blend outreach (mission in the narrow sense) with corporate worship. Growing the flock and feeding the flock are two different functions. You can't serve two masters well. Of course, when Jesus says this, He is referring to serving the World and serving God, but I think the principle applies. Outreach is demanding, and as simple as I think this is, does take a lot of energy and effort. Feeding the flock is also not so complicated. Knowing each member of the flock and then preaching and teaching specifically to that flock to strengthen and feed each member so each grows and matures is not complicated, but takes a lot of work, energy, and effort.

If I might use another common image from Scripture: Sowing is not the same as tending the fields, and tending the fields is not the same as harvesting. In a broad sense they are all part of farming, but in the narrow sense they are each a separate and distinct step which needs to be done separately and in sequence if the seed is to take root, grow and

come to a more fruitful harvest. To me, it makes sense when outreach is intentional and focused and kept separate from the worship service. Worship then can also be intentional, focused on feeding solid food to those who already believe.

When we keep the two tasks separate, we avoid many sticky situations that arise when we mix the two. For instance, during corporate worship, I want to celebrate the Sacrament, but if I am mixing my worship with evangelism, it means that many who are in attendance are not Lutheran, not confirmed, and possibly not even baptized. The faithful, those sheep already in the flock and mature, desire and want the Sacrament, but those who are not yet reborn into the flock, have no business at the table. When I am mixing evangelism with worship, then, I either must skip the Sacrament to the detriment of the faithful or offend those I am trying to reach and chase off those I am trying to bring into the flock.[3]

Some practical illustrations of what we do in Russia:

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria is growing in faith and number—number of members and number of congregations. Most, if not all, of our congregations use a traditional Lutheran Liturgy. Contemporary forms are used in special events and special services, but not as an every-Sunday practice. Although the doors are open to visitors for services, our worship service is designed and focused on our members, for those who have been initiated, educated and understand what they are doing and Whom they are worshiping—and why. Outreach is intentionally focused to reach unchurched non-Lutherans, unbelievers, and even atheists.[4] Outreach is part of the process leading them from unbelief to faith, from faith to worship and from worship to involvement. Of course, coming to faith is the work of the Holy Spirit, and as we confess, He is using the means He always uses: the Word and the Sacraments—specifically in growing the Church, the Word and the Sacrament of Baptism. We are simply the instruments through which He is using those means—and He has both called and equipped us to use them.

Although the doors are open to visitors for services, our worship service is designed and focused on our members, for those who have been initiated, educated and understand what they are doing and Whom they are worshiping – and why.

Here I will share how we are using these means in Russia. I am sharing this not so much as a program to follow, but as an example of some simple ways your Russian brothers and sisters are using to reach the lost and bring them into the kingdom. To make disciples through teaching and baptizing, our Church has put the process under three headings: information, confirmation, and ordination. This last term is used in a very broad sense, which I will explain below. And all of this, when you read it below, you will realize is nothing new. Each step is separate and distinct but is part of the whole—to bring the lost to faith, to worship, and also to equip them to live out their faith.

1. **Information**. We live in an information age with new and growing avenues for spreading information—social media, the web, as well as the usual print media, or putting up signs and posters. The current Russian law is that one can only present religious propaganda, in other words, evangelize, inside a Church space. So as far as evangelism, the first goal is to get the lost into the Church any way possible. Of course, we inform or advertise the formal worship services and Bible studies for the already baptized. But for outreach, each congregation thinks up as many other events, seminars, discussion groups, clubs, and the like, to bring people through the doors. As some of our Church buildings are actually historical monuments, those congregations offer "tours" and set up small museums about their history—witnessing to tourists. In short, all things to all people. Once people are in the door for whatever activity, they intentionally will hear the Gospel. For example, one of our congregations has actually become quite a well-known venue for classical music and jazz concerts. Part of the "contract" for any concert, however, is that the pastor or his delegate gets the first 10 minutes of the concert to address the audience—a short history of the Church, a Gospel presentation, and although worship and Bible study times are mentioned, the emphasis is a specific invitation to unbelievers and the unchurched to attend what I outline in the next step.
2. **Confirmation**. This would be better termed "instruction," but I didn't pick the terms. At all events, everyone is invited to come to what we have called, "basic Christianity class." This is really not much more than a simple change in vocabulary. The classes are basically Catechism class but calling it "confirmation" is confusing to those outside the Church. Calling it "new member class" or "baptismal instruction" scares away those who might be interested in learning about Christianity, but not ready to commit to baptism or membership. The invitation goes something like this: "If you are interested in finding out what Christians believe straight from the horse's mouth rather than from other sources, we offer this class free of charge. If you are an atheist, you are most welcome to come to find out more about what you are against so you can better argue against it." The content of these classes is mainly the Small Catechism but vectored toward the unconverted—a bit more on Scripture, a bit more of Church history and a bit more explaining vestments, holy space, and so forth. One session is specifically devoted to explaining the meaning and purpose of each part of our formal Liturgy—after which those in attendance are invited to "view" a Church service. Only near the completion of the course are those in attendance invited to take an exam, which after passing, allows them to be baptized or confirmed if they are interested. This simple renaming of Catechism classes has proven most fruitful. By the way, we do still offer formal "Confirmation" classes and programs, but those are designed for Lutherans already in the Church.
3. **Ordination**. OK, the use of this term irks me a bit, but again I didn't choose it, and there are more serious battles to fight. The term as used here is in a very broad sense and does not even refer to the laying on of hands. A better term might be "involvement" or "inclusion" as in inclusion in some ministry or activity of the

> Church. For a few, this has led to seminary study and ordination as deacon or pastor, but the overall idea is to plug the newly baptized and converted into the life of the congregation. As with someone who is born into a family, as soon as they are able, they are given their chores, their part of the mutual care a family provides. This also means that a congregation is always looking for ways to expand its ministries and services—so that there are more and more volunteer opportunities available for new and existing members. We also then have continuing training for volunteers, and those with aptitude we invite to formal study at our Theological Institute. A result of "ordination" activity has meant that there is always someone at the Church with always something going on.

I suppose at this point I should find something profound to sum all this up. But in truth, there is nothing profound here. All that said, this is work, it takes time, energy, flexibility and thinking on one's feet, but it is not really complicated. It is not a result of analysis and research, it is simply applying Scriptural directives: Unconfused, unmixed, but applied as a whole to grow and feed the flock, to lead people from unbelief to faith and then feeding them, helping, equipping and strengthening them to live out their faith as salt and light in an ever-darkening world.

Endnotes

[1] The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Ingria is an LCMS partner Church in Russia brought into full altar and pulpit fellowship by synodical vote in 1998 after four years of full doctrinal review and consideration and has been a faithful partner of the LCMS ever since. The name "Ingria" is the historical name of the region in which the Church has its historic roots, much like the Missouri Synod has its roots in Perry County, MO.

[2] One of the first steps the Soviets took in persecuting the Church was to define religion as public worship, taking away all social and educational ministries from the Church. Freedom of "religion" existed since freedom of "worship" was allowed to exist, at least initially.

[3]In recognition of this, the traditional Liturgy I use in my English language service at St. Anne's in St. Petersburg is organized in such a way that if at the last minute a number of visitors show up and I haven't had time to explain closed Communion to them, we skip the Sacrament. My regular members know this, and the signal is using the Apostles' Creed instead of the Nicene Creed.

[4] We actually have several non-Lutheran congregations wishing to join our Church. That is another issue and another process—although it does involve confirmation instruction of the congregations and re-training of their pastors.

A New Hymnal for French-speaking West and Central Africa

Phillip Magness

"Lutheran missions plant Lutheran churches" has been a recent rallying cry in The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS). The slogan may seem tautological to those unaware of Lutheran mission history, but it is a healthy reminder to pastors and missionaries that those who are not ashamed of the Gospel should unashamedly seek to plant and sustain congregations that uphold the faith we confess. Because congregations are gathered around the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the Sacraments, this means enacting Lutheran worship. Given our confession that it is not necessary that rites and ceremonies be alike everywhere in the Church and that it "is enough" for the true unity of the Christian church that where the gospel is preached harmoniously according to a pure understanding, and the sacraments are administered in conformity with the divine Word"[1] (AC VII,1), the subject of worship has posed some challenges. Procrustean efforts to create a perfect model is not the evangelical way. The Gospel is the heart of Lutheran worship, and its implications for worship should not be ignored. Where those implications have been ignored, many promising missions have floundered.

While some may believe it sufficient to allow our teaching of the pure Gospel to lose its distinctiveness in order to fit into a broader non-denominational milieu, the testimony of Scripture and the witness of history require us to take a different course. We are to gather as the Body of Christ sharing a spiritual unity according to the outward marks of the Church — the pure ministry of the Word and the sacraments. This truth can be extended to the songs we sing together. While the subject of singing was not really in contention during the Reformation, it is one of the few instructions about worship we receive in the New Testament (Col 3:16, Eph 5:19, Heb 2:12).

The Pauline encouragement to share the faith through "psalms, hymns, and Spiritual songs" amplifies the Lord's numerous commands to His people to sing of His praiseworthy deeds. Forty-eight times in the Scriptures, the Lord prescribes singing the Lord's song.

Mr. Phillip Magness serves as a missionary to West and Central Africa. He previously served on the Synod's Board for International Mission. A musician and composer, he has works in the CPH and NPH catalogs, Lutheran Service Book*,* One and All Rejoice*,* Christian Worship: Supplement*, and* Christian Worship: Psalter. *His book on the art of music for the care of souls,* Lifting Voices and Hearts*, is being prepared for publication by Lexham Press. Magness has been DOXOLOGY's chief musician since 2008, and led music for daily worship at the 2013, 2016 and 2019 LCMS conventions.*

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This singing is not for its own sake or the pleasure of our Lord's ears, but for the sake of taking the story of His love to heart and proclaiming it to the nations, so that "many may see and fear and put their trust in the Lord" (Ps 40:3b).

Lutheran music is nothing less than singing the Lord's song for the reasons the Lord tells us to sing. That is why getting people to sing about Jesus has been at the heart of my work the past twelve years in francophone West and Central Africa.

At their core, worshiping communities in francophone Africa are no different than those in the West. Most of the people who come to church in Africa are the baptized, returning to the font and altar to be renewed in the Spirit, as God continues His sanctifying work through the forgiveness of sins and the equipping of the saints through the Word. Visitors and seekers do come to church in Africa, drawn by the Word, just as anywhere else. But worship is not designed differently with them in mind; the Divine Service remains the Divine Service. We continue in our way of worship, knowing that visitors are on the Lord's mind and trusting God to have His way with them as we share Jesus with them. When the Divine Service enters into the culture and community as a part of the message of evangelization, liturgy and hymnody are adapted to the community's situation and the worship activity of the faithful is itself an evangelical message.

When the Divine Service enters into the culture and community as part of the message of evangelization, liturgy and hymnody are adapted to the community's situation and the worship activity of the faithful is itself an evangelical message.

This is particularly true in our singing when the song of the Church becomes not just a way through which the Word dwells richly in the faithful, but a radical, inviting witness that proclaims the truth of God to all who hear. So we choose settings of psalms, Spiritual songs (canticles), and Lutheran hymns that musically align with the realities of African music, equipping the saints for the work of the ministry. And we rejoice when, as the Lord's song takes root, Africans adapt them to their own styles of harmonic and rhythmic accompaniment. The sounds change, yet the eternal song remains the same.

After a dozen years of teaching and nurturing music from the francophone edition of *Lutheran Service Book*, *Liturgies et Cantiques Luthériens* (*LCL*), the LCMS Africa team is at a point where we, in partnership with African churches, are prepared to release an African edition of *LCL–L'Édition Africaine* (*LCL–ÉA*). This new edition will fit the needs of local congregations by providing a set of about sixty solid hymns that have been taught and embraced among the francophone churches and that cover the Church Year, the sacraments, justification, sanctification, marriage, vocation, and death.

Because it will be published in Africa, it will be much more affordable and easier to deliver. The notation will consist of melody plus simple chord symbols for guitarists and keyboardists. The hymnal will also have some select psalm antiphons, an order for Matins, and a single setting of the Divine Service, with options for some of the Spiritual songs (canticles). The Divine Service setting borrows from all three of the Divine Service settings in *LCL*, incorporating those parts that have proven the best matches for the African context.

Also included will be several African tunes to which texts from *LCL* have been paired, some additional African hymns, and some hymns considered to be standards for all Christian denominations in the francophone world.

Congregations in Congo, Burundi, Côte d'Ivoire, Togo, Benin, Burkina Faso, and Guinea will be well-served by *LCL–ÉA* as they gather around a common liturgy and are enriched by a common song. At the same time, *LCL–ÉA* provides space for the local churches to continue singing local songs, since the general practice in Africa is to sing in the local language for the gathering music, offertory music, some communion music, and the closing music.

The model is the same as the early LCMS missions into anglophone North America. They expected the Americans to sing English hymns and adopted the best of continental Lutheran church music into traditional American forms, focusing on the teaching of new hymns, and at the same time preserving the great chorales that preach justification and teach the history of salvation.

In addition, because *LCL* has pastoral resources such as the special liturgies for Holy Week, collects, and the like, hymns in *LCL–ÉA* have a subscript number that corresponds to the hymn's location in *LCL.* This will allow pastors and vicars to use *LCL* like an altar book while the assembly uses *LCL–ÉA*.

The ministry of this mission is a simple one: teach the music of the Church to those who eagerly desire to join us in singing the faith the Lord has placed in our hearts.

Often in the West, we (in our luxury) develop abstract concepts and theories about worship and then use our blessed imaginations to devise all sorts of possibilities. Life in Africa is more practical. That does not mean that there is no room for creativity, but in practical mission, creativity is the art of making good and beautiful things happen with the people and talents one actually has.

I believe such is a model for mission everywhere, including in the West. Just as we who lead the Lord's song should not try to create copies of St. Louis or Chicago in Brazzaville or Ouagadougou, we should not try to duplicate the music of Nashville or Los Angeles recording artists or the choral and organ artistry of English cathedrals where the context does not call for it. The Lord has given each of us a time and place to nurture His song. Our call as pastors, cantors, and worship leaders is to get the people singing the psalms, hymns, and Spiritual songs of the Church according to the talents the Lord has placed in our midst. When we do so, questions of community, unity, and outreach will naturally be answered.

Endnotes

[1] Robert Kolb, Timothy J. Wengert, and Charles P. Arand, *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2000), 42.

Review

LITURGY OF THE ORDINARY: Sacred Practices in Everyday Life. By Tish Harrison Warren. Originally published by Intervarsity Press, Downers Grove, IL 2016. (The edition used for this review was produced by "Read How You Want" in "EasyRead Large" type, 169 pages; hence page numbers are likely not consistent with other editions.)

This is a wonderfully ordinary book. Both meanings of "ordinary" are thoughtfully, insightfully integrated, with Good News Gospel grounding.

1) Ordinary as the technical term for that part of the Christian liturgy that repeats at each service, by contrast with the Propers, e.g., the readings for the particular day.
2) Ordinary as the common, "ordinary" term for our daily living.

Eleven chapters narrate the ordinary parts of an American day, from morning waking and bedmaking to evening sleeping. Yet, the gift of the book, with each honest narration of the blessings and troubles of an ordinary day comes a correlation with parts of the ordinary of the liturgy, one or more proposals for how God's work in worship penetrates and correlates with such routines; and how such routines extend the "practice" of the liturgy in God's world. Twenty chapter-correlated pages of discussion/reflection questions (for self or group) and suggested daily practices foster this possible growth and penetration.

The author's Anglican experience does not prevent her from using other resources. "According to Lutheran theologian Martin Marty, Lutherans are taught to begin each day, first thing, by making the sign of the cross as a token of their baptism." And in case the reader missed the point, the paragraph finishes this way: "Martin Luther charged each member of his community to regard baptism 'as the daily garment which he is to wear all the time'" (5).

"Brushing Teeth." Really? A chapter devoted to brushing teeth? "We can believe that the cumulative hours and years spent on the incessant care of our bodies are meaningless, an insignificant necessity on the way to the important parts of our day. But in orthodox Christianity, our bodies matter profoundly" (29). The author continues, "when we use our bodies for their intended purpose—in gathered worship, raising our hands or singing or kneeling, or, in our average day, sleeping or savoring a meal or jumping or hiking or running or having sex with our spouse or kneeling in prayer or nursing a baby . . . it is glorious, as glorious as a great cathedral being used just as its architect had dreamt it would be" (38).

The author notes this "edge" to the challenge and opportunity of the ordinary. "If the church does not teach us what our bodies are for, our culture certainly will. If we don't learn to live the Christian life as embodied beings, worshiping God and stewarding the good gift of our bodies, we will learn a false gospel, an alternative liturgy of the body" (36).

"Losing Keys." I regret that the chapter fits this writer to a T. The author exposes my irritation, anger, and deep desire to be in control, all of which properly land me in "confession and the truth about ourselves" (43).

"Fighting with my Husband"?! The chapter subtitle captures the coordination, the integration the author pursues faithfully, "passing the peace and the everyday work of shalom" (72).

Warning: if worship is simply what you love to do in the church building, if worship is what you do there in your mind—or in your voice as you love to sing—do not read this book. It will infect you with the possibility that your whole life is worship.

Warning: handle this carefully if theology is all in your head—a risk in particular for those of us with deep doctrinal commitments—the author writes. "My theology was too big to touch a typical day in my life. I'd developed the habit of ignoring God in the midst of the daily grind" (49). She notes also, "I do not want to downplay the importance of doctrine or rigorous intellectual engagement. But in the midst of theological rigor, I also yearned for ways that the Christian life worked its way into places my mind could not go. . . . What would it meant to believe the gospel not just in my brain, but also in my body?" (34).

Fourteen pages of endnotes offer an array of sources from the Book of Common Prayer to a Rich Mullins comment in a concert. C.S. Lewis appears with some frequency and Dom Gregory Dix helps with "Fighting with my Husband." Gustaf Wingren and B.B. Warfield are there as well, along with Cyprian and Calvin.

A personal note: I am a bit jealous of this text, and likely of similar ones of recent vintage waiting to be read, including *The Common Rule: Habits of Purpose for an Age of Distraction* by Justin Earley and *You are What You Love* by James K. Smith. Where was I, thirty years ago, finishing my dissertation on a Lutheran understanding of vocation, that I did not bring the riches of (Lutheran) theology to the table for daily enrichment for readers?

This is a creedal book, ordinary people in ordinary (First Article) life redeemed by Christ (Second Article), alive in the Spirit (Third Article). This is a book about the ordinary with nothing proper in it; except that as each part of the ordinary of the classical Christian liturgy is linked with God's Good News work in Christ, everything in ordinary life becomes a proper part of God's work. Rich Carter

Lutheran Mission Matters Call for Papers
November 2022

Mission and Second-Generation Immigrant Ministries

The editorial committee of *Lutheran Mission Matters* (LMM) invites you to submit an article for the November 2022 issue on the chosen theme, "Mission and Second-Generation Immigrant Ministries." Religion and ethnicity are closely related phenomena in North America. The history and tradition of various denominations, including Lutherans, has been largely shaped by patterns of immigration and the establishment of various ethnic traditions.

The number of immigrants coming to America is increasing. Immigrants begin new churches mainly among people like themselves as a means for retaining contact with their previous culture. This meets the needs of the new immigrant, but succeeding generations are more interested in adopting worship modes represented in American culture. What challenges and opportunities do increasing numbers of immigrants pose for Christian churches (both immigrant and nonimmigrant)? How can outreach to second and succeeding generations be successful? How can churches actively engage the next generation to pass on faith? How can multiethnic churches be started and supported? What lessons can be learned? How do our theology and our cultural listening skills work together to inform our mission theology and strategy?

You are invited to submit articles, studies, or observations about Mission and Second-Generation Immigrant Ministries. *Lutheran Mission Matters* is a peer-reviewed publication, available online at https://www.lsfm.global/our-journals/ and in the Atlas (American Theological Library Association Serials) database or as printed journals. The journal is in its twenty-ninth year of publication.

LMM articles are generally up to 3,000 words in length, although longer articles will be considered. The deadline of September 9, 2022 is negotiable. Articles dealing with aspects of the theology and practice of Lutheran mission other than this issue's theme will be considered for publication, space permitting. Send your ideas and questions to the editor of the journal, Dr. Victor Raj (rajv@csl.edu), with a copy to the Editorial Assistant at LSFMdesk@gmail.com.

If you wish to submit a manuscript, please consult our submission guideline found at the back the journal or here https://www.lsfm.global/2020/05/03/submission-guidelines/

Please let us know soon of your willingness to be a part of this publishing effort.

In Christ's mission to the world, and on behalf of the Editorial Committee,

Rev. Dr. Victor Raj

Editor of *Lutheran Mission Matters*.

Lutheran Mission Matters Call for Papers
May 2023

Theological Education for Pastoral-Missional Leadership

The editorial committee of Lutheran Mission Matters (LMM) invites you to submit an article for the May 2023 issue on the chosen theme, "Theological Education for Pastoral, Missional Leadership."

Our November 2020 issue had as its theme, "Theological Education in a Missionary Age," and the response was such that another issue devoted to a similar topic was deemed helpful. Those essays laid a broad foundation for ongoing discussion. The range of topics engaged specifically the mission focus of theological education, including attention to new delivery systems, from the TEE models developed on mission fields to appropriate use of current forms of distance education. More importantly, a "missionary age," even if always part of the church's context, raises the key questions of the goals of theological education: what kind of person, what "attitudes, knowledge, and skills" (i.e., competencies) are to be inculcated specifically in and for the mission context of today's church?

"Theological Education for Pastoral, Missional Leadership" gives a double focus. First, for the purposes of this discussion, we are focusing on *pastoral* formation as a major objective of theological education. Theological education is much broader, of course, and we recognize and value its role not only for other professionals such as deacons and commissioned ministers (LC–MS), both male and female, but also among the diversities of gifts within the laity. Secondly, as is appropriate in a journal dealing with mission matters, we want to discuss pastoral formation in the context of today's mission challenges. This concern, too, is much broader than pastoral formation, as mission leadership also engages the whole church with its diverse vocations as participants and partners in our Lord's great mission to all nations. But pastoral ministry means pastoral leadership in that mission, as stewards of God's gifts of grace that empower God's people to be the body of Christ in the world.

So limiting this specific issue in this way, how do our models–and even our conversations about this topic–reflect and relate to the current challenges and opportunities of *this* missionary age? How do the goals of pastoral formation relate to a world of multiethnic, global, post-Christendom, high-tech realities filled with social and moral questions that folks no longer care to address from a theological perspective? How do we assess and evaluate models of residential education as a valued context for formation as well as other models and delivery systems that were not normative in the 16th, 19th, or even 20th century, not to mention the 1st?

You are invited to submit articles, studies, or observations about "Theological Education for Pastoral, Missional Leadership." *Lutheran Mission Matters* is a peer-reviewed publication, available online at https://www.lsfm.global and in the Atlas (American Theological Library Association Serials) database or as printed journals. The journal is in its thirtieth year of publication.

LMM articles are generally up to 3,000 words in length, although longer articles will be considered. The deadline of February 1, 2023 is negotiable. Articles dealing with aspects of the theology and practice of Lutheran mission other than this issue's theme will be considered for publication, space permitting. Send your ideas and questions to the editor of the journal, Dr. Victor Raj (rajv@csl.edu), with a copy to the Editorial Assistant at LSFMdesk@gmail.com.

If you wish to submit a manuscript, please consult our submission guideline found at the back the journal or here https://www.lsfm.global/our-journals/

Please let us know soon of your willingness to be a part of this publishing effort.

In Christ's mission to the world, and on behalf of the Editorial Committee,
Rev. Dr. Victor Raj
Editor of Lutheran Mission Matters.

Submission Guidelines

We welcome your participation in writing for *Lutheran Mission Matters*. Please observe the following guidelines for submission of manuscripts.

Lutheran Mission Matters publishes studies of missiological issues under discussion in Christian circles across the world. Exegetical, biblical, theological, historical, and practical dimensions of the apostolic mission of the church are explored in these pages. (See the mission statement below.) While issues often focus on a theme, the editorial committee encourages and appreciates submissions of articles on any missiological topic.

Contributors can familiarize themselves with previous issues of *Missio Apostolica* and *Lutheran Mission Matters* at the Lutheran Society for Missiology's website (https:/lsfm.global). Click on Our Journals to view PDFs of previous issues.

Book reviews: LSFM also welcomes book reviews. Submit reviews of no more than 500 words. E-mail Dr. Joel Okamoto (bookreviews@lsfm.global) if interested in writing a review.

Mission Statement

Lutheran Mission Matters serves as an international Lutheran forum for the exchange of ideas and discussion of issues related to proclaiming the Gospel of Jesus Christ globally.

Formatting and Style

Please consult and use *The Chicago Manual of Style*, 17th edition for endnotes. See basic examples below and/or consult the "Chicago-Style Citation Quick Guide" (http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html).

[1] David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 243–255.

[2] Hans Küng, *Does God Exist? An Answer for Today*, trans. Edwin Quinn (New York: Doubleday, 1980), 184–186.

[3] Robert J. Priest, Terry Dischinger, et al., "Researching the Short-Term Mission Movement," *Missiology, An International Review* 34 (2006): 431–450.

References to Luther's works must identify the original document and the year of its publication. Please use the following model.

[4] Martin Luther, Ninety-five Theses (1517) in *Luther's Works*, ed. Harold J. Grimm (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1957), 31:17–34.

Quotations of or allusions to specific texts in the Lutheran Confessional writings must be documented. The use of modern translations of the *Book of Concord* is encouraged. Please use the following model.

[5] Augsburg Confession V (Concerning the Office of Preaching) in *The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran* Church, ed. R. Kolb, T. J. Wengert, C. P. Arand (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 40.

Direct quotations exceeding four manuscript lines should be set off from the text in an indented paragraph, without quotation marks. Omissions in a quotation should be noted by ellipsis, with an additional period to end a sentence, as appropriate.

Spelling should follow the latest edition of *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary*. Words in languages other than English should be italicized.

Preparation and Submission

Length: Concise, clear articles are preferred. Manuscripts should not be more than 3,000–4,000 words although longer pieces may be arranged by the editor.

Content: *Lutheran Mission Matters* is committed to addressing the academic community as well as pastors and people throughout the church and involving them in the theology and practice of mission. Use of terms or phrases in languages other than the language of the article itself is discouraged. The use of complex and long sentences is discouraged. Attention should be paid to paragraphing so that the article is easy to follow and appears inviting on the page.

Use of call-outs: *Lutheran Mission Matters* frequently uses call-outs to break up blocks of text on a page and to emphasize important points being made in the article. The author is invited to use Word's Text Highlight Color to suggest words or phrase that may be included in a call-out. The final decision will be made by the editor.

Format: Please submit articles in single spaced Times New Roman 10-point font with 0.25" paragraph indents.

Submission: Manuscripts should be submitted electronically to Professor Victor Raj, editor@lsfm.global. Submission of a manuscript assumes that all material has been carefully read and properly noted and attributed. The author thereby assumes responsibility for any necessary legal permission for materials cited in the article. Articles that are inadequately documented will be returned for complete documentation. If the article has been previously published or presented in a public forum, please inform the editor at the time the article is submitted.

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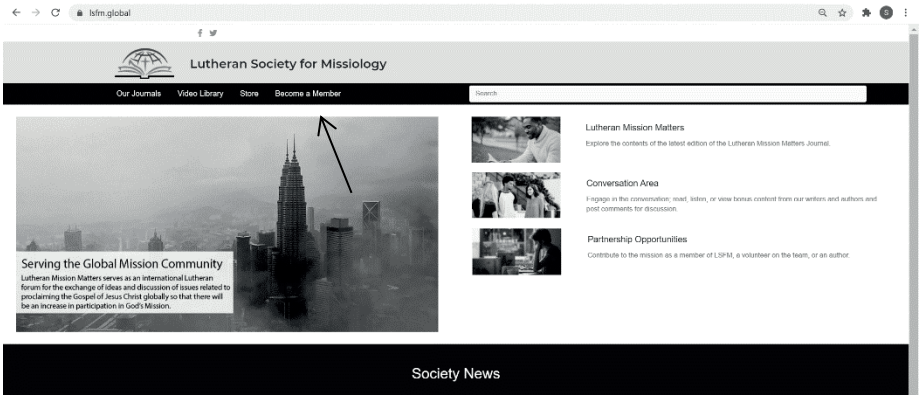

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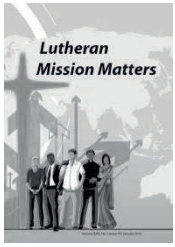

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