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By Todd Wilken

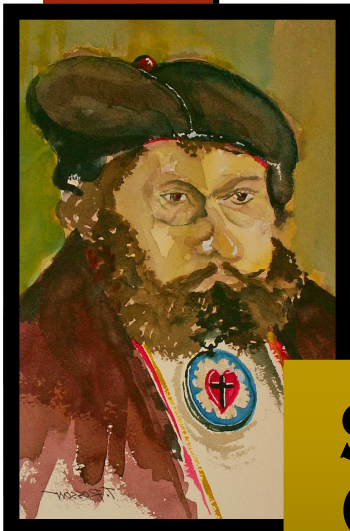
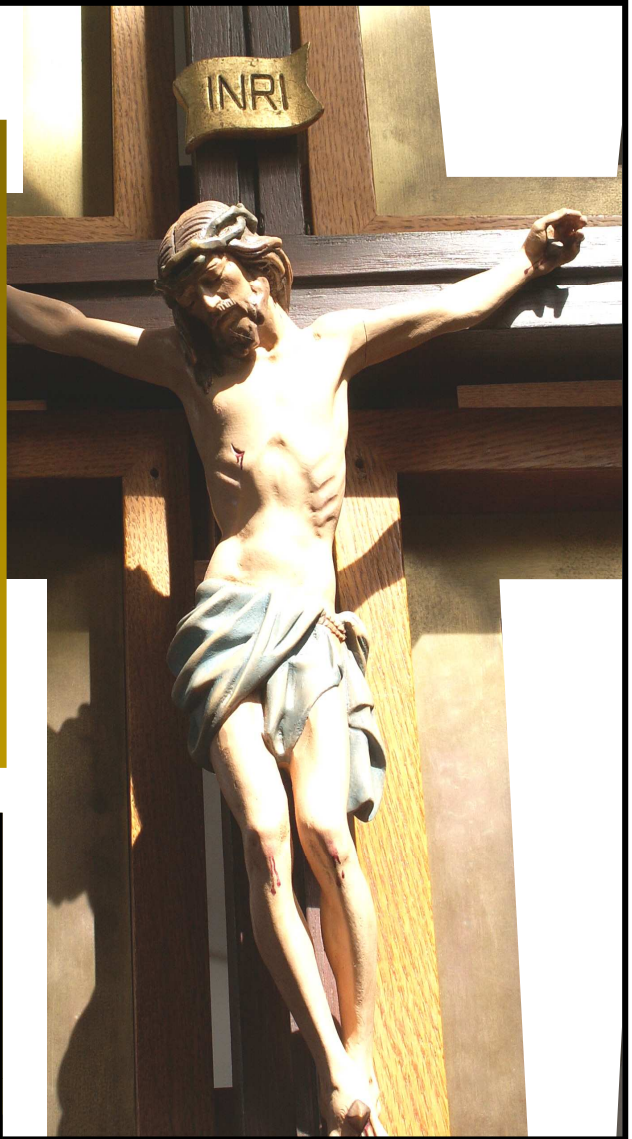
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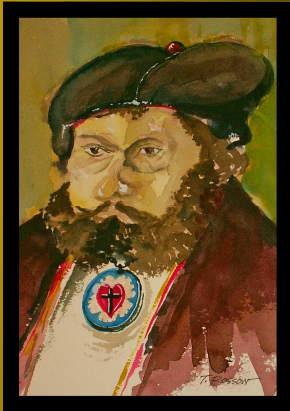
And Much More...



STEADFAST QUARTERLY

The Journal of the Brothers of John the Steadfast

Vol. 1, No. 2, September 25, 2008



STEADFAST QUARTERLY

The Quarterly Journal of the Brothers of John the Steadfast

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A Word From Pastor Wilken

Churchmen, Not Company Men

The term “Company Man” has become common in the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod.

In corporate America, a “Company Man” is a loyal employee who tows the company line. He thinks what the company tells him to think, says what the company tells him to say, does what the company tells him to do. The company is always right, even when it’s wrong.

Corporate America runs from the top down. In corporate America, it’s the company’s way or the highway; you’re either a Company Man, or you’re out. After all, corporations are in business to make money. You don’t make money if your employees are off the reservation, or refuse to tow the company line.

So, why do we hear some pastors and leaders in the LCMS proudly refer to themselves as “Company Men”?

The answer is simple. Many in current LCMS leadership think that our Synod should be run like a company.

In this way of thinking, the congregations, laypeople and pastors of the LCMS owe their trust, their loyalty and their support to the company.

Many of the latest proposals from President Kieschnick’s Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance, if adopted, would push the LCMS even further in the direction of the corporate model. These proposals would, in part:

- eliminate* electoral circuits,
- make* executive staff answerable only to the president of the Synod,
- take away* any administrative role that program boards have over synodical staff,

(Continued on p. 34)

Featured Steadfast Parish Memorial, Houston, Texas By Elaine Gavin

Once upon a time--a half century ago, to be exact--a little boy named Scott Murray was born in Kitchener, Ontario. He can't remember wanting to be anything but a pastor. The years passed and the little boy grew in the grace and knowledge of his Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In due time, Scott Murray completed his studies at Concordia Theological Seminary, Ft. Wayne, and was ordained in Ontario in 1983. The Rev. Dr. Scott R. Murray is now pastor of Memorial Lutheran Church in Houston, Texas. Pastor Murray talks about Memorial's founding and membership:

Memorial Lutheran Church was founded 52 years ago by LCMS Lutherans that wanted a new congregation on the "far west" side of Houston. The founding pastor was Gene Oesch. The congregation bought property on Westheimer when it was a two-lane dirt road. We are now on the western edge of the Galleria, a financial and shopping hub in Houston, on an eight-lane surface street. The "far west" side of Houston is at least fifteen miles farther west now. What a great location this is for the gospel! Just recently, the congregation, after some debate, determined to remain at this location and started a building project. This project made our church much more visible to Westheimer.

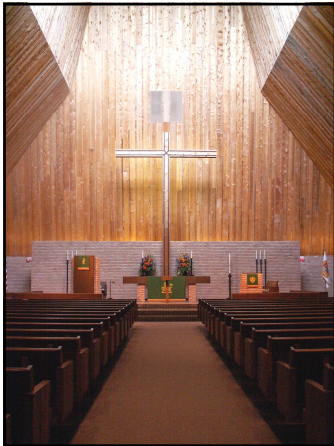
Like all Texas churches we have members who have Wendish heritage, although our congregation includes Vietnamese members, and a growing community of Africans, especially Tanzanian members. The congregation is relatively young, about ten years below the LCMS average. One-third of our members are 21 or younger. The majority of our hospital calls are for births. Memorial Lutheran Church serves



Pastor Murray in
Memorial's Pulpit



many professional people, especially oil people. That means there is a fast turnover of members, and we have members presently living in Europe, England, Libya, and Qatar.



The soaring chancel at Memorial

Memorial has always been a conservative, confessional Lutheran congregation, and they want to remain so, although Pastor Murray says that, when he arrived in 1996, the congregation wasn't always sure what that meant beyond "the Bible is the Word of God and we should vote for George Bush."

Memorial member, Robert Harvey, is chair of the Board of Finance, co-chair of the church's recent capital campaign, and an active participant on the building, construction, and dedication committees. He also serves the church at large on the Board of Directors of the Lutheran Academy and the Board of Regents of Concordia Theological Seminary in Ft. Wayne. He talks about the church:

I grew up in other LCMS churches in the Houston area at a time in the '60's when most local Lutheran churches were similar in practice. I briefly attended St. Matthew Lutheran when I returned to Houston in the early 1980's but found the church too liberal on multiple fronts. Once I arrived at Memorial, in the 1980's, I felt more at home and have felt that way ever since. I wasn't particularly aware of what was happening at other churches in the area until family members started to complain of changes in their congregations (and were ultimately forced to change churches).

Memorial is confessional in belief and practice. It has retained a traditional liturgy and strengthened such practice over time. It has two identical services on Sunday morning and a traditional "Sunday School hour" between the two services with a strong adult education component.

Over the years, preaching that properly distinguishes Law and Gospel and bib-

lical and confessional catechesis have taught the congregation to see the connection between faith and practice. Robert Harvey tells us what helps keep him firm in the faith:

[Our pastors] preach law and gospel with a heavy emphasis on gospel. . . We have an ongoing Scripture-focused Bible class for all adults. [The pastors], along with the Elders, have taken the congregation back to a traditional liturgy (we weren't that far off before), with communion each Sunday.

In fact, Memorial's return to celebrating the Eucharist every Sunday is an excellent case in point of solid catechesis. Pastor Murray describes what happened in his church several years ago:

Members came to the voters assembly and asked why the congregation was not offering every Sunday communion. Good teaching gave rise to hunger for the Supper.

Good teaching, indeed. Robert Harvey tells the story from his perspective as a catechized member:

Holy Communion has gained meaning to me as I have aged-- and perhaps matured-- in the church (which is to say that for many years I found communion redundant to other aspects of the service and time consuming--the dreaded page 15 Sunday.) Today, I know that Christ is literally present in the Sacrament and that through this Sacrament and His presence I gain strength to face the perils of the coming week. The magnitude of Christ's sacrifice on the Cross combined with His availing Himself directly to His people through this sacrament is impressed upon me each time I participate. I think that including the Eucharist each Sunday in all worship services has helped me realize that communion is an important blessing to be obtained whenever possible.



The body and blood of the Lord are served at Memorial from this chalice and paten.



Pastor Murray cites lack of enough hours in the day to do what he wants to do as his greatest frustration. Little wonder--he is a noted author, essayist, presenter, editor and lecturer. His writings include many books and magazine articles, plus a daily email devotion that reaches more than 900 subscribers all over the world. (Find it at www.mlchouston.org/memoriamoments). He is working on producing a radio program in Houston called, "Dying to Live," which will begin podcasting soon. At home, Pastor Murray is the husband of Maryann; they are the parents of Anastasia (20) and Hilary (16).

Pastor Murray has interesting insight on his experiences with baby boomers and younger adults in the church:

The twenty- and thirty-something's are especially insistent on the importance of confessional identity. The younger people are often much more respectful of tradition than their self-centered elders. They are less swift to throw over the gunwales things that they don't fully understand. The baby boomers are still trying to run the church like they run their lives: with a casualness that is fatal to integrity of practice. Often, our practice is attacked with nothing more than the question, "Why can't we . . ."

I enjoy working with the younger people, who do not come at Christianity with any preconceived animus, as did the baby boomers. Today, when you tell a twenty-something about the real presence in the sacrament of the altar, he or she says, "Cool! Tell me more about that." Twenty years ago boomers, said, "You don't believe that nonsense do you?" So there is an opening for faithful and confessional teaching today. Young people have a yearning for authenticity and mystery; those are certainly provided by thoughtful Christ-centered confessional Lutheranism.

We thank God for steadfast parishes like Memorial Lutheran, unwavering pastors like Scott Murray, and faithful laymen like Robert Harvey. Pastor Murray gets the last word:

I can't list all the joys I experience here, because you would run out of space.

The Blue Ribbon Plan

By Rev. Martin R. Noland

Introduction

In the realm of church structure and governance, reviews of the “big picture” need to be made about every ten conventions. These reviews are needed because the synod tinkers with its bylaws at every convention. Ten conventions, i.e., thirty years, of tinkering usually results in confusion in government and structure, duplication of effort, or worse.

I, therefore, offer my thanks to President Kieschnick for appointing in 2005 the “Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance.” I also offer my sincere thanks to each member of that committee, who have already spent countless hours on this necessary task, and who will undoubtedly spend many more. Thanks are also due to the members of the Commission on Structure, who help the synod keep tabs on needed changes in the interim.

The Proposals in General

The result of the work of the Blue Ribbon Task Force is the document “Walking Together: The LCMS Future,” available at the synod’s website (www.lcms.org). The specific proposals are described in the document “Proposals and Possibilities for Consideration and Discussion” (hereafter “Blue Ribbon Plan”; cited page numbers refer to this document). Although there are some good and needed proposals in the Blue Ribbon Plan, there are many others that are bad or unnecessary. Each change in structure or government needs to be considered on its own merits or demerits. The synod needs to beware of its habits at previous conventions. After passing a



couple of highly-debated resolutions, it often grew impatient and passed everything else that the chairmen recommended. The danger is that at the 2010 convention the delegates will get worn out and unwisely rubber-stamp harmful proposals.

This means that those who care about the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod need to review these proposals in advance, and identify which are bad or unnecessary. The demerits of the “bad or unnecessary” proposals should be publicized as early and as frequently as possible. Then the “good and necessary” proposals can be discussed in a positive way for the good of all members of the church, i.e, the “common good.” At the same time, we should be aware that changes in structure have a limited goal. They are not the way to synodical harmony and unity. The latter goals can only be achieved through deliberate



and fraternal discussion of theological issues, as many synodical leaders are reminding us.

The documents making up “Walking Together” lack two important features for making a definite response. First, reasons for the proposed change are lacking, in most cases. Second, specific proposed bylaws are lacking in all cases. We hope that the Task Force will provide both features in due time. In the meantime, the following can only be considered a provisional response because, lacking rationale and bylaws, the proposals are indefinite.

Conventions in Chains

Synodical and district conventions are the legislative bodies of The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod. They settle disputed questions, pass resolutions that must be enacted by someone else, adopt policies, and when necessary revise bylaws or the Constitution. There are many executive officers whose job it is to enact those resolutions. There is a judicial system that handles individual cases of dispute, heresy, and offense. Synodical and district conventions are also electoral bodies, i.e., they elect persons to office, and may remove them if necessary. The synodical and district conventions are thus the highest authority in the church and must be free in order to do their work properly.

The Missouri Synod did not invent synodical conventions. The word “synod” actually refers to regional assemblies of bishops and pastors, which date back to ca. 170 A.D. in the Christian church. The Council of Nicaea in 325 A.D. was the first “ecumenical council,” which was really just a “super-sized” synod. Such synods and councils were “representative” bodies, which means that they were opportunities for their members to freely **voice** their concerns, to have **fair settlement** of their differences, and to work together for the **common good**. These same purposes have been found in the Missouri Synod’s conventions, at least until now.



Many of the Blue Ribbon Plan proposals significantly impair the ability of synodical conventions to give the members of the synod

- * **voice** to their concerns,
- * **fair settlement** of differences, and
- * the ability to work together for the **common** good.

They also reduce the likelihood of **fair elections**. In a word, the Blue Ribbon Plan proposals pertaining to conventions are “anti-democratic.” If we do not carefully consider these proposals, the Missouri Synod will end up like the ELCA. Almost every ELCA member I know bemoans his church’s lack of democracy. James Nestingen, in a recent article in *Logia: A Journal of Lutheran Theology*, states that the ELCA is in its current state because too little attention was paid to the anti-democratic aspects of its polity at its founding in the late 1980's.

Why would the Task Force make such proposals? Although no one can presume individual motivations, the facts are that 1) most church leaders today are affected by the American corporate mind-set, which is strictly hierarchical; 2) many church leaders are heavily influenced by church consultants from evangelical and Pentecostal churches that are sectarian and accustomed to personality cults; 3) church leaders who lead “super-sized” congregations, or who have spent most of their careers in synodical office, often think that their opinions are more important than the rank-and-file pastor or layman. Thus they think their opinions should have more weight. After all, they are the experts, right?

WRONG! Although church leaders may know better HOW to do things, they are not experts on WHAT to do or WHY. Only the people of the church themselves know their concerns, their differences, and their common good. If the peoples’ expression of these things is stifled, then the concerns and good of the “experts” will become the focus of the conventions. If we claim to be a church that believes in the

“priesthood of all believers,” then the people’s concerns, differences, and common good should be the convention’s focus, not that of the “experts.”

Squelching the Voice of Members

Specific proposals that will impair the ability of the members of synod to have a **voice** include--

1. “eliminating electoral circuits” (p. 2);
2. eliminating free election of circuit counselors by congregational circuits (result of previous point and “involve the district president in the selection of circuit counselors,” p. 2);
3. reducing the number of voting delegates at synodical conventions (“a reduced number of voting delegates--either 625 or 850”, p. 4);
4. “elect national convention delegates at district conventions” (p. 4);
5. increasing the time between legislative conventions from three to six years (result of “hold a national convention every three years, alternating between a focused convention and a general convention,” p.4);
6. all but requiring overtures from congregations to be filtered through circuits for district conventions (“the individual member congregation is strongly encouraged to channel its overtures to the district convention . . . through a circuit forum . . . [these] will receive priority consideration,” p. 5);
7. all but requiring overtures to be filtered through **circuits and districts** for synod conventions (“the individual member congregation is strongly encouraged to channel its overtures to the national general convention . . . through the district convention . . . [these] will receive priority consideration,” p. 5);
8. requiring a two-thirds vote for doctrinal **resolutions**, while they presently only require a majority (“doctrinal resolutions . . . require a two-thirds vote for adoption,” p. 5); and
9. allowing doctrinal **statements** submitted by the CTCR to be adopted by two-thirds vote at a convention instead of **two-thirds of the congrega-**



tions of synod (result of “doctrinal statements . . . submitted by the CTCR . . . require a two-thirds vote for adoption,” p. 5).

10. creation of political caucuses, which will overwhelm the convention, as the Democratic Party and the ELCA discovered in the late twentieth century (result of “circuits could be formed . . . by affinity groups, by size of congregation, or by any other method,” p. 2). One is tempted to call this particular proposal the “ELCA Plan.”

Creating an Electoral Elite

Specific proposals that will impair the ability of the members of the synod to have a **fair settlement** of differences and **fair elections** include--

1. giving larger congregations more delegates to district conventions (“allow congregations with more than 750 members to be represented by two additional delegates for each additional unit of 750 confirmed members,” p. 4). This proposal seems to be democratic, but it is based on two fallacies. The first fallacy is that bigger congregations are thought to be more effective, and therefore deserve to have more voting power. But the grandfather of all “super-sizers,” Willow Creek Community Church in Chicago, recently acknowledged that its “super-size” status has resulted in **less** effectiveness in its religious ministry to its members. The second fallacy is that the unit of representation is the individual person in synod. The truth is that congregations make up the synod, not individuals; therefore congregations are the unit of representation. This is a direct deduction from Article V of the LCMS Constitution.

2. election of synodical delegates at district conventions by the majority bloc at that convention (result of “elect national convention delegates at district conventions from a list of congregational delegates to the district convention,” p. 4). This proposal means that synodical delegates will be representing not their congregations but the majority of dele-

gates at the district convention. District majorities will thus become the voting blocs in synod, and they will easily be controlled by district presidents. Democratic representation in the synod should be based on the member-unit, that is, the congregation no matter how small. The Blue Ribbon Plan will not give more voting power to the average laymen, but only to larger congregations and their pastors who will become the electoral elite.

There is also a proposal that will impair the ability of the **lay members** of the synod to have a voice and exert their “priesthood.” It will allow for the replacement of lay delegates with commissioned-minister delegates (result of “the ministers of religion-commissioned are . . . certainly eligible to serve as a congregation’s non-ordained delegate,” p.3). When commissioned ministers replace laymen as delegates, the latter will obviously have neither voice nor vote.

Relation of Synod to Its Members

People are often confused as to whether a resolution of the synod is binding on the “corporate synod” or its member congregations. When a resolution of the synod applies to a synodical officer or entity, that resolution is obviously binding. The synodical convention passes resolutions so that such officers and entities will enact them!

When the synodical convention passes a resolution that pertains to its member congregations, or church-workers in those congregations, a different relationship is involved. The language is in Article VII of the LCMS Constitution: “No resolution of the synod imposing anything upon the individual congregation is of binding force **if it is not** in accordance with the Word of God or if it appears to be inexpedient as far as the condition of a congregation is concerned.” This very important right of congregations is imperiled by this Blue Ribbon Plan statement: “The Synod expects every member congregation of the synod to respect its resolutions



and consider them of binding force **on the assumption** that they are in accordance with the Word of God and that they are applicable to the condition of the congregation” (p. 5).

The difference between the two wordings is that the historic position gives the individual congregation the right to decide. The new wording eliminates that right, because it eliminates the language of conditional exception in Article VII. At best, the new wording is ambiguous, which will encourage many more lawsuits between congregations and synod when synod tries to enforce its “rules.” At worst, the new wording will be an “iron fist” that forces congregations to comply with the will of the synod.

More Power for the President

An important “check” on the power of the synodical president has been the fact that he is up for election at every convention, i.e., every three years. The Blue Ribbon Plan would increase his tenure to six years (result of “standardize terms of office for all elected officials,” p. 3 and “six-year, staggered terms of office,” p. 4). This gives a bad president more time to do damage before he is called to account. This, too, is “anti-democratic.”

An important “balance” on the power of the synodical president has been the allocation of many important functions of the synod to “program boards.” The program boards would lose control over these functions **and** lose authority over the choice of and control of the corresponding executives under the Blue Ribbon Plan (result of “allow for a minimal number of executives who report directly to the president of the synod . . . all program boards would function in an advisory rather than an administrative role,” p. 3). These executives would become dependent functionaries of the synodical president, thus radically increasing his power between conventions. This, too, is “anti-democratic.”

Reshaping of Districts

The last proposal we will consider is the comprehensive plan to redistrict the synod (result of “increase the number of districts from 35 to 100,” p. 2). District boundaries determine a number of things: which and how many congregations attend district conventions, jurisdiction of district presidents, service areas for district staff, constituencies for district boards and commissions, and, most important, the fellowship of Lutherans that one knows by name.

The size of districts affects each of these in different ways. Smaller, and thus more, districts seem to make more sense for visitation purposes. But if the plan to increase the number of districts means a proportional increase in total district expenses, then the amount of revenue going to the national synod will be even less than present. That may be the reason that the Blue Ribbon Plan recommends the consolidation of district offices and staff (“these smaller districts could be organized into regions for staffing and for the resourcing of congregations,” p.2). District staff should be concerned that most of them will be “terminated” under this proposal, which the Task Force evidently believes is a good thing. When the synod makes even small changes in staffing, it should make provision for the “terminated” staff with adequate salary and benefits in the interim, until they are placed in a new position. To do any less is to belie the claim that servants of the church are “brothers.”

My chief concern is that the proposal to redistrict the synod will result in the alteration of boundaries in order to achieve political goals. Visitation of parishes could be improved, not by making more district presidents, but by specifying that district vice-presidents will perform this important duty. The number of vice-presidents in a district could then be determined by the number of parishes, e.g., one vice-president for every 60 parishes. Therefore the proposal to redistrict is really unnecessary, since its most



important goal can be achieved without abandoning the historic state boundaries.

Taking Action

What can you do about these things?

1. Educate yourself in matters of church government and structure. I recommend the following books available from Concordia Publishing House: C.S. Meyer, ed., *Moving Frontiers*; August Suelflow, ed., *Heritage in Motion*; C.F.W. Walther, *The True Visible Church and the Form of a Christian Congregation*; and C.F.W. Walther, *Essays for the Church*.

2. Spread the word about the “bad or unnecessary” Blue Ribbon Plan proposals. Make copies of this essay, and share it with pastors and lay leaders you know. For future communications and news, share the website address of Brothers of John the Steadfast (www.steadfastlutherans.org).

Conclusion

Keep our synod and all of its leaders in your prayers, that they may have the wisdom necessary to lead our church in a God-pleasing way. Remember that the persons you might disagree with are brothers (or sisters) in Christ. They deserve your respect and thanks, even when you disagree. Remember that what unites us is not personality or polity, but our common confession of Christ crucified, as proclaimed by the prophets and apostles in Holy Scriptures, and as explicated in our Lutheran confessions.

Statue of C. F. W. Walther at
LCMS headquarters

Church Newswatch

What's Going On in the Church at Large?

By Jennifer Jordan

The Presbyterian Church – USA has begun the process of revising the Heidelberg Catechism. According to the PC-USA's news service, most of the discussion focused on Question 87: "Can those who do not turn to God from their ungrateful, impenitent life be saved?" Currently, the answer reads, "Certainly not! Scripture says, 'Surely you know that the unjust will never come into possession of the kingdom of God. Make no mistake: no fornicator or idolater, none who are guilty either of adultery or of homosexual perversion, no thieves or grabbers or drunkards or swindlers, will possess the kingdom of God.'" The proposed change would eliminate the phrase, "or of homosexual perversion" as well as the introductory sentence, "Certainly not! Scripture says, 'Surely you know that the unjust will never come into possession of the kingdom of God. Make no mistake.'" Advocates of the change state that before 1962, homosexuality was not specifically mentioned in the list of vices condemned, and it is not mentioned in either the original German or Latin versions of the Catechism.

PCUSA

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Presiding Bishop Rev. Mark Hanson, along with three other officials, has written an open letter to the presidential candidates. Among many other social justice issues mentioned, the letter calls for presidential candidates to "Re-engage the United States in the international talks on global warming and ensure full participation by the U.S. in the development and implementation of any new agreements, leading by proposing legislation that reduces greenhouse gas emissions by 15 to 20 percent by 2020 and at least 80 percent of 2000 levels by the year 2050." Perhaps of more immediate concern

ELCA



is a request for candidates to “Propose a comprehensive health care plan that provides affordable access to basic physical and mental health care for all Americans, particularly those who are vulnerable.” As Mark D. Tooley, writing at FrontPageMagazine.com asks, “Is God a liberal Democrat?” Apparently so, if the ELCA is consulted. The entire letter can be read at <<http://tiny.cc/letter269>> Note that this is a .pdf document.

Emergent Village, a clearing house of sorts for one of the streams in the Emergent church, has started an Open Source Sermon wiki and has invited readers to contribute. The emergent/emerging church can be considered more like a delta, with some streams wandering right into the swamp of heterodoxy, and others wandering much less off the straight and narrow. Should your curiosity get the better of you, you can read more at <http://tiny.cc/OS_sermon>.



Pastor Andy Simcak addresses the Texas Confessional Lutherans in Brenham, Texas

Not Your Grandfathers' Church

Visits to Not-So-Steadfast Churches

By Phillip Magness

Recently I had the opportunity to visit an LCMS congregation in the north-west suburbs of Chicago. Entering a large sanctuary with free-standing altar and beautiful stained glass, I was cautiously optimistic as I took my seat for the 8:00 "traditional" service to the accompaniment of "Praise, My Soul, the King of Heaven" on the organ.

However, I soon began to notice some of the signs I've come to recognize as indicative of post-Lutheran congregations: no hymnals in the pews, no baptismal font in view, and the presence of casually dressed "worship leaders." Sure enough, at 8:01, a smiling gentleman in a golf shirt and sandals greeted and then began to "lead" us in the opening hymn. I put the word "lead" in quotes because he missed the opening pitches, changed tempos regularly, and held the high notes for longer than their assigned value. The organist clearly had a hard time following him, but some in the congregation eagerly followed his cues, and we all did get through it because it was a well-known hymn ("Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah").

This "song leader" then continued in the charismatic "lead worshipper" tradition, offering an *ex corde* prayer after this hymn, followed by exhortations to the congregation to shout out "Praise God!" and "Amen!" He did this throughout the morning, at one point admonishing the assembly with "we've been doing this for three years, now! Come on, let me hear you!" After our song leader/liturgist had his "prayer time," a casually dressed woman came forward to read the lessons, which had no relationship to the preaching to come nor the songs that were sung, and the congregation had no response to the readings. Interestingly enough, before the Gospel was read the congregation stood and sang the Gloria Patri from the old TLH page 5 service! I guess this was inserted because this was the "traditional" service, and the Gloria Patri is the one thing from the old liturgy that sounds somewhat like a praise chorus. Even it



was led by the songleader, who held up his hands in the charismatic position before the lady read the Holy Gospel. The overall effect of this Service of the Word (i.e. the second part of the liturgical pattern of Preparation-Word-Sacrament-Thanksgiving) was sort of a "time out" before the pastor finally came out to preach.

The pastor, clad in tie instead of collar, told several funny stories that led into his message, which was not based at all on the readings of the day. A review of the sermon itself would require a separate article, but if you've heard Chuck Swindoll before, you'd have a good idea of the theology of glory that was unpackaged in this sermon, which could have been titled "God Reigns in Our Failures." Calvin and Zwingli would have been especially pleased with the teaching that God *intends* sin so that He may be glorified.

After the lesson in double predestination, it was the pastor's turn to lead the people in an ex corde prayer. This prayer led into a prayer of repentance, in which the pastor paused for a moment to allow people to individually confess their sins in silence. Ironically, though the worship leaders allowed plenty of time for vocal expressions of praise, the pastor allowed no more than two or three seconds for people to silently reflect on their sin and rend their hearts before God. Evidently, repentance is something that can be dispensed with rather quickly. Because this was the "traditional" service, the pastor's prayer was followed by a corporate confession of sin, read together from the bulletin. Unfortunately, it was not one of the well-crafted confessions from the liturgy, and as a result so much was missed. No confession of total depravity, no acknowledgement of the righteousness of God's judgment, no confession of sins of omission as well as commission, and no confession of original sin. Instead, the bulletin prayer led people to confess their "weakness" and praised God for forgiving them. While certainly we should praise God for the forgiveness of our sins, it seemed rather presumptive to start doing that before the Absolution! At any rate, the pastor did forgive people in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.



Then we sat down. I expected the offering to be received, but instead the pastor launched into the Words of Institution, which he said while uncovering the elements on the altar! Other than the Peace exchanged between pastor & congregation immediately afterwards, this was the entirety of the communion liturgy. The continuous line communion kept the Lord's Supper down to about three minutes, while the worship leader sang a praise song--except when he was assisting with communion distribution. At those times there were lulls in the song, as the congregation wasn't participating.

The service concluded with the pastor saying "Let's pray!" and then improvising an ex corde prayer with at least seven uses of the adverb "just." This was accompanied by soft music on the piano. There was no Benediction. Then, though there was a closing hymn listed in the bulletin, the worship leader sang a "Gospel" song, complete with repeated chorus modulating up by half-step and ending with a romantic ritard and fermata on the high note before the final cadence. The weepy lady behind me cried out "Thank you, Lord Jesus" and several other people shouted "Amen!" as the congregation burst out into applause. Later, at the "blended" service, the worship leader would sing the same song before the sermon, at the beginning of which the pastor brought the soloist back out in front of the congregation for a standing ovation.

Clearly this nominally Lutheran congregation is being taken over by neo-charismatics. While there were a couple hundred folks at the services I attended that morning who were definitely into this style of worship, there were many quiet and uncomfortable folks around. I'm sure many of them are lifelong Lutherans who just don't know where else to go. Looking on the synod's attendance statistics for this church, I can see that a few hundred folks have evidently left in search of greener pastures; one hopes they didn't end up on the golf course. As in many European countries today, it seems in the LCMS the "natives" are leaving while the "Muslims" are moving in. One wonders why these charismatics want to take over a beautiful, historic Lutheran church when they could simply have built their own church--but then one realizes that by taking over a Lutheran church they get a facility and a location that is much better than the pole-barn "praise tabernacle" they would have built on the outskirts of town. It's just like Muslims in France. They don't want to become French; they want France to become Muslim so they can keep their culture but enjoy the beautiful buildings, the fine art, and the tasty cheeses. France seems to be waking up to this threat by electing a man (French President Nicolas Sarkozy) who wants to save their nation and their culture. Will the LCMS wake up in time and elect a synod president who similarly loves the Lutheran Church?



Quote of the Quarter from a Steadfast Layman On the Brothers Website

From Eric Ramer, in response to the discussion of Pastor Klemet Preus' post [Blended Worship in our Midst](#), September 11, 2008, www.steadfastlutherans.org

(Editor's Note: Eric is responding to a comment that proposed that worship be developed around the felt needs of consumers.)

I'm afraid I can't agree with the pre-supposed positions you bring to the discussion. First, the idea that Christ communicated clearly with his "audience" strikes me as off the mark. My recollection of several Gospel accounts of Christ's sermons/teachings is that afterwards he would often ask the disciples if they understood his message, which he then had to explain to them, or they often followed, without prompting, by asking that most Lutheran of questions: "What does this mean?" It's not that his teachings were unclear or obscure so much as the people receiving the word, stuck in their sinful nature, were not predisposed to accept and understand it. He didn't water down or sugar coat the message to make it easier for them to understand. Perhaps your perception of the traditional liturgy/hymnody as being irrelevant, limiting or obscure is more about your perception than it is about the liturgy. The notion that the traditional worship form, liturgy and music are irrelevant, limiting or obfuscatinal, either by design or social construct is not only completely wrong, it's insulting

In the 1830's Charles Finney said: "Without new measures it is impossible that the Church should succeed in gaining the attention of the world to religion. There are so many exciting subjects constantly brought before the public mind, such a running to and fro, so many that cry 'Lo here!' and 'Lo there!' that the Church cannot maintain her ground without sufficient novelty in measures, to get the public ear." (Charles Grandison Finney, *Revival Lectures*, Grand Rapids: Flemming H. Revell, n.d., 309.) In the 1830's! Interestingly, this preceded the formation of the Lutheran Church Missouri Synod, which grew and flourished, even using the liturgy and hymnody that you find irrelevant and outdated, as did Mr. Finney 170 years ago. It kind of belies the point that it is the music and form that is limiting the work of the Holy Spirit.

We hope you will join the discussion at www.steadfastlutherans.org.

Featured Steadfast Blog

Dan @ Necessary Roughness

By Jennifer Jordan

Necessary Roughness: Two Kingdoms, Hundreds of Thousands of Miles. <<http://necessaryroughness.org>>

Dan has become something of a fixture in the Lutheran Blogosphere, easily recognizable by the referee icons that accompany each of his posts. According to Dan, you might like Necessary Roughness if—

You feel true Christianity isn't represented by the most recognizable people who claim to be Christians.

You don't trust politicians to act according to your best interest rather than theirs.

You have a fascination with unintended consequences.

You like the occasional travel pictures, hotel reports, and church visits.

You enjoy a chant once in a while.

“Enjoy a chant once in a while,” eh? Do we have a Steadfast Lutheran on our hands? Sure enough, and a singing one, too. Via email, Dan told *The Steadfast Quarterly*,

One idea I am kicking around with my pastor is getting a monthly piano-led hymn-sing going at our house. Such an informal setting with lots of music might be a good way for guys (and ladies) to get musical instruction and practice they didn't get in school. We can teach the ability of music to plant the knowledge of God into the minds of our children, and we can show that when we do sing the Divine Service, we are singing the Word of God.

One of the services that Dan's blog provides is roving reviews of churches; he travels two or three weeks out of every month and has put his Sundays (and Wednesdays, during the penitential seasons) away from home to good use. As of this writing there are some 73 entries in Dan's “church visits” category. Perhaps he's visited *your* church.



We asked Dan what hobby he has that would make a Pietist squirm. He told us that he loves sinus-clearing crispy-fried hot wings. Fried! That's certainly not healthy! But upon reflection, we're sure the heat helps with his singing during the cold and flu season, so perhaps it's not such a guilty pleasure after all. Thank you for your steadfastly Lutheran contribution to the Lutheran blogosphere, Dan @ Necessary Roughness. Good old John the Steadfast looks like a guy who would join you in your wings. Careful, gentlemen! Don't stain that copy of the Augsburg Confession!

Steadfast Dads

By Jennifer Jordan

There's something about a man's voice that makes little children feel safe. How many babies fight sleep in the wee hours of the morning, long after Mom has sung herself hoarse with three-hundred and twenty-seven rounds of "Jesus Loves Me" only to fall into deep sleep moments after Dad takes over and starts croaking out "The Lion Sleeps Tonight"?

How many people love the sound of Gregorian chant, even though very few people understand Latin? There's something about a male voice.

Our Lord knows this. He makes mention, often, of the Shepherd's voice, and just as your Pastor is the voice of the Shepherd in the Divine Service, so are fathers the voice of the Shepherd to their families.

Let your children hear you sing, dear fathers! Sing in the Divine Service; sing in the shower. Sing in the car during your commute if you feel you need to practice in privacy. Sing while you mow the lawn; the mower will cover your mistakes. Unless of course, you're a true pietist, and use a reel mower.

"But what should I sing?" you ask. Start with the liturgy. It's familiar to you and to your children, and wholly appropriate for tucking your little ones in at bedtime. (You are doing that, right? Most of children's deepest questions, and their most theologically-minded ones, come at bedtime. Be there to answer them whenever you can. You are their home-pastor!) Learn hymns. Purchase a

(continued on p. 35)

Vocatio and the Fides Defensor

By Craig Parton

Much has been justly written on the importance of regaining a Reformation perspective on vocation or *vocatio* (see, for example, the works of Gene Veith, William Lazareth, and George Forell). Those discussions need to occur as conservative Reformation congregations in particular are ripe for the deadly cocktail which combines a high view of the ordained public ministry (good idea, for it rightly protects pulpit and altar) with a low view of the ability of the laity in their *vocatio* to properly distinguish between law and gospel (bad idea, as the laity then leave the Great Commission and universal call of all Christians to evangelize their neighbor to the “trained professionals”). Our Adversary surely will be all chips in on any deal that harms the furtherance of the Gospel if the “downside” is that the Church keeps its internal ecclesiastical house in order to serve an already heaven-bound clientele.

Luther was right--all of us have a general call to serve Christ and our neighbor in our *vocatio* or “common life” as he called it. Luther highly valued, for example, the *vocatio* of motherhood, esteeming it and the common labors of, say, a servant girl to be of infinitely higher value than all the prayers and fastings of the monastic orders founded on works righteousness. Some vocations have natural, structural connections to the Gospel. For example, physicians have routine contact with people experiencing suffering and the effects of sin. Christian physicians work with the stamp of approval of Christ Himself on the practice of relieving suffering--no mean thing. Similarly, the *vocatio* of being an artist, musician, or filmmaker has layers of possible connection to the Gospel and to the supporting of a biblical world view. Some vocations have a more difficult connection--say, the *vocatio* of packaging Frito corn chips all day long. But those connections exist in **every** legitimate *vocatio* as every area is sanctified by the one in whom the Holy Spirit lives and who lived His “common life” amongst us as the son of a carpenter. So, for example, preparing fine cuisine (even, and this is painful to admit, Lutheran potlucks) has direct connections to the biblical worldview as food and feasts are central to the biblical record (think Old Testament feast days, the Last Supper, Holy Communion, and the eschatological Marriage Supper of the Lamb), and clearly a



chef can climb up the Michelin Guide listing “for the greater glory of God and the kingdom of His Christ.”

It so happens that the *vocatio* of a lawyer has particularly deep and organic connections to the biblical record and to Christ as the center of that record. Moses was the First Law Giver and Paul was legally trained under the great Rabbinic trial lawyer, Gamaliel. Deeper still, though, the theological use of the Law to drive one to Christ runs deep in Reformation theology. In addition, the Bible speaks highly (as did the Reformers) of the civil use of law to punish evildoers and to keep society from cannibalism (Romans 13). On an even more central level, Luther argued forcefully from the original text that the central doctrine of all Scripture (justification by grace alone through faith alone on account of Christ alone) was best understood as a fundamental change in our legal standing before God as Judge. Contrary to Eastern Orthodox theology, this is not a western (or Latin) imposition of juridical language trumped up by Augustine and laminated onto the Vulgate—no, the courtroom picture bubbles right out of the biblical text itself.

It may come as a surprise, but lawyers have actually been some of the ablest defenders of the Christian faith throughout Christian history. That is not solely attributable to their unique training in evidence and advocacy. The reasons run deeper and relate to how the defense of the Christian position to the world is presented in Scripture, the role of truth claims in the biblical material, and what Christianity presents as its central verifiable claim.

Lawyers As Fides Defensors

There is a long and distinguished history amongst lawyers of subjecting the primary source biblical material, and the central factual claim of those documents, to evidentiary scrutiny. Certainly as early as the lawyer and church father Tertullian, and continuing through Hugo Grotius (the so-called “Father of International Law”) to this day, Christian lawyers have either been brought to saving faith through the human means of applying their legal training to the person and work of Jesus Christ found in the primary source documents, or have applied their legal training as advocates in the defense of the facticity of the Christian truth claims. Grotius wrote the first formal textbook of Christian apologetics in the 16th century, while Simon Greenleaf (Dean of the Harvard Law School in the 19th century) applied the laws of evidence to Matthew,

Mark, Luke and John to conclude that they would be considered extraordinarily reliable witnesses to the facts to which they attest. More recently, we have seen some of the great trial lawyers and legal minds either become Christians or argue for the superiority of Christian truth claims based on the quality of the evidence (see works by Lord Hailsham--Lord High Chancellor of England, Sir Norman Anderson, Jacques Ellul, and John Warwick Montgomery).

But what is it about the *vocatio* of the law (*vocatio juridica*) that makes it so helpful for proclaiming and defending the Christian faith? Is it because lawyers are naturally more spiritual than other people, or nicer or more naive, or demand less proof before making a religious commitment? Hardly!

First and foremost, the law is interested in facts. Underneath every legal dispute is a factual dispute. The law, and especially the English Common Law which was largely adopted by the framers of the American Constitution, developed very sophisticated mechanisms for determining what evidence was admissible, whether documents were reliable or not, and whether or not a witness was lying.

Second, a good lawyer zeroes in on what is central to win his case and largely ignores the rest. A tested trial lawyer with one winning argument and twelve okay other arguments will drop the other twelve and move in for the kill.

Finally, the law is designed to resolve disputes. Because of this central focus, it reaches verdicts or judgments. Right or wrong, a jury or a judge must make a decision and decide which side is in fact right (unlike, say, mediating Anglicans or most theologians).

The implications for Christian proclamation should be apparent: **The Christian should center his presentation of Christianity on facts, should center those facts on what the text itself says is the central issue (the resurrection), and should go for a verdict.** Errors abound in Christianity today over ignoring the perils that come from the failure to follow these three basic points. So, certain Calvinists fail to consider the power of blunt facts and require that the unbeliever make numerous assumptions *ab initio* about the nature of the world in order to even comprehend Christian truth claims, evangelicals fail to keep the resurrection central and thus mess with speculation about either the beginning or end of the world, and Lutherans fear going for a verdict lest they fall into syncretism or Arminianism, so they only preach and never engage in “greasy” persuasion and thus “stay pure,” all the while enjoying their sacred potlucks at the expense of any appreciable impact.



Vocatio Juridica et Apologia

Now we shall apply several of the daily tools of the *vocatio juridica* to current apologetical issues. This is much more central and productive than discussing the obvious issues that being a Christian lawyer raises (yes, you must be ethical; yes, you should try to represent people who can't pay but who are being unjustly treated; yes, you should treat your employees nicely; yes, you should act like a Christian in your practice, etc.; but these purely ethical issues unfortunately consume 99% of Christian Lawyer Society-type meetings).

The Christian, as the advocate who is presenting “evidence that demands a verdict,” has the burden of proof. This is hardly common knowledge today, especially in pietistic circles where it is 100% about “glowing lives” lived before the unbelievers and 0% about the presentation of an external and objective Gospel to those same unbelievers (Luther's *extra nos* Gospel). So many Christians give the impression to unbelievers that if the evidence for unbelief and the evidence for Christian faith are about equal, then one should default into Christian belief (a perversion of Pascal's “Wager Argument” to be sure). This is a disastrous approach. The Christian evangelist is actually the plaintiff asserting the claims of Christianity and as such has the burden of proof. Since the evidence for Christian faith is overwhelmingly strong, this burden should be happily accepted and the Christian should provide positive evidence (not merely negative critiques of aberrant worldviews) for Christian faith. Simply telling others what is wrong with their position does not, *ipso facto*, establish the truth of Christianity. Proving, for example, that Islam is false does not mean Christianity is suddenly true.

Interpretations are only as valid as the facts they are built upon. Either the judge or the jury will come to one proper interpretation of the facts. No post-modern nonsense about “everyone creates their own reality” is allowed reign in a Court of law. Facts are discernible and the best interpretation is that which fits the facts best. Facts are established by reliable and competent evidence.

As important, the standard of proof for any issue of fact no matter how unique that fact may be (say, the resurrection of a man from the dead) is

never 100%. Only proof “beyond a reasonable doubt to a moral certainty” is required in criminal proceedings where the death penalty may be the result, where a simple 51% of the “preponderance of the evidence” is necessary in a civil case. The application of this to evangelism and apologetics should be plain: No one can ever demand that the case for Christianity be proven to “100% certainty.” As the analytical philosophers in the last century have shown us, such proof in issues of fact is not even possible as only matters of deductive logic and mathematics reach such a level and that is only because “certainty” is already defined into those systems. Christianity, on the other hand, makes factual and historical claims (the physician-evangelist Luke tells us that Christ was born when Quirinius was governor of Syria and that He suffered under Pontius Pilate). An absolute standard of certainty for the case for Christianity, therefore, can never in principle be obtained and cannot be required by the unbeliever. In fact, the deity “proven” to 100% certainty would be purely formal anyway--a formula, if you will, that could be carried around on a 3 x 5 card in one’s wallet. Clean and sterile, to be sure, but hardly comforting and hardly the presentation of Our Heavenly Father in the primary source documents who has each hair on our head numbered and whose Son is a “Good Shepherd” to His lost and wandering sheep.

The central claim of Christianity is that Jesus Christ is God in the flesh, come to earth to live a perfect life and die an atoning death for the sins of the world, and that His resurrection from the dead vindicates His claim to be God. Admittedly, claims are cheap. But in Christianity, the claims of Christ are nailed to the facticity of His resurrection. Destroy the resurrection and you decimate Christianity. All that would be left is ethics, but the ethics of Christianity are not unique to Christianity, as C.S. Lewis showed (see the Appendix to the *The Abolition of Man*, where Lewis chronicles what he calls the “Tao” of universal and cross-cultural ethics found in the teachings of all the major world religions). A host of unbelieving lawyers, aware of Christianity’s Achilles’ heel, have quite rightly waged their central attack on the resurrection. A disturbing number have become Christians as a result. Put perversely, the Christian layman would do well to *lose* an argument centered on the resurrection rather than win arguments relating to creationism, prayer in public schools, and the right to bear arms. Christians on the left and on the right are tragically deceived when they put all their energy into trying to *transform* society by improving ethics (exchanging the transforming power of the Gospel for the condemning and constraining power of the law). Christianity actually does not teach that societies can be transformed. Societies, at best, can only be *reformed*. Ethics are nice, but there are ethical people in Hell who, say, never violated the Sixth Commandment throughout their lives. Only people can be trans-



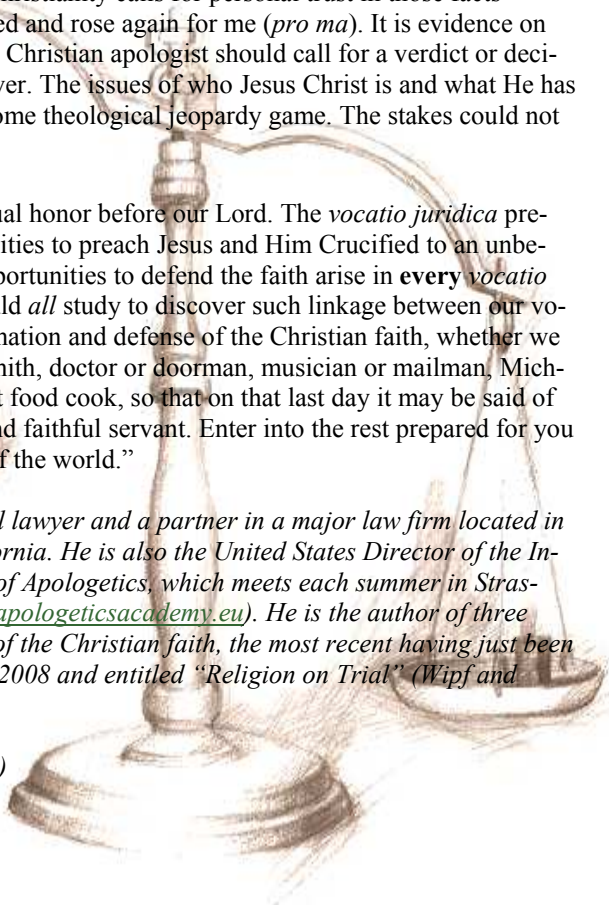
formed and that can occur for their eternal good only through Jesus Christ.

A lawyer goes for a verdict. Similarly, Christianity does not merely call for assent (*assensus*) to facts. The Devil assents to the facts of Christianity and at least he trembles. Christianity calls for personal trust in those facts (*fiducia*) that Jesus died and rose again for me (*pro me*). It is evidence on which the laymen and Christian apologist should call for a verdict or decision from the unbeliever. The issues of who Jesus Christ is and what He has done are not part of some theological jeopardy game. The stakes could not be higher.

All *vocatio*s have equal honor before our Lord. The *vocatio juridica* presents unique opportunities to preach Jesus and Him Crucified to an unbelieving world. But opportunities to defend the faith arise in **every** *vocatio* and therefore we should *all* study to discover such linkage between our vocation and the proclamation and defense of the Christian faith, whether we are a lawyer or locksmith, doctor or doorman, musician or mailman, Michelin Guide chef or fast food cook, so that on that last day it may be said of us “well done good and faithful servant. Enter into the rest prepared for you from the foundation of the world.”

Craig Parton is a trial lawyer and a partner in a major law firm located in Santa Barbara, California. He is also the United States Director of the International Academy of Apologetics, which meets each summer in Strasbourg, France (www.apologeticsacademy.eu). He is the author of three books on the defense of the Christian faith, the most recent having just been released in August of 2008 and entitled “Religion on Trial” (Wipf and Stock Publishers).

(Endnotes on page 32)



¹“A faithful servant girl does more good, accomplishes more, and is far more dependable—even if she only takes a sack from the back of an ass—than all the priests and monks who sing themselves to death day and night while making bloody martyrs of themselves.” Martin Luther, *Werke; Kritische Gesamtausgabe*. Vol. 10, 38 (Weimar: Bohlau, 1883).

² Shock of shocks, there is *not* a *vocatio* of being a Mafia hit man or a prostitute, since neither profession can be undertaken without committing sin. God never calls anyone to be a con artist.

³For a superb treatment of this, see Robert Preus, *Justification and Rome* (St. Louis: Concordia Academic Press, 1997).

⁴ See Parton, “*Appearing Before God Without a Lawyer*,” *Modern Reformation Magazine*, Vol. 15, No.3 (May/June 2006).

⁵Hugo Grotius, *On the Truth of the Christian Religion* (London: Bayne & Son, 1825).

⁶See Simon Greenleaf, *The Testimony of the Evangelists: The Gospels Examined by the Rules of Evidence* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Books, 1995).

⁷For a detailed discussion of the impact of these and many other English, French and American lawyers on the defense of the faith, see Ross Clifford’s *Leading Lawyers’ Case for the Resurrection* (Edmonton: Canadian Inst. For Law, Theology and Public Policy, 1996); Parton, *The Defense Never Rests* (St. Louis: Concordia Publishing House, 2004).

⁸Contrary to the belief of those who get apoplectic over anyone (read “Billy Graham”) suggesting a “day of decision,” calling for such a decision in evangelism does not mean one necessarily denies the *sola fide* or the *sola gratia*, has fallen into Arminian heresy, and is now teaching “decisional regeneration.” It is what one teaches the catechumen about salvation and saving faith after they are saved that may turn the *sola fide* and the *sola gratia* into the proverbial dog returning to its syncretistic vomit.



From the Editor

Thoughts on Restructuring

Rev. Frederic W. Baue, Ph.D



Recently I got into a conversation with a neighbor who has an Obama sign in his yard. I was asking him the rationale for the liberal political outlook.

He replied that it all begins with Darwin. The ape was a social creature long before human consciousness evolved. To ensure survival, the desires of the individual must be subordinated to the needs of the group. Government is just an extension of society, and has the obligation to provide for the needs of society: health care, education, welfare, etc.

It occurred to me that if you reject Darwin and begin with the Bible, you get a completely different result. This is not to say that God is a Republican. Rather, what you get from Scripture is a distinction between the duties of the church and the duties of the state. Jesus says to his disciples, "The greatest among you shall be the servant of all." St. Paul says, "[The ruler] is an... avenger who carries out God's wrath on the wrongdoer."

The church operates on the principle of love: forgiving sins, preaching the word, administering the sacraments, almsgiving, and so forth.

The state operates on the principle of force: making laws, enforcing them, collecting taxes, apprehending and punishing criminals, waging war, and so forth.

Problems ensue when the state tries to operate on the principle of love and when the church begins to operate on the principle of force. In government you get the welfare state, and in church you get the Spanish Inquisition.

We should be wary of the new proposals for re-structuring synod. They put more political power in the hands of the president of Synod, who should be focusing on the Word of God.

A Word from Wilken

(cont.'d from p. 3)

- lower* the number of voting delegates at national convention,
- decrease* the accountability of synodical leadership by decreasing the frequency of general conventions,
- double* the term of office for officers to 6 years,
- discourage* overtures to the national convention from congregations,
- make* overtures from congregations a lower priority at convention.

In short, President Kieschnick's Blue Ribbon Task Force on Synod Structure and Governance is proposing that the LCMS be run like more like a company and less like a synod. One can only imagine what the term "Company Man" will mean in this LCMS of the future.

Are we all destined to become Company Men, towing the company line?

Not necessarily. You see, in corporate America, you're either a Company Man or you're out --but not so in the Church.

In the Church there are no Company Men. In the Church there are only Churchmen.

A Churchman is loyal to the Word of God. He thinks what the Word tells him to think, says what the Word tells him to say, does what the Word tells him to do. The Word is always right because it comes from Christ himself.

A Churchman knows the difference between the Church and corporate America. He knows that the Church isn't a company and can't be run like one. He knows that the Word of God alone must rule in the Church.

A Churchman knows a Company Man when he sees one. A Churchman sees right through a Company Man. A Churchman knows that Company Men don't serve the Word of God.

No, a Churchman won't support the company; but he will give his last breath to see to it that the Word is preached purely. Why? Because a Churchman loves the Word of God, the Savior that it reveals, and the people for whom that Savior died.



(*Steadfast Dads*, continued from p. 35)

copy of your congregation's hymnal for use at home. If you don't read music, there are several on-line "hymnals" that include sound files. CyberHymnal at <www.cyberhymnal.org> is easy to search through and includes a MIDI soundtrack for each hymn.

This past summer saw the launch of several resources tailor-made for singing-shy Steadfast Dads. First, we saw a DVD produced by the Good Shepherd Institute and published by Concordia Publishing House. Narrated by Rev. Dr. Richard Resch, *Singing the Faith* contains some handy sequences of what we might dare to call "Lutheran Karaoke." Great for practicing a bit of singing, the words are scrolled on the bottom of the screen for many of the outstanding hymns discussed in this series. There is no bouncing ball, however. You'll have to read along on your own. Also released recently was a shorter DVD entitled *Children Making Music*, which outlines the importance of raising musical children to carry the musical legacy the Lutheran church has inherited forward to the next generation. Read more about it at <<http://worship.lcms.org/ChildrensDVDResources>>

This July, CPH made available in one volume all the catechism songs that have been released on a rolling basis over the last few years with the Growing in Christ Sunday School curriculum. By setting the entire Small Catechism to music that is memorable but not annoying, the *Steadfast Quarterly's* own Philip Magness has provided a wonderful treasure for dads to share with their children. It is available both as a song book with guitar chords and a low-cost CD. Both the songbook and the CD are called *Sing the Faith*, not to be confused with *Singing the Faith*, discussed above. It's just possible that it will forestall the "Are we there yet?" questions on your next vacation.

Finally, for those of you who may already be confident singers, consider the *The Brotherhood Prayer Book*. The Psalms, the Daily Office, and more, all set with the Gregorian chant tones they have been associated with for time immemorial, and in English. Read more at <<http://www.llpb.us/>>

Most importantly, though, is you as a dad sing. Show your son that real men praise their Lord and sing their prayers. Be a model to your daughter of the man you want her to marry someday. After all, would you rather have your son-in-law singing your grandbabies to sleep with "The Lion Sleeps Tonight" or with "Now Rest Beneath Night's Shadow?"

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The *Steadfast Quarterly* invites your input. If you are interested in writing a feature article, please contact Pastor Baue at fbaue@steadfastlutherans.org. Reader letters, nominations for Quote of the Quarter or Steadfast Parish/Blog, stories from the pews, or items for the Church Newswatch are invited and may be sent to either Pastor Rossow or Cheryl Magness at the addresses below:

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