



The Lutheran Herald

The Evangelical Lutheran Diocese of North America (ELDoNA)

October 2006 Issue—Festival of the Reformation

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Whither the Reformation?

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Has the Reformation become passé? There was a time when ecclesiastical and secular authorities were sufficiently bothered by Lutherans to burn them at the stake and march armies across Germany. But today the successor of Pope Leo X would probably say, “Why bother?”

Consider the movie theater, that bastion of modern Western ‘popular culture.’ For good or for ill, one can gain a fair estimate of the mental state of the American people from their choice of entertainment. There was a time not too long ago when the classic, black and white movie *Martin Luther* (1953) was at least controversial; Romanists even tried to stop it from being aired on a Chicago television station in 1956. Now, as the 2003 movie *Luther* demonstrated, it seems that the Reformation can’t even get folks worked up enough to go spend two hours in the dark. The new theatrical version of Luther’s life generated a paltry response, a little over \$5.6 million at the box office—an interesting return on a production budget of \$23 million, especially when one considers that this works out to less than \$1 per ‘Lutheran’ in the U.S. (If all of the purported 8 million Lutherans had shown up and bought a ticket, the box office would have been over \$50 million.)

Now, it’s not as if Americans aren’t interested in stories with a religious theme: the recently-released *The Da Vinci Code* generated over \$217 million at the box office. (Or another comparison: the *Luther* movie currently stands in 804th place in DVD sales at Amazon.com; *The Da Vinci Code* stands at 8th place.)

Well, perhaps some might think I’m giving too much attention to popular interest, and even worse, to numbers. “What matters is truth, not numbers!” Quite right. I’ve pointed to these numbers *not* because they tell

us what is the truth, but to demonstrate that most people aren’t even interested—for good or for ill—in the most significant event in the last 500 years of Western history.

In fact, I believe that there isn’t much interest in the Reformation in the *culture*, because there isn’t very much concern for the Reformation in the *Church*. The Leuenberg Agreement and the Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification prove this point.

In March 1973, delegates of European Lutheran, Reformed, and United (Union) churches, signed the Leuenberg Agreement. The agreement established that the doctrinal divisions which had stood since the Reformation were no longer divisive of church fellowship. Poof! With the swish of a pen, Luther’s faithful stand against Zwingli at Marburg, the exclusion of the Calvinists from the Peace of Augsburg (1555), and the brave resistance of Pastor J.A.A. Grabau and others against the evils of the Prussian Union (which created the Union Church by glossing over the different teachings concerning the Lord’s Supper) were all consigned to the dustbin of history. Thus the conclusion is reached in the Leuenberg Agreement:

27. Wherever these statements are accepted, the condemnations of the Reformation confessions in re-

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“Prelude To A Reformation”

(A Sermon Based Upon Matthew 18:22-35)

by Rev. Jeffrey A. Ahonen
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The young servant had been beaten badly, almost to the point of losing consciousness. He was bleeding from the many cuts that the whip had made in his back. His whole body seemed to be filled with pain, but the biggest hurt was the aching he felt in his heart. For he knew that the beating would begin again. As a person who owed a huge debt to his master, a debt that he simply could not pay, he understood completely why the master was angry, and delivered him to the torturer until he should pay all that was due to him.

Soon enough, he picked up the whip, and thus began the torture again, with the young servant being stricken upon the back with the whip that was in his own hand. Yes, he whipped himself . . . because he simply could not forgive himself.

Poor Martin Luther.

Yes, that is the story of Martin Luther as a young monk in the monastery. That was Luther before the light of the pure Gospel dawned upon him. That was the Luther who lacked understanding of the free grace of God upon the sinner, the forgiveness that is delivered to the sinner through faith alone, the cancellation of our debt to God on account of the work of Christ Jesus alone. That was the Luther who acted like the servant in today's parable, where we meet the servant who did not appreciate the gift that his king had given to him in mercifully releasing him from his debt and therefore did not forgive his own debtors—even when, as for Luther, one of those debtors was himself.

That was the Luther who acted just like us.

For we ourselves are like the servant who

refused to forgive as he had been forgiven.

We are. Just look at the grudges we hold in our hearts against those who hurt us in some way in the past. Maybe it was an unkind word spoken to you—or spoken about you behind your back. Perhaps it was something done by a person who was truly trying to be helpful, but it ended up being totally unhelpful to your cause; or maybe it was a deliberate act of wickedness against you. Whether it was intentional or unintentional, whether it was by a friend or a foe, it hurt you—and it was wrong. The person who did you wrong “owed you one.” He owed you an apology at the very least, and perhaps more.

But why are you still carrying that debt by carrying that grudge? Listen to what you have prayed—at many times since that time: “Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.” Yes, that is The Lord's Prayer, with a slightly different but quite familiar wording. When you prayed this prayer, what did you mean by it? The language of the prayer itself suggests this reading of it: “Forgive us our trespasses, just as we have already forgiven those who trespass against us.” That permits no carrying of a grudge; in fact, praying the Lord's Prayer with such an understanding is a confession to God that we have already forgiven the debts of our fellow servants.

Or do you dare to pray your prayer in another way? “Forgive us our trespasses like we forgive those who trespass against us.” In other words: “God, treat me in the same way as I treat others.” Are you sure you want that? That is what the wicked servant in today's parable received: “That servant went out and found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii; and he laid hands on him and took him by the throat, saying, ‘Pay me what you owe!’ ... and threw him into prison till he should pay the debt. Then the master of the first servant angrily called to

his servant and said, 'You wicked servant!' ... and delivered him to the torturers until he should pay all that was due to him" (St. Matthew 18:28-32).

Do any of us dare to continue to carry those grudges against our husband, our wife, our Dad or Mom, that guy from work, those ladies from our Church, that former friend, or anyone? Hear again the clear warning from our Lord: "So My heavenly Father also will do to you if each of you, from his heart, does not forgive his brother his trespasses" (St. Matthew 18:35).

So forgive your brother. And forgive yourself, Brother Martin. Stop beating up your brother—and yourself. For that is not how our accounts are settled in the Kingdom of Heaven. As Luther eventually discovered with great joy, the Kingdom of Heaven has a King Who is filled with compassion toward our poverty, knowing that we could not even begin to pay our debt for our sins even if we gave up our most precious possessions—our selves and our wives and our children—and everything else that we have. He settles our account by charging it all to the account of the Only One Who could—and did—pay the full price for our wrongs against God.

The cost of all of our grudges against each other—and all of our grudges against God—and all of our many other sins—has been paid by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, shed when the whip cut into His back and the nails of the cross pierced His holy hands and feet. The perfectly obedient and perfectly sinless Son of God took upon Himself all of our sin and, with it, all of God the Father's anger against the sinner, paying the price of sin with His death. On the cross, Jesus was delivered to the torturer until he should pay all that was due to God—and so He has. He has paid it all—for us all!

And so Christ Jesus now looks upon us poor sinners, and is moved with compassion for us, and releases us, and forgives us our enormous debt to Him! He wipes the slate clean with the gracious washing He gives in Holy Baptism, cleansing us from the guilt of all of our trespasses. He declares to all the world that the debt is paid in full through the

word of absolution: "I forgive you of all of your sins." He demonstrates to us that God is no longer angry with us, but is pleased to call us His own dear children, inviting us to dine with Him at His Family Table, where we feast upon the very Flesh and Blood of His Son, the holy meal that nourishes and strengthens our own flesh and blood for living the debt-free life.

Yes, a debt-free life. We are free of any debt to God. We owe Him nothing! Zero!

This truth is the key that opened the door to new life for Martin Luther. Through his study of and meditation upon the Holy Scriptures, Luther was led by the Holy Spirit of God to this right understanding of God's Word. He was led to rediscover this Good News about God's mercy upon the sinner, about God's love for him, about God's forgiveness of Him, coming to man by grace alone—without any contribution from man—through faith alone in the merits of Christ alone. Man's debt is paid—in full—by the life and death of Jesus. Luther finally understood how God had forgiven him, and Luther finally understood how to forgive others—especially himself. As graciously as God has forgiven us, so we forgive ourselves—and each other.

So we forgive our debtors as we have been forgiven our debts. We who have been forgiven by such a compassionate God of our massive debt to Him are led by His gracious Spirit to forgive those who owe us far less. We release these fellow servants of their little debts to us, forgiving them their trespasses and wrongs against us. Repenting of our own trespasses against them, we release the grudges that we once held against those with whom we share a home, a school, a workplace, a Church, a community, a world. We no longer allow these self-made barriers to block our relationships with these people, but reform them into the relationships that God intends them to be—relationships of love, from the heart.

God reform your heart with such love, with love from God's own heart, on Reformation Day—and all your days.

Amen.

The Philippists and the Undermining of the Lutheran Church in Central Europe

by Rev. John S. Rutowicz
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Introduction

Most Lutherans are not aware of the divisions in the Lutheran Church after the death of blessed Martin Luther. Some of the better catechized vaguely recall something about how Luther's friend Philip Melanchthon was not as stalwart as he might have been after Luther's death, but that's about it. Perhaps a review of some church history could be useful for us in resisting some dangerous influences in our own day.

Melanchthon had begun to deviate in a few doctrinal points in the last decade of Luther's life. This should not be overstated, but there was some definite drift in Melanchthon towards a more synergistic position in the doctrine of justification, and a drift toward a more Calvinist position on Christ's real presence in the Eucharist. These "developments" in Melanchthon's belief were incorporated in his revisions of the Augsburg Confession (e.g. 1540 Augsburg Confession). To what extent Philip Melanchthon truly drifted from Lutheran doctrine is a matter of great debate among theologians, but certainly there was a real drift among Phillip's supposed students.

Rifts in the Lutheran camp that were just beginning near the end of Luther's life, really came to the fore after his death. The event that really broke these rifts open was the defeat of the Schmalkald League and the imposition, by the emperor, of the Augsburg and Leipzig Interims. Philip Melanchthon's consent to the Leipzig Interim caused great animosity toward him among a number of the other prominent Lutheran theologians. The Peace of Augsburg in 1555 put an end to the Augsburg and Leipzig Interims, but the theological issues and divisions that the Leipzig Interim caused did not go away. At least two distinct groups emerged during this time, the "Gnesio-Lutherans," or the orthodox camp, and the "Philippists," later to be known as the "Crypto-Calvinists."

Though there were numerous controversies at this time, one of the more important ones was the spread of Calvinist teaching among the Philippist group. They had increasingly adopted Calvin's teachings on the real presence in the Eucharist, and Calvin's teaching on the two natures, divine and human, in Christ. Calvin's positions were in opposition to Luther's on these issues. The reason these men were called Crypto-Calvinists (hidden or secret Calvinists) is because they continually claimed adherence to the Augsburg Confession. The problem was that they adhered to a 1540 edition of the Augsburg Confession that Melanchthon substantially altered in order to make it acceptable to the Calvinists. This trick was not easily or immediately recognized by many laymen, princes or otherwise.

Philippism in Saxony

The heart of this struggle between the Philippists and the Gnesio-Lutherans was in Saxony where the Lutheran Reformation started. And at first, the Philippists were gaining ground. By the 1570's Wittenberg was for all practical purposes "Calvinized" by the Philippist clergy and theologians. Orthodox theologians and bishops from all over Germany, and especially in the north, uncovered this deception in Electoral Saxony, but Elector August of Saxony was genuinely gullible and blind to the deceit. Elector August wanted to defend his universities and theologians against those whom he thought were fanatics and troublemakers, the Gnesio-Lutherans. Elector August believed the Philippists that they were nothing but faithful adherents to the Augsburg Confession.

However, in 1574 the triumphant Philippists overstepped themselves. They published a book called *Exegesis Perspicua*. This book explained their position on the Lord's Supper. But for the first time, their clearly Calvinist teachings were explained so clearly that everyone could see that it was in fact, Calvinism. Even Elector August's eyes were finally opened. Elector August

also uncovered a conspiracy by some of the Philippist theologians to put Calvinist prayer books in his wife's hands, in order to shape her beliefs, the theory being, if they can win the wife, the husband (Elector August) would fall into line. Elector August was outraged at the deception. This spelled the end for the Philippists in Saxony.

The leaders of the Philippist conspiracy were imprisoned. A memorial coin celebrating the victory over Crypto-Calvinism was struck in 1574. And the Lutheran Church would produce its last confessional document, the *Formula of Concord*, in 1580, thereby solidifying its stance against Calvinism permanently.

When reading general surveys of church history one might get the impression that Crypto-Calvinism and unionism were destroyed in the Lutheran Church after 1580, and that the Lutheran Church entered an age of complete unity and orthodoxy until the 18th century "Enlightenment." But we ought to remember that the completion of the Reformation moved along different time-lines in different kingdoms. Though these particular controversies were vigorously dealt with in Saxony in 1574, not all lands were as blessed as Luther's home province.

Poland and Prussia

The sixteenth century Reformation of the church was, of course, not entirely a German or a Scandinavian phenomenon. Many countries throughout Europe were effected by the Reformation. Some lesser known countries that were entirely converted to the Lutheran Reformation were Latvia and Estonia (or, at least those regions). Poland also experienced the Reformation. A great deal of reforming activity took place in Poland in the sixteenth century, in fact, at one point, there was a very real possibility that Poland would become a "Protestant" country. Janusz Mallek gives a couple of enlightening statistics. Of the Polish parliament he says; "As many as 50 per cent of the senate members were Protestant in 1569," and "In 1591 one in six parishes in Poland was non-Catholic."¹

When discussing the rise of the Lutheran Reformation in Poland one must remember to distinguish between 1) the vassal state of Ducal Prussia headed by Albrecht von Hohenzollern and centered around Königsberg, 2) Royal Prussia represented by the cities of Gdansk (Danzig), Elblag (Elbing) and, Torun

(Thorn), and 3) Crown Poland, made up of Great Poland, Little Poland and Lithuania. The Lutheran Reformation progressed at different rates in each of these regions. In Ducal Prussia Lutheranism was declared official in 1525 and is, in fact, pretty much accepted by the whole populace by 1544. Whereas, in Lithuania, except for the city of Vilnius, Lutheranism never got a strong foothold among the general population.

Ducal Prussia became Lutheran very early and Königsberg became an important center for Lutheran evangelism and publishing for the Polish lands. Duke Albrecht established the university of Königsberg in 1544. Albrecht invited a number of Polish Lutherans to Königsberg in order to publish and teach in the Polish language. "In 1544 John Seklucyan published his Confession of Faith, and somewhat later his Polish translation of the four Gospels appeared".² The translation of the Bible into Polish was done by two Lutherans from Königsberg, Jan Seklucjan and Stanislaw Murzynowski.

We can see some of the earliest reports of "anti-Romanist", "pro-Luther" activity in Gdansk in Royal Prussia as early as 1518. "James Knade, a native of Dantzic, threw off his habit, took a wife, and began publicly to preach in that city against Rome."³ This wasn't really a fully formed "Lutheran" Reformation yet, but certainly sympathetic with Luther.

In Wielkopolska things were a little bit slower in taking off.

Protestantism was publicly manifested for the first time by the opening of a Lutheran church, (1530-40,) under the patronage of the influential family of Górka, who had embraced the doctrines of the Saxon reformer.⁴

This progression of the Lutheran Church in Poland and Prussia did not continue without significant difficulty, however. First of all, the Roman Church awoke and seriously started to re-assert its power by the 1550s. In 1559 the Jesuits first arrive in Poland and begin their work of wiping out, by any means necessary, the Reformation. Cardinal Hosius (Stanislaw Hozjusz) founded the first Jesuit college in Poland six years later. The Jesuits had tremendous success by "educating" the children of the indigent nobility. The zealotry and efficiency of the Jesuits cannot be underestimated in the downfall of the Reformation among ethnic Poles. And secondly, in

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LORD, KEEP US IN THY WORD AND WORK

Martin Luther, 1541, sts. 1-3; Justus Jonas, 1544 sts. 4-5

Erhalt Uns, Herr, J. Klug, 1543

1 Lord, keep us in Thy Word and work, re - strain the
 2 Lord Je - sus Christ, Thy pow'r make known, for Thou art
 3 Thou Com - fort - er of price - less worth, give one mind
 4 De - stroy their coun - sels, Lord our God, and smite them
 5 So that at last they may per - ceive that, Lord our

mur - d'rous Pope and Turk, who fain would tear from off Thy
 Lord of lords a - lone; shield Thy poor Chris - ten - dom, that
 to Thy flock on earth; stand by us in our fi - nal
 with an i - ron rod, and let them fall in - to the
 God, Thou still dost live, and dost de - liv - er might - i -

throne Christ Je - sus, Thy be - lov - ed Son.
 we may ev - er - more sing praise to Thee.
 strife and lead us out of death to life.
 snare which for Thy Chris - tians they pre - pare.
 ly all those who put their trust in Thee.

Among our readership, many of those who are familiar with Luther's hymn "Erhalt uns, Herr" know it primarily according to the translation published in *The Lutheran Hymnal* (1941), and even a casual perusal demonstrates the substantial differences between the 1941 text and that which is printed above, from the *Evangelical Lutheran Hymn-Book* of 1912. The German text of the first stanza reads:

Erhalt uns, Herr, bei deinem Wort
 Und steur des Papsts und Türken Mord.
 Die Jesum Christum, deinen Sohn,
 Wollen stürzen von deinem Thron!

This hymn was first published in 1543 with the title, "A children's hymn, to be sung against the two arch-enemies of Christ and His holy Church, the Pope and the Turk." But the TLH version meekly and obliquely mentions "those who fain by craft and sword" rather than simply

saying it like it is: "the murd'rous Pope and Turk." Why change the sentence so that it is so much less clear and precise than what Luther originally wrote?

According to the *Handbook of The Lutheran Hymnal*, "Luther wrote the hymn in 1541 for a special service arranged in Wittenberg for prayer against the threatening Turkish army." (p. 192) Perhaps four centuries later, the Pope and Turk seemed less threatening? If so, the modern raging of the Mohammedans and the growing doctrinal confusions and deceptions of post-Vatican II Romanism should encourage confessional Lutherans to dig out the older translation. Luther and his noble coadjutors understood what was at stake in the 16th century—it's time for the Church to recall their confession to mind in these early days of the 21st century.

Our thanks to Dr. Michael Totten for retyping the hymn and its notation!

BOOK REVIEW

Patrick J. Buchanan, ***State of Emergency: The Third World Invasion and Conquest of America***, (St. Martin's Press: New York, 2006) 308 pages.

Patrick Buchanan and other Paleo-conservatives have long been sounding the alarm with regard to our collapsing western civilization. While the neo-cons of the Bush administration myopically focus on the threat from the Mohammedan world, Buchanan warns that there is a much more real and dangerous conquest taking place in our own land. Buchanan's book *State of Emergency* picks up where his previous book *Death of the West*, left off. In the current book he narrows his focus down to one of the West's major problems, immigration. And even more specifically, he spends much of his time addressing immigration from Mexico to the United States. Buchanan, rather convincingly asserts that this tidal wave of largely Mexican immigration will dramatically and permanently change the cultural essence of America if it is not stopped soon.

In addressing the death of the West from third world immigration Buchanan goes beyond current events to the ideologies behind the dilemma. Ideologically, he advocates a different way of seeing certain issues. In chapter six, Buchanan attacks what he calls "The Economism Cult." This economic world view is the putting of economics before all other social concerns. For many, this world view trumps, and even obliterates, all other concerns such as community, country, or religion. Buchanan asserts that this economic idolatry must be ended for America's future health. "A Zollverein is not a fatherland." "An economic union like the European Union is not a nation. An economy is not a country," says the author. Buchanan ties this to immigration by pointing out that too many Republicans, the President included, see Mexican immigration as a means of providing a nearly inexhaustible supply of cheap labor for corporate

America. Legal, and especially illegal, immigration serve America's corporate elite, and too many Republicans will protect whatever serves the corporate elite. Mr. Buchanan calls these attitudes and practices exactly what they seem to be, "economic treason against the American worker."

Perhaps the greatest change in thinking Mr. Buchanan would like to see Americans undertake is the definition of a nation. He demonstrates that it is a popular myth, that America is not a nation built on language, history, faith, blood and soil, but a nation built on a set of ideas and ideals. Many neo-conservatives and liberals believe America is a creedal nation, an ideological nation, and nothing more. Therefore, anyone from any background can assimilate to the ideals of democracy, freedom, and equality, and a nation can exist with no other connections than these. Buchanan argues that this idea is demonstrably false from human history, and it is a flawed understanding of human nature. He then goes on, eloquently, to argue that men do not fight and die for abstract ideologies, not even democracy or free trade. Rather, they give their lives for their families, their faith, their native soil. And if those building blocks of society are destroyed, the country cannot survive. "Democracy is not enough. Equality is not enough. Free markets are not enough - to hold a people together. Without patriotism, a love of country and countrymen not for what they believe or profess but for who they are, "Things fall apart; the center cannot hold," according to the author.

But Buchanan actually goes to the heart of the issue and smashes perhaps the greatest taboos of the West, the ideas that no race, religion, language, or culture should be preferred over another. In his concluding chapter, Buchanan states the issue with breathtaking simplicity. "Race matters. Ethnicity matters. History matters. Faith matters. Nationality matters. While they are not everything, they are not nothing. Multiculturalist ideology be damned, this is what history teaches."

Mr. Buchanan offers several practical policy

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Letters

Women's Suffrage

The issue of voting for women in a congregation always inspires slumping of the shoulders in me. When a woman brings this issue up it is always followed by the horrors of not having a voice in the very church they help support financially, bodily, and spiritually. This is especially true for widows.

Unfortunately, the lack of voice has nothing to do with voting. It is merely a symptom of a congregation in need of cohesiveness.

Voting is a relatively new concept in the history of all people and is not addressed in the Bible. Voting should only be used as a tool to bring order to large groups. If you have a group the size of say 100 or more it is difficult to make sure everyone agrees and so voting in a small way lets each person be heard. With larger groups order becomes even more difficult and individual voices shrink. The scale peaks during U.S. Presidential voting. During every Presidential election we hear about anomalies in the voting booths and often hear people complain that their one little vote doesn't make a difference.

At the opposite end of decision making are groups of 50 or less. At that point voting should be abandoned in favor of consensus. In a small group when a proposal comes before the group, discussion should take place. When the leaders feel that the group is unanimous a call for opposition should be declared. At that point if there are no responses then the proposal is accepted. If there are members unhappy with the proposal they should speak up and discussion should continue with them until they come around to agreement or if they still oppose, the item should be tabled. This allows everyone to have an opportunity to be involved in decision making without voting. Without voting, a congregation no longer pits a few people against many. Instead, thoughtful discussion and listening to the concerns of members allows the congregation to make decisions harmoniously.

One problem some fortunate (or some may

say unfortunate) churches will have is that their congregation is too large to hold non-voting meetings. Probably a church of that size needs to some mission work. Or if this isn't the case then they should run like the megachurches. Large churches don't have general assemblies for members to vote. Instead, they run through representation and committees. In this way, voting should happen only to "elect" those who will make decisions for the church.

Someday I hope to hear women respond to the voting issue by being appalled that a church body still holds Voters Meetings. Instead, they should be called the Quarterly Meeting and they should be led by the men Christ has given the Church. Never again should a meeting end with a member feeling bullied or discredited by a vote.

—Mrs. Pam Krumvieda
member, Salem Lutheran Church (Malone)

Confessional Lutheran Mission Fund Prepares to Assist Congregations

Salem Lutheran Church (Malone) began its Confessional Lutheran Mission Fund as part of the congregation's 120th anniversary celebrations. The Initial goal of \$5,000 by July 1st was met and surpassed, and the congregation set a new target of \$10,000 for the end of 2006. Nearly \$7,800 has been raised to date, and the Mission Board is beginning to purchase items which we be needed by mission congregations. The intention is to prepare assistance packages which will include hymnals, altar books, communion ware and other items to suit the needs of particular mission congregations.

Those individuals or congregations which wish to contribute to the Mission Fund may send donations to:

Salem Lutheran Church
718 HCR 3424 E
Malone, TX 76660

Checks should be made payable to the church.



New Members of Saint Boniface Ev. Lutheran Church (Niles, MI), Rachel Hattenbach and her son, Bradley Hattenbach in front of our church sign. Brad began confirmation this month.



Jessica Markwardt (pictured with her husband, Greg Markwardt, and Pastor Heiser) is the newest member of Salem Lutheran Church (Malone, Texas)



The Men's Fellowship of Salem Lutheran Church (Malone, TX) had a Chicken BBQ Supper on October 7th to raise funds to support the Confessional Lutheran Mission Fund and the congregation's Radio Ministry on KHBR (AM 1580). A total of \$473 was raised to help support these two efforts, and everyone had a lot of fun in the process! Between enjoying a good meal (and good music, thanks to Tina Schnell, Morris Kruger, and Weldon Reinke), it was a very enjoyable evening.

To date, a total of just under \$7,800 has been raised for Salem's Confessional Lutheran Mission Fund.

Salem's Radio Ministry began on the First Sunday in Advent, 2002. The weekly, 15 minute sermon is broadcast each Sunday at 9:15 a.m. as a service to the homebound and other listeners within the northern Hill County listening area.



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changes to stem the tide of immigration and possibly keep America from sliding toward disaster. A ten year “time-out” on all immigration. Stop it entirely. No amnesty for illegals. A permanent fence along the entire 2,000-mile border with Mexico. And a number of legal changes that would end most of the incentives drawing illegals here. But while these are sensible ideas, these policy changes are simply the stop-gap measures we need right now so that we can deal with some deeper issues for our society. To deal with our dying civilization, however, we need to go beyond policy changes and change the way western men think. At first it might seem that we need to ask ourselves the question, “who are we?” But Mr. Buchanan has, to a large extent, answered that question in his book. It seems that we are pushed further by this book to ask ourselves the question, “are we worthy of continued existence?” Buchanan asks, what’s wrong with being a Christian, English-speaking nation anyway? If Americans, and all those of the western world, love their civilization, the inheritance that has been given them, they must consciously decide to defend and preserve it. And that means blood and soil, faith and language, history and culture. Civilization can’t survive without these building blocks. This is, perhaps, western man’s greatest challenge because, as the book points out, his greatest illness is guilt. A pathological, suicidal guilt drives western men to destroy themselves for their real and imagined sins rather than go on living. Western man seems to be committing suicide to atone for his conquest of the darker peoples of the earth. Colonialism, slavery, and the Jewish holocaust seem to have so unnerved the western man that he can’t go on. Add to this the materialism and decadence of the West distracting us from all serious questions in life, and the future looks rather bleak.

As a traditional Roman Catholic, one would suppose that Mr. Buchanan certainly would concur that Jesus Christ is the ultimate answer to our woes. But his book is not about theology, it is

about politics and culture, and so he offers his best suggestions for saving the nation that he loves. And he does a marvelous job of analyzing the problems and offering the easiest, most realistically attainable solutions he can think of.

Christians should care about these issues for a number of reasons. These issues are going to get more important with each passing year. Our whole way of life is going to be effected. As confessional, biblical Christians we need to understand what we should believe and practice with regard to preserving our culture. The liberal churches are at the forefront of the multiculturalist assault on western civilization. But even most “conservative” churches have unwittingly adopted multiculturalist attitudes toward most issues. And so, we Christians have a huge job in front of us. And we do our fellow Christians a disservice by telling them that the multiculturalist ideology is wrong when it comes to religion, but right when it comes to race, language, history, and all other aspects of human identity. Humans are integrated, whole beings, and they will interact with their world as such, not as abstractions. If we allow multiculturalism to have the field in all other spheres of life, we will not be able to keep it out of religion for long. For the sake of the faith we Christians must begin to be able to talk about these delicate issues as Mr Buchanan has before we lose not only our cultural heritage, but our spiritual one as well.

My hope is that more “conservative” Christians will read this book and start to re-examine their own assumptions about what is truly “conservative.”

—Rev. John Rutowicz

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Crown Poland, "Protestants" had a much more difficult time than their Prussian brothers in the face of Jesuit attack because of a lack of an institutional framework for the churches. Unlike in the Holy Roman Empire, "Protestant life [in Crown Poland] remained dependent on the commitment by individual magnate protectors or local noble communities, and wherever the protectors withdrew from the Protestant cause the organizational structure of the congregations in most cases declined rapidly."⁵ In Royal Prussia (a territory of the Polish crown) things were somewhat better. Even though they did not have anything like the German *Landeskirche*, the size of the Protestant churches afforded a certain level of safety.

But in fighting against this very real threat from Rome, Lutherans in Poland and Prussia make some critical mistakes. For the Poles it accelerates their demise. And for the Prussians it proves nearly fatal.

The Progress of Unionism

The great threat of persecution from the Roman church was a major factor influencing all the discussions between the various Reformation church bodies. Also of great influence, was the prospect of king Sigismund II Augustus converting to the Reformation and taking the rest of the country with him. These influences are felt early on by the Protestants, and find organizational expression as early as 1554 with the Synod of Slomniki. These were talks between the Reformed/Calvinist churches, sometimes called the "Major church," and the various Brethren churches, sometimes called the "Minor church." Starting at Slomniki, and then at Krzeczice and Goluchów, the ground work is laid for closer relations between the Major and Minor churches of Poland.

This led up to the Synod of Kominek in 1555 in which the Czech or Bohemian Brethren in Poland enter into a union with the Reformed church in Poland. There were still some doctrinal differences between them (e.g. the Bohemian Brethren retained all seven sacraments and still practiced clerical celibacy while the Reformed did not, but this did not stand in the way to union). This union seems to have taken place largely to give a measure of political strength to the churches involved. Later this union was confirmed at the Synods

of Pinczów (1556), Wlodislaw (1557), and Xionz (1560).

The united churches endeavoured to extend their alliance to the Lutherans, and the synod of Wlodislaw, presided over by the celebrated John Laski, or à Lasco, invited the Lutherans to join their union, but the invitation remained without effect.⁶

The Lutherans did not join the union at Wlodislaw and in fact held their own Synod in Goluchów in the same year in which they denounced Jan Laski.

In 1560 another Protestant Union Synod is held in Xionz to which the Lutherans this time send delegates to observe. They still did not join, but we can see a change of attitude in that they are willing to attend.

The next event on the horizon is the conflict between the Reformed and the Anti-Trinitarian Polish Brethren within the Kominek confederation. The Reformed condemned the Anti-Trinitarians at the Synod of Kraków in 1563. The Anti-Trinitarian Polish Brethren in turn condemned the Reformed, and by 1565 had broken away from the Kominek union in order to give birth to an Anti-Trinitarian church. The two groups continued to fight until the following year. The Lutherans abstained.

Now we come to a major event for the Lutherans in Poland in the sixteenth century. At their own Synod of Poznań in January of 1567 the Lutherans tried to see if they could persuade the Bohemian Brethren to accept the Augsburg Confession. The Brethren rejected this confession and asked that they be shown at what points they (the Brethren) were in error. The Lutherans, of course, came up with a list.

The Bohemian Brethren immediately wrote an apology defending their position. The Lutherans were not satisfied and claimed that it was obscure. The debate became rather heated and finally both sides agreed to submit the Brethren apology to the faculty of Wittenberg for a final judgement. The Lutherans must have felt rather confident of their certain victory, but by this time the faculty at Wittenberg was filled with crypto-Calvinists: Paul Eber, the dean of the faculty, George Major, Paul Crellius and, Caspar Peucer.

The apology of the Bohemian church was examined and declared orthodox, and in accor-

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spect of the Lord's Supper, Christology, and predestination are inapplicable to the doctrinal position. This does not mean that the condemnations pronounced by the Reformation fathers are irrelevant; but they are no longer an obstacle to church fellowship.

Yes, you read that correctly: the condemnations are *relevant*, just not *divisive of fellowship*. The Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD) is the logical result of this Leuenberg logic: the institutional union of 23 Lutheran, Reformed and United churches into 'one big, happy family.'

Thus it is only fitting that the EKD was a party to the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*, concerning which the sainted Dr. Robert Preus observed: "It is a consensus in which Lutherans and Catholics may walk together, not because they are united in the doctrine of the Gospel and all its articles, but because they are united in a common purpose" (*Justification and Rome*, p. 112). So much for the Lutheran faith, which boldly asks in the *Apology of the Augsburg Confession*:

Now since our consciences understand that by the adversaries the manifest truth is condemned, whose defence is necessary for the Church, and increases the glory of Christ; we easily despise the terrors of the world, and patiently will bear whatever is to be suffered for the glory of Christ and the advantage of the Church. Who would not rejoice to die in the confession of such articles as that we obtain the remission of sins by faith freely for Christ's sake, that we do not merit the remission of sins by our works? (Jacobs ed., p. 233)

This gets to the heart of it, doesn't it? Has the Reformation become passé? Far from it! The promise of salvation by grace through faith in the Christ is at the very heart of the Lutheran Reformation, and our hope of salvation rests in His atonement. We are deeply saddened that there are so many who call themselves 'Protestant'—or even 'Lutheran'—who put their emphasis on other things. So many seek their unity in something other than a common confession and rejoice in something other than the Gospel: driven by "numbers," they turn away from the Word of God and turn to the marketing schemes of men. And this is often as true of the "conservatives" as it is of the "liberals"; often both look to numbers, with "conservatives" racing along shouting, "Me too!"

Me too!"—as if the measure of the Word was that it could "pack them in, too."

In this fallen world, the sons of God are a remnant among the nations of men. The theology of glory rejoices in the numbers; the theology of the cross rejoices in the Savior who made atonement. As Luther taught in his *Theses for the Heidelberg Disputation* (1518): "The 'theologian of glory' calls the bad good and the good bad. The 'theologian of the cross' says what a thing is." Again: "The law says: 'Do this!', and it never is done. Grace says: 'Believe in this One!', and forthwith everything is done."

The theology of our Reformation hymnody gets the situation right:

O Lord, look down from heav'n behold
And let Thy pity waken;
How few are we within Thy fold,
Thy saints by men forsaken!
True faith seems quenched on ev'ry hand,
Men suffer not Thy Word to stand;
Dark times have us o'er taken. (TLH 260:1)

O little flock, fear not the Foe
Who madly seeks your overthrow;
Dread not his rage and pow'r.
What tho' your courage sometimes faints,
His seeming triumph o'er God's saints
Lasts but a little hour. (TLLH 263:1)

Perserve Thy little flock in peace,
Nor let Thy boundless mercy cease;
To all the world let it appear
That Thy true Church indeed is here. (TLH 265:5)

The Church is the faithful little flock, the remnant which the Lord gathers around Word and Sacrament. Christ won the victory over the evil one, and we live through that victory. As Luther penned so famously:

The Kingdom ours remaineth.

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dance with the confession of Augsburg. Eber said, in a speech which he held on that occasion, "the brethren of Bohemia and Moravia professed since long time a pure doctrine; they believe the same that we do, although they have retained some outward ceremonies, dissimilar from those which are used by us. They are neither Anabaptists nor enemies of the faith. It is wrong to act against them either in public or in private, and to abuse them from the pulpits. They are our brethren, and deserving of our Christian good-will."⁷

The judgement of the Wittenberg faculty seemed to take the wind out of the sails of the Lutherans. They were now much more pacified and abandoned their attacks on the Bohemian Brethren. It seems that up to this point the orthodox Lutherans were still in control of their church in Poland. After this point, it seems that the Philippists take control of the Polish Lutheran church.

The next year in 1569 the historic political union of Poland and Lithuania was accomplished by the Diet of Lublin. Previous to this, the two countries shared a common sovereign, but now they would be united into one country. For the leaders of the Protestant churches this seemed like a perfect opportunity to show the king that they were united and could be a respectable and stable national church. They hoped that a show of unity and strength would push the king over the top and that he would convert. Sigismund II certainly did not like discord and combativeness, so this sort of unity would very much appeal to him.

The Synod of Sandomierz lasted from the 9th to the 14th of April 1570. The Lutheran bishop of Greater Poland, Erazm Gliczner, and his brother Mikolaj caused a bit of a disturbance when they tried to insist that the Augsburg Confession be received by the Reformed and Bohemian churches. For a while it looked like there would be no agreement, but two of the more prominent noblemen intervened and persuaded the Lutherans not to destroy the cause of the Reformation, especially with such a powerful enemy before them and not to throw a stumbling block before the king when he may be ready to convert. After these efforts the Lutherans submitted and joined the union.

The Consensus of Sandomierz (*Consensus Sandomirensis*) was a dogmatic union (however imperfect),

and a union of pulpit and altar. The one thing it was not was a union of hierarchy. Each church kept its own hierarchy. Each church would keep their own peculiar practices but neither was to criticize the other. Ecclesiastical discipline was unified. No one was to use expressions, words or explanation that differed from the Consensus of Sandomierz. Where they differed (e.g. the Lord's Supper) they agreed not to speak of the matter.

The union was completed and the Protestant churches presented a united front before the king. But the king did not convert. What the churches thought was their moment of triumph turned out to be an illusion. Within two years the king was dead and a long string of hostile kings were to succeed him.

Developments in Royal Prussia

The Reformation had early beginnings in Royal Prussia.⁸ But these early beginnings took some radical, non-Lutheran turns early on as well. In January 1525 the populace of Gdansk rose against the patricians of that city in an Anabaptist type rebellion. On the advice of Archbishop Jan Laski, King Sigismund I personally went to Gdansk in the spring of 1526, accompanied by a force of 8,000 men. They put down this rebellion and restored the old order of things with a relatively small amount of bloodshed. Fourteen of the leaders were beheaded and the supporters of the Reformation were given two weeks to leave the city. The development of the Reformation ceased in Royal Prussia for several decades. It would not truly begin again until the reign of Sigismund's son, Sigismund II Augustus. He was sympathetic to the Reformation and allowed *de facto* religious liberty during his reign.

Sigismund II granted the Royal Prussian towns their individual privileges again. And after 1557 they confirmed their adherence to the Augsburg Confession. But just as these Royal Prussian cities of Gdansk (Danzig), Elblag (Elbing), and Torun (Thorn) declared themselves adherents of the Augsburg Confession, the Philippist virus was gaining strength. Given the political circumstances in the Polish lands of Crown Poland and Royal Prussia, Philippism had the perfect environment in which to grow. Royal Prussian city magistrates grew concerned over the increasing Gnesio-Lutheran nature of theology in the Holy Roman Empire, and over

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the border in Ducal Prussia. The Royal Prussian magistrates wanted to keep their independence and increasingly saw Philippism and Poland as allies rather than the Germans in the Empire or Ducal Prussia.

There were several interesting events that show the profound grip Philippism had in Royal Prussia. The magistrates of the cities “hastened to turn down Lübeck’s proposal that the Prussians should join the efforts of the Hanse to establish a common church organization on the basis of Lutheran orthodoxy.”⁹ Later, the first Lutheran church order to be issued in a Prussian town, the *Notula Concordiae*, was intended to be an anti-Gnesio-Lutheran church order.¹⁰ It was drawn primarily from the writings of Swiss theologians as well as those of Jan Laski.¹¹

While the Gnesio-Lutherans in the Empire and in Ducal Prussia were growing in strength against their Philippist enemies, the cities of Royal Prussia were drawing closer to Poland as an ally in their defense of their Philippist position. The Royal Prussian cities welcomed the Consensus of Sandomierz in 1570 as their own. And in 1571, “when confronted with urgent appeals by Lutheran theologians in Germany to endorse the Lutheran interpretation of exorcism, magistrates and ministers in Danzig decided for the first time to acknowledge formally a diverging theological position, and to refer openly to the *Consensus Sandomirensis* in order to legitimize their option.”¹² Throughout the 1570s, tensions increased between Philippist Royal Prussia and other German Lutheran territories. “But it was only towards the end of the decade that the Prussian magistrates decided to put an end to smoldering conflict by clearly demarcating the confessional status of their towns against that of the Lutheran churches in the Empire. By 1578 all three towns had introduced the *Corpus Doctrinae Melancthonis*, and in 1580 they formally rejected the Lutheran *Formula Concordiae*.”¹³

“After 1590, the Prussian magistrates started to characterize ‘the churches of our Prussian province’ as being explicitly ‘Reformed’, and to stress that Royal Prussia should be considered an integral part of the Polish-Lithuanian lands united under the *Consensus*.”¹⁴

Resolution in Royal Prussia

At first it may seem as if Calvinism in its Philippist form had won the day in Royal Prussia. But there were several factors that undermined these Crypto-

Calvinists. The Formula of Concord of 1580 could not be ignored. As much as the Philippists in Royal Prussia tried to fend off orthodoxy, they were becoming more and more isolated from other territories that had adopted the Formula. These other territories put pressure on Royal Prussia. It was also getting harder to find Philippist clergy to fill vacant parishes. And these more orthodox clergy were also exerting their influence as well. Finally, there was wide spread popular resistance to Calvinist liturgical changes. There definitely seemed to be a division between the city magistrates and patrician families who were zealously Calvinist, and a conservative Lutheran general population. Though Philippist confessions were officially adhered to in the cities of Royal Prussia, there was never a time in which Philippism was universally and unquestioningly accepted. As time went on, orthodox opposition grew.

Finally there was an open revolt against the council of Gdansk in 1605 over some Calvinist abuses. This revolt was led by a group of Lutheran burghers and some wealthy patrician families. They accused the city council of violating some royal privileges and they appealed to the king to intervene. The investigation at the royal tribunal in Kraków lasted two years and was inconclusive. However, the city councillors recognized that were going to have to concede to the orthodox Lutheran pressure. The city’s ministers were formally instructed to observe strictly the pure *Augustana*.

“What followed was a rapid, and remarkably smooth, transition of the whole church towards an explicitly Lutheran position; although almost all members of the ministry remained in office, within a decade all but two of the town’s parishes had abandoned Calvinist or syncretist practices.”¹⁵ The cities of Elblag and Torun followed suit.

Decline in Crown Poland

The Lutherans found themselves bound in the 1570 Consensus of Sandomierz. They were very uncomfortable with the arraignment, but did not destroy it. But starting in 1583 an orthodox pastor named Paul Gericus from Poznan started to declare that “the emperor had no clothes,” that is, the Consensus of Sandomierz was a sham in every way. This once again caused problems between the Lutherans and the Bohemian Brethren. But now it was different. Now they were

supposedly one body.

Gericius was heard to say that it would be better to become a Romanist than to adhere to the union, and that it would be “much better to join the Jesuits than the Bohemians.”¹⁶ This could not be tolerated by the leadership of the union. A synod was called in Poznan and Gericius and a couple of other men were chastised publicly, but were not removed from their offices.

Gericius ignored this rebuke and continued to collect information for his arguments against the Union. Gericius’ perseverance started to make headway with the Philippist leaning bishop, Erazm Gliczner. Bishop Gliczner, at the same time, had been up to some problematic things. He had finished translating the Augsburg Confession into Polish, and thereby had violated the Sandomierz union. Gliczner’s new found courage now put him in direct combat with the Bohemian Superintendent Turnowski. It appeared that the Consensus of Sandomierz was about to break up. With this prospect looming, the chief noblemen of the kingdom assembled in Kraków in February of 1595. They decided to convoke a general synod at Torun that summer. Palatinate Leszczynski arranged the differences between Gliczner and Turnowski on the following conditions:

1. They both were to forgive and forget.
2. Gliczner was to get Gericius to subscribe to the Consensus of Sandomierz.
3. Criticism of Sandomierz was to be suppressed.
4. The Augsburg Confession was to be republished, but only after it was revised by superintendents of the other two church bodies to remove all polemical material.

...And so on through several other points.

Gericius continued to argue that the Sandomierz Consensus was inconsistent with itself and he noted that it was strange that these men of different confessions could claim that there were no conflicting doctrines between them when theologians in other kingdoms saw things quite differently and accused each other of error.

Gliczner argued that Bohemian and Reformed clergy were teaching and writing on the Lord’s Supper things that the Lutherans could not accept and it was they who were violating the Consensus of Sandomierz. Gericius and Gliczner argued for quite a while on these subjects but in the end they were not heard. The Synod

finally voted to excommunicate Gericius. Gliczner bitterly complained, but was overruled.

Gliczner, unfortunately, did not remain defiant. He seems to have slipped from a Philippist position to baldly unionist position. Apparently, he was persuaded after a while, to accept and carry out the decision of the Synod. He moved against his former ally Gericius.

A commission was appointed to carry into execution the sentence of the synod against Gericius, as well as against Luperinus, the pastor of the Lutheran Polish congregation of Posnania. After two fruitless attempts by the commissioners, Erasmus Gliczner himself arrived at Posnania, and deposed Luperinus without opposition; but the German congregation, of which Gericius was the pastor, manifested so strong an opposition that Gliczner was in danger of being exposed to personal violence. Gericius, however, retired to Germany, and his place was occupied by a minister favourable to the consensus of Sandomir.¹⁷

After this Synod in Torun in 1595, the Lutheran participation in the union continued, but often the participation was formal at best. In time the Consensus of Sandomierz weakened and broke, but by the second half of the 17th century the Reformation was in rapid decline. The Counter-Reformation was in full force and many noble families were returning to the Roman church. The Jesuits mocked that Gericius was “the only true Lutheran of Poland.”¹⁸

Conclusion

Flying under false colors is terribly destructive. The Philippists, going under the banner of the Augsburg Confession, undermined the strength of the Lutheran Church in Poland and Prussia. Poland was largely re-converted to Rome in the course of the 17th century. Prussia shook off the Philippist virus after its first encounter, only to have it re-introduced with their eventual Calvinist king. This would, in time, lead to the Prussian Union Church.

Today we have a Philippist-like virus among Lutherans. It often goes under names like “church growth movement,” or “evangelical style, Lutheran substance.” But it is the same undermining virus. It is a foreign teaching

and practice under the name “Lutheran.” God grant that we awaken to, and resist this Philippist spirit in our land.

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Endnotes

¹ Janusz Mallek, “The Reformation in Poland and Prussia in the sixteenth century: similarities and differences”, in Karin Maag (ed.), *The Reformation in Eastern and Central Europe* (Aldershot, England, 1997), p. 189.

² Paul Fox, *The Reformation in Poland: Some Social and Economic Aspects*, (Greenwood Press, Westport, CT, 1971), p. 37.

³ Count Walerjan Krasinski, *Historical Sketch of the Rise, Progress, and Decline of the Reformation in Poland*, (London, 1838 & 1840), vol. 1, p. 111-112.

⁴ Ibid., p. 138.

⁵ Michael G. Muller, “Late Reformation and Protestant confessionalization in major towns of Royal Prussia”, in Karin Maag (ed.), *The Reformation in Eastern and Central Europe* (Aldershot, England, 1997), p. 204.

⁶ Krasinski, vol. 1, p. 367.

⁷ Ibid., p. 378.

⁸ As early as 1518. See above.

⁹ Muller, p. 196.

¹⁰ This church order was implemented in Gdansk in 1562.

¹¹ This Jan Laski is the Calvinist nephew of the Archbishop Primate Jan Laski who advised putting down the rebellion in Gdansk in 1526.

¹² Muller, p. 199.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 202.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 208.

¹⁶ Krasinski, vol. 2, p. 81.

¹⁷ Krasinski, vol. 2, p. 130.

¹⁸ Krasinski, vol. 2, p. 81.

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