



The Lutheran Herald

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Reflections on Polity in the Lutheran Church

by Rt. Rev. James D. Heiser
Bishop, The ELDoNA
Pastor, Salem Lutheran Church (Malone, TX)

St. Paul wrote to St. Timothy: “This is a faithful saying: If a man desires the position of a bishop, he desires a good work.” (1 Tim. 3:1 NKJV) Now, I would submit that these words aren’t really all that hard to understand—unless someone has made up their mind to reject them in advance. St. Paul declares this little axiom (“desiring the position of a bishop = desiring a good work”) in fairly clear terms. And then the holy apostle actually goes ahead and describes who should be entrusted with this office. This certainly implies that the holy apostle actually intended for men to be called to this office.

And St. Paul said even more when he wrote to St. Titus, declaring that a bishop must be “holding fast the faithful word as he has been taught, that he may be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and convict those who contradict. For there are many insubordinate, both idle talkers and deceivers, especially those of the circumcision, whose mouths must be stopped, who subvert whole households, teaching things which they ought not, for the sake of dishonest gain.” (Titus 1:9–11) So let’s recap: According to St. Paul,

(1) If you desire to be a bishop, you desire a good work.

(2) There is a biblical definition of who should be called to this good work.

(3) The men who hold this office hold fast the Word and therefore silence those who are insubordinate, idle talkers, and deceivers.

Now, that little word “insubordinate” really gives the Pietists the vapors. Who are the insubordinate? Well, someone is “insubordinate”

who is “not subordinate to authority.” But the insubordinate, idle talkers and deceivers don’t want to acknowledge that there is any authority (well, except for themselves). And so they have turned a God-given word and office—Bishop/*Episcopé*—into a term for reviling. Oh, they’ll put up with any manner of legalistic tyranny as long as they have regular plebiscites to reaffirm a tyrant who tells them what they want to hear and panders to their “priesthood,” while he pitches the Bible out the window. Call the tyrant a “president” and degrade the Bride of Christ with the revolting spectacle of a party spirit, and the insubordinate are tickled pink (or they would be pink, if that color wasn’t so dangerously close to Episcopal Purple!). But the stubborn fact that Holy Scripture says positive things about the Episcopate reduces the insubordinate and idle talkers to howling at the moon.

What is at stake in this discussion is the biblical Office of the Holy Ministry. In the campaign for president of the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, one “candidate” has gone so far as to publicly attack the *episkopé*. But one cannot attack *episkopé* without attacking, in its very essence, the entire ministry.

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Mohammedanism and the War against the Church

Rev. C. D. Hudson
Pastor, Christ Lutheran Church
Richmond, Missouri

Dear Saints,

I indicated in last month's newsletter* that I intended to begin this month writing a series of (monthly) essays explaining some of the doctrinal practices which enabled the early Christians to be faithful while yet remaining "in" this passing world. Contrary to what might be assumed, this was not an easy thing to do; it was not an easy life to live, for their persistence in doing this—that is being "faithful" to Holy Scripture—soon led to public hostility and ridicule, then social ostracization, and eventually public and official persecution, prison and even torture unto death. All because of a "confession" and "lifestyle."

I am moved to write an essay each month because I am acutely aware of the divine charge given to me by the Holy Trinity, that I use the skills with which He blesses me to continually strengthen you in the one true and saving faith with which He has so richly blessed you. It is for this reason that it is important that I address a different topic than that which I had originally planned on writing this month, the subject of which directly touches the faith and life of each one of us as confessional Lutherans.

Once again, there has been a major social and religious controversy because of what someone of public prominence has said about Mohammedanism. In the most recent case it was the Bishop of Rome, who in presenting an essay stated the following, in part: "... that everything that Mohammed brought was evil, such as his command to spread by the sword the faith he preached." The media informs us that the Bishop was quoting from a book which in turn was quoting the Byzantine emperor Manuel Palaeologos II, of the 14th century.

The reaction of that which—interestingly

*This article is reprinted from the October 2006 newsletter of Christ Lutheran Church (Richmond, MO).

and revealingly—the media consistently calls the "Muslim world" was predictable. Recall if you will that it was just a few months ago when rioting occurred in a number of different countries by multitudes of the followers of Mohammedanism over some political cartoons of Mohammed published in a European newspaper.

But more to the point, in regard to this latest controversy. Up to the time I am writing this, I have seen nothing in the media which has sought to set the quote which has generated this latest lawlessness in its historical context. In other words, what caused the Byzantine emperor to speak those words, and just as importantly, what does history reveal about Mohammedanism in regard to how it has been spread? Was the emperor correct? Did he have just cause to make that statement? I have had an opportunity to watch a number of discussion on various news programs since the controversy began and these two questions have as of yet to be addressed. What follows is a short overview of what factual history reveals about how the Mohammedan religion has been spread.

Muhammad died in A.D. 632. The man who followed him in leadership was Abu Bekr. A year after he assumed control, he invaded Palestine to spread the religion. In 634 Omar seceded Abu Bekr and in 635 he conquered Damascus. In 638 he conquered Jerusalem where he prohibited Christians from building new churches, whereas Mohammedans were free to take over any building that had been a church that they desired. In 637 Omar and Mohammedanism invaded Syria, and then continued moving west until it captured another major Christian capital, Alexandria, in Egypt in 640. In 642 they conquered the rest of the then largely Christian country of Egypt. They kept moving west, spreading their religion by continued military conquest, eventually capturing the town of Tripoli. From there they would eventually

invade southern Spain in 711. During this whole time, as Mohammedanism was continuing to be spread by military might to the west, another group moved north. Thus, in 649 they launched an invasion and conquered the island of Cyprus. The island of Rhodes fell to the Mohammedan sword in 653. It is of great importance to realize that in each city and country conquered, Mohammedanism became the “official” religion. While there was not in all cases forced conversion to Mohammedanism, all other religions were automatically relegated to a second-class status, and “freedom of worship” was curtailed to varying degrees. In many if not most cases, those who remained faithful to the Christian faith were reduced to second class citizenship at best. The supreme ruling authority was always a Mohammedan, and the teachings of the Koran was the basis of law.

The Mohammedans were not content with simply invading the southern end of Spain and so, continuing to wield the scimitar to spread their religion, they pressed on so that by 718 they had conquered most of the Iberian Peninsula (that is, modern day Spain and Portugal). A few years later they would surge forth once again, this time crossing the Pyrenees mountains into France where their military conquest, all in the name of their religion, was finally stopped by the Frankish leader Charles Martel (“the hammer”) in the battle of Tours and Poitiers. They were thus forced to withdraw back into Spain where they would remain for centuries, until finally pushed out by military force in 1492. It is interesting to note that it was in Spain that the policy and practice of “Dhimmitude” became normative. This teaching, which has never been “officially” denounced even to this day, automatically classifies Christians and Jews as second-class citizens, thereby allowing for a host of “acceptable” discriminatory and (in many cases) punitive practices against them. Christians and Jews are, as has been stated repeatedly in public forms by representatives of Mohammedanism the last couple of years, “people of the Book,” but they are relegated to a “second” and thereby “lower class” of “brethren,” legally. The only “rights” they have, both religious and civil, are those the Mohammedan governing authorities deigns to grant to them. And

so it is, even to this day! There is no religious “freedom” under Mohammedanism, just varying degrees of “tolerance,” which—by the way—can be changed at any time.

While the Mohammedan scimitar had been busy “spreading the faith” in the Middle East and North Africa, conquering countries, cities, and peoples that had for centuries been overwhelmingly Christian, forcibly imposing a Mohammedan government on all, it was not idle in other places as well. They invaded Sicily off southern Italy in 827, and—to the credit of those saints—they fought until they were finally conquered in 902. In 846, the Mohammedan armies fought their way into the Christian capital of Europe, the city of Rome, and did what had become then their standard practice: they plundered the churches first. In 1071, they defeated the Byzantine Christians and in 1091 they drove all Christian priests out of Jerusalem.

In essence, the Mohammedan military expansion—always in the name of, and for the spread of, their “religion”—conquered countries which had been Christian for more than 500 years! This is what we are not told about in the media and school textbooks of our time. And dear saints, the suffering which the vast majority of Christians experienced that came with Mohammedan conquest was real and long-lasting. It was this reality, the centuries of long-suffering and abuse of fellow Christians that moved the Bishop of Rome in 1095 to call for that which has become such a “naughty” word that both the president of the United States and the Bishop of Rome to apologize for, and shy away from as if it was the plague: the word “Crusade.”

Let’s review briefly. Mohammed himself supported and used military force to spread the “religion” which he had dreamed up. Upon his death, his followers invaded with military force and conquered the following, in the name of “allah”: Palestine in 633; Yarmouk in 636; Syria in 637; Jerusalem in 638; Egypt in 641; Persian in 642; the northern part of Africa in 643; and Spain in 711. In addition there were the other invasion referenced above of southern Europe. And that’s not all.

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I'm Not Leaving—I'm Already Orthodox

Dr. Michael R. Totten
Pastor, Saint Laurence Lutheran Church
San Lorenzo, California

A recent widely publicized decision by a Lutheran pastor to renounce his call and join Eastern Orthodoxy inevitably raises the question, “Who’s next?” Perhaps for some the clergy associated with ELDoNA are imagined as special targets of this concern, given our not undeserved reputation as a liturgically “high church” and structurally “hierarchical” entity. I personally went to Goleta, California in the late 1980’s and discussed this possibility with Peter Gilquist, a former Campus Crusade for Christ staff member raised in one of the ELCA’s predecessor bodies, who had led a group of Protestant congregations into the Antiochian Archdiocese of Eastern Orthodoxy. So why didn’t I join them?

Some pastors have gone elsewhere because they fell in love with Reformation era liturgics at the seminary, only to be denied the same in their first calls. In my current congregation, every divine service features the Holy Eucharist, the chanting of liturgical texts, and the burning of incense, all of which were retained in Martin Luther’s reforms. In other cases, pastors have abandoned Lutheranism when they could no longer tolerate their denomination’s divergence from the basic principles of the Lutheran Confessions. But the existence of ELDoNA makes this unnecessary; it is now possible to escape such errors as “voters supremacy” and Yankee Stadium Unionism without having to relinquish the Small Catechism or classic Lutheran hymnody.

But the main reason why I didn’t heed the call to “go east, young man” was Eastern Orthodoxy’s failure to affirm the chief article of the Christian religion, namely, justification by grace through faith. Critics of Byzantine [that is, Eastern] theology have asserted that its adherents are little more than high church Methodists, a suspicion confirmed for me when Eastern Orthodox laymen with whom I dialogued in the 1990’s told

me that the Protestant theologian most acceptable to their approach was John Wesley. For all their cultural and customary differences, Eastern Orthodoxy and Roman Catholicism are in full agreement with most “evangelical” Protestants in teaching that genuine holiness is acquired by human effort with divine assistance, through a lengthy process of spiritual improvement (monasticism, Pentecostalism, “purpose driven” living) which, if not completed prior to one’s physical death, extends into an afterlife (purgatory, the millennium, a “left behind” tribulation period). But the Scriptures make clear that already at conversion, by faith through God’s Word and Baptism, Christians are adopted sons of God (Gal. 3:26) and partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). The Christian life is about the preservation and enjoyment of this “one thing needful” (Luke 10:42), not the acquisition of some additional status.

My opposition to the theology of the East did not however lead me to become uncritical of modern Lutheranism, including its “conservative” and “confessional” branches. An obsession with Romans 7, in which “flesh” (something Jesus shares with us according to John 1:14) is misunderstood as a “sinful nature” (something Jesus clearly does not share with us), has led many supposed descendants of the Reformation to assert as a central proposition of their systems that Christians are “saints and sinners at the same time.” Whether Martin Luther really or consistently taught such a notion remains a topic of scholarly debate; in 1530 he preached a sermon in which he declared that Christians were no longer sinners, but in 1535 he wrote a commentary in which he asserted that in some sense Christians still are sinners. In any case, this idea has no foundation in the Lutheran Confessions, violates the eighteenth thesis of C.F.W. Walther’s “Proper Distinction between Law and Gospel” (which condemns those who “create

the impression that even true believers are still under the spell of ruling sins and are sinning purposely”), and directly contradicts Psalm 1:5, Romans 8:1, and many other clear promises of the Gospel.

Modern Lutherans love to compare the sanctification schemes of other church bodies to that of the Pharisee who brags about his works in Luke 18:11-12, yet the “Lutheran” system is hardly of any benefit to the repentant tax collector in that story. Too many contemporary “Lutheran” sermons, after supposedly “pardoning” their hearers, fail to send them to their houses justified (Luke 18:14), but instead intercept them halfway home and march them back to the temple to re-confess their sins.

Only when justification is taught correctly will any pastor or congregation be granted an exodus from the various theological Egypts in whose houses of bondage so many latter day Israelites currently dwell. Declaring that a Christian is righteous means just that; he no longer has any spiritual problem which he must either repair himself in this life, or wait for God to repair for him in an afterlife. A commitment to this principle may not answer every possible question or resolve every imaginable dispute, but with the chief gift of God already in our possession, there’s nowhere else we need to go!



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Alvin J. Schmidt writes: “Given this historically verifiable context for the Crusades, it is not an exaggeration to call them a defensive war, as Thomas Madden does. Being a defensive war, they therefore cannot be called a venture in imperialism, as is often done. Here the words of British historian Paul Johnson come to mind: ‘The Crusades, far from being an outrageous prototype of Western imperialism, as taught in most schools, were a mere episode in a struggle that has lasted 1,400 years, and were one of the few occasions when Christians took the offensive to regain ‘occupied territories’ of the Holy Land’ (*The Great Divide*, p.146).

The much maligned and largely misunderstood “Crusades” ended officially in 1291. But the Mohammedan “jihad” (their ‘crusades’) did not! Fifty years after the last Christian effort to gain access of historically Christian lands and holy sites, and to free Christian people so that they could worship in freedom, the Mohammedan’s launched yet another attack, this time by the Ottoman Turks, into southeastern Europe. The truly appalling policies and practices of the Mohammedan occupying forces of this “invasion” were to sear the hearts and minds of the Christians in southern Europe, and are the seeds of the truly bitter war of just a few years ago in Bosnia. Again, we were told nothing of this during that war. It was during this invasion that Orkhan I created what was called the “Janissary Corps,” which he intended to be an elite military force for Mohammedanism. At its beginning it was staffed by capturing boys of Christian families in the Balkans (the former Yugoslavia—thus Bosnia, Serbia, Albania, etc.,) but it was found that they could not obtain enough boys (again Christian boys) to meet their needs through this method. They thus switched to a new method of recruitment, one in which Christian boys were forcibly taken from their homes to be trained as military slaves (Bat Ye’or’s book, referenced in this newsletter, has a major discussion of this practice, and of what life was like for Christians during this time in these lands). Every fourth year about one-

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The Missional Church: The Confessional Church

Rev. Jeffrey A. Ahonen
Deacon-Elect, Salem Lutheran Church
Malone, Texas

Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God. -- Romans 10:17

And God said. . . .

In the beginning, God created all things by His Word. God opened His mouth and uttered His command, and it happened, just as He said. His Word contains the power to create whatever the Creator desires. So God created the everything in the universe through His Word. Not one thing was made apart from His Word (Genesis 1:1–31).

As it was in the beginning, so it is now. God has not changed the manner in which He works. He still does not create anything apart from His Word. If His Word is not present, nothing is made.

This includes the making of disciples. Apart from God’s Word, no disciples can be created. His Word is absolutely necessary in carrying out Christ’s commission to make Christians out of the unbelievers among the nations of the world. It is only in the presence of God’s Holy Word that faith is created in the heart of a man, as Saint Paul teaches: “Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Romans 10:17).

In that single verse, the Apostle summarizes the lesson taught by Jesus through His healing of a deaf and mute man (Mark 7:31–37). The man’s inability to hear is symbolic of our own deafness to the Word of God with which we are born as a result of the fall into sin, and his inability to speak points to our helplessness while we remain in unbelief. As the Apostle Paul says, “How shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard?” (Romans 10:14–15). Only when the Creator comes in mercy to re-create will the fallen be lifted up.

And He did!

The Creator came into the presence of that deaf man and uttered the Word, “Ephphatha! Be opened!” and the Finger of God—the Holy Spirit—unstopped those deaf ears. The Word of God traveled through those opened ears and struck that faithless heart, which the Holy Spirit enlivened and made into a believing and loving heart. The Word flowed from the heart to the tongue, and the Holy Spirit freed it to praise and thank and call upon the Lord. Jesus has made for Himself, by His Word, a disciple, filled with faith in Him.

As it was then, so it is now—even for us. “That we we may obtain this faith, the Ministry of Teaching the Gospel and administering the Sacra-

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Confessional Lutheran Mission Fund Continues to Grow; Hymnals and Communion Ware Acquired for Missions

Salem Lutheran Church (Malone) began its Confessional Lutheran Mission Fund as part of the congregation’s 120th anniversary celebrations. Approximately \$11,500 has been raised to date. The Mission Board is beginning to purchase items which will 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.

Book Review

C. FitzSimons Allison
The Cruelty of Heresy
Morehouse Publishing 1994
Pp 22 + 178

Every once in a while something strongly attracts one's attention to a book. Sometimes it is the picture on the dust jacket, or the color of the cover. In this case it was simply the title of the book, for the word "heresy" and its meaning, as it has been both defined and accepted by the Church Catholic, has all but disappeared from both the vocabulary and spiritual life of much of contemporary Christianity. This absence is one of the things the author seeks to bring to our attention, and he does so in a way that is both unique and most refreshing. Allison expresses his great concern over this loss repeatedly throughout the book, having expressed his concern in these words in the *Introduction*: "The achievements of the first four General or Ecumenical Councils have continued to serve as guidelines for Roman Catholic, Eastern Orthodox, Anglican, Reformed, Lutheran and Methodist churches. Not since the early centuries have they been under as serious assault as they are today both from without and from within the churches" (p.16). He then continues with a lament: "We are susceptible to heretical teachings because, in one form or another, they nurture and reflect the way we would have it be rather than the way God has provided, which is infinitely better for us" (p.17). He then writes these most timely words of warning: "Neither ignorance of the heresies nor belief in their irrelevance can guard against making the same mistakes" (p.17). It is with these concerns in mind that Allison presents the reader with a very readable and highly informative presentation of some much needed and important information about the most prominent and persistent of the "ancient" heresies, many of which are once again gaining in popularity and respectability, even among those who would contend that they are Christians.

The book consists of ten chapters that are relatively short in length (about 15 pages each) but

the pages are literally packed with information. He provides some basic biographical information about the founder of each of the heresies he addresses, as well as situating them in their historical context. He then presents an explanation of the theological problem(s) with the particular heresy he is addressing. It is on this point in particular that the usefulness of the book is to be seen the most, for the author has done a truly remarkable job in explaining the theological problems with each heresy presented, using words and even diagrams that are understandable to a reader who has not had a formal theological education.

Chapter One provides background information about some of the earliest heresies which afflicted the Christian Church. He introducing the reader to "Docetism," the false teaching that Jesus only *appeared* to suffer; "Ebionism," the false teaching which rejected Jesus' divine Sonship; and "Adoptionism," the teaching which fundamentally contended that the "man" Jesus was "adopted" by God. These three false doctrines are of great importance for two reasons: first, because they all empty the Christ's Passion of its salvific meaning, and thus the Gospel of its saving grace, and second, because they have, in one form or another, served as a basis for a host of other heresies through the passing of the centuries.

Chapter Two addresses the heresies of "Gnosticism" and "Manichaeism." This is a chapter which is of particular relevance for our time for Gnosticism has been "re-discovered" in the last sixty years or so, and is in fact being vigorously promoted by many who contend that they are Christians and quite often have the word "professor" behind their name. This is why we periodically see on the "History" or "Discovery" channel (especially during those days the Church Catholic have marked as "holy") special programs highlighting in an overwhelming positive light, the "new and exciting" discovery of the "Gospel of Thomas," "of Mary," "of Peter," and of late even "of Judas." Allen rightly gives pride of place for the first defense of true (Biblically based) Christianity against Gnosticism to Irenaeus (ca. 130 A.D.-ca. 200 A.D.). His major work, "Against the Heresies," is still

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ments was instituted. For through the Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith, where and when it pleases God, in them that hear the Gospel” (Augsburg Confession V.1–3). Through the Office of the Holy Ministry, the Word of God comes now into the world to make disciples.

Therefore, the Office of the Holy Ministry is by its very nature a missional office. The men who occupy that office are, by virtue of their call and ordination into this office, missional pastors. On account of their vocation to preach the Word and administer the Sacraments, they are all missionaries. For the Word and the Sacraments that they handle do nothing other than the work of a missionary: making disciples.

The called and ordained servants of The Word make disciples through the pouring of water and the Word upon men and women and children in Holy Baptism, opening them to the hearing of the Gospel and to saving faith in the Holy Trinity. The ministers of the Gospel proclaim the Gospel of Absolution to the repentant and believing hearts of disciples who are re-created each time they hear these words of life, “I forgive you all of your sins, in the name of The Father and of The Son and of The Holy Spirit.” These pastors administer the Word joined to bread and wine, the blessed Sacrament of the Body and Blood of Our Lord, to recreate the weak flesh and tired blood of the Lord’s disciples, rejuvenating and reinvigorating the faithful to live a life worthy of this glorious calling as a disciple of Christ in a missional church.

Or, rather, a disciple of Christ in a confessional church!

For these marks of the truly missional church are nothing other than the very marks of the truly confessional church: the Gospel taught in its full truth and purity, and the Sacraments administered in full accord with Christ’s institution of them. Thus, to be a confessional church is to be a missional church, and to be a missional church is to be a confessional church. To describe a church as one or the other is to describe something other



Salem Lutheran Calls Ahonen to Serve as Deacon and Missionary

In January, Salem Lutheran Church (Malone, TX) discussed the possibility of calling Rev. Jeffrey Ahonen to serve in a part-time capacity as Salem’s Deacon, with the intention that he would also engage in mission work as the Lord provides opportunity. (Rev. Ahonen was known to Salem from his time of service at Peace Lutheran-Garland, TX, and his involvement in last Summer’s colloquium, and the diocese had recently received his application for membership.) A special voters meeting was called for February 4th to consider extending such a call, and the vote to extend the call to Rev. Ahonen was unanimous. Rev. Ahonen visited with Salem on February 19th (see pictures), while considering this call. Rev. Ahonen notified Salem on March 17th of his acceptance of the call.

Preparations are now underway for Rev. Ahonen’s installation on June 24th (the Festival of the Nativity of St. John) during the Divine Service at Salem. All are welcome and encouraged to attend!

Deacon Ahonen will begin mission work in MN, WI and the Upper Peninsula of MI. To learn more, you may contact Deacon Ahonen at jahonen@mac.com, or call 906-364-2031.



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Visitation of Christ (Richmond)—Bishop Heiser conducted his visitation Christ Lutheran (Richmond) on April 22. The evening discussion centered on a number of pressing issues which confront Confessional Lutherans in our culture, and the opportunity which Christ-Richmond has for proclaiming the Word in it's truth and purity within her community. As with St. Boniface, the pastor and members of Christ are always a joy to visit—their dedication to the Word and faithful support of their pastor is to be commended.



Visitation of St. Boniface (Niles)—Bishop Heiser's first official parish visitation since the formation of the ELDoNA was at St. Boniface on January 15. The visitation gave an opportunity to discuss our shared work in the diocese, and to discuss the ministry of St. Boniface within their community. The evening concluded with the Divine Service, observing the Festival of the Confession of St. Peter (transferred). The kindness and generosity of the pastor and members of St. Boniface was a true joy.

Rev. Mark Raitz is the newest member of our diocese. He is the pastor of **Christ our Redeemer Lutheran Church (Trenton, Michigan)**. Christ our Redeemer was established as an independent congregation in February 2006. When Pastor Raitz learned about the ELDoNA, he inquired with Bishop Heiser to find out how to join the diocese. Pastor Rutowicz and Bishop Heiser had the opportunity to meet with Pastor Raitz on the day after the St. Boniface visitation, to conduct his colloquy interview.

Rev. Raitz is a 1995 graduate of Concordia Theological Seminary—Fort Wayne. In addition to his responsibilities as the Pastor of Christ our Redeemer, he also serves as a hospice chaplain. At present, Christ our Redeemer Lutheran Church has approximately 40 members.



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most relevant and one of the best sources of refutation against Gnostic teaching. Allison sums up Irenaeus' contribution to orthodoxy in these words: "Irenaeus's firm insistence upon the fullness of Christ's humanity helped save Christianity from being absorbed into a culturally larger Gnostic system . . . , which taught and promised escape rather than redemption" (p.53). And so it still is.

Chapter Three is a brief but very informative chapter on the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. It is in this chapter that the author also addresses the problem with "Monarchianism," for this false doctrine is intimately connected to the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. This is the teaching that was held to by many in the early church who were so intent on defending the doctrine that God is "One" that they rejected the biblical doctrine that God the Holy Trinity is in fact one God, consisting of three divine and distinct Persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Allison explains in very understandable terms what are the spiritual consequences of failing to recognize this Trinitarian reality.

Chapter Four treats of what must be the most studied and written about of all the heresy's that has beset the Church Catholic, that of Arianism. A very helpful section provides important information about Arius (ca. 256-336), the "founder" of the "basic form" of this particular heresy (it evolved through the passing of the years into several forms and degrees). More importantly, he also describes in very understandable terms what its false doctrine does to the relationship between God the eternal Father and His only-begotten Son. This section is then quite properly followed by one discussing Athanasius and the doctrine he so vigorously and persistently defended. This is of great importance because it was primarily through his efforts, over a period of a little more than 50 years (during which time he was exiled 5 different times from his Bishopric for a total of about twenty years because of his unwillingness to compromise doctrine), that the biblical truth of the proper and true relationship between God the eternal Father and the only-begotten Son was formally established and confessed as orthodox at the First Ecumenical Council held at Nicaea.

Chapter Five gives an overview of "The Cappadocians" contribution to orthodoxy. Allison sums up the chapter so well in the opening paragraph with these words: "Three brilliant men who lived in the fourth century in Cappodocia in Asia Minor [modern day Turkey] were instrumental in overcoming the Arian influence that had initially undermined the victory of Athanasius at Nicaea. They were Basil the Caesarea (330-379), Gregory of Nazianzus ((329-389), and Gregory of Nyssa (died ca. 394)" (p.95). This will perhaps be the most challenging of the chapters in the book for many readers for the author treats at some length the struggle over the very important question, what word or words most accurately describe that which we do not truly understand, the relationship between the three Persons of the one true God, the Holy Trinity? I believe it is also in this chapter that we see the commitment the author has made to help those who have no "formal" theological training to wrestle with—dare we say begin to understand—some of the deeper spiritual realities of the one true and saving faith, biblically-based Christianity and the God revealed in it, the most Holy Trinity. At first glance one might well be inclined to think, "Why do I need to know this? Through the passing of the years, other have said, "It was a silly debate really, about words such as 'essence,' and 'person.'" Not so! for how the saints of the Church use (and understand) these words in particular, especially in a spiritual context, will form "what" they think God "is," and "who" they believe Him to be. Contrary to what is widely believed in our time, words are important, and they do mean something! This is even more the case when thinking and speaking of things divine, for what we must seek to do is speak properly and thereby reverently of the one true and eternal God, the Holy Trinity.

Chapter six treats the heresy of Apollinarianism. Apollinarius was a Christian thinker and theologian who contributed significantly to the life of the Church in the later part of the fourth century. His goal was to remain a faithful "Nicean," that is to say, faithful to the doctrine confessed as "Catholic" by the council of Nicaea

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fifth of the Christian boys between the age of 14-18 for forcibly conscripted, trained for military service and during that training were compelled to adopt Mohammedanism. They then became an elite force, ready and wiling to fight and to die, to continue the spreading of Mohammedanism by military might! By the grace of the Holy Trinity as it was in France, so it was in Eastern Europe, that the Mohammedan sword was finally stopped, after they had invaded all the way to the gates of Vienna, in 1683. The combined force of Germans and Poles clearly understood, that what was at stake was the future of Christendom.

Recall once again the latest civil unrest and public outrage by the “Islamic world” over the quote by the Bishop of Rome. Let’s spend just a few moments and put it in its historical context. When the Byzantine emperor asked the question he knew what the history of Mohammedanism was. He knew that three of the five patriarchal sees of Christendom—Antioch, Jerusalem and Alexandria—had fallen to the sword of Mohammedanism, and the Christians there were no longer allowed to worship in freedom, if at all. He also knew so very well that the Mohammedans had wanted to conquer Constantinople since virtually the time of Mohammed. The first attempt was in 670, nearly forty years after the death of Mohammed in 632. This attempt ended in failure, after a seven year siege. In 717 a second attempt was made, and again they failed. The city’s existence, as one of the two remaining patriarchal sees (the other being Rome) was a continuing source of offense, and a grand prize much sought by the Mohammedans. In 1453 yet another military campaign was launched in an attempt to capture the city. In point of fact, this “Christian” city, which had been established by Constantine, had been the administrative and ecclesiastical center of Christianity in the Eastern Roman empire since its creation, and it had been repeatedly besieged over time by a host of enemies. Of the twenty-nine known attacks, seven came from Mohammedans. On May 29, 1453, the besieged city finally succumbed. I quote here the comments of Schmidt, referenced above:

“Before the siege was over, a divine liturgy was held in the famous St. Sophia church, built 900 years earlier. Christian men, women, and children prayed, sang, and embraced one another, imploring God’s mercy before the final hour. As Paul Fergosi poignantly notes, the participants of St. Sophia knew the next day would bring not only the downfall of their city, but it would bring defilement to the most majestic cathedral in Christendom once the Muslims took control of it. They also knew that on the following day they would experience rape, sodomy, slavery, or death, or all four as they took part in what has been described as a ‘liturgy of death.’

“Fergosi gives a graphic account of what transpired the next day, May 29, 1453—the day that Constantinople fell. He says several thousand sought refuge in St. Sophia before Mahomet II (the Ottoman caliph and sultan) gave his troops license to wield their scimitars. They then massacred 4,000 refugees, raped women, and slaughtered them as well. Then Mahomet ordered a muezzin to mount the cathedral’s pulpit and give the church formally to Allah. In addition, 50,000 inhabitants were taken away as slaves. The corpse of the Emperor Constantine XI was brought to Mahomet, who ordered it decapitated in keeping with the treatment given to all Greek corpses killed in battle by the Turks. Constantine’s head was later embalmed and sent to various cities of the Ottoman Empire to be put on display. Mahomet continued in this manner after his victory, decapitating leading nobles and noteworthy citizens of Constantinople” (Schmidt, p.52-3).

And they didn’t stop there. By this time the “Crusades” were a distant memory, but the spread of Mohammedan military aggression was not! They surged forward yet again, conquering Hungary in 1526. The leader of this phase of what was by then almost a thousand year old military campaign, (jihad) was Suleiman I. He took back to the then conquered and re-named city of Constantinople (now called Istanbul) thousands of Hungarian men, women and children to be sold as slaves in various parts of the Ottoman empire. He

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than the Evangelical Lutheran Church—and something other than the Church catholic, to whom our Lord granted the commission of making disciples by His preached and His sacramental Word (Matthew 28:18–20). From the very beginning of the Church of the New Testament, our Lord Christ has called and sent pastors into all the world to preach the pure Gospel to every creature (Mark 16:15), that men and women and children might believe and be baptized (Mark 16:16) and be remade into new creations in Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17).

As it was in the beginning, even so may it be now. The pastors of our diocese endeavor, by the grace of God, to preach and teach purely the whole Word of God, that right hearing and the one true faith and orthodox Lutherans might be made by that Word within our congregations. God grant that we ever remain missional by remaining confessional, and remain confessional by remaining missional, that many within our communities might be opened by the Word to hear and believe the Good News of the Gospel and join us as disciples of Christ in our confessional and missional congregations.

How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!"—Romans 10:14–15

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And yet, Martin Luther’s “Table of Duties” in the Small Catechism first speaks of the duties of <gasp> “Bishops, Pastors and Preachers” and cites the very passages from 1 Timothy and Titus to which I have referred above. And, even more traumatizing for the delicate ears of the idle talkers, Luther then wrote of “What Duties Hearers Owe Their Bishops.” Oh, the scandal!

The Reformers understood that the abuses of the Romanists should not overthrow the “good work” which Rome had often corrupted. Thus we read in Apology XXVIII: “Besides, we have declared in the Confession what power the Gospel ascribes to bishops. Those who are now bishops do not perform the duties of bishops according to the Gospel”—please note that this clearly teaches that there are, therefore, duties of bishops according to the Gospel—“although indeed they may be bishops according to canonical polity, which we do not censure.” (§12) So... even the man-made “canonical polity” is not censured by Confessional Lutherans.

But the Apology of the Augsburg Confessions goes even further, and defines what a ‘Scriptural bishop’ is: “But we are speaking of a bishop according to the Gospel. And the ancient division of power into ‘power of the order’ and ‘power of jurisdiction’ is pleasing to us. Therefore the bishop has the power of the order, i.e. the ministry of the Word and Sacraments; he also has the power of jurisdiction, i.e. the authority to excommunicate those guilty of open crimes, and again to absolve them if they are converted and seek absolution. Nor indeed have they power tyrannical, i.e. without law; or regal, i.e. above law; but they have a fixed command and a fixed Word of God, according to which they ought to teach, and according to which they ought to exercise their jurisdiction.” (§13–14)

These responsibilities of Word, Sacraments, and Jurisdiction are common to all whom the Lord of the Church has called to the office of the holy ministry. (See, for example, Treatise §74, and Treatise §61). But the Church of the Augsburg Confession retained ‘Bishops’ in the narrow—by then, long traditional—canonical sense of the term for the sake of good order, in some places calling them “Bishops” (in Scandinavia, for example) and in other places “Superintendents” (Martin Chemnitz being an outstanding example of a Superintendent of Christ’s Church).

Why do the idle talkers and insubordinate rail against the “Bishops”? Because they take issue with the calling of the entire office of the holy ministry. They make a bugbear of the bishop as the camel’s nose of infiltration against the real target: the office of Word, Sacraments ... and Jurisdiction.

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returned again three years later, with an even bigger army in an attempt to capture Vienna, but he failed in this effort. And, as mentioned above, they surged into Europe again, in yet another military campaign in the name of their religion, in 1683! It was in the midst of defeat that once again we see the “peacefulness” of Mohammedanism, for before Suleiman returned to “Istanbul” (in 1529) he proved true to form, by ordering the massacre all of his captives, many being kidnaped peasants and their families. Schmidt writes: “Similar to Tariq in Spain, some centuries earlier, Suleiman obeyed the wishes of the Koran, which tells all Muslims what they must do to non-Muslim captives—namely, ‘seize them and kill them wherever you find them, and take not from among them a friend or a helper (Sura 4:89)” (Schmidt, p.54).

Lest we think that this attitude is ancient history, we need to realize that it was in the 1890's that the Kurds and Turks combined and picked up the scimitar yet again (perhaps we should say, they have never put it down) and, quoting Schmidt, “massacred between 50,000 and 75,000 Armenian (Christians) in Anatolia. In 1909, less than one hundred years ago, another 30,000 Christians were slaughtered in Adana. In 1915, the Turks annihilated thousands more in the Harput region of Turkey. That same year, the Muslim Turks arrested and soon executed hundreds of Armenians in Istanbul. Also, that same year, in the province of Sivas, only 10,000 Armenians escaped with their lives out of 160,000. The Christian Science Monitor described these 1915 massacres as the worst in history. By the end of 1916, 1916, the Anti-Armenian measures exercised by the Turks ‘were virtually complete.’ Thus, of the almost 1.9 million Armenians (Christians) in the Ottoman Empire before World War I, about one million were killed (half of them women and children); some 250,000 escaped to Russia; and about 200,000 were forcibly Islamized” (Schmidt, p.54-55).

I make bold to suggest that Emperor Manuel Palaeologos II was speaking a truth, for he was tragically, living it, along with virtually countless other Christians, and indeed other religions as well. I have said over the years that I know

of no case where the Mohammedan faith has become the dominant “religion” in a country by evangelism of the word, but by the force of the scimitar. Again, it is not by chance that the “symbol” of this intentionally and doctrinally sanctioned “religion” of military and political compulsion, is the quarter moon, which looks so very much like the sword which has been used as the primary means for its spreading.

Incredibly, it was the “holy” book of this religion, which does not command the sword be put away, which the former Bishop of Rome, John Paul II was photographed holding in his hand, and kissing! This is the “religion,” Mohammedanism, that the latest Roman Catechism teaches it’s followers will be in heaven, because they are “people of the Book,” and thus, like the Jews, need not hear nor believe in the all-atoning sacrifice of the Christ, for the forgiveness of sins!

Mohammedanism is, by its very nature and structure, a “theocracy,” that is to say, it is fully integrated into government, to the point that the Koran and most especially, “Shariah” (sacred) Law have the final say. In 1981 Mohammedan officials gathered in Cairo and drafted a “Universal Human Rights Declaration.” This document is often cited as an example of the great concern for human rights that the Mohammedan religion has. The document consists of 25 Articles, and all is well, until one arrives at Article 24 which states: “All the rights and freedoms stipulated in this declaration are subject to the Islamic Shariah.” And Article 25 reads: “The Islamic Shariah is the only source of reference for the explanation or clarification of any of the articles of this declaration.” It is a document of bondage!

Dear saints, to the regret of the Christian faith, it is true that the sword has, on numerous occasions, been used to “spread the faith.” What is different about this is, however, is that the Gospel clearly teaches otherwise. Those who have done this have acted against the clear teaching of Holy Scripture.

Upon the completion of the first draft of this article, I took a lunch break and tuned on the TV. As I watched the news it showed the president

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addressing the United Nations, and he declared that the “West” is not at war with Islam! I submit that’s not the question that needs to be asked. Instead, why is it we hear almost no one asking, “When will Mohammedanism cease its war against all other religions?” It is most revealing that within the teaching of that religion, the world is divined into two profoundly different parts: that which is under control of a Mohammedan government is part of the “word at peace.” All other countries, outside the control of the Koran and Shariah Law, is called “the world at war.” This is how they view the world in which we live. Their mission is to “convert” us, and if we will not, then at least place us under the Koran and Shariah Law! There is no religions “freedom” under their rule, only varying degrees of “tolerance,” determined by them!

The evidence reveals that Mohammedanism is on the move once again. I am speaking here not of terrorist groups, but the religion as a whole. One recent report I read said that by the middle of this century, if the trend continues, Mohammedanism will be the dominant religion in Western Europe, simply through birth rate. The average traditional European family has 1.2 children per family and the Mohammedans have 6.2. Again, the fastest growing religion in England is Mohammedanism, and predictions are it will become the largest religion in that county possibly by the end of this decade. What is so important about this is the fact that their religion teaches no such things as a separation of church and state. The “church” runs the state.

Recently Judge John Roberts was questioned by members of the Senate about his faith (he professes to be a follower of the Bishop of Rome) in relation to his assuming a seat on the Supreme Court of the United States. Over and over again, when the question came up, Judge Roberts assured the members that he would judge impartially, complying with former decisions. He stated clearly and repeatedly that his faith would not influence his judicial decisions. One must ask, then what good is one’s “faith,” if it does not influence one’s decisions? This is in fact one of the greatest failures of so much of Christianity in our time, the separation of the teachings of ones faith, and ap-

plying it to daily life.

This is not what Mohammedanism teaches. One author has said when you enter into Mohammedanism, you don’t enter into a “religion,” but a way of life. It is tolerant of other religions, as long as it is in the minority, but becomes openly intolerant once it becomes the majority religion.

Luther recognized so clearly the threat that Mohammedanism posed. This is why he wrote the following: “Mohammed denies that Christ is the Son of God, denies that He died for our sins, denies that He rose again to bring us to life, denies that through faith in Him sins are forgiven and we are justified, denies that He will come as the Jude of the living and the dead—though he does believe in a resurrection of the dead and a day of judgment—denies the Holy Spirit, and denies His gifts. By these and similar articles the conscience must be fortified against the rites of Mohammed (What Luther Says, p.762.3025).

We must not persecute the followers of this tragically false religion, even though they have, and are continuing to persecute those who confess the Christ, Jesus of Nazareth as the only Lord and Savior of the world! We must pray for them and for the sake of their souls, share the Gospel of Jesus with them. At the same time, however, we must also recognize that they only tolerate our faith and confession at the present because they are in the minority! By the grace of the Holy Trinity, we have been given the sword of the Spirit; they continue to cling to the spirit of the scimitar.

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in A.D. 325. Unfortunately he was so intent on preserving the reality of the divinity of the Christ (against the Arians in particular) that he believed (and taught) that the “Word” had replaced the mind of Jesus. Jesus thus had a true human body, but not a true human mind. In other words, Jesus was not “fully” man. The author sums what is at risk here very nicely in these words: “The soteriological (salvation) question, ‘How can humanity be saved?’, that helped to explain the difference between Arius and Athanasius exposes the ultimate cruelty of Apollinarius’ teaching: we are ‘saved’ by ‘replacement,’ by destruction.” (p.107). He continues at some length explaining the spiritual consequences of this false doctrine, again using terms and explanations which are very understandable by the non-specialist.

Chapter Seven addresses the topic of “Nestorianism.” Nestorius (ca. 382-ca. 451) was the Bishop of Constantinople who willingly and sincerely accepted the doctrine that Jesus was a true Man, (not, as is being promoted in our time, “fully human”) but Nestorius refused to accept and believe that the divine Logos (the “Word,” the Second Person of God the Holy Trinity) was *Incar-nated* and underwent the *Nativity*, being born of the Virgin Mary. He is alleged to have said he could not believe that an infant crying in a manger was truly God. The author provides a number of diagrams in this chapter which are very helpful in assisting the reader to understand the great importance of believing in the orthodox doctrine of the two natures in the Christ, and the spiritual consequences of failing to do so.

Chapter Eight is the last chapter which deals with a specific heresy, that of Eutychianism. This was a doctrine initially taught by Eutyches (ca. 378-452) who was a monk in the eastern Roman empire. As is so often the case with heresy, at issue was the proper understanding of the Christ; in this case, did Jesus have one “nature” or two? Eutyches contended that Jesus had but one nature (thus the term *monophysite*, one-nature). The author once again takes what can be a very technical or complicated subject and truly brings it to life by

describing this heretical teaching in words that are very understandable.

Chapters Nine and Ten are a summation of what it means to be Christian in what I contend is an increasingly un-Christian society, for while many contend they are Christian, after reading this book you will recognize that many who contend they “are,” are in fact “not.”

Yes, there is some weakness in the book. One example is that periodically the author speaks of the Christian “experience,” when from a historic Lutheran perspective “faith” is a more accurate and proper term. The problems are relatively minor, however, when compared to the richness and readability of the heresies treated. In relation to the publication of “things spiritual” in our time Allison clearly shows forth an unusual degree of awareness of both the spreading spiritual decay and the consequent spiritual threat that is ongoing in so much of Christianity in our time. He rightly points out that all of the heresies treated in the book were recognized and authoritatively declared to be “heresy” and thus outside the one true and saving faith, Biblical Christianity, centuries ago!

This is a most timely and important book, for the topic of heresy is not just a concern for the pastor, but for all who truly desire to be faithful to the Word, for in the end, what is at risk is where one will spend the rest of eternity, in heaven or in hell, and yes, hell truly does exist!

Without hesitation, I encourage pastors and laity alike to obtain a copy of this book, for heresy still exists, and as it has been, is now, and so it shall continue to be a most serious threat to those who would be the children of the Most High.

To the Resurrected Christ be all the glory for the salvation that has come unto us! Amen and Amen.

—**Rev. C. D. Hudson**



The Seal of The Evangelical Lutheran Diocese of North America:

As Evangelical Lutherans, we retain the “rose” of Dr. Martin Luther, which the Reformer created to summarize the central teaching of Justification by grace through faith. The Jerusalem Cross in the center of the rose signifies the five wounds of Christ (His hands, His feet, and His side). The words “Verbum Dei Manet in Aeternum” (“The Word of God endures Forever”) have been emblazoned on Lutheran banners, shields and standards since the time of John the Steadfast (1468–1532), the Elector of Saxony, who stood with the Reformers at the time of the Augsburg Confession. “Concordia A.D. 1580” confesses that our teaching is that of all true Evangelical Lutherans across the generations, the doctrine of the Book of Concord (1580).

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Ray County Fairgrounds
Richmond, Missouri 64085
Pastor C. D. Hudson
Phone: (660) 259-2728
Sunday: Divine Service 9:30 a.m.; Christian Ed. 10:45 a.m.

Christ our Redeemer Lutheran Church
Trenton, Michigan
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2007 Diocesan Synod and Theological Colloquium

The synod (meeting) of the diocese will be at Salem Lutheran Church on **August 28**. Attendance at the synod is restricted to the diocesan clergy and such guests/observers as are preapproved by the bishop (laity from parishes served by ELDoNA clergy are invited to attend as observers).

The Theological Colloquium will be held on **August 29** and is open to *everyone*. Please visit our website (eldona.org) for more information.