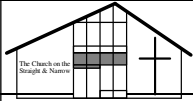


The Straight & Narrow Way



A Newsletter for OUR SAVIOUR LUTHERAN CHURCH

St. John's Tide 2007

Comfort on the Journey

The following is an excerpt from "The Hammer of God," a novel by Rev. Bo Giertz, Bishop of Sweden. It is a conversation between the rector (pastor) and a new vicar (assistant pastor).

"I just want you to know from the beginning, sir, that I am a believer," he said. His voice was a bit harsh.

He saw a gleam in the old man's eyes which he could not quite interpret. Was approval indicated, or did he have something up his sleeve?

The rector put the lamp back on the table, puffed at his pipe, and looked at the young man a moment before he spoke.

"So you are a believer, I'm glad to hear that. What do you believe in?"

Fridfeldt stared dumfounded at his superior. Was he jesting with him?

"But, sir, I am simply saying that I am a believer."

"Yes, I hear that, my boy. But what is it that you believe in?"

Fridfeldt was almost speechless. "But don't you know, sir, what it means to be a believer?"

"That is a word which can stand for things that differ greatly, my boy. I ask only what it is that YOU believe in."

"In Jesus, of course," answered Fridfeldt, raising his voice. "I mean—I mean that I have given Him my heart."

The older man's face became suddenly as solemn as the grave.

"Do you consider THAT something to give Him?"

By this time, Fridfeldt was almost in tears. "But sir, if you do not give your heart to Jesus, you cannot be saved."

"You are right, my boy. And it is just as true that, if you think you are saved because you give Jesus your heart, you will not be saved. You see, my boy," he continued reassuringly, as he continued to look at the young pastor's face, in which uncertainty and resentment were shown in a struggle for the upper hand, "it is ONE THING to choose Jesus as one's Lord and Savior, to give Him one's heart and commit oneself to Him, and that He now accepts one into His little flock; it is a very different thing to believe on Him as a Redeemer of sinners, of whom one is chief. One does not choose a Redeemer for oneself, you understand, nor give one's heart to Him. The heart is a rusty old can on a junk heap. A fine birthday gift, indeed! But a wonderful Lord passes by, and has mercy on the wretched tin can, sticks His walking cane through it and rescues it from the junk pile and takes it home with Him. That is how it is."

If you would like to read more of this book, just ask Pastor Lange. We have two copies that we would love to share.



Pastoral Pedagogy

Lutheran Service Book Q & A

An interview with Paul Grime, the Executive Director of the Commission on Worship for the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod.

Why a new hymnal?

The standard answer is that churches update their hymnals from

time to time. I think that some folks think we do it just to bug them! But the truth is that such updates are necessary in order for us to take advantage of the new gifts of word and song that God gives to his church through the talents of poets and composers.

In the case of the LCMS, the timing for an up-date was ripe. Lutheran Worship (LW) is now a quarter-century old, and The Lutheran Hymnal (TLH) is 65 years old! Many people aren't aware that over one-third of our congregations were still using 77th prior to the arrival last summer of Lutheran Service Book (LSB).

What do you perceive to be the strengths of Lutheran Service Book?

Its chief strength, in my opinion, is its unambiguous witness to the Gospel. Always a strength of past hymnals, LSB continues in the Lutheran tradition of extolling the gifts of forgiveness and life using a rich array of images. Many of the newer hymns, for example, contain insightful and fresh language that points to Christ and his benefits.

Another strength is its user-friendliness. While such practical matters are in a completely different category than the content of the book, they are, nevertheless, important. The response to the design and layout of LSB has been extremely positive. Folks appreciate the artwork and even the color of the paper. And best of all, very few have found the book to be too heavy!

Describe for us, briefly, the process of publishing a hymnal in the Missouri Synod. Do you feel that this process, where the hymnal has to be approved by a majority of convention voters, in any way hinders the Commission on Worship from proposing the best hymnal possible?

The way I came to describe our process was with the phrase, "many eyes, many times." In other words, our work was reviewed by many eyes, and

the review process occurred on many different levels. For example, all of the hymn texts were examined by the Hymnody Committee, then reviewed in detail by a hymn text working group. When the texts were ready, they were reviewed by our Translations and Language Committee. After further review by the Hymnody Committee, the Commission on Worship finally examined each of the texts. Next came doctrinal review, and finally approval by the Synod in convention. A similar process was followed for almost every component of the project.

As to the second part of your question, there is no doubt that the final approval process influenced to some degree the decisions we made. It couldn't have been otherwise. There are all kinds of competing interests in the Synod. Our challenge was always to find the right balance that would best serve our congregations at this particular time in our history. There are plenty of things in LSB to satisfy nearly everybody and also something to make almost everyone a bit uncomfortable at one point or another. While these competing pressures made our work difficult at times, to the extent that we juggled everything successfully, LSB is a better book for it.

What is the role of LSB in the church catholic? Is this just a hymnal for Missouri Synod Lutherans?

Most any denominational hymnal naturally finds its home primarily within its own communion. This is certainly the case with LSB. Its preparation was always done with the knowledge that, first and foremost, it had to serve the congregations of our Synod. For that reason, many of the decisions regarding what to include were made on the basis of how it would best serve our own congregations.

Nevertheless, LSB certainly has a role to play in the church catholic. Its Gospel-centered texts bear powerful witness to the central teaching of the church. To the extent that it can provide assistance to other church bodies as they compile their own books, the church catholic will be the richer for it.

Why was an epiclesis prayer not included as an option in any of LSB's Eucharistic Prayers?

We chose not to include an epiclesis in the traditional, post-Verba location. Our chief concern was the misunderstanding of the epiclesis as in some sense consecratory (e.g., praying for the Spirit to come down upon the elements), thus robbing the Verba of its unique role in the eucharistic liturgy.

In place of this traditional location, we do provide an epiclesis prior to the Verba in Settings One, Two, Four, and Five. This epiclesis, which is probably the more ancient form, is the calling of the Spirit on the communicants to prepare them for faithful reception of Christ's body and blood whereby forgiveness is given.



Why the failure to use "catholic" as a translation in the creeds? Why did the Synod feel we needed one Creed translation and not one translation of the Lord's Prayer?

We agonized long and hard about the translation of the creeds. Again, we had several traditions to reconcile—namely, those using the older translation found in TLH, those using the mildly updated version in LW, and the small percentage of congregations with LBW using its ICET translation. The commission's initial proposal was to use the word "catholic" in both creeds. Partly due to reactions from the field, the commission later modified its proposal, recommending fewer changes. This included setting aside the plan to use the word "catholic." In the end, the floor committee that handled the hymnal proposal opted to recommend to the convention that the LW translation of

the Apostles' and Nicene creeds be used throughout LSB.

Regarding the Lord's Prayer, there was a push at the convention to include the updated version somewhere in LSB. Though we might have preferred to have only one version of this prayer as well, we ended up accommodating this request by including the updated language on the back inside cover (where we also included the text of both creeds for easy reference).

With respect to hymns, why were words or melodies changed so that they are different from the way that the rest of the English-speaking church sings them?

Very careful attention was paid to every aspect of the hymns in LSB. This was especially the case where our TLH and LW traditions presented us with two versions of the same hymn. Though we had specific guidelines to help us in our task, it quickly became evident that each hymn had to be considered on its own merits. For some hymns that were unnecessarily updated in LW, the decision to return to an earlier form of the text was quickly made. Thus, we once again sing "My faith looks up to Thee," rather than "My faith looks trustingly." Such "down-dating" of a handful of hymn texts has been very positively received.

This approach, however, was not applied to every hymn. The committee that was charged with overseeing language and translation issues provided helpful guidance in their distinction between obsolete and archaic language. Obsolete language was defined as words that have completely dropped out of contemporary use. Examples from earlier hymnals included words like "guerdon" [TLH 513: a reward or recompense] and "glebe" [TLH 368: a plot of cultivated land]. Archaic language, on the other hand, was defined as words, phrases, and grammatical constructions that have the sense of being old-fashioned yet are still comprehensible. Whereas obsolete words were avoided, archaic expressions were retained when their meaning was readily discerned.

I might point out an example of a hymn text that was changed in order to

give us a version that is common with other churches. In both TLH and LW, we sang “Our God, our help in ages past.” The first word has been changed so that the hymn now begins “O God, our help in ages past” (LSB 733), which now brings us into alignment with most English-speaking churches.

One final example concerns Jaroslav Vajda’s Ascension hymn, “Up though Endless Ranks of Angels” (LSB 491). When written more than 30 years ago, the following phrase would have raised few eyebrows: “Send Your promised Spirit guide.” In these days of New Age spirituality, however, singing about a “Spirit guide” is not particularly helpful. A simple rearrangement of the words, however, to “Send Your Spirit, promised guide,” proved to be a happy solution, one that Jarry heartily approved of when I presented it to him several years ago!



What were the criteria for hymn selection? For example, would hymns containing the words of Psalms in the Bible fit the hymn criteria selection of the commission on worship, or

were there criteria even beyond words of Scripture?

There were numerous criteria that came into play during the selection of the hymn corpus. Sometimes, these criteria came into conflict with each other, making our decision that much more difficult.

Certainly, the primary criterion in the selection of any hymn concerned the doctrinal content of the text. If the axiom that what we pray shapes what we believe (*Lex orandi, lex credendi*) means anything, then the doctrinal content had to be taken seriously.

Defining that criterion a little further, we were always interested in finding hymn texts that clearly proclaimed Christ and his Gospel. That doesn’t mean that every hymn in LSB had to have a full-blown Gospel presentation. Nor did it mean that hymns of praise with language that is similar to that found in the Psalter was automatically rejected. Language that draws on the rich imagery found in Holy Scripture was always of interest to us as we searched out hymns. Since there are thousands of hymns that fit that category, the criteria needed to be refined further. For LSB, that resulted foremost in the selection of hymns where the Gospel predominated.

Are there plans for a supplement or supplements to the LSB for additional resources (liturgies, hymns, etc.)?

There are not any specific plans for supplements to LSB at this time. We know that that time will come; still, before we begin supplementing LSB, there is wisdom in providing several years just to get to know it. Indeed, one of the challenges in introducing any hymnal is to find ways of helping worship planners discover all of the resources that exist in that book. If congregations are able to work toward making full use of LSB and its resources, then the need for immediate supplemental materials will most likely not be as great. I have joked

with some in saying that the next hymnal is already in the works. By that, I mean that our conversations both about what is good in LSB and that which is not as good are already shaping the thinking that will go into the next hymnal revision in a couple of decades. As for specific committee work, I’m going to leave that to someone else!

Is it the goal of the Commission on Worship to retard the growth of Evangelical Protestantism in the Missouri Synod? Is this hymnal going to help do this?

I’m not certain that the commission has a specific goal in this area. It does have the responsibility of recommending worship resources and advising and warning “against the use of worship materials that are unworthy of use in corporate worship.” In light of that charge, the commission is always interested in assisting congregations to strive for the very best practices in the planning and leading of worship. Furthermore, the 2004 synodical convention gave the commission the assignment of “initiating a process leading toward the development of diverse worship resources.” The commission is currently preparing a report outlining how they anticipate fulfilling this mandate.

Your second question asks about the role LSB may play. While I have no illusions that LSB will ever become the single worship resource to which all congregations of the Synod will turn, I do believe that it will play a significant role in corporate worship in the coming years. For those congregations that are searching for something “different” or “new,” LSB may provide just the kind of variety that they have been desiring. Furthermore, we know of large congregations offering a variety of worship styles that have purchased LSB for use in their liturgical service. Having a new hymnal physically in the pew racks will undoubtedly provide opportunities for LSB to influence all of the congregation’s worship life. Finally, I would urge all pastors, whether their congregations use a hymnal in worship or not, to get to know LSB very well. This hymnal has something to say about the collective wisdom of our church concerning worship. And, as I mentioned earlier, it is especially the centrality of the Gospel

proclamation in LSB that needs to shape our ongoing conversation on worship.

Why is there an inconsistency in the agenda where some rites use “and also with you” and others use “and with your spirit”?

Those four little words were certainly challenging for us. Our overall goal was to achieve as much consistency between services as possible. In our initial work, we had determined to return to the more literal translation “and with your spirit.” Our understanding of the meaning of those words suggested that the more recent response “and also with you” simply didn’t capture the fullness of this exchange between pastor and people. When Rome issued new translation guidelines in 2001 in the document *Liturgiam authenticam* that called for the same change, we actually felt somewhat ahead of the “curve.”

Upon further reflection, however, the Commission on Worship decided because of pastoral concerns to retain the more familiar “and also with you.” Yet, they also decided to break with the consistency principle and use the more literal translation in those places where it was attached to a musical response—namely, in *Divine Service*, *Setting Three* and in *Matins* and *Vespers*.

As you have introduced LSB around the country, are there any misconceptions that you have had to clear up about the hymnal?

Not really. We have been working on the project so long and communicated our intentions so often that it appears that most folks were prepared for what they first saw. A few were taken back by the inclusion of melody-only for some of the hymns. More than a few have expressed their disappointment that the propers were not included in the *Pew Edition*, especially the collects. But over all, almost anyone who has raised a concern has prefaced it with a general comment of appreciation for the book as a whole.

How long do you believe is this hymnal’s lifespan?

Predictions are always dangerous. Since we often talk about hymnals lasting a generation or so, I certainly hope that will be the case for LSB. There are

so many other factors at play, such as the rapid development of technology, that it would be hard to speculate any further.

Any final things that you think the readers of *Lutheran Forum* should know about LSB?

As with any new worship book, I would encourage users of LSB to try to be systematic in using the book to the fullest extent possible. Our human nature is such that we’re often predisposed to gravitate toward the things with which we are familiar. Over time, we train ourselves to look past the less familiar hymns and services. To the extent that users can plumb the riches of LSB, it will serve as a faithful resource for years to come.



Excursions in Faith

◆ Youth Retreat

We have had a great response to the youth retreat being hosted by Higher Things. At least eight youth from our dual parish will be going to Jackson on June 8-11 to study and play with other Lutheran youth from across the country.

◆ 25th Anniversary

On Sunday, July 22nd, Our Saviour in Evanston will be holding our 25th anniversary celebration. Make plans now to set aside this date and join us in the celebration together with a number of former pastors and members.

◆ Lutheran Hour

We have received notice from the International Lutheran Layman’s League that, due to budgeting priorities, they will no longer be funding the Lutheran Hour on KMER. The last date for its broadcast will be June 3rd. If we would like to see its continued broadcast, we will need to fund it in concert with neighboring congregations. Please think this through and give your ideas to Pastor Lange.



Down the Path

This month begins the Sundays of Ordinary Time. The 27 Sundays after Trinity focus on the acts and teachings of Jesus during His Galilean ministry with a view toward showing how He is still doing these things in the Church today. St. John’s Tide are the beginning Sundays of this season which takes its name from the feast day of John the Baptist (June 24th).

◆ Trinity Sunday - June 3

Psalm: 148 or 8
Old Testament: Isaiah 6:1-7
Epistle: Romans 11:33-36
Gospel: St. John 3:1-15

◆ Trinity 1 - June 10

Psalm: 62
Old Testament: Genesis 15:1-6
Epistle: 1 John 4:16-21
Gospel: St. Luke 16:19-31

◆ Trinity 2 - June 17

Psalm: 100
Old Testament: Proverbs 9:1-10
Epistle: 1 John 3:13-18
Gospel: St. Luke 14:15-24

◆ Trinity 3—June 24

Psalm: 103
Old Testament: Micah 7:18-20
Epistle: 1 Peter 5:6-11
Gospel: St. Luke 15:1-32

◆ Trinity 4—July 1

Psalm: 138
Old Testament: Genesis 50:15-21
Epistle: Romans 8:18-23
Gospel: St. Luke 6:36-42

◆ Trinity 5—July 8

Psalm: 147
Old Testament: I Kings 19:11-21
Epistle: 1 Peter 8:8-15
Gospel: St. Luke 5:1-11

◆ Trinity 6—July 15

Psalm: 90
Old Testament: Exodus 20:1-17
Epistle: Romans 6:1-11
Gospel: St. Matthew 5:17-26

◆ Trinity 7—July 22

Psalm: 34
Old Testament: Genesis 2:7-17
Epistle: Romans 6:19-23
Gospel: St. Mark 8:1-9

